

# Congregational Profiles

Articles from the *Congregationalist*, 1958-1997

Readings in the History and Polity of the National  
Association of Congregational Christian Churches

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Rev. Dr. Arlin T. Larson, editor

# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

## FOUNDERS

- Executive Committee Chairmen.* Louis Gerhardt, "The Executive Committee and its Chairmen" 74-6  
*Executive Secretaries.* Cary Mead, "Our First Magnificent Five" 74-06  
*John Alexander, first Executive Secretary.* Karen Hoffman, "Dad & His Church: A Portrait of Dedication" 82-6  
*Malcolm Burton, founder.* John Alexander, "A Prince Has Fallen" 84-6  
*Harry R. Butman.* "The Gospel We Preach" 58 - 2 (the first issue of *The Congregationalist*)  
*John Claxton, founder of CFTS.* "A Memorial Service for Dr. John W. Claxton" 76-11  
*Howard Conn, minister in Minneapolis.* "The Personal Accent On Dedicated Service" 65-01  
*James Fifeld, minister in Los Angeles.* "The Personal Accent On Dedicated Service" 65-01  
*Henry David Gray, first editor of the Congregationalist.* Harry Butman "A Tribute: Henry David Gray" 66-10  
*Henry David Gray, minister.* John Alexander, "World Christian Statesman" 94-12  
*Cary Mead, lay stalwart.* Harry Butman, "Tribute to Cary Mead" 90-10  
*Arthur Rouner, Sr. .* Malcomb Burton, "A Memorial: Rev. Arthur Acy Rouner, Sr." 81-10  
*Philotheos Zikas, missionary.* Henry David Gray, "Tribute to the Reverend Philotheos Zikas" 90-10

## HISTORICAL FIGURES

- Famous Congregationalists, series.* Arvel Steece, Jan., 1961 through Aug., 1968  
*Henry Ward Beecher, preacher supreme.* Harry Butman, "Emporer of American Preachers" 87-4  
*William Brewster, Pilgrim leader.* Eleanor Miller, "William Brewster, Man With Ideas" 69-11  
*Antoinette Brown, first ordained woman.* W.T. Keefe, "Women in the Pastoral Ministry" 82-10  
*Winston & Jennie Churchill, English statespersons.* Sam Ellis "A Great Man\_\_an Extraordinary Mother" 74-3  
*Lloyd Douglas, author of "The Robe".* George Bohman, "Who Was Lloyd Douglas?" 85-8  
*Lloyd Douglas, author of "The Robe".* Gabe Campbell, "The Secret Spiritual Teaching of Lloyd C. Douglas" 96-4  
*Timothy Dwight, Yale president.* Vincent Edwards, "The Chaplain Who Revised the Hymnal" 74-3  
*John Eliot, apostle to the Indians* Marjorie Neagle, "John Eliot's Indian Bible" 65-02  
*John Eliot, evangelist to Indians.* Anobel Armour, "John Eliot of Essex", 3 parts 69-1,2,3  
*John Eliot, evangelist to the Indians.* Stuart Garver, "Apostle to the American Indian" 70-04  
*Washington Gladden, leader of liberalism.* C. George Fry, "Washington Gladden: Congregationalist" 75-3  
*Sarah Hale, inventor of Thanksgiving.* Marie Wood, "Sarah Hale and the Thanksgiving Proclamatin" 79-Fall  
*Samuel Hidden, early New England pastor.* Harry Butman "The Legacy of Samuel Hidden" 70-02  
*Kaahumanu, queen of Hawaii.* W. Lee Roddy, "Hawaii's Most Amiazing Queen" 66-01  
*David Livingstone, missionary to Africa.* Betty Learmont, "David Livingstone, the Magnificent Failure" 69-02  
*Betsy Lyons, missionary to Hawaii.* W. Lee Roddy, "My Betsy" 65-04  
*Henry Obookiah, native missionary.* "From Hawaii to Connecticut" 69-3  
*Ray Palmer, hymn writer.* Blanche Richardson, "Ray Palmer, Hymn Writer" 68-05  
*Stephen Peet, circuit rider.* Julia McCleary, "From Whence We Grew" 90-6  
*John Robinson, Pilgrim pastor.* R. Tudur Jones, "Congregational Lecture: John Robinson" 85-10  
*Samuel Sewall, Psalm setter.* Albert Butler, "Samuel Sewall, Singer of Psalms" 79-06  
*Charles Sheldon, best selling author.* Harry Butman, "Following in His Steps" 84-6

*Martha Sheldon, missionary to Tibet.* Aldena Greer, "The Story of Martha Sheldon and Her Visit to Tibet" 70-04  
*Squanto, Indian friend of the Pilgrims.* Clinton Parker, "Squanto, the Man Sent by God" 77-11  
*Amos Alonzo Stagg, football great.* Duane Valentry, "Let Me Do My Best!" 68-10  
*Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin".* Peter Bagley, "The Little Lady Who Started the War" 85-8  
*Marcus Whitman frontier evangelist.* Lucille Goodyear, "Missionary Trailblazer" 78-01  
*Roger Williams, Puritan dissenter.* George Bohman, "Pioneer for Separation of Church and State and Man of Conflicts" 77-11

## CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS

*A. Ray Appelquist, NACCC Executive Secretary.* Erwin Britton, "Dr. A. Ray Appelquist: Irenic in Spirit" 85-8  
*Richard Bower, Moderator of the NACCC.* Helen Thuman, "A Man Called Richard" 83-4  
*Erwin Britton, Executive Secretary.* "Britt" 75-12  
*Carol DiBiasio-Snyder, clergy couple.* Mary Woolsey, "A Shared Ministry--A Shared Life" 83-10  
*Richard Ellison, engineer turned minister.* "From Engineer to Minister" 92-4  
*John Green, Maine pastor.* "One Man's Ministry" 66-04  
*Alfred Grey, interim minister.* "Rev. Alfred D. Grey, Interim Minister Extraordinaire" 65-01  
*Mary Lane, academician and minister.* Terence Johnson, "God Has Opened a Way for Me" 77-06  
*Elaine Marsh, minister of education.* Anita Buck, "Elaine Marsh: Traveling on in Her Ministry" 83-10  
*Betsey Mauro (Audette), seminarian.* "My Vocation Was Not Geology" 87-6  
*Harold Ockenga, pastor of Park Street Church.* "Presenting Harold John Ockenga" 66-11  
*Daphne Resch, seminarian.* Judy Herseman, "Daphne Faces Challenge of Parish Internship" 77-02  
*Karl Schimpf, young minister.* Walton Deming, "Profile of a Young Minister" 74-10  
*Gordon Taylor, minister to Indians.* "Prison is His Parish" 81-4  
*Orvin Titus, contractor & minister.* Judy McCleary, "The Tent Minister - 1975" 75-11  
*James Walter, college president.* "James E. Walter, 1906-1989" 89-8  
*Don Ward, minister.* "Our Man for All Seasons" 94-12  
*Edie Winter, seminarian.* "A Preacher in the Family" 82-12  
*Walter York, tentmaker minister.* Douglas Drown, "Down East 'Tentmaker'" 79-01

## LAY MEN and WOMEN

*William H. Ahrens Moderator, engineer.* Richard Kurrasch, "Special Churchman" 93-10  
*Donald Bentley, Moderator.* Elizabeth Bingham, "Math Professor Leads the NACCC" 94-12  
*Helen Joan Berkaw, NACCC stalwart.* Erwin Britton, "In Memoriam: Helen Joan Berkaw" 87-2  
*Josephine Swift Billings, hospital chairwoman.* Janet Elliott, "A Lifetime Commitment to Care of the Sick" 87-4  
*Majken Broby, missionary.* Walter Boring, "A Life-Long Servant of the Lord" 84-6  
*Dave Brubeck, contemporary composer.* Stuart Bullion, "The Light in the Wilderness" 76-02  
*Taylor Caldwell, author & moralist.* John Bennett, "Embrace of Life" 69-1  
*Jerold Cochrane, Exec. Committee Chair.* Robert Coates, "Combines Spirituality, Pragmatism with Humor" 96-10  
*Wayne Crockett, medical doctor.* John Drag, "Meet Dr. Wayne Crockett, a committed Congregational Christian layman" 73-11  
*Keith Deacon, banker.* Nancy Manser, "Meet Keith Deacon" 73-12  
*Helen Eastes, song writer.* "The Musician of Galesburg" 78-9  
*James England, comic.* Jerry England, "J.D. England, the Sit-down Comic" 89-4  
*Sherry Fast, hospital clown minister.* Lois Dick, "In Kansas There's a Rainbow" 84-2  
*George Gullen, business man and academician.* Erwin Britton, "A Man for All Seasons" 67-02  
*Walter Judd, Congressman.* "Dr. Walter H. Judd: World Renowned Congregationalist"



*Lynne Kalbfleisch, aspiring musician.* Roxy Rice , "I Know Where I'm Going" 78-09  
*Anne Kuester NACCC secretary* J. Fred Rennebohm "Call Anne" 92-6  
*Marion Luenberger, Los Angeles activist.* Don Ward, "Thank You, Crumley Cousins" 84-4  
*May McMillan, literacy advocate.* Jane Scanland, "One Woman Can Make a Difference" 76-10  
*Frances McGill, fighter.* Cyril Nute , "Rebel Against Death...Singer of Life" 78-1  
*Terry Meeuwsen, Miss America, 1972.* Michael Halcomb , "Miss America 1972" 88-4  
*Paul Miller, engineer.* Kathryn Calhoun, "Man on the Wing" 66-10  
*George Shangrow, young musician.* Don Duncan, "Music Makes His World God 'Round" 69-12

## INTRODUCTION

Of all the articles compiled for this course, those about people, these Profiles, caused the most anxiety. Who should be highlighted? For what reasons? How accurate a picture of the people of the NACCC do these particular profiles paint?

I do not pretend to have firm answers to any of these questions. It remains for qualified historians, sociologists, and others to conduct a thorough study of the NACCC, weighing the events and personalities from a more scientific perspective. These articles will, however, bring to your attention many people who have been highlighted in the pages of the *Congregationalist*. Whether there has been over the years any consistent basis of selection, I cannot say. Some of those profiled are leaders at the national level. Others are historical figures who someone (the editor him/herself?, an editor just glad to receive some material) thought worthy of notice. Many profiles are more on the order of human interest stories, exemplary instances, or “people in the news.”

What does it say about the NACCC that we honor, recognize, choose to lead us, listen to these particular people? There are certainly lessons to be gleaned by an observant reader. What conclusions do you draw?

## **Congregational Profiles**

# Ministers

# Dr. A. Ray Appelquist: Irenic in Spirit



Committee began to consider filling the position made vacant by the earlier resignation of Walter Vernon as Associate Secretary.

Soon thereafter, an unfamiliar name (in N.A. circles) began to surface among those directly or indirectly involved in the search process. When it became apparent that this person was the enthusiastic choice of the committee and that he was at least willing to seriously consider the offer, the committee thought it highly desirable that he and I should meet one another. Thus it transpired on a lovely day in early spring, I came face to face for the first time with A. Ray Appelquist.

We spent several hours together getting acquainted and, I suspect, sizing up each others' style. When I returned home that evening I remarked to Carolyn, "I'm really getting excited about becoming Executive Secretary. Working with Ray Appelquist will be a great experience!" And, so it proved to be.

With his accustomed vigor he began his work as Associate Secretary for Missions by traveling around the world, visiting various areas where the Missionary Society was involved, in order to get a first hand look at the people and programs the fellowship was supporting.

When he returned to Oak Creek, because Carol had remained in the Washington, D.C. area to supervise the sale of their home there, Carolyn and I invited him to occupy what we came to call the "N.A. Suite" in our modest

apartment in Greenfield. Hence, for several months thereafter, informal briefings and conversations often began around the breakfast table, were resumed at dinner, and many times continued well into the evening. He studied his N.A. Yearbook almost as carefully and diligently as he did his Bible. Every weekend found him visiting churches and ministers throughout the fellowship. In addition to extensive air travel, he put over 90,000 miles on his N.A. leased car in three years. In a remarkably short time he became well acquainted with the churches and ministers with whom he was to work so effectively in the area of Pastoral Relations and later as Executive Secretary. He carried, also, a portfolio of the Commission on the Ministry.

At conclusion of my term of office as Executive Secretary, the Search Committee, at Ray's request, sought out others to assume the post. However, it became increasingly apparent that the only person who should be considered for the post was Ray, himself. The succeeding four years have validated the wisdom of that choice. His initial work load was unbelievably heavy until the coming of Walter Boring (Missions) and Harry Clark (Pastoral Relations) to the Oak Creek office. These past four years have witnessed a steady growth in the number of churches, of financial support and have seen an increase in the breadth and scope of program resources.

Back in 1975 when the name of Ray Appelquist was first mentioned, a perfectly logical question sprang to many minds: "Why name someone from the outside of our fellowship to this sensitive position?" Yet his whole past pointed to this moment.

He grew up in the Swedish Baptist tradition. Thus, he understood the nature of the free church. He

*by Dr. Erwin A. Britton*

Shortly after the Search Committee, appointed in 1974 to find a successor to John Alexander, had offered me the position and I had agreed to serve if elected, the

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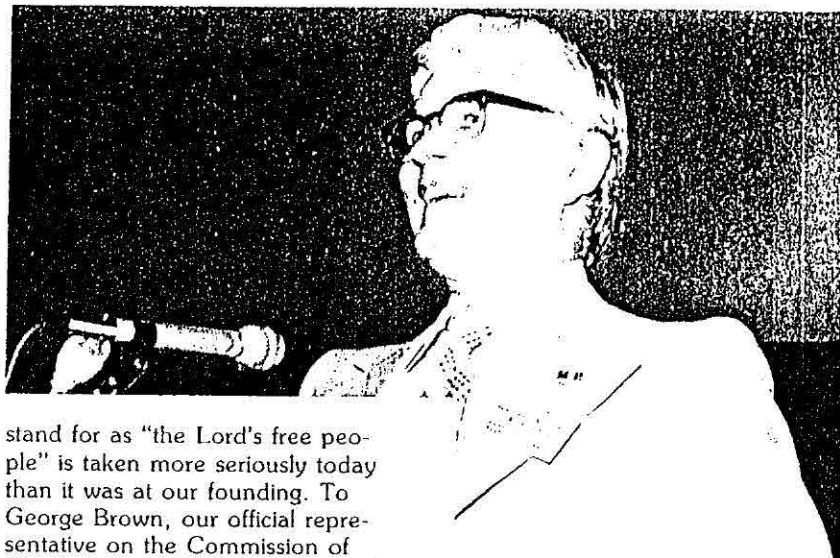
*Dr. Erwin A. Britton is Immediate Past Executive Secretary of National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. Now he is assistant to the president at Olivet College.*

served as an Army Chaplain. Thus, he was prepared to deal with all sorts and conditions of persons. He ministered as pastor of a church. Thus, he was prepared to understand the problems and possibilities of the parish. He served on the staff of the American Baptist Convention. Thus, he anticipated the limitations placed upon an ecclesiastical bureaucracy which must function in the context of the free church. His fourteen years as Secretary to the General Commission of Chaplains for the Armed Services in Washington brought him into contact with the leadership of a wide range of denominations and churches. This experience gave him real insight into the diversities in theology, liturgy, lifestyles, churchmanship, and social practices of the members of our Association. Finally, and most important, he and Carol are persons of prayer. They both felt God's leading in this venture, for which we as an Association can only sing the Doxology!

At the time of the founding of the National Association, we Congregationalists were regarded as crab grass on the lawn of ecumenism. Of necessity we had placed our wagons in a circle, for we were a beleaguered group. When we were not regarded with scorn or suspicion, we were studiously ignored, occasionally shunned or deliberately excluded.

It is a tribute to our genuine commitment to the concept of real ecumenism that we readily called to a critical and sensitive post on our National staff an "outsider." It is a tribute also to our fellowship and its potential that a person of Ray's stature and talent should gladly cast his lot with us.

He came to the N.A. as we were entering our 21st year as an organization. In many ways he helped us "come of age." What we



stand for as "the Lord's free people" is taken more seriously today than it was at our founding. To George Brown, our official representative on the Commission of Chaplains, must be given the credit for alerting the 1974 Search Committee to Ray's availability.

In staff meetings, private conversations, and public gatherings Ray often used the word "irenic" to describe the spirit of some church or minister for which he had particular admiration. It is a word which also describes Ray's spirit and methodology. He is a good listener, a patient and perceptive observer, and an effective doer. Though not easily provoked he could, when the occasion demanded it, be roused to righteous anger in a fashion that left no one in doubt as to his feelings, convictions, or intentions.

He is genuinely a pastor to our pastors, rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who mourn. His administrative skills, honed by years of experience, are characteristically unobtrusive; therefore they are most effective. He is indefatigable, never becoming "weary of well doing."

Any tribute to Ray Appelquist would fall far short of its mark unless it included a strong statement about the contributions made by his wife Carol. She often traveled with him. She participated regularly in the activities of many N.A. groups and organizations as a speaker, counselor, or interested bystander. Their home in Franklin,

with Carol as gracious hostess, was often the center of visiting N.A. groups or persons. No one knows better than I how valuable is this kind of support.

All of us rejoice that Ray and Carol, in moving to their new assignment in Mt. Dora, Fla., will still remain within the N.A. family. We wish for them God's richest blessings in their new ventures. □

*A Man Called*

# Richard

*Helen Thuman*



Nicknames? Fine for others, but he prefers to be called "Richard"—especially by his parishioners.

The National Association's current moderator, Richard J. Bower, has not missed a National Association meeting since his first attendance in 1964. During this time he has served as chairman of many major committees: Christian Education, Nominating, Executive, 25th Anniversary and Search, the latter's function being to find a new Executive Secretary.

A native of New Jersey, his father an engineer, mother a housewife, two brothers almost a generation older, Richard grew up in the Methodist Church and was always involved in church activities. He thought of entering the ministry all the way through high school. No other profession ever really interested him—except in seventh grade when he announced that he was going to be an actor on Broadway!

Actually, he did "tread the boards" and "speak the speech" in both high school and college where his non-academic activities were participation in music groups and drama. The Thespians, honorary high school dramatic organization, named him outstanding state male actor during his senior year.

Valedictorian of his graduating class, he was accepted for undergraduate studies at Yale University but chose, instead, to attend Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT on a scholarship. A French major, he was privileged to spend a year at The Sorbonne in France. (Fortunately for his congregations, his sermons are always in English!)

His thoughts of becoming a minister became commitment. He applied to various seminaries. Again he was accepted by Yale. Again he made another choice, entering Drew University Theological Seminary in Madison, N.J. Fate had stepped in. Helen Ann Check was also at Drew! They met in 1961 and were married in December of 1962.

During his first year at Drew, Richard learned through a friend of his mother that the Congregational Church in Bound Brook, NJ, was looking for a student minister. He got the job. Thus began his valued friendship with and inspirational tutelage under Dr. Olin Lewis, the senior minister of that church.

After his second charge, a year of internship at a Methodist student church in Jersey City, Richard and Helen Ann returned to Bound Brook, became Congregationalists, and Richard interned in Dr. Lewis' church for two more years. He was ordained in 1965.

The Kewaunee, WI, Congregational Church called him to replace its minister who had been there for many years. After almost three years and the birth of their son, Christopher, the Bowers headed back to Bound Brook because Dr. Lewis, after twenty-two years of ministry there, was moving to another church. There they remained until, in 1978, the Congregational Church of the Chimes in Sherman Oaks, CA, (a suburb of Los Angeles), called him to succeed Dr. Walter H. Staves who had founded the church in 1950.

His office staff loves working with him in spite of his minuscule handwriting, his ability to spot a misspelled word a mile away and his (reasonable) perfectionism. He always remembers to express his gratitude and praise for the work that others do.

Richard's sermons are low-key, not pontifical, enriched by his knowledge of literature and poetry and his dedication to The Word.

Give him a gavel and an auctioneer's block—he'll keep up a rapid chatter and sell everything that isn't nailed down! Those of you who have attended the N.A.'s convention know that he's a master emcee (and sartorially meticulous).

Musically, Richard is a classicist, favoring Bach, Mozart and Wagner. While attending an international theological seminar at Oxford, England, this past January, he was more than delighted to be able to attend two operas at Covent Garden in London, one of them, "The Marriage of Figaro," on New Year's Eve.

Don't expect him to repair a leaky faucet or change an automobile spark plug, but give him some greens, some flowers and any kind of a container and he can fashion a beautiful display. Some part-time and summer work in a florist shop during his school years enhanced his naturally artistic talents.

The Bower parsonage is just a short spin from the church. Even if it were only a couple of blocks, Richard probably wouldn't walk. He's not an enthusiast for exercise programs or health foods! Anything with chocolate has to be delicious. Helen Ann is an excellent cook, but she knows he won't touch eggplant, squash or onions.

Helen Ann and Richard belong to the church bridge club. (He says his wife is a better player than he.) Mystery novels are his choice for diversion. A few hours basking in the sun at the beach are the perfect prescription for sheer relaxation.

The Church of the Chimes has enjoyed a constant, healthy growth during the past five years. The church school is expanding with the children of young families joining the congregation. The Christian fellowship grows deeper and the circles of outreach ever wider, reflecting the faith, the optimism, the energy and the personality of the minister, Richard J. Bower.

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*Helen Thuman is one of Richard's parishioners at the Congregational Church of the Chimes in Sherman Oaks, CA.*



# BRITT

## — An Introduction to Erwin A. Britton

Some call him "Britt" or "Erv."

Others, more formal, refer to him as "Dr. Britton."

But all share in one privilege — calling Erwin A. Britton "friend."

The universal reaction of people in Detroit when they hear Britt is moving to Milwaukee as executive secretary of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC) is that they will miss him deeply.

Britt has become an integral part of the Detroit scene in his years as minister of historic First Congregational Church, located in what once was known as the "piety hill" section of the city. He's been active in both civic and ecumenical groups and he's well known around town.

One prominent Detroit clergyman, Dr. Carl G. Howie, minister of Westminster United Presbyterian Church, comments:

"Britt may have the traditional image of the clergyman but he has a remarkable openness and savoir faire about the way things are today."

Adds the Rev. Paul H. Young Jr., pastor of Southfield's North Congregational Church:

"I'm very impressed with his theological perspective, his churchmanship and the way in which he sees the life of the church becoming a vital force in people's lives.

"He's the type of man who can bridge the differences between conservatives and liberals. He can speak the language of both."

Bridging differences long has been a talent of Britt's.

"I remember when I was in high school somehow I got to be the intermediary between the principal and my home room teacher," says Britt.

"Somehow I must have had the reputation that I could be trusted and that I could communicate.

"The same thing happened in graduate school of theology when I was the intermediary between the dean and the faculty."

Britt says his ability to reconcile comes from his father, a supervisor of a water purification plant who was active in civic affairs and often took the role of peace-maker.

Born a Buckeye, Britt also is that rarity in Congregationalism, a native Congregationalist.

"I started attending when I was five years old," he says.

"I was active in youth programs and was the first moderator of the youth group in Northern Ohio from 1931 to 1937."

Attending Oberlin College, Britt found himself attracted to the secretary to the dean and registrar for the school of theology.

"I'd go by the office everyday to pick up the mail and every day I'd drop in," recalls Britt.

"I liked what I saw."

Britt and Carolyn had an "understanding," says the 60-year-old minister until he became minister of First Congregational Church in Wayne, Mich.

The Brittons had three daughters, Penny, Betsy and Connie. They now have a granddaughter, Amanda, less than one year old, of whom they "just happen" to have stacks of pictures handy to show friends.

"She's the cutest baby in the world," says Britt. "I have her

grandmother's word for it. I don't disagree with her."

The Brittons — Carolyn is deeply involved in Britt's ministry — spent 23 years at the Wayne church where the membership went from 225 to 1,200.

In 1964 he became minister of First in Detroit, a church founded in 1844 when Detroit had a population of 10,948 and the city was still suffering from the panic of 1837.

The current church was constructed in 1890 at a site which then was "way out in the suburbs." It is an unusual church because it combines the Romanesque and Byzantine designs.

First also is unusual because the angel Uriel tops the church tower and not many churches have angels on their roofs. In recent years Uriel had to be taken down for repairs, the second time in 20 years.

"That first time," says Britt, "the interim minister said unless Uriel was repaired there would either be a 'loose woman above us or a fallen woman in our midst.'"

Actually, says Britt, he's not sure how to address Uriel, as he, she, it or Ms., since angels don't have gender.

Humor is one of the hallmarks of Britt, who enjoys writing a limerick now and then and manages to devise gentle puns and quick replies.

With James Lyons, minister of Pine Hill Congregational Church in Orchard Lake, Mich., Britt does a modern day dialog on St. Paul. Britt takes the part of Paul while Lyons interviews him.

Asked by one person about ministers' supporting themselves, Britt quickly retorted as Paul:

"I did, through my tent ministry, and if you recall, I also said the laborer was worthy of his hire."

Britt will miss that dialog, will miss working with people in the local church.

"I do enjoy preaching but I don't think it's one of my great strengths," he says candidly.

"I enjoy working with people, doing things in and for the

church. I have the facility to have people work together who have divergent points of view."

The greatest satisfaction he's had is "seeing things that happen to people which give them personal satisfaction in terms of their coming to grips with some of the problems they're facing or the joys they experience through fellowship in the church."

Britt, who considers the NACCC annual meeting in Wichita this last June one of the "more positive," looks at his new post as working with others "side by side."

"It's not a hierarchical arrangement," he says.

His concerns for the future include new church development, encouraging others with similar viewpoints to join and support the NACCC,

and continuing to let others know that the association exists.

"I want to see a continual strengthening of the ministry, as continuing education for our ministers," says Britt.

"We have a responsibility to the non-Congregational ministers among us to give them more of our philosophy.

"We could take several days to bring people together and say 'here we are, this is what we're trying to do and this is why we're the peculiar people we are.'"

As he looks back on his years in Detroit, Britt singles out a nearby church, Plymouth United Church of Christ, for its contribution to the city in developing inner city housing for moderate income people. Plymouth, as part of its

dedication to the city, secured federal funding for the project and used black architects and a black union.

"This will hold up through the years as a creative response of an urban black church to the needs of the people," maintains Britt.

Overall, Britt sees the close relationship which developed in the past ten years between the Protestants and Catholics as one of the most significant trends and one which personally gave him great joy.

Now, that ecumenical community, which came to know Erv and Carolyn Britton so well, regret the losing of treasured friends.

From all your friends in this area — and from around the country — best of luck to you, Britt and Carolyn.

— Nancy Manser





Carol DiBiasio-Snyder

## A SHARED MINISTRY—A SHARED LIFE

Mary Woolsey

"Sharing" is the word most typical of both her ministry and her total life style. She is Carol DiBiasio-Snyder, petite, brown-haired with sparkling brown eyes that reflect both her lively sense of humor and her concern with performing well in her chosen ministry.

A recent M.A. graduate of Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Carol and her husband, Ralph, share the Christian Education ministry of North Shore Congregational Church in Milwaukee, WI. Together they are creating an exciting and extremely active C.E. program. Carol takes charge of the church school (infants through high school) while Ralph is in charge of adult education. Together they organize and work with the youth ministry for the junior and senior high school groups as well as intergenerational events. The duties of the position have been divided to take advantage of each person's talents. It is an arrangement that is advantageous for the church and allows them each to work less than full time.

"Having a male and female working with the youth has great advantages," says Carol. "At a time when youth are developing their own sex role identities, we both offer role models. Since neither Ralph nor I fulfill the traditional stereotypes for our sex, we feel that the youth have alternative models to the 'macho' male or the 'shrinking' female extremes."

One role that Carol feels is important to model for the youth is that of women in the ministry. "As a woman in ministry, it is a privilege to be able to model the church professions as valid and important vocational options for women. It is a great joy to encourage youth to listen without limits for the voice of God calling them to service."

Sharing a position at the church with her husband is only one extension of Carol's chosen total life style. She and Ralph also share, in a real sense, their home life. Each performs household duties according to their talents and inclination. An organized person, Carol says they have formally set up the organization of their home. For instance, Carol shops, Ralph does the laundry and they share meal preparation.

Carol and Ralph also share in another important area of their life, their name. DiBiasio (Dee-Bee-ah-zee-o), Carol's maiden name, was linked with Ralph's Snyder upon marriage.

Why have they chosen a sharing life style? "This arrangement leaves us free to pursue other life goals and interests," says Carol. "We both wanted a career in the ministry but we knew a full time career for either or both of us would bring conflicts. Full time ministry often leaves little time for other activities or for family. We have seen others burn out and we didn't want that to happen to us."

With her career and household sharing arrangement, Carol finds time to enjoy her artistic talents as well as volunteer her services in

worthwhile community activities that interest her. Ralph finds time for writing and music.

Carol first became aware that she was interested in the ministry as a career in high school but it wasn't until she was in college that she seriously considered this option. She received her B.S. degree from Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio and for a time worked as a graphic artist. It was also during her college career that she began attending a nearby Congregational Church. "I became a Congregationalist by accident," she grins, "but I stayed by choice."

Totally immersed in Congregationalism now, Carol was chosen to give morning devotions at the recent National Association meetings in Lansing. She also serves on the Christian Education Commission. It was during these annual meetings that one of Carol's secret passions came to light. She is a confirmed Chocoholic! During the awards portion of the meetings, she was presented with a gigantic chocolate bar by fellow Chocoholic Richard Bower. Upon completion of the meeting, fellow Congregationalists found Carol at the exit—sharing, of course.

# From Engineer to Minister

## Road to Emmaus Issues from Local Church for CFTS Graduate

by the Rev. Richard C. Ellison  
Congregational Church of Randolph, New Jersey

*They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the scriptures?" —Luke 24:32*

**S**everal weeks ago, Steve, a fellow elder at the Randolph (New Jersey) Congregational Church came up to me and wanted to talk about my career change. He was considering changing careers and going to seminary. So, during the following week, we sat in my study one night and talked for three hours about all the ramifications connected with taking this tremendous step of faith. I shared with him my experience and by the end of the night, I felt very inadequate. Did I encourage or discourage him in his quest to do God's will in his life?

In reflecting on that extended conversation, I recalled that we concentrated on economic factors. Steve has three children; none in college yet. He is a middle management person with maybe twelve years left before being eligible for "early retirement."

Could his family adjust to a reduced standard of living? Would Steve be a "responsible provider" by giving up his future, full pension?

Yes, the economic factors are paramount for anyone contemplating a career change as drastic as going to seminary and then on into full-time ministry. One day your income is in the mid-seventies and the next, you hope it will reach the lower twenties. This dramatic income drop is graphically reflected in the "W2 Forms" filed with your Federal Income Tax return. For over 20 years, my total annual income was reported on a single W2 Form from one company. Then, when I entered seminary, "support" came from various sources including a variety of part-time jobs. However, as traumatic as these instantaneous economic contractions were, their importance faded as I realized that my career change was a gradual process that stretched over many years.

Let's see, how can I describe the process? The main line of the Erie-

Lackawanna Railroad is near our home. There is a two-lane road that parallels a straight stretch of track for almost a mile. There are level and very, very close. I have driven on the road when a fast freight has come up from behind and suddenly emitted a loud blast from the air horn. Thank God a car was not passing me in the opposite direction. Years ago, when I started my "career change process," I was driving along the road in my secular career and heavily involved in church activities. However, when I reached the end of that parallel section of road and track, I found myself aboard the freight train on my way to seminary. I never changed the direction I was going, just the conveyance which was going to a different destination.

I read somewhere that, contrary to popular belief, qualified clergypersons are not dropped out of heaven into our pulpits but are nurtured by sensitive congregations. One of the "blessings" of the Congregational Way is that a congregation is free to



*Richard C. Ellison, and his wife of 31 years, Carol, consider themselves evangelicals in that every believer should have a dynamic, personal relationship with Jesus. They also consider themselves "charismatics" in that they believe that all the gifts of the Spirit are operative today. They would like to be called to a pastoral ministry and participate in church renewal.*

act upon what it discerns as God's will for that gathered flock. The Randolph Congregation freely acted upon its commitment to become a "nurturing" flock and authorized the investment of money and Pastor Tim Witzel's time and sweat into a very comprehensive training program that would equip servant elders to minister within the congregation. So, for over ten years, my "parallel road and track" consisted of participation in this training program, elder ordination and then preaching, teaching and pastoring within our congregation while still "driving" my car. When the Lord called, I heard the call and was ready to let Him put me on the train.

Over my desk hangs a picture of the seven men who completed the first Elder's Training Class. One of my classmates was Art Smith who is currently pastoring a congregation in Vermont. Art, among others, encouraged me to apply to the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies. I had come from another denomination and so CFTS provided a foundational knowledge of our tradition.

Another tradition has been nurtured by the Randolph Congregation. The mission collection from Communion Sunday, the first Sun-

day of every month, has always been given to support a seminarian: Art Smith, Fred Burckbuchler, John Navarre and yours truly, just to name a few.

I would call my personal stretch of road and track, my road to Emmaus. As Carol and I started traveling along the road, a fast freight did not come up behind us and scare us half to death. No, the Body of Christ came up and joined us. The Randolph Congregation gave us many opportunities to serve in serious, faith-stretching ministries and when the call to pursue a new career of full-time ministry was accepted, the congregation and the National Association sustained us with spiritual and physical support.

The two disciples on the original Emmaus Road were changed after experiencing communion with the risen Christ. They now had a life-giving message to share and they joyfully and enthusiastically ran back to Jerusalem. Carol and I have been changed by our communion with our local, gathered Body of Christ and our extended, national fellowship during these past three years. We now have a life-giving message to share with the "Congregational" congregation that calls us to share in its local witness and pilgrimage. ■

#### *About Richard Ellison*

*After serving as a technical instructor for the United States Air Force, Richard returned to New Jersey in 1962 to join the Automatic Switch Company. During his 24 years with ASCO, he earned an industrial engineering degree at Newark College of Engineering. He worked in engineering, inside and outside sales and was national sales manager. He left ASCO to become international service manager for a high-power laser manufacturer, resigning after two years to enter Drew Theological Seminary where, sponsored by CFTS, he earned a Master of Divinity degree with honors in May, 1991 at 52 years of age.*



John F. C. Green was born in Kratt Regierungsbezirk Eckernfoerde, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, May 6, 1892. He attended the public school in Soeby, and was confirmed some months early, prior to his immigration in 1907 to Montana where he hoped to become a rancher. After several years of working on ranches, he entered night-school, intending to return to the ranch after a few months. But his teacher, Dr. Virgil V. Phelps, persuaded him to consider higher education. And so he completed the high school course and college by 1916, graduating from Shurtleff College, Alton, Illinois. In 1917, he received the Master of Arts degree at the University of Chicago. In 1919, he graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary, and after that he spent another year in special study at the University of Chicago. In 1947 Washington and Jefferson College awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

He was ordained to the Congregational ministry in the Congregational Church of Godfrey, Illinois, March 7, 1919, following brief work in a mission at Pana, Illinois. In 1922 he was called to the Congregational Church of Batavia, Illinois. In 1925, he undertook the pastorate of an independent Evangelical Prot-

## ONE MAN'S MINISTRY

### A FORTY-SEVEN YEAR STORY

*John F. C. Green, D. D., Pastor for thirty-nine years at the Evangelical Congregational Church in McKeesport, Pennsylvania, was tendered a Testimonial Dinner on the occasion of his retirement on February 18, 1966. The following biography was printed in the program for the evening.*

estant Church in Madison, Indiana, which, under its previous leadership had gotten into Lutheran influence. The congregation voted to unite with the Evangelical Protestant Conference of Congregational Churches prior to his acceptance of a call to the Evangelical Congregational Church of McKeesport, Pennsylvania, where he was installed November 21, 1926.

During his 39 year pastorate in McKeesport, Dr. Green saw the congregation expand and flourish. The dreams of the Church for a new Parish House and a new sanctuary were realized when the present edifices were dedicated in 1936 and 1952 respectively. Young people's groups flourished and added new life to the Church. The first children's and young people's choirs were organized with great success in 1927. Boy Scouts and Cubs were John Green's real interest and the first Cub Pack in the area was at the McKeesport Church. Dr. Green served as Scoutmaster for some 10 years. The young people continue to be leaders among the Churches and other organizations of the community.

Much of what has been accomplished can be considered a personal triumph for Dr. Green. His influence was felt, not only in his own Church, but in other Churches and organizations throughout the area. He was ever active in the local Ministerium both as president and as chairman of various departments. With other colleagues, he organized the Sunday evening services, which, for a term of years were very well attended. The Reformation services, on a community scale, were largely his work. The first and largest was led by Bishop Otto Dibelius of Germany. For many years during his pastorate, double services were held bi-monthly; English at 10:00 and

German at 11:00. For a while this brought the largest German attendance the Church had ever had, drawing not only from our own congregation but from all German families of the community.

Dr. Green has been a foremost leader in the preservation of the free Church and has been active in the Western Pennsylvania Association of Congregational Churches and the state conference of these Churches. He has been active in the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches from the start and is now a member of the World Christian Relations Commission with interests and contacts in many parts of the world.

Dr. Green's services were not merely in the wide realm of the ministry. In 1928 he organized the first welfare association in McKeesport, The Family Welfare Society. In the same year he organized the first boys club of the Optimist Club for this entire district. He also organized the Interracial Committee. He was a member and also served as chairman of the City Planning Commission and a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for 25 years. In 1950, he founded and organized the Youth Guidance Council of McKeesport and with the Reverend Father Peter Kreta was co-chairman until 1965.

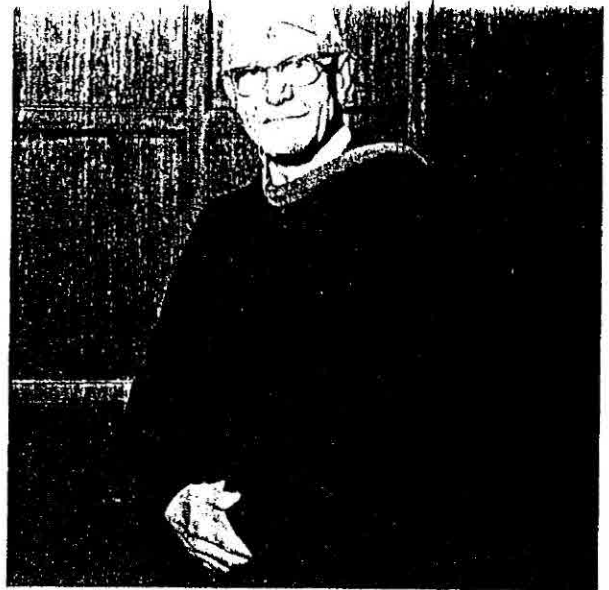
It would be impossible to list the many services the Rev. Dr. John F. C. Green has contributed to his Church and his community. The McKeesport Church, on the occasion of his resignation, presented gifts, and tributes by the Mayor, the President of the Ministerial Association, the President of the McKeesport Optimists and the Chairman of the Youth Guidance Council, were received.

Retirement from McKeesport is merely another phase in the life of this man of God. ●



# ... 50 Years in the Ministry

Rev. Alfred D. Grey  
Interim Minister  
Extraordinaire



The First Congregational Church of Detroit was host to an unusual gathering recently, the occasion being a dinner and reception honoring two men who had served "Old First" as *interim ministers* at critical periods in the Church's history.

The Rev. Ralph P. Claggett was born in 1891, educated at Oberlin College and Oberlin Graduate School of Theology. Five years in the retail department of the Johannesburg Manufacturing Company in Michigan were followed by five years as a Y.M.C.A. secretary in Kansas City, Missouri and Detroit.

Mr. Claggett is the author of two books and four plays, and has had religious drama as a life-long avocation.

From 1926 to 1957 Mr. Claggett served successively five Congregational Churches—one in Ohio, and four in Michigan. He was interim at First Church, Detroit for one winter after his retirement.

The Reverend Alfred D. Grey, D.D. was hailed on the 50th Anniversary of his ordination, and also the 50th wedding anniversary of the Greys.

Dr. Grey has served Congregational Churches in Washington, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Kansas, Ohio,



Rev. Ralph P. Claggett

California and Michigan. In Michigan the Congregational Church of Birmingham and the Pine Hill Congregational Church were gathered around the Greys.

More than any other man in our fellowship, Dr. Alfred D. Grey has become a father-in-the-Lord to younger pastors and to the numerous Churches he has served as interim or as first minister.

The following vivid commentary is from an address delivered by Dr. Grey, entitled "My Fifty Years in the Ministry."

"I was ordained by the laying on of hands, October 18th, 1914 in First Congregational Church, Tacoma, Washington where I had been called as Associate Minister, just out of seminary. The church instituted the ordination call, not the Tacoma Association. It was a vicinage council.

"For the first ten or twelve years I had a rugged time, jumping from one job to another, satisfying neither myself nor anyone else. The problem was for the most part, one of adjustment.

"It is the challenge of the exigencies of occupation which either makes you or breaks you. This is especially true of the Christian ministry. It is when God's upper and nether mill-stones grind you exceedingly fine that your self-confidence and self-esteem are reduced to the irreducible minimum, and you come face to face with yourself for the first time—am I a phony or am I real—and you throw yourself on the mercy of God and you pray as did Cowper,

*Return Oh Heavenly Dove,  
return,  
Sweet messenger of rest;  
I hate the sins that made  
Thee mourn  
And drove Thee from my  
breast.*

"My life has been blessed by the influence of several great men, both

laymen and clergymen. *My father* was a minister of the Evangelical Church—now the Evangelical United Brethren Church. He was a man of impeccable integrity. *Ozora Stearns Davis*, President of Chicago Seminary exercised a profound influence over me and still does. I learned more from him than from all the rest of the faculty put together, and not so much from what he taught as from what he was. He loved me and I knew it. *Charles M. Sheldon*, famous author of 'In His Steps', lived in Topeka, Kansas while I was minister at Lawrence, 26 miles east. We visited back and forth and became trusted friends. *H. O. Cameron* was treasurer for 40 years at Washington Congregational Church in Toledo. I had 13 wonderful years there. He was a man of substance and of few words. I will never forget the first annual meeting I attended in January, 1933. The Church owed \$100,000. Everybody was discouraged. Gloom filled the air. Mr. Cameron stood up. He said, 'I'm not discouraged. I know this congregation. If we all stick together, we'll come through all right.' And he sat down. The atmosphere of the meeting was charged with electric sharpness. The people went to work. We paid off that indebtedness."

#### Great Preachers

"Some of the great preachers of our Congregational fellowship were an inspiration to the young preachers of my generation. We heard them at National Council meetings and when they lifted us, made us proud that we were numbered with them in the tradition of the Pilgrim Faith: *Gordon* of Old South, Boston; *Jefferson* at Broadway Tabernacle, New York; *Hillis* and *Cadman* of Brooklyn; *Gladden* of Columbus, Ohio; *Gunsaulus* and *Davis* of Chicago; *Atkins* of Detroit; *Dewey* of Plymouth, Minneapolis; *Smith* of Omaha; *Horace Day* of Los Angeles.

"They were all great preachers. There were giants in those days. They were developed and fostered in the free atmosphere of a free fellowship. Organizational Christianity does not produce them.

"In June, 1936 at the General Council meeting at Mount Holyoke

College, half a dozen of us stood around Dr. Cadman on the lawn and plied him with questions. One of us said, 'Dr. Cadman, why did you leave the Methodist Church for our Congregational fellowship?' Like a pistol shot he replied, slipping into the vernacular of the coal mines of England out of which he had come, 'I wanted to be meself!' He went on to say that he felt free in the liberty of Congregationalism."

#### Scripture Important

"I could be wrong, but it seems to me that many of our young men, in the preparation of their sermons, have not learned to use the Scripture, felt uneasy with it and are inwardly embarrassed by the necessity which conventionality lays upon them in reading and speaking about it in Church. The sermons are for the most part topical and Scriptural illustrations and quotations are comparatively rare. I thank God that in my youth, I learned the Scripture. I mean the content of the Bible. It was drilled into me at home. Paul says, 'For God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind.' (Tim. 1:7) To search and to know the Scriptures gives steadiness, assurance, confidence to the preacher. When I got to Seminary I knew the Bible. Of course I knew nothing of its background. But I knew its contents. If you want to prepare a sermon on personal religion, it is there. If you want to preach on modern social issues, they are in the Scriptures. I remember Graham Taylor, great social prophet speaking in chapel on one of the social passages in Isaiah. He brought his fist down on the chapel pulpit and roared, 'I care not if there be two Isaiahs or forty-two Isaiahs, this is the Word of God!' The Bible must be the center and source of our preaching, first, last and all the time.

"In closing, let me make a few observations on the changes that have occurred in our Congregational Fellowship in these 50 years. Gradually Superintendents acquired more power, mostly by the method of controlling state nominating committees, until only death and taxes could remove them. The centralizing process

among our Churches began 50 years ago. I began observing it 35 years ago. It was partly due to the impatience of our denominational leaders in the setup of the Federal Council, when they observed the facility and dispatch with which their brethren of other denominations on Boards and committees of the Council, whipped their churches into line in matters of strategy and promotion. This moved into the state offices. Fifteen years ago one of our State Superintendents working on me to change my views said, 'This movement has been developing for twenty-five years. It is inevitable.' I think too that the movement was accelerated by the Great Depression. Read the statistics of those years in the Year Books of our denomination. There was desperation in the air—in labor, in business, in government and among the Churches. And it was sincere."

#### Informal to Formal

"There has been a noticeable shift from informal worship to ritual and liturgy. Fifty years ago our Churches had central pulpits. Now there is the divided chancel. Prayer was extemporaneous. Now, for the most part, ministers read their prayers. For 15 years I wore a frock coat in the pulpit. After a while a member of the Church presented me with a Geneva gown. Looking back over this change from informal to formal, I wonder whether we have not gained little and lost much. Evangelical fervor has its place in worship. 'The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life.' And what has become of the burning passion for foreign missions which blazed in our Congregational Churches a half century ago?

"On August 4th, last, Mrs. Grey and I celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary. During all these years she has been by my side. She rarely missed Church service. If the sermon was good, she praised it—sparingly. If it was bad, she said nothing. She was never a leader in Church activities. But she was always in the midst of them, helping wherever she was needed. She made multitudes of friends and no enemies that I can recollect. Any preacher with a wife like that, is lucky." ■

# God Has Opened a Way for Me



*Dr. Mary C. Lane*

by Terence E. Johnson

Why would a 61-year-old woman who retired as a full colonel from the Women's Army Corps, United States Army, suddenly seek ordination to

the ministry? Because she sensed a "call"!

Mary C. Lane, baptized a Congregationalist as a child, has, throughout her adult life, been an

active church person; and becoming officially recognized as a minister was a natural extension of her spiritual commitment.

She was examined for ordination last February in an Ecclesiastical Council of the Vicinage. The council was hosted by the First Congregational Church of Royal Oak, Michigan, whose diaconate sponsored her as a candidate for ordination. Her statement of religious faith and experience was impressive, and the council unanimously supported her request for ordination. The service of ordination was held in the spring of this year.

Col. Lane, following her retirement in 1971 from the Army, studied for and received master's and doctor's degrees from the University of Southern California. Then a member of Los Angeles' First Congregational Church, she heard a speech by President James E. Walter of Piedmont College at First Church. That speech by Dr. Walter and "my studies at U.S.C. with Dr. Earl Pullias and others" strongly influenced her commitment to education as a ministry. Dr. Lane draws heavily on the Congregational tradition of education as a part of the church's mission; and so interpreted her subsequent move to Piedmont as professor to education and religion as responding to a "call" to Christian service.

In going to Piedmont and in seeking ordination, Dr. Lane fulfilled "a long-sought desire." "I chose education as an opportunity for real service," she said in an interview, "and I see Piedmont as a 'Christian missionary college.'" So at the small Georgia school she is able to fulfill her personal ministry as "teacher and minister" through her professional duties as well as serving as assistant chaplain. Part of her ministry there, as she views it, is also to expand the understanding of "Congregationalism where it needs to be better understood."

As a recognized minister, the Rev. Dr. Lane feels that she is better able to serve through preaching in various churches, and in the confidence gained through the recognition of her as an ordained clergy. "God has opened up this way for me," she says, "for serving in education and religion."

A confirmed religious progressive, Dr. Lane reflects the intellectual tradition of liberal Congregationalism. A central question for her is: "Can you bring your intellectual faculties into the church as well as your spirit? It's important to bring your mind." Influential in her spiritual development was the ministry of Congregationalist-turned-Unitarian Van Ogden Vogt, famed Chicago pastor. Other ministers who contributed to the shaping of her spiritual life were A. Powell Davies and Seth Brooks.

Albert Schweitzer's writings and the witness of his life have been significant examples and inspiration to Dr. Lane. "Schweitzer's life and thought have helped shape my thinking, and his *Quest for the Historical Jesus* changed my views." William Ellery Channing and Theodore

Parker, outstanding in Unitarian Christianity, are "heroes" of Dr. Lane.

"I count myself a Christian," says this Mount Holyoke graduate, "and I am a confirmed theist." Her orientation is thoroughly Christian, and she views Jesus "as the unique revelation of God on earth. He changed the history of mankind and brought a new concept that has moved men for centuries." Though open to and appreciative of other religious expressions, Dr. Lane sees Christianity as the highest expression of religion for her, and affirms, "I believe it does change people's lives."

Shifting to the concern of women in the ministry, Prof. Lane said, "It is unfortunate that Paul had had such strong influence all these years! The Pauline prohibition concerning women keeping silent in the church was dictated by the social milieu of his time." She believes that women have a place in the professional ministry and that the churches must cultivate acceptance of women's leadership. Often our own worst enemies as women are other women!" Dr. Lane thinks that this can be partially overcome through proper education of children, who ought to learn that there are possibilities in the various professions for women as well as men. In addition, "women have sympathy, understanding, and intuition that men often do not possess, and these are needed qualities in the ministry."

Because "the word" is significant in the ordained ministry, this new Congregational minister sees the importance of the voice of the minister; and this, she believes, is something the woman minister must develop. "The word must be delivered in a clear, forceful, spiritually-inspiring way." Saying that some women do not have "the voice for the preaching mission," Dr. Lane added that many may find avenues of ministry through religious education and the ministry of music. The Roman Catholic Church has provided a marvelous example to women, she states, in which women have dedicated themselves to all fields of life — nuns who are nurses, teachers, etc.

Because the church in Royal Oak (as well as other churches in southeastern Michigan) has maintained close ties with Piedmont, the ordination council was held in Michigan. The diaconate of First Congregational Church, Royal Oak, was delighted to recommend Dr. Lane as a candidate for the ministry, and the Vicinage Council unanimously supported her request and the church's sponsorship. Participating in the spring Service of Ordination were Dr. Walter and R. Jesse P. Peirce, Piedmont chaplain.

Dr. Lane stands as an inspiration to younger women who may consider the ministry as a professional option, to older women looking to a career change, and to all who respect the openness, freedom, and challenge of Congregationalism.

*Mr. Johnson is the senior minister of First Congregational Church of Royal Oak, Michigan.*



*"I wouldn't change a thing about my life."*

## Elaine Marsh: Traveling on In Her Ministry

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*Anita Buck*

She worked in West Virginia, then in New York, becoming a person who lived out of motels all the time. Her work was mainly speaking to church school teachers.

Her friend from the European trip invited Elaine to visit in Minneapolis. It was then that she applied for and was accepted as educational minister at Plymouth Congregational Church. Because she was an ordained minister, Pastor Marsh did other things, but for many years her main efforts were with the educational needs of the church. When Dr. Howard Conn, senior minister of Plymouth, retired about seven years ago, she and the young men on the staff did the work of the church together. About three-and-a-half years ago, Vivian Jones became senior minister.

At the time Dr. Conn retired, Elaine Marsh gave notice that she planned to retire in 1983. Even with that advance warning, retirement has come much faster than she expected.

"This is the best church I know," Rev. Marsh said. "It has been very open to women. Women are on every board. They participate in every phase of church work. Plymouth is very concerned about inclusive language. Not liking the male language of the church, a lot is being done to change that," she continued.

While Rev. Marsh retired from Plymouth Congregational Church on June 30, she did not retire from the ministry. On July 1, she left for Devon, England, to take the pastorate of the second oldest free church in that country. The Chulmleigh (pronounced "Chumley") Church was founded in 1633, and Rev. Marsh will be there to celebrate its 350th anniversary. Prior to starting work on Aug. 21, she vacationed in Cornwall for a month.

Rev. Marsh had traveled to England six times, and wondered how she could arrange to stay there for a year. When she was asked to be chaplain at the first international meeting of Congregationalists held in 1977, she met Rev. Elsie Chamberlain, head of the Congregational Union of England and minister of a Congregational Church.

After working together on the planning committee for the international Congregational meeting held in Wales two years ago, Rev. Chamberlain asked Marsh "Why aren't you over here?"

Rev. Marsh replied, "Well, I'm really working on it."

Soon afterward, Rev. Chamberlain wrote of her retirement plans, and Rev. Marsh agreed to go to the church in Devon.

Called the loveliest part of England by some, Devon's north border is on the Bristol Channel. The south borders on the English Channel. Gulf stream waters wash the coast, which means flowers all year around, and palm trees in the south.

The manse in which Marsh will live is as old as the church, dating back 350 years. "It has five bedrooms, so I'm inviting all my friends to visit," laughed Marsh.

### Plans for an Active Retirement

Chulmleigh has five churches, two banks, a community college, and a very famous pub, the Barnstable Inn, founded in 1633, the same year as the church.

Marsh is looking forward to rich experiences in Devon. She will be serving in a continuing Congregational church. Many of the Congregational churches in England merged with the Presbyterian church, in the same manner that many in the United States merged with the United Church of Christ. The Chulmleigh church is one that did not join the merger.

Asked about her Baptist background in relationship to her Congregational ministry, Marsh said that her seminary training at Hartford was Congregational. The polity of the American Baptist church and the Congregational Church are very similar.

When her year expires, Rev. Marsh plans to return to Minneapolis, where she owns a home. She previously has worked with alcoholic women, listening to the fifth confessional steps of alcoholism. She would like to join the staff of a hospital or treatment center as a clergy person hearing fifth steps. She would also like to serve as a supply preacher, and she wants to keep on traveling.

Reaching the milestone of retirement, Rev. Elaine Marsh said she has had a happy, satisfactory time in the ministry. "I wouldn't change a thing about my life."



"I have been able to do the things I have wanted to do. I have always been able to take advantage of the opportunities which came, and I've always been able to work." Looking back on her life in the ministry, the Rev. Elaine Marsh said she was totally satisfied. She retired June 30, 1983, after 23 years at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis, MN.

Elaine's first inclination toward the ministry came when she was 16. She heard the woman preacher of a small pentacostal religious sect in her home town in Kansas. Fascinated by the woman, Elaine attended her church. The minister encouraged her to preach. Elaine began preaching when she was 17, and felt she was a great help to the woman.

At a Quaker college in Kansas, Elaine took religion and philosophy courses that would help her in the ministry. She also joined the speech society. Although she won first prize in the college speaking on "Peace," Elaine's coach warned her that she would not win in state competition. "You have a very good oration, but a fellow will be given first prize. You will get second." That is exactly what happened. Rev. Marsh said this type of prejudice used to be very common, and probably exists in some places today, but more subtly.

When she was about to graduate, a Quaker professor directed Elaine and a classmate to Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, the first seminary in the country to let women attend on an equal basis with men. Some 100 years earlier, a group of wealthy women decided that women ought to be trained theologically.

"Heaven forbid, I think, that they should be ministers," said Marsh. "But these women thought there should be women professors at the prestigious women's colleges such as Mount Holyoke, Smith, and Vassar."

Hartford Seminary agreed to allow two women to attend each year, and the scholarships were established. "Nowadays, seminaries have 50 percent women," commented Marsh.

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*Anita Buck is a freelance writer who works with the Stillwater, MN Gazette. She is a member of People's Congregational Church, Bayport, MN.*

Elaine attended Hartford on scholarships for three years, receiving her theological degree. She wrote her master's thesis on "Women in the Church."

Having had a woman serve in a church does more than anything else to make way for other women, according to Marsh. Recalling her seminary days in Connecticut, Marsh said that a small Methodist church wanted a pastor for a year. She was a Baptist. The other candidate was a Methodist, and a man. She was selected for the position, and was troubled as to why she was chosen. She later learned that the best pastor the church ever had was a woman.

After what she termed "three wonderful years at seminary," Elaine, still an American Baptist, wanted to touch base with that religion. She also felt that being a woman she should be very well trained. She enrolled at Berkeley (California) Baptist Divinity School, and studied for a master's degree in religious education.

Following graduation, the Rev. Marsh became one of two ministers in a large parish in the Bitterroot Valley of Montana.

"I lived in Darby, a town just like something out of a wild west movie, with drinking, gambling, fighting, and shooting. I think I preached to the fastest guns in the west. It was a real challenge, but a wonderful place to be," she remembers.

Rev. Marsh left Montana because she had a chance to go to Europe for four months. Knapsacks in hand, she and a friend went abroad in 1949, the first year after

## From the Wild West to Devon

World War II during which people were traveling to the continent. Although they did not have much money, the two women tramped through 15 countries. Rev. Marsh regards the trip as the greatest thing she ever did.

Returning to the United States, Rev. Marsh accepted a position at the First Baptist Church in Cherokee, Iowa, and served for more than eight years, until she was asked to become a field representative of religious education material for the American Baptist Publication Society.

*Through hours of prayer*

## My vocation was not geology

by *Betsey Mauro*

In 1980, I was somewhere in Wyoming working on the oil rigs as a geologist, laying the foundations of a career that held promise of success and affluence. And while life on the oil rigs certainly wasn't easy or glamorous, I wasn't dissatisfied. After all, it was the first rung up the "career ladder," and I was motivated by the sight of future possibilities.

In 1981, after spending two years in the oil patch, as it is called, I hired on as an exploration and development geologist for a petroleum company in Salt Lake City, Utah. As a single woman, I was earning twice the average family income in Utah, and was quite comfortable as a homeowner, living with my two dogs.

So why is it, in 1987, I find myself graduating from seminary heading into parish ministry? Why

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*Betsey Mauro, a member of First Congregational Church, Salt Lake City, Utah, is in her last year of seminary at the Earlham School of Religion, Richmond, Ind. She is a CFTS fellow, and hopes to find a parish for her ministry in the New England area.*

the career change? No, I wasn't a victim of the petroleum layoffs. And why ministry out of all the changes I could have made?

As a single person wrapped up in her career, I experienced what it meant to live my work. While I had no one else for whom to provide, I also had no one else on whom to rely for my own needs. Hence, work was the cornerstone of my life.

To experience work as the cornerstone of life is to rely on it for more than just meeting material needs. It is to experience intimately the meaningfulness of what I am doing with my life. I came to know how much meaning comes from what we do, for what we do is a statement of who we are and who we will become.

In my work as a geologist, I came face to face with the question "What does my work mean?" I wondered: "If I did this for the rest of my life, would I be glad for what I had accomplished?"

This wasn't a question that emerged overnight. I first asked it of myself as an academic exercise, not expecting too much. But the seed was sown, and when over the

next few months I heard a number of sermons preached at First Congregational Church of Salt Lake City about vocation and calling, it was as if the question was fed and watered and grew to take on a life of its own. But the question had a new twist: "Was this the best way I could serve God?" Undoubtedly, for many people in a situation like mine, the answer would have been "yes." For many, life would have continued uninterrupted. Not, however, for me.

With the help of many friends at First Congregational Church, and through hours of prayer, I came to feel that geology was not my vocation; it was my profession, but it did not reflect what was most important to me in my life, and I wanted it to.

I came to feel that my relationship to God needed to be honored and expressed in a way that my working in geology couldn't allow. It wasn't that geology was a terrible thing to be doing. In fact, there are several people for whom working in geology is a form of ministry. But for me it was no longer enough. My decision to leave geology and enter ministry was my



Betsy Mauro

attempt to make my life congruent. It was to make my "work" reflective of that which I thought was most important in my life. Not only was God important, but I wanted to help others experience their relationship with God more fully. For me, to say "yes" to parish ministry is to say "yes" to others through the relationship we all have with God. When I finally realized this, I laid down my career in geology and started to prepare myself to enter the ministry.

When I called my family to tell them of this change—a change filled with idealism—my father nearly fainted. When he recovered, he asked me some tough questions, all of which drove at the same thing. "How is ministry practical today?" It was and is an important question.

Our world benefits greatly from technology. Technology enables us to transact business with people whom we never meet; allows us to add numbers, solve problems, graph data at the touch of a few buttons; and makes it possible to be objective in responding to the demands of the world. Technology allows us to respond to the world

with strength, surety, and rationality in ways unknown to earlier generations.

The benefits of the technological world is also its liability. We can transact business halfway around the world, and never meet the person with whom we've worked. We can work at our computers and never have to interact with another person for help in solving a problem. And we can distance ourselves from our subjective lives to work "objectively."

Ministry is practical in a technological world because it centers on persons as persons. Technology does not address the spiritual dimension of our lives. It isn't designed to. And yet we continue to have spiritual needs. Ministry seeks to balance our experience of the technical world with the very basic spiritual needs we all have. Ministry is not intended to fight technology. It is intended to address the issues of life that technology does not, bringing wholeness and fullness to all our experiences.

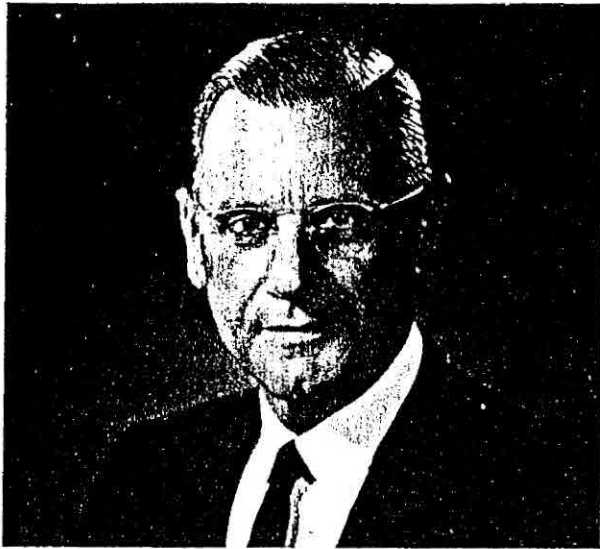
Our technological lives also demand a high degree of mobility, sending us from one coastline to

another as needed. This mobility is exciting, but it can fragment our lives and our sense of community. The church has the unique opportunity to provide strong, rich community in our mobile world. As a friend once said, "No matter where I move, or how often, it is a great comfort to know that I can enter a place of worship and find friends there." In a world in which people are moving constantly, the church can be a dynamic constant.

As practical as technology can make our lives, technology also makes ministry necessary. As we reap the benefits of technology, ministry becomes a practical necessity. Each new creation of technology will create a new reason for ministry because human beings long for whole and balanced lives.

It seems like ages ago that I was on the oil rigs in Wyoming. If I had to do it all over again, would I still choose ministry? The answer is clearly, "yes, and I can't wait to see my spiritual calling make a practical difference." ■





*Dr. Harold John Ockenga*

Thirty years ago this month Dr. Harold John Ockenga was called to be the pastor of historic Park Street Church (Congregational) on the Boston Common. Together, pastor and people have had phenomenal results in missionary, evangelistic and educational endeavor. They have given primary place in the church program to the work of missions. Because of this preeminence given to missions the church has been signally blessed of God — in evangelism, in the Bible School, in the radio ministry, and in every field of effort.

Dr. Ockenga was born in Chicago, educated at Taylor University, Princeton and Westminster Seminaries, and the University of Pittsburgh. He has travelled widely in Europe, Africa, and the Orient, and is in wide demand as an evangelist, conference speaker and civic lecturer. In the summers of '46, '48, '51, and '57, he occupied the pulpit of Westminster Chapel in London.

From 1942 to 1944 Dr. Ockenga served as President of the National Association of Evangelicals; in 1947 he was a member of President Truman's Clergymen's Mission to Europe; from 1947 to 1954 and from 1959 to 1963 he was President of Fuller Theological Seminary, a fully-accredited and influential institution which he helped to establish. He has been President of the Board of CHRISTIANITY TODAY (largest worldwide circulation to Protestant ministers); a Trustee of Gordon College, Beverly Farms, Mass.; a Director of Christian Freedom Foundation, and a former Director of Rotary Club, Boston.

Author of fourteen books, Dr. Ockenga is best known for his expository preaching and his evangelical leadership. He is constantly engaged in research and holds twelve degrees from ten universities. His weekly Boston TV program, "I Want an Answer," has a wide appeal. He was a featured speaker on the NBC Radio Network series, "Faith in Action."

Park Street Church is Trinitarian, Evangelical and Congregational. It came into existence at the time of the Unitarian landslide when all but one Congregational church in Boston turned Unitarian and a need existed for a dynamic and Trinitarian witness on the Congregational form. The final court of appeal in matters of doctrine and practice is the Bible as the infallible rule of faith.

In 1936 the annual budget was \$20,000. Now it is yearly a half-million dollars, more than \$300,000 of which goes to

## AN ANNIVERSARY

*presenting*

# *Harold John Ockenga*

missions. The present membership of the church is over 2,200. Whereas the church supported two missionaries twenty years ago, it now supports over 100 missionaries in forty-five countries, one of the largest individual church missionary programs in the United States.

Each year a ten-day "Missionary Conference" is held. In the 27 years since the first conference, giving for missions through Park Street Church has exceeded \$5,000,000. One of the most heartening results of a missionary conference is its stimulating effect upon the church itself. Folks there readily testify that "Park Street Church has been notably blessed in direct proportion to its giving for missions."

In addition to their exceptional missionary support the congregation lists other ministries under Dr. Ockenga's inspiring leadership:

Since their inception, an unbroken schedule of Sunday morning and evening worship services and the Friday night Bible lectures.

A continuous and growing ministry in the Sunday School, which had its beginning in 1817.

An increased use of several radio stations for broadcasting the services, with scheduled television being added in 1957.

The Evening School of the Bible which has ministered to thousands of students from hundreds of churches in the New England area for twenty-one years.

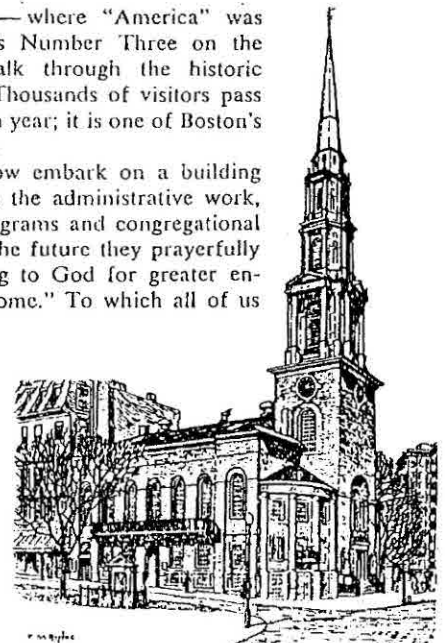
A collegiate ministry, begun in 1949, and now one of the largest in the Boston area.

Dynamic youth programs which attract junior and senior high school students from the entire greater Boston complex.

The world outreach and ministry of THE SPIRE (church news-bulletin), the printed sermons, and the pastor's books.

Park Street Church — where "America" was first sung in 1831 — is Number Three on the Freedom Trail — a walk through the historic shrines of old Boston. Thousands of visitors pass through the Church each year; it is one of Boston's great tourist attractions.

Pastor and people now embark on a building program to better serve the administrative work, Christian Education programs and congregational needs. As they look to the future they prayerfully confess "We are looking to God for greater enabling in the years to come." To which all of us fervently add "Amen."



*Home of "America"*

# *Daphne Faces Challenge of Parish Internship*

By Judy Herseman

Being "young, small and female" hasn't been much of a problem for Daphne Resch, who this Sunday will conclude three months' experience as a summer intern at Pilgrim Congregational Church, Green Bay, Wisconsin. She will be returning to Princeton Theological Seminary this fall to begin her middler, or second year of study for her Master of Divinity degree. The petite Miss Resch will eventually be involved in some type of ministry work.

"I'm not sure about being a parish pastor," she said. "I would like to have a happy medium, somewhere between a director of Christian education and an associate pastor, although I don't like those descriptions. Seen in a broad perspective, maybe an associate pastor of education. I want to be involved in many things, counseling, preaching and visitation, not just youth work." During the past three months she has been involved in "many things" at the local church, from singing duets, to helping at the Bible School, reading Scriptures at funerals, writing announcements for the bulletins, preaching during the pastor's absence and making hospital and house calls.

"The job has been marvelous as far as gaining experience. I really want to go into the ministry now. I have never felt so fulfilled and sure about where I belong. I have never felt so much in the right place, doing what I'm supposed to do," happily reported the intern. She suspects there may have been some apprehension when plans to have the "young, small and female" Intern work here for the summer were announced. "But when they met me as a person, not just an idea, they were open and receptive. It's much easier to accept a person than an idea. And in some instances being a young female helped. Elderly ladies, for exam-



*Daphne is greeted by a church member while the Rev. Terry Ragland looks on.*

ple, seemed to be able to relate to me," said Miss Resch.

Daphne has become partial to Bible study, preaching and hospital visitation in the past three months, because "that's where I feel I was helping the most and meeting the needs of the people. It's a neat feeling to help people and feed them on the Word of God that has been given to me." The dedicated student hasn't always been caught up in the ministry. She recalls that when her older sister talked about becoming a missionary, Daphne's reaction was "Yuk." It wasn't until she was a senior in high school that she became committed to Christ. In college, many of her friends decided on church work and "when I received my call I was overjoyed." Daphne isn't especially concerned about her social life or relationships with the opposite sex.

"Unmarried male pastors have problems too. When the Lord wants me to get married, he'll find someone for me. Right now I'm growing as a single person and that is as important as to whether or not I will marry in the future." The student was brought up as a Presbyterian, but switched to the Congregationalists later. "It seemed the logical thing to do. I prefer the denomination. It is small and I can get to know people without feeling lost. I like the system of government because it gets people involved. After all that's what it is supposed to be all about. Christianity has to be active and growing or the Lord's work will do no good," Miss Resch reported.

She's not happy about competition among denominations. "Denominations are necessary to meet needs, but I feel that if I meet another Christian, regardless of faith, and we can converse, be friends and know Jesus Christ as our Lord, that's all that is needed. We must accept people, on an individual basis, for what they are." Daphne would

like to work again someplace next summer. Meanwhile, her three months' intern work hasn't changed her plans for the academic future. This fall she will be taking some required and practical courses. She will be stressing Bible study and such practical things as preaching, Christian education, speech, pastoral care and counseling and administration. Looking ahead, Daphne isn't sure she will want to be called the Rev. or pastor, "because I'm not yet completely into those roles. 'Daph' will be just fine at least for now." Says the future minister, "I'm not worried about commanding respect. That comes with each individual. Some want you in a pastor role, others want to know you better. We have to be human, because we are. People can't relate to you unless you show them you are human."

The Rev. Terry Ragland, pastor of Pilgrim Congregational Church, thinks the last three months "have been a marvelous experience." He confessed he had some apprehension. "I wasn't

reluctant to give Daphne a try, because I had had nothing but good reports on her. But our community, Catholic and Protestant alike hasn't been too inclined toward women in the ministry. There were a few in our own congregation that had some doubts, too, but they agreed to give it an honest try."

The result?

"It's been one surprise after another," said Mr. Ragland. "Daphne is very mature, very impressive. She is only 22, a little serious, but members of a Bible Class she conducted found out they had fun during the summer. "Let's say she was really accepted and deeply appreciated." Members of the congregation will honor Miss Resch at a farewell luncheon following Sunday's morning service.

*(This article, a reprint from the Green Bay Press Gazette, is typical of many written about our C.F.T.S. students and their summer activities.)*

# PROFILE OF A YOUNG MINISTER



How often do you see, and are aware of, a biography in the making? Very rarely. At least such an experience was rare for me until I had a call from the Congregationalist powers that be. They said, "Tell us about that man Karl Schimpf at Mayfair-Plymouth."

With the chips down, you discover that you have to mention not only important and interesting dates and events, but somehow describe how he became the man he is today. When you recognize you're writing about a close personal friend, the experience is humbling and agonizing.

Frankly, when I first met Karl several years ago, I thought here's another stubborn Dutchman from Pennsylvania. How wrong I was or I had mentally used the wrong word. The man is principled, not stubborn. His base is Christ.

Karl is also a realist. He knows

*Preaching.  
Listening.  
Studying.  
Sharing.*

*Pictures of a caring  
Christian life.*

*Just as our cover  
reflects the elements  
of an active ministry,  
Karl Schimpf's story  
represents the trials,  
concerns and hopes  
of today's young  
ministers . . .*

#### *Editor's Note*

Since going to press with this issue of *The Congregationalist* Karl Schimpf has resigned his extremely effective ministry at Mayfair-Plymouth, Toledo, Ohio to accept the challenging invitation of the First Congregational Church, Salt Lake City, Utah to be their new minister. May God continue to bless his dedicated efforts as an ever-faithful servant of our Lord.

*by Walton F. Deming*

the world is full of sorrow, problems, tragedies, and sins and, at the same time, abundant with joy, and laughter and love and beauty. Karl's laughs are deep belly laughs. Most times at his own mistakes and foibles.

When Karl graduated from Davis and Elkins in 1964 he was in a great quandry. With strong personal commitment, he knew that he wanted in life to become a Congregational minister but he didn't quite know how to go about it. All he had, at that particular point, was a sheepskin, a new devoted bride, physical stamina and faith.

In response to this faith came the interest and active participation of such men as Dr. John Claxton, Dr. Penrose Albright and Dr. Walter Couch. It was through their efforts that Karl Schimpf became one of the first Fellows of CFTS, then in its infancy, and the first Plymouth



Scholar of Plymouth Congregational Church in Wichita, Kansas. The result was a full scholarship to the Earlham School of Religion at Richmond, Indiana.

At Earlham, Dottie Schimpf worked at her profession as a registered nurse, Karl listened and listened and burned the midnight oil and Kenaz Solomon, brought from South India by the Missionary Society and North Shore Church became the Schimpfs' friend for life. It was a time, according to Karl, of joy and growth.

During these formative years, the early leaders of CFTS developed the counselor-counselee program which Karl feels is of immense value. Dr. Louis Gerhardt would drive clear across the State of Indiana to confer with Karl and Dr. Claxton would make frequent visits to the campus.

From time to time Karl was afforded the opportunity of preaching in Dr. Gerhardt's church in Terre Haute. In his last seminary year, Karl interned at the First Methodist Church of Connersville under Dr. Floyd Cook. His intern responsibilities were to direct youth activities and fill in wherever needed.

June of 1967 brought these milestone events. Karl's graduation from the seminary, his Ordination at his home church in McKeesport, Pennsylvania and a Call to the Mayfair Congregational Church of Toledo, Ohio. Karl says that his real education started with the Schimpf arrival in Toledo.

So much has happened in the last seven years. Two fine boys, David and Mark, have increased the Schimpf family. Karl and Dorothy have traveled to minister with Phaedon Cambouropolis in Athens, with the Santi's at Casa Materna in Italy, to visit with John Kneel at the Pilgrim Father's Memorial Church in London and to South India where Karl married Kenaz and Kamazh Solomon celebrating the first wholly English wedding in the history of the Christcoil London Mission Church. Last year it was an extensive trip to the Holyland with five

members of his church.

Movement, action and results have been apparent during Karl's pastorate in Toledo. Seminary gossip had pointed out two things a budding minister should avoid . . . merger and an extensive building program. Karl met both head on and back to back.



In 1970 the Mayfair and the Plymouth Churches of Toledo merged to form the Mayfair-Plymouth Congregational Church. It was this situation that developed Karl's knowledge and adeptness in getting people to openly relate to each other, to find love and concern for each other and to find joy and fulfillment in the Will of God. Marriages mean adjustments.

With the merger, the congregation soon realized that space was, indeed, inadequate. Two usually crowded services were held each Sunday. Sunday School classes were crowded. The upshot was a \$215,000.00 building program with a new sanctuary, a new fellowship hall and remodeling to provide a new expanded education wing. The project has been funded, constructed and dedicated in an impressive service on June 2nd of this year. This was a truly magnificent congregational effort with Karl on the side as guide, carpenter, painter; handyman and minister.

It would be neglectful to ignore

the more regular functions of Karl's ministry at Mayfair-Plymouth. He has preached regularly. Gently nudging, comforting, directing, teaching a growingly responsive congregation. He speaks frequently at other Toledo civic and service affairs. He has helped, through counseling and simply listening, many of his own congregation as well as a host of others throughout the city. He ministers well to free people.

Karl's ministry has not been insular. He has been, with the urging and assistance of his congregation, active in the Ohio Association, the National Association and in the Toledo Clergy Fellowship. His NA track record is good. He and Dottie have attended every Annual Meeting since 1967.

Perhaps, because Congregational Christians have come to know Karl, he has been able to continue and to expand his interest in CFTS. He was elected to the Board in 1969 and in June of this year elected chairman of the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies. During all this time he has been working closely with Dr. George Drown, Dean. Karl emphasizes the value to him of working under the leadership of Irv Britton, Lester Schriver and Robert Morris. Recognizing the broad theological spectrum of our Congregational way, Karl has deep concern and action plans toward developing well grounded, adequately prepared beginning ministers to fill our pulpits and lead our people. Karl has a strong affinity to our smaller churches with their attendant problems. He hopes that all commissions, all boards and all churches can come together cooperatively toward a common goal.

What more is there to write about a young minister and friend? Karl would say, "Pray for me and for our fellow man. Join with me that we may demonstrate to the world that faith, freedom and fellowship under Christ is our source of strength."

*Mr. Deming is Administrator, First Congregational Church, Toledo, Ohio*

## PRISON IS HIS PARISH

On the day after the warmest, wettest Christmas ever recorded in northern Oregon, Sandra Anderson drove us from Portland to Keizer to visit Westminster Congregational Church.

I knew very little of the church, and had not met the minister, Dr. Gordon A. Taylor. I knew that earlier in the year 1980, an old mansion built in 1898 had been moved to 2335 Chemawa Road (Chem-a'-wa) to serve as the meeting house. I knew the program had something to do with Indians.

When we arrived at 2335 Chemawa Road, the sign said Chemawa Chapel, and not Westminster Congregational Church, but the building looked like a picture of the old mansion which I had seen.

Our first glimpse of the chapel can best be described with one word — disaster! The building was on its way to being restored, but it still needed painting, land fill, landscaping and some repair to the exterior. In addition to this, it seemed to be in a sea of mud and water.

I went up the steps and into the chapel, where my education continued pell-mell. The front of the chapel contained a stained glass window, a pulpit, a piano, and several orderly pews — as I conceive order to be. But the back pews were stacked with all kinds of plunder, cast-off articles which had nothing to do with worship.

Dr. Taylor heard me and came to greet me. His outstretched hand, and broad smile reassured me that I had arrived at my planned destination. And then, as if he sensed my unspoken questions, he explained that the front pews were ample to seat the congregation, so the back pews were used to store whatever was given to the church to either be given to aid Indian families, or to be sold and the money to be used on their behalf.

I had begun to like this young man, but as we entered his office I felt an absolute kinship to him. On his desk were two crescent wrenches and a screwdriver. I thought of what he might find on my desk on any normal working day, and I knew we were kindred spirits.

One's first impression of Dr. Taylor, Gordy, is one of strength, happiness and a sincere interest in people. He appears to be exactly where he wishes to be, doing what he wishes to do. His clerical shirt and collar

proclaimed his call and commitment, but the red checked wool shirt suggested that he did not take himself too seriously.

He began our conversation by telling me that the main floor of the building housed the chapel, office, kitchen and dining room. The second floor were his family quarters where he, his wife and their three children lived.

The basement was a half-way house which provided housing for Indian youth who were in need of such lodging. At that time, there were 8 youth who called it "home."

Then he explained that when he and his family had come home from a Christmas dinner the night before, they had found 6' of water in the basement. That mess was in the process of being cleaned up by two of the young men who lived there.



Randy McCallister (left) and John Galligar (right) stand with Rev. Gordon Taylor at Chemawa Chapel.

I began to ask about their program and work. Westminster Congregational Church had been gathered in 1979, beginning with three Indian families. Their purpose was to provide spiritual leadership and counselling for persons in prison, to provide a place for parolees to live as they attempted to make reentry into society, and to assist in finding employment. The chapel welcomes runaways, and provides counselling for both the youth and their families.

In addition to this, the chapel provides facilities for the Chemeketa Bible School. Dr. Taylor describes this program as "a church in an envelope". These mailings provide a church for those who are so isolated as to be unable to gather a church. The lessons are simple and evangelistic. 3,500 Bible lessons are

mailed each year, delivering the good news of the new birth; of redemption; of personal salvation.

Dr. Taylor is a cross-sectional chaplain to Indians. Less than a mile away is the Chemawa Indian School, which provides educational opportunities for 400 Indian youth. There are four prisons in Salem, of which Keizer is a suburb. Gordon is chaplain of them all, and whenever an Indian is in trouble, he is called to counsel and to help.

Because of his work with those young people who are troubled, he has been described as "The Hoodlum Priest".

I asked how a church with the name "Westminster" had become a Congregational church. He explained that the church had been gathered, a name selected, and then denominational ties had been established. The church had elected to become congregational because this form of government would give them the kind of freedom they needed to form their own ministry in that particular circumstance. They wished no tyranny of creed or ecclesiastical form which would attempt to dictate what they could say and what they could do.

As we visited, three boisterous teen-agers dropped in for a visit, incessantly ringing the doorbell, and calling out without pausing to hear the invitation to enter.

The respect they displayed for their mentor, the banter which was not a hiding place, the warm friendliness, told more of the work at Chemawa Chapel than words could ever tell.

Their needs were so basic. The need for a friend. One of them needed a pair of pants altered. They needed direction. And here they found it, from someone who really cared.

Then we toured the building: a bathroom you had to go out of doors to enter; a kitchen and dining room where meals were prepared and where they all ate together; upstairs to the family quarters where Julie 10, Pam 8, and Kirk 6 were enjoying a little freedom from the rigors of school.

His wife, Alice, was at work. She is a nurse at Salem Memorial Hospital, and her entire salary goes to the work of Chemawa Chapel.

(continued on page 9)

*(continued from page 7)*

In the basement — disaster. Enough to wipe the smiles off the faces of most saints. Water soaked bedding, clothing and equipment. The deep freeze had floated. The water heater had been under water. Although the water had been drained out, there was enough dampness and mud to last for many days. But Gordy, and the two young men who were working to clean up the mess, never lost either their faith or their cheerfulness.

And there is no central heat for the basement. I shivered to think of it, and wondered if they would ever get the place dry again.

Writing this was not difficult. My heart responded to the faith and effort of Dr. Taylor. But what ending could we make for the story?

I walked out, and we drove away — and there is no end to their story. The work of The Westminster Congregational Church, through Chemawa Chapel, continues in the hearts of those who work, and the hearts of those who benefit from that work.

(W.T.K.)



## *The Congregational Way*

*This is the second of fourteen articles about interesting Congregational churches and people in the United States.*

# The Tent Minister — 1975

Orvin Titus, who was ordained last September 21, in the middle of his ministry, is a hard hat preacher in many ways. Not only is the Mr. Titus a licensed plumber and a licensed electrician, but he is not afraid to speak his mind.

The minister wheeled into the church driveway in his plumbing truck.

"You're right on time," he announced cheerfully as he jumped out, looking at his watch. "We'll get along fine." Orvin Titus was wearing his usual hard hat. He had come straight from a job at the Rock County Fairgrounds where his parishioners had manned a food booth during the fair. He is minister of the 100 member Afton Community Church which ordained him to the Christian Ministry September 21. The Afton, Wis. Church has just joined the Continuing Congregational Churches as our 367th member church. Titus has been their minister since August 1966, the longest tenure in the history of the congregation.

As a minister, plumber, electrician, he is a very busy man. He is also direct and forthright. "I'm no different in the pulpit than I am right here talking to you," he said. "Yes, I do a lot of different things but its the busy man who gets the job done."

He is relaxed, approachable and dedicated. He talks about his community. "Afton is a small country town. If you take in all the edges, its probably 200 people. There are a lot of people who live outside of town, too. They have maybe an acre of land and they probably work in Janesville. But I get along well with rural folks, I always have. It's a different kind of ministry than a city parish and I like it. There's less formality here for one thing. And I think it's more of a personal faith type of ministry. They want their minister to be a part of their decisions. A pastor has to become comfortable with this."

Mr. Titus is a comfortable kind of person. He has been filling country pulpits since his college days. He spent 2 years at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, then transferred to Hamlin University in St. Paul, Minn. There he began to supply Methodist churches in Becker and Clear Lake, Minnesota. He quite honestly says he had a little spat with the Dist. Supt. and left to begin preaching in independent community churches. Between 1955 and 1960 he was minister at the Briggs Lake, Minnesota Community Church. At the same time he worked for the Remington Rand Univac Division which was the granddaddy of the space program. In 1960 he returned to Janesville where he had grown up because both his parents were seriously sick. Orvin is an only child. Both parents immediately recovered, he says and are now wonderful grandparents to Barbara and Orvin Titus' six children.

Mr. Titus talks easily about his development as a minister. "A lot of people say Moody is very fundamental, conservative. But Moody taught me to be able to expose myself on a day to day basis with people. I feel that as



long as I can be myself in the pulpit as well as sitting here talking to you, and can direct people on that basis, that's what I want to do. It's a sharing type of gospel. I want to listen and help people with living."

The Titus family lives in the village of Afton and he has his business there because he wants to be a part of his community. "You never can tell when you will be needed — when there will be a funeral or some other need for me."

The feeling is warm between Orvin and his parishioners. One day he mentioned to one of them that he wished he had a place for all his books which were just piled at home. At that time there was no office in the church building. Soon after a man came up to him and handed him a key. "You can put your books down there at the church," he said. They had cleaned out, panelled and built bookcases in a little store room beside the entry. "I like that kind of thing," Orvin says. "Sometimes we come home and find the kitchen table filled with fresh vegetables, or baked goods or even meat. They make warm hearted gestures like this."

The Afton Church building itself is very old. The present church is the second building and was built in 1860. The congregation dates back to 1854. It was originally a Baptist congregation. The present building is built of cherry and walnut and put together with pegs instead of nails. It is a simple clapboard structure with a gable roof, well adapted to the prairies of the last century.

In 1919 the church was abandoned by the Baptist Church and became a Community Congregation. The building has been remodelled several times and in 1969 a Sunday School wing was added. A social hall and kitchen under the sanctuary are well equipped to serve 100 people and is used often by the active congregation.

The present Sunday School has an average attendance of 50 each Sunday. Between 20 and 30 young people gather on Sunday evenings at the church with parents helping with their activities. The young people often combine with

the nearby Emerald Grove Congregational Church Youth Group.

Mr. Titus is especially proud of his Confirmation classes and his marriage counselling.

"I am very direct with couples who come to me who wish to be married," he says. "You have to be very direct with them. A shepherd has to have leading thoughts, get them talking then be able to guide them to make their individual decisions. It has to be 'what's right for you'. It may not be right for me but your individual life must be so directed to make the right decisions. I will say, this approach has been very successful."

"I ask them, 'Are you happy with each other?' The Puritan belief of one door for men, another for women, is outmoded. I feel that young people today have taught us a lot about sex education and where we should be at. I think people have become individuals. Puritanism was very rigid. The code was laid out — 'do not — shall not', an expected type of thing. People didn't actually marry for love in those days."

"I think Jesus had some things to say about it. It's quite Christian in many ways. The lady at the well, the Samaritan. She told him she couldn't draw water for him. Jesus said, 'Forget that', I am thirsty! She was so overwhelmed she ran off leaving her water jar! Just because we do things a little different, we should not be criticized."

"I feel very strongly about my ordination," Titus said. "It's a high point. This doesn't mean things are any different, but it is very important to be recognized by your peers and I am deeply honored."

Orvin Titus will continue with his plumbing and electrical business. He now has an official 'Reverend' before his name, a title he has earned but a title his parishioners know he has carried for a long time.

— Judy McCleary



**James E. Walter,**



**1906-1989**

The death of Dr. James E. Walter on June 11, 1989 brought to a close forty years of distinguished service to Piedmont College and fifty-five years of dedicated service in the Christian ministry. He was President, Piedmont College from 1949 to 1983, and President Emeritus and Trustee, 1983 to the time of his death. At his retirement in 1983, he was also named Comptroller of the College, a position he held until 1987.

Appointed to the presidency at a time of severe financial and educational crisis within the College, Dr. Walter virtually single-handedly succeeded (through his determination and tireless labor) in bringing the College to a height unprecedented in its history. During his tenure in office, the College acquired a physical plant with permanent buildings, nearly all of which had been constructed during his presidency, a considerable endowment, and a distinguished faculty. In 1965, these advances earned for the College its first accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, an accreditation reaffirmed in 1975 and 1987. Under his leadership thousands of men and women of Georgia and other states, as well as from foreign countries, received the opportunity to earn a baccalaureate degree in the liberal arts and sciences—an opportunity which many would not otherwise have been afforded. The Christian-oriented liberal arts education provided by Piedmont College, as stressed and upheld by Dr. Walter, has strongly influenced the lives of its alumni who now hold important positions in education, business, the arts, medicine, law, and the Christian ministry. In sheer numbers,

the persons graduated during his long tenure as President represent more than twice the number upon whom the baccalaureate degree had been conferred by his eight predecessors in office of president. "It is my firm conviction," said Dr. Walter once in reviewing his educational philosophy, "and one by which I have lived, that the best educational opportunities should be made available in a proper Christian environment to all worthy people of every creed, race, or national origin. Only thus can the world be made safe, not only for us, but for our children and our children's children."

Dr. Walter was born December 17, 1906, in Toledo, Ohio, the son of Ernest George and Hemina Schwyn Walter, both of whom had been brought as children from Switzerland. Dr. Walter was educated in the public schools of Toledo, Ohio. At Scott High School, from which he graduated in 1924, he received the Francis E. Garvin Ohio State prize in creative chemistry.

From 1924 to 1926, he attended Toledo University working as a student assistant in the chemistry department. After one year in industry, he entered Otterbein University, Westerville, Ohio, from which he graduated in 1929, with double major in chemistry and Bible. During the summer of his senior year he served as pastor at three small churches of the United Brethren Church near Marysville, Ohio. It was this experience, he later said, which "provided the essential laboratory for deciding on my change from a career in science to graduate school studies for the ministry."

Choosing, therefore, to dedicate his life to the

Christian ministry, he entered Yale University Divinity School from which he was graduated in 1933, with degree of Bachelor of Divinity. In later years, for his studies at Yale, he was awarded by that University the degree of Master of Sacred Theology. He was twice awarded an honorary doctorate: in 1947 the Doctor of Divinity degree by Piedmont College, and in 1969, the Doctor of Letters and Law degree by Otterbein. In June 1988, Otterbein further honored him by awarding him its Special Achievement Award, made jointly by the University and the Otterbein Alumni Association, in "proud recognition of his major accomplishments in the field of education and extraordinary service to his profession and community."

Following graduation from Yale's Divinity School, Dr. Walter was ordained into the Christian ministry in 1933 at the Church of the Redeemer (Congregational), New Haven, Connecticut, where he had served as Assistant Minister and Assistant Director of Welcome Hall, the social service unit of the Church of the Redeemer. In 1934, he also married the former Elizabeth Perry of Worcester, Massachusetts, a graduate of Mount Holyoke College and the School of Nursing, Yale University. Mrs. Walter, his lifelong helpmate and companion, served many years as the Piedmont College Nurse.

Following marriage, Dr. Walter served three years as minister, Orange Congregational Church, Orange, Connecticut, and then was appointed National Project Secretary of the Home and Foreign Missionary Boards of the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States. His wide contacts with Congregational Christian churches throughout the United States during his twelve years as Project Secretary, were instrumental in achieving the financial support these churches continue to render to Piedmont College and its building and on-going educational programs.

The culmination of the College's building program undertaken in 1951 and continuing through 1972, was the Piedmont College Chapel, erected in 1971 through contributions from 57 Congregational Christian churches and more than 400 individual donors. The consecrated service Dr. and Mrs. Walter had rendered over the years was recognized by the Piedmont College Board of Trustees in the dedicatory plaque which reads: "To the Glory of God, in honor of James Ernest Walter, President, 1949, and Elizabeth Perry Walter, 1949, Believers in God and Youth, Disciples of the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Dr. Walter's civic and community activities have included service as Director, First National Bank of Habersham, and Director, Victory Home, where he served as Treasurer of the Endowment

*Continued on page 23*

A tribute to Dr. James E. Walter as presented by the Rev. A. Vaughan Abercrombie to the 1988 CCCNA Annual Meeting.

*On Commencement Day at Piedmont College, June 11th, 1989, Dr. James Ernest Walter entered into the joy of his Lord.*

*His death brought to a close 55 years of distinguished service as a Congregational minister, a home missionary secretary, and 40 years as President of Piedmont College which has been such an important part of the outreach of our churches for nearly 100 years.*

*Dr. Walter wrote in 1981—"My message to [Piedmont's] friends throughout the nation [has been] rooted in the human and divine appeal [of] the parables of Jesus, and [the] verse in Luke [2:52] [that] . . . 'Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.'"*

*He tenderly dedicated his little book on "Piedmont's Successes" to "Betty," his "beloved wife and co-worker" in all their "efforts in behalf of young people."*

*James Walter's religion and ethics grew, not out of abstract theological speculation, but out of his native compassion for students, teachers, and all of us whose souls and pocketbooks needed to be consecrated to character building and community building.*

*It took far more than a smart, even knowledgeable, person to lead the likes of us to build Piedmont College as it is today. James Walter was a wise man. One who had "numbered his days and applied his heart into wisdom."*

*His wisdom encompassed that principle of alternation which is the sine qua non of maturity—namely, that it takes two legs for any human being to walk, or to think, or to choose between alternatives, or to act in any personal or social decision.*

*James Walter promised us no easy answers, no quick fixes—not faith without works, not head without heart, not science without values. Instead he advocated talent and training, inspiration and discipline, prose and poetry, satisfaction and restraint, rights and responsibilities, freedom and authority, standards and democracy.*

*His wisdom called us to make our own the principles of humane conduct articulated in the Gospels. He called us also to exercise the Gospel principles of judgement by which humane ideals are made concrete in mature character and spiritually productive communities.*

*James Ernest Walter's everlasting life is now forever within us, and in our beloved Piedmont College—its grounds, its walls, its endowments, its hallowed memories, and in visions of unending opportunities for learning and creative fellowship in generations yet to come!*

*All glory be to God. Amen.*

Memorials to Dr. Walter should be sent to the CCCNA.

**James Walter** (Continued from page 19)

Fund. Dr. and Mrs. Walter are associate members of the Federated Church (Congregational side) of Demorest, where Dr. Walter served as deacon.

Dr. Walter is survived by his widow, two sons: Robert Perry Walter of Atlanta; James Douglas Walter of Cornelia; five grandchildren: Cynthia Walter Hurley of Columbia, South Carolina; Donna Walter Isley of Powder Springs, Georgia; Tara and Bradley Walter of Cornelia; and Kathryn Walter of Atlanta; a sister, Mabel Walter Baer of Sandia Park, New Mexico; a half-brother, Howard Walter of Los Angeles, California; and brother, Richard Walter of Lakewood, Ohio. A memorial service was held in the Piedmont College Chapel at 2:00 p.m., June 15, 1989, with the Reverend A. Vaughan Abercrombie and the Reverend Dr. John H. Bridges officiating. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial gifts be given to Piedmont College or to the Congregational Christian Churches, National Association.

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## Our Man for All Seasons

*The Rev. Dr. Donald B. Ward, 1919-1994*

*Wise warriors are mightier than strong ones and those who have knowledge than those who have strength. Proverbs 24:5*

Teacher, television and radio performer, musician and magician, college administrator, world advocate of the Congregational Way, airplane pilot, humorist, community leader.

Don Ward did them all with grace and style.

Congregationalism's "Man for All Seasons"\* has gone home to the Church Triumphant.

It was easy to like and admire Don Ward for the mastery of words, Christian compassion, and intelligence which he exercised during his incredible life.

In the forties and early fifties he took the stage in Chicago radio and early television, where he associated with such future stars as Hugh Downs and Paul Harvey. As they went on to fame, he chose a different route. In his mid-thirties he entered a second season of life to become a Christian minister.

After receiving his Master of Divinity degree from Chicago Theological Seminary, he pastored three churches: Glen Ellyn Countryside Church, Glen Ellyn, Ill., 1957; Congregational Church of Ravenswood,

\* "A Man for All Seasons," a play written by Robert Bolt in 1962, depicts the life of Sir Thomas More, who refused to recognize Henry VIII's claim to supremacy over the Pope.

Chicago, 1958-1960; and Kirk of Bonnie Brae, Denver, 1960-62.

Then came another season and another challenge as he was called in 1962 to become president of the college which his grandfather founded—Yankton College in South Dakota.

And the seasons kept rolling. He returned to the ministry at First Congregational Church, Evanston, Ill., where he served from 1970-79. Briefly back to the collegiate world as vice president at Alaska Pacific University, Anchorage, Alaska, and then to First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, where he was senior minister from 1980 until retirement in 1986, later being named minister emeritus.

An almost uninterrupted series of interim assignments followed—back to First Congregational Church of Evanston, Pilgrim Congregational Church in Pomona, and First Congregational Church of Los Angeles again. And two delightful summers as pastor of the Little



Stone Church on Mackinac Island, Michigan.

During the season of "retirement," he increased his advocacy of the Congregational Way in keeping with his birthright as 12th generation Congregationalist descended from six direct line ancestors on the Mayflower.

He served the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches on the Congregational Foundation for Theological Studies Division, Executive Committee, and as Congregational Lecturer. On the international level, he co-chaired the International Congregational Fellowship 1993 meeting in Los Angeles. He was chosen Moderator-Elect

### *Donald B. Ward Memorial Funds*

Two memorial funds have been established in his honor. One, at the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, will be used for programs that advance the Congregational Way. Checks should be made to the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles (540 S. Commonwealth Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90020) and designated for the Donald B. Ward Endowed Memorial Fund. The other fund, at the Union Congregational Church (Little Stone Church) Mackinac Island, will be used for college scholarships for Island students. Checks should be made to the Little Stone Church, designated for the Donald B. Ward Memorial Education Fund, and sent to Dr. Donald Largo, 1221 Laurel View Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48105.

# A Preacher in the Family

Edie Winter

*Edie Winter is a new seminarian. She is also wife, mother and owner of the Prajna Art Gallery. An active churchwoman, Edie has served the NA on the Communications Commission and is presently a member of the Executive Committee. Her letter of acceptance from the Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan was "the culmination of prayers and plans that have been a long time coming."*

My mother had always said she wanted a preacher in the family, but she and I were equally sure it wasn't me she was talking about. Funny how our certainties become maybe's and then certainties again, but 180° around.

God took charge of my life a long time ago; He just revealed His plans to me slowly, in doses I could handle without too much argument. He prepared me carefully for where I am now. I know I am where I ought to be. I am on the next step in my faith walk.

My parents came from the Dutch Reformed tradition in Chicago. Our family life was centered around the life of the church. In fact, church and work were the main elements of life.

When my family moved to the suburbs, they chose a United Presbyterian church in which to worship and we all attended. Family life again centered around the church and service on the Trustee Board, the Session, the women's societies, the Sunday School. We children were raised going to church twice on Sunday, once on Wednesday, and as many other times as could be scheduled. We were baptized and when old enough, attended Sunday School, communicant's class, church camp in the summer.

The next major family move was farther than the suburbs. My generation moved to new states, countries and denominations. Some stayed in the United Presbyterian church, but many didn't. My immediate family became Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists.

Now, in a way, I have completed the circle by attending a Reformed church seminary in a very Dutch community. Many at the seminary may wonder what a Congregationalist is doing in "Calvin country," but somehow I don't feel I am far from my roots. In some ways I am just beginning to understand them.

As a youngster in communicant's class, back in Illinois, I read the Westminster Catechism. Now I have reread it as well as the Westminster Confession. I still have problems with parts of the confession and probably always will, but I am learning at seminary that it is not a sacrilege or blasphemy to question these documents.

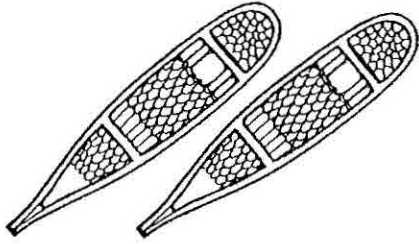
Nor is it terrible to question God or argue with Him. He and I have points of departure, but He knows that I love Him and shall serve Him and praise Him daily for showing me the need in my life for seminary work. Where this step on my faith walk will lead I do not know. When people ask me how long it will take to get my degree, I answer, "As a part-time student, about five years." What's at the end of the process? God knows and will reveal to me in His time. This I believe—God has a plan for my life.

My new beginning has been full of surprises, challenges, and hard work. It makes me accountable for my faith. I must know what I believe. It has enriched my understanding, and given me an appreciation for how much I do not know.

I look forward to vacation times now, to search out those sources the professors have mentioned that just don't fit into a two course, ten text, nine week term, as well as a rest for my very tired eyes.



Edie Winter



## Down East "Tentmaker"

By Douglas Warren Drown

In ancient days the Apostle Paul supported himself by tentmaking while preaching and ministering.

Today Walter York, lay minister of the Congregational Church in Caratunk, Maine, also preaches and ministers and supports himself with an unusual form of "tentmaking."

Walter York, with his wife Leona, makes snowshoes and he's so good at his craft that his shoes are in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

During the nation's bicentennial celebration in 1976, York and his wife were invited to demonstrate their craft at the Smithsonian during the National Folklore Festival.

"We spent a week down there," Walter recalls. "All expenses paid, including a first-class air ticket!"

One of the most memorable experiences of their lives, it was a fitting tribute to the remarkable preacher-snowshoe maker from Caratunk down East.

Walter York is an important person in the life of Caratunk. Besides the ministerial duties and snowshoe making, he is First Assessor of Caratunk and the local Justice of the Peace.

Caratunk is a tiny hamlet in a remote area of the Northern Kennebec Valley amid the mountains of West Central Maine.

The village consists of: one long street, two short side streets, 25 well-maintained homes, a combination general store-gas station-post office where you can find nearly anything you want (including good conversation), a one-room school housing a single male teacher and five students, and the little Congregational chapel,



an attractive white frame building constructed in 1888 by volunteer labor using donated materials.

Caratunk's primary activity is—and has long been—logging. Day or night travelers going past Caratunk on U.S. 201 are likely to see trucks hauling tons of freshly-cut logs. It was in this industry Walter York earned his livelihood until turning to snowshoe manufacturing.

"I come from a family of woodsmen," he says.

Walter himself served for many years as a contractor-operator, running his own business with several people working for him. His last lumbering was in 1966.

"Originally it was all done with oxen," he says. "Then we turned to horses and eventually to heavy equipment."

Lumbering operations became more elaborate and competitive and finally Walter retired, faced with the prospect of having to purchase tons of new machinery.

Three years before his retirement from logging, Walter was approached by an electrical engineer-snowshoe maker from "down river" who was interested in organizing and constructing a large plant in Caratunk to churn out 90,000 snowshoes annually, primarily for children.

After initial discussions, four local men, including Walter, began planning the project. With typical Yankee caution, Walter thought it well to look into prospects concerning sales. A thorough investigation led to the discovery that the market for children's snowshoes was negligible.

The proposed plant was laid to rest but Walter learned enough about the craft to whet his interest. He built a one-room "shop" in his back yard where he made snowshoes in his spare time with his son, William. Following his retirement from logging, he began making snowshoes on a full-time basis.



At the same time his son, William, built a sawmill outside the village, leaving Walter to make snowshoes on his own for the last 11 years.

"Back seven or eight years ago," he recalls, "someone managed to get my name into the first *Whole Earth Catalog*. When that happened, I began getting phone calls and letters from all over."

Orders came from as far as Alaska and Germany. Most people reading the catalog apparently surmised Walter operated a large scale manufacturing concern.

"They were pretty surprised to find that it was just a one-man operation," he says with a chuckle.

Actually, it is a one man, one woman operation. Leona, Walter's wife of 55 years, works beside him steaming and varnishing the snowshoes.

Making the snowshoes is a long and intricate process. Walter starts by going into the woods to select white ash trees, looking for the younger growth which makes the best wood for the shoes.

The wood is sawed into inch boards and dried for a year. After that there's more cutting and planing and shaping.

"Each end has to be thinned in order to bend them," says Walter.



He then puts an average of eight bows, or frames, into a special box on top of a stove and steams the wood so it is soft enough to bend without breaking. He puts the bows on forms, leaving them a week for the shaping process.

Then comes marking, riveting, drilling for weaving, sanding, and three coats of varnish which Leona York applies.

"Snowshoes can't be made by machine," says Walter, who, with Leona, manufactures between 75 and 100 snowshoes annually.

"Last year we turned out 88," explained Walter. "In our peak year we made 100." Besides the 88 manufactured, the Yorks refinished and re-strung an additional 40 shoes in need of repair.

Leona York continues by her husband's side as she has for the last 55 years. Leona came to Caratunk as a schoolteacher, marrying Walter York the year after her arrival. Together they raised a family of five children.

Walter, a member of the Caratunk Church since 1937, has served as minister since 1960.

Seventy-five years young, stocky, vigorous, talkative, Walter's Christian commitment is evident to all who come in contact with him.

"I was kind of a rough fella when I was young," he remembers, "then I experienced a gradual conversion."

Walter was won to Christ through the influence of several people, including the late Rev. Arthur Sargent, one of Walter's predecessors in the Caratunk pulpit and Dr. Arthur Macdougall of the Congregational Church in nearby Bingham, now retired and still a close friend.

Three others who influenced him were Thelma Damon, Victoria Petrie and Priscilla Conley, who, after graduating from Gordon College, were commissioned by the Congregational Christian Conference of Maine as home missionaries to the communities of the northern Kennebec Valley, serving for some years as co-ministers of the Caratunk Church.

It was during their pastorate that Walter attended worship one Sunday and emerged from the little meetinghouse with a sense of being a "new man in Christ."

"I'll never forget it," he says. "The tears were streaming down my face."

It is doubtful anyone was aware of the impact Christ would make upon Walter's life. Not only was he destined to become pastor of his own home church, he also eventually became Moderator of the Congregational Christian Conference of Maine and one of the leaders in the Continuing Congregational Movement in the state.

Years after his conversion Walter began to preach. Dr. Macdougall invited Walter to give

the sermon at the first Laity Sunday observance held in Bingham.

"That was my start," says Walter. "Before long I was getting invitations from all over to come and preach."

On a midwinter day in the late 1950s, Dr. Walter L. Cook, professor of preaching and coordinator of field education at Bangor Seminary, drove to Caratunk to speak with Walter about supplying pulpits across the state under Seminary auspices.

Finding only Mrs. York home, Dr. Cook and Leona trudged through ten inches of snow for two miles to find Walter with his logging crew. That encounter led to a series of preaching assignments that took Walter all over the state.

When the Caratunk Church, which had been supplied for several years by Bangor students, found itself without a minister, Walter was asked if he could take the pulpit for several Sundays until a new supply could be secured.

"I've been there ever since," he says with a smile.

Under his leadership the church, which currently numbers a dozen active members, became self-supporting. Previously a Maine Conference grant kept it open.

"We're doing quite well," says Leona York. "Last year we gave \$400 to missions."

The church operates in the black and maintains its building well, keeping it freshly painted and nicely appointed. Its interior contains only a vestibule, a small closet and sanctuary. The pews are hand-made and the chancel area harbors a large antique center pulpit and a new electronic organ.

Three of Walter's sons, John, William and Carroll, attend the Caratunk Church along with their families. They and several other townspeople constitute the backbone of the church's membership.

With no formal ministerial training, Walter, like many lay ministers, is a gifted and polished preacher. He studied Old Testament for some time through the home-study course offered by the Moody Bible Institute.

In addition to his pastoral work and his snowshoe business, Walter serves as First Assessor of Caratunk and the local Justice of the Peace.

He points out it is only recently that Caratunk became a town, having functioned for many years as a "plantation," an entity unique to Maine in which citizens elect assessors but no selectmen in a community and in which the state is involved in community government to a significant degree.

The vote to change status came largely as the result of a desire on the part of Caratunk's citi-



zens to control their own shore-line zoning (although one local citizen, when queried about the switch, replied that "town" is shorter to spell than "plantation").

"The town has changed quite a lot over the years," Walter reflects.

"It used to be much busier with logging, especially during the spring when the log drives took place."

The last of the big log drives on the Kennebec River occurred in 1976, the Environmental Protection Agency having ruled the drives are hazardous to the river's fish because of the high amount of tannic acid in the log bark.

While a good deal of logging is still carried on in Caratunk through local contractors and the

Scott Paper Company, the only industries present in the community are William York's sawmill and Walter York's snowshoe shop.

We in the National Association hail Walter and Leona York and assure them of our continued prayers and good wishes in their pursuit of the ministry and their pursuit of their unique craft.

Note: Details of Walter York's manufacturing process is detailed in the summer and fall 1975 editions of *Salt*, a periodical published by the students of Kennebunk High School in Maine. For information write *Salt*, Box 302A, Kennebunkport, Maine 04046.