

# Religious pluralism is 'wave of the future,' says lecturer

Last week more than 1000 United Methodist ministers and lay persons gathered at SMU in Dallas to participate in Perkins School of Theology's 41st annual Ministers' Week. Coming primarily from the 17 Annual Conferences of the South Central Jurisdiction, they joined in the three major lecture series and had their selection of more than a half-dozen workshops on themes varying from "Patriotism and the Bible" and "Evangelicals and Politics" to sessions on Church History, The Nairobi Assembly of the World Council of Churches, and a Global Ministries Workshop.

An estimated 40 pastors and lay persons from the Little Rock and North Arkansas Conferences attended.

The following, with additional items on pages two and three, are reports on portions of the three and one-half day event.

According to Dr. Charles Shelby Rooks, president and associate professor of Ministry at Chicago Theological Seminary, one of the greatest challenges facing contemporary Americans is the finding of a more effective way of responding to the nation's religious and cultural pluralism. As the Fondren Lecturer at last week's Ministers' Week in Dallas, Dr. Rooks addressed that challenge in his four lectures on the theme "The Gospel According to America: The Idea of Religious Liberty."

Calling the challenge represented by the nation's pluralism "a very large order indeed," the Chicago educator, an ordained minister in both The United Church of Christ and the National Baptist Convention, said he is "fully

convinced that unless we find new meaning in our foremost reality in this country — pluralism — we are doomed to an eventual, and perhaps early, demise as a nation." He maintained that Americans have refused to see their diversity of race, religion and culture as a national resource, saying that those varied elements have "more often been viewed as the source of conflict and oppression." He called religious pluralism "the wave of the future."

Dr. Rooks sees mankind faced with the critical choice of either "finding more ways of relating the beliefs and hopes and needs of the races and nations of the earth" or "embarking upon a radical death struggle for control of the essential elements that sustain life." He

said that the United States, more than any other nation, "still has before it the opportunity to make the more positive choice."

"The real task for each American in the celebration of the Bicentennial Year," said Dr. Rooks, "is not the recital of past glories or present miseries, but is the forging of a new dream — a dream based on reality rather than myth, so that this land can have a new hope and a new future."

He said that America's understanding of its secular and religious history had been limited by its unwillingness "to listen carefully to histories and thought other than those within our own particular social context." He said the nation's history had centered upon its White majority and had neglected the histories of non-Europeans in its culture, notably those of Black and Native Americans.

Dr. Rooks said "the task of theological reconstruction" was "absolutely necessary," and suggested that a reconstructed theology must reflect the thought and influence of the nation's several religious, racial and cultural elements. He called such a combining of thought "an American mosaic theology" — in which each element, or "mosaic," would have its individual integrity while

contributing to the whole.

The Fondren lecturer said that theology as it is presently "done" in academic circles and in the church was unsuited, by itself, for the task of contemporary religious interpretation. "This is so," he said, "because theology is a particularly Christian methodology for religious interpretation," and "carries too much of the baggage of Christian history and Christian perspective" and has no way of understanding other religious influences which have played important roles in America's history.

Dr. Rooks said that America's diversity of racial and religious influence had created "a new human possibility on the earth," but that neither the "possibility nor the hope" of that potential had been realized "because the eye of the majority has always been on wealth, which the human resource was exploited to attain."

Dr. Rooks said he saw the "new vision" for the nation resting on "the reality and diversity" of its pluralism. "Where it will take us," he said, "I do not know, but I am certain it would provide an unprecedented opportunity for new life and faith and hope in this new century of our national existence."

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## Arkansas Methodist

Arkansas United Methodism's Newsweekly

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95th Year, No. 7

### Conference to focus on 'Judeo-Christian Heritage'

The Seventh Annual Clergy and Laity Conference, sponsored by the Arkansas Council of Churches and The Arkansas Region of The National Conference of Christians and Jews, Inc., will be held Feb. 16-18 in Little Rock. The theme of the event is "Judeo-Christian Heritage in the History of American Freedom." The conference is designed "to give practical assistance to those involved in Christian and Jewish leadership on local levels."

Featured speakers for the three-day session which will be held at St. John's Conference Center and Westover Hills Presbyterian Church, will be the Rev. Msgr. Edward H. Flannery of Washington, D.C., executive director of the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations, and Mr. Milton Himmelfarb, director of Information and Research Services of the American Jewish Committee.

Mr. Himmelfarb will give three lectures on "The Development and Normalization of American Pluralism" and Msgr. Flannery will give two addresses relating to the Conference theme.

Msgr. Flannery, an internationally recognized authority in the area of Christian-Jewish concerns, is the author of numerous books and articles in that field and has served as an editor, teacher and consultant. Mr. Himmelfarb has served as a visiting professor at Jewish Theological Seminary and at Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and as a visiting lecturer at Yale College. His book *Jews of Modernity* was published

in 1973.

The Most Rev. Andrew J. McDonald, bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Little Rock, is general chairman of the conference.

Two events during the Conference will be open to the public, a Service for the Affirmation of Brotherhood, on Monday, and an address on Tuesday, both of which will be held at Westover Hills Presbyterian Church, Kavanaugh and Pine Valley Road. Msgr. Flannery will speak at each service, which will be held at 7:30 p.m. on the two evenings. An offering will be received at the two services and will be divided equally to aid hunger relief programs of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths.

United Methodists serving on the Conference Committee are the Rev. Alf A. Eason of Little Rock, Dr. Myers B. Curtis and Mr. Walter Davidson of North Little Rock, Dr. Harold Flowers of Pine Bluff, and the Rev. C. C. Hall of Hot Springs.

Registration for the conference begins at 4:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 16, at St. John's Conference Center, 2500 N. Tyler. Full cost, with lodging at St. John's, and meals, is \$24. Conference registration only is \$2.50. Interested persons may acquire a brochure giving the conference agenda and a registration form by writing to: Arkansas Council of Churches, P.O. Box 6011, Little Rock, Ark. 72206.

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(See "The Bicentennial," page nine)



Msgr. Edward H. Flannery



Mr. Milton Himmelfarb

### Little Rock Conference Youth Council takes stand on UMCYM issues

The Little Rock Conference Council on Youth Ministries in a meeting on January 17 discussed and took positions on two major issues which the United Methodist Council on Youth Ministries (UMCYM), the national youth organization of our church, plans to present at General Conference.

The Little Rock Conference Council does not support the UMCYM proposal that the phrase "... we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching" be dropped from the Social Principles of the Book of Discipline. The Conference Council stated that although it felt that homosexuals should be ministered to; that because homosexuality is unscriptural the actions of homosexuals should not be condoned.

The Little Rock Conference Council also decided not to support the UMCYM's proposal for the restructuring of the UMY at the General Level, but instead supports the Board of Discipleship's proposal for a biennial National Youth Ministry Convocation of three representatives from each annual conference. The representation from each Annual Conference will consist of two youth and one adult. The Conference felt that in the past the present structure of the UMCYM has not allowed for representative decisions of our youth and that the UMCYM itself, by its makeup, was not representative. Furthermore, the feeling was expressed that the present UMCYM has little accountability, even to its own youth constituency.

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Seen visiting at the reception hosted by Perkins students from Arkansas are (from left) Bishop and Mrs. Eugene Frank, the Rev. and Mrs. Bob Crossman of the Conway District, Mrs. Robert E. L. Bearden of Conway and Mr. R. D. Connally of Dallas, son-in-law of the Beardens. Mr. Crossman is a student at Perkins.



The Rev. and Mrs. L. David Deere (left) from Sparkman and the Rev. and Mrs. Robert Hook from the Batesville District visit at the reception. Both Mr. Deere and Mr. Hook are Perkins students.



Enjoying good fellowship are (from left) the Rev. Robert Hasley from Magnolia, Perkins student, Dr. Charles Casteel from North Little Rock, Mrs. Hasley, the Rev. Gladwin Connell from El Dorado and the Rev. George Meyer from Stuttgart.

## Church joins in aid to quake victims

NEW YORK, N.Y. (UMC) — The relief agency of The United Methodist Church began responding directly and through ecumenical channels to the needs of victims within hours after a massive earthquake devastated Guatemala on Feb. 4.

An assessment team was organized from a two-year-old earthquake reconstruction program in Nicaragua, a United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) flood reclamation program in Honduras also was asked to help and two other UMCOR programs already operating in Guatemala were alerted.

"We didn't have to wait while we assembled an American team," explained the Rev. Dr. J. Harry Haines, UMCOR executive. "We had people on the spot."

The earthquake, measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale, had its epicenter 30 miles outside Guatemala City. Estimates of the death toll ranged as high as 15,000, and the number of homeless victims was expected to reach 100,000.

Church World Service, the ecumenical relief agency of National Council of Churches, issued an emergency appeal for \$100,000 for Guatemala on Feb. 4, and UMCOR released \$10,000 for the purchase of blankets. The major Protestant churches of Guatemala formed a joint agency to respond to the disaster.

Dr. Haines stressed the importance of the long-term rehabilitation work for the Guatemalan victims. The usual pattern in such disasters, he explained, is that there is a massive but short-term world response to emergency needs . . . "In

Nicaragua, for example, three months after the earthquake decimated the whole city, there were only two agencies left. We are still there two years later."

One possibility for future UMCOR help in Guatemala, he said, is the construction of (earthquake proof) Stack-Sack housing, which UMCOR developed, but the assessment of actual need will take some time, and will also depend on what the Guatemalan government and churches will allow or support.

"While we have not yet been able to assess the full extent and nature of aid needed in Guatemala," he continued, "we anticipate the need will be for a long term program, because most of the

suffering and damage was in the slum areas, among people least able to cope with it . . ."

Dr. Haines said United Methodists wishing to respond with financial assistance through UMCOR should earmark such funds for Guatemala. He urged that material goods not be sent until a more complete assessment of needs has been determined.

A U.S. relief team from UMCOR will go to Guatemala the week of Feb. 9 to assess the actual needs, in cooperation with CEPA, the Guatemalan Protestant relief group.

### A message from Bishop Frank

The bulletin from United Methodist Committee on Relief makes it clear that our relief agency was involved in the catastrophe and tragedy of the earthquake within hours of the event.

Our part in this relief and rehabilitation effort will be to prepare immediately for a SPECIAL OFFERING in all of our churches. We can be assured that this will be forthcoming from the Council of Bishops and the Council on Finance and Administration who must both approve the offering.

We will be praying that God will bless with courage and hope all those who have survived this disaster. But, we will also be sending food, medicine, clothing and bedding to these crushed and heartbroken people as we give generously of our money to support the work already begun by our United Methodist Committee on Relief.

I hope and pray all United Methodists in Arkansas will join Mrs. Frank and me in a sacrificial offering when it is officially announced. Your District Superintendent will alert you to the SPECIAL DAY OF PRAYER AND SACRIFICE.

*Eugene M. Frank*

## One million members lost —

### 'What would early Methodists think and say?' asks Bishop Martin

"Within eight years we Methodists are going to be celebrating our own bicentennial . . . What do you suppose the Methodists of Asbury's day and McKendree's day would think if someone should tell them that during the last full year for which we have a complete record, there were 102 Methodist churches of 500 members or more that had not one single addition on profession of faith? And that there were 87 churches in that level which had one. And 177 which had two!

"And what do you suppose they'd say if we should tell them that in a little more than five years, just at the time our nation is growing in population, we've lost a million members? We need a 'Bicentennial,' don't we!"

Those questions and observations were made by Bishop William C. Martin of Little Rock in a sermon last week at Perkins School of Theology's Ministers' Week. An estimated 600 persons heard the bishop preach Tuesday evening in the Sanctuary of Dallas' Highland Park United Methodist Church, adjacent to the SMU campus. He was one of four ministers to give sermons in the week's Jackson Worship Service series.

Bishop Martin, who retired in 1964, under "I do believe that better days are ahead for us if, under God, we have the faith and the commitment to match it! The need is here. Everybody knows that. And the possibilities are here. But we need — and I don't know any better way to put it — an empowering of the Holy Spirit!"

The bishop said the General Conference of 1972 "must have been under the guidance of the Holy Spirit when a deeper understanding of the meaning of the Spirit in our individual lives and in our churches (was seen) as our primary need today."

Bishop Martin said "I am in total agreement with Bishop Earl Hunt (of the Charlotte [N.C.] Area) when he says that the charismatic movement in current life is a universal phenomenon and cannot be ignored or swept under the carpet. It's here — what are we going to do about it? He said we must recognize it as the work of God in this generation."

Bishop Martin said he further agreed with Bishop Hunt when he said that United Methodists must keep



Bishop William C. Martin (left) visits with Dr. Grady Hardin of the Perkins School of Theology faculty before Tuesday evening's worship service. Dr. Hardin introduced Bishop Martin at the service in Highland Park United Methodist Church.

the charismatic movement "in the framework of a true understanding of the Wesleyan tradition — with that kind of depth and conviction about it — if it is to be a blessing rather than a plague to the churches and their activities."

Bishop Martin's remarks were made in a sermon on the theme of freedom in Christ.

Noting that during the Bicentennial Year Americans were "going to be hearing a lot about freedom," the bishop said he wanted to invite his hearers to think about freedom on "a deeper and more inclusive level: freedom in Christ, a freedom that embraces not one nation only, but all the nations and all the peoples of the world."

The bishop spoke of three principal ways in which freedom in Christ finds its expression: in the freedom to believe, in the freedom to pray, and in the freedom to witness.

Speaking of the freedom to believe, Bishop Martin said many people found that there was a large degree to which their freedom was restricted and circumscribed, not by others but by themselves, by certain preconceptions they held. He said that persons "frequently built fences around themselves and were unable to get into the full realm of truth" until such barriers were overcome.

The bishop said that Christians should always reach out for truth; that as followers of Christ they have an obligation to seek truth everywhere, both in "the realm of the spirit and the realm of the material," which, he said, belong together.

Concerning prayer, Bishop Martin said its practice was too much a "marginal consideration" for large numbers of Christians. He warned of speaking of stereotyped patterns of prayer, but said that centuries of Christian living and experience had revealed that praise, thanksgiving, confession, intercession for others and petition for ourselves were essential elements of prayer. He said "I would think that if we found our prayers consistently ignoring any one of these five elements, we had better take a new look at them."

The bishop said the greatest hindrance to prayer is "our unwillingness to recognize the inestimable value of prayer" and in failing to set aside sufficient time for praying.

The bishop's remarks about the lack of numerical growth of The United Methodist Church and his comments on the charismatic movement came during the third point of his sermon, concerning the freedom to witness.

He spoke of giving and of tithing as a means of witnessing, saying he was indebted to a Catholic bishop for the idea that a local church budget was a "theological document" that could tell as much about what a church really believed as could its creeds.



# The Christian Mission in a World of Crises

An ecumenical mission executive shares his concerns and hopes

Dr. Eugene L. Stockwell is associate general secretary of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the National Council of The Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. (NCC). Last week he was in Dallas, Tex., serving as chief resource person in the Global Ministries Workshop at Perkins School of Theology's Ministers' Week. The Arkansas Methodist interviewed Dr. Stockwell and portions of that visit are reported below.



Before assuming his present duties, Dr. Stockwell, a United Methodist minister, was associated with the denomination's Board of Global Ministries. He is a former missionary, having served as a pastor in Uruguay for ten years. While there he also taught in a seminary and participated in a radio ministry. He is a member of the Northern New Jersey Conference.

Dr. Stockwell's duties relate him to the varied overseas mission programs of NCC member-churches.

**The Arkansas Methodist:** Dr. Stockwell, what do you see as the future of the missionary?

**Dr. Eugene L. Stockwell:** I for one believe that despite the talk in some places about a need for a moratorium on missionaries and funds — and I believe that may be justified in some areas — the day of the missionary is by no means over. I believe it's important for churches to continue to give of the best they have to other churches around the world. And that includes giving some of their best people — or loaning them for a period of time.

But the image of the missionary has to be radically different today from what it was 25 years ago. Until not many years ago the missionary was the innovator, the initiator, the pioneer. And therefore — whether he or she wanted to or not — was often the power person who determined what would happen in terms of funds.

But now the missionary goes in terms of a co-worker, under national leadership, often in a situation where he or she can be a resource person. And he or she has to live in a very tentative kind of relationship, and is probably not going to be able to stay in a given country very long, depending upon the way the people in those countries see their needs.

And the missionary also goes with the unavoidable image of being an American, which has its pluses and minuses in today's world, and at times will, quite unjustly but nevertheless realistically, have to bear the burden of being seen as a representative of his own nation where what is seen nationally is not liked by other countries. And therefore, the missionary has to bear the burden.

The opportunity of the missionary in this somewhat subservient position is, of course, to be able to relate in personal relationships to people and to share the love of Christ despite all these handicaps. And many missionaries do it in a beautiful way. As long as there are people like that, I'm for missionaries continuing to go!

**A.M.:** It has been said that the church faces the danger of being "fadish" in its response to crises. How can the church provide the needed on-going kinds of ministries which issues like the world hunger and refugee problems require?

**E.L.S.:** Well, of course the church must not avoid current crises. The church must address these things. But the most important thing is to try to see what the underlying causes of the major problems of the day are and to work out strategies and plans and programs which carry over for a longer period than most crises last.

For example, take the whole question of Angola. I was interested in seeing a letter from the Methodist bishop in Angola, last year, when he was commenting on the future of his country. In speaking particularly of the issue of hunger, he said the issue is not hunger itself. There are hungry people there, to be sure. But the issue is

colonialism, under the Portuguese, and the whole long-range problem of justice for Black people in their own lands.

Now, if we can deal with that kind of issue — the issue of self-development of people within the context of their own self-determination and justice — we're not dealing with a fad of the moment; we're dealing with a long-range thing, which has implications not only in Angola, but practically anywhere in the world.

The danger is that we are governed in the church too easily by what the top headlines are saying. We've been aware of the hunger in the Sahel and in the Far East and have failed to see that there is hunger on our own doorstep. That's something a local church can deal with — or ought to be dealing with, it seems to me.

We really need to try to relate the local issues of our own community to the global issues which are in the headlines. That's hard to do, but it seems to me that the nature of our world almost obligates us to do this.

**A.M.:** Do you see issues which the church is not adequately addressing today, which ought to be of priority concern?

**E.L.S.:** One issue which I believe the church must address with more care than it has in the past is what I would call the survival issue . . .

We cannot go on with the assumption that economic growth is endless. There are limits to growth, and it seems to me that if we assume that there are not limits — which our nation seems to be doing — then we are headed for disaster and for a confrontation with the have-nots of the world and are headed for the destruction of the planet.

The other issue is the whole area of our reliance on military defense, military hardware, and our assumption that we can continue to put as large a portion of our national budget into the military when we have overkill possibilities far beyond what we need already. I'm convinced that local church people see these as important issues.

**A.M.:** What do you see as the unique role of the church in relating to such issues?

**E.L.S.:** To speak to the ethical issues raised! We cannot pretend to be experts in either economics or defense, but we can attempt to raise the ethical questions about the uses of our resources and our power.

One of the things that has fascinated me is how some of our scientists, including Nobel Prize winners, are saying that in terms of the values by which a society is to be governed, they have little guidance to give. They are coming, in meetings of the World Council of Churches and the NCC, and asking for guidance and for these direct questions to be raised about the ethical issues involved.

**A.M.:** How do you evaluate the health of the church today?

**E.L.S.:** I guess my major concern about the health of the church in our nation, as I see it, is at two points. This is of course a very broad generalization, but I see us as too often being caught up in internal concerns, in the machinery and mechanism of the church. That is important and can't be shunted aside. And yet I see too much of an ingrownness in our church — a concern for buildings or committee structures and elections and all the rest. And this bothers me, frankly.

The other thing, and I'm a part of it, which I see as also cutting at the health of the church is our affluence. I realize that not everybody in the church is affluent. But we are basically affluent churches in an affluent nation. We assume some of the values of economic growth and of the capitalistic society without question. And I see these infiltrated into the church as well; and we ought to raise some questions about that.

**A.M.:** Your work brings you into contact with many denominations; how do you assess the health of the ecumenical movement?

**E.L.S.:** I'm encouraged at the moment. I think the ecumenical movement, both world-wide as evidenced by the Nairobi Assembly (of the World Council of Churches) and in our own nation, is having something of a new lease on life.

I don't want to be overly optimistic, because I know that financially, as is true of many church organizations, the ecumenical movement is having a great deal of trouble. But it seems to me that some of the kinds of poor press that the ecumenical movement had a decade ago, often on the basis of — well, "lies" — that much of that is being dispelled now. And it therefore has been possible for the ecumenical movement to focus on issues of concern to the human community and on issues which make it possible for the churches to work together in ways that I think are very encouraging.

**A.M.:** Knowing what you do about world problems, are you an optimist or a pessimist?

**E.L.S.:** That's a tough one. I tend to put it this way: I'm a short-range pessimist and a long-range optimist. The short-range pessimism is in terms of the realities of the world as I see them at the moment. And I don't yet see either our nation or the world community dealing adequately, in my judgment, with the questions of survival and the quality of life.

But the reason I can say I'm a long-range optimist is that that is a statement of faith. I believe that God is not to be destroyed by a hydrogen bomb, and that his long-range purposes for the universe, while they can be frustrated by us at points, will prevail. Now just what that means in terms of the survival of this planet, I'm not sure yet. But I think he has purposes even beyond this planet.

**A.M.:** What do you say to individuals who feel that events are beyond their control? What is the word of hope?

**E.L.S.:** Well, the word of hope is that an individual can make a difference! He may not be able to change major policies of our or other governments, but I'm impressed time and again by the ways in which, for example, an individual will analyze a particular issue or problem, write a letter to a newspaper, contact some key people in his community or in government and begin to get a new awareness about a particular issue going.

And I am surprised time and again how changes do come about by the actions of a very few concerned people. And this, to me, is one of the wonderful things that is still possible in our country and in many parts of the world.

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## Council Directors to Local Churches

### Available: a special consultant on World Hunger

Looking at our own life styles and putting them in a global context is as important as giving massive emergency relief to poorer nations, according to a new United Methodist hunger consultant.

The Rev. Kenneth R. Colton, formerly on the pastoral staff of First United Methodist Church in Ann Arbor, Mich., was named in November as special consultant on hunger and nutrition by the Health and Welfare Ministries Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries. His appointment is part of the board's campaign on world hunger.

"When we hear the words, 'world hunger,'" Colton explained, "we cannot assume it's somebody else's responsibility. We cannot let ourselves become an isolated island of plenty in a hungry world, and that means we have to learn what 'hunger' means in our context."

"There are many things people can do to fight hunger in their own communities," he said. "Among them, learning about the foods we are manipulated to buy . . . which are not necessarily the most nutritious for us. Unfortunately, we are not as careful about what goes into our bodies as we are about what kind of cars or other products we buy."

Mr. Colton is preparing a workbook for local parishes which will help persons understand hunger and nutrition where

they are, and hopes to put together a cassette series which would feature the leading thinkers around the world on hunger and nutrition. The 31-year-old clergyman also will examine the theological and political aspects of the hunger problem.

Among other plans for his consultant work, Mr. Colton is querying United Methodist seminaries about a possible brief course in world hunger and nutrition. Students would prepare a field project in addition to the six-hour class sessions, and course graduates would act as resource persons for regional workshops, where all churches in the seminary's area could participate.

According to the Rev. John A. Murdock, chief executive of the Health and Welfare Ministries Division, Colton's services as a consultant will be available free of charge to annual conferences and local congregations through the division offices, or through the Hunger Research and Information Center, 1001 Green Road, Ann Arbor, Mich. Phone 313, 761-9438. Mr. Colton will base his operation in Ann Arbor.

He has two masters degrees from Colgate Rochester Divinity School, and is a member of the Michigan CROP board of Directors.

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### Lydia Patterson president to speak in Little Rock Conference

Dr. Noe Gonzales, president of Lydia Patterson Institute will visit in local churches of the Little Rock Conference Feb. 29-March 7. He will speak on the work of the El Paso, Tex. school, which is owned and operated by the South Central Jurisdiction of The United Methodist Church.

Dr. Gonzales will make the following appearances:

Feb. 29 — Ashdown First Church, 9 a.m.; Richmond, 11 a.m.; Hope First Church, 7 p.m.

March 1 — In Little Rock: Winfield, 10 a.m., First Church, 11 a.m.

March 2 — Pulaski Heights, Little Rock, 6 p.m.

March 3 — Stuttgart and area churches, 7 p.m.

March 4 — Hamburg and area churches, noon; McGehee First Church, p.m.

March 5 — McGehee Rotary Club, noon.

March 6 — Camden District UMW, a.m. and p.m.

March 7 — Arkadelphia First Church, 11 a.m.; Lakeside (Pine Bluff) and area churches, 7 p.m.

The Rev. Thomas A. Abney of Monticello, Little Rock Conference Missionary Secretary, reports that it is still possible for churches or groups to schedule a visit with Dr. Gonzales. Persons desiring to do so may telephone Mr. Abney at 367-5966 or 367-7294. No honorarium is expected, though a host church or group is asked to provide room and board and travel to the next point on the itinerary. Special offerings may be received for these purposes.



Dr. Noe Gonzales

Lydia Patterson serves over 500 students from the El Paso community, from both the U.S. and Mexican sides of the border. Its program of seventh through 12th grade classes serve many children and youth who would otherwise have little opportunity for formal education. The institution is fully accredited by the Texas Education Agency and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Both the Little Rock and North Arkansas Annual Conferences have approved Lydia Patterson Institute as an Advance Special project, making it eligible to receive gifts from local churches.

Dr. Gonzales visited churches in the North Arkansas Conference earlier in the Conference year.

## Camp Tanako Summer Schedule

### Conference-wide Events

June 7-11	Training Camp for Staff and Session Directors
June 14-18	Children's Choir Camp
June 20, 21	"Old" UMY Conference Council
June 21-25	Conference Camp
June 25, 26	"New" UMY Conference Council
June 28-July 2	Junior High I
July 5-9	Elementary I
July 10, 11	Senior High Weekend and Workers With Youth
July 12-16	Junior High II
July 16, 17, 18	Young Adult Family Weekend
July 19-23	Riverside Baptist Church — Bastrop, Louisiana
July 23-31	MAD Camp
August 2-6	Parkview Baptist Church — Monroe, Louisiana
August 6, 7, 8	Mini Camp Meeting for Families
August 9-13	Junior High III
August 13, 14, 15	Young Adult Couples and Singles
August 16-20	Elementary II
August 21, 22	Laity Weekend

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Camp Is Available Now, and as Schedule Permits, Before and After Summer Programs.

For more information contact:

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715 Center, Room 202  
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501/374-5027

Brochures and Registration Blanks will be mailed to all pastors early in March.

Also: A Colorado Trail Hike, plus a Float Trip or two are in the planning stages now. More later!

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### Preparing to Teach

Dr. Joseph E. Taylor (standing, right), pastor of First Church, Springdale, is the leader for a course on "Current Viewpoints in Christian Theology," being presented to equip persons in the North Arkansas Conference to teach the course in area churches. Participants are shown as they met at Hendrix College for the first sessions held Jan. 30-31. The second phase of study will be presented May 7-8 at Kamp Kaetzell. The Rev. Arvill Brannon, conference Council on Ministries staff person, coordinated the program.





summary by Doris Woolard

**Stepped-up** repressive measures against Christians by the government of Equatorial Guinea on the west-central coast of Africa have been reported to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches in Geneva. According to an Alliance spokesman, the police state, ruled by "President for Life," Francisco Macias Nguema Biyogo, prohibits the holding of church meetings, the giving of financial support to churches or pastors, or "the maintaining of friendly relations with pastors."

**United Methodist Bishop** Abel T. Muzorewa of Rhodesia has accepted asylum in Mozambique and plans to stay there until he feels free to return to his homeland, according to Bishop Roy C. Nichols of Pittsburgh who presided over the Rhodesian annual conference in Bishop Muzorewa's absence. Bishop Nichols said the Rhodesian church leader is afraid of possible imprisonment and physical violence if he returns home now. He said doctors and missionaries are leaving Rhodesia because of uncertainties over the political situation.

**The Governor General** of Papua New Guinea, addressing the opening session at the Third Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches at the new University of Papua, acknowledged with gratitude the outstanding contribution which the Christian church has made to the welfare of the South Pacific. The assembly focused on the theme, "God's Mission in a Changing Pacific Society."

**A proposed United Nations** definition for "sexual health" which includes every individual's right to sexual pleasure has been drafted as the result of a study commissioned and released by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva. The study said that countries should consider accepting sexual relationships "for pleasure as well as for procreation."

**The Nationwide Festival of Light**, the anti-pornography movement in Britain, has welcomed the Vatican's new declaration on sexual ethics as an "outspoken call for moral purity." "Such a declaration is vital at a time when family life is under attack by those who publish and promote ever more degrading and corrupting pornographic magazines," said an executive of the organization. "All this corruption of community standards by moral pollution makes it imperative for all church leaders throughout Christendom to speak out in the strongest possible terms for love, purity, and family life," he said.

**Roman Catholic Bishop** Daniel P. Reilly, preaching for an interfaith service in Warwick, R.I., said while Christian unity must be a concern for everyone, individual churches cannot totally abandon their own teachings, but can find common ground that all can accept together. "We need each other today," said Bishop Reilly, "... We have been blessed with many ecumenical gifts. One of the most important is a new willingness to dare to do things, and to share."

**Rabbi Arthur Schneier**, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation — an interreligious agency founded in 1965 to work for religious liberty, especially in Eastern Europe — has announced that the USSR has agreed to allow five Soviet Jews to study for the rabbinate at Yeshiva University in New York City.

**A major world conference** to mobilize international action against the "ever-harsher" treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union will be held in Brussels, Belgium from Feb. 17-19 with more than 1,000 delegates expected from 20 countries. Former Prime Minister Golda Meir of Israel will serve as honorary chairperson of the conference and deliver the closing address. Senator Frank Church of Idaho, a ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, will head a delegation of nearly a dozen members of Congress, and will speak.

**Canon Albert J. duBois**, president of the American Church Union and national coordinator of Episcopalians United, speaking at a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity observance in Washington, D.C., outlined the history of the Anglican Communion as one in which "two diametrically opposed concepts of the nature of the Church" are in "uneasy compromise." He said Episcopalians face a choice, when the General Convention meets at Minneapolis in September, of being either "Catholic" or "Protestant."

**William P. Thompson**, president of the National Council of Churches told an ecumenical congregation of 1,200 people assembled in Newark, N.J. for an interfaith service, "We should not be dismayed to find that equally committed Christians sometimes disagree," because human fallibility "makes differences almost inevitable." Mr. Thompson, a United Presbyterian, called prayer in common essential and urged that it be increased to enable us "to learn to accept even those who differ from us as being equally as sincere and committed" to Christ as ourselves.

**Susan Atkins**, one-time "Manson family" member who is serving a life sentence for her part in the 1969 "Sharon Tate mass murders," has become a Christian. She is reported to have made her decision in an isolation cell in September 1974 and to have been baptized by immersion Feb. 23, 1975, outside the prison chapel. News of Miss Atkins' conversion was not publicized until recently because of fears that it would meet with cynicism and skepticism, according to a California Baptist couple who have given spiritual guidance to the new convert.

**A study** of "theological issues related to men and women in the body of Christ," has been approved by a management committee of the Lutheran Church in America. The study was approved on the recommendation of the Consulting Committee on Women in Church and Society.

**The Consulting Committee on Aging** of the Lutheran Church in America has urged congregations, synods and churchwide agencies to "recognize the potential of the vast majority of older adults to participate responsibly in and to make significant contribution to, the life of the church and society." The committee has also recommended that "the appropriate agencies of the church... include within theological education, clinical pastoral education and continuing education for pastors and other professional church leaders, guidance in understanding the aging process and in effective ministry with older adults."



—RNS Photo

**THE HONORABLE Masiofo Fetaui Mata'afa**, a member of Western Samoa's Parliament and widow of the late Prime Minister, who died in 1975, leads a prayer at opening session of the Third Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

**MRS. CLARIE COLLINS Harvey**, United Methodist businesswoman of Jackson, Miss., whose Christian influence has been felt around the world, will receive the annual Upper Room Citation at a World Christian Fellowship Dinner in Jackson, March 1. "All my life I have believed that whatever I do it must be done to the glory of God," says Mrs. Harvey.



—UMC Photo



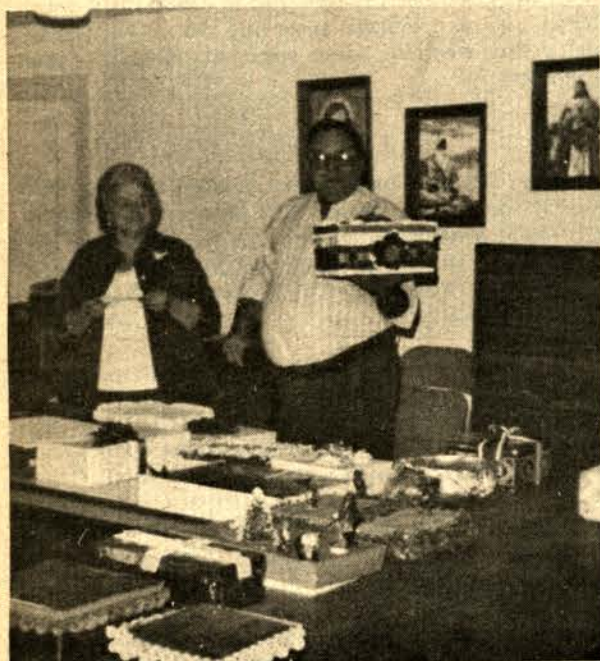
—RNS Photo, by George Gurtner

## Praying That 'Saints Become Winners'

**NEW ORLEANS** — The New Orleans Saints professional football team got Hank Stram (seated, center) as its new head coach and Stram, in turn, immediately got a blessing from the Rev. Bob Street, who gained fame as the "Chaplain of Bourbon Street," stood up when Stram's appointment was announced and said, "Hank, I'm going to pray that all our sinners here in New Orleans become saints and that our Saints become winners." A few "amens" were heard from the huge audience of press people. Stram is the former head coach of the Kansas City Chiefs.



# News from the churches



## Holly Grove Box Supper

The Second Sunday Monthly Singing Group of Holly Grove Church recently held an old fashioned box supper to raise money for the Tennis Court Fund. Auctioneer Aaron Hogan conducted the bidding. More than \$200 was raised.

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THE GOLDEN AGERS' of Lakeside Church, Pine Bluff, traveled to Little Rock recently to tour historical sites and Methodist points of interest. Stops included the Territorial Restoration, the state capitol, the Old State House, and Methodist Headquarters, where they were conducted on a guided tour by the Rev. Carr Dee Racop, associate director of the Little Rock Conference Council on Ministries.

THE REV. WOODROW W. SMITH, associate pastor at St. Luke United Methodist Church, Houston, Tex., was a recent pulpit guest at Mabelvale Church. Mr. Smith was also a special guest at the Methodist Men's breakfast.

FIRST CHURCH, Marked Tree, is engaged in a churchwide study on the "Primer of Beliefs For United Methodist Laymen." The series will continue each Sunday evening at 7 p.m. during February.

ROY PULLIG showed a film on the Holy Land at a meeting of Methodist Men at Grand Avenue Church, Stuttgart.

CHANCEL FURNITURE will be dedicated at Forrest Hills Church in Forrest City during the 11 a.m. worship service next Sunday, Feb. 15, as a memorial to the late Mr. Guy Long. The furnishings, including pulpit, lectern, altar, baptismal font and a cross, were purchased through a memorial fund provided by family and friends in recognition of Mr. Long's service to the church.



## Hardy UMY Spreads Cheer

These members of the UMY at Hardy United Methodist Church caroled and delivered baskets of fruit and candy to 20 shut-ins in their community at Christmas time.

THE FORTY-FIVE MEMBER youth choir of First Church, Monticello, will perform at the morning worship service in that church, Sunday, Feb. 15th. The group will present several numbers following the theme "Reaching out to make this world a better place." The group will perform Sunday, Feb. 22 at Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. Debbie Biniore directs the singers.

MANILA United Methodist Church will hold a special service on Sunday, Feb. 29 to commemorate the unusual occurrence of a fifth Sunday in February. Community Church, which is on the Manila Charge, will participate in the service. The congregation will dress in bicentennial attire. A basket dinner will follow morning worship and the afternoon will include singing, church history and fellowship.

UNITED METHODIST MEN of Central Church, Fayetteville, held Ladies' Night for their February meeting. The program was a bicentennial slide presentation.

THE CONCORDIA CHOIR of Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn., will appear in concert at Fayetteville High School on Tuesday, Feb. 17th, under sponsorship of Central United Methodist Church. The 68-voice singing group, under the direction of Dr. Paul J. Christiansen, has received both national and international acclaim from musical critics. Singing a cappella, the choir will present a program ranging from 16th century classics down through the Baroque era to the contemporary masters.



## History Comes Alive!

The Junior Youth of Fisher Street United Methodist Church, Jonesboro, recently took part in a study program entitled "Our American Heritage." They are pictured here as they reenact the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

## LITERACY COUNCIL TO SPONSOR TUTORING WORKSHOP

The Literacy Council of Pulaski County announces a Tutor Workshop to be held at Immanuel Baptist Church, 10th and Bishop Streets, Little Rock, Feb. 17-18-19, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. Persons interested in having a part in the literacy program are urged to take advantage of this training opportunity. Participants are requested to provide their own sack lunches. For additional information call Mrs. Margaret Booth at 664-5419.

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THE REV. Frank Gonzales and his God Squad Singers recently presented a two-hour Sunday evening program at Cherokee Village United Methodist Church. Around 330 villagers heard the presentation entitled "A Realistic Approach to Abundant Life in Jesus Christ." The visiting group, a part of the Frank Gonzales Evangelistic Association, promotes mission groups of young people from various churches in the states in a Summer program of Christian witness in Mexico. Last summer a group of youth from the Cherokee Village Church — accompanied by their pastor, the Rev. Roy E. Poyner, and counselors — participated in a travel mission to Mexico.

FIRST CHURCH, Marysville, recently completed a churchwide study of "The Prophets" with the following teachers: Mrs. Jennings, the Book of Jeremiah; Arlene Bishop, Isaiah; Larry Goza, Amos, and Helen Johnson, Hosea. The Rev. Bob Johnson is pastor.

THE REV. IRL BRIDENTHAL, retired minister of North Little Rock, was pulpit guest at Capitol View Church, Little Rock, recently while the pastor, the Rev. Thomas Nation, representing the Little Rock Conference Committee on Communications, attended "Operation Understanding" in Cleveland, Tenn.

THE REV. ED McCULLOUGH, pastor of Traskwood-Ebenezer Charge, was a pulpit guest at Asbury Church, Little Rock, on a recent Sunday evening.

DR. JOHN ROBSON, sociology professor at UALR, led a recent Sunday Evening Adult Study at Winfield Church, Little Rock, on the subject "Attitudes on Death and Dying."

MR. JERRY PORTER, director of the Mid-America Museum, was the guest speaker at the February meeting of United Methodist Men of First Church, Hot Springs.

## Daily Bible Readings

Below is a schedule for the Daily Bible Readings, which the Board of Discipleship invites you to use as a regular guide in your homes.

Feb. 15—Sunday	Deut. 8:11-20
Feb. 16	Deut. 31:1-8
Feb. 17	Psalm 25:1-14
Feb. 18	Psalm 28:1-9
Feb. 19	I Peter 5:1-11
Feb. 20	I John 2:1-17
Feb. 21	James 4:13-17
Feb. 22—Sunday	Exo. 20:1-17

BILL MANN, singing evangelist and recording artist from Dallas, Tex., will be at Des Arc and New Bethel Churches for a "Festival of Song" Sunday, Feb. 15 through Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. each evening. The public is cordially invited to attend.

## Personalia

MRS. VICTOR NIXON, wife of the pastor at Huntington Avenue Church, Jonesboro, recently became the first Arkansas recipient of The Outstanding Community Service Award. Mrs. Nixon was presented the award on the Channel 11 Eye On Arkansas program in recognition of her service as a member of the Mental Health Association board of Northwest Arkansas, as Carroll County director of the Voluntary Action Center and as director of the Carroll County children's immunization drive. The award is sponsored by the Carnation Company and the Arkansas Volunteer Action Program. The Nixons recently transferred from the pastorate in Berryville to Huntington Avenue.

DR. JOSEPH TAYLOR, pastor of First Church, Springdale, attended a recent Estate Planning Seminar in St. Louis to help develop a ministry in the area of Christian Stewardship as it affects the planning of an individual's estate.



## Church Leader To Receive Special Recognition

Next Sunday, Feb. 15th, has been designated "E. O. Hinson Day," at Hunter Memorial Church, 3301 Romine Rd., Little Rock, in honor of Mr. Hinson shown above. A member of that church since 1947, Mr. Hinson will receive recognition for having filled almost every key position of leadership in the congregation and for having been instrumental, approximately two years ago, in the relocating of Hunter Church from its former site at 11th and McAlmont to the present one. One hundred new members joined during the first year at the new location, and Mr. Hinson is credited with having visited in all of the homes. Friends of the honoree are invited to take part in the celebration in his honor at the 11 a.m. worship service.



## Visitor tells of aid to Turkey's poor

A group of Arkansas United Methodists received an unexpected opportunity last week to get a first hand report on how some of the denomination's funds are being used to give self-help aid to "the poorest of the poor" in Turkey.

Mr. Altan Zeki Unver, secretary general of the Development Foundation of Turkey (DFT), told the North Arkansas Conference's Board of Global Ministries how United Methodist contributions of almost \$100,000 had assisted that private, non-profit agency's work with subsistence farmers in the rural areas of Turkey.

Mr. Unver was in Little Rock to seek aid from Heifer Project International (HPI), the non-profit ecumenical organization which supplies livestock and poultry, and training in their care, to persons in developing areas around the world. His meeting with the Arkansas United Methodist board came when that group and HPI officials, with whom Mr. Unver was meeting, were at separate dinner meetings in a Little Rock restaurant.

Mr. Unver was introduced to the Methodist board and spoke briefly about DFT's program. He told of its work with dairy, poultry and bee-keeping projects and vegetable and silk worm production programs. He said that the United Methodist aid had come through the denomination's general Board of Global Ministries during 1974 and 1975.

Interviewed later by the **Arkansas Methodist**, Mr. Unver said the agency's request to HPI was for 75 to 80 pregnant Holstein heifers and three bulls to form a foundation herd, the offspring from which would be distributed to rural farmers.

The foundation official said the most significant aspect of DFT's work was that it had developed "an avenue for working with the 'poorest of the poor,' the subsistence, illiterate farmer in rural Turkey who has two cows and is getting half-a-ton of milk per year from each cow." He said that problems facing such



Mr. Altan Zeki Unver

farmers had "really defied solution" and that DFT's programs had received the endorsement and encouragement of the government of Turkey, which had been unable to provide effective programs with such farmers.

DFT was organized seven years ago as an outgrowth of a United Church of Christ mission school in Turkey and is the only agency of its kind seeking to relate to the nation's poorest farmers. The foundation's program is endorsed by the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches and receives support from the United Church of Christ and the United Presbyterian Church as well as from the United Methodist board.

Mr. Unver, a native of Turkey, is a graduate of the University of Texas with masters degrees in chemical engineering and economics. He was a project engineer with Atlas Chemical Company in Wilmington, Del., before deciding to change his career to human service oriented programs. A Quaker, he attended for seven years the mission school in Turkey out of which the Development Foundation of Turkey originated.

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### Spiritual Renewal Weekend at Beebe

Bishop and Mrs. Eugene M. Frank (right) with the Rev. Dewey Dark, pastor at Beebe, and Mrs. Dark, during Spiritual Renewal Weekend at First Church, Beebe, Jan. 30-Feb. 1. Bishop Frank preached on Friday and Saturday evenings and on Sunday Morning. On Saturday morning he led a study on "How Jesus Used the Scripture," and Mrs. Frank led the afternoon study on "Prayer." Visiting participants in the event were members of Antioch, Batesville and Searcy United Methodist Churches. The Rev. Floyd Villines, Batesville District superintendent, assisted in the worship services.



Fayetteville District Council on Ministries during weekend retreat at Lost Bridge Lodge.

## Fayetteville District Council holds planning retreat

Members of the Fayetteville District Council on Ministries met at Lost Bridge Lodge on Beaver Lake, Jan. 16-17 to determine priorities and sharpen objectives and goals for the year ahead.

Events scheduled for action in the near future include a Share Your Faith Experience to be held in Fayetteville March 12-13; a Lay-speaking Workshop sometime in March, and a Churchwide Mission Study Workshop in September — to be led by resource persons who will have attended the Arkansas School of Mission at Hendrix College.

Other priorities for which plans will be outlined at a later time include a Marriage Enrichment Seminar, and programs dealing with Theology and United Methodist Beliefs, World Hunger, Personal Growth, Aiding Small Churches and Training Lay Leaders.

Leaders for the planning retreat included Dr. John Spurlin, district lay

leader, directing a get-acquainted period, and the Rev. Larry Dodgen, chairperson, presenting a statement of purpose and procedure, Dr. Joel Cooper presenting Conference Objectives, and the Rev. Ronald Clark presiding over a period of Brainstorming and Work Area Concerns.

The Friday evening session was devoted to small group discussions with the following leaders and topics: Dr. Joel Cooper, Evangelism; Dr. Joe Taylor, Education; Barbara (Mrs. Frank) Broyles, Social Concerns and Innovative Ministries, and Mr. Tom Rupert, Lay Ministries.

Following breakfast on Saturday morning the Council convened for a summarization by Chairperson Larry Dodgen and an evaluation and closing statement by District Superintendent Harold Spence.

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## Memphis group sponsoring National Workshop on Christian Unity

"Christian Unity and Religious Freedom in Our Pluralistic Society," will be the theme for a national seminar to be held at the Downtown Ramada Inn in Memphis, Feb. 25-27. Hosting the event will be the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association of Memphis which includes Baptist, Roman Catholic, Christian, Episcopal, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, United Methodist and Greek Orthodox Churches.

Plenary sessions and seven seminars will feature an array of prominent church leaders. Addressing plenary sessions will be The Most Rev. Jean Jadot, D.D., Apostolic Delegate in the U.S.; Dr. Robert G. Torbet, national chairman for the event; Dr. Richard Shaull of Princeton Theological Seminary, and Dr. Robert T. Handy of Union Theological Seminary.

Two informational seminars to be unlimited in size, will include Education for Ecumenism and Effects of Church Union Movements Around the World. The latter will be moderated by the Rev. Robert L. Turnipseed, executive secretary of the Ecumenical and Inter-religious Concerns Division of United Methodism's Board of Global Ministries.

The following seminars will be limited to forty persons to assure group participation: Experiences of Christian Unity at the Local Level, The Black Church in Ecumenical Undertakings, Baptism and Mutual Recognition of Membership in

the Church, Communicating the Christian Faith in the Context of Religious Pluralism, and Practicum-Organizing for Local Ecumenism.

Registration, which will be open from 9 a.m. to 12 o'clock noon on Wednesday, will be \$20 per person for the Wednesday to Friday sessions; a \$10 fee will be charged for one day's attendance.

To register and obtain additional information interested persons should write Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association, Registrar, National Workshop on Christian Unity, 149 Monroe Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38103.

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## Arkansan attends presidents' meeting

Mr. Dick Fikes of North Little Rock represented the North Arkansas Conference at a 3-day meeting of Conference presidents of United Methodist Men at St. Paul Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. He was one of 56 conference presidents attending the event sponsored by the Division of Lay Life and Work of the Board of Discipleship.

The major portion of the meeting was devoted to the planning of the Congress of United Methodist Men which is scheduled to be held at Purdue University in July, 1977. An attendance goal of 5,000 has been set for the congress which will be "for men only."



# "Why the Church?"

By LARRY D. POWELL Pastor, Markham United Methodist Church, Little Rock



## Lesson for February 22

**Scripture:** Matthew 16-17.

The Bible did not produce the Church; the Church produced the Bible. The early Christian community, or 'ecclesia,' had access to the Old Testament scriptures, but because the New Testament story had not yet been recorded, the completed Bible did not appear until after the synoptic writers, Paul, and others concluded their efforts. Then, as is well known, the great Church councils proceeded to the tasks of collection, selection, and canonizing the Scriptures until finally the familiar rendering, Genesis through Revelation, appeared.

One of the more familiar terms used in the New Testament to designate the Church is, as previously implied, the Greek word 'ecclesia.' The word appears 112 times in the New Testament with ninety per cent of the usages being in Paul's letters, the book of Acts, and Revelation. It means literally "that which belongs to the Lord," and was used primarily to designate a "particular communal reality, not to describe its qualitative aspects." (INTERPRETER'S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE, Vol. 1, p. 606)

In early Christianity, CHURCH often meant the worship of God by a group of Christians, such as the Church at Antioch. The term later came to be identified with the building used for public Christian worship. According to the WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA, "Early Christians met secretly outdoors, in catacombs, or in private houses. The earliest-known Christian sanctuary, a private house in Dura, eastern Syria, dates from about A.D. 200. After the Roman Emperor Constantine stopped the persecution of Christians in the A.D. 300's, Christians began building churches."

Traditionally, the event described in the second chapter of the book of Acts having occurred on the day of Jewish Pentecost, is referred to as the "Birthday of the Church." However, Elmer Homrighausen is perhaps more correct when he states, "We trace the Church back to God's nature and to his purpose for us and for our world. There is a divine purpose for man and history. Christ revealed this history, and the Church embodies and witnesses to it." (I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH, p. 9)

### On This Rock

The Nazarene's reputation had begun to precede him. Accounts, however were extremely varied. Some were claiming that he was the Messiah; others held him as being a disillusioned dreamer, a wandering teacher, a sensationalist, or a sham. Some, including Herod, were saying, "This is John the Baptist, risen from the dead." (See Mt. 14:1, 2.) Others said, "No, he is Elijah." Malachi 4:5 had predicted Elijah's return to the earth in the so-called "dreadful day of the Lord." And too, still others insisted that he was Jeremiah, the forerunner of the Messiah.

Jesus had heard them all. At last, when he and the disciples came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked them, "Who do men say that I am?" They began repeating what he already knew (v. 14). "But," he interrupted, "who do YOU say that I am?" No more reporting other men's opinions, repeating what they had heard, or worse, neglecting to say anything... the matter had now come down to what they held personally to be true.

"We believe that there was a silence that was

long... silence broken when Peter blurted out, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." That was what Jesus wanted to hear. It was the great discovery of those who knew Him best, the Great Confession of faith behind all our other confessions and creeds. When Jesus heard it, He blessed him who had said it and reminded Simon Bar-jona that God had revealed it to him, had put it on his lips and in his heart to say." (TARBELL'S TEACHER'S GUIDE, p. 197)

Jesus replied, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona (Bar-jona literally means "son of John") for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you." This is a passage unique to Matthew and relates Peter to the foundation of the Christian Church. Some have seen v. 8 as referring to Peter's confession, "You are the Christ," and the play would be upon Peter's name, "Petros" or Aramaic "Cephas," meaning "Rock."

To espouse this interpretation would mean the minimizing of Apostolic Succession, beginning with Peter, which some of our Christian friends consider as striking at the very base of the Church's authority. On the other hand, to deny that the confession of Christ as Lord is primary, is to move dangerously close to an exclusive ecclesiastical system.

### Some Credentials Of The Early Church

I. The charges brought against the Christians were atheism and anarchy. Williston Walker explains: "Their rejection of the old gods seemed atheism; their refusal to join in emperor-worship appeared treasonable. Popular credulity, made possible by the degree to which the Christians held aloof from ordinary civil society charged them with crimes as revolting as they were preposterous. A misunderstanding of the Christian presence in the Lord's Supper brought the accusation of cannibalism; and its celebration secretly in the evening as gross licentiousness." (A HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, p. 45)

### How do these charges compare with the charges raised against the Church today?

II. Sometime in the Second Century, a philosopher named Aristides provided the emperor with a now famous description of members of the early Church, from which I extract the following quotation:

"... Falsehood is not found among them, and they love one another; and from widows they do not turn away their esteem; and they deliver the orphan from him who treats him harshly. And he who has gives to him who has not, without boasting. And when they see a stranger, they take him into their homes and rejoice over him as a very brother; for they do not call them brethren after the flesh, but after the spirit and in God... and if there is anything among them that is poor and needy, and if they have no spare food, they fast two or three days in order to supply the needy their lack of food. They observe the precepts of their Messiah with much care... every morning and every hour they give thanks and praise to God for his lovingkindness toward them; and for their food and for their drink they offer thanksgiving to him." (Schermerhorn, BEGINNINGS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, p. 126)

### Is this an accurate description of the Church today?

III. Paul wrote to the Church at Colossae: "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and

beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these, put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (3:12-14)

### How could this be applied to your church?

#### The Church Visible

Occasionally, I hear the comment, "I believe in religion but I do not believe in churches." In my own humble opinion, this attitude is comparable to saying, "I believe in education but do not believe in schools," or "I believe in health, but not in hospitals." Now, probably there will be some good folks out there who will discount this analogy, but to claim religious persuasion while disclaiming the institution is just not consistent with our total behavior.

Although it is true that we appear to have lost our way from time to time, the organization is yet necessary. And it must be organized around weak and sinful people; there is no other kind.

The Church is defined in the Articles of Religion of our denomination as: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful persons in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." (Articles of Religion, THE DISCIPLINE)

Therefore, it is possible for us to conclude with Professor John Lawson that "The Church is not an organization. It is a close-knit and disciplined FAMILY of persons joined to one another by fellowship with a personally present Lord. We become the Church today by joining in the fellowship of other worshipping Christians." (ADULT LEADER, p. 74)

Now, aside from all the theological and historical references pertaining to the Church universal, there is yet another consideration; a little more earthy, a little more local:

"I am your Church.

Make of me what you will. I shall reflect you as clearly as a mirror. If outwardly my appearance is pleasing and inviting it is because you have made it so.

If within, my spiritual atmosphere is kindly, yet earnest; reverent, yet friendly; worshipful, yet sincere; sympathetic, yet strong; divine, yet humanly expressed, it is but the manifestation of the spirit of those who constitute my membership.

But if you should by chance find me a bit cold, or dull, I beg of you not to condemn me; for I show forth only the kind of life I receive from you. Of this you may always be assured. I will respond instantly to your every wish practically expressed, for I am the reflected image of your own soul. Make of me what you will." (copied)

Why the Church? Because it is divinely inspired; the body of Christ, commissioned to a divine task. It is the agent of fellowship, worship, and proclamation. It is God's colony on earth; a colony which has answered with Peter, "Thou art the Christ."

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**NEXT WEEK:** "Demands of Forgiveness." (Matthew, Chapter 18)



# The Bicentennial: Its Biblical roots

By Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum

## America's Biblical Roots

(Rabbi Tanenbaum is national director of inter-religious affairs, American Jewish Committee, and a member of the steering committee of the American Revolution Bicentennial Committee.)

NEW YORK (RNS) — Modern democracy is the child of the Protestant Reformation. That is the opinion of Prof. G. F. Gooch in his study on English Democratic Ideas. But Prof. Gooch notes that the Protestant Reformation largely owed its origin to the enunciation of two intellectual principles, the rightful duty of free inquiry and the priesthood of all believers.

Free inquiry meant nothing more to the reformers in the 16th century than the right of each person to read the Bible for himself or herself, and that principle led straight from theological to political criticism. It became in fact the spiritual foundation of political liberty. The theory of the universal priesthood of all believers became the support and justification of human equality.

These central American ideals of liberty and equality were transported to New England by the Puritans. A book entitled *The Puritan Heritage: America's Roots in the Bible*, by Joseph Gaer and Ben Segal, declares that "much of what is recognized as distinctively American in thought, culture, and tradition is derived essentially from four very distinct sets of values. These begin with 17th-century Puritanism, and go on to the 18th century fusion of liberalism, federalism, and the Southern aristocratic code. Then follow 19th-century New England transcendentalism, and finally the western frontier's 'rugged individualism.' Most historians agree that of all these influences, Puritanism has proved the most sustained. Not to understand Puritanism, is not to understand America."

The philosophical pattern of the Puritans, in turn, is rooted in the images, principles, and laws of the Hebrew Bible. America's roots lie deep in Biblical soil, planted there from the country's very beginnings.

The Puritans were English Protestants, who in the early 17th century adopted John Calvin's creed, and the Bible, especially the Old Testament — which Jews prefer to call the Hebrew Scriptures — became their principal theological authority. Like the Hebrews, the Puritans looked upon themselves as God's chosen people, comparing their New England states to those of the ancient Israelites. From the Biblical accounts of the Hebrew tribal struggles and wanderings, the Puritans borrowed their imagery and formed their thinking patterns.

For both the Hebrews and the Puritans, the central theme of their identity was the covenant between God and man. In their "Bible Commonwealth" of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, they sought to realize the Biblical commandments of concern for the poor, orphaned, and mistreated, and that became the basis of the Puritan view of equality of all people before God, especially the brotherhood of the elected saints.

For both Hebrews and Puritans, God was the only true monarch; no man could be more than His chosen agent. And to God the humblest slave equaled the mightiest prince. They saw their defiance of the English monarchy and the Church of England in terms of Moses' defiance of Pharaoh, and of Nathan's rebuke to King David. And when they embarked on the Great Migration from England, they viewed the New World as their "wilderness Zion" and the Promised Land.

On the eve of America's Bicentennial, it is interesting to recall that through the mediation of the Puritans, the Hebrew Scriptures became a major intellectual arsenal

of the American Revolution. In the Bible, the Patriots found precedent and inspiration, and the pulpits of the land, where public opinion was molded, resounded with their revolutionary summonses.

## Influence of Hebrew Scriptures

The Exodus from Egypt was the classic model of liberation from tyranny. The call engraved on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" — selected from the book of Leviticus — was symbolic of the attachment of the Founding Fathers to the Hebrew Scriptures. Revolutionary doctrine became crystallized in the slogan, "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Those in fact were the words which Franklin, Jefferson, and John Adams proposed for the seal of the United States; they were to be inscribed around a picture of the children crossing the Red Sea.

Not less potent was the influence of the Hebrew Scriptures in determining the basic political system of the new society that emerged from the War of Independence. To discredit the monarchy, preachers like the bold and brilliant Jonathan Mayhew of Boston held up the warning of the prophet Samuel against royalty. Samuel Langdon, the president of Harvard, considered the government of the Biblical Hebrew Commonwealth "a perfect republic," and Ezra Stiles, the president of Yale, found in American government the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy.

For those and for numerous other reasons, in his classic work, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, the eminent 19th century historian, William Edward Lecky, rightly declared that "the Hebraic mortar cemented the foundations of American democracy."

†

## From Our Readers . . .

### SCARRITT'S FIRST DOLLAR FROM ARKANSAS

To the Editor:

I read with interest your interview with Mr. Robert Gentry as published in the January 29, 1976 issue of the *Arkansas Methodist*. How about a look backward? In the May 1, 1889 issue of the *Arkansas Methodist* this article appears:

"The Woman's Board of Foreign Missions in the Methodist Episcopal Church South — a wise and consecrated body of women — met in the First Methodist Church South in Little Rock, Arkansas. Truly an imposing assembly of elect ladies . . . One would be charmed with the facility with which they get to their work, as well as the decisiveness with which they dispatch their work."

At this meeting Miss Belle H. Bennett of Richmond, Kentucky presented her thought of the establishment of a training school for missionaries, and the women yielded to her pleadings and arguments. A resolution was adopted to appoint Miss Bennett agent for the development of this work.

It is interesting, I think, that the first dollar Miss Bennett received in this work for Scarritt was from a little girl in our First Church. During the Board meeting, Miss Bennett and others were entertained in the home of Dr. and Mrs. William Thompson, and their young niece, Julia Dortch (later Mrs. Abraham of Arkadelphia) brought her a silver dollar, saying: "My aunt paid me this dollar for helping wait on the table and I want you to take it for your school for the missionaries."

As president of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Central Texas Conference, I was privileged to be a

member of the 1928 Jubilee Session of the Woman's Missionary Council when the Belle D. Bennett Memorial Building of Scarritt College was dedicated. The sight of those (and now other) buildings unsheathes a miracle. "Faith turns dull stone to loveliness and lifts men's hearts to prayer."

Mr. Workman, your interview carried a picture of one of the portals in the Belle Bennett Memorial of Scarritt. I could read with the eye of memory the inscription above the arch: "Attempt Great Things for God," and with the inner eye of the heart "read" the inscription on the other side of this arch: "Expect Great Things from God."

These are admonitions from the great missionary William Carey of India. A challenging lintel sermon for the Lenten season!

### Historical References:

"*Builders of a Kingdom*" by Coralee Gannaway Williams.

"*Illustrated History First Methodist Church, South, Little Rock, Arkansas.*"

*Historical Sketch* by Mrs. W. H. Pem-horton.

(Mrs. W. B.) Gwendolyn Davis Landrum Little Rock, Ark.

Mrs. Landrum, prior to her retirement several years ago, served as a Regional Secretary of the Woman's Division of United Methodism's Board of Missions, and as an executive member of the Section of Program and Education for Christian Mission.

†

### AGAINST PROPOSED STUDY

To the Editor:

BE IT RESOLVED: We, The Administrative Board of The First United Methodist Church at Mt. Ida, Arkansas, do hereby very strongly object to the proposed changes made by the Board of

Church and Society regarding the Marriage Bond and homosexuality.

We object to any deletions or changes in the "wording" of our current Social Principles section of the Discipline.

We object to the proposed Study Commission on the Church and Human sexuality, involving a four-year study at a cost of some \$290,000.

By copy, We are instructing our Delegates to General Conference to vote no and/or against the proposed Human Sexuality Study and the proposed revisions to the Social Principles of the Discipline.

Ernest Matzke, Secretary to The Administrative Board Hwy. 88, P.O. Box 41 Sims, Arkansas 71969

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### 'MORE THAN A BUILDING BESIDE THE ROAD'

To the Editor:

I'd like to explain an overpayment. Because Conference apportionments are based on 1972 salary levels, the amount requested from the Shiloh Church at Paragould was very low — about 60 cents per subscription. As Pastor, I felt that we should pay at least \$1 for each member-family receiving the paper. Our Administrative Board agreed — thus, the overpayment for 1975.

In this and many other ways, Shiloh is more than a building beside the road. And as long as it is, I am proud to be its pastor.

David Moose Rt. 4, Box 356 Paragould, Ark. 72450

†

### BEN FEW CAMPGROUND CABINS BURN

To the Editor:

. . . We need some help from you if you can give it.

A few weeks ago some careless person or persons made a make-shift place to cook behind some cabins at Ben Few Campground and set four of our cabins afire.

One of these was our girls' dorm which must be rebuilt before camp meeting time, July 20-Aug. 8.

Since we aren't financed by any organization we have to depend on individual contributions. We hope you can give us a little space in the *Arkansas Methodist* to let people know of our need. If you can, any contribution may be made to Ben Few Campground and mailed to Merchants and Planters Bank, Sparkman, Ark. 71763 . . .

Our committee co-chairmen are Mr. and Mrs. Tyler Harrison, 7400 Vega Dr., Little Rock, Ark.

Mrs. J. O. McGuire 813 E. Highland Ave. Malvern, Ark. 72104

†



"Anything special you want? Mine's going to get there first."



# Churchgoing of Protestant youth stabilizing, study shows

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS) — A national Gallup Poll study indicates that the downward trend in church attendance among young people which began in the 1960s has subsided in the 1970s.

"The levelling off of the downslide in church attendance among youth is, of course, encouraging to the nation's religious leaders, since the future of organized religion depends in large measure on the religious beliefs and activities of society's youngest adults," said George Gallup in his analysis of the data.

Church attendance nationwide in 1975 remained at the same level as in the four previous years of the decade: 40 per cent of adults attended church or synagogue in a typical week.

Among young people, church attendance dropped from 40 per cent in 1967 in the midst of the downslide to about 30 per cent at the beginning of the 1970s. The figure has remained stable at 30 per cent.

The latest Gallup Poll survey also revealed that young adults (18 to 29 years old) were as active as older adults in religious activities other than church attendance during the test week of the survey.

Nationwide, 20 per cent of all Americans said they had participated during that week in religious activities "such as prayer group meetings, Bible reading classes, and the like." This included 21 per cent of persons over 30 and 18 per cent of persons 18 to 29.

Other breakdowns of individuals participating in religious activities other than church services included: Protestants, 23 per cent; Catholics, 17 per cent; men, 17 per cent; women, 23 per cent; college

background, 22 per cent; high school, 21 per cent; grade school, 15 per cent.

Statistics on churchgoing in 1975 reveal that 54 per cent of Catholics and 38 per cent of Protestants attended church during the test week, and 21 per cent of Jews attended synagogue.

"Churchgoing among Protestants has been remarkably stable since 1964, fluctuating only by a point or two from

year to year over this entire period of time," Mr. Gallup reported.

"Catholic attendance, on the other hand, is down 17 percentage points from 1964. Most of this decline, however, occurred in the 1960s."

Mr. Gallup noted that "since Jews represent only about 3 per cent of the U.S., population, the number included in these annual audits is necessarily small.

Therefore, the results are subject to considerable sampling fluctuations. However, the evidence appears clear that attendance among Jews at synagogue has remained fairly stable over the last 12 years, with 17 per cent having attended in a typical week in 1964 compared with 21 per cent in 1975."

## Discipleship Board invites inquiries by local churches

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMC) — A third series of "New World Missions" is being projected by the United Methodist Board of Discipleship after positive evaluation of two such missions during 1975.

Sponsored by the Board in cooperation with the World Methodist Council Committee on Evangelism, the 1975 missions involved 345 communities in 60 of the 73 United Methodist annual conferences.

Overseas visitors are being invited to the U.S. for three, one-week missions beginning Oct. 3 according to the Rev. H. Eddie Fox, director of contemporary proclamation evangelism for the Board of Discipleship. Local churches interested in involvement in the October series are invited to write Mr. Fox at P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

The New World Mission program has developed a "new rhythm" in mission and evangelism, Mr. Fox said, whereby there are no longer receiving and sending churches.

Quoting Australian evangelist Alan Walker who participated in the 1975 missions, Mr. Fox said, "There can be no assumed superiority of a Western World over the rest of the earth. The Western

World is underdeveloped morally and spiritually, as poorer nations are underdeveloped physically."

Before the visitors arrive, local churches are asked to study a book entitled "Shalom" written by Dr. George Morris, former Board of Discipleship staff member who is now pastor of First United Methodist Church in Kenosha, Wis. Following the proclamation phase of the mission, during which time the

overseas visitor is available, the local congregation is challenged to become more involved in the life of the community.

As a part of the world-wide New World Mission program, 40 United Methodist pastors from the United States participated in 80 missions in Australia during July, 1975.

## Missionaries adopt resolution opposing CIA practice

NEW YORK, N.Y. (UMC) — A group of United Methodist missionaries currently on furlough in the United States has repudiated "the use of missionaries by the Central Intelligence Agency or any other intelligence agency of any nation."

The 79 missionaries unanimously adopted a resolution Jan. 10 during the winter Missionary Conference at Glorieta, N.M.

Condemning the government-acknowledged CIA practice of using missionaries as intelligence sources, the United Methodists declared such activity "inconsistent with our missionary

calling and our relationship with colleague churches here and abroad." The group also scored such policies as being "inconsistent with the separation of church and state . . . and with our sacred rights of religious liberty."

Taking a similar stance expressed in December by officials of the denomination's mission agency, the Board of Global Ministries, the missionaries voiced support of U.S. Senate Bill 2784, introduced by Sen. Mark Hatfield, which would ban such practices by the intelligence agency.

# 'Religion and the Presidency'

WASHINGTON, D.C. (UMC) — What questions would you, from a church member perspective, ask candidates for the U.S. Presidency? Chances are that most of those queries were voiced here Jan. 19-21 in a widely ecumenical but mild confrontation with six candidates.

"Religion and the Presidency — RAP '76" was a new venture in getting the hopefuls on the record as to their views on "the presidency and the moral tone of the nation," as well as letting church people pose more specifically religious questions.

The session met against a backdrop of two concurrent major political events — the President's State of the Union address and the year's first selection of convention delegates, in Iowa.

The results?

1) All the candidates who appeared handled themselves well, were candid or at least appeared so, and expressed concern for the varied ways in which politics, power, religion and morality impinge on each other.

2) The approximately 100 participants got some questions answered, some partially answered and wished they could ask more. They were stymied on the latter score largely because of two factors — few asked simple questions, and even fewer of the replies were succinct.

3) To paraphrase Pres. Lincoln, some of the stands taken by the candidates may have pleased all the listeners and all of the stands probably pleased some of the listeners, but certainly not all of them satisfied everybody.

## Diversity Characterizes Participants

That result was dictated more by the diversity of the crowd than of the politicians. While all 12 declared candidates were invited to be here, only six finally appeared. Neither of the Republicans, Gerald Ford or Ronald Reagan, would accept. The only independent, Eugene McCarthy, is a former Democrat aspirant. Then there were Democrats Lloyd Bentsen, Milton Shapp, Sargent Shriver and Morris Udall, and the most

diverse — Arthur Blessitt, the Baptist preacher who once walked across the U.S. with a cross on his shoulder.

The participants, however, made one of the most varied religious groups ever together here. They ranged through Catholic, Jew, Orthodox, and Protestant; from fundamentalist to ultra-liberal; from bishops and theologians to local pastors and laity.

United Methodists had major roles in RAP, especially through the Rev. Fred Morris, former missionary to Brazil who was the coordinator. Sponsors were some 30 individuals from a variety of religious organizations, including Bishop James K. Mathews, Washington; Theresa Hoover, New York, Women's Division chief executive; the Rev. Eugene L. Stockwell, New York, National Council of Churches executive; the Rev. A. Dudley Ward, Washington, Board of Church and Society chief executive, and the Rev. James M. Wall, Chicago, editor of *Christian Century*.

At any one time, there were apt to be one or more United Methodists (who came from several states) in line to query the candidates. Some also were among the church press/church leaders panel which questioned each of the guests.

Each candidate had submitted advance statements on RAP's theme as well as on specific questions in the areas of civil rights, welfare, the economy, education, hunger, foreign policy and national security.

Each further explained those views here, at some length, because none saw the relationships as easy or simplistic. Their stances on the basic theme of "religion and the presidency" might be exemplified by two — Blessitt's insistence that the President "needs to be a born again Christian," and Shriver's belief, based on several experiences in government, that "a majority of decisions that hit the President's desk are moral and ethical ones."

## Discussion On Social Issues

Then they faced questions on amnesty, the United Nations, education, nuclear power, the Middle East,

priorities, abortion, school busing, consumer protection, foreign aid and policy, Angola, welfare assistance, unemployment, crime, race and sex discrimination, civil religion and others.

Few of the queries would be considered "harsh." Some triggered rhetoric — replies that sounded plausible but on examination were evasive or innocuous.

Two panel discussions set the stage for the candidates' appearances, on "the role of religion in American political life" and "what is credible moral leadership?"

Comments by panelists included these:

• Rabbi Balfour Brickner, New York, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, recalled the religious activism of several years in civil rights and peace protests that centered in the host church, New York Avenue Presbyterian. He said the "deceit by authority" of these years, by national leaders of whom "some had feet of clay that extended to between their ears," makes religious persons' involvement in the decision process more imperative now than ever.

• Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, Washington, evangelical lecturer and former editor, warned that "civilization more concerned with the consequences than the causes of social ills is doomed to anarchy or totalitarianism." He held that "the shaky state of American morality is often used to justify political accommodation."

• Dr. Martin Marty, Chicago, theological professor and author, urged that churches need to be informed about issues early and to examine the values involved in them, even if they don't all come out on the same side.

• Dr. Wall asserted that, despite recent tumult suggesting the nation is inherently evil, "we are not evil just because we are powerful. We are neither a chosen people nor agents of the devil." He called the President's personal morality neither all-important nor unimportant, but "a measure of the character and stability of the individual."





Tuning Up!

Three new choirs were organized last fall among the youth and children of DeValls Bluff United Methodist Church. ABOVE: The Liberty Singers provide their own guitar accompaniment. Mrs. Larry Gershner is director for the three choirs. BELOW LEFT: Youth Choir of younger age group. BELOW RIGHT: "Son-shine Singers."



## Arkansas Methodist Children's Home

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(To be continued)

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## Poetry Panorama

By Barbara Mulkey

William Blake wrote . . . "He who would do good to another must do it in minute particulars."

### What Is Life?

Life is a million footsteps leading in all directions.  
Some to the highest pinnacles where laughter  
springs forth like living waters.  
And to the lowest abyss where heartaches await  
and grind like the mill of human weakness.  
Life is a narrow path where the young in heart  
dwell, and the very young cry and wail like a tiny  
whelp striving for its mother's nearness.  
What is life? Life is like a whisper that can be taken  
away in the twinkling of an eye.  
It is love that carries out over the mountains, prairies  
and low-lands.  
It's sunshine after the breaking up of a storm. Where  
deep shadows go into hiding to be replaced with a  
brand-new day.  
Chains of prayers return to enhance empty and  
bleeding hearts, and give them the grace to thank God . . .  
for this beautiful life, and the other life He's  
promised in abundance.

—by Leota Taylor  
Lake City, Ark.

### I saw . . .

I saw the look of loneliness  
And perhaps some fear  
On your drawn face —

As I passed your room —  
And I wanted to stop  
And talk and let  
You get it all out —  
But I couldn't.

I saw you lying there  
Looking down at what  
Used to be a leg and  
I saw the tears —  
And I wanted to stop  
And perhaps shed tears  
With you and understand —  
But I couldn't.

I saw the tubes and machines  
Forcing you to stay alive  
When you gave up and  
Wanted to die —  
And I wanted to stop  
And reassure you about  
Your uncertain future —  
But I couldn't.

I wanted to let all of you know  
That I cared about you  
And I wanted to help  
But to you I was just  
Another person in white  
Who didn't have time —  
And unfortunately —  
I didn't.

—by Becky Mann  
Little Rock, Ark.



# District Training Enterprise

Reported by Mrs. Hazel Dabney,  
Director of Training Enterprise

At the Spring Meeting of the Pine Bluff District Council on Ministries concern was expressed over the church schools. As a result a questionnaire, relating to the work of church schools, was prepared and sent to the 34 churches in the Pine Bluff District.

Twenty-one churches returned the questionnaires, with 196 persons completing them — pastors, associate pastors, directors of education, education chairpersons, coordinators of children, youth, adults, and family life, superintendent of study, president of United Methodist Women, president of United Methodist Men, presidents of United Methodist Youth, teachers of children, youth and adults, youth counselors, chairpersons of Councils on Ministries and Administrative Boards, members of Work Areas on Worship, Missions, Evangelism, Social Concerns, Pastor/Parish Relations, Finance, Contact, and others.

The results from the questionnaire showed a need for improvement in the church schools in Pine Bluff District. Reasons listed for church school problems included: ATTENDANCE, LOYALTY and BASIC CONCERNS. Findings from the survey were presented to the Council on Ministries at the Fall Meeting and at that time it was agreed that an over-all workshop of training sessions was not what was needed. It was decided that Teams of

four to five persons be trained to go into the churches (at their request) to work with local leaders in a program to IMPROVE THE CHURCH SCHOOLS.

A District Team was given the responsibility of designing a program that would give specific training for teams to go into the churches. The District Team is made up of the district coordinators: Children, Mrs. Larry Williams; Youth, the Rev. Charles Settle; Young Adults, the Rev. Larry Williams; Adults, Mrs. Hazel L. Dabney; Family Life Ministries, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Robey and the Rev. Tom Adkinson. Mrs. Hazel Dabney was named chairperson of the District Team, and director of the Training Enterprise.

In a letter dated October 3rd, ministers were asked to submit names of persons qualified, interested and willing to be trained as members of a team to go into churches as needed. Sixty-three names were submitted and sixty-three letters of explanation of the purpose, with a return-stamped postcard enclosed for quick reply were sent out. Twenty-eight responded that they were interested and would attend a training enterprise set for Saturday, Jan. 10, 1976, at Carr Memorial United Methodist Church in Pine Bluff.

In the meantime, Mrs. Dabney met with the Rev. Alf Eason, Conference Council on Ministries director, and the Rev. Carr Dee Racop, associate director,



**PINE BLUFF DISTRICT TEAM:** Left to right, the Rev. Larry Williams and Mrs. Williams of Carr Memorial Church, Pine Bluff; the Rev. Charles Settle, Grady-Trinity Church; Mrs. Hazel L. Dabney, Lakeside Church, Pine Bluff; the Rev. Tom Adkinson, associate pastor at Lakeside; Mrs. Jack Robey, Dr. Virgil Keeley, district superintendent.



**CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAM:** Left to right, the Rev. George Tanner of Dumas; Miss Olive Smith, Little Rock; the Rev. William Elliott, Monticello; the Rev. William A. Stewart, Hamburg; Mr. Bill Fuller, director of youth work at First Church, Little Rock, and the Rev. Carr Dee Racop, associate director of Little Rock Conference Council on Ministries.



**TWO TEAMS** east of the river: (Left to right, seated) Mrs. Bennie Burkett, Mrs. Marquis Jones, Mrs. H. E. Ratekin, Mrs. Carolyn Moore, Mrs. Douglass Vizzier, Mrs. Patsy Cornier; (standing) Mr. Robert Lindsay, Mr. Marquis Jones, chairperson, Dr. Max Denman, Mr. John Shallhorn and Mrs. Judy Jacobs.



**THREE TEAMS** west of the river: (Left to right, seated) Mr. Buddy Chadick, Mrs. Jack Davis, Mrs. Charlene Sykes, Mrs. Charles Francis, chairperson for Group 2, Mrs. Rubye Lee Jackson, Mrs. Bettie Pierce, Mrs. Susan Chadick, chairperson for Group 1, Mrs. Gladys Alley; (standing) Mr. Buddy Ratliff, Mr. James Pelton, Mrs. C. B. Shanks, Mrs. Fred Shanks, chairperson for Group 3; Mrs. Bobbie Adkinson, Mrs. Peggy Mitchell and Mrs. Fred Janssonius. (Other team members are Mrs. Peter Seviars and Mrs. Yvonne Williamson.)



**BILL FULLER** makes presentation at one of the training sessions.



**"GIVING A LISTEN"** as trainees engage in "input."

to discuss plans, select materials and leaders for the Enterprise. Mr. Eason wrote to Mrs. Hazel Jordan at Cokesbury, explaining the purpose of the Enterprise and asking for materials to be sent to Pine Bluff. Miss Jordan went all out and sent sample materials for the team members; copies of THE CHURCH SCHOOL, FORECAST, AGE LEVEL CURRICULUM MATERIALS, MATURE YEARS AND CHILDREN HOME, and included a number of books to be used as references for material for all levels.

On Saturday, Jan. 10th, the volunteers met in sessions with the leaders and members of the District Team, to receive curriculum materials and instructions for using them. Teams were organized, two east of the river and three west of the river. Chairperson for the two teams east of the river is Mr. Marquis Jones of Stuttgart. Chairpersons for the teams west of the river are: #1 — Mrs. Susan Chadick; #2 — Mrs. Betsy Francis; and #3 — Mrs. Carolyn Shanks.

**FOLLOWING THE TRAINING ENTERPRISE:** Letters have been sent the pastors in the Pine Bluff District, urging them to ask for a Team to visit their church. Requests for a Team are to be sent to the Chairperson, Mrs. Hazel L. Dabney, who in turn will contact the leaders of the teams. Pastors are asked to include in their request preferred materials used, and the number of persons to be involved in the training. This is a Pine Bluff District Project and is being watched by the Conference. Other Conferences, the Jurisdictional Secretary, Dr. Brantley (copy of the entire story has been sent to the Jurisdictional Secretary, Dr. Brantley at his request) and the staff in Nashville. This is an opportunity for special training and emphasis on "Improving Church School" or "How to make your Church School Successful."

TIME will tell what happens in the churches of the Pine Bluff District, but it is hoped that the year will be one of work and improvement in the Church Schools.

—Photos by Joel Railback, Strong, Arkansas