

Arkansas Methodist

Arkansas United Methodism's Newsweekly

Little Rock, Arkansas, Thursday, April 15, 1976



95th Year, No. 16

North Arkansas UMW honors past, welcomes future

The contributions of the past and the challenges of the future were the focus of attention for the more than 725 persons who gathered at Hendrix College last Saturday, April 10, for the Third Annual Meeting of United Methodist Women of the North Arkansas Conference. In addition to the 625 UMW members from local churches in the Conference's seven districts who registered for the event, approximately 100 other persons, including a number of ministers from across the Conference, attended. The theme for the event was "The Past Speaks, the Future Beckons."

Principal program features for the session, which began at 9:30 a.m. and adjourned at 3:30 p.m., were a keynote address (see separate article) by Dr. Tracey K. Jones Jr., of New York, general secretary of the church's Board of Global Ministries, a message by Mrs. Gladys (Harold D.) Womack of North Little Rock, president of the Conference unit, a pageant depicting highlights of national history and that of Methodism in the U.S., the election of officers, presentation of special awards and other business matters, and a concluding worship service incorporating the sacrament of The Lord's Supper. Program sessions were held in the Hendrix Auditorium.

A "heritage display," exhibiting items from the past, was provided by each of the seven district units. The conferees viewed the display, in the Mills Center, prior to the session and during the noon lunch break.

The atmosphere of the meeting was enhanced by the presence of many conferees in Colonial attire. Local units invited their members to bring small bells to the meeting, and when the occasion in the general sessions called for applause, that expression was joined by the ringing of the bells, a sound heard frequently throughout the meeting. Group singing during the session was led by Mrs. Avis (Donald L.) Moore of Mountain Home. Organist was Mrs. Elise (Robert) Shoemaker of Conway.

Message And Pageant

In the President's Message, Mrs. Womack said that both the Church and the nation had been through a time when "to talk of the past was to be held up for ridicule, as though we did not want to move into the future." She said that many had used the past as an "escape valve" after struggling "in often unacceptable ways" with the present. She said a more proper use of the past was "to inform the present and direct the future."

Noting that the nation, in 1976, faced problems which are "so much deeper and more complex than those of 1776 that they defy comparison," Mrs. Womack said that solutions would come "only as more people, including women, decide to do what those who fought at Lexington and Concord did: get involved."

Quoting from an essay authored by her daughter, she said "Godly virtues were responsible for America's beginning, her growth and her leadership in the world," and that America could "gain the respect of the world by recognizing our weaknesses, healing ourselves of them,

and thus transforming them into strengths." She called upon the Conference to "go forward, true to the ideals of our founding fathers, a nation under God, striving onward toward a new birth of freedom." She challenged her hearers to remember they were "the architects of their future."

The pageant, entitled "The Past Speaks," was a major feature of the morning session. Written by Miss Mildred Osment of Jonesboro and directed by Miss Kathleen Sharp of Paragould, the presentation consisted of vignettes of national and Methodist history enacted by representatives from each of the seven district units. A narrative script, prepared by Mrs. Alice Chandler of Jonesboro, described each scene. All cast members were dressed in Colonial attire. The presentation was accompanied by numbers from a brass choir from Hendrix and from a vocal choir composed of UMW members from the seven districts, and by vocal solos and readings and a presentation by a dance group.

Awards, Elections, Reports

Awards totaling \$1,000 given to missions were presented to 27 honorees.

Honored were: Patron Membership—Mrs. Nadine (Hugh) Hardin Honorary Memberships—Mrs. Alice Chandler and Mrs. Deana (Jim) Lloyd; and Special Memberships for outstanding service to the Church—Mrs. Virginia (James) Upton, Mrs. Euba Mae Winton and Mrs. Sharon Bruner Burejois.

Special Memberships were also awarded to retiring Conference officers who had completed their terms: Mrs. Lynn (Earl) Hughes, Mrs. Lenora (Clarence) Wilcox, and Mrs. Othella (Muriel) Peters.

Also honored with Special Memberships were the four clergywomen of the Conference: the Revs. Miss Fern Cook, Mrs. Carol Ann Lascaro, Miss Everne Hunter and Mrs. Ella Anderson.

Others honored with Special Memberships were the district treasurers and wives of the district superintendents. Treasurers honored: Mrs. Jesse M. Baldridge, Mrs. T. D. Hampton, Mrs. Ora Crouch, Mrs. Jimmie Spotts, Mrs. James Daniels, Mrs. Austin Stovall and Miss Vahntee Adams. Superintendents' wives honored: Mrs. Floyd Villines, Mrs. Robert Bearden, Mrs. Harold Spence, Mrs. Elmo Thomason, Mrs. Charles McDonald,

Mrs. J. Ralph Hillis and Mrs. Ben Jordan.

The following officers were elected: Vice President, Mrs. Marie (Ben F.) Jordan of Paragould; Secretary, Mrs. Treccia (Charles) Cook of Searcy; Treasurer, Mrs. Mary Lou (Al) Gall of Jacksonville; Chairperson of Nominating Committee, Mrs. Kay (Jack) Wilson of Mountain Home, Miss Mary Kathrine Martin of Paragould and Mrs. Willine (T.B.) Hampton of Morrilton; Supportive Community, Mrs. Willie (Roy) Weld of Fisher Christian Social Involvement, Mrs. Donna (Bill) Williams of Trumann; Program Resources, Mrs. Fannie (John) Gordon of Fort Smith; and member of Board of Global Ministries, Mrs. June (Jimmy) Spotts of West Memphis. All other offices remain as currently filled.

Mrs. Deana (Jim) Lloyd, treasurer, reported that during 1975 the local units contributed \$115,000 to missions, \$5,000 more than the amount pledged.

In offerings received during the day, \$635.41 was given for missions, \$120.50 in "Memorial Gifts" for undesignated pledges, and \$134 from "In Honor" gifts for Women in Rural Development.

(See related photos in next issue)

'To have a future, you must examine your past,' Global Ministries head tells UMW

Dr. Tracey K. Jones Jr., chief of the largest program agency of The United Methodist Church, told more than 700 women gathered in Conway April 10 for the Third Annual Meeting of United Methodist Women of the North Arkansas Conference (see related article), that "no part of the Church is more knowledgeable" in major social issues and that "none is more committed to dealing with them" than is the membership of United Methodist women.

Noting that in his own family he could list four generations of women who were active in UMW or its predecessor organizations, Dr. Jones said he hoped in the year 2000 "to speak at a centennial celebration of five such generations of our family, for I have a granddaughter, age five, who shows all the signs of being involved in leadership in the movement!" Dr. Jones called his message to the Conway assembly "a preview of what I want to say at that centennial service."

Saying "if you want a future, you have to discover and examine a past," Dr. Jones cited three contributions which the women's movement had made to the nation's and the Church's heritage. He said it had "awakened hope in women as to what women can be;" it had awakened hope "as to what women, in an organized way, can do," and it had produced women theologians whose messages "have nuances that you do not find in theologians who are males."

'What Women Can Be'

Dr. Jones said he agreed with the late Dag Hammarskjöld, one-time U.N.

general secretary, that of all the developments of the past 2000 years, "none was as profoundly significant and so beneficial in the long run as the emancipation of women." Dr. Jones said that the Church had played a major role in that emancipation as it "awakened hope as to what women, in the name of Jesus Christ, can be as they commit themselves to the mission of the Church." He said the Church's contribution stemmed from the example of Jesus, "who dealt with women as he did with men."

Reciting Jesus' relation to women, Dr. Jones said "it was to a Samaritan woman that he first revealed his messiahship. Women were with him in his travels, at the cross when he died, and were the first to see him at the resurrection. Jesus made it clear that in his kingdom there was no distinction between women and men." Dr. Jones said that the insight of what women in the name of Jesus Christ are called to be had dominated the women's emancipation movement.

'What Organization Can Do'

"The key to the history of the women's movement over the years," said Dr. Jones, "has been 'organized force'—in terms of the fiscal implications, the energy systems and the prayers and all the rest." He cited, as evidence of what women "in an organized way could do," the more than 700 schools, hospitals and orphanages which The United Methodist Church had established around the world.

Dr. Jones noted that while many issues of the past remain, "another whole set of concerns is emerging where organized women are beginning to target their

energies." Among these he listed ownership and exploitation of the seas, discrimination and injustice toward women on a global scale, hunger, ecology, war, racism and systems of economic power.

He said when women were awakened "to do something about the world's problems, they awaken such hope in men as well." He told the women, "to awaken hope is obviously a part of your history and your future."

New Voices In Theology

Speaking of the contribution of contemporary women theologians, Dr. Jones said that among the significant things they were saying was "our understanding of theological truth, of God, of human life and nature, is more intuitive and less systematic than that of male theologians. It is more person-oriented and less abstract; more pragmatic and down to earth."

Dr. Jones said that women theologians had "a more reverent attitude toward the world, a greater gentleness toward other cultures, a concern for people and for human values rather than a concern whether the system or the corporation is working." He said "women are saying that they have a word to say about the future of the human race. And whether male theologians like it or not, they are going to say it."

Dr. Jones said the findings of women theologians were "just beginning," and pointed out that there are currently 500 women in the 15 United Methodist seminaries and that that figure was increasing by ten to 15 percent a year. "Just imagine," he said, "what can happen in the future!"

C. C. Hall, leader in former Southwest Conference, dies

The Rev. C. C. Hall, retired member of the Little Rock Conference and long-time leader in the former Southwest Conference, died March 29. He was serving as pastor of Sweet Home United Methodist Church. He was 70. At the time of his retirement in June, 1974, he had served 42 years as a member of the Southwest Conference and four as a member of the Little Rock Conference. He was born at Clow (Hempstead County), a son of the late Rev. George Allen and Mary Catherine Gamble Hall. He attended Philander Smith College.

Mr. Hall had held pastorates at North Little Rock, Dermott, Texarkana, Hot Springs, Fort Smith, Sweet Home and Little Rock. In the Southwest Conference he served as superintendent of the Fort Smith District for five years and of the Little Rock District for six years. He was superintendent of the Southwestern District of the Little Rock Conference for one year. He was for many years chairman of the Southwest Conference's Board of Pensions and Board of Missions.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Jo Anna Burks Hall; a daughter, Mrs. Sylvia Hall Martin of Indianapolis, Ind.; a stepdaughter, Miss Carla Nash of Little Rock, and four sisters, Mrs. Iantha Hickman of Ardmore, Okla., Mrs. Sedalia Baker of North Little Rock, Mrs.

Attention, former Springdale members

To the Editor:

I have been asked by the Rev. Maurice Webb, associate pastor of First United Methodist Church, Springdale, to contact former members of the Springdale First church through media channels (including the Arkansas Methodist) and apprise such persons of a Family Night program planned for Saturday, May 1 at Parsons Stadium . . . at the rodeo grounds east of Springdale.

It is hoped that a substantial number of former members can attend the reunion and those who cannot, may be able to send pictures of church activities. Pictures are especially sought that were made during the years the church was located on the corner of Emma Ave. and Main St. Photographs will be welcomed of members, former pastors, or families of former pastors. Those mailing pictures to First United Methodist, Springdale, 72764, should tape names and addresses to the back of photo so that the pictures may be returned. Pictures will be displayed on a huge bulletin board.

Thank you for all the help you can give us in getting this message to former members.

Nova Backus Teeter
Church page editor
Springdale News

Choir Members Sought

The Committee on Worship of the North Arkansas Conference is seeking ministers and lay persons who would be interested in being in a choir to sing at the Ordination Service at the Annual Conference, Tuesday, June 8, 7:30 p.m. Interested persons are asked to complete the application form below:

Name _____

Address _____

I am interested in being in the Conference Choir for the June 8th Ordination Service.

(Mail to: Mrs. Elise Shoemaker, First United Methodist Church, 1610 Prince, Conway, Ark. 72032)

Georgia Matlock of Ozan (Hempstead County) and Mrs. Arvella Norwood of Little Rock. The funeral was April 3 at Ebenezer United Methodist Church with the Rev. J. T. Counts, pastor, and the Rev. John H. Oliver of Hot Springs officiating. Burial was at Cummins Cemetery at Clow.

THE REV. JAY P. ROBERTS

The Rev. Jay Palmer Roberts of Green Forest died Feb. 23. He was ordained as a Methodist minister in 1923 and was active until ill health forced his retirement. He was 80.

He was born Jan. 22, 1896 at Rodd, Ark., a son of John Phillip and Lou Jan Dunlap Roberts. He was married to Sue M. Sisco on May 17, 1916.

Mr. Roberts is survived by his wife; five sons, W. E. Roberts of Hollister, Calif., Keith L. Roberts of Springfield, Mo., John W. Roberts of Millington, Tenn., J. C. Roberts of San Jose, Calif., and David P. Roberts of Springdale, and by 14 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

The funeral was Feb. 25 with the Rev. Woodrow Woods and the Rev. Fern Cook officiating. Burial was in Gobbler Cemetery.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The North Arkansas Conference delegation to General and Jurisdictional Conference will meet Wednesday, April 21, at 1 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, Conway, to review and discuss issues coming before the General Conference.

The delegation invites any person or groups wishing to communicate with them to meet at that location between one and three p.m.

APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED

Bishop Eugene M. Frank announces the following pastoral appointments in the Little Rock Conference:

Portland-Wilmet Charge — The Rev. Kenneth W. Kinard

Bearden-Thornton Charge — The Rev. Thomas J. Nation

The appointments became effective April 1, 1976.

Licensed to Preach

Mr. Augustus Rimmel, a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church, Little Rock, has recently been awarded a Local Preacher's License by the Little Rock District Board of the Ministry. Making the presentation was Dr. J. Edward Dunlap, Little Rock District superintendent.



'Project Pride' Completed At Forrest City

A Preaching Mission will begin April 18 (Easter night) and continue through Wednesday, April 21, at First Church, Forrest City, highlighting the completion of a major restoration project which began last August. The Rev. Norman Carter, pastor at Mountain Home will present the messages, and open house will be held in conjunction with the services. The entire church property, including the parsonage, the education building, the sanctuary and the grounds, have been a part of the beautification program dubbed "Project Pride." Co-chairmen for the \$50,000 project were Mr. Virgil Vandiver and Mr. John Sikes. Mrs. Bill Gibbs was in charge of a Centennial Garden project. The Rev. Merle A. Johnson is minister.

Arkansas Methodism's new history

What they say about it

Methodism in Arkansas, 1816-1976, will be published May 25. It will be the third volume to be officially commissioned by the church (the first was published in 1892, the second in 1935). It is authored by Dr. Walter N. Vernon of Nashville, Tenn., retired executive of the former Board of Education of The United Methodist Church.

The following comment by Bishop William C. Martin of Little Rock was prepared for use on the book's jacket, and is used here with permission.

"In this Bicentennial year of our life as a nation, how fortunate for the United Methodists of Arkansas that we have an inclusive and insightful record of the life and achievements of Methodists in this state by a church historian of proven competence.

"Even before he was chosen as the writer of this book, Dr. Walter N. Vernon, a Texan, had shown an unusual degree of interest in and acquaintance

with the history of Methodism in Arkansas as revealed in his biography, "William Stevenson; Riding Preacher." Assisted by his capable wife, Ruth, he has left no available source or relevant information unexplored in the effort to compile all the facts that are necessary for the writing of this record.

"This book, in the homes and in the church and school libraries of our people, will be a challenge to the recognition of the fact that an acquaintance with and gratitude for the sacrificial devotion of those who have gone before us is essential to the most faithful and responsible living in this and in succeeding generations."

Pre-publication orders for the volume are now being received. Until the publication date of May 25 the price will be \$7.95; after that date, \$9.95. Order by writing: Arkansas Methodist History Publication Committee, 715 Center Street, Little Rock, Ark. 72201.



Japany Church Adding Room

Among the growing number of small rural churches which are taking on new life these days is Japany United Methodist Church on the Murfreesboro-Japany Charge. The Building Committee is shown beside an early stage in the construction of a 14-foot by 28-foot Fellowship Hall which will serve also as a Sunday School room. The work is being done by volunteer labor. Left to right (front row), the committee members are Mrs. Olive Sullivan, Roland Smedley, Judy Kuykendall; (back) Jerry Stockton, Chairman Larry Graves, Willie Fugitt, and Ronnie McKinnon. The church has engaged Miss Janet Watson of Mt. Holly, a Henderson State junior, to direct the summer youth program.

What do churches look for in a young minister?

MINNEAPOLIS (RNS) — The No. 1 quality that American and Canadian church people are looking for in their young ministers and priests is willingness to serve without regard for acclaim.

Next they want personal integrity — the ability to honor commitments by carrying out promises despite all pressures to compromise.

A Christian example that people in the community can respect is the third most important factor.

Particular pastoral skills rank fourth and the minister's role as a leader in community building stands fifth.

All this was learned in a three-year project costing more than \$500,000 which is being sponsored by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. But the project has done more than pinpoint the qualities desired in fledgling ministers. It also developed several instruments that will assess readiness of seminarians to enter the profession.

The project, called "Readiness for Ministry," represents one of the first times that a profession has tried to define criteria to which its training ought to be addressed, says Dr. David S. Schuller, the project's administrative director.

Dr. Schuller, who is associate director of the Association of Theological Schools, said one of the reasons for the project was the concern of churches that many of the people coming into the ministry had a different view of it from those in the congregations they later were to serve. Another reason for it, he said, was the awareness by seminaries that some of their training was not directly related to what their graduates do in the field.

Research for the project was provided by the Youth Research Center of Minneapolis, which has done numerous studies involving church youth of many denominations. The project was financed by a grant of

\$480,000 from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., Indianapolis. In addition, Lutheran Brotherhood, Minneapolis, provided around \$75,000 in computer time for the project.

The first 18 months of the project were devoted to defining the criteria by which readiness for ministry could be measured. More than 1,200 persons in the 47 denominations involved in the 200 theological schools related to the sponsoring association were asked to recall specific moments when an ordained person ministering to them was either highly effective or clearly ineffective.

"By analyzing these written accounts we were able to identify where people tend to see ministry taking place and what served as the basis for their judgments regarding effectiveness," Dr. Schuller said.

Later, the project researchers developed a pre-test questionnaire of some 850 specific items that was completed by more than 2,000 persons randomly selected from the 47 denominations. Half of the 2,000 were laity and the other half clergy — seminary professors, clergy active in the field, denominational leaders and senior seminary students.

They were asked to evaluate the degree of importance each of the 850 items holds for the specific situation in which they were experiencing ministry, such as a small rural church setting, a chaplaincy in a large general hospital and a ministry in an inner-city congregation.

Next, a revised questionnaire of some 444 items was completed and 5,131 randomly-selected persons from the 47 denominations were asked to evaluate the importance of each of the 444 items.

Analyzing the results, the research team eventually found 64 clusters of responses. "The ranking of each of the 64 clusters gives us an estimate of what is generally seen as absolutely essential down to what is viewed as

detrimental or disqualifying for a minister," Dr. Schuller said.

Ranking at the very top was the cluster labeled "service without regard for acclaim." This cluster, it was explained, "describes an individual who is able to accept personal limitations and, believing the gospel, is able to serve without concern for public recognition."

This cluster, Dr. Schuller noted, is reinforced by the second highest factor, that of personal integrity, and the third ranking factor, having to do with Christian example. It was pointed out that four of the five top criteria lie within the area of the minister's personal commitment and faith and center in the minister-priest as a person. The last of the five describe a particular leadership skill.

Clusters that rank sixth through ninth deal with other ministerial roles: the minister as a perceptive counselor; as a thinker and theologian; as an individual able to handle the stressful situations by remaining calm under pressure while continuing to affirm persons; and as a person able to acknowledge limitations and mistakes and recognize the need for continued growth and learning.

The survey also found the qualities least desired in ministers and priests. The harshest criticism centers on what people describe as a "self-serving" ministry, a minister who avoids intimacy and repels people with a critical, demeaning and insensitive attitude.

Next most serious criticism centers on ministers involved in illicit sexual relationships and other self-indulgent actions that irritate, shock or offend.

The third most serious set of problems clustered around expressions of emotional immaturity and actions that demonstrate immaturity, insecurity and insensitivity when buffeted by the demands and pressures of the profession.

The Editor's Pulpit

From the Bottom of the Heart

The 'Resurrection Runners'

It is the Easter message, more than any other, that is God's greatest gift, through the Church, to humanity.

Easter joins the most fundamental quest of all humans, the quest of life, with God's most significant gift, resurrection. The event overcomes the final defeat of death with the ultimate victory of life. To our deepest need, Easter brings God's highest promise: new life; and that with a quality which can only be called "eternal."

No human or earthly language is sufficient to express the Easter message. It takes the simple yet profound realities of death and life to convey this message of living hope. Easter proclaims God's ultimate triumph over humanity's final enemy. It is the universal symbol, in a medium all can comprehend, that the Creator is on the side of life.

The Easter message is better understood with the heart than with the head. It is poetry rather than prose. It is melody more than lyric. It is drama more than dogma. The lily tells its truth better than the liturgy. Easter is comprehended by the soul more than by the senses.

We don't "understand" Easter so much as Easter understands us. It knows our deepest needs, our highest hopes, our most profound fears. Easter knows us better than we know ourselves.

Perhaps not the least of Easter's services to us is that it is a reminder, in this time when we have devised so many, many ways to destroy ourselves and our planet, that the word which the Creator is trying to get us to hear is a word of resurrection — of renewal, of hope, of life.

There is a very real sense in which the Church has no message other than resurrection, nor does it need any other. All else it says is predicated upon the resurrection principle. "If Christ is not raised, then our preaching is vain and your faith is vain." The early disciples knew who they were: "We are witnesses to his resurrection." For people of faith, the resurrection is the very reason for their lives and the very "cause" for which they live their lives.

The reaction of those who first experienced Easter's message was to run and tell others. Running has always been the proper stance for Christians. Our tired, tried and worn world is ever renewed by that word carried by its "resurrection runners": The Lord is risen! The Lord is risen indeed!

Off the Top of the Head

Better Shredded Wheat than Wild Oats

There's good news and bad news from the breakfast table.

The good news first. I'm well into my second box of Nabisco Shredded Wheat (see last week's column) and I still get a free trip back to my childhood with every bite of those little "biscuits." (It says on the carton that that's what you're

supposed to call those little haystack things.) And at one biscuit per meal, I've now worked my way through two whole summers and one winter of dandy childhood recollections.

That's the good news. Now the bad news.

Not all of my childhood times are that dandy to revisit. Like, for instance, the little episode that flashed across my head this morning as I munched my shreds: the time my big brother and I burned down the garage and storehouse behind the parsonage in Conway. The thanks we got for that effort to restore the neighborhood to its natural environment was to stay in bed for a whole day. And that right at the beginning of summer vacation, too! As I recall it, we were also deprived of our breakfast — which was probably two whole haystacks of Nabisco Shredded Wheat and half a banana apiece.

I can recall being less than elated about that all-day and all-night in bed with my big brother and without my haystacks and 'nana. But, then, it seems I can remember that Mommy and Daddy weren't exactly overjoyed about the whole thing either.

I guess the moral of all this is that if aging children eat Nabisco Shredded Wheat to conjure up memories of childhood, then they'll just have to take the good with the bad. For, alas, Shredded Wheat is no respecter of memories.

Super supping

If you think Shredded Wheat by itself is powerful in the memory-recall department, just try slicing a banana on your next serving! I did that the other morning and remembered things I hadn't even done!

JSW

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'Missional priority' funding proposal reaffirmed

Dayton, Ohio (UMC) — The United Methodist General Council on Ministries (GCOM) has reaffirmed a December decision on proposed funding of United Methodism's "missional priority" on the ethnic minority local church.

At its meeting here, following debate in committee and on the floor, the GCOM again voted to seek \$1,500,000 annually from World Service (the denomination's basic benevolence fund) and \$3,500,000 through Advance Specials (voluntary, designated gifts). Along with that World Service request goes a \$500,000 request for ethnic minority scholarships, making a total of \$2,000,000 the GCOM is seeking from World Service. The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) is proposing that the \$2,000,000 covering those two items

come from a special benevolence fund.

The General Conference starting April 27 presumably will make the final decision, the situation remaining the same on divergent funding proposals as it was after the GCOM and GCFA meetings in December.

In deciding to reaffirm previous action, the GCOM demurred from accepting the recommendation of its Ethnic Minority Local Church Task Force which had urged that all of the \$5,000,000 in "new money" for the missional priority come from World Service. In other actions on the ethnic local church priority at its March 8-11 meeting the GCOM:

- Endorsed a Task Force recommendation that General Conference

create a 21-member Study Committee on Native American Ministries which would study and evaluate the basic "networking system of Native American Ministries;"

- Authorized the Commission on Religion and Race to monitor progress by the church in implementing objectives and strategies outlined in the ethnic minority local church report.

- Thanked general agencies for responding to GCOM's request to provide information concerning money spent for ethnic minority concerns and asked for a new report at the GCOM fall meeting, which would provide data on programs "that have to do specifically with the Ethnic Minority Local Church priority."

- Referred to the Division of Or-

dained Ministry, Board of Higher Education and Ministry, a legislative proposal that would have permitted exemption, under certain conditions, of ministers from other Methodist churches from the usual educational requirements for full membership in an annual conference.

No moves were made in plenary to try to change the action seeking \$1,500,000 from World Service and \$3,500,000 from the Advance. Though action centered on the \$5,000,000 in "new money" for the ethnic local church missional priority, a package of \$15,000,000 annually during 1977-80 proposed by the Task Force also includes \$5,000,000 from a reordering of priorities by general agencies and \$5,000,000 from annual conferences.

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United Methodist News . . . Issues . . . Concerns . . .

Baptism renewal ritual issues

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMC) — United Methodist individuals or congregations who wish to renew their baptismal covenants may now do so with the aid of a new ritual released this month by the Board of Discipleship.

Developed by a task force of the Board's Section on Worship, the new alternate text is to be used within the context of a service of worship. With slight modifications, the text can be used for baptism, confirmation, and renewal services or a combination of the three.

Baptism and confirmation are common observances in United Methodist Churches, but renewal services are not. A sharp distinction between the renewal of baptism and "rebaptism" is made by the task force in a booklet which accompanies the new text.

†

Women 'uneasy' at merged record

CHICAGO, Ill. (UMC) — "We are uneasy," the Women's Division of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries said here March 15 as it completed a review of 12 years of an "experiment in a unified mission structure" in which the women's programs were merged with other units of the board.

Cited particularly were the "minimal" mission education "being received by children and youth," the place of women in church structures in this country and abroad, and lack of contacts with women overseas. After hearing the review, the division adopted a series of

recommendations to other units of the board designed to insure that their concerns receive attention.

In other business here March 12-15, the women heard a partial report on an extensive prime-time television monitoring project; adopted a wide-ranging series of petitions to General Conference, including a call for a four-year study of human sexuality; heard that income in 1975 passed the \$13,727,500 mark, an increase of two percent from 1974; set its next national Assembly for April 27-30, 1978, in Louisville, Ky.; approved an agreement with the Evangelical Covenant Church for operation of its home for retired workers in Pasadena, Calif.; honored its retiring president, Mrs. C. Clifford Cummings of Dixon, Ill., with the funding in her name of two programs totaling \$50,000; reviewed its participation in International Women's Year; and reaffirmed its support for the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

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Women interested in board seats listed

EVANSTON, Ill. (UMC) — A roster of 158 women interested in membership on United Methodist general agency boards of managers in the 1977-80 quadrennium has been compiled by the denomination's Commission on the Status and Role of Women here.

A project of the commission's Talent Bank, the listing includes women who are interested in either employment by the agencies or seats on the boards, and others who are available only for board membership. Of the 158, lay women number 93 and ordained

women 65. Some already are serving on boards of managers, and some presently are employed by church agencies.

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Anti-abortion amendment discussed

WASHINGTON, D.C. (UMC) — The diversity of Protestant beliefs about abortion, related to religious practice, individual responsibility, privacy and health, was stressed here March 24 in a Congressional hearing on a proposed anti-abortion amendment.

United Methodist Women's executive Theresa Hoover, as one of two who testified for the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights (RCAR), emphasized that none of the RCAR members advocates abortion. But, she added, none wants its teachings imposed on other groups or to have "the teachings of another religion on this matter imposed on us through law," and would "oppose any efforts toward forced abortion equally as vehemently as we oppose efforts to deny the option of abortion."

Meanwhile, Dr. Mildred Jefferson, a Methodist who is an assistant clinical professor of surgery at the Boston University School of Medicine and president of the National Right to Life Committee, told the John Carroll Society here that the movement she heads is the "greatest people's movement our country has ever known." She said liberalization of abortion laws threatens the life of the nation.

†

'Persons in Mission' commissioned

— Two from Little Rock

CHICAGO, Ill. (UMC) — Beneath the floodlighted spire that has been a landmark in the Loop here for more than a half-century, 14 young men and women were commissioned as "Persons in Mission" in The United Methodist Church.

(Two of the persons commissioned for service were Estelita and Percy Brown, of the Little Rock Conference, who will go from the World Division as missionaries to Africa.)

"Go now, and find yourselves . . . as servants on the edges of mission in the world," Bishop Paul A. Washburn told the nine women and five men, members of the Board of Global Ministries and several hundred visitors in Chicago Temple/First United Methodist Church. It was the first such commissioning service during a board meeting since 1971.

Earlier in the service, the Rev. Mortimer Arias, noted Bolivian Evangelical Methodist and a former bishop in that country, had told the candidates that although "to be an American is not precisely an asset for evangelization of

the oppressed peoples of the earth . . . their real asset (may be) to come as a beggar telling other beggars where both can find bread."

He stressed, however, that "we still need missionaries," from America and any other country in the world.

Mr. Arias pleaded for "an end to pretense" and "a recovery of candor on evangelization in the world today." Such a recovery, he said, can lead to "an end to our present evangelistic paralysis."

The Bolivian leader said that one of the "unmentionable things" in evangelization is "the crisis of motivation." He added, tongue in cheek, that "even for those who officially believe their main task is 'to save souls,' . . . this motivation is not 'overpowering them.'"

He also called attention to "the fact . . . that a growing number of conservative Christians, who are committed to evangelism, are insisting today that Christian responsibility is much more than just 'saving souls' . . . (and are) concerned with the totality of human life, and relating individual salvation with social justice."

Volunteer adult workers with youth come in for attention

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UMC) — The 12-member board of directors for the new Fellowship of Adults in Youth Ministry held their first meeting here March 24-26 and identified local church adult volunteers as their primary constituency.

The Rev. Norman Cobb, Sunray, Tex., chairman of the Board said other organizations in the church are taking care of the needs of professional youth workers and directors of Christian education but little continuing support is being given to volunteer adult workers with youth.

Pointing to the emergence of "youth empowerment" in the church, Mr. Cobb said many adults have been pushed into the background. "We want to recognize again the valuable role adult leaders play and the need for them," he said.

The board of directors of the Fellowship includes three conference coordinators of youth work, three district coordinators of youth work, three local church workers with youth, and three staff members of the Board of Disciple-

ship to which the Fellowship is administratively linked.

Mr. Cobb said the Fellowship will work primarily in three areas: leadership development, program ideas and "how-to" suggestions, news and information.

There are approximately 168,000 local church adults who work in youth ministry in The United Methodist Church. Three types of annual membership are available in the Fellowship. A \$7 basic membership provides a bi-monthly newsletter. A \$12 membership also includes a yearly packet of youth ministry handbooks, selected youth ministry resources from all general boards, catalogues of youth ministry resources, and sample curriculum resources. The third category of membership, costing \$30, also includes a monthly "Youth Culture Media Pac" with subscriptions to several basic periodicals of youth ministry.

For more information, persons may write to the Rev. Don Cottrill, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

Another view on seminaries and membership losses

To the Editor:

Recent issues of the *Arkansas Methodist* have highlighted the absence of "effective" evangelism within Methodism. Statistics have been cited: "1,100,000 members lost in last 10 years." "65.8 percent of all United Methodist churches receive fewer than four persons per year by profession of faith."

When confronted with such facts, lovers of the Church find their consciences shocked with pain. But, unfortunately, we human beings all too often fail to move in a systematic, loving fashion to find answers. Rather, we exhibit a peculiar behavioral pattern of clenching our fist, extending the index finger and pointing, saying "it's their fault!" Now seminaries and liberalism (whatever that "ism" means) have been blamed for declines.

Come on, it's a cheap shot to blame seminaries for membership declines, to blame seminary educated ministers for low professions of faith statistics, or to say that seminaries are sick and disease-ridden. With equal authority this type of "rash" statement can be directed to any profession or institution including hospitals and doctors. (Look at the rising malpractice statistics, for instance.) But authority based on ignorance or half-truth is no authority at all. Scapegoats can be too easily found. And so it is in blaming seminaries.

'Must Be Doing Something Right'

Indeed, based on the article, "Why Were One Million Members Lost?," the facts suggest that the seminaries must be doing something quite right. From that article I quote "the number of professions of faith is in an inverse ratio to the size of the church . . . The smaller the church, the larger (the) number of professions of faith per 1000 members."

Simply stated, smaller churches gain more members proportionately by professions of faith than do larger churches. Which churches do recent seminary graduates usually serve? SMALL CHURCHES, not large ones. Seminaries and recent seminary grad-

uates must be doing something right. The figures say so.

But still another interesting fact emerges. According to the above mentioned article, the period between 1957-1960 saw rapid gains in professions of faith. While now, it is the large churches which are experiencing little or none. The interesting point is that most of these large church ministers were also serving churches back during the 1957-60 surge.

The appropriate question seems to be "if these ministers through evangelism gained members in 1957-60 by professions of faith, why aren't they doing as well now in large churches?" Apparently what was effective then has either changed or become ineffective now!

Though I do not propose to have "the answer" to the questions of evangelism, membership, and declining professions of faith, I do have a couple of points that "may" be helpful. Both are rooted in history.

One: The Laity's Power

I seriously question the all-important role of the minister in membership results via evangelism which some people suggest. Why? Because historical facts in Methodism suggest something quite different. The power of the laity is all too often overlooked.

Early Methodism was organized around three basic elements: the church (the local group of lay people), the preacher, and the itinerant connectional system. The operation of the connectional system had particular impact upon the other two elements: the role of the minister was to preach (communicate) and the operations of the local church was in the hands of the local people.

In early American Methodism a church was lucky to see a preacher once a month. True, after the sermon was preached, members were taken in, but what happened in the lives of these converts and in these churches for the months before and after that sermon?

The church members, largely unaided by preachers, loved and minis-

tered to those about them. They ministered in real ways to the sick, homeless and forgotten. They loved people as Christ loves people and they saw growth in membership. Instead of the minister only evangelizing, every member evangelized by living the ministry. The members set the stage. After the sermon, members were taken in and the minister traveled on. But the local people sustained and ministered the love of Christ before and after, thus paving the way for real and long-lasting evangelism.

Two: Communication Forms

During the past 20 years a revolution has been occurring in the society about us — a revolution in which the church has played no part. After 20 years of television, and generations raised on film and radio, people now are accustomed to the newer media but more importantly, they are able to absorb greater amounts of information. Unfortunately, the "preached" sermon is unable to convey the amounts of information and experiences to which people are now accustomed.

It's often joked that the preacher puts people to sleep. Unfortunately, it's no joke. Because of the communications revolution, people can grasp much more. When they get to church, they expect much more, don't get it and are often bored. It's not their fault. It's not the content of the sermon, but rather the "preached" communication form that bores and puts people to sleep.

Do you go to sleep in a movie theatre? Do you sleep while watching a televised Razorback game? You may indeed doze if part of a group hearing someone "talk" about football for 25 minutes. If you love football which would you rather do: experience the Razorback game via television or hear someone talk about the game? As a Christian would you rather experience the message or hear a minister talk about the message?

While the "preached" sermon was a unique event in the quiet and lonely life of the 19th Century American farmer or villager, it's a horse and buggy on

the communications interstate highway of today. As people who love the church, who believe and love the gospel, who desire a more loving and Christian world, we owe it to the Lord of Life to use the most effective communication forms available. Indeed, it is our responsibility to offer up and use the best — not the second best.

'Make The message Real'

For evangelism and conversions early Methodism was blessed with the best of two worlds. They had the best communication form of their day — the "preached" sermon. And they had strong congregations willing to minister the message of Christ. The "priesthood of all believers" was no token phrase. Each member was a minister. In any typical community, hundreds rather than one may have been doing the Lord's work.

In 1976 we find ourselves in a vastly different situation. The best communication forms are not used. And as lay people we tend to look to the ordained minister as the "one" to do the proper ministry of the church. We, as lay people, shrink from ministerial responsibilities. We blame others.

Based on history, some conclusions can be drawn for the present. First, evangelism does not begin with the pulpit. It begins with understanding — understanding of God, of the mission of Christ, of the Church, of the essentialness of love and the problems of people. From these understandings ministers and lay people can act, can move out to non-believers — not so much with a message but with a way of life and community which substantiates that message and makes it real — not just words.

When the communication of the Christian message occurs, then make it occur by the best and most effective means available. By doing this in conjunction with a strong, ministering laity we will recapture the zeal and strength of Wesleyan Methodism.

J. Kenneth Dodd
3723 Foster
Little Rock, Ark. 72204

†

NEWS and opinion

summary by Doris Woolard

The Massachusetts Council of Churches has announced plans to study what it does and why it does it. "The basic thing is a loss of a sense of direction," executive Director James Nash said. "Unless our purposes and functions are reasonably clear to ourselves and to others, we cannot justify our existence and our supporters diminish." The council directors said that since the ecumenical highpoints of the 1950s and 1960s, councils of churches "have floundered without direction."

†

United Methodism's General Conference will be asked as it meets in Portland later this month to approve exchanging voting delegates with Methodist bodies in Mexico and the Caribbean area, and help resolve a long legal dispute involving the denomination's churches in Southern Asia by affirming that the 11 annual conferences involved are still part of The United Methodist Church.

†

Thursday, April 15, 1976

Labor leader Leonard Woodcock told a Southern Baptist seminar audience that there is a "decline in the kind of compassionate, Christian spirit that should be most prevalent in times such as these." Discussing the current unemployment situation the United Auto Workers' president cited "divorce, alcoholism, child abuse, mental illness, suicide, and loss of personal pride and dignity." Mr. Woodcock pointed to Romans 14:7, "None of us lives to himself and none of us dies to himself," and Galatians 6:2, "Bear one another's burdens."

†

Professor Harvey Cox of Harvard University, addressing a Southern Baptist seminar on Christian citizenship, urged American voters to "always be suspicious of any politician who talks about faith without referring to an object of that faith." When politicians speak of faith, the American Baptist theologian advised voters to ask, "Faith in what?" "Faith in God through Jesus Christ, we believe, is the only legitimate object of faith," he added.

†

The bishops of the Orthodox Church in America have issued an encyclical letter warning against four "tempta-

tions" concerning spiritual life: "external ritualism," "religious indifference," "false ecumenism," and "false spiritualities." "While there can be little doubt," the bishops add, "about the sincerity of the majority of those who practice and preach this type of Christian piety, especially within the so-called charismatic and neo-pentecostal movements, we must still warn of the dangers inherent in this type of spirituality, as did the apostles in the early Church."

†

The Rev. Charles W. Keysor, a founder of the "Good News" movement within United Methodism told an audience at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Ga., that his group prefers the term "orthodox" because the term 'evangelical' has been debased."

†

Gwennap Pit, a natural amphitheater in England, where John Wesley preached to thousands of tin miners and their families, is scheduled at last to come under Methodist ownership. For 200 years it served as a center of Methodist worship and pilgrimage.

†

Southwest Texas Annual Conference, meeting in a called session, turned down a proposal by conference trustees to purchase a \$675,000 ranch for use in camping, retreats and assemblies.

†

The Christian Pentecostal Church of Cuba has requested fraternal relationships with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Dr. William Nottingham of Indianapolis, Latin America executive for the Disciples' Overseas Ministries Division, said the Cuban body wish to relate formally to Christians outside their country. "We would send personnel if they requested it and if the political situation permitted. Neither is possible at the moment," said Dr. Nottingham.

†

Daily Bible Readings

Apr. 18—Sunday Psalm 3:1-8
Apr. 19 Psalm 4:1-8
Apr. 20 Psalm 27:1-14
Apr. 21 Psalm 91:1-16
Apr. 22 Isa. 30:15-21
Apr. 23 Hab. 3:13-19
Apr. 24 Matt. 6:24-34
Apr. 25—Sunday I Sam. 17:41-50

A Christian Family Life Style

By VICTOR H. NIXON,
Pastor, Huntington Avenue
United Methodist Church, Jonesboro

Scripture: Colossians 3:1-21

Foreword: Christian family life must confront many new factors in our day. It is not only appropriate, according to Horace Weaver, "but absolutely necessary, that Christians understand the biblical principles that speak with timeless clarity to the trends in our social system affecting family life."

For the next six weeks we will be looking at some of the pressures felt by the modern family — changing life styles, mobility of persons, changing roles of parental authority, the institution of marriage, effects of modern technology, and the threat of drugs.

What does our Christian faith have to say about family life in the midst of social change and upheaval?

This is the question before us in the lesson for this week on the life style of the Christian family.

Pray without Ceasing

When I consider my own family life as a child, one of the favorite stories we enjoy retelling often comes to mind.

At our house we "took turns" saying the grace at mealtime. One particular day it was my younger brother's time to "return thanks." But being an impatient person, I bowed my head and said the blessing before Ken even had a chance to think up a prayer! (Which just goes to show that even would-be Methodist preachers will pray before anybody else gets the chance — a problem that some of us still have!)

Well, Ken very angrily and tearfully complained that I had usurped his praying privileges (something I'm sure he hasn't done since). But Mom, after giving me one of those you-ought-to-be-ashamed-of-yourself-to-treat-your-little-brother-that-way looks, soothed his hurt pride by telling him that he could say the blessing at suppertime.

When we sat down to dinner that evening Mom explained to Dad what had happened earlier (more disapproving looks), and told my brother that it was now his turn to say the grace. We all bowed our heads and Ken began to pray. And pray . . . and pray . . . and pray! He must have been thinking and planning this prayer most of the afternoon because he thanked God for everything from beans to baseball gloves. My parents looked at each other across the table. The food was getting cold. But Ken piously prayed on and on, as if this were the very last prayer he would ever utter. Finally, after what seemed like hours, he said "Amen," looked up and delivered the greatest understatement of all time: "Boy, I thought I never would get through!"

The family that prays together may stay together — but the food also gets cold!

All in the Family

Some sociologists tell us that intimate, cherished moments of family life like the above are quickly disappearing in the modern world, largely because of the increased pressures — social, economic, emotional, ethical and technological — upon the "nuclear" family. The nuclear family is defined as the basic social unit of father, mother and children. They argue that the family has been the "nucleus" of our civilization and

culture and that with the disappearance of the family, as we know it, will come the demise of our civilization. Some say that already "the family has greatly lost its influence on the next generation."

Others do not paint such a bleak portrait of the family. Critics of the "family is doomed" viewpoint contend that such a sentimental picture freezes families in their earlier forms and functions and refused them the flexibility they need for survival.

Between the crossfire of these two polar points of view, what is needed is not a cushion to buffer the blows, but rather a way through that offers promise to those who care for and have faith in families.

Families have survived longer than any other human institution. They have lasted from humanity's earliest history because they have been adaptable to changes in century after century. Much as pioneer families faced a wilderness of frightening potentials and blazed trails across the unknown over which those who came later might follow, so present-day families are on new frontiers where families have never been before.

The survival of the family depends upon whether it can adapt to the new changes going on around and within it. To attempt to recover the structures of the past will not save the family, any more than putting "new wine into old wineskins." Nor, to my way of thinking, is dismissing the family unit as outmoded like last year's coat a satisfactory solution.

Hopefully, with God's help and Christian endeavor, the family unit will continue to be an important part of our society — even if in a different form.

The Christian Family

Paragraph 72 of The Book of Discipline states our position on this important social unit:

We believe the family to be the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity. We urge social, economic, and religious efforts to maintain and strengthen families in order that every member may be assisted toward complete personhood.

Such a position recognizes the value of the family as the locus of human development. We all learn from our earliest years what it means to be a human being through our participation in this basic human community. Our values, self-concepts, relationships, attitudes, and emotions are learned and developed within familiar surroundings, traits which will be carried for the most part throughout the remainder of our lives. Consequently, the quality of family life cannot be overstressed as a major factor in determining human development.

This leads to the question of whether Christian faith has anything distinctive to contribute to the quality of family life. Can a Christian family be identified as somehow different or more desirable than any other family?

While some may differ with me at this point, the scripture for the lesson written by Paul is likely to raise as many questions as it answers with respect to family life. In these days of emphasis upon women's rights

(with which I am sympathetic) the Pauline command, "Wives be subject to your husbands," (3:18) is likely to be objectionable. The writers of the curriculum materials seem to completely overlook this statement, as if by ignoring it it will go away (a position the church has too often taken on this and other important social issues).

Obviously, Paul is reflecting the patriarchal, male-dominated world of which he was a part. It is regrettable, but nonetheless true, that women of Paul's day had very few personal rights. However, before we dismiss Paul as a male-chauvinist pig, it is important to see that he is attempting to emphasize respect for each person — husband, wife, child — within the family structure of his day, an emphasis that needs repetition in our own. It is foolish to assume that we can recapture the patriarchal structure of the first century Mediterranean world; as it is equally foolish to assume that therefore Paul has nothing of value to say.

Biblically, the identifying characteristics of a Christian family are no different from those for an individual person.

1. **The Christian Family is God-centered.** "Seek the things . . . set your minds on things that are above, . . ." (3:1-2), is Paul's way of saying that for the family, as for the individual person, love of God is primary.

2. **The Christian Family is Christ-oriented.** In the language of death and resurrection, Paul talks about putting to death our "old nature" and putting on the "new nature" of life in Christ (3:5-11). The Christian family should be one where growth takes place, where our old understandings and passions die to be replaced by a new self-understanding in which "Christ is all, and in all" (3:11).

3. **The Christian Family is love-motivated.** The relationship to God, revealed in Christ, applied to human relationships. "Above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." (3:14) In very concrete and visible ways Paul lists the characteristics of those for whom love of the other has become a guiding principle. The intimacy of family relationships, where conflict and compassion occur, is perhaps the greatest test of our faith.

However, we must realize that the family which conscientiously follows these principles of faith will not necessarily live happily ever after. Christian families are not excluded from modern pressures or ancient heartbreaks any more than the individual. But what the family of faith will have is a confidence that in the midst of the difficulties of the present age there is One whose love will enable them to endure, or in the words of the sociologist, maintain a flexibility which will enable the family to adapt to the pressures of a changing world.

¹International Lesson Series, 282.

²Quoted in E. M. Duvall, *Faith in Families* (New York: Rand McNally & Co., 1970), 11.

³Ibid., 13.

†

NEXT WEEK: "Faith and Families on the Move"
SCRIPTURE: Genesis 12:1-9; Hebrews 11:1, 8-16

Council Directors to Local Churches

1. Hold a series of festivals highlighting the rich and varied contributions of the immigrants to this country. Attempt to feature a program depicting music, dance, food, art, and other cultural traditions. Let a worship experience emerge out of the celebrative spirit of the evening. A resource that may be useful is "The Fiesta of Worship" which may be secured from the Section on Worship.

2. Plan special communion services on the Fourth of July and on Thanksgiving Sunday. The printed communion liturgies for those two Sundays are available from Discipleship Resources, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

3. Utilize special liturgical services without Holy Communion on occasions

when Bicentennial Celebrations are to be observed. The six special liturgies for this purpose may be duplicated or printed in the church bulletin. The liturgies may be ordered from Discipleship Resources.

4. Preach a series of sermons on topics related to the Bicentennial, such as "Freedom: Risk and Opportunity," "The Ramparts We Watch," "Birth and Rebirth of a Nation," "Blazing a New Trail," "Again, Pilgrims!"

5. Celebrate a special Sunday evening Bicentennial worship showing the special films or film strips available from your AV Library. The rest of the service could feature music, including

some hymns sung at camp meetings, as well as contemporary gospel and folk songs.

6. Utilize the bulletin inserts for special Sundays. The topics and writers for the bulletin inserts are as follows: Liberty, Freedom, Liberation — Melvin G. Talbert; Patriotism — John B. Warman; Heritage — Harold Bales; The Impossible Dream — Roberto Escamilla. These may be ordered in quantities from Discipleship Resources.

7. Have a festival of American Folk Hymns and select an appropriate drama. Highlight the impact and inspiration of music in the worship life of the church. For additional information concerning this possibility, write for information on "For the Bicentennial Celebration" and

"A Festival of American Hymns: 1776-1976" to the office of Creative Arts, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

8. Celebrate an old-fashioned Sunday school picnic. Besides recreational activities, plan a worship service highlighting the beauty of the earth and the bounty of God's world. Try to communicate the fact that we express gratitude for all our blessings.

9. Plan to hold an agape meal or a love feast. You may secure suggestions and resources from the Office of Local Church Worship, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, Tenn. 37202.

10. Initiate and participate fully in ecumenical worship events in your community.

Bicentennial Suggestions

News from the Churches

HARMONY CHURCH on the Antioch Charge of Batesville District announces its annual Homecoming to be held Sunday, April 25. Morning worship will begin at 11 o'clock and will be followed by potluck dinner, with singing in the afternoon. The Rev. John Abshire is pastor.

THE GRIFFITHVILLE UMY has reorganized their youth group to include the other churches of the Griffithville Charge — Dogwood, Ellis Chapel, Higginson and New Hope. New officers elected to serve are: President, Bob Bradley; Vice President, Jill Chapman; Secretary, Reba Moody; Treasurer, Paul Henson; Reporter, Steve Sherrill; Program Chairman, Diane Huffstickler; Telephone Co-chairpersons, Rochelle Huffstickler and Cole Huffstickler.

MR. BOB CHEYNE, North Arkansas Conference lay leader, was the featured speaker at the April 8 Little River County Laymen's Banquet, an interdenominational event held at the C. D. Franks School cafeteria in Ashdown. Also appearing on the program were Tommy Cheyne, Arkansas Razorback punter, and Mark Miller, Razorback defensive halfback. Mr. John Blundell, Ashdown lay leader, was in charge of the program.

CONWAY DISTRICT PARSONETTES

The April meeting of the Conway District Parsonettes will be a "Spring Fling" on Petit Jean Mountain April 30 and May 1, 1976. A letter with all the details will be mailed to each member.

TEA TIME

Annual Scholarship tea
of

Church Women United Business Group
Sunday, April 25, 2 to 4 p.m.
Hotze House, 1619 Louisiana
Little Rock

FIRST CHURCH, Forrest City, has engaged the services of Mr. John Russell Collier, a native of Hughes, Ark., as Administrative Assistant. Mr. Collier, who will assume his duties July 1, holds the bachelor of arts degree in Literature and Philosophy from Hendrix College, the master of divinity degree from Perkins School of Theology, has done graduate work in the field of ethics and earned the master of education degree in the field of Early Childhood Education and Supervision from the University of Central Arkansas at Conway. He is currently Headmaster at Hughes Academy.

FIRST CHURCH, Little Rock, will unveil in a special ceremony next Sunday, April 18 following morning worship a bronze tablet marking the site of the first Methodist Meeting House in Little Rock, located on the north side of West Second Street between Main and Louisiana Streets, just west of the alley.

Pine Bluff District Youth Elect New Officers

District officers were elected for the 1976-77 conference year at the Pine Bluff District Youth Rally held at First Church, Stuttgart, on April 3. The program included get-acquainted games, small group discussions centering on needs and goals for the district youth, and a musical concert presented by youth from Spring Water, Okla. New officers elected were: President, Doug Tinsley, Sheridan; Vice President, Brad Reeves, Sheridan; Secretary, Tami Neukam, DeWitt; Project Review Committee members, Linus Dilday, DeWitt, and Malu Hammans, Stuttgart; Youth Representatives to Annual Conference, Eugene Wright, Pine Bluff, and Tom Waller, Sheridan. The Rev. Charles T. Settle of Grady is district youth coordinator.

Jonesboro District Stewardship Workshop

Mrs. Jim Lloyd (second row, second from right — in light dress), treasurer of the North Arkansas Conference organization of United Methodist Women, led a workshop for local church UMW treasurers in a recent Sunday afternoon session at Mt. Carmel Church, Jonesboro. The event was attended by 87 local treasurers and other local officers.

Parsonage Committee At Lake Street

Presiding over the refreshment table during recent open house at new Lake Street parsonage in Blytheville were (left to right) Mrs. Edward Evans, Mrs. Earl Jarrett, and Mrs. James M. Besharse. Serving as the Parsonage Committee, these ladies also selected and arranged the new furnishings.



Re-elected and installed to serve as officers of the Little Rock District organization of United Methodist Women were: (left to right) Mrs. Louise Pate, president; Mrs. Stan Buergey, vice president; Mrs. Hewitt Reeves, treasurer; Mrs. Norene Bettis, secretary. Mrs. Lucille Nix, conference president, was present to install the new officers.

UMW Spring Meeting focuses on hunger

The Little Rock District organization of United Methodist Women meeting for its spring session at St. Paul Church, Little Rock, followed the theme, "Feed My Sheep," with the focus on world hunger. Mrs. Louise Pate, district president, presided over the meeting, and guests were welcomed by Mrs. Courtney Swindler, president of the hostess group.

A NEW PARSONAGE has recently been purchased by the congregation of Sequoyah Church, Fayetteville. The three-bedroom residence, on which construction is almost completed, is located at 3115 Cherokee, Sequoyah Woods Subdivision, Fayetteville. It contains 1500 square feet of living space and a two-car garage. The Rev. Sam B. Williams Jr. is pastor.

AMBOY CHURCH North Little Rock, observed its 20th anniversary with former pastors returning to preach for services Sunday, April 4 through Friday, April 9. Preaching in the order in which they served the church were: the Revs. Maurice Burrough, Bob Edwards, John Jump, Dois Kennedy, Dr. Myers Curtis and Muriel Peters, the present pastor.

PREACHERS for the March 21-25 revival series at Grand Avenue Church, Hot Springs, were Dr. C. Ray Hozendorf, pastor of Winfield, Little Rock; the Rev. James Keith, Sylvan Hills, North Little Rock; Dr. Joe Phillips, St. James, Little Rock; the Rev. David Hankins, Oak Forest, Little Rock; the Rev. M. E. Scott, retired member of the Little Rock Conference. The Rev. Norris Steele is pastor.

DR. W. J. A. POWER, professor of Old Testament at Perkins School of Theology, and his wife, Marjorie, led a recent workshop at Berryville United Methodist Church entitled "Scripture and Spiritual Renewal." Dr. Power holds a Ph.D. in Hebrew from the University of Toronto and is an ordained priest in the Episcopal Church. He spent two years as resident archaeologist in Jordan. Mrs. Power, who did graduate work at SMU in the humanities, guidance, counseling and theology, is also widely known in the Texas area for her expertise as a reviewer of books.

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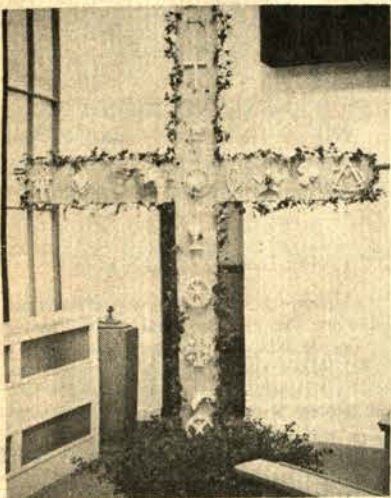
508 Main, North Little Rock



Open House At New Fisher Street Parsonage

In receiving line to greet guests at the Fisher Street-Pleasant Grove parsonage open house on Sunday afternoon, March 28 were: (standing, left to right) Mr. John Bridger, chairman of Trustees and Administrative Board, Pleasant Grove Church; the Rev. George Cleary, pastor; Mr. Carl Rogers, Administrative Board chairman, Fisher Street; Mr. Barney Osment, Trustees' chairman, Fisher Street; Dr. Ralph Hillis, Jonesboro District superintendent; (seated) Mrs. George Cleary; Mrs. Charley Blevins, UMW president, Fisher Street, and Mrs. Ralph Hillis. UMW members were in charge of serving.

United Methodists in Arkansas



'Chrismon Cross'

First Church, England, Ark., is one of a number of churches in Arkansas which have placed Chrismon Crosses in their sanctuaries during the Lenten season. The women of England Church had a 10-foot rough wooden cross erected, edged it with greenery and decorated it with white and gold Chrismons symbolizing various aspects of the Christian faith. The cross will remain until after Easter.



'Someone From Home'

The Rev. Thomas E. Anderson (right), a student at the Methodist Theological School in Delaware, Ohio, welcomes a visit with the Rev. Waymon C. Hollis, a member of the Board of Ministry and registrar for seminary students of the North Arkansas Conference. Mr. Anderson also serves as pastor of Central United Methodist Church in Richwood, Ohio.



Share Your Faith Workshop

The Rev. Phil Hathcock (at left) pastor at Jasper, served as director of a Share Your Faith Workshop at Central Church, Fayetteville, March 12-13. Shown below are some of the 45 persons, lay and clergy, who participated in the event sponsored by the Fayetteville District Council on Ministries. Friday evening was spent in actual visitation of prospects and inactive church members from lists supplied by the local churches.



North Arkansas Youth Rally Draws Over 1,000

Some of the participants in the rally held at Hendrix College in Conway, April 3, included: (back row, left to right) The Rev. Earl Carter, who spoke on issues to come before General Conference; the Revs. Victor Nixon and Dick Haltom who led the opening worship service; (front) Miss Vicki Van Poucke, president of the conference Council on Youth Ministries presided, and Miss Martha Ramsay, served as chairperson of the task force that planned the rally. State Attorney General Jim Guy Tucker was a featured speaker.



Methodist Headquarters Visitors

Members of the United Methodist Women's organization at Newport were photographed as they visited Arkansas Methodist offices on recent tour of Methodist Headquarters. Mrs. Coleman Kent (at left) is president of the UMW, and standing beside her is Mrs. Jim Beal, the minister's wife.

**Russellville Youth Choirs
Present Bicentennial Program**

"I Love America," was the theme of a recent musical presentation by the combined youth choirs of the United Methodist and Central Presbyterian Churches of Russellville. Shown (above, right) is the 14-piece instrumental ensemble which accompanied the 33 singers shown below. Dr. Roland Shaw directed the work, written by John W. Peterson and Don Wyrzten.



Coordinator Honored

Mrs. Saville Henry (right) of Lakewood Church, North Little Rock, is presented an engraved silver tray as a token of appreciation for her service as North Arkansas coordinator of Youth Ministries from 1971-'75.



Wye Mountain Visitors

Among the thousands of visitors who made the pilgrimage to Wye United Methodist Church to see the jonquil-studded acreage on the church property was the Bigelow Kindergarten group and their two teachers. BELOW: Members of North Little Rock churches boarded the Washington Avenue United Methodist Church bus to see the spectacular array of jonquils on the 7-acre plot.

