

# new world outlook

JUNE 1982

A photograph of a church service, likely a Eucharist, with people in vestments gathered around an altar. The scene is dimly lit, with light coming from windows in the background. A priest in a white and red vestment is visible on the left, and another person in a white and black vestment is in the foreground. The overall atmosphere is solemn and focused.

## SPECIAL ISSUE

Pilgrimage of Faith:  
Oneness in Christ

# new world outlook

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Consultation on Church Union Communion Service, Louisville, Kentucky  
COCU Photo by John Fulton

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# MISSION MEMO

News and Analysis of Developments in Christian Mission

June, 1982

Pastoral Letter. In late April the UM Council of Bishops issued a second statement within six months expressing concern about a possible nuclear holocaust. The statement was read in UM churches in mid-May. The bishops said they endorse the Joint Resolution on Nuclear Freeze and Arms Reduction which calls on both the USSR and the USA to halt the manufacture of nuclear weapons, reduce current supplies of nuclear arms, and agree upon adequate verification procedures. It does not call for unilateral disarmament. The bishops urged United Methodists to let their voices be heard on the subject with state and national lawmakers and the President.

Infant Formula Flap. In early May Dr. J. Philip Wogaman, dean and professor at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington and chair of United Methodism's Infant Formula Task Force (IFTF), was appointed as one of eight persons on Nestle's newly-formed Infant Formula Audit Commission. The Rev. George McClain, executive secretary of the Methodist Federation for Social Action, charged that this was a conflict of interest and urged Wogaman to resign from the IFTF. "The integrity and objectivity of the United Methodist response through the IFTF requires a complete independence from entanglement with Nestle and its instrumentalities," said McClain. Dr. Wogaman told UM News Service that he had the support of the task force in serving on the multinational commission. "The commission is to be a fact-finding body studying Nestle's operation in relation to the World Health Organization code," he explained. "The task force endorses that code. Either we are willing to inspect them or we had better shut up." He said his position was different from that of Bishop James Armstrong, who resigned from the task force when he became president of the National Council of Churches, because the United Methodist Church as a Church was not engaged in the Nestle boycott, whereas the NCC is. (Some United Methodist agencies, such as the Women's Division, participate in the boycott of Nestle products.)

Moscow Conference. The international conference of religious leaders in Moscow, USSR, May 10-14, produced a considerably more balanced statement on nuclear weapons than a heavily pro-Soviet first draft largely as a result of the efforts of two American church leaders, according to Religious News Service (RNS). The conference which attracted some 1,000 Christian, Buddhist and Moslem delegates, was overshadowed for much of its life by the presence of the Rev. Billy Graham, who visited Moscow for six days as an observer to the meeting. Bishop David W. Preus, who heads the American Lutheran Church, warned that the anti-American tone of initial speeches threatened to turn the parley into a "political forum heavily tilted" against the

United States. The Rev. Arie W. Brouwer, secretary of the Reformed Church in America, joined Dr. Preus by lamenting "the participation in the arms race by the Soviet Union." The Soviet media carried no reports on the outcome of the conference, possibly because the final document was not the unqualified endorsement of Soviet foreign policies that organizers had intended, said RNS. There were no United Methodist delegates. United Presbyterians were represented by Stated Clerk William P. Thompson.

Chaplains. Twenty-eight applicants for the UM chaplaincy were recently endorsed by a committee of the Division of Chaplains and Related Ministries of the UM Board of Higher Education and Ministry. There are now 810 active, 350 part-time and 540 retired chaplains. Plans for recruitment of more ethnic minority persons for the chaplaincy have been announced. Presently, about 10 percent of the 789 full-time chaplains related to the Division are ethnic minority persons.

Argentina. Active and retired bishops of the Methodist Church in Argentina have urged their U.S. counterparts to "stop the escalation of terror and death" over the Falkland Islands. The cable, addressed to Bishop James M. Ault, of Pittsburgh, secretary of the Council of Bishops, came from Bishop Federico J. Pagura, current head of the Argentine Evangelical Methodist Church; Carlos T. Gattinoni, first bishop of the autonomous church elected in 1969; and Santa Uberto Barbieri, retired bishop of the United Methodist Church who led the Argentinian church to autonomy. The cable, dated May 5, said in part: "Your government's support of British naval force invasion..., in opposition to the United Nations and Organization of American States resolutions, is aggravating the situation to the point that it endangers continental and world peace. We urge you to help, through prayer and action to stop this escalation of terror and death in the name of our Lord, the Prince of Peace." Bishop Pagura in a telephone conversation May 4 with Joyce Hill of the GBGM World Division said the situation in Argentina was very tense, but there was no "mass hysteria" among the people. A telephone call from a United Methodist missionary in Argentina, the Rev. Jerald Russell, said that as of May 5 no UM missionaries had left the country. Under World Division policy, missionaries on the field decide whether and when to leave a troubled area. The UMC has seven missionaries in Argentina: Jerald and Judy Russell of Knoxville, Tenn., Buenos Aires; the Rev. Neal and Valene Long of Wilmore, Ky., Buenos Aires; the Rev. Douglas and Betsy Ruffle, Jamesburg, N.J., in Rosario; and the Rev. Patricia Richardson of Sheridan, Ind., in Chivelcoy.

India. A "fanatical Hindu group" known as the RSS is behind the violence which has claimed the lives of 20 Christian fishermen in southern India, according to Mrs. Daisy Gopal Ratnam, president of the National Council of Churches in India. Mrs. Gopal Ratnam, a former juvenile court judge and an active layperson in the Church of South India, told New World Outlook in New York that Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi responded with great concern to a delegation of six Indian church leaders, including herself, on April 7, who told the Prime Minister of the deaths and destruction in the Kanyakumari district in Tamil Nadu. The RSS, says Mrs. Gopal Ratnam, is not representative of the vast numbers of Hindus because it uses violence, to which Hindus are opposed. They appear to believe that non-Hindu religions are "alien" to India; mosques as well as churches have been attacked. The group was originally strong in the north but moved south after it was suppressed by the government. Another concern raised at the meeting with Mrs. Gandhi was the tightening of

restrictions on visas which has affected seminaries, such as Bangalore Theological College, as well as church work where foreign missionaries are still needed in special situations. "The presence of missionaries is a special witness to the universality of the Church," said Mrs. Gopal Ratnam, while noting that the missionaries the church needs now would not take away jobs from Indian Christian workers. Among the church leaders who saw Mrs. Gandhi was Bishop Joseph R. Lance, of the Lucknow Area of the Methodist Church in India.

Awards. Miss Hildegard Grams, the only missionary in India from the Methodist Church in Germany, was presented with Germany's "Order of Merit" by the German Ambassador to India. In India since 1953, Miss Grams started the training school in Batala, in Punjab, to train young women as wardens for hostels. It was the first such institution in India and has served as a model for others like it. In making the award, the German ambassador pointed out that it is an honor "comparatively few women have received."...New World Outlook received an Award of Merit by the Associated Church Press for "best photography with an article" in a magazine. The winning entry was "Growing Up in Soweto" by Peter Magubane in the March, 1981 issue. Another UM publication, the United Methodist Reporter, won an Award of Merit in the news event category for its coverage by associate editor Roy Howard Beck of a conference on Southern Africa in New York last fall.

Ecumenism. Sensing that the idea of ecumenism itself is often as poorly understood as it is spelled, the Department of Information of the National Council of Churches has produced a whimsical multi-colored poster suitable for framing showing many people from diverse walks of life forming a pyramid and holding a globe and cross. The center of the pyramid, however, has someone missing. The slogan under the poster is "ecumenical needs 'U' ". There is also a button with the slogan "are u missing?" The poster and button are available for \$2 from the NCC Department of Information at Room 850, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115.

World Council of Churches. The New York offices of the World Council of Churches were illegally occupied May 19 by youthful members of the Jewish Defense League who protested the Rev. Billy Graham's remarks about religious freedom in the Soviet Union. The occupation coincided with a press conference the famed evangelist was giving in a New York hotel in which he explained his views by saying that he found religious freedom in the USSR to be more than he expected. When the members of the JDL refused to leave the WCC offices, the New York police were called in and arrests were made. The offices suffered considerable damage, much of it a result of the forcible entry the police had to make. The World Council of Churches had no connection with the visit of Dr. Graham to the Soviet Union.

Personalia. David and Pat Williams, UM missionaries in Fiji, will be leaving the field and returning to the U.S. at the end of December....UM Bishop Finis A. Crutchfield, of the Houston Area, became president of the Council of Bishops on April 30th at a meeting at Lake Junaluska of the Council's spring meeting. The primary task of the church at this moment is spiritual formation, he told UM News Service....UM Bishop A. James Armstrong of Indiana Area has been named the most influential in the U.S. in the field of religion by the magazine U.S. News and World Report....

Deaths. Donn P. Doten, editor of the Michigan Christian Advocate, died April 21 in Ann Arbor, Mich., after a long illness. He was 63....Paul M. Fekula, owner of the collection of Orthodox artifacts on display in the Orthodox Room at The Interchurch Center, died on May 5 in New York City at the age of 76....

Unemployment. Widely-known Australian Methodist evangelist Alan Walker told a rally in Johnson City, Tennessee that unemployment is a "supreme human tragedy." He defended a basic living allowance for all people, said welfare payments or unemployment allowances are "thoroughly Christian," and criticized the governments of America and England for being "far too indifferent and callous toward the unemployed." The first "call in a Christian society on the strength of the strong is the need of the weak," he said. He decried youth unemployment as the saddest feature of today's society. Walker is director of evangelism for the World Methodist Council.

Staff. New staff of the UM General Board of Global Ministries are Josephine Wildcat Bigler, a field representative for ethnic and language ministries in the National Division; Ernesto Alvarez, supervisor of financial analysis in the accounting office; Clara Kearsse, secretary for cultivation assigned to UMCOR in the Education and Cultivation Division; Nova Langston, director of the United Methodist Development Fund in the National Division; and Bonnie Offrink, executive secretary for youth serving ministries in the National Division....New staff of the UM General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns are J. Warren Jacobs, a patristics scholar from Boston, and Patricia F. Southard, a program planner and workshop leader from Oakland, California.

Opening. Church Women United is looking for a General Director for its national office in New York. A job description will be available July 1. Inquiries may be addressed to Helen B. McAllister, 3400 N. Harvey Parkway, Oklahoma City, OK. 73118.

Peru. It took no less than 80 ballots, but the Rev. Juan Hollemweguer, 75, the oldest ordained elder still active in the autonomous Methodist Church of Peru, was elected its third bishop. The election was hotly contested by incumbent bishop Marco Ochoa Amoretti, 56, who had served since January 1978. He had trailed on every ballot but refused to withdraw. The new episcopal leader, who is pastor of Magdalene Church in Lima, was named to a four-year term. The Peruvian church has 2,753 members in 28 organized churches.

UN Disarmament Session. A mass rally in support of nuclear disarmament is expected to draw 500,000 to one million people to New York's Central Park June 12. Buses have been chartered and housing reserved in the Big Apple for large groups of people coming in support of the Second UN Special Session on Disarmament. UM Bishop Roy C. Nichols of New York will be one of the principal speakers. There will also be a June 9-11 seminar on disarmament which is sponsored by the General Board of Church and Society and the GBGM Women's Division. An international religious convocation for the Second Special Session will begin at noon June 11 at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The convocation has been organized by the Religious Task Force of Survival, which received a grant of \$1,500 from the Women's Division.

# EDITORIALS

## THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Probably the greatest temptation in the spiritual life of the Christian is to keep going on old religious experiences without renewing one's commitment through fresh approaches. The season of summer, however, is an ideal time for finding new paths of devotion and service to Christ.

However, "summer's lease hath all too short a date," so it takes planning.

One could start by listing classics of the Christian life one has been intending to read but hadn't found the time. Writers such as Thomas a Kempis, Meister Eckhart, St. Francis de Sales, Catherine of Siena, Julian of Norwich, John Woolman, John Bunyan, Soren Kierkegaard, and, of course, John and Charles Wesley are just a few whose devotional works provide new strength for the Christian life. Now is a good time to dig into them.

Many of these are known for their journals. Increasingly, as was shown at the Women's Assembly in Philadelphia, there is considerable interest in personal journal-keeping. There is no better time to start than the present.

There are many contemporary writers whose works commend themselves to Christians seeking to deepen their devotional life. These include Frederick Buechner, Henri Nouwen, Florence Allshorn, Simone Weil, Thomas Mer-ton, John Killinger, and Tilden Edwards.

It is foolish to believe we can actively be involved in God's mission in the world without continually recharging our spiritual life. Jesus said he was the vine and we were the branches and that we had to "abide" in him in order to bear fruit. How easy a lesson it is to forget. But for the sake of the mission we must not forget it. We must continually go back to the Source.

## THE FALKLANDS CRISIS

If we are to survive as a human race we must do something about nuclear weapons (see May editorial) and we must agree on how we can live together as a family of nations.

Last month in this space we avoided comment on the Falklands crisis because it seemed it could change at any moment. The situation is even more pronounced this month, where we could either have peace or war breaking

out at any time. But some overall considerations and lessons can be drawn even with this tentative situation.

When on April 2 it took control of the Falkland Islands, also known as the Malvinas, Argentina violated two points on which there has been growing consensus in the world since the time of President Woodrow Wilson. These are that territory shall not be acquired by force and that self-determination shall be respected.

These two principles are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and they underline the work of much of that world body. On the day after the invasion the Security Council passed resolution 502 calling for an end to hostilities, the immediate withdrawal of Argentine forces from the islands, and negotiations. Now the United Nations and its secretary general, Javier Perez de Cuellar, have an opportunity unmatched in years to be a peacemaker.

Unfortunately, it is all too clear that time is running out. But whatever the near-term outcome of the struggle, the United Nations will be playing an increasingly important role in the South Atlantic. Perhaps, with the failure of Secretary Haig's shuttle diplomacy, the world will turn more and more to the U.N. where diplomats representing opposing sides are no more than a short walk away from each other.

Separating truth from fiction about the various claims and counter-claims to the Falklands/Malvinas is a fruitless exercise. More to the point, it is irrelevant; Britain has been trying for ten years to give them up but no solution acceptable to all parties was found. Clearly, the Argentines and in fact virtually all of Latin America view Britain's possession of the islands as a vestige of colonialism and an affront to Latin America. That much, at least, we have all learned in this stupid war, the most stupid since the War of Jenkins Ear. But in the process of learning this we have come perilously close to the edge.

It is one thing to present one's claims in an international court, it is quite another to stake one's claim by force. Two examples from the Middle East show how the world has come to condemn territorial annexation by force. In 1980 Iraq marched into Iran and claimed territory around the Shatt-

al-Arab waterway. Iraq said its claims were limited and just, but then was astounded when the world condemned the action. Even the U.S. sided with Iran, which at the time was holding American hostages. Now that Iraq is losing its war, there is not much sympathy for its position.

Israel too learned recently when it annexed the Golan Heights which it had held since the June war of 1967 that the world views this as territorial annexation by force. Israel called the action purely "administrative" but the different jargon fools no one. Moreover, the Begin government would like to annex the West Bank, which it calls Judea and Samaria, and says its "claim" is at least two thousand years old.

In Africa it is well known that the boundaries of the nations were drawn in Europe with no respect to where African tribes lived. Nevertheless, the nations have agreed that any effort to change those boundaries by force will not be tolerated.

To return to the Falklands/Malvinas, for their part, the Argentines were undoubtedly frustrated at the slow pace of negotiations over the islands and the lack of any resolution. They also were misled by American rhetoric on Central America and the months of diplomatic wooing of Argentine support for U.S. policies. This conflict in the South Atlantic is a tangled web indeed with no over-riding archvillains.

The principle of self-determination for the Falkland islanders is crucial, but it should not be determinative. The Argentines have minimized it and thus lost potential good will around the world. On the other hand, there is also truth in the view of Britain's *Methodist Recorder* that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has "boxed herself in a corner by insisting that the wishes of the islanders must be paramount."

To respect the wishes of the islanders is not the same as giving them veto power over any plan which does not keep them solidly British, especially if obstinacy can lead to a world conflict. That they must be included in negotiations about their future goes without saying. As the *Methodist Recorder* notes, some form of long term lease which would offer security to the people of the islands and yet "satisfy long-held Argentine aspirations" would appear to be the best answer.

In the meantime we have all had an expensive (in human lives) lesson in the fragility of world peace. If we could learn to wage peace with a fraction of the expertise and skill war has been waged we might make peace possible.

# WHY CHRISTIAN UNITY?

## A Methodist Perspective

James Armstrong

I was on the roof of our gray, two-bedroom home sweeping leaves into oblivion when the call came. My wife, Phyllis, said Jim Ault (Bishop James Ault of Pittsburgh) was on the phone speaking for the nominating committee of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Would I be willing to serve as president for the 1982-84 triennium? Thus began a chain of conversations and a flow of earnest prayers.

I talked with Phyllis. She would pay the major price for a horrendous schedule. And there were my co-workers in Indianapolis, the council staffs and 20 district superintendents. They would live with the consequences of my decision. I had only come to Indiana a year before. I was still learning names, faces, procedures and "no-nos". As one of the most demanding areas in United Methodism with 1,425 churches and a third of a million members, it had a prior claim. Could I effectively serve the United Methodist Church in Indiana? And I chaired the General Commission on Religion and Race. With the outcroppings of racial bigotry across the land and the EMLC quadrennial missional priority that responsibility could not be set aside.

So—after treading water for more than a month and following the essential consultation—I said "yes." Why? What is so commanding, so compelling, about the ecumenical movement?

That's a good place to begin. I'm more committed to the ecumenical movement than to an ecumenical institution. Thus, my response to the NCCC was a response to a movement; to an ideal.

Why Christian unity? *Because our faith requires it.*

The theme of oneness runs through Scripture from the story of creation to the vision of "a new heaven and a new earth." Christ affirmed his oneness with God, prayed that his disciples might share that oneness and further prayed that the church might be one. (John 17:11) Ephesians 4 reminds us that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one faith, one baptism and one Lord. Paul, in his first Corinthian letter, referred to the Church as the community which God has "appointed" and calls it Christ's body. "There are many different organs," he wrote, "but one body." (I Corinthians 12:20 NEB)

At the heart of our call to unity stands "Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of the religion we profess." (Hebrews 3:1 NEB) As W. A. Visser 't Hooft pointed out in a sermon 25 years ago:

"The ultimate reason why we are indestructibly linked together is the act by which Jesus performed once and for all the supreme sacrifice . . . Our unity has its irrevocable center in the cross. As we come nearer to the cross we come nearer to each other. As we consider the High Priest who has shared our condition, tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sinning, we realize more deeply that our lack of unity is a denial of his work of salvation." The Lord's table, lifting up his broken body and shed blood, reminds us as nothing else that our separateness is a denial of his sacrifice.

Why Christian unity? *Because of the pointedness of our rich tradition.*

John Wesley did not see Methodism as a church but as a religious society within the Church. He remained a priest of the Church of England until his death. While the Methodist societies were mainly Anglican they drew members from dissenting bodies as



Bishop James Armstrong

well. They offered no special creed or confession. That was not necessary because the Church already provided that. Rather, they offered a peculiar discipline, a particular fervor and spirituality, a revivalism that was emphatically sacramental. Members of the societies received communion, not in Methodist preaching-houses but in their own parish churches. The Church was one. In his remarkable "Letter to a Roman Catholic" Wesley wrote, "We ought, without this endless jangling about opinions, to provoke each other to love and good works. Let the points wherein we differ stand aside: (there) are enough wherein we agree, enough to be the ground of every Christian temper and of every Christian action."

The different streams that flow into what is now United Methodism have participated in the ecumenical movement from the beginning. They were there when the Federal Council of Churches came into being. They were

there when the National Council of Churches was formed. From the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 to the formation of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948, the voices of our tradition have been heard and have helped give shape to ecumenical and interfaith reality.

The central figure in Amsterdam was the honorary president of the new council, John R. Mott. He was the architect used by God to fashion this creation. Joseph Oldham once wrote:

"In (Mott's) life-long association with the ecumenical movement his judgment and decision were crucial at such a countless number of points, noticed and unnoticed, his influence on the lives of those who helped to shape the movement was so deep and extended, that one can say of him in a much more far-reaching sense than of any of his contemporaries that, had he not lived, the ecumenical movement would not have taken the form that it has done." And John R. Mott was one of us.

The conciliar movement has been far from perfect and it has its vocal critics within United Methodism, but we need to remind ourselves that we have been committed to the "holy catholic church"—the one church universal—from the moment of our birth. Our tradition has made its distinctive contributions to the "larger church", but it has always seen itself as an integral part of that Church.

Why Christian unity? *Because a troubled nation and broken world desperately need it.*

The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church say:

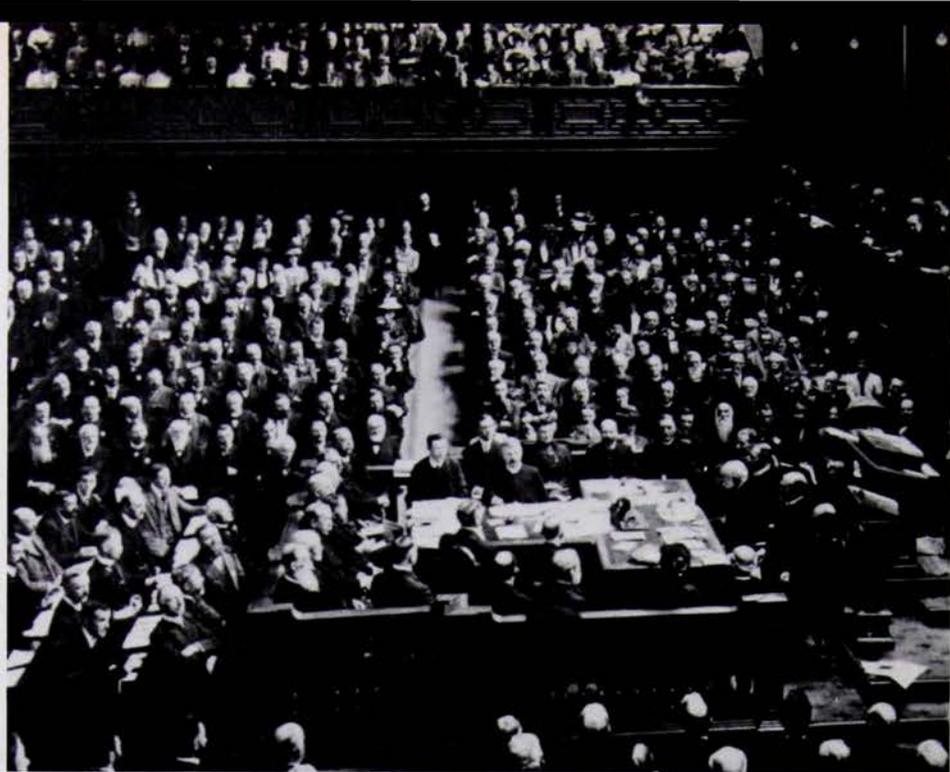
"God's world is one world. The unity now being thrust upon us by technological revolution has far out-run our moral and spiritual capacity to achieve a stable world. The enforced unity of humanity, increasingly evident on all levels of life, presents the Church as well as all people with problems that will not wait for answer: injustice, war, exploitation, privilege, population, international ecological crisis, proliferation of arsenals of nuclear weapons, development of transnational business corporations that operate beyond the effective control of any governmental structure, and the increase of tyranny in all its forms. This generation must find viable answers to these and related questions if humanity is to continue on this earth."

And yet, confronted by pain and



*"At the heart of our call to unity stands 'Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of the religion we profess.' "*

*"We need to remind ourselves that we have been committed to the one church universal from the moment of our birth."*



From the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference (top) to the founding of the World Council of Churches, such Methodists as John R. Mott (center, below) and Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam (right, below) were involved, as are United Methodists today (bottom).



brokenness, by the *sins*, of a world courting self-destruction, the Church is splintered beyond belief. The scattered confusion of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), not the power and spiritual unity of Pentecost (Acts 2) prevails.

When I became president of the NCCC I insisted that the number one challenge confronting the human family is survival. The madness of the nuclear arms race poses a clear and present danger to that survival. A nuclear war—and it could not be "limited"—would destroy the world's transportation and communications systems and would rip the fabric of society to shreds. As Jonathan Schell has pointed out in his new book, *The Fate of the Earth*, it would reduce this planet to a realm of "insects and grass". And the Church, the one international body that could rise above competing ideologies and systems to speak on behalf of the human family, is divided.

The violent disarray of the human family is mirrored in the breakdown of the traditional family, "the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect and fidelity." (*The Book of Discipline*, p. 89). Forty percent of all first marriages end in divorce. Forty-four percent of all second marriages end in divorce. By the end of this decade, if present trends continue, one of every two marriages will end in divorce. As the National Association of Evangelicals, another expression of the ecumenical movement, warned last month in a three-day convention dealing with the family: the pursuit of self-gratification, unrestrained materi-

alism, and "a moral relativism that leaves parents unable to teach their children moral and spiritual absolutes" are eroding family life. And the Church, which should be "koinonia," which should reflect community at its sacred best, finds many of its members suffering the fates these secular values dictate—and it is divided.

Economic recession, widespread unemployment and an expanding underworld of poverty and hunger plague the land with anxiety, dread and a sense of hopelessness. Overt expressions of racial bigotry, subtle forms of racism and sexism, and the cruel neglect of the elderly, threaten our shared future. The Church has never been more important in the life of this republic—and it is divided.

When I speak of the unity of the Church I am not idealizing a monolithic organization, I am not talking about organic union, although in God's good time the many parts may become one literal body. I am talking about and praying for intensified cross-denominational conversations and experiences; commonality of mission and purpose; life and resources shared as they are centered in Christ our Lord. Far more than can be said of us now, the Church is called to be one in Spirit, one in Sacrament, one in faith, one in hope—one in its vision of a coming kingdom. "When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world" (II Corinthians 5:17 NEB). "You are all one person in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28 NEB). ■

Bishop James Armstrong is head of the Indianapolis Area of the United Methodist Church and president of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

# COCU: Covenant or Cuckoo?

Arthur J. Landwehr

**T**hey said the old bird was dead and buried, but it isn't so. The Consultation on Church Union celebrated its 20th birthday in Louisville in March. There is no question about it, its adolescence is showing. Bouncing back and forth between insecurity and grandiosity, COCU goes on "living its way to unity." There is insecurity because there is less and less keeping the churches apart. The time is coming soon when member bodies will have to go to their parents and ask if what they have been doing is all right. And that would make any one of them a bit queasy.

Grandiosity is expressed in the great dreams they dare to have. In affirming covenanting as the appropriate way ahead in the quest for visible unity in a Church "truly catholic, truly evangelical, and truly reformed" the adolescent is challenged to grow up. Such a bold daring proposal can only be a call to a "transforming experience." Unanimously the 15th Plenary adopted this grand leap.

The "covenanting" process is to be an interim first step in "living our way to union." The idea of coming together around a constitution with its juridical language was given up in its early stages of infancy. "Living our way to unity" through covenanting is the only dynamic way of approaching maturity.

In 1984 the Commission on Church Order will present a design to initiate the "covenanting process". The design will include one or all of the following elements:

- Claiming the emerging theological consensus as developed *In Quest*. After additional refinement each church will be asked if there is sufficient agreement in the consensus for entering anew into God's covenant.
- Mutual recognition of our churches, including acceptable rites of initiation. To affirm one another's baptism/confirmation affirms the validity of the church into which that person is baptized/confirmed.

- Reconciling our ministries. Each of the communions has an authorized ministry that represents that whole communion in its various ministerial offices and functions as part of the body of Christ. The reconstitution of a united ministry is integral to any consideration of seeking union.

- Initiating eucharistic fellowship. The sacrament is bound up with the oneness and should be celebrated on a regular basis.

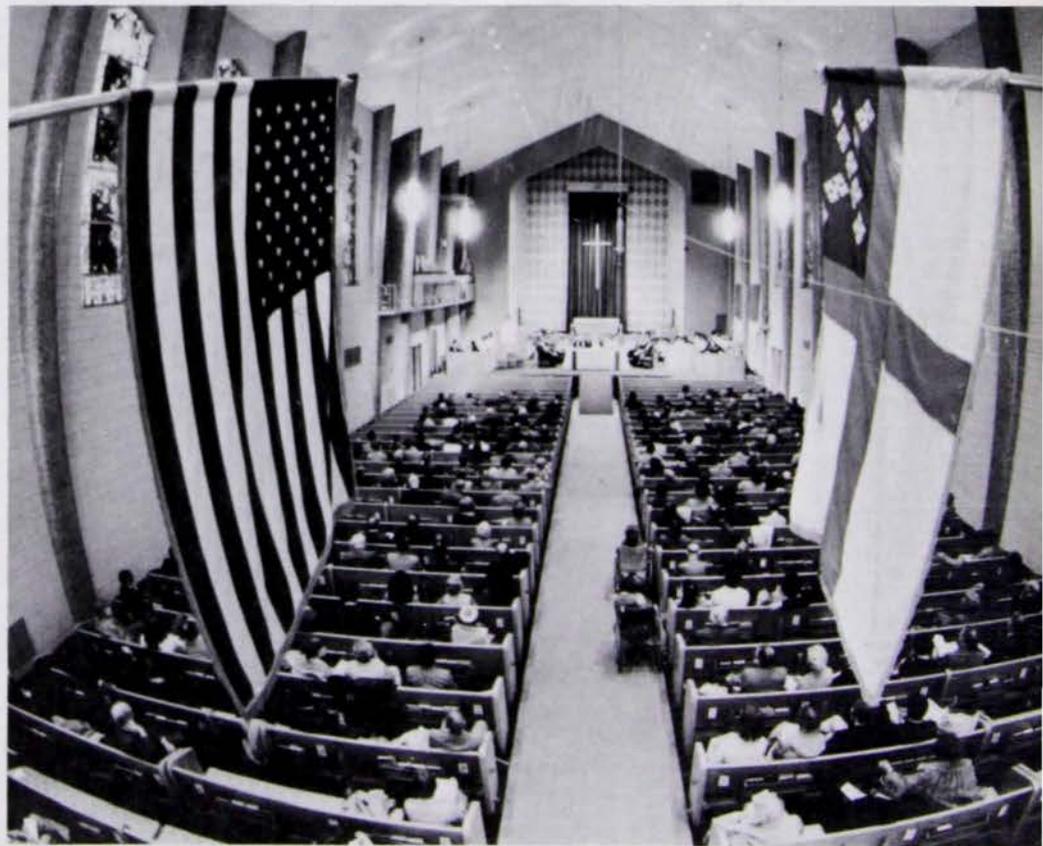
- Exercising personal and social mission. The church is commissioned to preach the prophetic witness to the world around it. Covenanting to be accountable to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ would help us to make such decisions together.

- Commissioning "apostolic collegia" (councils of oversight). A structure that would oversee this covenanting process would be put in place.

This is no agenda for "ecumenical burnouts." Paul Crow, chairperson of the Commission on Church Order, believes this gives new momentum to COCU. Member churches are committed to a new approach which will provide interim steps that will create irretrievable relationships. "This union if it is to happen will be built upon relationships, not legislation," says Crow.

To put these six elements on the launching pad requires a design that would include the "apostolic collegia." The "collegia" would be composed of persons from each of the participating churches. Their primary purpose would be to provide oversight for implementation of the design on the state, regional, and local levels.

There is much merit in this step if it can be pulled off. Eucharistic celebrations, other joint events such as ordinations, confirmations, and baptisms might be undertaken. Such celebrations would indeed witness to



Worship service during a COCU meeting.

the prayer of our Lord, "that they might be one...so that the world might believe."

Back home in local churches there does not seem to be any eagerness to leave churches in which people have become comfortable. The renewed tribalism encouraged by an emphasis on ethnicism, classism, and ideological groups has deeply affected the church. The wisdom of the church growth people tells us that homogeneous bodies grow best. Long live our divisions!

Churches vary in their emphases of the Gospel. One can sense a prevailing ethos within the life of particular churches. But we dare not suggest that the "consumer mentality" of our culture is normative for the life of the church. There is no Gospel of reconciliation unless there is reconciliation between Greek and barbarian, black and white, male and female, rich and poor. The Christ who makes us one through him must not be used simply to baptize positions, attitudes and relationships we already find congenial.

Gerald Moede, General Secretary of the Consultation, believes COCU challenges this anti-Gospel stance. The Gospel is catholic. COCU emphasizes communion in which barriers have been overcome. COCU and any single church that understands this is going against pop religious culture. It is quite clear that the prevailing cultural mood does not support crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers—a mood amply imitated in the church.

It might be seriously asked whether American churches can stomach the COCU challenge. In spite of the fact that there is general agreement on the sacraments, on the reconciliation and integration of ministries, and visible renewal of mission and witness and the mutual recognition of members, there is little visible impetus at the grass roots towards coming any closer together than we already are. There is no eagerness to be transformed into something new when one is satisfied and comfortable. Local church responses to COCU's *In Quest* would lead us to believe that COCU is going nowhere, at least not before the year 3,000.

One ought not to expect it to be different. The gap between where COCU is and where pastors, judicatory leaders and local churches are cannot be overstated. On the grass roots level is the constant question "for

"Two things remain to be tested—  
the will to union and the  
trust necessary to it."



(Left) Eugene Carson Blake, whose proposal began the Consultation, talks with William Cardinal Baum, then a Roman Catholic observer, during a COCU meeting. (Below) UM clergyman Gerald Moede (center) is installed as general secretary. (Bottom) Discussion during a meeting of the Consultation.





Members of the ten denominations participate in officiating at a Communion service.

what do we want to do this?" There is no mandate. The erosion of authority generally has affected COCU particularly. Neither Biblical model, nor consensus, nor document revisions, nor anything else will bring us to the union God offers us in Christ Jesus our Lord. The crucial bridge remaining to be built is to the local churches.

COCU has stimulated activity within the member churches toward one another. Two black churches, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion and Christian Methodist Episcopal, are planning to come together in union with a target date of 1988. Rumor has it that the African Methodist Episcopal Church would like to be in on it and may join the discussions soon.

By 1986 The United Presbyterian Church in the USA and the Presbyterian Church in the US hope for some form of union. The United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) continue their explorations toward union. These dynamics certainly add to the excitement of COCU's future. It may be that when COCU gets to the end of its adolescence there may be six churches to bring together instead of ten.

The ten churches know they have some housecleaning to do in the

meantime. There is a section in the *In Quest* document called the "Alerts". They address racism, sexism, and institutionalism. Member churches have institutionalized racism by various systems of beliefs and practices. COCU is the only attempt at church union where large bodies of blacks and whites are in the mix.

The issue of sexism emerged as an issue for COCU when growing numbers of women and men felt compelled to speak to their churches about the matter of ordaining women for the ministry. Language about God used in the church, its prayers and hymns shape God in the images of male and female too often.

Church institutionalism with its maze-like bureaucracies has given its efforts to self-serving in maintaining the practices of racism, sexism, and classism in our churches. The question for the Church of Christ Uniting is whether congregational life will be ecumenical or exclusive. It is precisely the challenging of these "isms" that is at stake in the present COCU ethos.

"Covenanting" is a way of claiming each other in new ways. The way into the future is to experience a qualitatively different relationship to one another. Anything less will not allow the

Consultation to go ahead. Doctrinal, liturgical, and missional agreement are never sufficient for a familial relationship. Covenanting offers us the chance to claim each other short of ultimate union.

Too, "covenanting" witnesses to the larger fact that the unity of the church is inextricably bound to the unity of humankind. The world is seeking unity within the human family. That is the context of the uniting church as it covenants. This opportunity toward the Church of Christ Uniting is one of the great moments of decision for Christian witness in this century. Whatever makes the church think it has anything but a head trip to offer to a fragmented world if the people of God cannot be one?

Two things remain to be tested—the *will* to union and the *trust* necessary to it. Covenanting is affirmed because there is a will and a trust that this act affirms the ultimate goal—some union in some time and in some place. That's not Cuckoo—that's COCU. ■

Arthur J. Landwehr, senior minister of the First United Methodist Church of Evanston, Illinois, is a member of the UM Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns and a delegate to COCU.



## The Black Church and Christian Unity

John E. Brandon

**A**t the 15th Plenary of the Consultation on Church Union, held in Louisville, Kentucky, March 9-12, 1982, black church representatives expressed a compelling need and desire to move toward covenanting, while at the same time voicing extreme caution and care in their relationship with predominantly white churches. There is the feeling among the black churches in COCU that God desires the union of the church, but the black church is unwilling to become a part of the same racist structures from which it separated in the 18th century.

The cloud of slavery yet hangs over the heads of black people in America. It hovers over relations in every area of

work and play, including ecumenical relations.

So many years have passed since chattel slavery, but the attitudes were firmly embedded in the minds of the dominant society about those who were seen as mere property to be dispensed and disposed at will.

### Slavery and the Churches

There was never a unanimous opinion among white Christians with regard to slavery. There were Baptist and Methodist missionaries who preached the liberation of the slaves as part of their creed on the ground that slavery was contrary to the laws of God, humankind, and nature. In 1784 the

Methodist Conference took steps toward the abolition of slavery, declaring that slavery was opposed to the laws of God and contrary to the principles and ideals of the American Revolution. Gradually the people and groups who had decided against slavery were persuaded in the opposite direction when economic conditions in the South changed.

There were outstanding black preachers who had embraced the Methodist faith and were pioneers in establishing congregations among their black sisters and brothers. One famous black preacher, known as Black Harry, accompanied Bishop Asbury and was declared by Dr.

Benjamin Rush to be the greatest orator in America. Black Harry and other black Methodist preachers preached to white as well as black congregations. But there was always some question concerning the propriety of blacks preaching to whites. There was also great opposition to whites and blacks worshipping together in God's house.

Many of these difficulties were (said to be) solved in the separate church or mission presided over by a white pastor, who was generally regarded as a missionary to the Negroes. It avoided social mixing, it permitted special preaching to slaves, and it provided the one element about which there was so much uneasiness—white supervision of Negro gatherings. Something of these separate churches is seen in a passage from Thomas N. Owen's *History of Alabama*.

"... The Baptist State Convention of 1844 recognized the duty of using all practicable and legal means of instructing slaves in the Christian religion.

"Preachers were urged, with the consent of masters, to assemble the colored people, in no very great numbers at one time or place on the plantation or at the churches, as may be convenient and adapt discourses especially to them that they pray and sing with them and endeavor to guide them into the way of heaven."

A separate church led by blacks might have alleviated some of the problems sometime ago except that, during slavery and after, whites felt that a meeting of blacks led by blacks was always a potential source of rebellion. The slave rebellions under Denmark Vessey and Nat Turner increased the suspicion of the separate, all-black church. Black gatherings were very closely watched. However, from the inhuman treatment, and refusal of white churchmen to recognize blacks as equals, blacks were forced to be separated.

In 1867 the 38 black members of Fairfield Baptist Church (a white church) addressed a petition to white members indicating the need for a separate church.

This petition was unanimously granted. Two white members donated small plots of land on which a temporary place of worship was erected for the new congregation.

### The Black Church Movement

However, the independent black church movement surfaced in 1787 in

a dramatic way with the inception of the Free African Society in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which later became the African Methodist Episcopal Church when Richard Allen walked out of St. George Methodist Church because of prejudice and discrimination against blacks. The black church was formed out of protest and discrimination.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was organized in 1796 in New York City by members of the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church. The first Church was built in 1800, called "Zion".

The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (earlier known as the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church) was organized in 1866, and in 1870 at Jackson, Tennessee, the first General Conference was held.

These black Methodist bodies are all fundamentally Methodist in orientation and organization.

The black churches in COCU have always been inclined toward ecumenical relations, beginning in 1871 when the AME, AMEZ and CME churches first expressed publicly a desire to unite. Since 1871, various attempts at union have been made. However, it does seem that within the next six years there will be a union of the AMEZ and CME Churches. The

General Conferences of both the AMEZ and CME Churches have approved the resolution that they "immediately begin the process and organization for organic union," with the expectation of union by 1988. These two churches would bring together in one denomination over two million black people.

Black church representatives at this year's COCU meeting wondered whether more visible signs of change should be manifested prior to covenanting with white churches. There is concern in the black churches about the use of power. Power in the black church is a theological concept, not simply sociological or political, but is equal to the concepts of love and justice. Jesus was concerned about the powerless. One's understanding of power influences the way the "house" is to be built.

It was expressed that there is a need now for the white church to begin living out the implications of its acknowledgments and expressed desire for right relationships.

### Jesus as the Liberator

In fact, the black church takes very seriously a theology of liberation, and Jesus as the liberator. Even in the midst of suffering, Jesus is the liberator. A black theology of liberation speaks to



THE FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN AMERICA.  
ERECTED AD 1800 ON GOLDEN HILL, NOW JOHN ST. CITY OF NEW YORK.

(Opposite page) Absalom Jones, the first ordained black Episcopal priest in the U.S., was a co-founder with Richard Allen of the Free Africa Society. (Above) John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in New York in an old watercolor. Peter Williams, sexton of the church, is standing in the doorway. Williams was later one of the founders of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

**"The first business for consideration is the demands of the Gospel and then their application to circumstances of our own lives and to the needs of the world and the times."**

the experience of black people with God.

In the response of the African Methodist Episcopal Church to the document of the Consultation on Church Union, "In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting", the A.M.E. Church states that "The theological context from which the consultation gathers its consensus must...be inclusive of liberation theology, and not overwhelmingly influenced by European thought."

Jesus as liberator is understood to be what He does and who He is. The black church's response to an understanding of the history of Jesus is that Jesus' nature was both human and divine. Jesus was a person for all seasons and all people. He transcended culture and race, with specific concern for the oppressed of society. This is why blacks can relate so readily to the person of Jesus. He is Jesus, the "child of humankind"—human, yet, Jesus, the child of God, divine.

"Jesus, the Liberator", is sounded like a refrain throughout the writings of black literature concerned with the subject of the relationship and action of the Christ in the world and black community.

For example, the "Message to the Black Church and Community" of the Black Theology Project states, "Gathered here..., from all parts of God's world to examine the meaning and implications of black theology for our day, we greet you in the name of that same *Jesus Christ, the Black Messiah and Liberator.*"

Further in the document, after preliminary remarks, it states that, "Black Theology understands the 'good news' as freedom and Jesus Christ as the Liberator."

The National Conference of Black Churchmen on several occasions, made significant statements that spoke to the Christology of the black church.

In a Statement of the Theological Commission of NCBC in 1976, Jesus was lifted up as the liberator, who

liberates both spiritually and physically. The statement makes clear that "Insofar as Jesus Christ was subjugated and humiliated without cause, to save the world, he is recognized by black theology as the oppressed man of God who took upon himself the undeserved suffering of all oppressed people."

The above statement is consistent with an inclusive christology, emphasizing "that grace is offered and available to all, even those who have never heard of Jesus of Nazareth," and, it is "only in and through Jesus that God's salvific will becomes operative in human history."

Jesus, for the black church, "is the Black Messiah who was raised from the dead to liberate the oppressed by the power of the God who delivered Israel..."

### The Whole Church

We are reminded that even though Jesus is referred to as the "Black Messiah", the black church and black theology recognize that "all efforts to reunite and renew the black church serves the ultimate purpose of confirming the catholicity, apostolicity and holiness of the whole church of Jesus Christ in which every race and nation joined together, each contributing properly and equally, upbuilds the One Church of Christ in love and justice." Also, black theology makes clear that Jesus Christ, the Black Messiah, brings to our attention a God who has seen the suffering of His people and acted to free His people. He has acted to free not only the oppressed from oppression, but the oppressor. Paul spoke to this when he writes, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Gal. 5:1)

James Cone observes: "Liberation knows no color bar. Unlike oppression that is often limited to color, the very nature of the gospel is universalism, i.e., a liberation that embraces the whole of humanity."

This global perspective in black theology enlarges our vision regarding the process of liberation. Jesus is a man for all seasons and all circumstances.

Bishop Joseph A. Johnson reminds us to take note of the fact that, "The tragedy of the interpretations of Jesus by the white American theologians during the last three hundred years is that Jesus has been too often identified with the oppressive structures and forces of the prevailing society."

Bishop Johnson refers to Luke 4:18-19, as "Jesus' manifesto of liberation," signaling His (Jesus') intention, aim, and goal of his ministry, which was not met with a friendly reception from the powers of the day, as recorded in Luke 4:28-30. "The Church building must be a point of departure, a departure into the world...to be Christian is to stand with Jesus and participate in His ministry of love and liberation."

Black churches' development historically reflects flaws inherent in white Christianity. These flaws have latent and unconscious racism which have not been accepted openly so they remain largely not dealt with, even today.

### The Demands of the Gospel

Black Christians recognize that there is no real unity of Christians, black and white, no genuine ecumenical cooperation, unless there are some basic agreements about the relationship of Jesus to this society, its people and the communities in which we live. Unfortunately, many ecumenical discussions between black and white Christians and churches deal with issues and concerns from two theological perspectives.

The first business for consideration is the demands of the Gospel and then their application to circumstances of our own lives and to the needs of the world and the times.

While recognizing the difficulties yet encountered in the union of black churches with white churches, there is no place where the issue of race is faced more squarely than in the Consultation on Church Union. Therefore, we must continue to talk frankly and openly with an eye toward the unity that God wills for the Church. ■

The Rev. John E. Brandon is Pastor of Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, New York, and former Associate General Secretary of the Consultation on Church Union, 1977-1981.

# An Interview with Geoffrey Wainwright

Tracy Early

When Geoffrey Wainwright went to Aarhus, Denmark, in 1964 as a youth delegate to the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches (WCC), he found people beginning to focus attention on a trio of topics that had been notably divisive in Christian history: baptism, eucharist (Lord's Supper, Communion) and ministry.

A British Methodist, he was later sent by the Methodist Missionary Society to teach theology in Cameroon, and then returned to teach in Birmingham, England. When his church in 1975 made him a member of the WCC Faith and Order Commission, he found himself back in the thick of discussions that had begun at Aarhus.

To a degree, baptism, eucharist and ministry had of course received attention ever since the first Faith and Order Conference at Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1927. But from 1964, the Faith and Order Commission had engaged in a sustained effort to see how much agreement the churches might be able to reach on these topics.

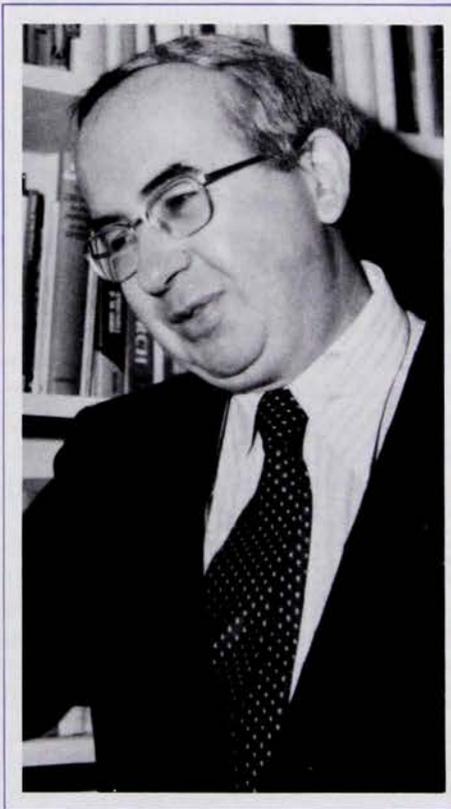
Just the year before Wainwright joined the Commission, it published a preliminary draft of its results, and sent it to the churches for comment. As the responses began coming in, Commission members made revisions, and Wainwright was now playing a key role. At the Commission's Bangalore meeting in 1978, he chaired the section charged with working out the revisions. And he had the same assignment this past January when the Commission met in Lima, Peru, and approved the final text of its statement on baptism, eucharist and ministry—now commonly known by the initials BEM.

Members voted unanimously to send it to the churches and ask for a reaction from an authoritative level. This does not mean every Commission member necessarily endorses it as the statement he or she would consider ideal from an individual perspective, but members have agreed that it is something all churches might accept as a basis of unity. Some members

would of course say that for full unity the churches will need agreement on additional points such as the role of the Bishop of Rome, a subject not treated in the BEM statement.

While continuing to serve on the Commission, Wainwright had taken a new teaching post. In 1979, he moved to New York and joined the faculty of Union Theological Seminary, though as a minister he remains affiliated with the British Methodist Church.

Interviewed at his seminary residence, he said that the BEM statement represented a remarkable degree of



agreement. Though the Catholic Church does not belong to the WCC, the Faith and Order Commission has Catholic members, as well as Eastern Orthodox and Protestants of many hues. Finding language acceptable to all parties in its "multilateral" discussions, Wainwright reported, poses far more difficulty than satisfying just two churches in the "bilateral" dialogues such as Methodists have with various other denominations. Still, he noted that whether the BEM statement ac-

tually moved the churches toward unity depends on what they do with it at an official level.

"Lima is saying, here is a large group of widely representative theologians who have found considerable convergence and a prospect of complete agreement at the level of doctrine," he said. "We're offering it to the churches and saying, this is the job as we can do it as theologians. We offer it as something you can act on."

When the preliminary BEM draft was published, the United Methodist Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (then a division of the Board of Global Ministries) set up a task force to study it. That group, with Professor J. Robert Nelson of the Boston School of Theology as chairperson and Jeanne Audrey Powers as staff, published an analysis from a United Methodist perspective, noting specific points of agreement and disagreement.

"Out of some two hundred responses, theirs was one of the fullest and most helpful," Wainwright said. "The present document is much closer to what they asked for."

As an example, he cited a task force complaint that the ministry section gave inadequate attention to the ministry expected of all Christians, ordained or not. "Now," he said, "it has five paragraphs at the beginning on the ministry of the whole people of God."

Out of about 150 members, the Faith and Order Commission currently has nine Methodists, Wainwright said. But though the influence of their theological heritage is discernible to people such as himself, who "know what phrases to listen for," he said, they do not act as a bloc or denominational caucus.

He denies that Methodist members engaged in any conspiracy to write the theology of John Wesley into the BEM document, but he nonetheless contends that it does express the best of the Wesleyan heritage. "Maybe Lutherans would say it expresses the true essence of Lutheranism," he said. "Or it could be we're just stating the Christian faith, and people of every church can find

the best of their own tradition there."

Wainwright sees Wesleyanism especially in the baptism and eucharist sections. "On baptism," he said, "we ask the churches to accept both infant baptism and believers' baptism. We do this not just for the sake of convenience, but because there is now a greater recognition of what is common to these two practices. Both express the grace of God and the human response of faith within the believing community."

An important milestone in working out this position, Wainwright said, was a 1979 consultation held by Faith and Order in Louisville. "Usually in World Council meetings, people representing the believers' baptism position are greatly outnumbered," he said. "But at Louisville the proportions were about fifty-fifty, and for the first time the believers' baptism people thought they were taken seriously by the World Council."

Wainwright's own sympathies lie more in the direction of believers' baptism, but he sees in the Wesleyan tradition a "tension" between the practice of infant baptism and a stress on the need for later conversion. "The Lima document reflects the need for both poles to be taken into account," he said.

Regarding the Lord's Supper, Wainwright says the Faith and Order statement will help Methodists recover a lost sacramental emphasis of the Wesleys. "The picture now fits very well with the hymns on the Lord's Supper published by John and Charles Wesley in their hymnal of seventeen forty-five," he said. "Many Methodists later went off to a low Protestant view, and today there are probably more Wesleyan hymns on the Lord's Supper in Catholic hymnals than in Methodist."

In the past, Wainwright noted, theologians have argued over whether the Lord's Supper was a sacrament of Christ's presence or simply a memorial. Faith and Order theologians were able to move beyond that dispute, he said, because of developments over the past half century in biblical theology and studies of early church theology and worship.

The New Testament command, "Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24), he said, is better translated, "Do this for my memorial." But in biblical thought, he said, doing something as a memorial carries a deeper significance than many Protestants have commonly imagined.

*"The Faith and Order Statement now deserves a serious response."*



Biblical scholars, he said, have come to realize that these acts, in the Old Testament (Exodus 13:8-10; Deut. 6:20-25) as well as the New Testament, were intended to put each new generation in touch with the original event. For Israelites, the Passover was a memorial that made the Exodus a present reality in every generation. In biblical thought, Wainwright said, a memorial is not a mere recollection of something past and gone, but an experience of something made newly present.

In regard to the Lord's Supper, a sacramental view means that Christians are "experiencing the presence of Christ in the assembly" and are put in touch particularly with his death and resurrection, he said.

"This view now predominates among theologians across the board—Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant," he said. "But it takes time for these ideas to percolate into the consciousness of the people."

The ministry section of the BEM statement calls for acceptance of the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter (United Methodist elder or minister) and deacon by all churches that do not presently have it. The document likewise calls for renewal in the functioning of the threefold ministry among churches where it already exists.

For British Methodists, Wainwright noted, following the BEM suggestions would mean adding both bishops and deacons. But it would also mean some adjustments for the United Methodist Church, which has a form of threefold ministry.

One change for United Methodists would come in the area of the diaconate. Though the BEM document recognizes that the diaconate may take various forms, it criticizes the practice

followed by several churches, including the United Methodist, of letting the diaconate become a preliminary step people take on the way to another form of ministry.

However, United Methodists have also had "deaconesses" and, more recently, "diaconal ministers" and these traditions could be developed to make the diaconate a distinct, recognized order.

Wainwright noted that the BEM document also proposes that the churches unify their ministries by all agreeing to accept the historic succession of bishops. Though the United Methodist Church has bishops, they do not stand in the historic succession, nor do they claim to.

"We do not use the phrase, apostolic succession," Wainwright said. "We speak of the apostolic tradition as the continuity of the whole church and its faith from the apostles onward, and of the episcopal succession as the line of bishops going back through the centuries."

Churches without bishops in the historic succession, or without bishops at all, may have the apostolic faith, he said, but the Faith and Order Commission is asking churches to accept episcopal succession as "an important sign of continuity."

How much of the BEM document can win acceptance in the churches, Wainwright naturally does not predict. The Faith and Order Commission, he said, is asking the churches for a response from "the highest appropriate level" by the end of 1984.

Meanwhile, the Commission will not be idly standing by. Rather, it will proceed with trying to write a statement called "Toward a Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today." The BEM document, if accepted, could become part of that larger confession, he said.

Wainwright recognizes that agreement among theologians, remarkable as it may be in contrast to their battles of centuries past, stands a far cry from unity among churches. Christians of the same theology may remain at odds over the more worldly issues of who will wield how much power in what ways, he noted.

But the work of theologians has its contribution to make, he believes. And he believes the Faith and Order statement on baptism, eucharist and ministry now deserves a serious response from the churches. ■

Tracy Early is a frequent contributor.

In January of 1982, the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Lima, Peru, approved a document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry containing an unprecedented amount of agreement on these basic matters of Christian faith. This document will be sent to the churches around the world for comment. Because of the historic nature of this document, we are pleased to print excerpts from it here. It must be noted that these are only excerpts and that the entire document requires careful study. Editors' note.

# BAPTISM EUCHARIST & MINISTRY

## PREFACE

If the divided churches are to achieve the visible unity they seek, one of the essential prerequisites is that they should be in basic agreement on baptism, eucharist and ministry. Naturally, therefore, the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches has devoted a good deal of attention to overcoming doctrinal division on these three themes. During the last fifty years, most of its conferences have had one or another of these subjects at the center of discussion.

Where have these efforts brought us? As demonstrated in the following texts, we have already achieved a remarkable degree of agreement. Certainly we have not yet fully reached "consensus", understood here as that experience of life and articulation of faith necessary to realize and maintain the Church's visible unity. Such consensus is rooted in the communion built on Jesus Christ and the witness of the apostles. As a gift of the Spirit it is realized as a communal experience before it can be articulated by common efforts into words. Full consensus can only be proclaimed after the churches reach the point of living and acting together in unity.

The three texts represent the significant theological convergence which Faith and Order has discussed and formulated. Those who know how widely the churches have differed in doctrine and practice on baptism, eucharist and ministry, will appreciate the importance of the large measure of

agreement registered in the statements. Virtually all the confessional traditions are included in the Commission's membership. That theologians of such widely different traditions should be able to speak so harmoniously about baptism, eucharist and ministry is unprecedented in the modern ecumenical movement. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Commission also includes among its full members theologians of the Roman Catholic and other churches which do not belong to the World Council of Churches.

Perhaps even more influential than the official studies are the changes which are taking place within the life of the churches themselves. We live in a crucial moment in the history of humankind. As the churches grow into unity, they are asking how their understandings and practices of baptism, eucharist and ministry relate to their mission in and for the renewal of human community as they seek to promote justice, peace and reconciliation. These texts cannot be divorced from the redemptive and liberating mission of Christ through the churches in the modern world.

As a result of biblical and patristic studies, together with the liturgical revival and the need for common witness, a fellowship has come into being which often cuts across confessional boundaries and within which former differences are now seen in a new light. Hence, although the lan-

guage of these statements is still largely classical in reconciling historical controversies, the driving force is contextual and contemporary. This spirit will likely stimulate many reformulations of this text into the language of our time.

These three statements constitute the Lima text. The Faith and Order Commission invites all churches to prepare an official response to these texts at the highest appropriate level of authority, whether it be a Council, Synod, Conference, Assembly or other body. In support of this process of reception, the Commission would be pleased to know as precisely as possible:

—the extent to which your church can recognize in this text the faith of the Church through the ages;

—the consequences your church can draw from this text for its relations and dialogue with other churches, as part of the common search for visible unity, particularly with those churches which also recognize the text as an expression of the apostolic faith;

—the guidance your church can take from this text for its liturgical, educational, ethical, and spiritual life and witness;

—the suggestions your church can make for the ongoing work of Faith and Order as it relates the material of this text on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry to its long-range research project, "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today."



## BAPTISM

### *The Meaning of Baptism*

Baptism is the sign of new life through Jesus Christ. It unites the one baptized with Christ and with his people. The New Testament scriptures and the liturgy of the Church unfold the meaning of baptism in various images which express the riches of Christ and the gifts of his salvation. These images are sometimes linked with the symbolic uses of water in the Old Testament. Baptism is participation in Christ's death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12); a washing away of sin (1 Cor. 6:11); a new birth (John 3:5); an enlightenment by Christ (Eph. 5:14); a reclothing in Christ (Gal. 3:27); a renewal by the Spirit (Titus 3:5); the experience of salvation from the Flood (1 Peter 3:20-21); an exodus from bondage (1 Cor. 10:1-2) and a liberation into a new humanity in which barriers of division whether of sex or race or social status are transcended (Gal. 3:27-28; 1 Cor. 12:13). The images are many but the reality is one.

### **Incorporation into the Body of Christ**

Administered in obedience to our Lord, baptism is a sign and seal of our common discipleship. Through their own baptism, Christians are brought



into union with Christ, with each other and with the Church of every time and place. Our common baptism, which unites us to Christ in faith, is thus a basic bond of unity. We are one people and are called to confess and serve one Lord in each place and in all the world. The union with Christ which we share through baptism has important implications for Christian unity. "There is...one baptism, one God and Father of us all..." (Eph. 4:4-6). When baptismal unity is realized in one holy, Catholic and apostolic Church, a genuine Christian witness can be made to the healing and reconciling love of God. Therefore, our one baptism into Christ constitutes a call to the churches to overcome their divisions, and visibly manifest their fellowship.

### Baptismal Practice

#### *Baptism of Believers and Infants*

While the possibility that infant baptism was also practiced in the apostolic age cannot be excluded, baptism upon personal profession of faith is the most clearly attested practice in the New Testament documents. In the course of history, the practice of baptism has developed in a variety of forms.

Some churches baptize infants brought by parents or guardians who are ready, in and with the Church, to bring up the children in the Christian faith. Other churches practice exclusively the baptism of believers who are able to make a personal confession of faith. Some of these churches encourage infants or children to be presented and blessed in a service which usually involves thanksgiving for the gift of the child and also the commitment of the mother and father to Christian parenthood.

All churches baptize believers coming from other religions or from unbelief who accept the Christian faith and participate in catechetical instruction.

Both the baptism of believers and the baptism of infants take place in the Church as the community of faith. When one who can answer for himself or herself is baptized, a personal confession of faith will be an integral part of the baptismal service. When an infant is baptized, the personal response will be offered at a later moment in life. In both cases, the baptized person will have to grow in the understanding of faith. For those baptized upon their own confession of

faith, there is always the constant requirements of a continuing growth of personal response in faith. In the case of infants, personal confession is expected later, and Christian nurture is directed to the eliciting of this confession. All baptism is rooted in and declares Christ's faithfulness unto death. It has its setting within the life and faith of the Church and, through the witness of the whole Church, points to the faithfulness of God, the ground of all life in faith. At every baptism the whole congregation reaffirms its faith in God and pledges itself to provide an environment of witness and service. Baptism should therefore always be celebrated and developed in the setting of the Christian community.

Baptism is an unrepeatable act. Any practice which might be interpreted as "re-baptism" must be avoided.

### Toward Mutual Recognition of Baptism

Churches are increasingly recognizing each other's baptism as the one baptism into Christ when Jesus Christ has been confessed as Lord by the candidate or, in the case of infant baptism, when confession has been made by the church (parents, guardians, godparents and congregation) and affirmed later by personal faith and commitment. Mutual recognition of baptism is acknowledged as an important sign and means of expressing the baptismal unity given in Christ. Wherever possible, mutual recognition should be expressed explicitly by the churches.

In order to overcome their differences, believer baptists and those who practice infant baptism should reconsider certain aspects of their practices. The first may seek to express more visibly the fact that children are placed under the protection of God's grace. The latter must guard themselves against the practice of apparently indiscriminate baptism and take more seriously their responsibility for the nurture of baptized children to mature commitment to Christ.

### The Celebration of Baptism

Baptism is administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In the celebration of baptism the symbolic dimension of water should be taken seriously and not minimized. The act of immersion can vividly express the reality that in baptism the

***"Baptism is an unrepeatable act. Any practice which might be interpreted as 're-baptism' is to be avoided."***

Christian participates in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.

As was the case in the early centuries, the gift of the Spirit in baptism may be signified in additional ways; for example, by the sign of the laying on of hands, and by anointing or chrismation. The very sign of the cross recalls the promised gift of the Holy Spirit who is the instalment and pledge of what is yet to come when God has fully redeemed those whom he has made his own (Eph. 1:13-14). The recovery of such vivid signs may be expected to enrich the liturgy.

Within any comprehensive order of baptism at least the following elements should find a place: the proclamation of the Scriptures referring to baptism; an invocation of the Holy Spirit; a renunciation of evil; a profession of faith in Christ and in the Holy Trinity; the use of water; a declaration that the persons baptized have acquired a new identity as sons and daughters of God, and as members of the Church, called to be witnesses to the Gospel. Some churches consider that Christian initiation is not complete without the sealing of the baptized with the gift of the Holy Spirit and participation in holy communion.

It is appropriate to explain in the context of the baptismal service the meaning of baptism as it appears from Scripture (i.e., the participation in Christ's death and resurrection, conversion, pardon and cleansing, gift of the Spirit, incorporation into the body of Christ and sign of the Kingdom).

#### *Commentary*

Recent discussion indicates that more attention should be given to misunderstandings encouraged by the socio-cultural context in which baptism takes place:

In many large European and American majority churches infant baptism is often practiced in an apparently indiscriminate way. This contributes to the reluctance of churches which practice believers' baptism to acknowledge the validity of infant bap-

***“Every Christian receives this gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ.”***



tism: this fact should lead to more critical reflection on the meaning of baptism within those majority churches themselves.

Some African churches practice baptism of the Holy Spirit without water, through the laying on of hands, while recognizing other churches' baptism. A study is required concerning this practice and its relation to baptism with water.

Baptism is normally administered by an ordained minister, though in certain circumstances others are allowed to baptize.

Since baptism is intimately connected with the corporate life and worship of the Church, it should normally be administered during public worship, so that the members of the congregation may be reminded of their own baptism and may welcome into their fellowship those who are baptized and whom they are committed to nurture in the Christian faith. The sacrament is appropriate to great festival occasions such as Easter, Pentecost and Epiphany, as was the practice in the early Church.

## **EUCHARIST**

### *The Meaning of the Eucharist*

The eucharist is essentially the sacrament of the gift which God makes to us in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian receives this gift of salvation through communion in the body and blood of Christ. In the eucharistic meal, in the eating and drinking of the bread and wine, Christ grants communion with himself. God himself acts, giving life to the body of Christ and renewing each member. In accordance with Christ's promise, each baptized member of the body of Christ receives in the eucharist the assurance of the forgiveness of sins (Mk. 26:28) and the pledge of eternal life (Jn. 6:51-58). Although the eucharist is essentially one complete act, it will be considered here under the following aspects: thanksgiving to the Father, memorial of Christ, invocation of the Spirit, communion of the faithful, meal of the kingdom.

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### *The Eucharist as Thanksgiving to the Father*

The eucharist, which always includes both word and sacrament, is a proclamation and a celebration of the work of God. It is the great thanksgiving to the Father for everything which he accomplished in creation, redemption and sanctification, for everything which he accomplishes now in the Church and in the world in spite of the sins of human beings, for everything that he will accomplish in bringing his kingdom to fulfilment. Thus the eucharist is the benediction (*berakah*) by which the Church expresses its thankfulness to God for all his benefits.

The eucharist is the great sacrifice of praise by which the Church speaks on behalf of the whole creation. For the world which God has reconciled to himself is present at every eucharist: in the bread and wine, in the persons of the faithful, and in the prayers they offer for themselves and for all people. Christ unites the faithful with himself and includes their prayers within his own intercession so that the faithful are transfigured and their prayers accepted.

The sacrifice of praise is possible only through Christ, with him and in him. The bread and wine, fruits of the earth and of human labour, are presented to the Father in faith and thanksgiving. The eucharist thus signifies what the world is to become: an offering and hymn of praise to the Creator, a universal communion in the Body of Christ, a kingdom of justice, love and peace in the Holy Spirit.

### *The Eucharist as Invocation of the Spirit*

It is in virtue of the living word of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit that the bread and wine become the sacramental signs of Christ's body and blood. They remain so for the purpose of communion.

*Commentary:* In the history of the Church there have been various attempts to understand the mystery of the real and unique presence of Christ in the eucharist. Some are content merely to affirm this presence without seeking to explain it. Others consider it necessary to assert a change wrought by the Holy Spirit and Christ's words, in consequence of which there is no longer just ordinary bread and wine but the body and blood of Christ. Others again have developed an explanation of the real presence which, though not claiming to

exhaust the significance of the mystery, seeks to protect it from damaging interpretations.

### *The Eucharist as Communion of the Faithful*

Solidarity in the eucharistic communion of the body of Christ and responsible care of Christians for one another and the world find specific expression in the liturgies: in the mutual forgiveness of sins; the sign of peace; intercession for all; the eating and drinking together; the taking of the elements to the sick and those in prison or the celebration of the eucharist with them. All these manifestations of love in the eucharist are directly related to Christ's own testimony as a servant, in whose servanthood Christians themselves participate.

### *The Eucharist as Meal of the Kingdom*

The eucharist opens up the vision of the divine rule which has been promised as the final renewal of creation and a foretaste of it. Signs of this renewal are present in the world wherever the grace of God is manifest and human beings work for justice, love and peace. The eucharist is the feast at which the Church gives thanks to God for these signs and joyfully celebrates and anticipates the coming of the Kingdom in Christ (I Cor. 11:26; Mt. 26:29).

The world, to which renewal is promised, is present in the whole eucharistic celebration. The world is present in the thanksgiving to the Father, where the Church speaks on behalf of the whole creation; in the memorial of Christ, where the Church, united with its great High Priest and Intercessor, prays for the world; in the prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, where the Church asks for sanctification and new creation.

Reconciled in the eucharist, the members of the body of Christ are called to be servants of reconciliation amongst men and women and witnesses of the joy of resurrection. As Jesus went out to publicans and sinners and had table-fellowship with them during his earthly ministry, so Christians are called in the eucharist to be in solidarity with the outcast and to become signs of the love of Christ who lived and sacrificed himself for all and now gives himself in the eucharist.

The very celebration of the eucharist is an instance of the Church's participation in God's mission to the world. This participation takes everyday form in the proclamation of the Gospel, service of the neighbor, and faithful presence in the world.

As it is entirely the gift of God, the eucharist brings into the present age a new reality which transforms Christians into the image of Christ and therefore makes them his effective witnesses. The eucharist is precious food for missionaries, bread and wine for pilgrims on their apostolic journey. The eucharistic community is nourished and strengthened for confessing by word and action the Lord Jesus Christ who gave his life for the salvation of the world. As it becomes one people, sharing the meal of the one Lord, the eucharistic assembly must be concerned for gathering also those who are at present beyond its visible limits, because Christ invited to his feast all for whom he died. Insofar as Christians cannot unite in full fellowship around the same table to eat the same loaf and drink from the

***"The world,  
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whole eucharistic  
celebration."***

same cup, their missionary witness is weakened at both the individual and the corporate levels.

### *The Celebration of the Eucharist*

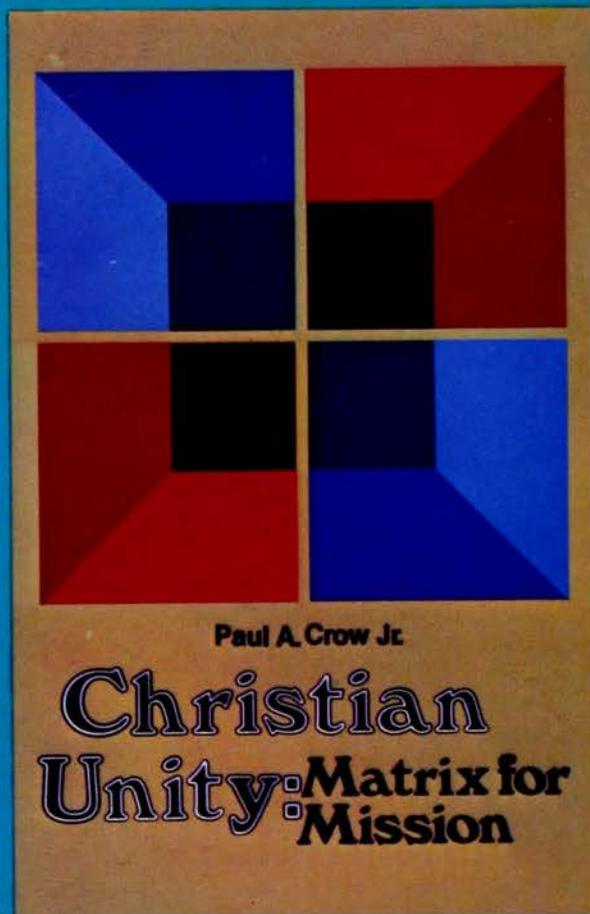
The eucharistic liturgy is essentially a single whole, consisting historically of the following elements in varying sequence and of diverse importance:

- hymns of praise
- act of repentance
- declaration of pardon
- proclamation of the Word of God, in various forms
- confession of faith (creed)
- intercession for the whole Church and for the world
- preparation of the bread and wine
- thanksgiving to the Father for the marvels of creation, redemption and sanctification (deriving from the Jewish tradition of the *berakah*).
- the words of Christ's institution of the sacrament according to the New Testament tradition
- the anamnesis or memorial of the great acts of redemption, passion, death, resurrection, ascension and Pentecost, which brought the Church into being
- the invocation of the Holy Spirit on the community, and the elements

*(Continued on p. 26)*

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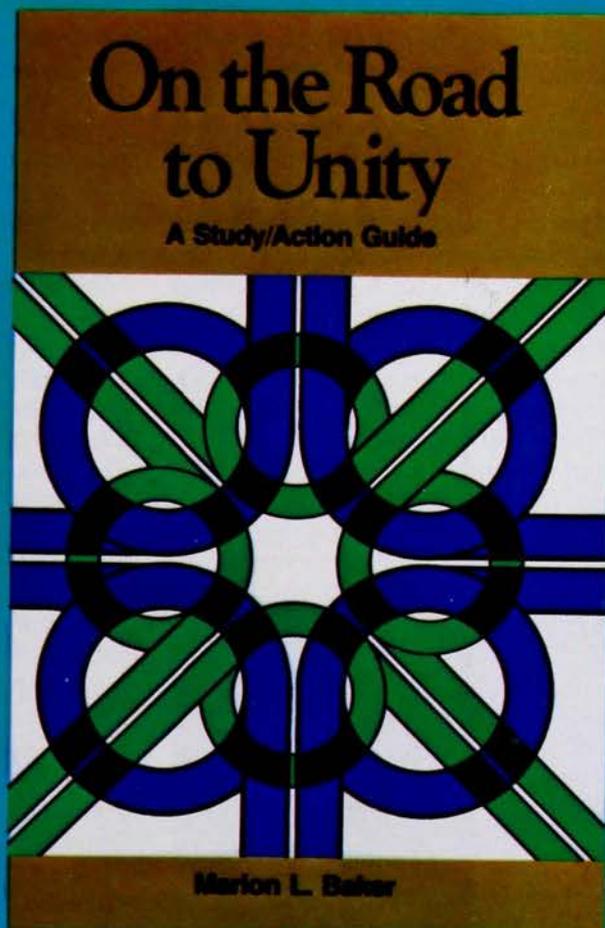
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of bread and wine (*epiklesis*, either before the words of institution or after the memorial or both, or some other reference to the Holy Spirit which adequately expresses the "epikletic" character of the eucharist)

—consecration of the faithful to God  
—reference to the communion of saints

—prayer for the return of the Lord and the definitive manifestation of his kingdom

—the Amen of the whole community

—the Lord's Prayer  
—a sign of reconciliation and peace  
—breaking of the bread

—eating and drinking in communion with Christ and with each member of the Church

—final act of praise  
—blessing and sending.

The best way toward unity in eucharistic celebration and communion is the renewal of the eucharist itself in the different churches in regard to teaching and liturgy. The churches should test their liturgies in the light of the eucharistic agreement now in process of attainment.

## MINISTRY

### *The Calling of the Whole People of God*

In a broken world God calls the whole of humanity to become God's people. For this purpose God chose Israel and then spoke in a unique and decisive way in Jesus Christ, God's Son. Jesus made his own the nature, condition and cause of the whole human race, giving himself as a sacrifice for all. Jesus's life of service, his death and resurrection, are the foundation of a new community which is built up continually by the good news of the Gospel and the gifts of the sacraments. The Holy Spirit unites in a single body those who follow Jesus Christ and sends them as witnesses into the world. Belonging to the Church means living in communion with God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

### *The Church and the Ordained Ministry*

Differences in terminology are part of the matter under debate. In order to avoid confusion in the discussions on

the ordained ministry in the Church, it is necessary to delineate clearly how various terms are used in the following paragraphs.

(a) The word *charism* denotes the gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit on any member of the body of Christ for the building up of the community and the fulfilment of its calling.

(b) The word *ministry* in its broadest sense denotes the service to which the whole people of God is called, whether as individuals, as a local community, or as the universal Church. Ministry or ministries can also denote the particular institutional forms which this service may take.

(c) The term *ordained ministry* refers to persons who have received a charism and whom the church appoints for service by ordination through the invocation of the Spirit and the laying on of hands.

(d) Many churches use the word *priest* to denote certain ordained ministers. Because this usage is not universal, this document will discuss the substantive questions in paragraph 16.

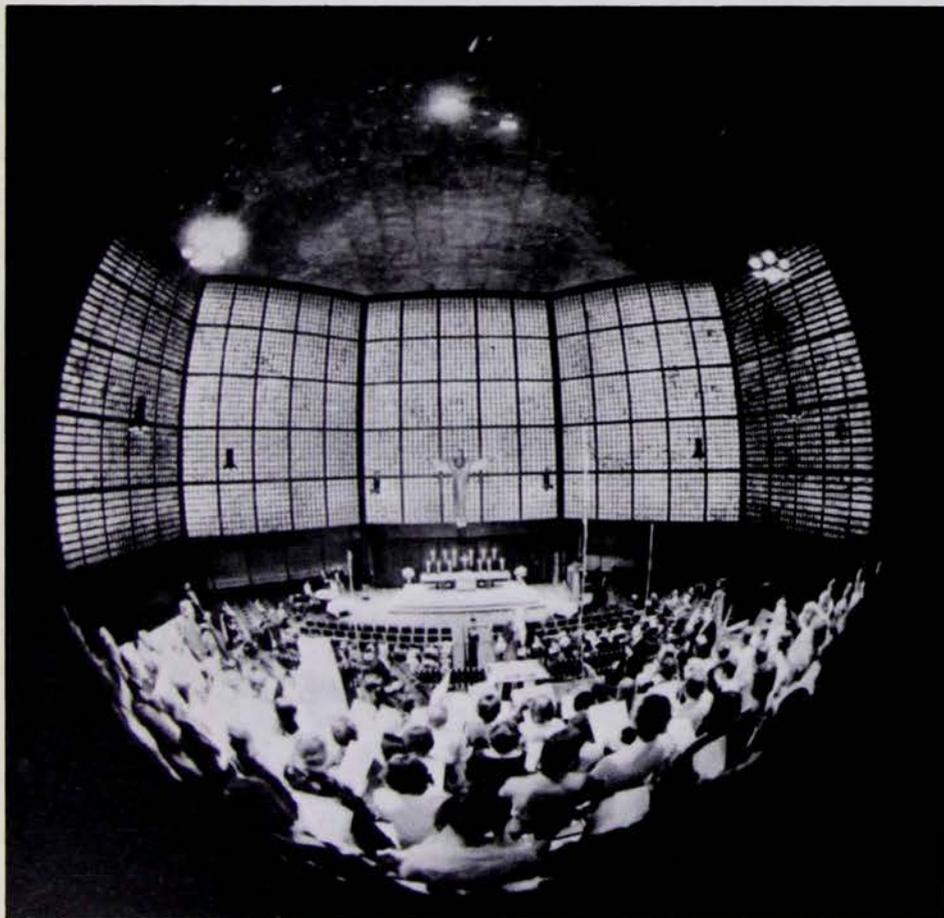
### *The ordained ministry*

In order to fulfil its mission, the Church needs persons who are publicly and continually responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ, and thereby provide, within a multiplicity of gifts, a focus of its unity. The ministry of such persons, who since very early times have been ordained, is constitutive for the life and witness of the Church.

As Christ chose and sent the apostles, Christ continues through the Holy Spirit to choose and call persons into the ordained ministry. As heralds and ambassadors, ordained ministers are representatives of Jesus Christ to the community, and proclaim his message of reconciliation. As leaders and teachers they call the community to submit to the authority of Jesus Christ, the teacher and prophet, in whom law and prophets were fulfilled. As pastors, under Jesus Christ the chief shepherd, they assemble and guide the dispersed people of God, in anticipation of the coming Kingdom.

The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating the sacraments, and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its caring ministry.

*Commentary:* These tasks are not exercised by the ordained ministry



"In a broken world God calls the whole of humanity to become God's people."

in an exclusive way. Since the ordained ministry and the community are inextricably related, all members participate in fulfilling these functions. In fact, every charism serves to assemble and build up the body of Christ. Any members of the body may share in proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, may contribute to the sacramental life of that body. The ordained ministry fulfils these functions in a representative way, providing the focus for the unity of the life and witness of the community.

It is especially in the eucharistic celebration that the ordained ministry is the visible focus of the deep and all-embracing communion between Christ and the members of his body. In the eucharist Christ gathers, teaches, and nourishes the Church. It is Christ who invites to the meal and who presides at it. In most of the churches this presidency is signified and represented by an ordained minister.

*Commentary:* The New Testament says very little about the ordering of the eucharist. There is no explicit evidence about the presidency of the eucharist. Very soon it is clear that an ordained ministry presides over the celebration. If the ordained ministry is to provide a focus for the unity of the life and witness of the Church, it is appropriate that an ordained minister should be given this task. It is intimately related to the task of guiding the community, i.e. supervising its life (*episkope*) and strengthening its vigilance in relation to the truth of the apostolic message and the coming of the Kingdom.

*Ordained ministry and priesthood* (Paragraph 16) Jesus Christ is the unique priest of the new covenant. Christ's life was given as a sacrifice for all. Derivatively, the Church as a whole can be described as a priesthood. All members are called to offer their being "as a living sacrifice" and to intercede for the Church and the salvation of the world. Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood of God and to the priesthood of the Church. But they may appropriately be called priests because they fulfil a particular priestly service by strengthening and building up the royal and prophetic priesthood of the faithful through word and sacraments, through their prayers of intercession, and through their pastoral guidance of the community.

### *The Ministry of Men and Women in the Church*

Where Christ is present, human barriers are being broken. The Church is called to convey to the world the image of a new humanity. There is in Christ no male or female (Gal. 3:28). Both women and men must discover together their contributions to the service of Christ in the Church. The Church must discover the ministry which can be provided by women as well as that which can be provided by men. A deeper understanding of the comprehensiveness of ministry which reflects the interdependence of men and women needs to be more widely manifested in the life of the Church.

Though they agree on this need, the churches draw different conclusions as to the admission of women to the ordained ministry. An increasing number of churches have decided that there is no biblical or theological reason against ordaining women, and many of them have subsequently proceeded to do so. Yet many churches hold that the tradition of the Church in this regard must not be changed.

### *Guiding principles for the exercise of the ordained ministry in the Church*

Three considerations are important in this respect. The ordained ministry should be exercised in a personal, collegial and communal way. *Personal* in that the presence of Christ among his people can most effectively be pointed to by the person ordained to proclaim the Gospel and to call the community to serve the Lord in unity of life and witness. *Collegial*, for there is need for a college of ordained ministers sharing in the common task of representing the concerns of the community. Finally, the intimate relationship between the ordained ministry and the community must find expression in a *communal* dimension where the exercise of the ordained ministry must be rooted in the life of the community and requires the community's effective participation in the discovery of God's will and the guidance of the Spirit.

### *Functions of bishops, presbyters and deacons*

*Bishops* preach the Word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacra-

mental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission. They relate the Christian community in their area to the wider Church, and the universal Church to their community. They, in communion with the presbyters and deacons and the whole community, are responsible for the orderly transfer of ministerial authority in the Church.

*Presbyters* serve as pastoral ministers of Word and sacraments in a local eucharistic community. They are preachers and teachers of the faith, exercise pastoral care, and bear responsibility for the discipline of the congregation to the end that the world may believe and that the entire mem-

***"The word ministry in its broadest sense denotes the service to which the whole people of God is called. . . ."***

bership of the Church may be renewed, strengthened and equipped in ministry. Presbyters have particular responsibility for the preparation of members for Christian life and ministry.

*Deacons* represent to the Church its calling as servant in the world. By struggling in Christ's name with the myriad needs of societies and persons, deacons exemplify the interdependence of worship and service in the Church's life. They exercise responsibility in the worship of the congregation: for example by reading the Scriptures, preaching and leading the people in prayer. They help in the teaching of the congregation. They exercise a ministry of love within the community. They fulfil certain administrative tasks and may be elected to responsibilities for governance.

### *Succession of the apostolic ministry*

The primary manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole. The succession is an expression of the permanence and, therefore, of the continuity of Christ's own mission in which the Church participates. Within the Church the ordained ministry has a particular task of preser-

ving and actualizing the apostolic faith. The orderly transmission of the ordained ministry is therefore a powerful expression of the continuity of the Church throughout history; it also underlines the calling of the ordained minister as guardian of the faith. Where churches see little importance in orderly transmission, they should ask themselves whether they have not to change their conception of continuity in the apostolic tradition. On the other hand, where the ordained ministry does not adequately serve the proclamation of the apostolic faith, churches must ask themselves whether their ministerial structures are not in need of reform.

In churches which practice the succession through the episcopate, it is increasingly recognized that a continuity in apostolic faith, worship and mission has been preserved in churches which have not retained the form of historic episcopate. This recognition finds additional support in the fact that the reality and function of the episcopal ministry have been preserved in many of these churches, with or without the title "bishop". Ordination, for example, is always done in them by persons in whom the Church recognizes the authority to transmit the ministerial commission.

These considerations do not diminish the importance of the episcopal ministry. On the contrary, they enable churches which have not retained the episcopate to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church. Today churches, including those engaged in union negotiations, are expressing willingness to accept episcopal succession as a sign of the apostolicity of the life of the whole Church. Yet, at the same time, they cannot accept any suggestions that the ministry exercised in their own tradition should be invalid until the moment that it enters into an existing line of episcopal suggestion. Their acceptance of the episcopal succession will best further the unity of the whole Church if it is part of a wider process by which the episcopal churches themselves also regain their lost unity.

## Ordination

### *The meaning of ordination*

The Church ordains certain of its members for the ministry in the name of Christ by the invocation of the Spirit and the laying on of hands (I Tim. 4:14; II Tim. 1:6); in so doing it seeks to continue the mission of the apostles and to remain faithful to their teaching. The act of ordination by those who are appointed for this ministry attests the bond of the Church with Jesus Christ and the apostolic witness, recalling that it is the risen Lord who is the true ordainer and bestows the gift. In ordaining, the Church, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, provides for the faithful proclamation of the Gospel and humble service in the name of Christ. The laying on of hands is the sign of the gift of the Spirit, rendering visible the fact that the ministry was instituted in the revelation accomplished in Christ, and reminding the Church to look to him as the source of its commission.

### *The act of ordination*

A long and early Christian tradition places ordination in the context of

worship and especially of the eucharist. Such a place for the service of ordination preserves the understanding of ordination as an act of the whole community, and not of a certain order within it or of the individual ordained. The act of ordination by the laying on of hands of those appointed to do so is at one and the same time: invocation of the Holy Spirit (*epiklesis*); sacramental sign; acknowledgement of gifts and commitment.

Ordination is an invocation to God that he bestow the power of the Holy Spirit upon the new minister in the new relation which is established between this minister and the local Christian community and, by intention, the Church universal. The otherness of God's initiative, of which the ordained ministry is a sign, is here acknowledged in the act of ordination itself. "The Spirit blows where it wills" (John 3:3): the invocation of the Spirit implies the absolute dependence on God for the outcome of the Church's prayer. This means that the Spirit may set new forces in motion and open new possibilities "far more abundantly



than all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

### Towards The Mutual Recognition of the Ordained Ministries

In order to achieve mutual recognition, different steps are required of different churches. For example:

Churches which have preserved the episcopal succession are asked to recognize both the apostolic content of the ordained ministry which exists in churches which have not maintained such succession and also the existence in these churches of a ministry of *epiklesis* in various forms.

Churches without the episcopal succession, and living in faithful continuity with the apostolic faith and mission, have a ministry of Word and Sacrament, as is evident from the belief, practice and life of those churches. These churches are asked to realize that the continuity with the Church of the apostles finds profound expression in the successive laying on of hands by bishops and that, though they may not lack the continuity of the apostolic tradition, this sign will strengthen and deepen that continuity. They may need to recover the sign of the episcopal succession.

Some churches ordain both men and women, others ordain only men. Differences on this issue raise obstacles to the mutual recognition of ministries. But those obstacles must not be regarded as substantive hindrance for further efforts towards mutual recognition. Openness to each other holds the possibility that the Spirit may well speak to one church through the insights of another. Ecumenical consideration, therefore, should encourage, not restrain, the facing of this question.

The mutual recognition of churches and their ministries implies decision by the appropriate authorities and a liturgical act from which point unity would be publicly manifest. Several forms of such public acts have been proposed: mutual laying on of hands, eucharistic con-celebration, solemn worship without a particular rite of recognition, the reading of a text of union during the course of a celebration. No one liturgical form would be absolutely required, but in any case it would be necessary to proclaim the accomplishment of mutual recognition publicly. The common celebration of the eucharist would certainly be the place for such an act. ■



# Some Barriers to Christian Unity

Walter G. Muelder

**W**hat are major sociological barriers to Christian unity and what are persistent institutional barriers to church unity in the denominations? The social barriers follow familiar cultural components which are institutionalized like the family, economic life, political order, communication and education, art, and religion. The churches' institutional life reflects and tends to confirm these and to reinforce them. As a prophetic change agent the church is called to transform the culture and to redeem it.

Today the church is divided in its understanding of family life, how it should be regulated, the sexual roles of its members, along with their freedoms and duties, the place of single persons, etc. The church is also divided along economic class lines and is struggling with questions of the gap between rich and poor and with the economics of energy and ecology. Hunger is higher on the agenda of many churches than is oppression of the poor. There is division also in the political loyalties of church members and the appropriate use of government to effect normal reform, with much wrangling over church and state issues. In communication and education the disunity across denominational lines involves both standards of private and public morality, permissiveness and authority, and the responsibilities of schools and the mass media. In short, religion is so lock-stitched in the social fabric that the whole range of its meanings and values becomes an inescapable agenda for doctrine, ethics, and church order. Since the ultimate source of the church as minister in the realm of redemption is the same as that for the order of creation, the movement for fuller Christian unity entails its servant leadership in total human development.

## Positive and Negative Functions of Institutions

Since anti-institutionalism has persisted far beyond the 1960s, let me assure us all of the positive functions of religious institutions. The *koinonia* (community or fellowship) demands institutional form. I shall list nine

positive functions in church structures: 1) the media of mission and witness and service in history; 2) making the gospel of Christ articulate and definite, for even doctrine is a mode of institution; 3) giving structure to the body of Christ and hence indispensable for Christian unity; 4) expressions of accountability; 5) providing organs of continuity; 6) helping to make unity visible and graspable; 7) providing the elements of relevance in service; 8) giving Christianity social significance in the midst of competing secular institutions of culture; and 9) as an instrument of power and empowerment in the service of love and justice.

Negative tendencies are those which inhibit church institutions from fulfilling their ecumenical destiny of increasing the love of God and neighbor in the world: 1) an idolatry of historical structures and traditions whereby they become sacred and untouchable objects; 2) the reversal of roles from servant to master over persons; 3) the misuse of power; 4) the confusion of the medium with the message; 5) the fear of change; 6) the imprisonment of the message in constitutions, politics, and confessions; 7) the refusal to die; 8) efforts to predetermine how the Spirit will speak to future generations; and 9) entangling alliances with privileged elites in culture and the social order.

## Some Relevant Developments

In recent years the churches have been divided not only along the themes of irreducible cultural institutions like family and politics but across them in terms of race, sex, and class. Not least have been the tensions of the liberation struggles; civil rights activism, organized movements about nuclear energy, ecological ideologies, youth and drugs, medical practices, privatism and many others. Ethnic caucuses are both intra-institutional and transdenominational, as are also caucuses for racial justice, gay rights, and women's full participation and recognition. Institutionalized caucuses generate their own rival modes of unity. The charismatic movement has taken the threefold form of denominational, non-denominational, and ecumenical. In these days it takes a tough and committed ecumenical movement to grapple effectively with all these forces. I can deal here with only a few.

Racism is the most basic. For the churches it has four distinguishable elements: a) problems of exclusion, b) problems of racial pride, c) problems of identity, and d) problems of seeking roots in a rootless society. Exclusion involves economic class, poverty, social process, and structural injustice. Black theology is manifoldly an



affirmation of Christian and churchly identity, a quest for roots, a protest against exclusion, an affirmation of indigenization, and a statement of missional relevance. In an ecumenical context racism displays the inability thus far for many denominations adequately to assimilate members of racial minorities into their own inclusive structures. The negative role of failure has been to institutionalize church bodies composed predominantly of racial minorities, who thereafter have all the usual institutional barriers to Christian unity. Some affirm a racial pride which says, in effect, "We will develop our own." The exclusionist still says, in effect, "They are better off in their own churches and neighborhoods."

The movement for church unity has principally developed in mainline Protestantism, with Roman Catholicism joining after Vatican II. But mainline Protestant bodies have been declining since about 1965 and their defensive reaction to loss of growth has serious ecumenical repercussions. Hoge and Roozen (*Understanding Church Growth and Decline*) have noted an element in this decline in membership of long range significance to our topic: "Age differences in church attendance and religious attitudes occurred progressively after about 1960. Most of the decline in church attendance and membership since 1960 has been among persons 39 years old or less."

Two observations may be in order

here: 1) the earlier ecumenical movement drew heavily for its leadership from the university student Christian movement which has virtually disappeared in mainline Protestantism. Diminished Christian unity among college age youth means diminished leadership trust during the succeeding generations with respect to church unity efforts. 2) Many of the ecumenical leaders who have devoted years in church merger efforts are now fatigued and less inspired to take even more years in the tiring tasks of negotiating unions to a conclusion. They have other agendas. A new cadre of committed and inspired leaders must be found from the under-forty age group in the declining membership segment of mainline denominations.

The values of the younger adult families and single people also have sociological and institutional significance. They affect birthrates and membership participation, for adults in greater proportion attend when and where their children are in church school. Moreover, their changing attitudes on social questions are associated with church commitment and attendance. These include values regarding sex behavior, abortion, family size, civil liberties, marijuana legalization, and political party affiliation. Hoge and Roozen observe: "In every instance the attitude trends are in the direction of individualism, personal freedom, and tolerance of diversity. The associated change in the realm of religion has been toward individual-

ism and away from church commitment. The change has been much greater among young adults, and especially college-educated young adults, than elsewhere."

The implications for local ecumenism should not be missed both within congregations and in the social context. The context of growing families is still fraught with the values that emerged in the massive counter-culture of the 1960s and persisted after the end of conscription for the Indo-China War. Decline in church membership of mainline Protestant churches is due more to failure to recruit new members from this age group than from the dropping out of existing members. But the proportionate growth of older members and their orientation toward local church loyalty tends to polarize the value scale and often leads to conflict. The trends are not restricted to the mainline middle-class denominations, however. Although decline is most rapid in middle-class, cosmopolitan, theologically liberal churches, it has also set in with the less cosmopolitan, theologically moderate denominations. The decline is least where the value distance from the dominant culture profile is the greatest.

Ecumenism has thus far been a correlate, not a determinant or consequent, of denominational life; and denominations are accommodated to the major cultural trends. The probable reason is that church unity has been an *additive* and not a *constitutive* aspect of their evangelical life. And

**"The churches have been divided not only along the themes of cultural institutions like family and politics but across them in terms of race, class and sex." (Below) A voting rights march in Alabama. (Opposite page) A hungry, homeless man at a charity kitchen in New York City.**



this is dangerous in the national context and in the local context. Denominations which most strongly embrace cultural trends in order to win members are most strongly affected by changes in the cultural climate, particularly in the short run. Accommodating to the values of the privatistic young adults, whether married or single, does not provide a cadre for ecumenism. And they are not being educated in the local congregations in the doctrines of the ecumenical consensus. They are being offered a least common denominator type of spiritual psychotherapy, essentially tolerant of conflicting values and highly individualistic. The churches which have grown in recent years are less accommodative to value changes, are more evangelical, more theologically conservative, more distinctive in life-style and morality, and they have stressed maintenance of unitary beliefs. Many young adults outside the churches sit quite loose to organized religion and cast about for all manner of value symbols, transient modes of meditation, including the so-called Eastern disciplines of spirituality.

A further word needs attention about the polarization of American culture in relation to institutionalism. The quest for church unity and for the survival of middle-class mainline Christianity must acknowledge a major polarization of American culture which is entailed in the crisis of the age group under forty. It is that between the humanist-individualist-utilitarian ethos and segment of secular culture, on the one hand, and the conservative evangelical mode of Christianity, on the other. In other words, the long-term polarization is not within Christian America, but between the humanistic-scientific-secularistic subculture and the right wing of Protestantism, Orthodoxy, and Catholicism. The mainline churches which constituted a synthesis or bridge between secular humanism and Christianity for many decades are at present not effectively sustaining the middle ground. As some have said the 'middle' is collapsing.

### Economic Factors

Church unity movements are trapped by economic recession and economic doldrums. Denominational austerity has at least five effects: 1) It makes the bureaus and agencies protective and defensive. 2) It reinforces the already serious introversion of denominations. 3) It tends to push

Christian unity even further to the margin of budgetary and program attention. 4) It poses for churches the dilemma of prophetic utterance versus support maintenance. 5) The cultivation of present constituencies for already established programs is intensified.

As American institutions the denominations are deeply rooted in the capitalist-democratic order. Laissez-faire competition and establishing volunteer associations are characteristic. Objectives are limited, pragmatic, and single-mindedly promoted. Market appeals and convenience consumerism infiltrates recruitment of money and members. One caters to what one can "put across" and what people are "ready for". When the group is under forty, the style and the substance of the appeal tends to accommodate to their interest. For these reasons co-operative and associative modes of church unity are more readily adopted than organic and covenantal forms of union.

Economic factors seem to be playing a greater role in church unity movements than two decades ago. Despite doctrinal consensus and the need for covenanted and shared life in every local place, the ethos of bureaucratic and denominational competition tends to make ecumenism expendable. This can be tragic in the changing urban situation.

I wish to stress particularly the dangers for all church life of the growth of a permanent underclass in urban America. Lewis Harry Spence points out four elements in the progressive degradation in poor communities: 1) the increasing exclusion of the poor from the productive economic life of the larger community, that is, from work. 2) the absence in poor communities of reliable and responsive ordering institutions. 3) the confusion across the society of concepts of individual cultural liberation with the economic and political liberation of oppressed communities; and 4) the absence of direct access for the poor to the political process. Of these the most basic is unemployment. To withdraw employment, that is, direct access to productive activity, means to withhold the primary underpinnings of order and mutual cooperation from the community. When semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, previously available, disappear, the impact on poor communities is devastating.

Singly, the churches are impotent to tackle the ecology of such devastation.

For churches which wish to serve the metropolitan area, the challenge is to adopt a strategy which identifies with the oppressed. But the temptation denominationally in a period of budgetary crisis is simply to salvage what can be conserved or to abandon the scene. Localism feeds introversion when not ecumenically directed. Institutionalism feeds failure of nerve.

Many observers note the overall decline of church social action. But closer analysis shows that social action is not necessarily a cause of church membership decline. Admittedly, the coalescence of economic and political conflict in the churches tends to produce an enfeeblement of the Life and Work dynamic in and among church bodies. This is the case despite the strength of particular action-oriented caucuses and the new leadership generated in such radical movements as black, feminist, and liberation theology. Single-cause associations even across denominational boundaries do not an ecumenical social ethic make. They often create rivalry for scarce resources.

Moreover, the talent that has gone into these more specialized reforms has siphoned off energy of a more comprehensive type. The organic wholeness of Christian unity at both the national and the local level is thus compromised by both denominational priorities and single-cause limitations. Even within the groups committed to "Life and Work" the energy of many denominational and ecumenical leaders is drained by hard-pressed budgets so that these leaders become more intramural managers than captains of the hosts of clergy and laity united for transforming social change. The deluge of promotional mail for innumerable fragmented approaches to noble causes is ample witness to the cost of disunity.

In all such activities there is an underdeveloped cadre of the laity. Thirty years ago there was a vigorous literature on the ministry of the laity on the frontiers of the church and of the kingdom of God, but today the institutional drift still favors the bureaucratized clergy. And clergy have a built-in predisposition for loyalty to the order into which they were ordained. There is an enormous potential pool of lay Christian leadership for shared ecumenical life which is untapped. In this day of data processing and computers, is there any denomination that knows what its lay resources for Christian unity are?

## Localism and Anti-institutionalism

For many, current anti-institutionalism is a protest against centralism and bigness at the expense of Christian unity. Bigness and centralism are not the same, but fears of one reinforce the other. If church union appears to strengthen what is big and centrally controlled, it suffers. Localism is a last resort of those who feel that they are powerless in their small communities and neighborhoods, their suburban havens, their ghettos. Mainline churches have thrived generally when they have a local context which is affluent, middle-class, conveniently neighborly, residential, with homeowners, homogeneous in the absence of minorities, and not close to other Protestant bodies. With any lowering of economic level, these local churches begin to decline and follow their clientele to the suburbs. Christian unity challenges such localism with its long ingrained habits and customs. Yet without an inclusive approach of mission, witness, and service, the appeal for covenant and shared life in Christian unity is meaningless. But shared life should not be relegated to rear-guard action.

Localism thrives on tendencies with which Christian unity must realistically contend: the need for intimate response, the habits of the local context, parochial inertia, the trammels of inconvenience, the vested interests of limited commitment, family traditions and congregational endowments, styles of life and ethos of worship, class congeniality, common language, entrenched leadership. Here the interpenetration of psychological and sociological factors are subtly interfused with questions of doctrine and polity. The blindness, arrogance, and fear of leaders exacerbate this localism.

There are other institutional barriers still at work such as lack of denominational commitment to the education of local congregations in manifesting Christian unity beyond the stage of limited cooperation. This will continue, so long as ecumenism devotes less time and energy to institutional and locally shared life than to commissions seeking doctrinal consensus, important as that is. By ecumenism in this sense I refer to the structural and operational practices of denominations, not simply the agencies of Christian unity. I still read many statements which confuse doctrinal and organizational issues on matters of

ultimate administrative authority, infallibility, celibacy, ordination of women, the hierarchy of orders, and traditional teachings concerning family, birth control, abortion, and the like. One person's institutionalism may be another's doctrinal dilemma, but greater shared life in shaping strategy and worship and social action will help in clarifying and resolving the distinctions and the conflicts.

**“Decline in church membership of mainline Protestant churches is due more to failure to recruit new members from this age group (under 40) than from the dropping out of existing members.”**

In all sound strategy realism indicates the combination of institutional commitment to Christian unity in head and branches with diversity in programs and mode of worship. The decision-making process in church institutions at all levels of order and organization will not satisfy the presumptions of Christian unity until all mutually recognized members and ministries participate with spiritual equality. Unity without equality is no longer institutionally thinkable. For example, it is impossible to draft a fully acceptable statement in doctrine, worship, evangelism, or social action which is not drafted by a racially and sexually inclusive commission and adopted by an assembly whose constitution does not reflect such inclusiveness.

### Ecumenism and Non-doctrinal Barriers

I shall, in conclusion, venture to list some comments in a strategy of Christian unity without claiming originality in framing them:

1. The development of covenantal and conciliar Christian unity beyond the cooperative Christianity and self-sufficiency of denominationalism. Experiments in shared institutions and programs at all levels are the earnest of

having gone beyond the externals of mutual recognition.

2. Persistence in the wholistic theme: the unity of the church and the unity of humankind dialectically perceived.

3. Adopting the method of ecology both in theology and practice by dealing with the institutional context of the churches at both national, regional and local levels.

4. Giving as much time and talent to the study and resolution of sociological and institutional barriers as to doctrinal and liturgical ones.

5. Moving aggressively to embrace in dialogue the whole spectrum of Christian bodies.

6. Accelerating structural and constitutional changes which subordinate denominational loyalty to ecumenical commitment.

7. Integrating denominational bureaus into the agencies for Christian unity so as to avoid competition among the internal interests of the denomination. Ecumenical agencies are not substitutes for other denominational responsibilities.

8. Pursuing common social action on an ever widening front of concern and accountability.

9. Addressing jointly the two major poles of spiritual life: the university inspired secular and individualistic humanism and the extreme right wing of religious conservatism.

10. Accepting the challenge of the class struggle and the seismic change that the new urban environment of the churches presents.

11. Active education and cultivation by denominations of their local congregations in the theological consensus among denominations. The local fear of bigness and centralism would be less severely felt if the churches kept their members abreast of new developments in doctrinal and moral values.

The churches suffer from failure to take risks in Christian unity. They seem to act as if other forces in the community will be constructively at work, thus relieving themselves of the risks they should be taking. The failure to risk is at bottom a failure of faith in Christ and the Spirit, for all things cohere in the One who is the Lord of the Church and the world. ■

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# ECUMENISM IN ACTION: Three Examples

## The Catholic Worker in a Methodist Church

Kevin Pedro Kelly

### Keeping the Doors Open

Keeping the doors of the Felicity United Methodist Church open had been a recurring theme years before the unlikely band of Catholics began hauling in bags of second-hand vegetables.

Anita Cory, an active member of the church's congregation, recalls Sunday services a few years ago when only three people sat in the pews.

In 1920, when Cory attended Sunday school at the Felicity Methodist Church, the area was green and well-kept, she said. But the prosperous families of those days had long ago evacuated, leaving winos in Coliseum Park, the frightened elderly on fixed incomes and the droves of Central American immigrants as the main inhabitants.

Cory's mother and a few other stalwarts kept the sinking church afloat, Cory said.

Her mother died a few years ago, leaving Cory a house which is now subdivided and occupied by a number of elderly tenants. Before the Catholics had ladled their first bowl of soup, Cory was busy passing the word among her tenants.

The elderly needed companionship and an occasional outing as much as they need nourishment, Cory said.

"They don't see anybody except those right around them," she said.

### A First Feeble Step

The Sunday afternoon meals are a chance for the elderly, the women and children to come out of hiding and share a meal. Arranging that weekly meal was the community's first feeble step toward ministry with the poor.

Dorothy Day, the founder of the Catholic Worker movement, started a similar soup kitchen in the 1940s. Now there are soup kitchens in nearly every major city in the United States—including New Orleans. Her example inspired the group's prayer and planning.

The New Orleans Catholic Worker Soup Kitchen opened in an unlikely spot last March.

In a city whose strong Catholic roots have produced jazz funerals and Mardi Gras—the Catholics started out in the Felicity United Methodist Church.

The union began when a 28-year-old United Methodist minister named Millicent Feske arrived in the city last summer. Feske had only to look across the street at the burned and gutted apartment houses to see the old neighborhood needed help.

About the same time Feske was learning the streets of the Irish Channel, a group of Catholics began meeting with hopes of developing a ministry to some of the city's poor. They were an assortment of teachers, social workers, college students and odd jobbers. They also began walking the streets, looking for an area where they could work.

The twain met.

Feske's church, located in a destitute section of New Orleans, had a kitchen, spacious dining hall and limited people power. The Catholics had strong people power but no facilities.

The difference of denomination for both the Catholics and Methodists was almost an afterthought.

"I wanted the doors open. I wanted some social concerns ministry," Feske said. "It never crossed my mind that it was a Catholic group."

Only after the link had been established did it occur to the Catholics that something special was afoot.

Mary Baudouin, a community member, said the Methodist/Catholic aspect made her see a broader concept of Christianity, "a larger family."

The church means "a community of people working together in simplicity and love with open doors," another Catholic reflected.

"I hadn't stopped to think about who gets in and who doesn't," she added.

Handing out bread is an exercise in justice rather than charity, Dorothy used to say. That helps the group to see an old woman waiting to be served as a sister in Christ rather than the repository of good will.

The publication of a quarterly newspaper called "The Cornerstone" (...the stone which the builders rejected) was another effort at groping toward a Catholic Worker identity.

As to funding the venture "there is never anything left over, and we always have a few debts to keep us worrying, to make us more like the poor we are trying to help," Dorothy wrote in *Loaves and Fishes*.

Though the group has yet to see its first overdrawn check, the experience of begging and depending upon Providence to provide food, the rent and funds for the paper has been profound for the primarily middle and upper middle class Catholic Workers.

Last December, two of the community members had procrastinated in their pursuit of a Christmas tree begging assignment. It was the day before the group's "soup line benefit" (a very non-exclusive \$2.50 a head affair). The first tree salesman they talked to--the one they expected would kick off a series of "get lost" responses--said, "Take any one on the lot."

Another "beggar" came up with 40 loaves of French bread which were donated because they were supposed to be crooked. Once removed from the wrapper, the bread was not only straight but fresh besides.

When the meager feast was finished, Allen and Katie carted the remaining stack of French breads and pot of soup to the Ozanam Inn, a soup kitchen and emergency shelter on New Orleans's Skid Row. The kitchen which serves thousands of men a week provided a humbling contrast for the fledgling group.

Dorothy loved Feydor Dostoevski's description of love in action as 'a harsh

and dreadful thing, compared with love in dreams." Chava Colon, a community member, noted the first attempt at turning a mountain of cauliflower leaves, carrots, onions and spices into a meal resulted in a "harsh and dreadful soup."

The 200 guests who shared that first meal not only stifled their complaints, they also donated enough money to move our soup out of borrowed pots, pans and styrofoam bowls; not to mention the money required for a first press run of the newspaper.

### The Coliseum Square Homeowners

The Cornerstone community was building like a skyscraper. They could do no wrong—until they met the Coliseum Square Association.

The Association is composed of local homeowners whose white picket fences and trimmed hedges stand out conspicuously from the otherwise weed and trash filled yard which surround them. Their kids play on swings instead of smoking cigarettes and listening to Soul music.

While the Catholic Workers basked in initial success, the Coliseum Square-ites brooded, figuring the soup line would attract every wino in the city. They contacted Feske and promised court action which would, at best, mire the group in delays for a few years and at worst, close the venture permanently.

### Felicity on the Firing Line

The Felicity Church and Feske were on the firing line.

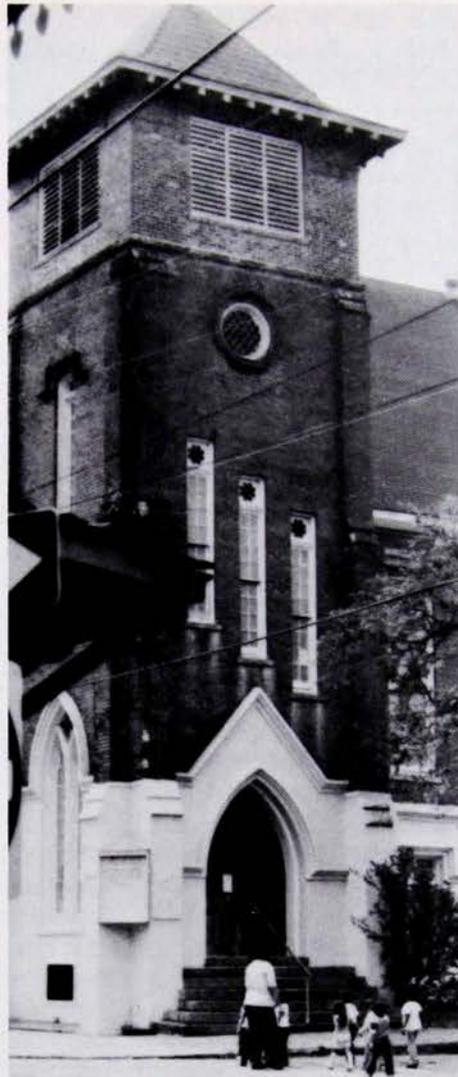
"I had to take a hard look at how much I trusted these people (Catholic Workers)," Feske said.

"I really had to believe in them," she resolved. District Superintendent William Blakely, Feske and some of the Catholics entered into negotiations with the Coliseum Square group.

Blakely, who was raised in non-Catholic Arkansas, said his introduction to ecumenism came when "I saw my first nun shooting craps at a church fair in New Orleans."

When the association inquired as to why a Methodist church was letting Catholics run programs out of it, Blakely told them "Sin is the enemy, not one another."

In the end, a compromise was reached and the Catholic Worker agreed to serve only the elderly, women and children. As a measure of their good faith, the Coliseum Square Association said it would help the



(Left) Felicity United Methodist Church. (Below) Rev. Millicent Feske, pastor of the church.



group gain title to and renovate an old house in the neighborhood for future expansion.

With the soup line two months old, an issue of the newspaper scattered throughout the city and nearly a year together, Baudouin reflected on the witness value of the group.

With full-time jobs and soup kitchen commitments, everyone has felt pressured at times, Baudouin said. "It's really a giving of our essence, not our abundance," she added.

She marveled at how well things had worked out when, individually, none of the group members have much time nor many resources.

Baudouin also noted how a group of people who started out with the serious goal of addressing poverty on a local level, ended up having a lot of fun together.

The community grew closer and "it begins not seeming like a sacrifice," she said.

A number of the meetings have either begun or ended with pot luck suppers. At one of those meetings the group discovered Allen played the

accordion and Mary could do a mean German Polka.

Feske shares in most of the group's meetings, the dancing and praying too.

In the past, ecumenism had frequently involved different denominations doing ministry together, Feske said. "But now we're moving toward worship together," she said.

Her seminary years at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Ga., laid low many of the barriers which may have hampered attitudes toward ecumenical worship. Through coordinating worship services for Lutherans, Episcopalians and other Christian denominations, she discovered more common ground than not.

With the Catholic Workers, Feske has found "a common understanding of the Gospel."

"That's what will keep this going long after the initial enthusiasm wears off," she said. ■

Kevin Pedro Kelly is a reporter with a New Orleans newspaper, a free-lance writer and a member of the Catholic Worker Community.

## United Ministry Churches, Union Springs, New York

Albert F. Gollnick  
and James S. Lawton

In 1959 a "Survey of Town and Country Churches" observed:

In view of the interchurch competition in the community and the need for increased resident pastoral leadership, there is some indication as to the value of consideration of a cooperative program with the local Methodist Church.

This survey was conducted by the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, and the community referred to was Union Springs, New York.

During the summer of 1981 the United Ministry Council and its constituent congregations—Grace Episcopal Church, First United Methodist Church, and the First United Presbyterian Church (affiliated with the Diocese of Central New York, Central New York Annual Conference and the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, respectively.)—appointed a study group of nine people to study the Consultation on Church Union document *In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting*. This action was made in response to requests from all three denominations. In its report the study group described the United Ministry Churches of Union Springs as:

Three congregations from different denominations under the leadership of one pastor, and sharing one program of worship incorporating the traditions of all three.

The United Ministry is a living, growing body daring to live out that oneness in its structure, program, mission and its worship.

### Origins

The Village of Union Springs and its immediate surroundings constitute a rural community of some two thousand persons. It is located in the Finger Lakes Region of Central New York State, on the eastern shore of Cayuga Lake, about thirty miles north of Ithaca.

The first white settlers were Revolutionary War veterans, of whom several had already visited the region in 1779, as members of General Sullivan's punitive expedition against the Cayuga Indian Nation (on whose former

tribal lands the village now stands). They were attracted by the fertile soil, available as Congressional land bounties to all who had fought in the War of Independence.

From the beginning, a variety of forms of religious expressions flourished. First came Quakers, Baptists, and Presbyterians. By the mid-1800's they had been joined by Unitarians, Methodists, Roman Catholics and Episcopalians. Most recently, in 1921, the New York Conference of Seventh Day Adventists purchased the Oakwood Seminary from the Quakers, and established the Union Springs Academy for high school students.

By 1967, the year in which our story really begins, village churches included the Adventists, St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, the First Presbyterian Church of Springport, the First United Methodist Church of Union Springs, and Grace Episcopal Church. In November of that year members of the three last named congregations met with those from Presbyterian and Episcopal churches in the nearby villages of Aurora and Scipioville to discuss ways in which they, as small churches in a small-town/country setting, could combine resources to better minister to the local community and the world.

The spirit which inspired the initial discussions (and which continues to vitalize the United Ministry) is best expressed in a letter received in early 1968 by all members of the churches involved:

"That we need to make better use of our time, our talents, and our money in national as well as local parish programs can be scarcely gainsaid. In our separateness we fail one another, waste trained men's time in duplication, support more buildings and empty pews than are needed, and fail to challenge people who are estranged by our divisions ... as the New Testament conceives it, the church is *one body* with several diverse members acting concertedly. As that body, we are summoned to make a reaffir-

mation of Christ's commission to his apostles to bring the gospel, the "good news", to the world. The committee is convinced that the proposal of a parish, team, or cooperative ministry gives us a practical means of making that affirmation."

After much discussion two, rather than a single, shared, or united, ministries evolved. One included the Aurora and Scipioville Churches, and the other was The United Ministry Churches of Union Springs. In March of 1969 the Reverend Charles F. Hess, a United Methodist, was called to be the first pastor of the United Ministry Churches and served in that capacity until June, 1974.

From the beginning the life of the United Ministry has been marked by change, and by growth in spirit and fellowship towards an end which is but dimly seen. Initially, the three denominational leaderships—Administrative Board, Session, and Vestry—functioned independently and quite conventionally. Each of them provided representatives and money to the United Ministry (first called Advisory) Council, which, through a system of committees, was responsible for our common life: worship, education, pastoral ministry, local outreach. However, as the three boards and their individual members grew closer together, a closer formal relationship was sought. This became a reality when new by-laws were adopted in the fall of 1974 (while the United Ministry was searching for Hess' successor). From that time onward, the United Ministry Council has included the Session (nine), Vestry and Wardens (eight), nine members of the Administrative Board, and the pastor. The Council governs all aspects of our ministry which are not specifically the concern of a single denomination. It prepares a unified budget (1982 - \$62,000) out of which all denominational obligations and mission programs are financed, and to which the congregation as a whole contributes. Members are now called to pledge their time, talents and substance to the

United Ministry Churches rather than to a specific denomination. Each board continues to administer its own trust funds and real property.

Also in 1974, the Vestry, recognizing that the Grace Church building could not accommodate the united congregation, sold it, with Diocesan approval, to St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, whose own building was beyond repair.

After a year of searching, the United Ministry called the Reverend James Hughes, a Presbyterian minister, to be its second pastor. He served until the end of 1978, and was followed, in early 1980, by the present pastor, the Reverend James S. Lawton, an Episcopalian. All three pastors have been accepted as "full" members of Conference, Diocese and Presbytery.

### Where Are We Now?

We are entering our second generation of leaders, many of whom have, as active adults, known only one main-line Protestant ministry in Union Springs. This new leadership is influenced less by the local traditions that each congregation brought into the Ministry, and more inclined to take advantage of the "richness in a diversity of backgrounds". One dream, long held by a number of younger members, of a fourth roll for "members of the United Ministry" seems to be giving way to a growing appreciation of the potential of our being three-in-one. The fact that there are still three separate rolls (total around 325) is beginning to be seen not as a remnant of past divisions, but as a symbol of the unity of the United Ministry. We maintain three identities as members of the three constituent churches—but we witness one body as we do everything together under the Lordship of Jesus our Christ.

We operate one program: *One* Sunday school currently using an Episcopal-based curriculum following the lectionary; *one* "set" of program committees (worship, education, evangelism and church life, social concerns, interpretation and stewardship, ministerial relations, and women's coordinating); *one* office with part-time secretary; *one* custodian; and *one* confirmation class that spends one year apprenticing before deciding which church to join. For everyday purposes we function as one congregation.

We gather for worship twice each Lord's Day—8:30 and 11:00. Just recently we have begun to celebrate

the Eucharist weekly at the 8:30 service. We rotate among four different rites—COCU's *An Order of Worship*, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and the *Worshipbook*, and, most recently, the United Methodist "Alternate Rite (1972)". The years of the United Ministry have matched almost exactly the working out of the implications of Vatican II. During these years every major denomination has been rethinking and rewriting its liturgy, liturgical resources, and hymnody. These resources all came out of the same pool of research on Christian worship. They are distinctive in their similarities...their ecumenical appeal. We have been in a unique position to take advantage of this abundant harvest.

Our ecumenical nature is also expressed in the use of the lectionary (the pastor participates in a weekly Bible study with United Methodist, Episcopal, United Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic clergy), our weekly use of the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) translations of the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, and the vast array of resources available from various denominations. In all of our planning for worship we tend to emphasize the similarities in the different rites, and use the differences as opportunities for learning.

### What About Problems...And Joys?

Our major problem is to convince ourselves (and others) that it isn't a "big problem" just being a united ministry. Maintaining ties with three denominations certainly can be confusing at times. A little extra work by a few key people and the pastor, however, can overcome this occasional confusion and encourage real growth. We are one of those exceptions that require a little special attention from the judicatories, and so need flexibility from their personnel. We feel the effect of each denomination's inability to "think" ecumenically.

A continuing problem is to sort our valid denominational differences from personal preferences or conflicts. The liturgical rites, for instance, pose far less a problem than the task of serving Communion in a manner that is both expedient and somewhat in line with local customs. Adjusting to the new ICET translations of the Lord's Prayer and Apostles' Creed is difficult for many who learned one of the old translations in a denominational setting. Accepting a new generation of leaders who are more visible as United

Ministry leaders than as denominational leaders raises fears of loss of identity and power.

Our practical problems tend to focus on the fact that we maintain two buildings. At this stage it is simply not viable to get rid of one. The "official policy" of the Council is to see them as God's gifts and make better use of them. So far we have failed to make full use of their potential.

The one area of program that has remained separate is the women's groups. Each has its own constituency, and each remains active. A United Ministry Women's Coordinating Committee does sponsor some joint activities and programs, so we don't see this as a major problem.

We have great joy in knowing that we have *grown more* united in our ministry—out of a growing awareness of the richness of our traditions. We are more able to talk about some issues that, a few years ago, were taboo for fear of raising "differences". It is exciting to realize that we are actively witnessing within the brokenness of the church the real possibility of working together. Our rich liturgical life is a witness to the oneness of the church's worship. We have maintained a solid commitment to benevolences, with 13% of the 1981 budget going to mission outside the community (not including special offerings). Working together we are able to maintain programs that would be impossible for any of us to do alone. The resources and opportunities available to us through Conference, Diocese and Presbytery are comprehensive. The greatest joy is that this article could be written after thirteen years, and that we celebrate with each other (and the other two churches in the village) being One. Our joy in the Lord is that we can witness in our small way the oneness of God's people.

We close with a quote from our response to the "Quest" document:

"We are unanimously and strongly committed to the vision to which we see 'Quest' as a first step. Indeed, it cannot be otherwise, since the United Ministry Churches of Union Springs is clearly one form of visible expression of the 'Church of Christ Uniting'". ■

James S. Lawton is pastor and Albert F. Gollnick is vice-chair of the United Ministry Council (and junior warden of the vestry) of the United Ministry Churches of Union Springs.

## Hartford Churches—Feed My Lambs

Jean Caldwell

**A**nn is a meticulously dressed woman of 77 who looks years younger. Two years ago major surgery forced her to retire and today she is deeply worried that her monthly allotment of food stamps has been cut from \$13 to \$11.

Mary is a jolly woman of 70 who looks older. She has lost many teeth, wears a green paper napkin as a patch over one eye. Her coat is missing a button. Nonetheless, the first thing she does when she walks into Fellowship Hall at Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral in Hartford, Connecticut, where she will join Ann and 40 others for lunch is to reach into a plastic bag and bring out an old-fashioned apron to cover her dress so she "won't spill anything on it."

Ann and Mary are two among many who are helped by the Center City Churches of Hartford, an ecumenical coalition of nine churches all within a brisk walk of each other. Together, the churches are trying to carry out the injunction carved in stone above the door of one of the churches: Feed My Lambs.

### Poverty Within Affluence

Connecticut is second among the 50 states in affluence, but if Hartford is compared to its eight suburban communities, it is one of the poorest cities in the country. Still, it carries the highest tax burden of any municipality in the state.

**"Center City Churches lease a former convent and rent rooms to some 60 men and women."**

Connecticut's population is predominantly white, but 55 percent of Hartford's 135,000 citizens are minorities. Fifty percent of the youngsters in the city's public schools are Black and 35 percent are Hispanic. The state ranks 46th or 47th in support of public education.

The center city is an area stretching for a mile along the Connecticut River and Route 191 and perhaps half a mile westward. It encompasses the central business district, including the home offices of Travelers Insurance Companies, the thriving Civic Center with its stylish shops, a flock of impressive state office buildings, including the golden-domed state capitol.

It also has row after row of boarded-up, decaying three storied buildings, a collection of tiny stores with names such as La Isla Supermarket, Borinquen Barber Shop, Comerio Spanish American Restaurant, a couple of low income housing projects, apartment houses for the elderly and shabby tenements the poor call home.

And it has the churches which have formed Center City Churches, with a full-time staff of 20, a part time staff that numbers 40-50 during the year, a thousand volunteers, and help from some 35-40 other city and suburban churches. These are First Church of Christ (UCC), whose minister, the Rev. Edith O'Donnell, is president of CCC, Church of the Good Shepherd and Christ Church Cathedral (both Episcopal), Central Baptist, which also

houses the youngest churches in the group: Iglesia Bautista Hispana; First Presbyterian Church, and South Park United Methodist Church, whose members recently merged with First St. Paul's United Methodist across town to form United Methodist Church of Hartford which has pledged to continue the CCC commitment. In addition, CCC has become an ecumenical affiliate of the Health and Welfare Ministries Commission of the New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Center City Churches was launched in 1967 after the assistant pastors of Center Church and Central Baptist Church completed a study which revealed that the area's elderly were in dire need of services. The result was the opening of a senior citizens center—the first in the city, one of the first in the state, and the first project of what was to be a strong ecumenical service organization.

### Closer to the Edge

As the Rev. Edith O'Donnell watches the women come to the lunch program, she mutters, "We'll be getting back to the breadlines of the '30s, I'm afraid." The federal government's withdrawal of funds will cut heavily into this program.

Christ Church tries to make the tables look cozy with checkered table cloths and vases holding a plastic flower or two.



At Friendship Center in the basement of St. Elizabeth's House, another Center City Churches program, the tables have no cloths or decorations but the sense is conveyed that somehow the need is greater. The guests—mostly men—wolf down their homemade soup and peanut butter sandwiches. The amiable chatter of the senior citizens in the Cathedral is missing. These men are closer to the edge.

Friendship Center was begun as a drop-in place for alcoholics. O'Donnell remembers when the air was thick with alcohol. Today few of the guests show evidence of alcohol or drug abuse. Many are young men who simply can't find a job in a time of high unemployment.

Les Phillips, director of Street Ministries for Center City Churches, says some of Friendship Center's lunch guests will sleep at night in abandoned buildings nearby. One regular is adept at picking out the classiest car on a used car lot for a bed. When it gets warm, "they sleep in the weeds," in Bushnell Park or under the bridges of routes 91 and 84, Phillips explains. The lucky ones sleep upstairs in St. E's.

St. Elizabeth's was once the convent of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. Today Center City Churches leases the building and rents rooms to some 60 men and women. A few rooms are set aside for emergency shelter. Many of St. E's boarders are deinstitutionalized—former mental patients who are not yet ready to make it on their own.

Ms. O'Donnell believes this service ministry is a primary reason why the churches themselves continue to flourish even though many of the long-time parishioners have moved from the neighborhood into the suburbs.

Children form an important part of the ministry of Center City Churches. Mary Jo Pattison, tutoring director for CCC, is busy ushering some 19 boys and girls into the basement of the elegant parish house of the Church of the Good Shepherd. An almost equal number of tutors, most of them older women, are waiting for the eager first, second and third graders.

These are kids who are having trouble with reading and math in public schools, and this is one of several CCC tutorial programs.

Pattison points to Lilliana, a bubbly child who flashes a smile at a visitor and sits down attentively by her tutor. "Lilliana was an excruciatingly shy 6 year old two years ago. She is missing



A job experience interview at the Center for Youth and Community Resources.

**“The central city churches of Hartford have found they can serve these people better by working together.”**



**This Friendship Center provides an open door for street people.**

two fingers. She was self-conscious about that. She was non-responsive. Now she is out-going. Her work is on grade level. She has self-esteem. She comes every day and had perfect attendance last semester.” Lilliana is going to make it in school, thanks to Center City Churches.

**Lull Before the Storm**

A few blocks away Mike Francis’ words echo over the empty gym of Central Baptist Church. Francis is a recreation worker with CCC’s Center for Youth and Community Resources. This is the lull before the storm. In a few minutes some 50 kids ages eight to 19 will be swarming in the door for an afternoon and evening of basketball, weight lifting, tutoring, arts and crafts.

If you ask Francis if the program has made any difference to the kids, he cites an anonymous example. “He was a rather slow kid, too old for the grade he was in. He wasn’t doing well in school at the beginning. Because of the care and concern he got here, he

decided to stay in school. It wasn’t easy. He was 21 when he graduated. Now he has a job and is being considered for a good job with the state. He was slow. We gave him individual attention and showed we cared and that he was somebody.”

**A Health Services Component**

Three years ago South Park United Methodist conducted a needs assessment of the area that led to a health services component for Center City Churches. The program was set up by the Rev. Robert Woodcock of South Park who is not only a pastor but also a nurse-practitioner.

Woodcock’s team of registered nurses, a physician and an outreach worker (some staff, some volunteer) served 509 individuals between July 1, 1981 and mid-January of this year. In addition, they ran educational programs for 211 people on topics ranging from first aid to preventing hypothermia.

The decision of CCC to become affiliated with the New York United Methodist Conference Health and Welfare Ministries was made last June when South Park members were contemplating their future.

The link through South Park was the only health-related Methodist activity in Hartford. Both CCC and the Conference wanted to keep it strong—especially if a merger did not take place.

In the end, the merger strengthened Methodist involvement in center city activities even though the old South Park building was put up for sale. Woodcock, now associate minister of the new United Methodist Church of Hartford, says, “It’s not that we left and forgot but that we are bringing in new people.”

In addition to service ministries, the nine churches of CCC gather for noon-time worship services during Advent and Lent. Now and then they go on retreats together. Each October they gather some 800 strong to celebrate the anniversary of their inner city ministry.

The yearly budget of Center City Churches is \$700,000, plus an additional \$500,000 in “in kind” contributions from the churches.

A recent development for Center City Churches is the phenomenon known as “gentrification”—the rehabilitation of down-at-the heels apartment buildings in inner city areas and their conversion to housing for middle and upper income people, often young professionals. From one point of view this is a good thing for run down cities, but it has unfortunate consequences as well. The old apartments were the homes for poor people. “Where can they go?” asks Ms. O’Donnell.

She remembers wistfully going into one of the condominiums before the conversion process started. “Food was on the shelves. It looked like a war-time evacuation. The people who had left had no place to carry their things to. It was the saddest thing I ever saw.”

The people who turn to CCC for help are those who remain—the poor, the elderly, the lonely, the de-institutionalized, the alcoholics, the street people. The central city churches of Hartford have found they can serve these people better by working together than by working separately. ■

Jean Caldwell is a correspondent for The Boston Globe and a free lance writer.

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Creighton Lacy

Is the problem of world hunger made worse rather than better by providing more food to enable people to propagate more children who will then suffer and die from malnutrition?

From the Christian perspective this thought seems unthinkable. But here at Duke University it was raised by a distinguished biologist at a symposium on Science, Technology, Ethics, and Policy.

Speaking on "Altruism and Population Problems," Dr. Garrett Hardin argued that Charles Darwin demolished the concept of altruism with his *On the Origin of Species*. There can be no such thing as "pure altruism"—concern for the welfare of others—because natural selection, the survival of the fittest, favors those whose primary instinct is self-preservation.

To be sure, he said, varying degrees of "discriminating (or discriminatory!) altruism can exist." The larger or more distant the group, the weaker the unselfish loyalties. Generally speaking, self-sacrifice in the animal world is limited to immediate offspring or colony, to the perpetuation of the family. Such traits are never for the benefit of another species. The egoist will outlive and outproduce his altruistic counterpart. Biologically, the argument is irrefutable.

What of the human race? Hardin quoted John Donne's familiar lines, "no man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main;...any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind." These are beautiful

words, said Hardin, "but ethical nonsense." Of course we care more about a splinter in the finger of the girl next door than thousands of starving children in Somalia. Universalism, concern for "the brotherhood of man," Hardin dismissed as "promiscuous altruism," absurd and unnatural.

Hardin advocates what is known as the "lifeboat" theory of ethics. "Ethics is the study of the allocation of limited resources in a world of scarcity." It is more than coincidental, he added, that the same description fits economics. Indeed, the central issue of "Reaganomics" is the determination of priorities, the allocation of limited resources.

Impertinently, I inquired where in this picture Hardin would place "the man in the water," the individual who repeatedly gave up his own chances for survival to save others in the crash of the Air Florida plane in the Potomac. Such an exception simply proves the point, he replied. Self-sacrifice is by definition just that. It cannot survive or perpetuate itself, biologically or ethically, as a universal principle.

Personally, Hardin is a warm and compassionate individual. He believes that human beings do inherit two qualities: a caring impulse and the ability to discriminate. But applied to a larger, distant mass, the former trait is self-defeating, suicidal. The latter must be used to choose realistic, ultimately self-protective alternatives.

On the United Methodist missional priority of world hunger, Garrett Hardin would be adamant. More food does aggravate the problem. Only coercive measures to reduce population, including widespread starvation, affect the Malthusian formula that food resources increase only arithmetically, while food needs increase geometrically. Food shipments often intensify economic and psychological dependence. India's poverty is not America's, thus "there is no global population problem." Each country must adopt and enforce its own stringent policies and solutions.

These are fascinating, disturbing questions. The bottom line for Christians is whether love, compassion, caring, can be quantified or balanced, put into practical, realistic, calculated scales.

There are many who have given affirmative answers. Oscar Wilde—poet, playwright, cynic—warned that "charity creates a multitude of sins." Andrew Carnegie—industrialist, millionaire, benefactor—called for ratio-

nalistic, realistic restrictions and restraints: "One of the serious obstacles to the improvement of our race is indiscriminate charity." Even our churches are often guilty of "organized charity, scrimped and iced, in the name of a cautious, statistical Christ" (John Boyle O'Reilly).

The Master we would follow has no such limits to love, to the giving of himself. One of the most familiar parables tells us less about the Prodigal Son ("recklessly wasteful, extravagant") than about the Prodigal Father ("profuse in generosity, exceedingly abundant"). When the disciples would have sent away the five thousand (a microcosm of the world) to find their own food, Jesus replied: "You give them something to eat yourselves." And on other occasions: "Whoever cares for his own safety is lost....Anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me..."

The Apostle Paul got the message: "The wisdom of this world is folly in God's sight....Sparse sowing, sparse reaping; sow bountifully and you will reap bountifully....There should be no reluctance, no sense of compulsion....You will always be rich enough to be generous....There is no limit to love..."

Can Christians today, in an age of increasing scarcity, continue "to give and not to count the cost" (Ignatius Loyola)? Was Alexander Pope supremely right? He wrote:

In faith and hope the world will disagree,  
But all mankind's concern is charity.

It may well be true that altruism is "bred out" by natural selection from the biological species. Thank God it cannot be bred out of the human spirit. For it is the motive and purpose of our Christian world mission. It is the expression of God's love in our lives. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. ■



The July-August issue will include profiles of two persons working in National Division agencies in Oklahoma and Washington; an article on an unusual farm workers retirement home in California; several articles relating to problems of the aging, and an article on tourism as an issue of concern to the churches. And more, much much more.



## BOOKS

### CHRISTIAN UNITY: MATRIX FOR MISSION, Paul A. Crow, Jr., 1982: Friendship Press, 110 pages. \$4.95

This is a book to which a United Methodist Christian can resonate. Our concern for global ministry is linked with our concern for Christian unity. As the preamble to the United Methodist Constitution puts it: "The Church of Jesus Christ exists in and for the world, and its very dividedness is a hindrance to its mission in that world."

Christian unity as a matrix within which mission develops and matures is the theme of this self-styled "primer." It is short, yet for an introductory volume it is comprehensive. It is a personal testimony by a teacher/administrator ecumenist who knows the history of the cause of Christian unity and who has helped shape its course. It is replete with quotes and references, perhaps a bit much of a load for a primer, but it has relevant substance and frequent insights that aid the neophyte and the committed alike.

That it is a comprehensive primer is its value but the cause of frustration also. Book reviewers have biases and one of mine is that there are several points where the dictates of brevity in Dr. Crow's assignment have left critically important gaps. He points out that "we all live in cultures and countries that do not really support Christian values or Christian witness." But the barriers to Christian unity (psychological, social, historical as well as theological) deserve more explication. Self-understanding of the influences that inhibit Christian unity is a crucial accompaniment to thorough grasp of the theological and biblical perceptions of the fullness of the Church. But in the nature of his assignment such criticism is inevitable and we should be grateful for what "Matrix" does so commendably.

The quality of his biblical exegesis is suggested in the reminder that the New Testament was the heir of the Old Testament. The view that John 17:20-23 "that they all may be one" refers only to a vague fellowship of unity is cogently countered. His analysis of John 17 in another chapter describes and affirms spiritual depth in the response to unity but also corrects the notion there need be no organic manifestation. In the chapter on spirituality and ecumenism the chief problem is identified bluntly as "selfishness, the root of so much

division." The semantic distinctions in defining mission and evangelism as proclamation, presence, service and eucharist will be helpful to many. The clarity of the missional target—"service without calculation" (Visser 'tHooft) moves the author to suggest that the root problem is the lack of care of local churches for one another, an absence of *diaconia* in United States' communities, let alone in a global perspective. Slipped into a wealth of background history and analysis there are pungent critiques.

Dr. Crow is the ecumenical staff officer of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) with global experience. The urgency about Christian unity is that we now see more clearly how the divisions of the world divide the churches. Riches and poverty, racial inequalities of opportunity and status, divergent views of the relationship between church and state, still prevalent sexism and ageism all make commitment to Christian unity crucial. Why? "Because the same issues and the same people that keep visible unity from happening in the churches will also thwart a genuine confronting of the disunity of the global community."

Cooperation, covenant bonds and organic unions are three aspects of Christian unity that intertwine in his perspective. Several terms currently in use in ecumenical circles are explained and elaborated on: "covenant" and "conciliar fellowship." For him, conciliar fellowship and organic unity go hand in hand. Christian unity is a dynamic thing whose crucial aspect is the "quality of life together." Or as Albert C. Outler reminded us in 1966: ". . . the greatest challenge and opportunity before us in ecumenism is to step up the pace of the encounter and study in as many local situations as possible, and everywhere to pass from encounter and study to ecumenical action."

Friendship Press has published a most useful introduction for those increasing numbers of Christians who sense that "denominationalism" is anachronistic, but who need background and guidance. Would that readers will ponder carefully the final paragraph that makes explicit the cost of receiving the gift of Christian unity. "We can never be one without surrendering to some extent the pride of our separate identities." Dr. Crow is right on! For United Methodist Christians, the more specific admonition of Professor John Deschner of Perkins School of Theology is apt. Dr. Deschner appealed to a World Methodist Conference some years ago: "Seek first Christian unity and Methodism will be added unto you."

Robert W. Huston

*Robert W. Huston is general secretary of the Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns of the United Methodist Church.*



## LETTERS

### Inspiring

Please send me the NEW WORLD OUTLOOK and RESPONSE for one year. Check is enclosed.

I think both magazines are wonderful—so informative and inspiring.

Thank you and all the writers who make it possible.

Gertrude G. Price  
Hayesville, N. C.

### Centerfold Fantastic

I just received my April NWO copy. The centerfold is fantastic! What a great idea! I shall display it at the New Hampshire Annual Conference in May. Our theme is Missions. This is the marvelous type of visual aids we could use much more of in the magazine.

Marilyn Wallace  
Contoocook, N. H.

### Biased Misrepresentation

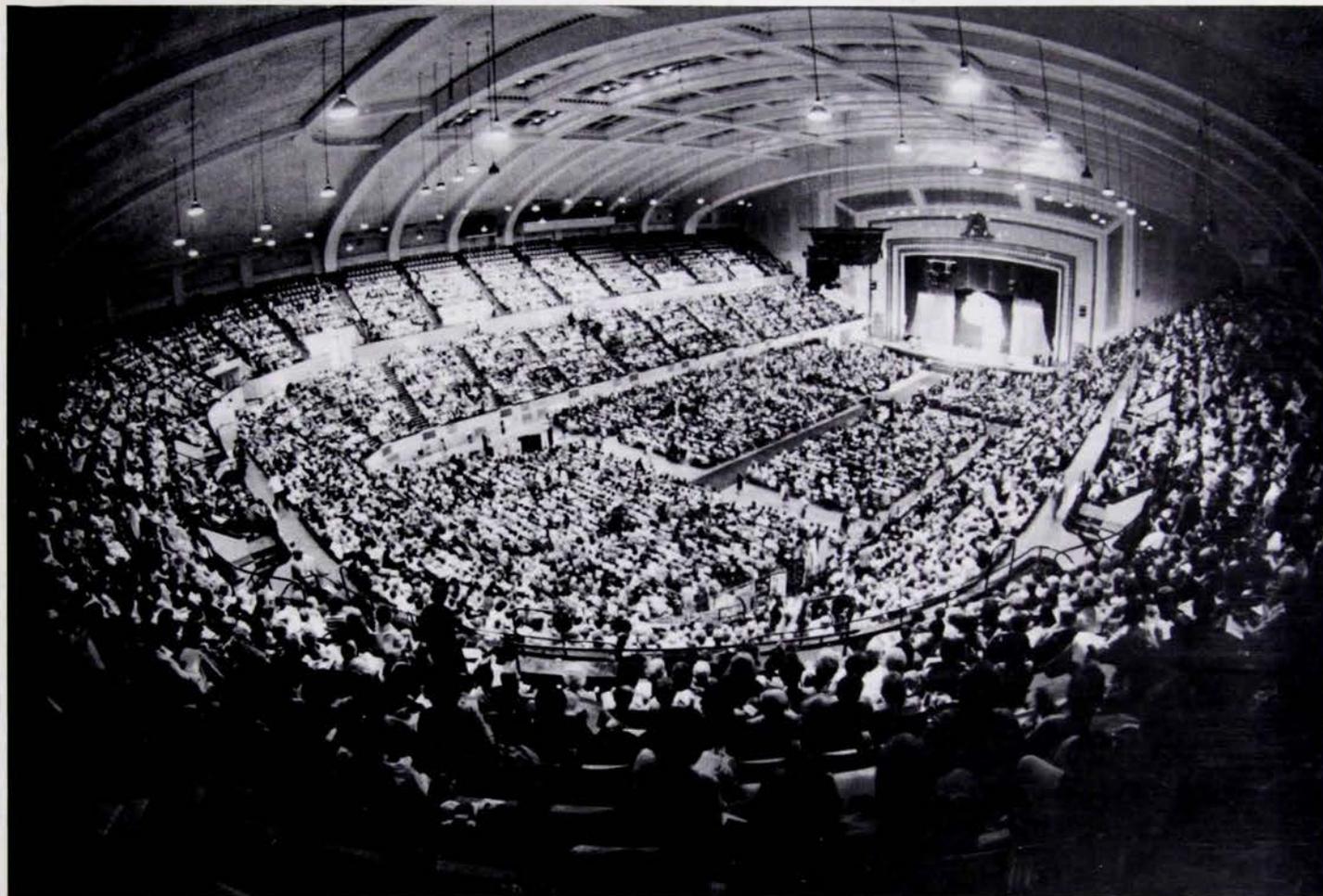
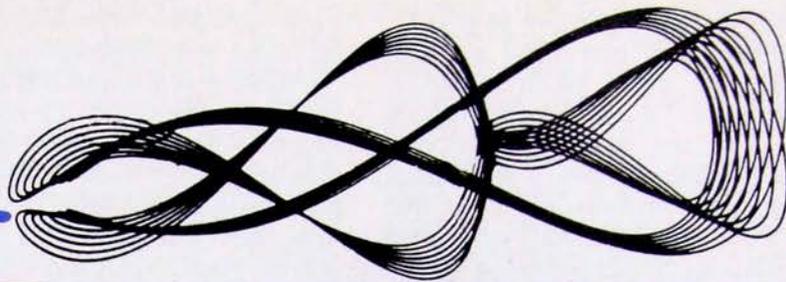
Miss Franklin is a commendable writer but she should be sure that her facts are straight. Biases show through too plainly as she forgets the way in which many missionaries shared the standard of living, which she condemns and which they were powerless to change until recent years, with young women like herself.

I served as a missionary under the Women's Division from 1948 until 1963 in India, and for most of that time a national lived with me as friend and sister. When I left WDCS missionary service I had arranged that my three appointments should be filled by three Indian women, intact with the same budget and equipment. This was true of most of us. It was not easy to find nationals who were willing to supervise village schools, a work requiring long hours and much uncomfortable travel.

What Miss Franklin does not seem to realize is that the loss of funds for district evangelistic work (including the village schools) was due to factors among the nationals themselves who had looked with envious eyes at the plenteous supply of WDCS funds. When the Board was re-organized and these funds were all in one pot, village schools and women's work came out on the short end. Some among our own sisters thought the village schools to be passé. This was not the missionaries' fault. It was the fault of those who handled the finances and set the policies, or allowed them to be set, after the re-organization of the Board. One might add that

(Continued on page 46.)

## THE MOVING FINGER WRITES



### 10,000 UM WOMEN MEET IN PHILADELPHIA

A nuclear holocaust would leave 90 percent of all Americans dead within 30 days, 10,000 United Methodist women were told May 1 during the quadrennial assembly of their national organization in Philadelphia, Pa.

In a speech which many thought the high point of the assembly, Dr. Helen Caldicott, a Boston pediatrician who is national president of Physicians for Social Responsibility, painted a devastating picture of the probable effects one nuclear bomb would have if it fell on Philadelphia.

Within a radius of six miles all people would be killed instantly. Within 20 miles people would be either killed or injured so seriously they would eventually die. Those who

sought refuge in bomb shelters would be cremated, she predicted. The fallout would blanket 4,000 square miles downwind with radiation.

But Dr. Caldicott went further, noting bacteria would multiply from the corpses of unburied dead. Insects would transmit disease from the dead bodies to those who survived. And survivors would have little nourishment because bees would be blinded and couldn't fertilize crops.

Terming the nuclear weapons threat "the ultimate religious issue," Dr. Caldicott contended, "Our responsibility to God is to continue this creation."

She challenged women, who know how to nurture and care for life, to force the nation's leaders to avert a nuclear holocaust, which she predicted would come in 10 years unless

attitudes change.

"It's time the boys who make the toys are disciplined," she said. "Take the toys away from the boys; they need their bottoms smacked."

Dr. Caldicott addressed United Methodist women who came to Philadelphia from all parts of the United States—many in chartered buses—to consider the theme "Christ Our Hope—the Journey Our Life." They filled the Civic Center to near capacity.

Through worship, Bible study, stories of faith and pictures of women pioneers, they celebrated nearly 100 years of mission outreach and considered contemporary issues.

They also gave of their substance to aid women in developing countries achieve a measure of self-sufficiency. Checks brought from annual conference UMWs and the offering taken at

the closing service totaled \$148,777.

Journeys both individual and collective were never far from participants' minds. Dr. Letty Russell of Yale Divinity School led two Bible studies on post-Easter themes with special relevance for women. Recalling that Jesus Christ was a "nobody who failed by the standards of his time, a loser," Dr. Russell said: "This doesn't mean we should value loser status in a masochistic way. It is important to understand the loser's ability to respond to Christ's offer of mercy."

Christ's self-revelation to the two people on the road to Emmaus, probably Cleopas and his wife, she said, shows God won't allow anything to separate us from Christ's presence along the way."

Dr. Dorothy Brown, a Nashville surgeon who teaches at Meharry Medical College, told her life story to illustrate "what happened on the road." She paid tribute to black foster parents who read the Bible with her and discussed its meaning in an effort to counteract racist influences in her early life. Eventually she was able to see that "the essence of Christianity is forgiveness."

Another faith journey was recounted by the Rev. Mortimer Arias, who was forced to leave Bolivia and now teaches at Claremont School of Theology in California.

Daring "to look at the world as it is," assembly participants heard Dr. Lucille Mair, new Under Secretary General of the United Nations, formerly of UNICEF, describe the plight of 300 million children trapped in absolute poverty.

She said a key element in reducing the incidence of infant mortality, sickness and malnutrition was the promotion of breastfeeding and control of multinational marketing practices designed to sell infant formula worldwide. Coalitions including United Methodist Women must continue to monitor these multinationals to make sure they comply with the World Health Organization's code governing breastmilk substitutes, she said.

The keynote address on "Facing the Future with Hope" was given by Dr. Hazel Henderson, a British-born futurist now living in Gainesville, Fla.

The 200-year-old industrial societies of the Northern Hemisphere, plagued by unemployment and resource limitations, are slowly beginning to shift from wasteful, mass-consumption of non-renewal resources, to new forms of production and techno-

logies based on renewable resources, recycling and conservation, she said.

The emerging future will be marked not by the the GNP—Gross National Product—but by the BHN—Basic Human Needs—as a standard of measuring the economy. This refers to how well the economy provides health, food, education and other human benefits for all people.

In an effort to shore up the old system against change, against "judgment day" that is upon them, the industrial societies are exporting their problems to the Southern Hemisphere, Dr. Henderson noted. "If we can't build nuclear power plants in the

U.S., we will sell them to Brazil or the Philippines; if we can't dump toxic wastes here, we try to dump them in Senegal."

Yet she saw signs that new coalitions are being forged by a huge variety of marginalized groups and those for whom the existing economy does not work. Women are important in creating a new political and economic order, she affirmed. If women are not included in old structures, they will form their own structures and networks, such as United Methodist Women was formed in the church.

Women participants attended approximately 80 interest groups, many

## New Books on **COURAGE, COMPASSION, THE PRIVILEGE OF THE POOR**

### **BASIC ECCLESIAL COMMUNITIES** The Evangelization of the Poor

Alvaro Barreiro

"This work is embarrassingly elementary, embarrassing for the reader, not the writer. Father Barreiro states with the power of simplicity the privileged place of the poor in the eyes of God . . . and presents the basic ecclesial communities as incarnations of that privilege."

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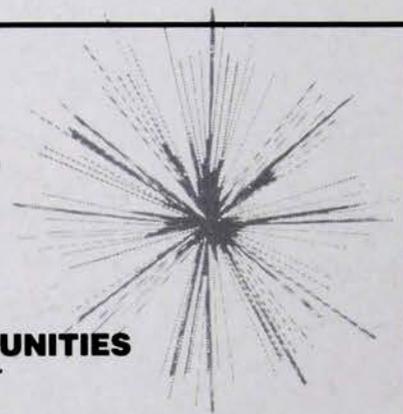
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offering instruction on how to do numerous jobs in their local organizations. The assembly experienced the journey of United Methodist Women through pictures, sound and quotations from leading characters in the organization's history, directed by Elaine Magalis. The Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble gave moving testimony through dance of the struggles of black people seeking the Promised Land.

In a closing service of commitment UMW President Ruth Daugherty of Reading, Pa., urged participants to "bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant God, and take the yoke of Christ upon us." Recalling that women have been persons of faith and action, she called on them to "remove the fetters that prevent all persons from experiencing the freedom of God to become whole persons."

Theresa Hoover, top staff executive of the Women's Division, administra-

tive agency for UMW, said: "Let us with God's help, make the UMW in the next decade the primal source of growth and values, pushing on to maturation, no longer children but mature adults looking the future in the face with awe, working joyfully for a future full of hope and promise. The journey won't be easy but as long as we have kept ourselves in tune with the will of God, it will be a successful one."

Ms. Daugherty officially launched the centennial celebration of UMW, which will climax in the 1986 Women's Assembly. Its theme is "Committed to mission tomorrow, building on yesterday." (UMNS)

### UM TELEVISION CAMPAIGN CUT BACK BUT "NOT DEAD"

Annual conferences in the United Methodist Church will no longer be

pressured to organize campaigns to help finance the National Television Presence and Ministry (TVP&M) effort of the denomination, but the project is not dead.

Continuation of the project beyond 1984, pending General Conference approval, was unanimously supported by the church's General Commission on Communication (UMCom), its TVP&M Steering Committee, and the church's Council of Bishops.

The action was taken April 30 by the Commission and its Steering Committee during a two-hour conference telephone call hooking together 30 members and staff in 21 locations across the country. The two groups were responding to six proposals developed by the executive committee of the Steering Committee.

Bishop Paul A. Duffey, Louisville, Ky., presiding officer of the committee and a UMCom member, had reported proposed recommendations to the Council of Bishops on April 29, during the council's spring meeting here.

The bishops responded positively to the recommendations which included suspension of annual conference campaign initiatives by the national campaign organization; affirmation of the concept of a denomination-wide television presence and ministry; continuing solicitation of individuals and groups for television programming funds; and repayment, on schedule, of a \$1 million loan from the church's General Council on Finance and Administration.

The council also adopted unanimously a resolution affirming "the need for, and the possibilities of, developing a national television presence and ministry; and pledging "the support of the bishops of the church in the long-range process to prepare a plan for presentation to the 1984 General Conference."

The bishops expressed "sincere appreciation to the Steering Commit-



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tee . . . for the responsible way they have attempted to resolve the present difficulties in the program." They also cited UCom president Charles Cappleman of Los Angeles, general secretary Curtis A. Chambers of Dayton, Ohio, and campaign director Nelson Price of Nashville, Tenn., for their untiring efforts to realize a national television presence and ministry by the church.

To launch the campaign, UCom borrowed \$1 million from the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) but during the 18-month campaign raised only \$500,000. Repayment of the loan will begin in July and must be completed by the close of this quadrennium, Dec. 31, 1984.

According to the approved recommendation, repayment will come from funds now being used to conduct the campaign, primarily UCom operating funds.

The Aldersgate Foundation, established to receive and disburse television ministry funds, will continue and was reaffirmed "as a secure and continuing means by which individuals may place their funds now, or in the future" for the ministry through television.

The Commission voted approval of campaign staff reductions if necessary. It is anticipated this would include the services of four fund-raisers and their support staff.

Television programming will continue as staff and money are available. Among programs announced in recent weeks is a television series featuring Bishop Roy C. Nichols and a major special on the church's world-wide ministry with children.

The Commission and Steering Committee expressed appreciation to the bishops, the GCFA and others "for the funds given, pledges made, and visions shared."

GCFA General Secretary Ewing T. Wayland, Evanston, Ill., affirmed the analysis that led up to the recommendations and said, "I think that if we had proceeded on the present course, opposition and hostility could have hardened and made difficult any effort to enlist support of the bishops."

Stressing that the campaign has not been scuttled, UCom member Spurgeon Dunnam III, editor and general manager of the *United Methodist Reporter*, said, "I sensed a tremendous relief on the part of the bishops that we were offering them something they could affirm. I do not think their support is superficial or

prefunctory."

Commenting on the actions, Mr. Cappleman said: "Give the present circumstances, the Commission has, in my opinion, acted realistically and responsibly. We are heartened by the wise counsel and resounding support of the Council of Bishops. Our denomination still needs to make such greater use of broadcast television and cable in carrying out the great injunction of Jesus. I am optimistic that this will begin to happen during the present quadrennium."

Bishop Duffey said the actions should "clear the air of considerable confusion and reduce the pressure being felt in many parts of the church regarding the TV Presence and Ministry effort.

"At the same time, we have reaffirmed the need" for such a presence and ministry, "and each of those we have consulted has likewise reaffirmed it and pledged support for developing a revised strategy to be offered to the 1984 General Conference," he said.

"I think most of our people want us to be in television," the bishop added. "I am convinced that if we can clarify our campaign goals and approach, we can elicit significant support during the next two years, and much more following action by the 1984 General Conference."

#### CHURCH GROUPS ASK AT&T CASE PANEL

Five church bodies, responding to an invitation to comment on the government's recent proposed settlement of the American Telephone & Telegraph antitrust case, urged the court to appoint a "neutral expert advisory panel" to protect church consumer interests in telephone and related services.

The comments filed here in U.S. District Court urged "careful scrutiny" of a consent decree negotiated by the Department of Justice with AT&T in the seven-year-old case.

The consent decree approved in January allows AT&T to divest itself of 22 local Bell Telephone operating companies, and frees it to compete in the market for "enhanced services" which combine telephones with computers and other telecommunication technology.

"Churches and synagogues constitute the second largest users of telephones after the federal government. The Roman Catholic Church

alone spends \$110 million a year on telephone service. Church services could be seriously crippled by negative changes in the cost and the methods of providing local and national telephone service."

Signing the comment were the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ; the Reformed Church in America; the Communications Commission of the National Council of Churches; the United Methodist Church General Board of Global Ministries' Education and Cultivation Division; and the Catholic UNDA-USA, the Catholic voluntary association of broadcasters and allied communicators.

For telephone services in 1981, the comment said, national UCC agencies spent \$241,525, the NCC spent almost \$390,000, the Reformed Church spent \$86,000 for headquarters functions, UNDA-USA spent \$15,000; the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries spent \$420,000.

"The proposed decree will provide the basic framework for much of the nation's future telephone, computer and data processing activities," the churches said. "The pending settlement opens the way to widespread industry reorganization and vigorous combat for the most profitable spoils in national and international telecommunications."

(LETTERS: Continued from p. 42)

many times gifts received on the field as a result of the efforts of former missionaries, went unacknowledged and so it was difficult to promote any support for former WDCS work on this side.

Miss Franklin seems to skip over the fact that the missionaries who went to India in the 40's and 50's had as one of their priorities that leadership should be developed among nationals and the work turned over to them as soon as feasibly possible. It caused misunderstanding between older and younger missionaries. It was a slow process and often a disappointing one. Some of us even had to leave to facilitate the turnover but even then it was difficult to persuade young women in some areas of the country that village work is both worthwhile and important.

While one feels personal hurt at the misrepresentation, it is much more to the point that many people in the USA who read this article will receive a biased misrepresentation of the facts. What they need is a presentation of what we can do today to help the Indian church.

Lois Biddle Mohansingh  
Huntington, PA

(Another letter on this subject will appear in the next issue.)

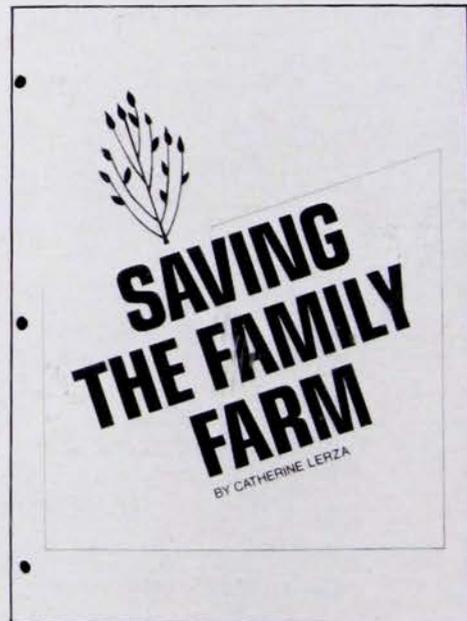
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