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Religions in America

Radically Biblical, Apostolic, Christianity



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RELIGIONS OF AMERICA

ADVENTISTS

Adventism in general, is a Christian Faith, based upon the conviction that the second advent of Christ is the sole hope of the world. It holds, that man's nature is fallen because of sin and that on the basis of neglect or rejection of God's plan of Salvation, those rebellious against the Government of God will be ultimately destroyed, while believers, by God's Grace, will be saved. After this cataclysmic event, Jesus Christ will reign in triumph through the thousand-year period, or Millennium, of Revelation 20:1-6. The whole Adventist thesis rests heavily upon the Prophetic and Apocalyptic texts of Daniel and Revelation.

As a religious movement, it began with a widespread "awakening" on the question of the advent, which developed spontaneously in the Old World and in the New in the early decades of the nineteenth Century. It became strongest and most clearly defined in the United States, at first under the leadership of William Miller (1782-1849) of Low Hampton, New York, a veteran of the War of 1812 and a man respected as a diligent student of the Bible, even though he did not have formal college or seminary training.

The movement, under Miller was at first an interchurch (or more accurately, intra-Church) development, with many Methodists, Christians, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists among its adherents. It was thus a movement within the existing Churches, and in the days of its beginnings there was no intention or attempt to organize a separate denomination. So influential was William Miller, that for years his followers were known as Millerites. Miller, himself, became a Baptist in 1816. He began, at once, a careful study of the Scriptures, concentrating on the Prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Using only the Bible, its marginal references and Cruden's Concordance as his sources, he came to the conclusion that many Old and New World Biblical scholars had already reached - namely, that the symbolic "day" of Bible Prophecy represents a year. He also concluded that the 2,300 "days" of Daniel 8:14, started concurrently with the 70 weeks of years of Daniel 9, or from 457 B.C., the year of the command to rebuild

and restore Jerusalem; and he believed that the longer of the two periods would end in or about the year 1843 as calculated by Jewish reckoning. Miller thought that the "Sanctuary," mentioned in Daniel 8:14, was the Earth (or the Church) that would be cleansed by fire at the second advent. He came to believe that this cleansing would occur sometime between March 21, 1843, and March 21, 1844.

When the advent expectation failed to materialize by the spring of 1844, many left the movement. Miller's associates, on the basis of meticulous study of Old Testament types, set a second date, October 22, 1844, as the great anti-typical Day of Atonement, confident that the "Day of the Lord is near, even at the door." By 1844, there were between 50,000 and 100,000 Adventists in North America. Some disposed of their property as the day of expectation approached, gave away their goods, settled all their accounts, and waited prayerfully for the Lord to come. October 22, came and passed, with no second coming. Now vast numbers lost all interest in Adventism and went back to their former Churches or abandoned the Christian Faith altogether.

Those who continued as Adventists formed several smaller bodies. At first, a loosely knit Adventist organization came into being at a Conference in Albany, New York, in 1845. This group held generally to Miller's positions and theology, emphasizing the personal and pre-millennial character of the second advent of Christ, the resurrection of the dead - the faithful to be raised at Christ's coming, the rest a thousand years later - and the renewal of the Earth as the eternal abode of the Redeemed. Known at first as the American Millennial Association, a portion of them later came to be called Evangelical Adventists, a Church that has dwindled with the passing of the years to the point of obscurity. Another and larger group in 1861, became known as the Advent Christian Church.

While the general expectation of the advent had united the disparate groups, the disappointment brought all differences to light again. Nearly all Adventists were, at first, agreed that the second advent of Christ will be pre-millennial - that is, that his return will precede the thousand-year period, foretold in Revelation 20. Today; however, many of

them, including the Advent Christian group, hold the Amillennial position.

In other areas, there was wide difference of viewpoint also. Just what is the state of the dead - conscious or unconscious - as they await the resurrection? Who are to arise - the righteous and the wicked or only the righteous? Is there to be eternal punishment for the wicked or ultimate annihilation? What is the nature of immortality? Does the cleansing of the Sanctuary of Daniel 8, refer to a Sanctuary in Heaven or on Earth? When should the Sabbath be celebrated - on the first day or on the seventh, on Sunday or on Saturday? Over these questions, the Adventists, as organized bodies, became divided into the four major groups, in which we find them today. We will discuss, in depth, one of these four groups.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

By far, the largest single Adventist body in point of numbers, both in the United States and particularly throughout the world, is the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which traces its beginning back to the 1840's. It traces its convictions on the Sabbath back to the earlier Seventh-Day Baptist of New England and the Old World.

The first major point of disagreement between Seventh-Day Adventists and the other Adventist groups was not over the Sabbath question, but the question of the "Sanctuary" in Daniel 8:14 and the interpretation of that passage. A small group of Adventists became convinced that the Sanctuary was in Heaven and not on Earth and that there would be work of "investigative judgment" in the Heavenly Sanctuary, prior to the second advent. Other Adventist bodies of the period still held that the Sanctuary was the Earth.

Coupled with this divergence came another, concerning the time of the second advent. The Seventh-Day group claimed that the Historical and Prophetic evidence pointed to October 22, 1844, was correct, but that the error lay in a mistaken interpretation of Daniel 8:13-14 - that Christ was not at that time to come out of, but was to enter into, the Most Holy Place in Heaven to complete the second phase of His High Priestly Ministry before

coming to this Earth. The group holding these views, also came to advocate the observance of the seventh day.

As early as 1844, a small group of these Adventists near Washington, New Hampshire, had begun observing the Sabbath on the seventh day. A pamphlet written by Joseph Bates in 1846, gave the question wide publicity and created great interest. Shortly after this, Bates, together with James White, Ellen Harmon (later Mrs. James White, whose writings Seventh-day Adventists hold “in highest esteem....{they} accept them as inspired counsels from the Lord”), Hiram Edson, Frederick Wheeler, and S.W. Rhodes, set out with the aid of regular publications, to champion the seventh-day Sabbath, along with the imminence of the advent. Hence their name - Seventh-day Adventist.

The growth of the group around these leaders was slow at first, owing to the general derision in which Adventists were held and to their economic limitations and social handicaps. By 1855, however, they were prosperous and numerically strong enough to set up headquarters at Battle Creek, Michigan, with a Publishing House called the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association. In 1860, they officially adopted the name Seventh-day Adventists, and in 1903, they moved their Headquarters to its present location in Washington, D.C.

Doctrinally, the Seventh-day Adventists are Evangelical Conservatives, with a sound Protestant recognition of the authoritative nature of God’s Revelation of Himself through the inspired writings encompassed in the entire Bible. Their standard statement of belief, appearing annually in their Yearbook, reveals that they believe in the transcendent, personal, communicating God, as revealed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each equally and uniquely divine, personal, and eternal. They believe in creation by divine fiat and recognize the fall of man. Man is, by nature, mortal, but may receive immortality through divine grace and the redemption offered through the total atoning work of Jesus Christ.

They hold the Ten Commandments to be a transcript of the character of God, as exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ, and thus the standard of righteousness for men of all ages. They base their observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath on the fourth commandment - "Six days shalt thou labour,....But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, thy God." The tithing of incomes provides the entire support of the Ministry of the Church. Beyond the tithe, they give generously toward missions, local Church expenses, and other Church enterprises. In 1977, their total per capita giving was \$642.75 in North America and \$179.37 in the world field.

They believe in the gift of Prophecy in the Church; that the dead awaiting the Resurrection, are in an unconscious state; that the whole person will be resurrected on the last day with immortality for the righteous and destruction, by fire, for the wicked. They seek religious liberty for all and advocate the complete separation of Church and State. They consider the body of man to be the Temple of the Holy Spirit and, in consequence, rigidly abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the promiscuous use of drugs. Likewise, they advocate sound principles of healthful living through diet, exercise, and helpful outlook. They believe in the pre-millennial, personal, visible return to Christ "at a time unknown, but close at hand," and in a New Earth to be created out of the ruins of the Old as the final abode of the redeemed. They practice immersion as the Biblical form of baptism and foot washing as a preparatory service for Communion.

The overall administrative body of the Church is the executive committee of their general conference, which is chosen by delegates from the various Church groups in the quinquennial sessions of the general conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Working under this general conference are 3 lesser governmental units: (1) the 12 "division" organizations, administering Church affairs in different Continents; (2) 78 "union conferences," making up the divisional organizations; and (3) 376 "local conferences," or missions, the smallest administrative units.

Each unit has a large amount of autonomy. Local congregations elect lay Elders, Deacons, and other officers; the local conference office supervises all local Pastoral and

Evangelistic work and pays all Pastors and other workers in its territory from a central fund, which is a highly representative form of government.

Evangelism, publishing, educational, health, and welfare work are outstanding and highly successful among Seventh-day Adventists. Regarding themselves not as just another Church, but as a movement established in the fulfillment of Bible Prophecy to prepare mankind for the second advent and to revive and restore neglected truths of the Reformation and of the Apostolic Church, they carry forward their work in 590 languages and dialects, 203 with publications, and 387 orally. They have 49 Publishing Houses distributed over the world, with 4 in the United States.

In North America, they have 10 liberal arts colleges; 2 Universities; a theological seminary; and medical, dental, and physical therapy schools. In the United States and abroad, they support 445 medical units and 42 nurses' training schools, 548 colleges and secondary schools, 3, 839 elementary schools. There are 3,126 weekly radio broadcasts in 76 languages; 6,040,795 students are enrolled in Bible correspondence schools. An International Broadcast, "The Voice of Prophecy," goes out over 895 stations weekly, and a weekly TV program, "Faith for Today," is viewed on 126 outlets. Still another, "It Is Written," is seen on 107 outlets each week.

Inasmuch as Adventists practice adult (age of accountability) baptism, no infants or children are reported in their total membership, which is listed at 2,949,758 in 19,761 Churches; it is limited to those who uphold their Church standards, including abstinence from liquor and tobacco. There are 551, 884 Seventh-day Adventists in the United States and Canada, organized into 3,729 Churches, as of 1977.

BAPTISTS

Baptists constitute one of the major Protestant forces in the United States. Twenty-seven Baptist denominations reported an approximate membership of 27,527,471 in 1971; there are approximately 94,508 local Baptist Churches, each one independent of

the others, with members also completely independent of one another, yet bound together by an amazingly strong “rope of sand” in a great common allegiance of certain principles and doctrines, based generally, upon the competence of each individual in matters of faith.

It is often heard among them that they have no founder, but Christ, and that Baptists have been preaching and practicing from the days of John the Baptist. That is true in a limited sense; there were certainly men and women holding what have come to be considered distinctly, Baptist principles all across the years. But as a Church, or as organized Churches, they began in Holland and England.

When the Reformation came early in the sixteenth Century, scattered groups appeared, advocating the convictions of faith, that are today, the warp and woof of Baptist theology and ideology. We find the name “Baptist,” in various forms, in Germany and Switzerland: Pedobaptists, among whom however, there were no Baptists in the modern sense, inasmuch as they baptized infants and children; Anti-Pedobaptists, who opposed infant baptism; and Anabaptists, who re-baptized adults, once baptized as children. The Anabaptists were the left wing of the Reformation and held to a literal application of the Word of God in social matters; they were communistic and pacifistic, opposing capital punishment, oaths in court, the holding of public office, and payment of taxes and interest. They rejected infant baptism as unscriptural, insisted upon the separation of Church and State, and defended this belief heroically and to the point of fanaticism and martyrdom. Under persecution, they spread all over Europe. Some fled to Norway, others to Italy, Poland, Holland, and England.

In Holland, a group of Mennonites, or followers of the former Anabaptist leader, Menno Simons, taught Anabaptist principles: that the Scriptures were the sole authority for man’s faith and practice, that baptism was a believer’s privilege, that Church and State should be completely and forever separated, and that Church discipline should be rigidly enforced in business, family, and personal affairs. These Mennonites met and perhaps, deeply influenced a little group of British Separatists, who had taken refuge in Amsterdam

from the religious persecutions under James I; many of them lived in Mennonite homes, and one of their leaders, John Smyth, was completely captured by the Mennonite argument. He re-baptized himself and his followers in the Anabaptist, or Baptist faith, and with them, organized the first English Baptist Church in 1609. When he tried to make Mennonites of them however, he went too far; Baptist they would be, but not Mennonites, for that meant a threat of their British heritage, and they were still good Englishmen and proposed to remain so. Smyth was excommunicated and he died in 1612, leaving behind him, in a “confession,” his convictions that:

“the magistrate, by virtue of his office, is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor to compel men to this or that form of religion or doctrine, but to leave the Christian religion to the free conscience of everyone, and to meddle only with political matters.”

So died, John Smyth, Baptist to the last. His people drifted back across the Channel and, with persecution waning, established yet another, Baptist Church in London.

These first 2 Churches were General Baptist Churches, believing in a general atonement for all men. In the course of time, there arose a Particular Baptist Church, holding to the predestinarian teachings of John Calvin and preaching a limited atonement. The first Particular (British) Church dates back to 1638. Three years after their founding, a third body, known as Immersion Baptists, broke away and in 1644, wrote a Confession of Faith that is still held by many modern Baptists. It was this confession, that stamped these people’s popularity for the first time as Baptists.

These early British Baptists wielded a tremendous influence in their time and upon the future; it is claimed for them that “more than any King or Parliament, they set the heart and mind of England free.” John Smyth’s teaching that “the magistrate...is not to meddle with religion, or in matters of conscience” has become one of mankind’s great Spiritual principles. They sent William Carey to India in 1793, and Carey became the Pioneer of

Modern Missions. More than a Century earlier, in 1631, Roger Williams had come to America; he was to be the first great champion of Freedom for Faith and conscience on this side of the Atlantic.

Williams was not a Baptist, but a Separatist Minister, when he arrived. His story is well known: preaching “new and dangerous opinions against the Authority of Magistrates,” he organized a Baptist Church at Providence, Rhode Island. John Clarke established another Baptist Church at Newport, Rhode Island, at about the same time. The Baptists are still arguing as to which Church came first; many scholars put the Providence Church in 1639, the Newport Church in 1641.

These were Particular, or Calvinistic, Baptist Churches. Their strength was challenged by the rise of interest in Arminian theology during the preaching of George Whitefield, but their Calvinism prevailed; it is the theological standard of many, if not most, Baptists in this country today. Their progress was slow; a bitter persecution of their Church, ennobled them and left one of the darkest blots on Colonial History.

Following the tour of Whitefield through the Colonies, a dispute arose among the Baptists, dividing them into Old Lights, or Regulars, who distrusted revivals and emotionalism, and New Lights, or Separates, who demanded a reborn membership in their Churches. Separate Baptists were outstanding in the fight for religious freedom in the new land. The friction died down with the signing of the Constitution; however, and a New Unity was found in a Foreign Missions Crusade. The first Protestant Missionary Board in America was the American Board, made up of Baptists, Reformed, Congregational, and Presbyterian Churchmen. In 1814, the Baptists organized their own separate General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions.

This Convention, representing a National Baptist Fellowship, marked the first real denominational consciousness of American Baptists. It was followed eventually by other organizations which welded them firmly together: a General Baptist Convention; a general

tract society - later called the American Baptist Publication Society; various missionary societies for work at home and abroad; an education society; and the Baptist Young People's Union.

These organizations were on a national scale. Their unity was disrupted, first by a feeling that home missions agencies within the body, had failed to evangelize southern territory, and later, by the question of slavery and the Civil War. The great division over slavery came in 1845, when the Southerners "seceded" to form their own Southern Baptist Convention in order to carry on more effectively the work of the Southern Baptist Churches. From this point forward, there were to be Northern and Southern Baptist Conventions.

Various other Baptist groups, following to the logical end, their love of independence, established themselves from east to west. While they differ in certain minor details, they are generally agreed upon, the following principles of faith: the inspiration and trustworthiness of the Bible as the sole rule of life; the Lordship of Jesus Christ; the inherent freedom of the individual to approach God for himself; the granting of Salvation through Faith by way of Grace and contact with the Holy Spirit; 2 ordinances - the Lord's Supper and baptism of believers by immersion; the independence of the local Church; the Church as a group of regenerated believers, baptized upon confession of faith; infant baptism as unscriptural and not to be practiced; complete separation of Church and State; the immortality of the soul; the brotherhood of man; the Royal Law of God; the need of redemption from sin; and the ultimate triumph of God's Kingdom.

These overall doctrines have never been written by the Baptists into any official Baptist Creed for all their Churches, but they have been incorporated in 2 important confessions of faith for the denomination. The Baptist Churches of London wrote a Philadelphia Confession in the year 1689, and this Confession was enlarged by the Philadelphia Association in 1742. The New Hampshire State Baptist Convention drew up another Confession in 1832. The older Philadelphia Confession is strongly Calvinistic in statement; the New Hampshire Confession only moderately so.

Baptists have insisted upon freedom of thought and expression in pulpit and pew. This has made them one of the most Democratic religious bodies in America - and one in which liberal and conservative doctrine is preached freely. They have insisted, too, upon the absolute autonomy of the local congregation; each Church arranges its own Worship, examines and baptizes its own members. There is no age limit set on membership, but the candidate is usually of such an age that he can understand and accept the teachings of Christ. Candidates for the Ministry are licensed by local Churches and ordained upon recommendation of a group of Sister Churches.

Baptist Churches are commonly found grouped into Associations, Local and State, for purposes of fellowship. National Conventions are established among many of them to carry on educational and missionary work and to make pension plans. Most State and Regional Conventions meet annually, with delegates representing all Baptist Churches in the given area. They receive reports, make recommendations, and help to raise the National Mission Budgets, but they have no authority to enforce their decisions. (Some re-grouping regionally has taken place in the North among American Baptists).

In Washington, D.C., there is a Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs for American and Southern Conventions and other Baptist groups; this Committee serves mainly to spread the Baptist conviction on public morals and to safeguard their principle of separation of Church and State. Finally, there is the growing Baptist World Alliance, organized in 1905, and now including more than 31,432,130 Baptists all over the globe. The Alliance meets every 5 years and is a purely Advisory Body, discussing the great themes and problems common to all Baptists. Headquarters of the Alliance are now located in Washington, D.C.

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.

Up to the time of the Revolutionary War, Baptist work in the northern states was in the hands of the local Churches, some few of which, formed themselves into associations

such as the Philadelphia Association or the Warren Association of Rhode Island. Beyond these associations, which were limited to Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island, there was no central administrative body to bind the Churches together. The association did well, building Churches, colleges, schools, and libraries; by the time of the split with the Southern Baptists about 1845, plans for a national coordinating body were under way.

In the early years of the nineteenth Century, there were 3 Baptist organizations in the North, mutually maintained: the American Baptist Home Mission Society; the American Baptist Missionary Union, later known as the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society; and the American Baptist Publication Society. The defection of the Southern Baptist served to intensify the efforts of these 3 bodies; they were separate corporations, but they often called annual meetings at the same time and place.

The women of the northern Churches formed their own home and foreign missionary societies in the 1870's. Separate appeals for funds to support all these competing societies created confusion and dissatisfaction and led eventually to the formation of the Northern Baptist Convention in 1907. This convention, actually a corporation with restricted powers in conducting religious work, receiving and expanding money, and affiliating itself with other bodies, changed its name in 1950 to the American Baptist Convention. In 1955, the 2 women's missionary societies, joined administratively with their counter parts, the older foreign and home mission societies. Consequently, the 2 foreign societies and the 2 home societies, respectively, function now under identical officers, boards of managers, and administrative staffs, though each of the societies maintains its own corporation identity. In 1968, the Women's Foreign Society was legally merged into the American Foreign Missionary Society. These societies, with the American Baptist Historical Society, the Minister's and Missionaries Benefit Board, and the American Baptist Board of Education and Publication, were known as cooperating organizations of the convention.

State conventions and city mission societies were drawn into closer unity by grouping

them into affiliated organizations through which they raised and distributed funds under a cooperative plan with a unified budget. The Division of World Mission Support supervised the collection of money for this unified budget. Numerous other councils and committees carried on the work of the convention under the supervision of the general council, which functioned between the annual gatherings of the convention. In 1950, for the first time, a general secretary was elected.

In 1972, the convention adopted its third and present name, American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., and restructured to strengthen the representational principle and to develop a much fuller integration of the national program agencies into the structure of the American Baptist Convention. A larger (200-member) general board, representative of election districts, is the policy-making body. A national staff council of executives of national program boards and regional, state, and city units serves to coordinate the corporate affairs of the denomination under the leadership of the general secretary.

The local church; however, is still the basis and independent unit of American Baptist government and administration. There are 5,937 churches and 1,593,574 members, 27 regional and state conventions, and 9 Baptist city societies. The Church is at work in 14 children's homes, 48 homes for the aged, 7 hospitals, 10 theological seminaries, 6 academies, 27 senior colleges and universities, 4 junior colleges, and 1 school for nursing education. The Board of National Ministries has workers in 35 states; it supports Bacone College for Indians in Oklahoma, and carries on a widespread work among blacks, Indians, and oriental residents in the United States. The Board of International Ministries supports missionaries in Burma, Assam, India, Bengal, Thailand, Japan, Okinawa, Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Central America and maintains a cooperative relationship in 10 European countries. American Baptists also support the work of the Burma Baptist Convention, financially.

In matters of faith, every Baptist Church speaks for itself, but there are certain Baptist doctrines held in common. The Bible is the foundation of their belief, the individual conscience, the interpreter of the Bible. There is the usual Baptist insistence upon the

inspiration and validity of the Scriptures, the Lordship of Christ, immortality and the future life, the brotherhood of man, and the need of man's redemption from sin. The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are considered more as aids, than as necessities to the living of the Christian life.

Generally, it may be said that, Northern Baptists represented in the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., are less conservative in thought and theology, than those in the Southern Baptist Convention, but this doctrinal difference is not the major cause of the continuing separation of the two groups. Divergent views on the question of race, open Communion, and especially of the Protestant trend toward ecumenicity, are now the major hurdles, with the latter predominant. American Baptists are represented in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and in the World Council of Churches; Southern Baptists are represented in neither. American Baptists have made gestures toward union with the General Baptists, the Southern Baptists, the National Baptist Convention, the Seventh Day Baptists, the Disciples of Christ, and the Church of the Brethren and have welcomed the Free Baptists into full fellowship. Unless and until these varying attitudes are changed or reconciled, there does not seem to be any real possibility of the reunion of the two larger Baptist bodies in the United States.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

It was inevitable that Northern and Southern Baptists should split over the slavery question, even before the outbreak of the Civil War. The friction between the two sections began a quarter of a Century before Bull Run. The acting board of foreign missions of the Baptists in the country had its headquarters in Boston. Being located there, it was naturally strongly influenced by the abolition movement. There was bitter debate among the board members, and in the early 1840's, it became evident, that this board would not accept slaveholders as missionaries. This question of missionaries and of missionary money was the immediate cause of the split. The "brethren of the North" first suggested separation; a month later, in May of 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention was organized, establishing at once its own boards of foreign and home missions.

Southern historians now recognize that in addition to the slavery issue, there was a long-standing disagreement between Baptists in the North and Baptists in the South over the nature of denominational organization. Certainly, the slave issue precepted the break, but there was a very significant consequence to it. Baptists in the United States, under northern leadership, heretofore, had no central denominational organization. Instead, there were separate and independent organizations (usually designed as “societies”) for various phases of cooperative effort, such as foreign and home missions and publication. Southerners had desired instead, to have one organization controlling these varied activities. From the beginning, the Southern Baptist Convention, was such an organization. Northern Baptists, on the other hand, waited until 1907, to form a convention, uniting their societies. This cohesion of centralized organization and cooperative societies has had much to do, Southern Baptists believe, with their growth.

In Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Alabama, 300 Churches entered the new organization. Up to the outbreak of the Civil War, this convention met biennially; since 1869, it has met annually.

A hard struggle for existence lay immediately ahead. The new convention suffered badly in point of Churches, membership, and finances during the war. Homes, schools, Churches, the livelihood of citizens, and the very pattern of southern society was destroyed with devastating effects among all the Churches; and anti-missionary movement decimated their ranks and membership - not finances and leadership - was affected when black Baptists withdrew to form their own convention. The recovery of the Southern Baptist Convention was amazing however. In 1845, there were 351,951 members in the convention, of whom, 130,000 were black; by 1890, there were 1,235,908 members, all of them white; in 1972, there were 1,067,284 members in 34,534 Churches, including black Churches related to the convention.

As previously noted, Southern Baptists generally hold to a more conservative theology than their northern brothers, but the basic items of belief are quite the same. The Southern Baptist faith is more definitely Calvinistic, and it is one of the ironies of Baptist

history that the Southern Baptist Convention adheres more firmly to the New Hampshire Confession of Faith than do the American Baptists. Church polity and government are the same in both conventions; membership and ministry are exchanged in harmony and understanding.

Twenty-two denominational agencies work with 33 state conventions in home and foreign missions, Sunday schools, educational institutions, and ministerial retirement. The Home Mission Board works throughout the United States, Panama, and the Panama Canal Zone, with more than 2,186 missionaries active in the field. An additional 1,002 summer missionaries are appointed each year. It cooperates with black Baptists; works among migrants in the South and Indians in the West and Southwest, among several language groups and the deaf; and provides loans for the erection of new Church buildings.

Foreign missionaries are at work in 84 countries and on 4 continents; yet in comparison with their huge membership, Southern Baptists rank second among Protestant denominations in the number of missionaries sent overseas - with more than 13,083,199 members in 35,255 Churches they have 2,694 active missionaries abroad. There are 482 schools supported by foreign mission programs, 7,584 Churches, and 10,905 chapels, 21 hospitals, and 125 clinics and dispensaries.

The Sunday School Board provides the literature for and supervises the work of 7,430,931 students in 34,363 Sunday schools. The first chair of Sunday school pedagogy was established in 1915, at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. There are 6 theological seminaries in the Southern Baptist Convention with 10,688 students, 46 senior colleges and universities, 7 junior colleges, 7 academies, and 5 Bible schools.

Southern Baptists are said to be the fastest growing religious group in the United States; new Churches are being established, not only in southern, but in northern, eastern, and western states as well. Their annual convention is being held increasingly in northern and western cities and two reasons are given for this: One is that there are

few southern cities with hotel accommodations adequate to care for the ever-increasing number of messengers attending conventions; the other is that there are so many Southern Baptists living in northern territory that northern cities, from sheer force of numbers, are entitled to national conventions within their own state. State and territorial lines are being crossed and it is more and more evident that the word "southern" in their name, is a misnomer. This is fast becoming a national Baptist body in every meaning of the word.

BLACK BAPTISTS

The first black Baptist Church in America was organized at Silver Bluff across the Savannah River from Augusta, Georgia, in 1773; other Churches followed in Petersburg, Virginia, in 1776; Richmond, Virginia, in 1780; Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1785; Savannah, Georgia, in 1785; and Lexington, Kentucky, in 1790. It is interesting that Andrew Bryan, a slave, was the first Pastor of the First African Baptist Church of Savannah, Georgia, and that its organization came about through the efforts of the Rev. Abraham Marshall (white) and the Rev. Jesse Peter (black).

As early as 1700, white slaveholders in the South were providing religious teaching and places of worship for their slaves; at least most of them did little to prevent it. Usually; however, the black slave sat in the gallery of the white Church, identified with the faith of his owner. White Ministers, sometimes assisted by black helpers, moved from one plantation to another, holding services more or less regularly; occasionally a black Minister was liberated to give full time to religious work among his people. These Ministers had great influence; they were consulted by the whites as the respected leaders of their people and were a real power up to the time of the slave rebellion of 1831, led by Nat Turner. For a period following this disturbance, it was illegal, in some sections of the South, for blacks to become Christians or to build meetinghouses.

The great majority of blacks in pre-Civil War days were either Baptists or Methodists. When Bull Run was fought in 1861, there were 200,000 black members of the Methodist

Episcopal Church, South, and 150,000 black Baptists. In 1793, there were 73,471 Baptists in the United States, and one-fourth of them were black; in 1806, one-third of the Baptists of North Carolina were black. The lack of formality in the Baptists Churches, together with the absence of ritual and the freedom and democracy of the local congregation, appealed to blacks more than did the Episcopal structure of the Methodists. This was accented at the end of the Civil War; a revival Spirit swept the blacks, creating thousands of new Churches. Aided by the Freedom's Aid Society and various Baptist organizations, nearly 1,000,000 black Baptists worshipped in their own Churches within 15 years.

The first black Baptist Association, the Providence Baptist Association of Ohio, was formed in 1836; the first attempt at national organization came in 1880, with the creation of the Foreign Mission Baptist Convention at Montgomery, Alabama. In 1886, the American National Baptist Convention was organized at St. Louis, and in 1893, the Baptist National Educational Convention was organized in the District of Columbia. All 3 conventions were merged with the National Baptist Convention of America at Atlanta in 1895. In 1915, a division arose in this convention over the adoption of a charter and the ownership of a publishing house. The group rejecting the charter, continued to function as the National Baptist Convention of America, while the group accepting the charter, became known as the National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A., Incorporated (incorporated, that is, under the laws of the District of Columbia). The former is frequently referred to as the "unincorporated," and the latter as the "incorporated" convention, but both trace their beginning to the Foreign Mission Baptist Convention of 1880.

Today, out of approximately 20,000,000 blacks in the United States, better than 10,000,000 are in the South, and 44 percent of the total black population, are Church members. They are grouped into a large number of Churches and denominations. There are more than 30 recognized and entirely different black denominations, some with less than 20 members, but seven-eighths of our total black population, is either Methodist or Baptist. Nearly 8,000,000 black Baptists are bound in the two major conventions; 5,500,000 in the National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A., Incorporated; and 2,668,799

in the National Baptist Convention of America, usually called the “unincorporated” body.

Black Baptist doctrine runs quite parallel to that of white Baptist Churches; however, it is slightly more Calvinistic. The polity of the 2 larger white convention prevails; local Churches unite in associations, usually along state lines, for the purpose of fellowship and consultation. There are also state conventions concerned with missionary work and often extending beyond state boundaries.

Foreign missionary work is especially strong in Africa and home missionary efforts are generally those expended in the direction of helping needy Churches and schools and in family support and relief. The National Baptist Convention, Inc., has several missionary stations in the Bahamas; the convention has a total abroad of 5 colleges, 1 theological seminary, and 1 training school for women and girls. The convention has stations in Jamaica, Panama, and Africa, and gives support to 10 colleges in these countries.

The old enmities between the two conventions are disappearing, but no reunion is expected for some time to come. Moves have been made; however, toward the union of the National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A., Inc., with the American Baptist Convention.

As the outcome of a violent dispute in the National Baptist Convention of the U.S.A., Inc., over procedures in the election of convention officers, a new Progressive Baptist Convention was organized in 1961. No further information is, as yet, available on this body.

GENERAL BAPTISTS

The General Baptists claim their name and origin in John Smyth and Thomas Helwys and the group of Baptists organized in England and Holland in 1611. They hold Roger Williams to be their first Minister in the American colonies.

The General Baptists in the colonies, along the Atlantic coast, were at first

overwhelmed by the influence of Calvinism (General Baptists have always been Armenian), but their work was reopened by Benoni Stinson, with the establishment of the Liberty Baptist Church, in what is now Evansville, Indiana, in 1823. They spread into Illinois and Kentucky and a general association of General Baptists were organized in 1870. Since that time, they have grown steadily; today, they are strong in Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas, and have located Churches in Oklahoma, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Arizona, California, Florida, Ohio, and Mississippi.

Their confession of faith is similar to that of the Free Will Baptists; it is their belief that Christ died for all men; that failure to achieve salvation, lies completely with the individual; that man is depraved and fallen and unable to save himself; that regeneration is necessary for salvation, except in the case of infants and idiots, who are not responsible for sin; that salvation comes by repentance and faith in Christ; that the Christian, who perseveres to the end, is saved; that the wicked are punished eternally. The dead, just and unjust, will be raised at the judgment; the Lord's Supper and believer's baptism, by immersion, are the only authorized Christian Ordinances and should be open to all believers. Some of the General Baptist Churches practice foot washing.

Church polity is about the same as that found in all Baptist Churches. The denomination is congregational in Church government. Churches of a common area, are organized into local associations that are, in turn, organized into a general association. Both local and general associations are representative bodies and advisory in power. A peculiar feature of the General Baptists, lies in their use of a Presbytery, into which the ordained members of local associations are grouped; they examine candidates for the ministry and for the diaconate. Ministers and Deacons are responsible to this Presbytery, which exists only on the local level.

Current statistics show 866 Churches, with a total membership of 73,000, They maintain at Oakland City, Indiana, a liberal arts college, with a theological department. A Publishing House is operated at Poplar Bluff, Missouri, where their monthly paper,

“General Baptist Messenger,” is issued together with Sunday school literature.

Foreign missionary work is supported in Guam, Saipan, Jamaica, and the Philippines. They have an active home missionary work in various states.

CHURCHES OF CHRIST (CHRISTIAN CHURCHES)

Seventeen thousand independent congregations, with a total membership of about 2,500,000, constitute the Churches of Christ. They are located in 50 states, with greatest concentrations in the South and West. They have congregations in 75 foreign countries and in the past 20 years, have emerged as one of the top 10 non-Catholic bodies in North America.

There is a distinctive plea of unity at the heart of the Churches of Christ - a unity, that is Bible based. It is believed, here, that the Bible is “the beginning place” in and through which God-fearing people, can achieve Spiritual Oneness; it is an appeal to “speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent,” in all matters pertaining to faith and morals; consequently, members recognize no other written creed or confession of faith, than the Scriptures. In all religious matters, there must be a “thus saith the Lord.”

In modern times, the Churches are related to the restoration movement - in the work and thinking of James O’Kelly, in Virginia; Abner Jones and Alias Smith, in New England; Barton Stone, in Kentucky; and Thomas and Alexander Campbell, in West Virginia. These 4 movements, all contending that “nothing should be bound upon Christians as a matter of doctrine, which is not as old as the New Testament,” and all completely independent at the start, eventually became one strong religious stream, because of their common purpose and plea.

The leaders among the Churches of Christ, in the nineteenth Century, were more

conservative religiously, than their counterparts among the Disciples of Christ. They contended for a strict adherence to the New Testament pattern of worship and Church organization. Congregations refused to join any inter-congregational organization, such as a missionary society. Their worship was simple, and they opposed the addition of instrumental music on the grounds that the New Testament did not authorize it and that the early Church did not use it. Around the turn of the twentieth Century, a recognition of differences between the conservative and more liberal wings of the restoration movements became evident, and in the 1906 Census of Religious Bodies, the Churches of Christ were listed separately for the first time. They disclaim being denominational, but claim to be non-denominational, with no headquarters, no governing bodies, and no clergy. They co-operate voluntarily, international radio programs, sponsored by one congregation.

Today, one of the outstanding features of the Churches of Christ, lies in their acceptance of the Bible, as a true and completely adequate revelation. This basic concept has resulted in such characteristic practices, as weekly observance of the Lord's Supper, baptism by immersion, "a cappella" singing, a vigorous prayer life, support of Church needs through voluntary giving, and a program of preaching and teaching the Bible. This concept, also explains, the autonomy of local Churches, governed by Elders and Deacons, appointed under New Testament qualifications, dignified worship services, enthusiastic mission campaigns, and far-flung benevolent programs, all financed by the local Churches.

The great Scriptural doctrines, usually classified as "conservative," are received in the Churches of Christ, including the concept of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as members of One Godhead; the incarnation, virgin birth, and bodily Resurrection of Christ; the universality of sin, after the age of accountability, and its only remedy in the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Strong emphasis is also laid on the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ. A figurative, rather than a literal view, is prevalent, with reference to the Book of Revelation. Membership is contingent, upon the faith of the individual in Jesus Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, repentance, confession of

faith, and baptism by immersion into Christ for the remission of sins. Church attendance is stressed.

While professing identity with the original Church established by Christ and the Apostles at Pentecost, the Churches of Christ maintain that, the final judgment of all religious groups, is reserved unto the Lord himself. Members believe they are “Christians only, but not the only Christians.” This view; however, still allows for a vigorous Evangelism, that finds unacceptable the doctrines, practices, names, titles, and creeds, that have been grafted into the original Christianity, in the long post-Apostolic period.

Ministers are ordained, rather than licensed and they hold tenure in their pulpits, under mutual agreement with the Elders of Churches, in which they preach. Their authority, is moral rather than arbitrary, the actual government of the Church, being vested in its Eldership.

A vigorous missionary program is carried on in 75 nations outside the United States, and in recent years, a strong movement to extend the influence of the group in the northeastern United States, has developed. Counting native workers in the foreign field and mission activities within the United States, there are over 1,000 missionaries, or Evangelists, supported by others, than the group to whom they preach. A quota of Chaplains is maintained in the Air Force and the Army.

Properties owned by the group probably exceed \$2,500,000,000 in value. There are 21 colleges, including 1 in Japan; 70 secondary and elementary schools; 40 homes for orphans or the aged; and 65 periodicals, newspapers, and magazines, published throughout the country. Since all official status in these institutions is lacking, none of them, being authorized to speak for the entire Church, their conformity in ideas and teachings is all the more remarkable.

Another medium of Evangelism has been put to use in the publication of articles in a

number of big national magazines. Many Churches offer correspondence courses. A “Herald of Truth,” radio and television program, has nationwide coverage; it is sponsored by the Highland Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, and support is found in hundreds of other Churches and individuals throughout the country. The “Amazing Grace Bible Class,” conducted by Dr. Ira North and sponsored by the Madison, Tennessee Church of Christ; the largest of the 17,000 Churches of Christ, is seen and heard on more than 100 television and radio stations and over the Armed Forces network.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Among the half dozen largest religious groups in the United States, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) might be called the most American; it was born on the nineteenth Century American frontier, out of a deep concern for Christian unity. There were four pioneers: Barton Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell, and Walter Scott. All of them had Presbyterian background.

Barton Stone believed that Christians could and should unite on the basis of simple faith in Christ and that the divisive doctrines and practices of denominationalism should be abolished. His Church at Cane Ridge, Kentucky, became the center of the famous Kentucky Revival; but Stone came out of that movement, convinced that salvation had little to do with Church affiliation and that “deeds are more important than creeds.” Disciplinary action was brought against him and against his followers in the established Churches; they withdrew and re-organized, under the name, “Christians” and spread across Kentucky, Ohio, and the central states.

Thomas Campbell served as a Clergyman in the Seceder branch of the Presbyterian Church in northern Ireland; he settled in a Seceder Church in western Pennsylvania in 1807, where he advocated closer relations with all Christians, Presbyterian, or otherwise, appealed from creeds to the Bible, as a basis of faith and practiced open Communion. Censured, he led in the formation of “the Christian Association of

Washington County, Pa.,” and published a Declaration and Address, that was to become the Magna Charta of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In this declaration, he argued that “schism, or uncharitable divisions,” in the Church were anti-Christian, anti-Scriptural, anti-Natural,” and “productive of confusion and every evil work.” The Church membership should be based, solely, upon the belief and practices of New Testament Christianity; the Articles of Faith and Holiness, “expressly revealed in the Word of God,” were quite enough, without the addition of human opinions or creedal inventions.

Thomas Campbell laid the cornerstone; his son, Alexander Campbell, gave the movement its formative theology. He left, a Seceder Church in Scotland, to join his father in Pennsylvania in 1810, and enlarged on the concept - that every Church should be “autonomous and completely independent” - that creeds, clerical titles, authority, and privilege, had no justification in Scripture; that the Lord’s Supper should be served at every Sunday Service; and that baptism should be by immersion for adult believers (those adult enough to understand the meaning of the ordinance). He argued eloquently for Christian union and freedom of individual faith and welcomed to his independent Church at Brush Run, Pennsylvania, all who came with simple faith in Christ, as the Son of God and Messiah. He met the same opposition that his father had met, and with his congregation, he joined in association of Particular Baptists, only to be separated from the body in 1830. Barton Stone used the word “Christian” to designate his group, feeling that all God’s children should be known so. Campbell used the word, “Disciples.” In 1832, the Christians and the Disciples merged; both names are still used, but usually and officially, the body is known today as, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Early in the movement, Walter Scott popularized the term “restoration,” by which he meant the restoration of the New Testament pattern and practice. Like Stone, Scott was suspicious of the values of the current revivalistic frenzies; he related faith more to the mind, than to the emotions - it was not a matter of emotional experience, but of intellectual acceptance of the truth of Christ’s Messiahship. He stressed the importance of such faith, together with repentance of sins and baptism by immersion.

The first National Convention of the Disciples and their first missionary society (the American Christian Missionary Society), were organized in 1849; State Conventions and Societies had begun to meet in 1839. They grew rapidly through and following the Civil War period, especially in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee, and Missouri, in spite of conflict within the Church, over emphasis on denominationalism or Ecclesiastical organization. The differences between conservative and progressives, became acute in such matters of the organization of missionary societies and instrumental music in the Churches; the Churches of Christ separated from the Disciples during this debate.

In matters of belief, conservative and progressive attitudes were and still are important, and the Church allows for variance of opinions and stands for complete freedom in interpretation, starting from the historic conviction that there is no creed, but Christ and no saving doctrines, save those of the New Testament. It could be said that the Disciples are “God-centered, Christ-centered, and Bible-centered,” but beyond that, faith is a matter of individual conviction. But there are areas of general agreement and acceptance. The Disciples are firm in their belief in immortality, but do not accept the doctrine of original sin; they hold that all men are of a sinful nature, until redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ; they are not concerned with speculation about the Trinity and the nature of a triune God. They have no catechism, no set orders of worship. Faith in Christ as Lord, is the only requirement.

For more than a Century, the Disciples were strictly congregational in polity - a loosely bound association of local Churches. But, increasingly, it was felt that such an arrangement, with overlapping boards and agencies and with no representative voice, needed a restructure in the interest of efficiency and economy. Following a 7-year study and discussion, led by a 130-member Commission on Brotherhood Restructure, a whole new design of governmental organization was adopted at Kansas City in 1968. Under the new plan, the whole Church works under a polity of “representative government” on 3 levels - local, regional, and general.

The local Church is still the basic unit. All congregations listed in the latest year book

are accepted as congregations; each congregation manages its own affairs, has its own charters and by-laws; owns and controls its property; calls its Ministers; establishes its own budgets and financial policies; and has voting representatives in regional and national assemblies.

The Churches are grouped into 36 regions, organized to provide help, counsel, and Pastoral care to members, Ministers, and congregations. Each region organizes its own boards, departments, and committees. Within policies developed by the general assembly, the regions certify the standing of Ministers, provide help and counsel to Ministers and congregations, in such matters as - ordination, licensing, location of Ministers, the establishment or dissolution of Pastoral relationships, the installation of Ministers. Regions have regional Ministers as their administrative leaders.

On the location level, there is a general assembly made up of voting and non-voting representatives from the local Churches and regions, plus Ministers and a few ex-officio members, the chief officers of institutions and the unit boards, and members of the general board. The assembly receives and acts upon proposed programs, policies, reports, and resolutions sent up through the general board, elects the officers of the Church and half the members of the general board. The 36 regions elect the other half.

The general board meets annually, processes business going to the assembly, recommends policies, reviews the total program of the Church, elects or confirms the governing bodies of the various administrative units and elects the committees of the general assembly and the members of an administrative committee. General board members are laymen, laywomen, and (1/3) Ministers.

The administrative committee of the general board is made up of 40 members, elected by the board; officers of the Church are ex-officio members. Meeting at least twice a year, it provides for long-range planning, implements policies, and promotes the causes and units of the Church.

Officers of the Church are of two classes - voluntary (non-salaried) officers of the general assembly and salaried officers. There is a volunteer moderator, 2 vice-moderators, a salaried general Minister, and a President.

There are now 1,256,849 members in 4,377 Churches in the United States and 39 congregations with 5,327 members in Canada. There are 32 colleges, undergraduate schools of religion and foundations; 8 centers for children and retarded persons; and 28 centers for older adults. The Disciples are represented in the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the World Council of Churches, and the Consultation on Church Union. A World Convention of Churches of Christ has its headquarters in Dallas.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS (MORMONS)

Better known as Mormons, the Latter-day Saints have had one of the most tempestuous histories of any Church body in the United States....Attacked by mobs and once invaded by United States Army Troops, they built a religious community in what was once a desert and established themselves as one of the outstanding religious groups of the nation.

Essentially a laymen's movement in its origin, their Church is rooted in the visions of Joseph Smith, who organized the movement in 1830 at Fayette, New York. Smith claimed to have experienced a series of Heavenly visitations, beginning with the appearance of God and Jesus Christ to him in 1820, in which he was informed that all existing Churches were in error, that the true Gospel was yet to be restored, that it would be revealed to him, and that he was to re-establish the true Church on earth. He was led by an Angel to discover, buried in a hill called Cumorah, near Manchester, New York, certain golden plates or tablets left there by an ancient Prophet and containing the sacred records of the ancient inhabitants of America and the true Word of God. According to the Mormons, America was originally settled by the Jaredites, one of the groups dispersed during the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel; the American Indians were direct descendants of the Hebrews, who came from Jerusalem in 600 B.C. Jesus, Himself,

visited this country after His resurrection.

Smith translated the hieroglyphics on the golden tablets into the “Book of Mormon,” from which the name “Mormon” comes. Oliver Cowdery acted as his scribe. This “Book of Mormon,” is considered by the saints, as being equal with and “supporting, but not supplanting” the Bible and as being equal with 2 other writings of Joseph Smith, The “Book of Doctrine and Covenants,” and the “Pearl of Great Price,” which contain the foundation teachings of the Church. The golden plates were said to have been returned to the Angel, by Joseph Smith; their authenticity has been challenged by non-Mormon scholars and as ardently defended by the Mormons, who offer the names of 11 other persons beside Smith who saw them. Smith and Cowdery had the “priesthood of Aaron” conferred upon them by a Heavenly Messenger, John the Baptist, who instructed them to baptize each other. Later, 3 other divine visitants, Peter, James, and John, bestowed upon them the “Priesthood of Melchizedek” and gave them the keys of Apostleship. This was in 1829, a year before the founding of the Church, with 6 charter members.

Opposition arose as the Church gained strength and the Mormons left New York in 1831 for Ohio, where Headquarters were established at Kirtland. Another large Mormon center developed at Independence, Missouri, where they planned to build the ideal community, with a Temple at its heart. Friction with other settlers became so acute that the Mormons were expelled from Missouri from 1838-39; they settled at Nauvoo, Illinois. Violence followed them there and reached its peak with the murder of Joseph Smith and Hyrum Smith, the Prophet and the Patriarch of the Church, in jail at Carthage, in 1844.

With Smith’s death, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was accepted as the Presidency of the Church and Brigham Young as President of the Quorum. A group of the defeated minority, objecting that Young was not the legal successor to Smith, withdrew to form other Churches. Some of them followed James T. Strong to Wisconsin to form the sect, known as Strangites; others joined various other splinter groups, but the largest body of “anti-Brighamites,” believed that the leadership of the Church belonged to direct descendants of Joseph Smith, Jr., and in 1860, these people formed the Re-organized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, led by Joseph Smith III, (a Church

unaffiliated with the Utah-based Church). But Young held his office with the vote of the majority and he had the courage and the administrative ability to save the Church from disruption and division.

He led the saints when they were driven out of Nauvoo in February 1846, and began their epic march to what is now, Utah, arriving in the Salt Lake Valley in July of 1847; here, they built their famous Tabernacle and Temple at the heart of what was to become a worldwide Mormonism, creating a self-existent community in the desert. In 1850, the territory of Utah was formed; it became the state of Utah in 1896.

Based on “The Book of Mormon” and the Bible, which is accepted “as far as it is translated correctly,” the faith of the Mormons, is a faith to be found in many conservative Protestant Churches, plus the revelations of Joseph Smith. However, certain aspects of Latter-day Saints’ theology depart from the traditional Orthodoxy of Catholic and Protestant Churches. They believe that the 3 persons comprising the Godhead are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that the Father and the Son have bodies of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s, but that the Holy Ghost is a personage of Spirit; that men will be punished for their own individual sins and not for Adam’s transgression. All mankind may be saved through the Atonement of Christ and by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel; these laws and ordinances include, faith in Christ, repentance, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the observance of the Lord’s Supper, each Sunday. They believe in the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues, visions, Prophecy, and healing, and that Christ will return to rule the earth from his capitals in Zion and Jerusalem following the restoration of the 10 Tribes of Israel. In addition, it is believed that the Latter-day Saints, should adhere to the official pronouncements of the living President (Prophet) of the Church.

Revelation is not to be regarded as being confined to either the Bible or “The Book of Mormons;” it continues today, in the living Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, teachers, and Evangelists of the modern Mormon Church. Baptism is necessary to salvation and

obedience to the Priesthood, is of first importance. Subjection to civil laws and rules is advocated, together with an insistence upon the right of the individual to worship according to the dictates of his conscience.

Two Mormon practices, baptism for the dead and sealing in marriage for eternity, are exclusive with this Church. Baptism and salvation for the dead are based upon the conviction, that those who died without a chance to hear or accept the Gospel, cannot possibly be condemned by a just and merciful God. The Gospel must be preached to them after death; authority for this is found in I Peter 4:6: "For this cause was the Gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit." Baptism is considered as essential to the dead as to the living, though the rites will not finally save them; there must be faith and repentance for salvation. The ceremony is performed with a living person standing proxy for the dead.

Marriage in Mormonism has 2 forms: marriage for time and marriage for eternity (or celestial marriage). Mormons who are married by civil authority, only still remain in good standing in the Church, but marriage for time and eternity in the Church's Temples, is regarded as a prerequisite for the highest opportunity of salvation. In connection with this, Joseph Smith informed his associates in the 1840's, that plural marriage was also sanctioned and commanded by God. Some plural marriages had been secretly contracted for some time, before Smith's revelation on the practice, was announced publicly by Brigham Young in 1852.

Following the Civil War, the Federal Government mounted an increasingly intense campaign against Mormon polygamy. In 1882, the Edmunds Act, provided stringent penalties for polygamists and in 1887, the Church was dis-incorporated and its properties were confiscated. In 1890, the U.S. Supreme Court, ruled that it was Constitutional to deny all privileges of citizenship to all members of the Church. Also, in 1890, the Church President issued a Manifesto, that officially discontinued the contracting of new plural marriages. Some followers of Joseph Smith, Jr., deny that polygamy was ever

sanctioned, but a few in other groups (notable in the Re-organization Church of Latter-day Saints) believe that it will never end. These contemporary polygamists are excommunicated from the Mormon Church and are known as Fundamentalists.

Organization and government in the Church differ in detail among 5 Mormon denominations, but agree in essentials. They are based upon the 2 Priesthoods: the higher Priesthood of Melchizedek, which holds power of Presidency and authority over the offices of the Church and whose officers include Apostles, Patriarchs, High Priests, Seventies, and Elders; and the lesser Priesthood of Aaron, which guides the temporal affairs of the Church through its Bishops, Priests, teachers, and Deacons.

The Presiding Council of the Church is the First Presidency, made up of 3 High Priests - the President and 2 Counsels. Its authority is Final and Universal in both Spiritual and Temporal affairs. The President of the Church is "the mouthpiece of God;" through him come the laws of the Church by direct revelation.

Next to the Presidency, stands the Council of the Twelve Apostles, chosen by Revelation, to supervise under the direction of the First Presidency, the whole work of the Church and to ordain all Ministers. The Church is divided into stakes (geographical divisions) that are composed of a number of wards, corresponding to local Churches or Parishes. High Priests, assisted by Elders, are in charge of the stakes. Members of the Melchizedek Priesthood, hold authority under the direction of the Presidency to officiate in all ordinances of the Gospel. Seventies work under the direction of the First Seventy (a presiding Quorum of 70 men); they are organized into Quorums of 70 each, with 7 Presidents of equal rank, presiding over each Quorum. Seventies have a responsibility to proselytize. The duties of the 12 Apostles and the Seventies, carry them into all the stakes, wards, and missions, throughout the entire Church. The duties of the stake Presidents, the ward Bishops, the Patriarchs, High Priests, and Elders, are to supervise the work within the stakes and wards of the Church. The Aaronic Priesthood is governed by the presiding Bishopric of 3 men, who also supervise the work done in the stakes and wards, by members of the Priesthood. (In June of 1978, it was ruled that "all worthy male

members of the Church, may be ordained to the Priesthood without regard for race or color”).

The Church influences every phase of the living of every member; it supplies relief in illness or poverty; assists with education and employment, when necessary, but does not educate or employ all members. Such a program has resulted in deep loyalty among its members. Almost 28,000 young Mormons currently serve as full-time Missionaries, throughout the World, without compensation; they give 2 years to the work of spreading the teaching of their Church at home and abroad. Only about 60 persons in leadership positions in the Church, receive a salary. Their Missionary experience strengthens them and their Church and offers a model of Church service.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The organization and doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had been outlined in the preceding section; with headquarters in Salt Lake City, it has a membership of 4,200,000 and 10,000 congregations; the membership has increased by 50 percent in the last decade. A general conference is held twice a year at Salt Lake City, and area conferences are held in other countries. The Church is supported by the tithes of the membership; each Mormon who earns money is expected to give one-tenth of his income.

The missionary effort of this Church is constant and vigorous. There are 170 missionary stations throughout the world. The death rate among Mormons is lower than that of any other group of people of the same size anywhere in the world; this is held by some to be the direct result of Mormon abstinence from liquor and tobacco and of their welfare program. This Church maintains storehouses for community food and clothing; members operate vegetable, seed, and wheat farms; orchards; a cotton plantation; dairies; sewing centers; fish canneries; soap processing plants; a vitamin pill factory; and several grain elevators. Most of these products are consumed at home, but not all of them; thousands of relief packages have gone to Europe under a Church-wide relief plan.

RE-ORGANIZED CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

This Church claims to be the continuation of the original Church, organized by Joseph Smith on April 6, 1830. It has more than 217,000 members, located in 37 countries across the world. It bases its claim to be the continuation of the original Mormon Church on obedience to the rule of lineal succession and its Presidency as found in “The Book of Doctrine and Covenants.” Court actions on 2 occasions, in Ohio in 1880 and in Missouri in 1894, are cited as naming it the legal continuation of the original Church. The son of Joseph Smith, it is held, was designated by his father to succeed him, and he became President in 1860.

The Re-organized Church rejected the claims of the Mormons, led by Brigham Young, because of their abandonment of this rule and also because of their abandonment of the doctrine of polygamy in 1852, which is held to be contrary to the teachings of “The Book of Mormon” and “The Book of Doctrine and Covenants,” endorsed by the original organization in 1835. It also differs on the doctrine of the Godhead, celestial marriage, and baptism of the dead.

At the death of Joseph Smith, Jr., in 1844, the Church entered a period of confusion, due to certain claims to leadership. Those holding to the “lineal succession,” eventually re-organized, the first collective expression of this movement, coming at a conference in Beloit, Wisconsin, in 1852. Joseph Smith III, was chosen President in 1860, at Amboy, Illinois. His successors have all been descendants of the founder.

Basic beliefs of the Re-organized Church include: faith in the University of God, the Eternal Father; Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of the Father; the Holy Spirit; the worth and dignity of others; repentance for sin; baptism by immersion; the efficacy of various sacramental ordinances; the resurrection of the dead; the open Canon of Scripture and the continuity of revelation; the doctrine of stewardship; and the principle of the accountability of all people to God.

The work of the Church is support by tithes and free-will offerings. This is regarded as a divine principle and the tithe is calculated upon a tenth of each member's annual increase over his needs and just wants.

The Church has adherents on every Continent in the world and in the islands of the Caribbean and South Pacific. It has 4-year accredited colleges at Lamoni, Iowa (Grace-land College), and at Kansas City, Missouri (Park College), a leadership and Ministerial school (Temple School), is located at Independence, Missouri.

Church doctrines, policies, and matters of legislation must have the approval and action of a delegate conference, held biennially at the auditorium in Independence. General administration of the Church is by a First Presidency of 3 High Priests, a Quorum of Twelve Apostles, who represent the Presidency in the field, and a Pastoral arm, under the High Priests and Elders. The work of their Bishops covers Church properties, the stewardship of members, and Church finances.

CHURCH OF CHRIST (TEMPLE LOT)

Claiming status as a remnant of the Church founded by Joseph Smith in 1830, this Church has 6,000 members in 32 local congregations. After the death of Smith in 1844, and following the western trek of the Mormons, a number of those who remained in the Midwest, became convinced that the Church leaders were advocating new teachings quite at variance with the original doctrines; by 1852, there were two protesting groups, one known as the New Organization and the other, centered in Crow Creek, Illinois, functioning under the original name of The Church of Christ. This latter group returned to Independence, Missouri, in the "appointed year" of 1867 and began purchasing "Temple Lots." The revelation concerning the "return" was given in 1864, through the presiding Elder at the time, Granville Hedrick.

The Temple Lots (the subject of controversy and court action between the Church of

Christ and the Re-organized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), finally resolved in favor of the Church of Christ; consists of land dedicated in 1831, by Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders, for the building of the Lord's Temple. The belief here, is that the Lord Himself will designate the time of building and that while the men of the Church cannot do this until the appointed time, they nevertheless believe that they have a Sacred obligation to "hold and keep this land free; when the time of building comes, it can be accomplished as the Lord sees fit."

The Church of Christ puts its faith in the pattern and thought of the Church "as it existed at the time of Christ and His Apostles." Hence, the highest office in the Church, is that of Apostle, and there are 12 Apostles. They are charged with the Missionary work and general supervision of the Church. Temporal affairs are directly administered by the General Bishopric, under the direction of the General Conference and the Council of Apostles; local Churches administer their own affairs, but must keep their teachings and practice in harmony with those of the denomination. Most of the membership is described as "Gentile," with several members among the Maya Indians of Yucatan, Mexico.

The Church accepts the King James Version of the Bible and "The Book of Mormon," as its standards. It holds that all Latter-Day Revelation, including that of Joseph Smith, must be tested by these Scriptures; it does not accept all that was given through him. Because changes were made in the early Revelations, this Church prefers "The Book of Commandments" to "The Doctrine and Covenants," where these changes are involved. For this reason, the doctrines of plural marriage, baptism for the dead, celestial marriage, and plurality of Gods, are not accepted.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST (BICKERTONITES)

The founders of this Church, were at one time, members of a Mormon body, led by Sidney Rigdon, in Pennsylvania. Rigdon and his followers refused to join the Western March under Brigham Young, denouncing Young's teaching of polygamy, the plurality of Gods, and baptism for the dead; in 1846, they purchased a farm (later lost at a Sheriff's

sale), near Greencastle, Pennsylvania. A small group did not go to Greencastle; they remained at West Elizabeth and under William Bickerton, who had been one of Rigdon's Elders, were formally organized as, The Church of Jesus Christ at Green Oak, in 1862. The name, "Bickertonites," is employed to distinguish them from other Mormon groups; they prefer to be known as "the Bickerton Organization." Current President, is Dr. Dominic R. Thomas, elected in 1974.

Foot washing is practiced and they salute one another with the Holy kiss. Monogamy is required, "except, in case of death," and obedience of all State and Civil Laws. They have their own edition of the "Book of Mormon" (in English and Italian), publish a monthly periodical, "The Gospel News," and other denominational material at Headquarters in Monongahela, Pennsylvania, where a General Conference meets annually. Missionary work is conducted in Italy, Nigeria, Mexico, and among the Indians of the United States and Canada. There are 2,500 members in the United States and more than 6,000 worldwide, now including Argentina and Ghana. There are 51 Churches in North America.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAYS SAINTS (STRANGITES)

The group claims that it is "the one and original Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" and that its founder, James J. Strang, is the only legal successor to Church leadership, with written credentials from Joseph Smith. Strang translated portions of the Plates of Laban; they, together with certain other revelations, are found in "The Book of the Law of the Lord." Strang also translated what is called, "The Voree Record" - a record found under an oak tree near Voree, Wisconsin, dealing in hieroglyphic-like characters, with "an ancient people....who no longer exist." He was crowned "King" of this Church in 1850, and was murdered in 1856, during a wave of anti-Mormonism, in the Great Lakes region.

Organized at Burlington, Wisconsin, in 1844, the Church denies the Virgin Birth theory, holds that Adam fell by a law of natural consequences, rather than in the breaking of a

Divine law and that the corruption, thus caused, could be removed only by the resurrection of Christ. They deny the Trinity and the plurality of Gods, celebrate Saturday as the Sabbath Day, and believe that baptism is essential for salvation. Due to “lack of Prophetic leadership, at the present time,” they do not practice baptism for the dead.

Chief officer of the Church is a High Priest in the Melchizedek Priesthood, chosen by the General Church Conference. Membership is given at about 300 in 6 Churches or branches.

CHURCH OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH, INC.

Confident that it is “a continuation of the Great Revival, begun at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost in A.D.33,” this Church was organized at Columbus, Ohio, in 1919, by R. C. Lawson. Doctrine is stated to be that of the Apostles and Prophets, with Christ as the Cornerstone. Perhaps the basic emphasis, are those laid upon Christ’s resurrection and pre-millennial second coming, the resurrection and translation of the Saints, the Priesthood of all believers, and the final judgment of mankind. Baptism is by immersion and the baptism of the Holy Spirit is necessary to the second birth. Foot washing is practiced, but not as an ordinance.

Found in 32 states, the British West Indies, Africa, the Philippines, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and London, England, the Church reports a membership of 45,000 in 155 Churches. Twenty-two elementary schools, 1 Bible College, 18 extension schools, 1 clinic, and 1 orphanage are maintained. A national convocation meets every other year at the headquarters Church, Refuge Temple in New York City. Officers of the denomination include 5 Apostles, 32 Bishops, 27 district Elders, 3 secretaries, 1 treasurer, and 1 public information officer.

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

The theological and doctrinal foundations of the Church of the Nazarene, lie in the preaching of the doctrines of Holiness and Sanctification, as taught by John Wesley, in the eighteenth-Century revival in England. Its physical structure is the result, not so much of schism, as of the merging of 3 independent Holiness groups already in existence in the United States. An eastern Holiness body, located principally in New York and New England and known as the Association of Pentecostal Churches in America, joined at Chicago in 1907, with a western (California) body called, the Church of the Nazarene; the 2 merging Churches agreed on the name, Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. The southern group, known as the Holiness Church of Christ, united with this Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene at Pilot Point, Texas, in 1908. In 1919, the word, "Pentecostal," was dropped from the name, leaving it as we know it today, the Church of the Nazarene. This was primarily a move to dis-associate, in the public mind, any connection with other Pentecostal groups, that taught or practiced speaking in tongues, a teaching and practice not endorsed by the Church of the Nazarene.

The background of the Nazarenes is definitely Methodist; they adhere closely to the original Wesleyan ideology. Most of the early Holiness groups, in this country, came out of the Methodist Episcopal Church; 2 of the original 7 general Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene, were ex-Methodist Ministers and the Nazarene "Manual," has been called a "re-written and modified Methodist Discipline."

The doctrine of the Church, is built around Sanctification, as a second definite work of Grace, subsequent to regeneration; all Ministers and local Church officials must have undergone this experience. Other doctrines include, belief in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, as containing all truth necessary to Christian faith and living; in the atonement of Christ for the whole human race; in the justification, regeneration, and adoption of all penitent believers in Christ; in the second coming of Christ; the resurrection of the dead; and the final judgment. Members of this Church believe in Divine healing, but never to the exclusion of medical agencies. The use of tobacco and alcoholic

beverages is denounced. Two ordinances - baptism by sprinkling, pouring, or most often, immersion and the Lord's Supper - are accepted as "instituted by Christ." Members are admitted on confession of faith, on agreement "to observe the rules and regulations...of the Church." It is a middle-of-the-road Church, neither extremely ritualistic on the one hand, nor extremely informal on the other; one Church Historian calls it, the "right wing of the Holiness movement."

There are 4,867 local congregations grouped into 74 districts in the United States and Canada and an additional 85 districts, or Inter-continental Zones, and mission areas, totaling 159 districts throughout the world. Local Pastors are elected by local Churches; each district is supervised by a District Superintendent, who is elected for a 4-year term by the members of the District Assembly.

The General Assembly also elects a General Board, consisting of an equal number of lay and Ministerial members, which is in turn divided into 8 Administrative Departments: World Missions, Home Missions, Evangelism, Publication, pensions and benevolences, Education and the Ministry, Church schools, and youths. A Missionary work is conducted in 60 world areas, with 590 Missionaries. A strong emphasis is laid upon Evangelism. Eight liberal arts colleges are maintained, 2 of which, were started in 1968. A Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri and Bible colleges in the United States, Canada, and the British Isles, are supported by the Church.

The Books and periodicals of the Church are produced at the Nazarene Publishing House in Kansas City. The annual volume of business exceeds \$10,000,000. Membership in the United States is reported at 455,100; in Canada, 8,253; on Inter-continental Zones in overseas stations, 99,204; for a total membership of 562,557. There are 6,900 Churches at home and overseas.

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

It is stated in the preface of the "Book of Common Prayer," of the Protestant Episcopal

Church (now known, generally as the Episcopal Church), that “this Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or worship.” Therein lies the hint of its origin: The Protestant Episcopal Church constitutes the “self-governing American branch of the Anglican Communion.” For a Century and a half in this country, it bore the name of the Church of England.

Its history runs back to the first Missionaries, who went to the British Isles from Gaul, prior to the Council of Arles, in A.D. 314. It is traced down through the days when Henry VIII, threw off the Supremacy of the Pope (Henry, according to Anglican scholars, did not found the Church of England; it was a Church that had always been more British than Roman); through the reign of Edward VI, when the “Book of Common Prayer,” and 42 Articles of Religion were written; through the period of Catholic restoration, under Bloody Mary, and through her successor, Elizabeth, who put the United Church and State under the Protestant banner and sent Sir Francis Drake sailing to build an Empire.

Drake came ashore, in what is now, Virginia, in 1578. His Church of England Chaplain, Francis Fletcher, planted a Cross and read a prayer, while Drake claimed the new land for the Virgin Queen. Martha Frobisher had reached Labrador in 1576, also with a Chaplain. After them, came Colonists to Virginia, under Sir Humphrey Gilbert and Sir Walter Raleigh; Raleigh’s Chaplain baptized an Indian, named Manteo and a white baby, named Virginia Dare, before the settlement vanished. With Captain John Smith, came Chaplain Robert Hunt, who stretched a sail between 2 trees for a shelter and read the service from the “Book of Common Prayer.”

In the South, the transplanted Church of England quickly became, the established Church. It was at heart, a tolerant and Catholic Church, but the control of the crown brought an almost ruthless authority, that made the Church suspect in the eyes of those Colonists who had come here seeking freedom, from all such authority. The Virginia House of Burgesses, set the salary of the Virginia Clergyman at “1,500 pounds of tobacco and 16 barrels of corn.” It was a British Clergy, supported by public tax and assessment and by contributions from the Church in England through the Society, for the Propagation

of the Gospel. And it was technically under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London. In that fact, lay one of its almost fatal weaknesses; Colonial Ministers had to journey to England for ordination, and few could afford it. This, coupled with the rising tide of the American Revolution, placed the Colonial Church of England in an unenviable position.

Yet, the Church did well. Membership grew rapidly. William and Mary College was established in 1693, and the Church of England became the predominant Church in the South. King's Chapel in Boston, the first Episcopal Church in New England, was opened in 1689; in 1698, a Church was established at Newport, Rhode Island, and another, called Trinity Church, in New York City. In 1702, a delegation from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, came from England to survey the Colonial Church and found about 50 Clergymen at work from the Carolina's to Maine. The visitors sensed the need for American Bishops to ordain American Clergymen; they also sensed the increasing opposition of the American patriot to a British-governed Church.

The Revolution almost destroyed the Colonial Church of England. Under special oath of allegiance to the King, the Clergy, either fled to England or Canada, or remained as Loyalists in the Colonies, in the face of overwhelming persecution. That many of them were loyal to the American cause, meant little; the Rev. William White was Chaplain of the Continental Congress, the Rev. Charles Thurston was a Continental Colonel, and in the pews of the Episcopal Church sat Washington, Jefferson, Patrick Henry, John Jay, Robert Morris, John Marshall, Charles and "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, and John Randolph. But their presence could not stem the tide. The Anglican House was divided, and it fell. At the War's end, there was no Episcopacy, no Association of the Churches, not even the semblance of an establishment. Few thought of any future for this Church, which suffered between Lexington and Yorktown more than any other in the Colonies.

There was; however, a future - and a great one. In 1782, there appeared a pamphlet entitled, "The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered," written by William White. It was a plea for unity and re-organization, and it proposed that the Ministry be continued, temporarily without the Episcopal succession, since the latter

“cannot at present be obtained.” In 1783, a Conference of the Episcopal Churches met at Annapolis, Maryland, and formally adopted the name, Protestant Episcopal Church - “Protestant,” to distinguish....it from the Roman Catholic Church, “Episcopal,” to distinguish it from the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists. In 1967, the General Convention adopted the Episcopal Church as an alternate name for the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A.

Also, in 1783, the Clergy in Connecticut elected Samuel Seabury as their prospective Bishop; he went to England and waited a year for consecration at the hands of English Bishops. This was denied, and he then went to Scotland to be the consecrated Bishop, in 1784. Ultimately, Parliament and the Church of England cleared the way, and 2 other Bishops-elect from New York and Pennsylvania were consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1787. In 1789, the Constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church was adopted in Philadelphia, the “Book of Common Prayer,” was revised for American use, and the Protestant Episcopal Church became an independent, self-governing body.

There was complete harmony and expansion for the next half-Century. There were established - new Churches and Church Institutions: Sunday schools, Bible, prayer Book and tract societies, theological Seminaries, colleges, boarding schools, guilds for men and women, and a domestic and foreign Missionary society. Diocesan organizations replaced State organizations; new Bishops moved into the New West. Bishop J. H. Hobart in New York, A.V.. Griswold in New England, Richard Channing Moore in Virginia, and Philander Chase in Ohio, worked miracles in overcoming the revolutionary prejudices against the Church. W. A. Muhlenberg, one of the great Episcopal builders, “organized the first free Church of any importance in New York, introduced the male choir, Sisterhoods, and the fresh air movement, while his Church infirmary suggested to his mind, the organization of St. Luke’s Hospital (in New York), the first Hospital of any Christian Communion in the Country.”

Muhlenberg was a man of wide vision; he inspired a “Memorial,” calling for a wider Catholicity in the Protestant Episcopal Church, which resulted in the famous Lambeth

Quadrilateral on Church Unity in 1888, and the movement that produced the further vision of the American "Book of Common Prayer" in 1892.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, disruption again, threatened the Protestant Episcopal Church, but it did not come. Among the major Protestant Churches, this one alone, suffered no division. New England Churchmen may have been abolitionists, and a Louisiana Bishop, Leonidas Polk, may have been a General under Lee, but Polk prayed for Bishop Charles Pettit McIlvaine of Ohio in public, and the Ohioian prayed for Polk, and they were still in one Church. A temporary Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States was organized to carry on the work in the South, but the names of the Southern Bishops were called in the General Convention in New York in 1862; and once the War was over, the Episcopal House was in 1865, quickly reunited.

The years following Appomattox, were years of new growth. A dispute over Churchmanship, rising out of the Oxford Movement in England, resulted in the separation of a group into the Reformed Episcopal Church in 1873, but otherwise, Episcopal unity held fast. New theological Seminaries were established and old ones were re-organized and strengthened. This period saw the Organization of a Church Congress, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, and numerous other Church agencies. The expansion continued into the next Century; 2 World Wars failed to halt it. In 1830, the Protestant Episcopal Church had 12 Bishops, 20 Dioceses, 600 Clergymen, and 30,000 Communicants; in 1930, it had 152 Bishops, 105 Dioceses, 600 Clergymen, and 1,250,000 Communicants.

The Episcopal form of Government closely parallels that of the Federal Government. It is a Federal Union, now consisting of 114 Dioceses (originally coterminous with the States of the Union), each of which is autonomous in its own sphere, associated originally for the maintenance of a common doctrine, discipline, and worship, to which objectives have been added, the unification development, and prosecution of missionary, educational, and social programs on a national scale.

Of the 114 Dioceses, 21 are overseas Missionary Dioceses. Most of the overseas

jurisdictions will become, either Independent Anglican Churches or parts of existing Anglican Churches, in their areas.

Each Diocese functions through a Bishop (elected locally, with the approval of the whole Episcopate and of representatives of the Clergy and laity of the whole Church), who is the Spiritual and Administrative head. There is Diocesan Legislative body, (convention, council, or synod) made up of the Clergy of the Diocese and representative of the local congregations, meeting annually; a standing Committee of Clergymen and laymen, who are advisers and assessors to the Bishop; and usually, a program board.

The normal pattern for the local congregation is the Parish, which elects its own Minister (called a Rector), who is vested with Pastoral oversight of the congregation and who, with the Warden and Vestrymen (comprising the Vestry), administers also the temporal affairs and the property of the Parish.

Each Parish and Parochial District (Mission or Chapel), is represented in the Annual Diocesan Convention by its Clergy and by elected lay delegates of the congregations (usually in proportion to their constituency); each Diocese and Missionary Diocese is represented in the triennial General Convention of the Church by its Bishop or Bishops and clerical and lay deputies, elected in equal numbers (at present 4 of each). The General Convention is a bicameral legislature, and the 2 houses of the convention, Bishops and deputies, meet and deliberate separately. Either house may initiate, but the concurrence of both, is required to enact legislation.

Between the sessions of the General Convention, the work of the Church is carried on by the presiding Bishop (elected for a 12-year term by the House of Bishops, with the concurrence of the house of deputies) and an elective executive council of 41 members - 30 elected by the General Convention, 9 elected by the Provinces (regional groups of Dioceses and Missionary districts), and 2 ex-officio (the presiding Bishop and the President of the house of deputies).

Established in 1919, to unify the work of 3 previously independent boards, the council in 1968, took the further step of abolishing, a more or less, rigid departmental structure, in favor of a collaborative working relationship among the program areas of National and World Mission, education for Ministry, Church in society, communication, Administration, finance, and stewardship-development.

The Episcopalian accepts 2 creeds - the Apostles' and the Nicene. The articles of the Church of England, with the exception of the twenty-first and with modification of the eighth, thirty-fifth, and thirty-sixth, are accepted as a general statement of doctrine, but adherence to them as a creed is not required. The Clergy make the following declaration:

“I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation, and I do solemnly engage to conform to the doctrine, discipline, and Worship of the (Protestant) Episcopal Church (in the United States of America).

The Church expects of all its members, “loyalty to the doctrine, discipline, and Worship of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, in all the essentials, but allows great liberty in non-essentials.” It allows for variation, individuality, independent thinking, and religious liberty. Liberals and conservatives, modernists, and fundamentalists, find cordial and common ground for Worship in the prayer Book, which next to the Bible, has probably influenced more people than any other Book in the English language.

There are 2 Sacraments, baptism and the Eucharist, recognized as “certain sure witnesses and effectual agencies of God’s love and grace.” Baptism, by pouring or immersion is necessary, for either, children or adults; baptism by any Church in the Name of the Trinity, is recognized as valid baptism; baptized children are confirmed as members of the Church by the Bishop, and those not baptized in infancy or childhood, must accept the rite before confirmation. Without stating or defining the Holy mystery, the Episcopal Church believes in the real presence of Christ, in the elements of the Eucharist. The

Church also recognizes the Sacramental character of confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and unction.

Some Episcopalians are high Churchmen, with elaborate ritual and ceremony; others are described as low Churchmen, with a ritual, less involved and with more of an Evangelistic emphasis. All; however, high or low, have a loyalty to their Church, that is deep and lasting. In more than 300 years, this Church has known only 1 minor division; today it stands, fifth, among all denominations: it has 3,070,349 members in 7,494 Churches in the United States.

Stanley I. Stuber, has called this, the “Church of Beauty,” and it is an apt description. Its prayer Book is eloquent in the literature of religious Worship, containing the heart of the New Testament and Old Testament devotions. Members have built stately Cathedrals in this country, among them, the Cathedral of St. John, the Divine, in New York City, which is the third largest Cathedral in the World, and the Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul (National Cathedral), at Washington, sometimes called the American Westminster Abbey. Stained-glass windows, gleaming altars, vested choirs, and a glorious ritual, give the Worshiper, not only beauty, but a deep sense of the continuity of the Christian Spirit and tradition. Next to their stress on Episcopacy, their liturgical Worship is a distinguishing feature; varying in degree, according to high or low Church inclinations; it has its roots in the liturgy of the Church of England and includes the reading, recitation, or intonation by Priest, people, and choir of the historic general confession, general thanksgiving, collects, psalter, and prayers.

National Church financial support is given to 13 U.S. Dioceses, to the Navajo land Episcopal Church (an area Mission in the Southwest), and to a coalition of Dioceses on the East Coast, that share a common Ministry to the Appalachian mountain people. Special emphasis is placed upon urban Ministries, Ministry in college communities, and Ministry to Black, Hispanic, Indian/Eskimo, and Asian congregations. Overseas Missions are located in all American territories - the Panama Canal Zone, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico - and in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Japan, the Near East,

Liberia, Mexico, Okinawa, Taiwan, Central America, and the Philippines. The Church sponsors 10 accredited Seminaries in the United States, plus 2 overseas, 9 colleges, 1 University, about 800 nurseries through high schools for boys and girls, 108 homes for the aged, 91 institutions and agencies for child and youth care, 69 Hospitals, homes, and convalescent clinics, and work for seamen in 8 Dioceses in the United States. The Church is unique in Protestantism for its orders of Monks and Nuns; there are 11 orders for men and 16 for women employed in schools, Hospitals, and various forms of Missionary work.

Two major developments in the Episcopal Church, in the past few years, have been subjects of debate: prayer Book revision and the ordination of women to the Priesthood. The General Convention of 1976, gave first approval to a Proposed Book of Common Prayer; this represents the first revision of the American Prayer Book, since 1928, and the first revision to use contemporary language. Much of the Tudor idiom; however, has been retained. The Holy Eucharist, Morning and Evening Prayer, the Burial of the Dead, and all the Collects for the Church Year, appear in contemporary and traditional language, and Archbishop Cranmer's Great Litany, has been somewhat revised, but it appears in its traditional form only. All other services - such as Baptism, Matrimony, Confirmation, Ordination, and the Psalter have been revised and/or re-written in the contemporary idiom. The Proposed Book, is also more comprehensive in such forms, as private confession, complete rites for Ash Wednesday and Holy Week, and the addition of 3 more daily offices between Morning and Evening Prayer. The Eucharistic Lectionary, has also been revised to include, for the first time, regular readings from the Old Testament at Mass. This Proposed Book was passed by an overwhelming majority at the 1979 Convention in Denver.

The issue of women's ordination is extremely complex. Actually, it goes back to the historical doctrine of the un-interrupted line of succession, in the Episcopal from the Apostles to the present - the Apostolic Succession, in which men only have been ordained in the threefold Ministries of Deacon, Priest, and Bishop. The controversy has centered, basically, in 2 opinion groups: those who believe that it is de facto impossible for women

to be Priests and those who believe that the General Convention - even though it is the Supreme Legislative authority of the Episcopal Church - has no right to decide this question of women's ordination and that such a decision can be made only by Catholic consensus or in some kind of Ecumenical Council.

The General Convention of 1970, authorized the ordination of women to the Diaconate, but "Priesting," was rejected at the Convention and again at the 1973 Convention. It passed in 1976, by a narrow margin. But even this did not settle the question. In February of 1978, 3 men were consecrated to the Episcopate of a newly formed Anglican Church of North America. This body, represents scattered groupings of Episcopalians, who feel that they can no longer remain within the Episcopal Church because of the Church's stand on women in the Priesthood, liturgical revision, and divorce and re-marriage. It is estimated, at the moment, that about 100 congregations or parts of congregations, have joined ACNA. Some 30 to 40 Priests, have been defrocked by their Bishop, for having joined the new Church. The great majority; however, though disliking the ordination of women, seem to have no intention of leaving the Episcopal Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury has said, that the schismatic group, is not to be in communion with the other sister Churches of Anglicanism.

The Episcopal Church has an undeserved reputation for exclusiveness and non-cooperation with other Protestant bodies; actually, it has been most cooperative. The Lambeth Quadrilateral, already mentioned, was adopted by the House of Bishops at the General Convention of 1886 and accepted, with modifications, 2 years later. It had 4 points for world unity of the Churches: the Scriptures as the Word of God, the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds, as the rule of faith, the 2 Sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the Episcopate, as the central principle of Church Government. In 1910, the General Convention appointed a commission to arrange for a World Conference on Faith and Order; the first Conference was held at Geneva in 1920, the second in 1927 at Lausanne, the third at Edinburgh in 1937. The Church is active in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., and in the World Council of Churches. An unusually effective inter-communion has been established among the Anglican and Old

Catholic Churches and abroad with the Church of Finland, Church of Sweden, Lusitanian Church of Portugal, the Mar Thomas Syrian Church of Malabar, United Church of North India, United Church of Pakistan, Church of South India, the Spanish Reformed Church, and the Philippine Independent Churches - all of which, may be a first step toward mergers among these bodies.

REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Reformed Episcopal Church was organized in New York City in 1873 by a Clergymen and 20 layman, who formerly had been Priests and members of the Protestant Episcopal Church. A long decade over the ritualism and Ecclesiasticism of the Protestant Episcopal Church, lay behind the separation; the immediate cause of the division, lay in the participation of Bishop George David Cummins of Kentucky, in a Communion Service, held in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City. In the face of criticism and in the conviction that the Catholic nature and mission of the Protestant Episcopal Church were being lost, Bishop Cummins withdrew, to found the new denomination.

Doctrine and organization are similar to that of the parent Church, with several important exceptions. The Reformed Episcopal Church rejects the doctrine, that the Lord's Table is an altar, on which the body and blood of Christ are offered anew to the Father, that the presence of Christ in the Supper, is a presence of the elements of bread and wine and that regeneration is inseparably connected with baptism. It also denies that Christian Ministers are Priests, in any other sense than that in which all other believers are a "royal Priesthood." Clergymen, ordained in other Churches, are not re-ordained on entering the Ministry of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and members are admitted on letters of dismissal from other Protestant denominations.

Worship is liturgical; at the morning services on Sunday, the use of the Prayer Book, revised to remove certain objectionable Sacerdotal elements, is required. At other services, its use is optional, while at any service, extempore prayer may be used by the

Minister.

Parish and Synodical units prevail in the Administration of the Church; the triennial General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church, is not like the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church; however, as its Bishops, do not constitute a separate house.

Foreign Missions are maintained in India, Congo, Uganda, northern Rhodesia, and Germany. In India and Africa, there are 20 primary schools, 2 Hospitals, and 1 orphanage. There is a Seminary in the United States, located at Philadelphia. There is a Seminary in the United States, located at Philadelphia. There are 6,532 members in 64 local Churches.

FRIENDS

With a membership in the United States and Canada of only 123,000 and with 200,000 around the world, the Religious Society of Friends, better known as Quakers, has had a deep and lasting influence upon Western society. Contributions, in both religious and humanitarian spheres, have won the Quakers, Universal respect and admiration, and their amazing History and loyalty to their quiet faith, offer a challenge and inspiration to all the Churches.

Their vicissitudes and victories began with George Fox (1624-91), a British “seeker,” after Spiritual truth and peace. Failing to find such in the Churches of his time, Fox found them in a new, intimate, personal relationship with Christ. He said: “When all my hopes in {Churches and Churchmen} were gone....then I heard a voice which said, “There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition.” This is the Inner Voice, or Inner Light, or Quakerism, based upon the description of John 1:9 - “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” - a voice available to all men, having nothing to do with outward forms or ceremonies, rituals, or creeds. Every man to the Quaker, is a walking Church, every heart is God’s altar and shrine.

Quakerism was revolutionary and it was treated as revolution by the State Church of England. To tell this United State and Church that they were both wrong, that their theology and dogma meant nothing, that men need not attend the “steeple houses” to find God, and that it was equally wrong to pay taxes in support of State Church Clergymen - this was rebellion.

Fox and his early followers went even further. They not only refused to go to Church, but insisted upon freedom of speech, assembly, and Worship; they would not take oaths in court; they refused to go to War; they doffed their hats to no man, King or commoner; they made no distinction among people in sexes or social classes; they condemned slavery and England’s treatment of the prisoner, and the insane. The very names they took - Children of Truth, Children of Light, Friends of Truth, and finally, the Religious Society of Friends - roused ridicule and fierce opposition. Fox, hauled into court, advised one Judge to “tremble at the Word of the Lord” and heard the Judge call him “Quaker.” It was derision, but it was not enough to stop them. Persecution unsheathed its sword.

The Quakers were whipped, jailed, tortured, mutilated, and murdered. Fox spent 6 years in jail; others spent decades, dying there. From 1650 to 1689, more than 3,000 suffered for conscience sake, and 300 to 400 died in prison. Thanks to that persecution, they prospered, founding the society in 1652. When Fox died, there were 50,000 Quakers.

Some were already in America. Ann Austin and Mary Fisher, arrived in Massachusetts from Barbados in 1656, and were promptly accused of being witches, and deported. Two days later, 8 more came from England. Laws were passed hastily to keep them out; the whipping post worked overtime and failed. Four were hanged in Boston. Quakers kept coming into New England, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Rhode Island and Pennsylvania welcomed them from the start. The long horror in the communities that did not welcome them, ended with the passage of the Toleration Act of 1689.

With the Act and Fox's death, a new phase began. Persecution waned and died and so did a great deal of Quaker revolutionary zeal. They settled down as businessmen and farmers, known for their pacifism and honesty and became quite prosperous.

Yet, there were lights in the period of quiet. The meeting organization and community life became well organized. Closely knit family life was emphasized. It was a time of creativeness and mystical inwardness. The period of withdrawal was one in which Quaker philanthropy became widely respected and even admired; their ideas on prison reform began to have effect. Quaker schools increased; as early as 1691, there were 15 Quaker boarding schools in England.

In 1682, William Penn came to Philadelphia. He sat under an elm at Shackamaxon and made a Treaty with the Indians - the "only Treaty never sworn to and never broken."

Treated like human beings, the Indians reacted in kind. If all our cities had been like Philadelphia and all our states like Pennsylvania, our national history would have been vastly different.

But even here, the Holy experiment had to end. Quakers controlled the Pennsylvania Legislature until 1756, when they refused to vote a tax to pay for a war against the Shawnees and the Delawares and consequently stepped down and out of power.

They looked within, rather than without, and began enforcing discipline on their membership so strictly that they became, in fact, a "peculiar people." Members were disowned or dismissed for even minor infractions of the discipline; thousands were cut-off for "marrying out of Meeting." Pleasure, music, and art were taboo; sobriety, punctuality, and honesty were demanded in all directions; dress was painfully plain, and speech was Biblical. They were different and dour; they gained few new converts, and lost many old members.

Some few “fighting Quakers” went to battle in the American Revolution, but they were few; most of them remained Pacifists. They worked quietly for peace, popular education, temperance, democracy, and against slavery. In 1688, the Friends of Germantown, Pennsylvania, said that slavery violated the Golden Rule and encouraged adultery; they protested the “traffic in the bodies of men” and called it unlawful. Their first attitude of tolerance changed slowly to one of outright opposition; it took nearly a Century for the Quakers to rid their society of slavery, but they did it years in advance of any other religious body in America. Sellers or purchasers of slaves were forbidden membership in the society by the close of the eighteenth Century. Persistently, all across the years, the Quakers dropped their seeds of anti-slavery agitation into the body politic. First, John Woolman and then the poet, Wittier, wielded tremendous influence in the fight; and once the Civil War was over, they threw their strength into such organizations as the Freedman’s Aid Society. Ever since, they have been active in education and legislative protection for blacks.

Divisions arose within their ranks during these years; the Hicksites separated in 1827, the Wilburites in 1845; and the Primitives, (a small group, now extinct) in 1861. Of these separations, the one led by Elias Hicks, was of primary concern. Hicks was a rural Long Island Quaker, whose liberal and rational theological views, brought him into conflict with those of more Orthodox and Evangelical persuasion. The division came in 1827; basically, while it had personal and sociological emphasis, the split was due to the widespread nineteenth-Century conflict between liberalism and rationalism on the one hand, and an Orthodoxy, based on Methodist ideas of Evangelism and Salvation, on the other. Two-thirds of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting withdrew with the Hicksites, (a nickname never officially adopted by any Quaker group) and similar divisions followed in New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Baltimore yearly meetings. A second series of separations resulted from the Wesleyan Methodist influence, led by Joseph John Gurney and John Wilbur (see “Religious Society of Friends {Conservative}” below).

The twentieth Century thus far, has been a Century of Quaker unity and outreach. A Five Years Meeting (now the Friend’s United Meeting), was organized in 1902, merging

a large portion of the Pastoral yearly meetings. The 2 Philadelphia meetings, separated since 1827, were united in 1955. In the same year, the 2 New Yearly Meetings were merged, and the 3 Canada Yearly Meetings came together to form one body. In 1968, 2 Baltimore Yearly Meetings reunited. Southeastern Meeting, newly founded, affiliated with Friends United Meeting and Friends General Conference united in 1972.

In 1917, before the guns of World War I had stopped firing, Friends from all branches of the Society, were at work in the American Friends Service Committee, in relief and reconstruction efforts abroad. The A.F.S.C., remains today, one of the most effective of such agencies in the world. Its volunteers erected demountable houses, staffed hospitals, plowed fields, reared domestic animals, and drove ambulances. Famine-relief and child feeding programs were instituted in Serbia, Poland, Austria, Russia, and Germany; at one time the Friends were feeding more than 1,000,000 German children everyday; Greek refugees, earthquake victims in Japan, needy miners' families in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky were helped. Thousands would have perished, but for the A.F.S.C.

Quakers drove ambulances and served in the Medical Corps of both World Wars, and some were in combat; probably more young Quakers volunteered or accepted Military Service in these conflicts than resisted on grounds of religious principle. They also worked to relieve our displaced Japanese-Americans, and they cooperated with the Brethren and Mennonites in locating our conscientious objectors in work of real importance on farms, in reformatories, hospitals, and insane asylums. They were in Spain soon after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and later fed the child victims in Spain, Southern France, Italy, Austria, Holland, North Africa, and Finland. In one year, 1945, they sent 282 tons of clothes, shoes, bedding, and soap to Europe and still more to China and India. Counting gifts, both of cash and materials, the income of the A.F.S.C., is apt to exceed \$7,500,000 annually. At home and abroad, summer camps of young volunteers have inspired an incalculable goodwill among nations and minority groups within nations.

Nor have they been satisfied with work merely in relief. Peace Conferences have been a prominent part of their work, conferences ranging from local to international, and covering all age groups. Lake Mohonk in New York was founded by a Friend. Scores of youth conferences and camps at home and in foreign fields testify to their devotion to the way of Christ. It is little wonder that they are known as a “peace Church.”

Worship and business in the society are conducted in monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings. The monthly meeting is the basic unit, made up of one or more meetings in a neighborhood. It convenes each week for Worship and once a month for business. It keeps records of membership, births, deaths, and marriages; appoints committees; considers queries on Spiritual welfare; and transacts all business of the group. Monthly meetings in a district, join 4 times a year in the quarterly meeting to stimulate Spiritual life and to pass on whatever business they feel should be brought to the attention of the yearly meeting. The yearly meeting corresponds to a Diocese in an Episcopal system; there are 27 of them in the United States and Canada. They are in touch with Friends all over the World and have standing committees on such subjects as publications, education, the social order, missions, peace, charities, and national legislation; they allocate trust-fund incomes, and generally supervise the work of the society.

Group decisions await the “sense of the meeting.” Lacking any unity of opinion, the meeting may have a “quiet time” for a few minutes until unity is found, or it may postpone consideration of the matter or refer to a committee for study. Minorities are not outvoted but, convinced. Every man, woman, and child is free to speak in any meeting; delegates, are appointed at quarterly and yearly meetings to insure adequate representation, but they enjoy no unusual position or prerogatives. Women have as much power as men and hold a position of absolute equality in Quaker polity.

There are, contrary to popular misunderstanding, Church officers - Elders and Ministers - among the Quakers; they are chosen for recognized ability in Spiritual leadership, and they; too, stand on equal footing with the rest of the membership. All members are Ministers to the Quaker. A few full-time workers are paid a modest salary,

and “recorded” Ministers, serving as Pastors, in those meetings having programmed Worship also receive salaries (about 1,000 meetings have no paid Pastors.)

Quaker worship is of 2 kinds: programmed and unprogrammed. The 2; however, are not always distinct. The former, more nearly, resembles a simple Protestant service, but there are no rites or outward Sacraments. While believing in Spiritual Communion, partaking of the elements, is thought unnecessary. In the unprogrammed meetings, there is no choir, collection, singing, or pulpit; the service is devoted to quiet meditation, prayer, and Communion. Any vocal contributions are spontaneous. There is no uniform practice; some of the, so-called Churches, greatly prefer to be called Meetings.

In business meetings, there is often frank inquiry into the conduct of business, treatment of others, use of narcotics or intoxicants, reading habits, and recreation. No true Quaker gambles, plays the stock market, bets, owns racehorses, or engages in raffles, lotteries, or the liquor business. Some follow conservative religious or theological patterns, and others are liberal; all are guided by the Inner Light.

The Inner Light is highly important in Quaker belief. Grace, Power from God, to help man resist evil, is to Quakers - Universal among all men. They seek, not Holiness, but Perfection - a higher, more Spiritual standard of life for both society, and the individual - and they believe that the truth is unfolding and continuing. They place high evaluation on the Bible, but try to rely on individual, fresh guidance from the Spirit of God, which produced the Bible, rather than to follow only what has been revealed to others. Some modern groups accept the Bible as the final authority in all religious matter Rufus Jones says:

“They believe supremely in the nearness of God to the human soul; in direct intercourse and immediate Communion; in mystical experience in a firsthand discovery of God....It means and involves a sensitiveness to the wider Spiritual life above us, around us, and within us; a dedication to duty; a passion for truth and an appreciation of goodness; an eagerness to let love and the Grace of God

come freely through one's own life; a reverence for the will of God wherever it is revealed in past or present; and a high faith - that Christ is a living presence and a life-giving energy - always within reach of the receptive soul.

No Quaker body has ever departed from the Declaration to Charles II, in 1661: "We utterly deny all outward Wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretense whatever....The Spirit of Christ, which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight, and War against any man with outward weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ, nor the Kingdoms of this World." However, there is great tolerance toward individual variations in this position. In World War II, formal Quaker positions favored, applying for conscientious objector status, either as non-combatants within the Military or in alternate service; during the Vietnam War, corporate positions shifted toward encouraging men to practice draft refusal and go to jail, if necessary. In both cases, a wide variety of positions was seen as acceptable; the emphasis was on following individual conscience. Quakers who enter Military Service are no longer disowned from membership, but many leave the society and join a Church that does not profess Pacifism. Conversely, Pacifists brought up in other traditions, tend to join the Society of Friends in young adulthood.

Marriage is not necessarily a ceremony to be performed by a Minister; in cases where the traditional Quaker marriage is observed, the bride and groom simply stand before a meeting and make mutual vows of love and faithfulness and are thereby married. In certain sections of the country, the Pastor of the meeting, officiates.

The Friends have never been great proselytizers; they depend almost entirely upon birthright membership and membership by "convincement." In many of their bodies, though not in all of them, every child born of Quaker parents, is declared a member of the society. This has resulted in a large number of nominal, or paper, members who contribute little; efforts are being made to correct this custom, by establishing a junior or associate membership for children. This reliance upon birthright membership has

seriously depleted their numbers. There are 30 yearly meetings in America, including 1 in Canada, 1 in Cuba, 1 in Jamaica, and a small group in Mexico. There are also 20 yearly meetings overseas.

If the Friends were ever “exclusive,” they are not now; a world outreach has been evident and growing in recent years. The Friend’s United Meeting and the Friend’s General Conference are members of the World Council of Churches; with the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, it also belongs to the National Council of Churches. A Friend’s World Committee for Consultation, organized at Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, following the Second World Conference of Friends in 1937, functions as an agent, or Clearinghouse, for the interchange of Quaker aspirations and experiences by way of Regional, National, and International inter-visitation, a person-to-person consultation, conferences, correspondence and a variety of publications. The Committee has Headquarters in Birmingham, England, and offices in Philadelphia; Plainfield; Indiana; and Edinburgh, Scotland. The American section has helped some 50 small Friends groups in the United States to monthly meeting status. The F.W.C.C., is a Non-Governmental Organization, related to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations through cooperation with the A.F.S.C, it helps operate a program at the U.N., headquarters to forward World Peace and human brotherhood. Something of a world brotherhood, or “Franciscan Third Order,” has been set up in the organization of the Wider Quaker Fellowship, in which non-Quakers, in sympathy with the Quaker Spirit and program, may participate in the work of the Friends without coming into full Quaker membership. This is not so much an organization, as it is “a fellowship of kindred minds - a way of life, a contagion of Spirit;” it has 4,200 members, 360 of whom live abroad.

An Evangelical Friends Alliance was formed in 1965, in the interests of Evangelical emphasis and denominational unity; it seeks to bring together, those interested in an Evangelical renewal within Christianity and renewal of interest in the Evangelical emphasis of seventeenth-Century Quakerism, and includes the Association of Evangelical Friends. Theology here is conservative; local Pastors are elected. There are 257 Churches and 25,531 members.

A further movement toward unity is found in the Religious Society of Friends (Unaffiliated Meetings), which also stresses elements and teachings of early Friends movements. This group is unique in its wide variety and experimentation in Worship and polity; it is not associated with the larger bodies in the society. There are 87 Churches with 5,696 members.

FRIENDS GENERAL CONFERENCE

This is a national organization of yearly meetings (Baltimore, Lake Erie, South Central, Canada, New England, Illinois, Indiana, South Eastern, New York, and Philadelphia). It was established in 1968, as a Sunday School Conference and matured in 1900, as a General Conference for fellowship across Yearly Meeting boundaries as an instrument for deepening the Spiritual and social testimonies of the Society of Friends. One of its main features is an Annual Conference; in 1978, it had 1,500 members, about one-third of whom, were children and young people. There are 22,000 families and 375 meetings in the General Conference, a fraction of whom, also belong to the Friends United Meeting (described below); this is explained by the dual membership in Canada, New York, and New England in the General Conference and the Friends United Meeting.

FRIENDS UNITED MEETING (FIVE YEARS MEETING)

With 67,362 members and 526 Churches in 1976, this is the largest single Quaker body in the United States. (The largest yearly meetings in the World are the East Africa, with 35,000 members and London, with 19,998). Organized in 1902, it brought together, in one cooperative relationship, 12 Yearly Meetings and 3 Yearly Meetings abroad - East Africa, Cuba, and Jamaica - with a somewhat different status. They work together in many departments - such as: Missionary Service and the production of Sunday School materials - and while each Yearly Meeting in the body is autonomous, they come together for Spiritual stimulation, business, and Conference every 3 years.

The Ministries of the “FUM” are carried forward in the interim between Triennial Sessions by 3 Planning Commissions and the General Board, which convene semi-annually. Affirming the importance of personal religious experience that goes beyond theory or speculation, it embodies a creative balance of central Quaker accents, Evangelism, and social concern, Mission and service, Worship, and Ministry. Friends of various persuasions work together within the FUM spectrum.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (CONSERVATIVE)

Known also as Wilburites, this group resulted from a second division. Joseph John Gurney, a British Evangelical Quaker, came to America in the mid 1800’s and began preaching and teaching the final authority of the Bible, and acceptance of the doctrines of the atonement, justification, and sanctification. John Wilbur, a Rhode Island Conservative Friend, while not denouncing the authority of the Bible and its teachings, felt that Gurney’s preaching substituted a Creed for the immediate revelation of the Divine Spirit available to man. Both men had large followings; the outcome was separation in Kansas, Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, New England, North Carolina, and Canada, between 1845 and 1904.

The Conservative pattern, generally, was one “set forth by the Society in the beginning,” calling for a silent waiting before God in Quaker Meetings, in expectation that His Spirit would instruct and move them to speak or pray without program or ritual. In New England in 1945, and in Canada in 1955, differences were resolved between these Conservatives, and they were reunited. There are still Conservative Yearly Meetings in Iowa, Ohio, and North Carolina; they cooperate with other Friends groups in various areas of service and in intervisitation. There are 27 Monthly Meetings and 1,728 members.

JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES

The people called Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that they have in their movement, the

true realization of the “one faith” mentioned by the Apostle Paul in Eph. 4:5. Their certainty of this and their zeal in proclaiming it have made them, at least in point of public interest, an outstanding religious phenomenon in modern America.

They were not known as Jehovah’s Witnesses until 1931. Up to that time, they had been called Millennial Dawnists, International Bible Students, and earlier, Russellites, after the man who brought about their first incorporation in 1884. Pastor Charles Taze Russell, their first President, is acknowledged not as founder (there is no “human founder”), but as general organizer; Judge Rutherford, Russell’s successor, claimed that the Witnesses had been on earth as an organization for more than 5,000 years and cited Isaiah 43:10-12; Hebrew 11; and John 18:37, to prove it.

Russell was deeply influenced by belief in Christ’s second coming; he studied the Bible avidly and attracted huge crowds to hear him expound it. The first formal group that he organized was Pittsburgh, in 1872; his Books, of which 13,000,000 are said to have been circulated, had great influence on the movement. Russell was President; to assist him, a Board of Directors was elected by vote of all members subscribing \$10.00 or more to the support of the work (a practice discontinued in 1944).

Under Russell’s direction, Headquarters were moved to Brooklyn in 1909, and another corporation was formed under the laws of the State of New York. In 1956, the name was changed to the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. When Pastor Russell died in 1916, Joseph F. Rutherford was made President. Known widely as Judge Rutherford, he had been a Missouri lawyer, who occasionally sat as a Circuit Court Judge. He wrote tirelessly; his Books, pamphlets, and tracts supplanted those of Russell; and his neglect of some aspects of the teaching of Russell brought dissension.

Administration of the group underwent changes in the days of Rutherford’s Presidency; the governing body of the Witnesses today is in the hands of older and more “Spiritually Qualified” men, who base their judgments upon the authority of the Scriptures. This is considered, not a governing hierarchy by the Witnesses, but a true

imitation of early Apostolic Christian Organization. Under this governing system, 3 corporations eventually came to serve the society: the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, and the International Bible Students Association of England. Judge Rutherford, as President, was a moving power in all of them.

Under the direction of these leaders at Headquarters, local congregations of Witnesses (they are always called congregations and never Churches), are arranged into circuits with a traveling Minister visiting the congregations, spending a week with each. Approximately 22 congregations are included in each circuit. Circuits are grouped into districts, of which there are 38 in the United States. District and circuit organizations are now found in 216 countries and islands across the world.

Meeting in Kingdom Halls and not in Churches, they witness and “publish” their faith, not only in testimony in their halls, but in a remarkably comprehensive Missionary effort. They do not believe in any separation into Clergy or laity, for the simple reason, that “Christ Jesus did not make such a separation.” They never use titles, such as “Reverend,” or “Rabbi,” or “Father”; this they feel, is not in accordance with the Words of Jesus in Matthew 23:6-10. All of them give generously of their time, in proclaiming their faith in teaching in private homes. Called Publishers of the Kingdom, they devote their time regularly in Kingdom work, preaching only from the Bible. Pioneers are required to give at least 96 hours per month; special pioneers and Missionaries devote a minimum of 140 hours per month and are sent to isolated areas and foreign lands, where new congregations can be formed. All pioneers provide for their own support, but the Society gives a small allowance to the special pioneers in view of their special needs. The Headquarters staff, including the President of the Society, are housed at the Bethel Home in Brooklyn, engage primarily in editorial and printing work, and receive an allowance of \$20.00 a month, in addition to room and board. The literature they write, print, and distribute is of almost astronomical proportions. The official journal, “The Watchtower,” has a circulation of 9,850,000; more than 1,000,000,000 Bibles, Books, and Booklets have been distributed since 1920; Bibles, Books, Booklets, and Leaflets are available in

more than 176 languages. More than 2,220,000 Witnesses are active in this work throughout the world.

In this literature (all of which is circulated without an author's by-line or signature) is contained, the teaching of the Society. It all rests firmly upon the idea of the theocracy, or rule of God. The world in the beginning, according to the Witnesses, was under the theocratic rule of the Almighty; all then was "happiness, peace, and blessedness." But Satan rebelled and became the ruler of the world, and from that moment on mankind, has followed his evil leading. Then came Jesus, "the beginning of the Creation by God," as the Prophets had predicted, to end Satan's rule; Jesus' rule began in 1914. In 1918, Christ "came to the Temple of Jehovah"; and in 1919, when Rutherford reorganized the movement, shattered by the War, Jesus, enthroned in the Temple, began illuminating the Prophecies and sending out his followers to preach.

God, in Witness thinking, will take vengeance upon wicked man in our times; at the same time, He is now showing His great love, by "gathering out" multitudes of people of goodwill, whom He will give life in His New World, which is to come after the imminent Battle of Armageddon is fought. This is to be a Universal battle; Christ will lead the Army of the Righteous, composed of the "Host of Heaven, the Holy Angels," and will completely annihilate the Army of Satan. The Righteous of the Earth, will watch this Battle, but will not participate. After the Battle, a great crowd of people will remain on the Earth; these will be believers in God and will be His Servants. Those who have proved their integrity, under tests in this Old World, will multiply and populate the New Earth with righteous people. A Resurrection will also take place and will be an additional means of filling the cleansed Earth with better inhabitants. After the Holocaust, "righteous Princes," are to rule the Earth under Christ, as "King of the Great Theocracy." One special group - the 144,000 Christians, mentioned in Revelation 7 and 14 - will become the "Bride of Christ" and rule with Him in Heaven.

Judge Rutherford said often, that "millions now living will never die" - which meant that Armageddon was close and that the Kingdom was at hand. He died in 1942, leaving

guidance of the movement in the hands of the present President, Nathan H. Knorr; and Armageddon had not yet been fought. But the certainty of its imminence persists.

All this is based upon the Bible; Witnesses quote elaborately from the Scriptures, using it to verify their beliefs. All other teachings and interpretations are to them, suspect and unreliable. They oppose and attack the teachings of the various Churches, as false and unscriptural, insisting as they do, that they are attacking or denouncing, not Churches or Church members as such, but only doctrines and interpretations of Scripture, that they consider false. They have been especially active in opposing what they consider to be 3 allies of Satan: the false teaching of the Churches, the tyranny of human governments, and the oppressions of business. This “triple alliance” of Ecclesiastical, Political, and Commercial Powers, has misled and all but destroyed humanity, the Witnesses claim, and must be destroyed at Armageddon before the New World can be born. They refuse, for instance, to salute the flag or to bear arms in War or to participate in the affairs of Government, not because of any Pacifist convictions, but because they consider these to be expressions of Satan’s power over men. This attitude has brought them into conflict with Law-Enforcing Agencies; and they have endured jailing’s, whippings, assault by mobs, even stoning’s and tar-and-featherings, and the burning of their homes. This they have accepted in a very submissive Spirit; their position is, that they will obey the laws of men when those laws are not in conflict with the laws of God; their guide is Acts 5:29.

The ranks of active “publishers” across the world have grown to 2,220,000, of which approximately 554,000, are in the United States. There are 7,400 congregations in the United States and 41,000, throughout the world. Branch offices are maintained in 95 countries and work is reported in 216 lands. There are 6,200, who have been trained as foreign Missionaries. The Bible School of Gilead, was established at South Lansing, New York, in 1943, to train their Missionaries and since 1961, has operated at International Headquarters at 124 Columbia Heights, in Brooklyn. Since 1959, the Society has operated in all the major countries of the world, a Kingdom Ministry School, designed to provide a 2-week training course for all congregation Elders.

The Jehovah Witnesses deny the physical Resurrection of Christ.

“Whether the body was dissolved into gases or whether it was still preserved somewhere....no one knows; nor is such knowledge necessary.” Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. II, pp. 129, 130.

But Jesus said, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see; for a Spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have” (Luke 24:39).

“Reach hither thy finger,” He said to Thomas, “and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27).

Nothing further need be said. There is no suggestion of anything, but a bodily Resurrection. The tomb was empty. If we reject the physical Resurrection of Christ, we will have to destroy the whole of the New Testament. If we insist that it was Spirit and not the body that rose, then there was no Resurrection, for the Spirit does not die.

The Jehovah Witnesses believe in soul sleep and teach that the grave is all the Hell there is.

“Hell is the grave” - Watchtower. “Those who die, are never again conscious” - The Harp of God, p. 45.

“Man does not have a soul, separate, and distinct from his body” - Watchtower.

But Ecclesiastes 12:7 and Acts 2:31, says, he has. Our Lord’s body, went to one place, His soul, to another. So, the grave to which the body goes, is not Hades, Hell, or Paradise, to which the soul goes.

Luke 16:19-31, forever settles the question of soul sleep. Hence, they call it a parable and then invent a symbolic interpretation to defend their position, for all the characters are alive and conscious after death. I dare them to take it as it reads. And remember, it

is not Gehenna, the final Hell.

The word, "Hell" (Gehenna) is used twelve times in the New Testament, and in every instance but one, it is used by Jesus Christ, Himself. So, there is a Hell, in spite of what Jehovah's Witnesses say, and it is pictured as a lake of fire.

Practically all their quotations are from the Old Testament. For instance, they quote the opinion of the writer of Ecclesiastes, who wrote only of what he saw, "under the Sun." Everything above the sun, was beyond his knowledge. Hence, they use Ecclesiastes 3:19-20, which speaks of the body only, but they ignore the twenty-first verse, which refers to the soul.

Then they quote, Ecclesiastes 9:10, as if it were the Word of God. These reasonings of man are set down by inspiration, just as the false words of Satan are. But we must always distinguish between man's opinion and "Thus saith the Lord."

Then, too, they quote Psalm 6:5. But who among the unsaved would remember God or give Him thanks? And as for the righteous, how can they render God the service they rendered on Earth, when in the body? The word is not "remember," but "memorial" or service.

All such passages as Revelation 14:10-11 and Revelation 20:10, they must interpret symbolically; they dare not take them as they read, and so they explain them as, "the perpetual captivity of death." Nonsense. How do they know that their explanation is the right one? They don't, but they have no choice, for such verses contradict everything they teach.

The Bible tells us that those who have died are alive and conscious; the dead do not sleep.

"So great a crowd of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1). Who are they? Why, they are the heroes

of faith in Chapter eleven. Are they asleep, then? Not if they are watching us as we run the Christian race. Not if they are witnesses.

Abraham, Samuel, Moses, and the martyrs of Revelation were all alive, active, and conscious after death.

Paul, in II Corinthians 5:8, says: "Absent from the body, present with the Lord," and since our Lord is alive and conscious, we, too, will be.

In Philippians 1:23, he says: "...to depart, and to be with Christ...is far better." Is it better to depart and be unconscious? No, it is better to be with Him, for we will be as He is.

In Luke 23:43, Jesus said: "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise." How would the thief know he was in Paradise with Christ if he were unconscious? Jehovah's Witnesses dare not take this statement as it reads. They are compelled to change the punctuation and explain it away.

"Blessed (Happy) are the dead" (Rev. 14:13). How can they be happy - or miserable - if they are unconscious, or asleep? One has to be awake and conscious to experience happiness.

In Isaiah 14:9-11, the dead are moved, stirred up - they speak. How can they be unconscious; how can they be asleep?

Revelation 6:9-12, states that the dead cry with loud voices. Then they must be awake. Certainly, they are not unconscious. Abraham rejoiced and was glad (John 8:56).

"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," said Jesus, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32). He is the God of those who are alive and know it.

LUTHERANS

Lutheran was a nickname fastened upon the followers of Martin Luther by their enemies in the days of the Protestant Reformation; today it stands for something far more comprehensive. "It is clear," said Abdel R. Wentzel, "that 'Lutheran' is a very inadequate name to give to a movement that is not limited to a person or an era, but is as ecumenical and abiding as Christianity itself." Luther's teachings of justification by faith and of the Universal Priesthood of believers, might be called the cornerstone of Protestantism.

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The story of Luther's rebellion against the Roman Catholic Church is well-known History. His position was, briefly, that the Roman Catholic Church and Papacy had no divine right in things Spiritual; that the Scriptures, and not the Roman Catholic Priest or Church, had final authority over conscience. "Whatever is not against Scripture is for Scripture," said Luther, "and Scripture is for it." Men were forgiven and absolved of their sins, he believed, not by good works or by imposition of Church rite - and especially not through the purchase of indulgences offered for sale by the Roman Catholic Church - but by man's Holy Spirit - empowered action in turning from sin, directly to God. Justification came through faith and not through ceremony, and faith was not subscription to the dictates of the Church, but "by the heart's utter trust in Christ." "The just shall live by faith," was the beginning and the end of his thought. He held the individual conscience to be responsible to God alone; he also held that the Bible was the clear, perfect, inspired, and authoritative Word of God and guide of man. God, conscience and the Book - on these, was Lutheranism founded.

In 1529, Luther wrote his Longer and Shorter catechisms. A year later, a statement of faith, known as the Augsburg Confession, was authorized by his scholarly associate, Philip Melanchthon; 1537 brought the Smalcald Articles of Faith written by Luther, Melanchthon, and other German reformers. In 1577, the Formula of Concord, was drawn up. These documents, in explanation of Luther's ideology and theology, form the doctrinal basis of Lutheranism.

The Reformation resulted, not in a United Protestantism, but in a Protestantism with two branches: Evangelical Lutheranism, with Luther and Melanchthon as leaders; and the Reformed Church, or branch, led by John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, and John Knox. Evangelical Lutheranism spread from its birthplace in Germany to Poland, Russia, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, France, and Holland; it became, in time, the State Church of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Estonia, and Latvia. It was mainly from Germany and Scandinavia that Lutheranism came to the United States.

A Lutheran Christmas service was held at Hudson's Bay in 1619; the first European Lutherans, to come here and stay permanently, arrived on Manhattan Island from Holland in 1623. They had a congregation, Worshipping in New Amsterdam in 1649, but they did not enjoy full freedom in their Worship until the English took over control of "New York" in 1664. The first Independent Colony of Lutherans was established by Swedes along the Delaware at Fort Christiana in the Colony of New Sweden in 1638.

The New York Lutherans were largely Germans. German exiles from Salzburg also settled in Georgia, where in 1736, they built the first orphanage in America. Lutherans from Wurttemberg settled in South Carolina. The Great Influx, however, came to Pennsylvania, where by the middle of the eighteenth Century, there were 30,000 Lutherans, four-fifths of them, being German and one-fifty, Swedes. From Philadelphia, they swept over into New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina.

Their first Churches were small, often without Pastors; and because only a minority of the immigrants joined the Church, they were poor Churches. The situation was relieved with the coming of Henry Melchour Muhlenberg, from the University of Halle, to effect the first real Organization of American Lutherans; in 1748, he organized Pastors and congregations in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Maryland into what came to be called the Ministerium of Pennsylvania; it was the first of many Lutheran synods in America. Other synods followed slowly; New York in 1786, North Carolina in 1803, Maryland in 1820, and Ohio in 1836. Each synod adjusted itself to its peculiar conditions

of language, national background, previous Ecclesiastical relationship with Lutheran authorities abroad, and geographical location. The need for even further organization, aggravated by the ever-increasing emigration of Lutherans from Europe, resulted in the formation of the General Synod in 1820; with that, the last real bonds with European Lutheranism began to break, and American Lutheranism was increasingly on its own.

The General Synod was obliged to extend its efforts farther and farther west, as German, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic, and Finnish Lutherans came pouring into the new country. The Missouri Synod was formed in 1847. From 1850 to 1860, 1,000,000 Germans arrived, and the majority of them were Lutherans; the German Iowa Synod was organized in 1854, and in the same year the Norwegian Lutheran Church was established. The Augustana Synod was created in 1860, to care for the Swedes in the New West. By 1870, the Lutherans had the fourth largest Protestant group in the country, with approximately 400,000 members.

The Civil War brought the first serious break in the Lutheran ranks with the Organization of the United Synod of the South in 1863, 3 years later, a number of other synods, led by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, withdrew from the General Synod to form the General Council. To increase the complexity, Lutheran immigrants arrived in larger and larger numbers; from 1870 to 1910, approximately 1,750,000 came from Sweden, Norway, and Denmark; and in those years, the Lutheran Churches, Colleges, Seminaries, and Publications, were established from coast to coast.

Since 1910, there has been an almost constant effort toward the unification of Lutheran Churches and agencies. Three of the large Norwegian bodies united in 1917, in the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America; some of the Midwest German Synods merged in the Joint Synod of Wisconsin in 1918; the Synods of Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo, merged in the American Lutheran Church in 1930. The General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod of the South merged into the United Lutheran Church in 1918, and no less than 8 Lutheran Churches were included in mergers in 1960-62. In addition to these, the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., (consisting of the American Lutheran

Church, the Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches) operates through 5 divisions (Educational Services, Mission and Welfare Services, Public Relations, Service to Military Personnel, and Theological Studies). Perhaps the most cooperative effort in the history of American Lutheranism is found in Lutheran World Action, through which over \$300,000,000 in food and cash (inclusive of U.S. Government-Donated Commodities) have been distributed across the world.

In spite of their organizational division, there is real unity among American Lutherans; it is a unity based more upon faith than upon organization. All Lutheran Churches represent a single type of Protestant Christianity. Their faith is built upon Luther's principles of justification, by faith alone, in Jesus Christ; it centers in the Gospel for fallen men. The Bible is the inspired Word of God and the Infallible Rule and Standard of Faith and Practice. Lutherans confess their faith through the 3 General Creeds of Christendom, the Apostles,' the Nicene, and the Athanasian, which they believe to be in Accordance with the Scriptures. They also believe that the Unaltered Augsburg Confession is a correct exposition of the Faith and Doctrine of Evangelical Lutheranism. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the 2 Catechisms of Luther, the Smalcald Articles, and the Formula of Concord, are held to be Faithful Interpretations of Evangelical Lutheranism and of the Bible.

The 2 Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are not merely Signs or Memorials to the Lutheran, but Channels, through which, God bestows His forgiving and empowering Grace upon men. The Body and Blood of Christ are believed to be present "in, with, and under" the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper and are received Sacramentally and Supernaturally. Consubstantiation, transubstantiation, and impanation, are rejected. Infants are baptized, and baptized persons are believed to receive the Gift of Regeneration from the Holy Ghost.

The congregation is usually administered between its annual meetings by a Church Council, consisting of the Pastor and a number of elected lay officers, some of whom are

called, Elders, Dome Deacons, and some Trustees. There is a growing tendency to call all lay officials, Deacons. Pastors are elected and called by the voting members of the congregation, but a congregation itself may never depose a Pastor from the Ministry. As a rule, Ministers are ordained at the annual meetings of the synods; they are practically all trained in college and seminary.

Congregations are united in synods; these are composed of the Pastors and lay representatives elected by the congregations and have only such authority as is granted by the Synod Constitution. In some other instances, there are territorial districts or conferences instead of a synod, operating in the same manner and under the same restrictions; some of these may Legislate, while others are for advisory or consultative purposes only.

Synods (conferences or districts) are united in a general body, that may be National or even International and is called variously "Church," "Synod," or "Conference." Some of these General Bodies are Legislative in nature, some Consultative; they supervise the work in Worship, Education, Publications, Charity, and Missions. Congregations have business meetings, at least annually; Synods, Districts, and Conferences hold yearly Conventions; the General Bodies meet annually or biennially.

Worship is liturgical, centering on the Altar. "No sect in Western Christendom outside the Church of Rome," said the late Lutheran Archbishop, Nathan Soderblom of Sweden, "has accentuated in its Doctrine, the Real Presence and the mysterious Communion of the Sacrament, as has our Evangelical Lutheran Sect, although our faith repudiates any quasi-rational magical explanation of the Virtue of the Sacrament."

Non-Lutherans are often critical of the divisions among American Lutherans, but actually they are not as divided as they seem. At one time, there were 150 Lutheran bodies in this country; Consolidation, Unification, and Federation have now reduced the number to 12. Six of the bodies in the United States account for about 95 percent of all Lutherans of North America. With the old barriers of speech and nationality disappearing,

the tendency toward Union, becomes constantly stronger. Even on the International front, United efforts are noticeable; groups of lay and Ministerial Delegates from major Lutheran Churches in 22 countries formed a Lutheran World Federation in 1947, for the purposes of relief and rehabilitation among Lutherans on a global scale.

Historically, the Lutherans have shown a tendency to remain apart from the rest of Protestantism. In the United States, they are identified with Churches, founded by immigrant groups, deeply conscious of their National and Linguistic origins, conservative, confessional, nonrevivalistic, and suspicious of anything, that might tend to modify their Old World faith and traditions. These traits seem to be vanishing; however, as the older membership passes and an English-speaking generation takes over. The mother tongues of Lutheranism are still used occasionally, but English is predominant.

The large Lutheran Church in America is a constituent member of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Four bodies - the United Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the American Evangelical Lutheran Church - participated in the Organization of the World Council of Churches. A fifth body, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, affiliated with the World Council, in 1957. Lutheran groups participating in Inter-denominational Organizations, have always insisted upon the operation of 2 principles within those Organizations: the Evangelical Principle that the Churches in the Association, should be those confessing the Deity and Saviorhood of Jesus Christ. And the Representative Principle that the Governing and Operating Units of the Organizations should be made up of Officially Chosen Representatives of the Churches.

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

At a constituting Convention held April 22-24, 1960, in Minneapolis, 3 major Lutheran Churches were formally merged into the body, now known as the American Lutheran Church. They were the American Lutheran Church, which had a German background and which began with the formation of the Ohio Synod in 1818, the Evangelical Lutheran

Church of Norwegian Heritage, which at the time of the merger, was the third largest Lutheran Church in America, and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, founded in 1896, by Danish emigrants. A fourth body, the Lutheran Free Church of Norwegian background, joined these 3, on February 1, 1963, giving the new American Lutheran Church an inclusive membership of 2,499,373 in 5,239 Churches. The Evangelical Church of Canada was founded by this group in 1967. Present membership of all, stands at 2,390,076 in 4,836 congregations.

This was a merger across ethnic lines, and the problems involved were complex in polity and doctrine, but they were successfully resolved. In Government, the highest Constitutional Authority is vested in a General Convention that meets every 2 years and has approximately 1,000 Delegates (500 lay, 500 Clergy), elected from the 18 Districts into which the Church is geographically divided. There are 3 National Officers - a General President, Vice-President, and General Secretary. A Church Council, composed of the General Officers and a lay and Clergy Representative from each District, together with the District Presidents, 2 Representatives, from the Board of Trustees and 2 Youths, elected by the Lutheran League, serving in advisory capacity, meets as the Interim Body between General Conventions and makes recommendations to the General Convention on all matters directed to it by the Districts and the Boards and Standing Committees of the Church. Five Divisions are maintained as Churchwide Agencies, responsible for Missions in behalf of or directly in service to member congregations. The Division of Life and Missions in the Congregation is to develop resources for and provide services to the congregations. The Division of Service and Missions in America is to implement the Mission of the Church within the United States. The Division for World Missions and Inter-Church Cooperation is responsible for the Missions of the Church abroad. These 3 Divisions are the responsibility of 21-person Boards with 18 elected by the Districts and 3 members, elected by the Church Council. The other 2 divisions are the Division for Theological Education and Ministry and the Division for College and University Services, each directed by a Board of 9 members, elected by the General Convention.

There are 3 Service Boards established to provide specific services. The Board of Trustees has responsibility for the General Management of business affairs, financial controls, and property transactions. The Board of Pensions provides for retirement income and major medical/dental coverage for the Clergy and eligible laity. The Board of Publications is a Non-budgetary Production and Distribution Unit. Each of its Service Boards is composed of 9 members elected by the General Convention.

There are 3 Administrative Offices maintained as Agencies responsible to the General President. The Office of Communications and Mission Support is to interpret the Mission of the Church and to provide support for that Mission. The Office of Research and Analysis is organized to keep the Church informed regarding the effects of changes in Society and to coordinate research efforts. The Office of Support to Ministry is to provide to the various Ministries of the Church and to provide staff services to the Council of Presidents. The offices have Standing Committees to which they relate.

Districts and National Committees on Appeals and Adjudication exercise Judicial Authority for the Church.

The Confessions of Faith of this Church accepts the Bible as divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant; the 3 ancient Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian); the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; Luther's Larger and Shorter Catechisms; the Book of Concord of 1580; the Apology; the Smalcald Articles, and the Formula of Concord.

In the field of Education, there are 3 Theological Seminaries, 11 senior colleges, 1 junior college, and 1 academy. In the area of Social Services, there are 18 group care homes for the emotionally disturbed, 7 homes for the mentally and physically handicapped, 126 homes for the aged, 2 alcohol treatment centers, 3 homes for unwed mothers, 13 hospitals, 34 multi-service agencies (case work, etc.), and 14 other group services. Foreign Missionaries are supported in 15 countries, overseas, and home Missionaries work in 47 States.

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

With well over 2,000,000 members, this is the largest Lutheran Church in the United States; it represents a consolidation of 4 Lutheran bodies (the United Lutheran Church in America, the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church), which came about on June 28, 1962.

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The United Lutheran Church was the youngest of the 4 uniting bodies, having been formed in 1918, in the uniting of 45 Synods, previously found in the General Council and the United Synod of the South. Some 13 of these Synods later withdrew or formed along new lines in the following 44 years, but the United Church brought a total of almost 2,500,000 members in 4,600 congregations into the 1962 merger.

The Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church began in the work of scattered Swedish families and congregations in Iowa and Illinois in the mid-1800's; their Augustana Synod was formed in 1860, with 5,000 communicants and 49 congregations, of which 36 were Swedish and 13 Norwegian. The name "Augustana" affirmed the group's loyalty to the Doctrine of the Augsburg Confession (Augustana, in the Latin). Ten years later, the Norwegians withdrew to form a Church of their own; at the time of the 1962 merger, the Augustana Body had better than half a million communicants in 1,200 congregations.

The Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church (better known as the Suomi Synod), was organized at Calumet, Michigan, in 1890; it was strictly a Confessional Church, using the 3 Ecumenical Creeds and the unaltered Augsburg Confession. Until quite recently, the Finnish language was employed in the Services of this Church, which had 36,000 members and 153 congregations in 1962.

The American Evangelical Lutheran Church was the smallest of the uniting bodies numerically, with 25,000 members in 79 congregations. It was of Danish origin, founded under the Direction of Ministers, sent from Denmark in 1872, and under the name,

“Kirkelig Missionsforening.” It was a Church deeply concerned with the place and meaning of the Bible in Lutheran Theology; yet, it had a strong tradition of Ecumenical interest and was represented in the National Lutheran Council, the National Council of Churches, and the World Council of Churches.

To bring these 4 Churches into 1 body, seemed at first, impossible, but it was accomplished. A New Confession was worked out that preserved the Historic Creeds and Confession’s of Lutheranism, and yet, established a new, broad base of emphasis upon full acceptance of Christ and the Scripture. This Statement of Faith is found in Article Two of the Constitution of the Lutheran Church in America; it reads; in part:

“This Church holds that the Gospel is the revelation of God’s sovereign will and saving grace in Jesus Christ.....acknowledges the Holy Scriptures as the norm for the faith and life of the Church....accepts the Apostles’, the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church....accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther’s Small Catechism as true witnesses to the Gospel, and acknowledges as one, with it in faith and doctrine, all Churches that likewise accept the teachings of these symbols.. { It } accepts the other symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther’s Larger Catechism, and the Formula of Concord as further valid interpretations of the Confession of the Church....{It} affirms that the Gospel transmitted by the Holy Scriptures....is the true treasure of the Church, the substance of its proclamation, and the basis of its unity and continuity.”

In Administration, the Chief Officer is a President, elected for 4 years by a biennial Convention; he presides over the Convention and over an Executive Council of 33

Members (3 Officers, 15 Ministers, and 15 laymen), which supervises the work of the Synods, and the following Churchwide Agencies: Division for Mission in North America, Division for Parish Services, Division for Professional Leadership, Division for World Mission and Ecumenism, Office for Administration and Finance, Office for Communication, and Office for Research and Planning.

A full-time President serves each of the 33 Synods that coordinate and direct the work of local congregations; these Synods hold Annual Meetings, of which, each Minister, whether active or retired, is a member and, in which, each congregation is represented by one or more lay Delegates; each Synod is sub-divided into Regional Districts, under the direction of a Pastor-Dean.

The LCA is active in Missions in 24 foreign countries. Nearly 200 Social Institutions (hospitals, homes for the aged and children, nurseries, etc.), are supported by the Church; there are 28 colleges and seminaries.

MENNONITES

The first Mennonite Congregation of Historical Record, was organized at Zurich, Switzerland, in 1525; it consisted of Swiss Brethren, or "Taufers," who disagreed with Ulrich Zwingli in his readiness to consent to a Union of Church and State. They also denied the Scriptural validity of infant baptism, and hence, were labeled Anabaptists, or Re-Baptizers. Anabaptist Congregations were organized in Holland by Obbe Philips as early as 1534; Obbe baptized Menno Simons (ca. 1496-1562) in 1536.

Menno was a converted Roman Catholic Priest; he organized more Anabaptist Congregations in Holland, and his contemporaries gave his name to the movement. Many of his Flemish adherents crossed the channel on the invitation of Henry VIII. In England, as well as in Germany, Holland, and Switzerland, they met opposition largely because of their determined distrust of any Union of Church and State. An impressive martyr roll was created; it might have been much larger had it not been for the sudden

Haven offered in the American Colony of William Penn. Thirteen families settled in Germantown, near Philadelphia, in 1683. Eventually they established a Mennonite Congregation there, although many of them had left the Mennonite fold and united with the Quakers before they left Crefeld, Germany. Mennonite emigrants from Germany and Switzerland spread over Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, farther west, and into Canada; these were later joined by others, coming from Russia, Prussia, and Poland. Thanks to their Historical insistence upon non-resistance, their colonial settlements were comparatively peaceful and prosperous.

The faith of these Mennonites was based upon a Confession of Faith signed at Dordrecht, Holland, in 1632. In 18 Articles, the following Doctrines were laid down: faith in God as Creator; man's fall and restoration at the coming of Christ; Christ, as the Son of God, redeeming men on the Cross; obedience to Christ's Law in the Gospel; the necessity of repentance and conversion for Salvation; baptism as a public testimony of faith; the Lord's Supper as an expression of common union and fellowship; matrimony as permissible, only among those "Spiritually kindred"; obedience to and respect for Civil Government, except in the use of Armed Force; exclusion from the Church of those who sin willfully and their social ostracism for the protection of the faith of others in the Church; and future reward and punishments for the faithful and the wicked.

The Lord's Supper is served twice a year in almost all Mennonite congregations, and in most of them, baptism is by pouring. Most of them observe the foot washing ordinance in connection with the Supper, after which, they salute one another with the "kiss of peace." The sexes are separated in the last 2 ceremonies. All Mennonites baptize only on Confession of Faith, refuse to take Oaths before Magistrates, oppose Secret Societies, and follow strictly the teachings of the New Testament. They have a strong Intra-Church Program of mutual aid and worldwide relief and Eleemosynary Service, through an all-Mennonite Relief Organization, called the Mennonite Central Committee.

The local congregation is more or less autonomous and authoritative, although in some instances, appeals are taken to District or State Conferences. The Officers of the

Church are Bishops (often called Elders), Ministers, and Deacons (Almoners). Many Ministers are self-supporting, working in secular employments, when not occupied with the work of the Church. There are other appointed officers for Sunday School, young people's work, and so forth.

The Amish Movement within the ranks of the Mennonites, takes its name from Jacob Amman, a Swiss (Bernese) Mennonite Bishop of the late seventeenth Century, who insisted upon strict conformation to the Confession of Faith, especially in the matter of "shunning" excommunicated members. This Literalism brought about a separation in Switzerland in 1693; about 200 years later, the divided bodies, with the exception of 3 Amish groups, were re-united.

Amish immigrants to the United States concentrated early in Pennsylvania and moved from there into Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Nebraska, and other Western States; some went into Canada. They have today, a common literature. Many of the Amish, distinguished by their severely plain clothing, are found in the Conservative Amish Mennonite Church and the larger Old Order Amish Mennonite Church. They are still the "Literalists" of the Movement, clinging tenaciously to the "Pennsylvania Dutch" language and to the seventeenth-Century culture of their Swiss-German forebearers. They oppose automobiles, telephones, and higher education, but are recognized as very efficient farmers.

BEACHY AMISH MENNONITE CHURCHES

These Churches are made up mostly of Amish Mennonites, who separated from the more Conservative Old Amish, over a period of years, beginning in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, in 1927. They were led by Bishop, Moses M. Beachy, who died in 1946. There are today 89 congregations and 5,175 members.

They resemble, to some degree, the Old Order Amish, in garb and general attitudes, but their discipline is milder and more relaxed. They worship in Church buildings, have Sunday Schools, are active in supporting Missionary work, and sponsor a Monthly Publication, "Calvary Messenger," and an annual 12 - week Calvary Bible School.

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST (MENNONITE)

This Church grew out of the preaching and labors of John Holderman, a member of the Mennonite Church in Ohio, who became convinced that his Church was Apostate and in error in many of its teachings and practices. He preached ardently on the necessity of the New Birth, Holy Ghost baptism, more adequate training of children in the fundamentals, the discipline of unfaithful members, avoidance of Apostates, and the condemnation of worldly-minded Churches. He separated himself, finally, from the Mennonite Church and in 1859, began holding meetings with a small group of followers, who were formally organized into the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite.

The Church believes that the same Confession of Faith must be believed and practiced by all Churches, "from the time of the Apostles to the End of the World," and that the Bible as the inspired, infallible Word of God, must govern all doctrine and teaching. It accepts the Eighteen Articles of Faith drawn up at Dordrecht, Holland, in 1632. It practices the mode form of baptism, and teaches non-resistance and non-conformity to the world in dress, bodily adornment, worldly sports, and amusements. Missions are operated in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Haiti, India, and Nigeria; there are 6,204 members in 38 congregations, spread from the United States to Africa.

CONSERVATIVE MENNONITE CONFERENCE

Known as the Conservative Amish Mennonite Church until 1954, when the present name was adopted, this Conference subscribes to the Dordrecht Confession of Faith and

the 1963 Mennonite Confession of Faith. Its first General Conference was held at Pigeon, Michigan, in 1910. It separated, gradually, from the Old Order Amish, installing such innovations as meetinghouses, Sunday Schools, evening and “continued” meetings, and the use of English, rather than German, in Worship. Holding strictly to the Mennonite principles of non-resistance and non-conformity, it promotes Missions and various types of social work in the United States, Central America, and Europe. There are 6,900 members in 103 Mission Stations and Congregations.

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE BRETHERN CONFERENCE

Formally called the Conference of Defenseless Mennonites of North America, this group now, has 3,874 members in 32 Churches. It was established by Russian Mennonite emigrants in 1873-74 and concentrates on a strong Missionary Program, under which some 110 Missionaries, are at work overseas.

EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CHURCH

Formally the Defenseless Mennonite Church, this body was founded about 1865, under the leadership of Henry Egly, to emphasize teaching on regeneration, separation, non-conformity to the world, and non-resistance. Their program, today, is largely one of missions and Evangelism. There is a children’s home in Flanagan, Illinois; 3,600 members are in 21 Churches.

GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH

A group of local Mennonite congregations in Iowa, eager to improve upon and enlarge foreign Missionary efforts, offer better training for prospective leaders, and to establish a Church Periodical, organized at Wayland, Iowa, in 1860, to form the General Conference Mennonite Church. The desire to unite all Mennonite Churches and Conferences was

strong among them, and still is. They accept established Mennonite doctrine, but place strong emphasis upon the autonomy of the local congregation, and in their insistence upon freedom from the traditional Mennonite regulations on dress and attire for men and women, they are marked as “liberal in conduct.”

Six District Conferences meet annually and a General Conference meets triennially for fellowship and the transaction of official business. Elected commissions - overseas Missions, Home Ministries, Education, Communication, and Administration - direct the work of the General Conference. The conference maintains 2 liberal arts colleges, 1 Bible college, 1 junior college, 1 theological seminary, several homes for children and the aged, hospitals, and nurses' training schools. There are 36,397 members in 187 Churches in the United States, 20,553 members in 103 Churches in Canada, and additional Churches in Latin America. Mission work is carried on in 10 overseas countries, where the membership, totals about 40,000.

HUTTERIAN BRETHREN

These are Disciples of Jacob Hutter, a sixteenth-Century Tyrolean Anabaptist, who advocated communal ownership of property. He was burned as a heretic in Austria, in 1536. Many of the Hutterites came from Russia to Canada and the United States about 1874; they have moved back and forth across the border ever since. Most of them today, are of German ancestry and use the German tongue in their homes and Churches. Aside from the common-property idea, they are quite similar to the Old Order Amish; they have a Bible-centered faith, that they seek to express in brotherly love; they aim at the recovery of the New Testament Spirit and fellowship; they feel that this requires non-conformity to the world, and accordingly, they practice non-resistance; refuse to participate in local politics, dress differently, make no contributions to community projects, and have their own schools, in which, the Bible is paramount. Their exclusiveness has made them unwelcome in certain sections of the country, and their status is uncertain at the moment. There are 20,000 of them in 200 colonies in South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Washington, and Canada.

MENNONITE BRETHREN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

Dutch and German in background, this Church was organized in 1860 on withdrawal from the Mennonite Church in the Ukraine of a small group, seeking closer attention to prayer and Bible study. Pietistic in orientation, the group adopted a Baptististic polity. Small bodies reached Kansas in 1876 and spread to the Pacific Coast and into Canada.

A General Conference meets triennially as the Chief Administrative Body, gathering Delegates from 2 areas (Canada and the United States). Each area has a number of Districts. The Area Conferences supervise work in Home Missions, Education, and Publications. Foreign Missions (a Department of the General Conference), are found in Africa, Asia, Europe, South America, and Mexico.

The Krimmer Mennonite Brethren merged with this Church in 1960, bringing the total membership to 38,000 in 260 Churches.

MENNONITE CHURCH

This is the largest single group of Mennonites in the United States, with 96,062 members in 1,059 Churches; it is the Church, founded by German emigrants in Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1683. The Dordrecht Confession was adopted at the Conferences of the Pennsylvania Mennonite Ministers in 1725, and this remained the Official Statement of Faith until a 1921 Mennonite General Conference adopted a restatement on the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, consisting of 18 Articles. In 1963, the General Conference of the Mennonite Church adopted a new, Revised Confession of Faith that seeks, without attempting to make Mennonites into a Creedal Church, to set forth the major doctrines of Scripture, as understood in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. The attempt was made to write with simplicity and clarity, to be more Biblical than philosophical or even theological. This 1963 Confession of Faith, stresses faith in

Christ, the saved status of children (without any ceremony), the importance of proclaiming God's Word and "making Disciples," the baptism of believers, the ethic of absolute love and non-resistance to injustice and maltreatment, the Church as a non-hierarchical brotherhood, and the practice of Church discipline.

The General Assembly meets every 2 years; ordained persons and others present, who are not elected Delegates from the District or State Conference, may debate, but not vote; the elected Delegates from the District Conferences render decisions by a majority vote. The District Conferences, in cooperation with their respective congregations, set the disciplinary standards for their Constituency. Bishops, Ministers, and Deacons serve as Delegates; most Districts also have lay Delegates.

Church-wide Program Boards are in charge of Mission, Congregational Ministries, Educational, Publishing, and mutual aid work; all are under the coordination of the Churches General Board. Home Missions stress Evangelism; overseas Missions are found in Asia, Africa, Europe, Central and South America. There are 3 colleges, 2 seminaries, numerous secondary and elementary schools, as well as Church-sponsored hospitals, retirement homes, and child welfare services.

OLD ORDER AMISH MENNONITE CHURCH

Continuous with the Amish emigrants of 1720-40, this Church adheres to the older forms of Worship and attire, using hooks and eyes instead of buttons, Worshipping in private homes, and having no conferences. Members do not believe in conferences, Missions, or Benevolent Institutions and oppose centralized schools; some of them; however, do contribute to the Missions and Charities of the Mennonite Church. There are 514 Old Amish Church Districts listed, and each District averages 110 to 150 members, with approximately half that number baptized.

OLD ORDER (WISLER) MENNONITE CHURCH

This Church was named for Jacob Wisler, the first Mennonite Bishop in Indiana, who led a separation from the Mennonite Church in 1872. Those, who separated, did so in protest of the use of English in the services and the introduction of Sunday Schools. Joined in 1886, 1893, and 1901, by groups with similar ideas from Canada, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, they still maintain their Church on the basis of these protests.

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Each section of the Church has its own District Conference, and there are home conferences, twice each year, in each community. There are no Benevolent or Missionary Enterprises, but some contribute to the work of the Mennonite Church in those fields. There are 8,400 members in 60 Churches, 19 Bishops, and 76 Ministers.

REFORMED MENNONITE CHURCH

Organized under the leadership of John Herr, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1812, Reformed Mennonites hold closely to New Testament teachings and believe that there can be but one true Church for all believers. They have 4 ordinances: baptism, the Lord's Supper, foot washing, and the kiss of peace; these are "for edification and not a means of salvation." Baptism by pouring or sprinkling is considered an outward testimony of the baptism of the Spirit within the heart, which must precede the reception of water baptism. The Communion Service signifies Unity with God and with one another and is observed only by members of the Church. They practice foot washing as taught in John 13, carry out strictly, the instructions in Matthew 18, regarding laboring in love with an erring brother, greet one another regularly with the kiss of peace, insist upon modest and plain uniform clothing, and require their women to wear head coverings.

They are non-resistant, Pacificistic, do not vote or hold any Governmental Office, and refuse to Worship with those with whom they are not united in faith and practice. They have 12 Churches and a membership of about 500. Their Bishops, Ministers, and Deacons are chosen from the local congregations and are not paid. They have no

Sunday Schools, believing it obligatory upon the parents to teach their own children.

UNAFFILIATED MENNONITES

A number of small Mennonite groups hold an unaffiliated status with all other Mennonite bodies. These unaffiliated Amish Mennonite and Mennonite Churches claim 4,425 members enrolled in 87 Churches. There is such a wide variety of emphasis on doctrines and practice, that no general statement can be made in respect to their faith and polity.

METHODISTS

England's famed old Oxford University has been called the "cradle of lost causes," but at least one cause was born there that was not lost. This is Methodism. Known and ridiculed at Oxford in 1729, it claims today, some 14,000,000 adherents in North America and more than 18,000,000 around the world.

The Oxford Mennonites (also dubbed "Bible Bigots," "Bible Moths," and the "Holy Club"), were a tiny group of students, who gave stated time to prayer and Bible reading; prominent among them were, John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield. They were methodically religious, talking of the necessity of being justified, before they could be sanctified, and of the need of Holiness in human living, reading and discussing William Law's, "A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life" and "A Treatise on Christian Perfection." The 2 Wesley's were sons of a Clergyman of the Church of England; with the other members of the Holy Club, they stood their ground against jeering students and went out to preach and pray with the poor and desperate Commoners of England - prisoners in jail, paupers in hovels, bitter and nearly hopeless "Underdogs of a British Society, that was perilously close to moral and Spiritual collapse." Methodism started on a campus and reached for the masses.

The Wesley's came to Georgia in 1736. Charles came as Secretary to General Oglethorpe, and John was sent by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, as a Missionary to the Indians. It was an unsuccessful and unhappy 2 years for John Wesley, with but one bright spot; on shipboard, en route to the Colonies, he met a group of Moravians and became deeply impressed by their piety and humble Christian living. Later, when he returned to London, he went one night to meet with a Religious Society in Aldersgate Street, heard the Preacher read Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans and felt his heart "strangely warmed," as the meaning of the reformer's doctrine of "Justification by Faith," sank into his soul. It was the Evangelistic spark that energized his life and started the flame of the Wesleyan Revival in England. From the pious Moravians, via Wesley, came the warmhearted emphasis upon conversion and Holiness, which are still the central themes of Methodism.

Whitefield and the Wesley's were too much afire to be boxed-in by the staid Church of England. When its doors were closed to them, they took to the open air; John preaching, and Charles writing the hymns of the revival for streets, barns, and private homes and in the mining pits of Cornwall; preaching repentance, regeneration, turning from sin and the wrath to come, justification, Holiness, and sanctification. The upper classes laughed, and the lower classes listened to the first words of hope they had heard in many a year. Converts came thick and fast; it became necessary to organize them into societies. The first Methodist Society was attached to a Moravian Congregation in Fetter Lane, London, in 1739, and later moved to its own quarters in an old, abandoned government building, known as the Foundry, where the first self-sustaining Methodist society in London, was organized in 1740.

Between 1739 and 1744, the organizational elements of Methodism were instituted; we read of a "Circuit System" and of an "Itinerant Ministry," of class meetings and class leaders, of lay Preachers and annual conferences. There was a phenomenal growth in membership; more than 26,000 Methodists were Worshipping in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales in 1767. Their impact upon British Society was startling; the crudities and barbarisms of the times were alleviated, and a "French Revolution" averted. It was

primarily, a lay movement.

Wesley did his best to keep the movement within the Church of England; an Evangelical Party grew within the Church, but the greater numbers recruited from among the un-Churched, made a separate organization, imperative. In 1739, Wesley drew up a set of General Rules that are still held by Modern Methodists and an ideal delineation of Bible rules and conduct. A Deed of Declaration in 1784, gave legal status to the yearly Methodist Conference. But, John Wesley was dead in 1791, before Methodism in England had the name of a recognized Church, the Wesleyan Methodist Connection.

Meanwhile, the movement had invaded Ireland and the American Colonies. Wesley had begun to send out leaders; the first of them in this country were, Joseph Pilmoor and Richard Boardman. Philip Embury, an Irish lay leader, encouraged by his cousin, Barbara Heck, preached in New York and inspired the organization of the First Methodist Society overseas, about 1766. By 1769, the New York Methodists had built Wesley Chapel, now known as John Street Methodist Church. To the south, Captain Thomas Webb, a Veteran of Braddock's ill-fated Army, established societies in Philadelphia, and Robert Strawbridge started a Revival in Maryland and built a log-cabin Church at Sam's Creek. Devereux Jarratt, a transplanted Evangelical Anglican Minister, led a Revival in Virginia that won thousands. The true center of Methodism, in those days, did indeed, lie in the South; out of 3,148 Methodists in the Colonies in 1775, about 2,000 lived south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Wesley, aware of the rapid spread of the movement in America, sent emissaries to take charge, among them, Francis Asbury and Thomas Rankin, the latter, as the first full-fledged "Superintendent of the entire work of Methodism in America." Rankin presided over the First Conference in America, called at Philadelphia in 1773 and attended by 10 Ministers.

There were about 1,160 Methodists represented in the Conference of 1773; when the Liberty Bell rang in 1776, there were less than 7,000 in all the Colonies, and they seemed doomed to disappear as quickly as they had been gathered. The majority of their Preachers had come from England and were incurably British; they were so roughly

handled by the Patriots, that by 1779, nearly everyone of them had fled, either to Canada or home to England. Wesley's pro-British attitude, also roused resentment, and Francis Asbury, working almost singlehanded, had a difficult time keeping some of the Churches alive. But, a miracle happened; of all the religious groups in the Colonies, the Methodists alone, actually seemed to prosper during the Revolution. When the surrender came at Yorktown, their membership had grown to 14,000 and there were nearly 80 Preachers. They were, after Yorktown, an American Church, free of both, England and the Church of England. Wesley accepted the inevitable; he ordained Ministers for the Colonies and appointed Asbury and Thomas Coke as Superintendents.

Coke brought with him, from England, certain instructions from Wesley, a Service Book and hymnal, and authority to proceed with the organization. A Christmas Conference held at Baltimore in December of 1784, organized the Methodist Episcopal Church, elected Coke and Asbury as superintendents (later called Bishops), and adopted the Sunday Service (an abridgment of the Book of Common Prayer) and Articles of Religion as written by John Wesley, adding another Article, that as good Patriots, Methodists should vow Allegiance to the United States Government. The first General Conference of the New Church was held in 1792, made up solely, of Ministers. It was not until 1872, that laymen were admitted, to what had become by that time, a quadrennial General Conference. Membership soared: from 37 circuits and 14,000 members at the close of the Revolution, there came a membership of 1,324,000 by the middle of the following Century.

Methodism not only swept through the cities; it developed an amazing strength in small towns and rural areas. Everywhere there were circuit riders - Ministers on horseback, riding the expanding frontier and preaching in mountain cabins, prairie Churches, schoolhouses, and camp meetings of free grace and individual responsibility and the need of conversion and regeneration. Their Itinerant Ministry was perfectly adapted to the Democratic Society of the frontier. The Methodist Book Concern was established in 1789, putting into the saddlebags of the circuit riders, a religious literature that followed the March of American Empire, South and West. The camp meeting, born among the

Presbyterians, though not always carried on by them, was adopted by the Methodists and exploited to the limit. Its revivalist flavor and method were made to order for the followers of Wesley and Whitefield. There are still camp meetings in Methodism.

All was not peaceful; however, among all the Methodists; divisions came. Objecting, like good Democrats, to what they considered abuses of the Episcopal System, several bodies broke away; the Republican Methodists, later the Christian Church, withdrew in Virginia; Methodist Protestants seceded in 1830. Between 1813 and 1817, large black groups formed Independent Churches: the African Methodist Episcopal Church; the Union Church of Africans, now the Union American Methodist Episcopal Church; and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. In 1844, came the most devastating split of all, the bisecting of the Methodist Episcopal Church into 2 Churches, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the northern body; and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The cause of this major split was, of course, slavery. Bishop Andrew, a Georgian, owned slaves through inheritance; and his wife was also a slaveholder. It was not possible for him or his wife to free their slaves under the Laws of Georgia. The General Conference of 1844, held in New York City, requested him to desist from the exercise of his Office, so long as he remained a slaveholder. Incensed, the Southern Delegates rebelled, a Provisional Plan of Separation was formulated, and the Southerners went home to organize their own Church in 1845. Basic to the separation, was the Constitutional question of the power of the General Conference, which, the Southerners maintained, assumed Supreme Power in virtually deposing a Bishop against whom no charges had been brought, who had violated no Law of the Church, and who had been given no trial. It was a split that concerned neither doctrine nor polity; it was purely Political and Social, and it was a wound that waited until 1939 for healing. In that year, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church were reunited at Kansas City, Missouri.

The Uniting Conference of 1939, adopted a New Constitution in 3 sections: an abridgment of the Articles of Religion, drawn up by John Wesley and based on the

39 Articles of Religion of the Church of England; the General Rules, covering the conduct of Church members and the duties of Church Officials; and the Articles of Organization and Government, outlining the Organization and Conduct of Conferences and local Churches. This Constitution cannot be changed by any General Conference, unless and until, every Annual Conference has acted on the changes proposed.

In matters of faith, there has been very little occasion for confusion or difference among Methodists; heresy trials and doctrinal quarrels have been noticeably absent. Historically, they have never built theological fences or walls to keep anyone out; they have stressed the great foundation beliefs of Protestantism and offered common theological ground. Some of the Churches repeat the Apostles' Creed in their Worship, but not all of them, though the discipline of the Church provides for its use in formal Worship. Their theology is Arminian, as interpreted by Wesley in his sermons, his Notes on the New Testament, and his Articles of Religion.

They preach and teach doctrines of the Trinity, the natural sinfulness of mankind, man's fall and need of conversion and repentance, freedom of the will, justification by faith, sanctification and Holiness, future rewards and punishment, the sufficiency of the Scriptures for salvation, perfection, and the enabling Grace of God. Two Sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are observed; baptism is administered to both infants and adults, usually by sprinkling. Membership - full, preparatory, or "affiliate" (the latter arranged for people away from their Home Church, who wish to affiliate where they live) - is based upon Confession of Faith or by letter of transfer from other Evangelical Churches; admission of children to membership is usually limited to those 13 years of age or over, though in the South, the age may be 2 or 3 years younger. There is wide freedom in the interpretation and practice of all doctrines; liberals and conservatives work in close harmony.

The local Churches of Methodism are called charges; their Ministers are appointed by the Bishop at the Annual Conference, and each Church elects its own Administrative Board, which initiates planning and sets goals and policies on the local level. It is

composed of staff people, Chairmen of various Committees, persons representing various program interests, and members at large. Charge, Annual, and General Conferences prevail in most Methodist Bodies; while Methodist Government is popularly called Episcopal, it is largely Governmental by this Series of Conferences. The Charge Conference meets in the Local Charge, or on the Circuit, with the District Superintendent presiding. It fixes the salary of the Pastor, elects the Church Officers, and sends Delegates to the Annual Conferences. The Charge Conference may delegate to the Administrative Board of the local Church, responsibility for many of these duties. Some areas have District Conferences between the Charge and the Annual Conference, but it is not a universal arrangement in the Church. Annual Conferences cover defined geographical areas, ordain and admit Candidates to the Ministry, vote on Constitutional questions, supervise pensions and relief, through action of the Bishop exchange Pastors, with other Annual Conferences, and every fourth year elect lay and Ministerial Delegates to the General Conference. The General Conference is the law-making body of the Church, meeting quadrennially; the Bishops preside, and the work of the conference is done largely in Committees, whose reports, when adopted by the General Conference become Methodist Law.

Worship and liturgy are based upon the English Prayer Book, with widespread modifications. The language of the Prayer Book, is much in evidence, in the Sacraments of the Methodist Churches. In many forms of Worship; however, each congregation is free to use or change the accepted pattern as it sees fit.

There are 23 Separate Methodist Bodies in the United States, of which, The United Methodist Church, is numerically, the strongest.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Two mergers of major importance produced The United Methodist Church (the largest Methodist Church in this country, with 9,861,028 members in 38,795 local Churches).

The first, was actually, a rejoining of 3 existing Methodist groups; at a Uniting Conference in Kansas City in 1939, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, were reunited under a new name, The Methodist Church. In 1968, The Methodist Church merged with the Evangelical United Brethren Church to form, The United Methodist Church.

The History of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have already been outlined above. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was organized at Louisville, Kentucky, in 1845, and held its First General Conference a year later in Petersburg, Virginia, under the Presidency of Bishops, James Andrews and Joshua Soule; it brought a membership of 2,500,000 to the reunited Church. The Methodist Protestant Church was organized at a conference in Baltimore in 1830, in protest against the almost total rule of the Clergy in the Methodist Episcopal Church and the exclusion of laymen from its Councils. It had about 200,000 members in 1939.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church came out of a series of mergers in 2 groups: The United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church. The Evangelical Church began with the labors of Jacob Albright (1759-1808) among the German people of Pennsylvania, in what at first, was called the Evangelical Association; preaching first as a Lutheran and then as a Methodist Exhorter, Albright was made a Bishop at the First Annual Conference of the Association in 1807. He used the Methodist "Discipline" until 1809, preached Methodist doctrine, and was so effective, that for sometime his followers were known as, "the Albrights." A split in the membership in 1891, resulted in a separate denomination, known as the United Evangelical Church; the 2 groups were reunited in 1922, under the name of the Evangelical Church.

Another group, known as the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, had a parallel development that began with the preaching of William Otterbein and Martin Boehm among the Germans in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia; they were elected Bishops at a conference in September, 1800, which created the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and which was also strongly Methodistic in polity, doctrine, and practice. Both

groups had a "Discipline" modeled on the Methodist "Discipline," and had too much in common to remain separated. These 2 bodies - the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church - were merged into the Evangelical United Brethren Church at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, in 1946.

Both Methodist and E.U.B., Churches, across the years, had been deeply conscious of their common Historical and Spiritual Heritage. Their doctrines were similar; both were Episcopal in Government; both traced their origins back to John Wesley; both had nearly the same Book of "Discipline." Their Preachers exchanged Pulpits and Congregations, often worked together, and shared the same buildings. The only major difference between them was that of language - German among the Brethren, English among the Methodists. As new, native-born generations appeared, this barrier meant less and less. Conversations concerning the merging of the 2 Churches began as early as 1803, and were consummated when the 2 came together as The United Methodist Church at Dallas, Texas, on April 23, 1968.

There was some dissent at Dallas; 51 Congregations and 79 Ministers of the Evangelical United Brethren, withdrew from the Pacific Northwest Conference, to establish the Evangelical Church of North America; 18 of 23 E.U.B., Congregations in Montana, left to establish, the Evangelical Church of North America in Montana, and 13 other Congregations in the Erie and Ohio Southeast Conference, petitioned to leave; these petitions were denied. The split occurred mainly over theological issues and the question of Church ownership. But there were, still roughly, 750,000 Brethren, who accepted the merger; their strength gave the new United Methodist Church, a membership of nearly 11 million.

In this union, no significant changes were made in either doctrine or polity. The Confession of Faith of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, adopted in 1962, was placed beside the Methodist Articles of Religion; Wesleyan standards dominate both statements, and both are used as the congregations of the Church elect to use them. The Methodist system of Bishops and Conferences, already in use in both denominations, is

maintained. There are now 73 Annual Conferences in the United States, with a total of 39,395, Organized Churches and 34,885 Ministers. Above the Annual Conferences, are 5 Jurisdictional Conferences, established for Geographical convenience in Administrative matters, meeting quadrennially at times, determined by the Council of Bishops, to elect new Bishops, and to name the members of the larger Boards and Commissions. In lands outside the continental United States, there are Central Conferences, that correspond to the Jurisdictional Conferences; they meet quadrennially and when authorized to do so, may elect their own Bishops. All Bishops are elected for life (except in autonomous overseas Conferences where the term is 4 years), with retirement set at 72; there are 45 of them in the United States and abroad, in charge of the Areas of the Church, such as the New York Area, the Denver Area, etc. Together they constitute the Council of Bishops, which meets at least once a year and usually twice a year, “for the general oversight and promotion of the Temporal and Spiritual Affairs of the Entire Church.”

The General Conference consists of over 800 Delegates, half laymen and half Ministers, elected on a proportional basis, by the Annual Conferences. A Judicial Council has been created to determine the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference that may be appealed, and to hear and determine any appeal from a Bishop’s decision on a question of Law in any District, Annual, Central, or Jurisdictional Conference. It is made up of 5 Ministerial and 4 lay members, and has become so important, that it is often called, “the Supreme Court” of the Church.

The General Conference of 1972, “restructured” the Administrative Bodies of the Church. The Council of Bishops and a Council on Finance and Administration, were made responsible to the General Conference, and a New Council on Ministries was set up as a Coordinating Body between the Conference and various other Commissions, Support Services, and Program Boards. The Commissions, now include, those on Archives and History, Religion and Race, Status and Role of Women; the Support Services, include a Board of Publication, United Methodist Communication, and a Board of Pensions. The Program Boards were rearranged to include Boards on Church and Society Discipleship, Higher Education and Ministry, and Global Ministries. In this

restructuring, the Church's 21 Major Boards and Agencies were reduced to 6.

The General Conference also broadened the basis of doctrine in the Church, in the first restatement on doctrine, since the eighteenth Century. The classic statements of the merging Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren Churches were maintained, but the doctrinal door was left open to theological change and revision. Typical of the openness that has always characterized Methodism, is the statement in the "Discipline," that the 4 main sources and guidelines for Christian Theology are Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason: "These four are inter-dependent; none can be defined unambiguously. They allow for, indeed they positively encourage, variety in United Methodist Theologizing."

This Church has property, valued at \$8,457,741,470, not including educational plants, hospitals, or homes for the aged. There are 145 Institutions devoted to long-term care, 57 to colleges, 7 universities, 13 schools of theology, 19 2-year colleges, 13 secondary schools, 1 elementary school, and 1 medical college. The Church is at work in 48 countries; 15 Missionary Bishops administer the work overseas, where there is a total of 648 Missionaries. The United Methodist Publishing House, is probably the largest Religious Publishing Concern in the World, there are 41 periodicals sponsored, exclusive of Sunday school materials.

The World Methodist Council, organized in 1881, and designed to draw the whole Wesleyan Movement close together in fellowship and devotion to the Wesleyan Heritage, has become increasingly active in recent years. Nine Ecumenical Conferences have been held by the Council since 1881; Headquarters are established at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina.

PRESBYTERIANS

Presbyterianism has 2 firm and deep roots: one goes back to the Greek word, "presbutros" ("Elder") and has to do with the System of Church Government of ancient and Apostolic times; the other goes back to John Calvin and the Protestant Reformation

and has to do with the Form of Government, used by all people, calling themselves, Presbyterian and holding the faith of the Reformed Churches.

Calvin (1509-64), was a Frenchman, trained for the law. Turning to theology, his keen, legislative mind and his lust for freedom from the rigid, confining forms of Roman Catholicism, drove him as a fugitive, from Roman reprisal to the city of Geneva, where he quickly grasped the reins of leadership in the Reformed Sector of the Reformation. Resolute and often harsh with those who opposed him, he established himself and his theological system, at the heart of a “City of God,” in the Swiss Capital, making it, according to Mecauly, the “cleanest and most wholesome City in Europe.” Calvin’s whole thought revolved about the concept of sovereignty: “The sovereignty of God in His Universe, the sovereignty of Christ in salvation, the sovereignty of the Scriptures in faith and conduct, the sovereignty of the individual conscience in the interpretation of the Will and Word of God.”

His system has been summarized in 5 main points: human impotence, unconditional predestination, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and final perseverance. God, according to Calvinism, is Sovereign and Eternal Ruler of the World; man is completely dominated by and dependent upon Him.

“The doctrine of God’s eternal decree is held in harmony with the doctrine of His love to all mankind, His gift of His Son, to be the propitiation, for the sins of the whole world, and His readiness to bestow His saving Grace, on all who seek it; that concerning those who perish, the doctrine of God’s eternal decree, is held in harmony, with the doctrine that God desires, not the death of any sinner, but has provided, in Christ, a salvation sufficient for all, adapted to all, and freely offered in the Gospel to all; that men are fully responsible for their treatment of God’s gracious offer; that His decree hinders no man from accepting that offer; and that no man is condemned, except on the ground of his sin. All dying in infancy, are excluded in the elections of Grace, and are regenerated and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who works when and where and how He pleases.” (Quoted from the declaratory statement in the Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church).

Out of this Calvinism, came miracles of reform. Few reformers have made as many contributions as John Calvin in so many fields at once - in education, in the building of an intelligent Ministry, in the liberation of the oppressed and persecuted, and in the establishment of Democratic Forms of Government, in both Church and State. In his thought, lay the germ, that in time, destroyed the Divine Right of Kings. He gave a new dignity to man, and Representative Government to man's Parliaments and Church Councils. He struck the final blow at Feudalism and offered a Spiritual and moral tone for dawning Capitalism.

Strictly speaking, John Calvin did not found Presbyterianism; he laid the foundations, upon which, it was reconstructed in Switzerland, Holland, France, England, Scotland, and Ireland. He inspired fellow Frenchmen, out of whose ranks, came the Huguenots; by 1560, there were 2,000 Churches of Presbyterian complexion in France. He influenced the Dutchmen, who established the Dutch Reformed Church in Holland. He gave courage to British Presbyterians in their bitter struggle against Catholic Bloody Mary. To him, came Scots, who became Covenanters; to him, came John Knox, who went home to cry, "Great God, give me Scotland, or I die." Knox and the Covenanters, set Scotland afire and made it Protestant and Presbyterian.

A Delegation of Scots sat in the Westminster Assembly of Divines, along with 121 English Ministers, 10 Peers, and 20 Members of the House of Commons, resolved to have "no Bishop, and no King." This Westminster Assembly is a milestone in Presbyterian History. Meeting at the Call of Parliament, to resolve the struggle over the compulsory use of the Anglican "Book of Common Prayer," it sat for nearly 5 years (1643-48) in 1,163 Sessions, produced a Larger and Shorter Catechism, a Directory for the Public Worship of God, a Form of Government, and the Westminster Confession of Faith, which, built upon the Old and New Testaments, became the doctrinal standard Scottish, British, and American Presbyterianism.

Dominant in the Westminster Assembly, the Presbyterians soon dominated the British Government. Cromwell completed the ousting of a Monarch and established a

Commonwealth; the Commonwealth crashed, the Monarchy returned, and the fires of persecution flamed again. British Presbyterians fled to America with the Puritans; an attempt to establish Episcopacy in Scotland after 1662, sent many Presbyterians out of Scotland into Ireland, where economic difficulties and religious inequalities drove them on to America. The Presbyterian British, and even more the Presbyterian Scotch-Irish, became the founders of Presbyterianism in America. Beginning in 1710 and running into mid-Century, from 3,000 to 6,000 Scotch-Irish, came annually into the American Colonies, settling at first in New England and the Middle Colonies, then spreading out more widely than any other racial group ever to reach our shores.

There were Presbyterian Congregations in the Colonies long before the Scotch-Irish migration of 1710-50. One was Worshipping in Virginia in 1611; others were Worshipping in Massachusetts and Connecticut in 1630. Long Island and New York, had Congregations by 1640 and 1643. Francis Makemie ranged the Coast from Boston to the Carolinas, planting Churches and giving them Unity with one another; 6 groups were United into the First Presbytery in Philadelphia in 1706; in 1716, this First Presbytery had become a Synod, made up of 4 Presbyteries and held its first meeting in 1717.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.

Overwhelmingly, the largest single body of Presbyterians in America, this Church is the result of a merger (1958) of 2 groups in the United States: the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and the United Presbyterian Church of North America. We shall consider them, first separately, under their original names, and then as a United Church.

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., dates back to the organizing of the General Presbytery in 1706. The First General Synod of its Spiritual Forefathers, meeting in 1729, adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms “as being in all essential and necessary Articles, good forms of sound words, and Systems of Christian Doctrine.” The same Synod denied to the Civil Magistrates, any power

whatever, over the Church, or any right to persecute anyone, for his religious faith.

Free in the New Land with their Scotch-Irish fire and Covenanter Background, the Presbyterians quickly set about, procuring trained Ministers; creeds and colleges have been their stock in trade, from the earliest days. William Tennent, Sr., organized a “Log College,” in a cabin at Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. He started with 3 of his 4 sons as his first pupils, and this family school grew into the most important Presbyterian Institution of higher learning in America. Out of it came the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University), and a stream of revivalist Presbyterian Preachers, who played leading roles in the Great Awakening of the early eighteenth Century. Prominent among them were, William Tennent, Jr., and his brother Gilbert, who met and liked the British revivalist, George Whitefield and followed him in preaching an emotional “New Birth” Revivalism, which came into conflict with the old creedal Calvinism. The camp-meeting revival grew out of the Great Awakening enthusiasm; it was born as a Presbyterian Institution and was continued by the Methodists, when the Presbyterians dropped it.

Presbyterian objection to emotional revivalism went deep; it split their Church. Preachers took sides; those of the “old side” opposed revivalism, while those of the “new side” endorsed it, claiming that less attention should be paid to college training for the Ministry and more to the recruiting of regenerated common men into the pulpit. The 2 sides quarreled until 1757, when they reunited; in 1758, the first year of the United Synod, there were 98 Ministers in the Presbyterian Church in the Colonies, 200 congregations, and 10,000 members. One of the ablest of the new-side Preachers, was John Witherspoon, President of Princeton (founded in 1746), member of the Continental Congress, and the only Ministerial Signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Witherspoon may have been instrumental in the call of the General Synod upon the Presbyterian Churches to “uphold and promote,” the Resolutions of the Continental Congress. The Scotch-Irish accepted the Revolution with relish; the persecution they had experienced in England and Ulster, left them as natural dissenters and solidly anti-British. Their old cry, “No Bishop and no King,” was heard as far off as England; Horace Walpole

supposedly remarked that, “Cousin America.” had run off with a Presbyterian person.

The Presbyterians moved swiftly to strengthen their Church after Yorktown, meeting as a Synod in Philadelphia in 1788 at the same time that the National Constitutional Convention was in session in the same city. The National Administrative Bodies of American Presbyterianism were known as the Presbytery from 1706-16; as The Synod from 1717-88, and as The General Assembly from 1789 to the present time.

From 1790 to 1837, membership in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., increased from 18,000 to 220,557. This growth was due to the revival that swept the country during those years and to the Plan of Union with the Congregationalists. Under this Plan, Presbyterian and Congregational Preachers and laymen, moving into the new western territory, worked and built together; Preachers of the 2 denominations preached in each other’s pulpits, and members held the right of representation in both Congregational Association and Presbyterian Presbytery. The plan worked well on the whole, absorbing the fruits of the national revivals and giving real impetus to Missionary work, both at home and abroad. Then came disagreements between Old School and New School factions within the Church, over matters of discipline and the expenditure of Missionary money. The General Assembly of 1837, expelled 4 New School Presbyteries, which promptly met in their own Convention at Auburn, New York. The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., was split in two, between New School Men, who wanted to keep the plan of Union and Old School Men, who were suspicious of the “Novelties of New England {Congregational} theology.”

These years promised to be an era of expansion for the Presbyterians. Marcus Whitman drove the first team and wagon over the South Pass of the Rockies into the Great Northwest. After him, came hosts of Presbyterian Preachers and laymen, building Churches, Schools, Colleges, and Seminaries. From 1812, to 1836, the Presbyterians in the United States, built their first great Theological Seminaries: Princeton, Allegheny, Auburn, Columbia, Lane, McCormick, Union in Virginia, and Union in New York City. They also set up their own Missionary and Educational Societies. But

the Era of Unity suddenly became an Era of Schism. Even earlier than the Old-School-New-School Division, the Cumberland Presbytery, had broken away in 1810, following a dispute over the Educational qualifications of the Ministry, to form the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Anti-slavery sentiment was increasing. A strong protest was made in 1818, but it was later modified. In 1846, the Old School Assembly regarded slavery in the Southern States, as no bar to Christian Communion; but the New School Assembly took action, in the same year, condemning it, without reservation. By 1857, several New School Southern Synods had withdrawn, to organize the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, and the greater and final break, came in 1861, when 47 Old School Southern Presbyteries, formed their General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. In 1865, the United Synod and the Confederate Churches merged into, what is now known as, the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The Synod of Kentucky, united with it in 1869, and the Synod of Missouri, in 1874.

The Old School and New School Bodies, holding Separate Assemblies since 1837, were united in 1870, on the basis of the Westminster Confession; they were joined in 1906, by a large majority of the Cumberland Churches, and in 1920, by the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.

From the 1920's through the 1950's, 2 strong emphasis were noticeable in this Church: one was the emphasis upon theology, seen in the struggle between liberals and conservatives; and the other was the emphasis upon Presbyterian Unity. The latter was evident in the proposed merger with the Protestant Episcopal Church, which was not realized, and in the 1958 merger of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., with the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

The United Presbyterian Church of North America was formed by the merging of the Associate Presbyterian Church and the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church at Pittsburg, in 1858. The Doctrines, Traditions, and Institutions of the 2 Combining Bodies were preserved; Government in the United Church, followed the Presbyterian Form with Session, Presbytery, Synod, and a General Assembly, that met annually.

In matters of faith, this Church rested upon the broad foundation of the Westminster Confession with certain modifications, one of which, amended the Chapter in the Confession on the Power of Civil Magistrates. A Confessional Statement of 44 Articles was drawn up by the United Presbyterian Church in 1925; it contained the substance of the Westminster standards and symbols, but restricted divorce cases to marital unfaithfulness, denied infant damnation, extended Sacramental privileges to all, who professed Faith in Christ and led Christian lives, withdrew the protest against Secret or Oath-bound Societies, abandoned the exclusive use of the Psalms, maintained insistence upon the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, affirmed the sufficiency and fullness of the provision of God for the needs of Christ, emphasized the Renewing and Sanctifying Power of the Holy Ghost, and held Salvation to be free to all sinners.

There were no insurmountable doctrinal differences when the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S.A., merged in 1958; there were the usual disagreements between Theological Conservatives and Liberals, but on the whole, they found agreement and Unity in the Doctrine of the Westminster Confession, which had been, the Accepted Doctrinal Statement of Presbyterianism in the United States since its adoption here in 1729. But as time passed, the conviction grew in the United Church, that a New Statement or Confession written, not against the background of seventeenth-Century language, thought, and culture, but in the language of the twentieth-Century, was needed and necessary to proclaim the Gospel. The Westminster Document was 300 years old; many felt that it was too much "bound by time." Accordingly, a Special Committee was appointed to prepare and present a New Statement. Climaxing nearly 8 years of study and discussion, the 179th General Assembly of the Church, meeting at Portland, Oregon, approved the Committee's New "Confession of 1967," as a Contemporary Statement of Faith. It was the first major change in 3 Centuries.

Presbyterians now have a "Book of Confessions," containing not 1 Creed or Confession, but 9: The Nicene Creed of 325, the Second-Century Apostles' Creed, the Scots Confession of 1560, the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, the Second Helvetic

Confession of 1566, the Westminster Confession of 1647, the Shorter Catechism of 1647, the Theological Declaration of Barmen (1934), and the Confession of 1967. The purpose of this Arrangement of Creeds and Confessions, was to trace the development of the Great Affirmations of the Christian Faith, particularly through the Reformed Tradition, to make clear the Great Common Confessional Belief of the majority of Christians in the World, and to offer Common Ground for Unity among those Churches holding the Reformed Position.

The Confession of 1967, is brief (4,200 words), avoids the confusing terminology of the Westminster Confession, and stresses the concepts of love, sin, Eternal Life, and (especially) the work of reconciliation in God, Christ, and the Church. It is Christ-centered, emphasizing Faith in Christ as Messiah and Lord and, generally, repeats, in modern speech, the Standards of the Westminster Confession. While there is still some opposition, (on the ground that it waters down some of the Traditional Statements of the Westminster Confession), an overwhelming majority in the Church has accepted it, convinced that it not only reflects the mind and faith of true Presbyterianism, but offers, as well, a Wide Theological Base upon which all Presbyterians can stand together.

Under the Presbyterian System of Government, each Congregation has its Local Session, which acts in receiving and disciplining members, and in the General Welfare of the Church, Congregations, in Limited Districts, are grouped in Presbyteries that examine, ordain, and install all Ministers; review reports from the Sessions, and hear cases of complaint, brought before them. The Synod supervises the Presbyteries of a larger District, reviews the records of its constituent Presbyteries, organizes new Presbyteries, and functions in an Administrative capacity in all Denominational matters lying within its Jurisdiction. The highest Judiciary, is the Annual General Assembly, made up of Clerical and lay Delegates, elected by the Presbyteries on a proportional plan. The General Assembly settles all matters of discipline and doctrine referred to it by the lower bodies, establishes new Synods, appoints Agencies and Commissions, and reviews all appeals. Its decisions are final, except that it cannot, of itself, Amend the Constitution of the Church. The Officers of the General Assembly are: the Stated Clerk, (the Chief Executive

Officer), elected for 5 years, with the privilege of re-election, and the moderator, chosen each year to preside over the Session of the General Assembly.

On the National Level, a program of restructure, concentrated direction of the work of the Denomination in 3 New Agencies - the Program Agency, the Vocation Agency, the Support Agency - and the General Assembly Mission Council. The General Assembly Mission Council recommends goals, objectives, policies, and the best possible use of all resources to the General Assembly; oversees the implementation of decisions made by the General Assembly; appropriates funds to Agencies and Synods; assesses the effectiveness of Mission undertakings; coordinates policies, procedures, and practices established by the Assembly. The Program Agency trains and deploys people in Missions on all 6 Continents - Missionaries, fraternal workers, volunteers, Church leaders, service people in human Ministries; provides money and consultations that enable other Units of the Church at home and abroad to conduct programs in Church Development, Evangelism, Church Education, and issue-responsive Ministries; serves people with particular needs - refugees, disaster victims anywhere in the World, and people with needs related to Military Service; maintains relationships with Presbyterian Education and Healthcare Institutions around the World, with World and National Ecumenical Groups, and relates to other UPC Councils and Agencies at the National Level. The Vocation Agency works in developing new Ministries, providing placement counseling, training judicatory staff, setting guidelines for enlistment, career counseling, remuneration, and retirement (pensions). The Support Agency works in the general areas of communication, research, and finance; it provides news and information through the channels of press, radio, and television; is associated with "A.D.," a magazine, serving both the United Presbyterian Church in the counsel and functions and budget operations, overseas treasury functions, including payments made to and by all Agencies, foreign accounting, banking and insurance management, supervises and informs on property management, the sale, rental, lease, and assigned use of property records management, central purchasing, marketing and distribution, office services, travel and overseas shipping, renders legal services, such as property transfers, mortgages, Church loans, and legal opinions.

Historically, it is interesting to note, the Presbyterian concern with Christian Higher Education. From the start, in this country, this Church has insisted upon high standards of Academic Training for its Ministers and has developed an admirable Educational Program, for both Clergy and laity. Today there are 53 United Presbyterian-related colleges and universities, 7 theological seminaries in the United States and 21 abroad, and a total of about 120 Ministers and Chaplains, serving on college campuses.

The membership of the Church stands at 2,569,437 in 8,656 Churches as of 1977. There are 10 different Presbyterian Denominations in the United States, with a total membership of over 4 million. Of these, well over 3 million are found in the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (Southern). (This figure already needs revision, due to the recent defection of some 400 Churches from the Southern group). Of the 10 groups, 5 are working together in the North American area of the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World, holding the Presbyterian Order, organized in 1875.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

The Establishment and Historical background of this Church have already been described. Popularly known today as Southern Presbyterians, they are still separated from the Northern Presbyterians in the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., in differences, that are theological, Ecclesiastical, administrative, and social in nature, but there are still evidence of cooperation in Missionary planning, in 2 colleges and 1 theological seminary. Probably more than either of the other 2 Churches in “the big 3,” (Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists), the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., has led the effort to integrate black Churches into the denomination and to open the doors of their conferences, colleges, and seminaries, to those of all races.

Through all its History, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, has been characterized by a continuing demand for freedom and intelligence, in both politics and

religion - a fundamental concept and drive, brought here by the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian dissenters, who migrated from the North of Ireland to settle in the American South. Their influence in the Establishment of the American Commonwealth, has run wide and deep. Virginia and North Carolina Presbyteries were calling for American Independence long before the Boston riots and the Liberty Bell; the Mecklenburg (North Carolina) Presbytery was the first Ecclesiastical Body in the Colonies to approve the Declaration of Independence. Presbyterian Civic Leaders brought law and order to many areas of the South before Colonial Officials could be appointed or elected; with their distinguishing passion for education, Presbyterian Ministers, taught school before there was any organized system of public education in the region. In parallel patriotic passion, they were prominent in both French and Indian Revolutionary Wars, and in the long struggle for religious liberty, and the rights of religious dissenters. With the Baptists, they laid in Church and School, the Spiritual, moral, and intellectual foundations of the famous Jeffersonian "Act for Establishing Religious Freedom" in Virginia, which preceded similar statements, concerning the same rights and freedoms in the Constitution of the United States. Their Missionary zeal was evident in their presence in the first wagons and wagon trains that moved out through the Mississippi Valley to the West.

Doctrinally, they are of course, Calvinistic. As in most Reformed Churches, Ministers, Elders, and Deacons, are required to give adherence to a Confessional Statement. Women are now admitted to the Ministry and Eldership and are encouraged to enlist in other Government Fields of Christian work. Polity Government and Doctrine follow the Presbyterian pattern.

There are 7 Synods and 59 Presbyteries, 4,036 Churches, and 877,664 members in 18 States. The Church supports 4 Theological Seminaries - Austin, Columbia, Louisville, and Union (Richmond) - 15 colleges and 1 other affiliated college, 5 junior colleges, 4 secondary schools, 2 Missions schools, and 1 School of Religious Education, 18 children's homes, and 20 homes for the aged. Home Missionary Work is conducted among the Indians and Latin Americans in Texas and Oklahoma, in the Ozarks and Appalachians; the work is marked, not only by financial support, but by concern for comity

in Churching the several areas, in urban problems, etc. Abroad, a Missionary Force of 519, is at work in Mexico, Ecuador, Brazil, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Portugal, Iraq, Vietnam, and the Congo; they serve, not only Presbyterian Churches and Missions, but many indigenous projects, as well. There are 29 periodicals published by the Board of Education, which also operates the John Knox Press.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

For the first 1,500 years of Christendom, up to the time of the Protestant Reformation, the Western World was almost solidly Roman Catholic. The eleventh-Century separation left the faith divided between Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Sectors. The Reformation left Continental Europe and the British Isles divided among Roman Catholic, Lutherans, Anglican, and Reformed Churches, with the prospect of still further division as Denominationalism increased.

The Roman Catholic Church dates its beginning from the moment of Christ's selection of the Apostle Peter, as guardian of the keys of Heaven and Earth and as Chief of the Apostles, and it claims this fisherman as its first Pope. It gained Temporal Authority and Power, when it arose as the Only Body, strong enough, to rule after the fall of the City of Rome in A.D. 410. A House of Terror, ravaged first by Goths, Vandals, and Franks, and then, by Saxons, Danes, Alemanni, Lombard's, and Burgundians, Europe found its only steadying hand in the Church. Without the Church, Anarchy would have been King from Britain to the Bosphorus.

The first mention of the term, "Catholic" (meaning "Universal") "Church," was made by Ignatius, about A.D. 110-15, but the first real demonstrations of its Roman Authority, came as it won the Barbarians to its banners, while it kept the Flame of Faith burning in its Churches and the Candle of Wisdom alive in its Monastic Schools. Augustine, deeply influenced its Theological and Philosophical Structure, and gave Papacy its finest justification and defense. He left it strong enough to give Crowns or deny them to Europe's Kings.

The Church beat back the threats of its enemies at home and from afar; it converted the Barbarian, won against the Saracen, and employed the Inquisition against the Heretic boring from within. It brought the Hopeful Interval, known as the Peace of God; it also supported Chivalry and Feudalism, fought the Crusades, built schools, created a noble art and literature. For long Centuries, the Benedictine Monasteries guarded and preserved learning and culture in Europe; this order of Monks, was founded in 529, in Italy by St. Benedict; since its founding, more than 4 million men have practiced the Benedictine Rule of Life. Centuries later, (1209), St. Francis of Assisi, established the Franciscan Order, and at about the same time, St. Dominic, began his Order of Friars Preachers (Dominicans).

Inevitably, there came the temptations of power and prosperity from without. Then came the Reformation. Roman Catholic Scholars readily admit that there were corrupt individuals within the Church and that Reform was necessary. Indeed, Reform was underway before the Reformation broke; Martin Luther, himself, was a Catholic Reformer within the Church, before he became a Protestant. Erasmus and Savonarola wrote and preached against the corruption and worldliness of certain Roman Catholic Leaders and laymen, but they stayed within the Church. That all these Reformers had a case against the members of the Roman Church, is not denied by the Roman Catholics, they do, however, maintain that while Priests and Bishops and even Popes may err, the one true Church cannot err, and that Luther was wrong in rebelling against the Church. But rebel he did, and the Roman Church suffered its most fateful division.

There were, too, other reasons for the revolt. There was the growth of Nationalism and Secularism, the ambitions of Political Princes and Rulers, with great personal ambitions, who wanted no interference from the Church. And there was the Renaissance, with its revival of Greek and Roman Pagan influences and emphasis. All these forces worked together to produce the Reformation. The counter Reformation was effective in halting the spread of the new Protestantism in Europe and won back some areas to the Roman Catholic Church and faith; one of its chief instruments was the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), an Educational and Missionary Order, founded by Ignatius of Lovola, in 1534.

But long before Luther, Roman Catholics had reached America. The first Roman Catholic Diocese on this side of the Atlantic was established in Greenland in 1125; there were Bishops in residence there until 1377. Priests of Catholic Spain came with Columbus in 1492; Missionaries came with Coronado and with the other early Spanish Explorers. Most of them perished; one of them started the First Permanent Parish in America at St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565.

French Explorers, Voyageurs, and Colonizers - Cartier, Joliet, Marquette, and others - were generally Roman Catholic, accompanied by Missionary Groups. Among them, were the Recollects, Jesuits, Sulpicians, Capuchins, and the Secular Clergy. New France became a Vicariate Apostolic in 1658, with Bishop Laval, at its Head. The Sea of Quebec (1675) had Spiritual Jurisdiction over all the vast Province of France in North America, reaching down the Valley of the Mississippi to Louisiana.

In 1634, the Roman Catholics founded Maryland; later they were restricted, by law in Maryland, and in most other Colonies, and the restrictions were not removed until after the Revolution. In the face of these restrictions and in view of the fact that most of the colonial immigrants were Protestants, the Roman Catholic Church grew slowly. In 1696, there were only 7 Catholic families in New York, and 80 years later, they were still traveling to Philadelphia, to receive the Sacraments. In 1763, there were fewer than 25,000 Catholics, out of a population of 2,200,000 in the Colonies; they were under the Jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic of London.

Among the Signatures on the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution, are found those of Thomas Fitzsimmons, Daniel Carroll, and Charles Carroll of Carrollton, all of whom were Catholics. The Revolution brought them religious, as well as political freedom; religious equality became the law, with the adoption of the Constitution in 1787.

There was no immediate Hierarchical Superior in the United States when the War ended, and the Vicar Apostolic in London, refused to exercise Jurisdiction over the

“rebels.” After long investigation and delay and an appeal to Rome, the Rev. John Carroll was named Superior, or prefect Apostolic, of the Church in the 13 Original States. At that time, there were 15,800 Catholics in Maryland, 700 in Pennsylvania, 200 in Virginia, and 1,500 in New York, unorganized and with no Priests. At the turn of the Century, there were 80 Churches and about 150,000 Roman Catholics; by 1890, there were 6,231,417 – a growth, due primarily, to the flood tide of emigration from the Catholic Countries of Europe. Today, the nearly 50 million members of the Roman Catholic Church, make up about one-quarter of the population of the United States.

Baltimore became the first American Diocese in 1789 and an Archdiocese in 1808; other Dioceses and Archdioceses were formed as the Church expanded. Three Plenary or National Councils were held at Baltimore in 1852, 1866, and 1884. Archbishop John McCloskey of New York, became the first American Cardinal in 1875, and Archbishop James Giggons of Baltimore, was elevated to the same rank in 1877.

The Civil War and 2 World Wars failed to disturb the work of the Church or to interrupt its growth; indeed, World War I, produced one of the ablest Hierarchal Roman Catholic Agencies in the Country - the National War Council, now known as the United States Catholic Conference. There were 18,608,003 Catholics in the United States in 1926; by 1977, the Roman Catholic Church had become the largest Church in the United States, with 49,325,752 members in approximately 18,250 Churches. About 23 percent of the American people identified themselves as Roman Catholics.

The faith and doctrine of Catholicism are founded upon “that deposit of faith, given to it by Christ and through His Apostles, sustained by the Bible and by tradition.” Thus, they accept as Official Creeds, the Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Creed of Pius IV, also called the Creedal Statement of the Council of Trent.

Roman Catholics, like the Eastern Orthodox, believe in 7 Sacraments. Baptism, necessary for membership in the Church, is administered to infants and adults by pouring

or immersion, and all baptized persons are considered to be members of the Church. Confirmation, by laying on of hands and anointing with the Holy Chrism, in the form of a Cross, follows baptism; the ordinary Minister of this Sacrament is the Bishop, but Priests may also confirm. The Laity usually receive the Eucharist (Lord's Supper), in the form of bread alone; the body and blood of Christ are considered as actually present in the Eucharistic elements. The Sacrament of Penance is one through which post-baptismal sins are forgiven. The anointing of the sick, is for those seriously ill, injured, or aged. The Sacrament of Holy Orders, is one of ordination for Deacons, Priests, and Bishops. Marriage is a Sacrament that "cannot be dissolved by any human power"; this rules out divorce with remarriage. Members are required to attend Mass on Sundays and obligatory Holy days, to fast and abstain on certain appointed days, to confess at least once a year, to receive the Holy Eucharist, during the Easter season, to contribute to support of Pastors, and to observe strictly, the marriage regulations of the Church.

The Government of the Roman Catholic Church, is Hierarchal and Authoritarian, but laymen are frequently consulted. (The trend is toward more and more lay participation, since Vatican Council II.) At the Head of the structure, stands the Pope, who is also Bishop of Rome and "Vicar of Christ on Earth and the Visible Head of the Church." His authority is Supreme in all matters of faith and discipline. Next to him, is the College of Cardinals. Although Laymen were once chosen to be Cardinals, the Office has been limited to Priests since 1918, the last Lay Cardinal died in 1876. Many of the Cardinals live in Rome, acting as advisors to the Pope and as Heads or members of the various Congregations or Commissions, supervising the Administration of the Church. When a Pope dies, the Cardinals elect his Successor; they hold authority in the Interim. The Roman Curia, is the official body of Papal Administrative Offices, through which, the Pope governs the Church; it is composed of Congregations, Tribunals, and Curial Offices.

In the United States, there are 9 active Cardinals, 55 Archbishops (8 also are Cardinals), 356 Bishops, and over 58,000 Priests. The Archbishop is in charge of the Archdiocese and has precedence in his Province. There are 32 Archdioceses and 137 Dioceses. Bishops are the Ruling Authority in the Diocese, but appeals from their

decisions may be taken to the Apostolic Delegate at Washington and even Rome. The Parish Pastor is responsible to the Bishop; he is appointed by the Bishop or Archbishop and holds authority to celebrate Mass and administer the Sacraments with the help of such other Priests as the Parish may need. Bishops are appointed from Rome, usually upon suggestions from the Hierarchy in the United States.

The Clergy of the Church includes Deacons, Priests, and Bishops. Candidates for orders studying in divinity schools are called Seminaries; there are 15,943 of them in Diocesan and Religious-Order Seminaries. The usual Seminary course covers a period of 8 years of study after high school - 4 years of philosophy and 4 years of theology. Those in Religious Orders also spend 1 or 2 years in a Novitiate.

Since the restoration of the permanent Diaconate in 1967, more than 1,900 men have completed the training course and been ordained Deacons. Most of these men are married and over 35. They are empowered to Preach, baptize, distribute Holy Communion, and officiate at weddings. Most Deacons support themselves in secular jobs and exercise their Ministry on weekends and evenings.

In 1977, there were 35,904 Diocesan or Secular Priests in the United States and 22,395 Priests, who belonged to Religious Orders and Congregations. Add to these, the 9,740 Lay Brothers and the 146,914 Sisters engaged in the work, and their importance in the overall task of the Church, becomes clear. The official "Catholic Directory," lists a total of 101 Religious Orders of Priests and Brothers, 24 Religious Orders for Brothers only, and 40 Orders of Women. They differ widely in their work. Some are "Contemplative" Orders, remaining in their Monasteries or cloistered convents. Those in active or mixed Religious Orders engage in teaching, care of the sick, Missionary work, writing, or social work. Those in Brotherhoods or Sisterhoods are required to take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, but are not ordained; they engage primarily in educational, philanthropic, and charitable work. (Technically, the only orders for ordained men are the Dominicans, Carmelites, Benedictines, Augustinians, and Jesuits, but ordinarily any religious community of men or women is called a Religious Order).

Besides Religious Orders and Congregations, Catholics may join Secular Institutions, whose members also observe poverty, chastity, and obedience, but do not wear any distinctive garb or live together in a community; before receiving approval as Secular Institutes engaged in Apostolic work, these groups may operate as approved "Pious Unions." Worldwide membership in these Institutes and Unions exceeds 15,000. Some members are also ordained Priests.

Three Ecclesiastical Councils form an important part of the Catholic Systems; they are known as General or Ecumenical; Plenary, or National; and Provincial Councils. A General Council is called by the Pope or with his consent; it is composed of all Catholic Bishops of the World, and its acts on matters of doctrine and discipline must be approved by the Pope. Plenary Councils are made up of the Bishops resident in a given Country; their acts too, must be submitted to the Holy See before promulgation. Below them, are the Diocesan and Provincial Councils that made further promulgation and application of the Decrees passed by the other Councils and approved by the Pope. Pope John XXIII, summoned the Bishops of the Church to the twenty-first Ecumenical Council, known as the Second Vatican Council. Following his death, Pope Paul VI, reconvened the Council, which stimulated Liturgical Reform, Catholic participation in the Ecumenical Movement, updated many Church practices, and inaugurated the idea of collegiality among the Bishops. In 1968, Paul VI, reaffirmed the Official Church position against any form of birth control, except total or partial abstinence from sex relations in marriage; many theologians, Priests, and Laymen protested this voicing opposition to the Encyclical "Humanae Vitae," and the Hierarchies of such Countries as France, Canada, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, and West Germany interpreted the Papal position in the light of the freedom of the individual conscience.

The central act of Worship is the Mass; its 2 principal parts are the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic Liturgy. Some of the chief parts of the Liturgy of the Word, are the readings from the Old and New Testaments; the Homily, or Sermon, the Nicene Creed; and the Prayer of the Faithful. The Eucharistic Liturgy includes the offering of the bread and wine, the Consecration, the Lord's Prayer, and the Communion. From the third

Century to 1963, the Western Church prescribed Latin as the liturgical language; now the entire Mass is recited in the vernacular, by both Priest and people. Besides the Mass, Catholics may participate in popular devotions, such as the benedictions, rosary, stations of the cross, novenas, and Bible vigils.

With the most centralized Government in Christendom, the Holy See at Rome has Representatives in many Countries of the World. Roman Catholic Churches have been established in 217 Countries with a total membership of over 633,000,000. The majority of Italians, Spanish, Irish, Austrians, Poles, Latin Americans, Belgians, Hungarians, Southern Germans, Portuguese French, and Filipinos are baptized Roman Catholics. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, is the overall Representative Missionary Body. In 110 foreign Countries, there are 7,699 Missionaries sent out from the United States.

Education has been a primary concern of American Catholics ever since the establishment of a classical school at St. Augustine, Florida, in 1606. As of 1977, there are 8,375 elementary parochial and private schools in this Country, with 2,478,229 students, 1,601 Catholic high schools with 895,775 students. More than 442,000 students attend 241 Catholic Colleges and Universities, including Notre Dame, Fordham, Georgetown, Boston College, St. Louis, Marquette, Catholic, Loyola, and Villanova. There are 167,836 full-time teachers in Catholic schools, of whom 6,009 are Priests, 3,537 are Brothers, 50,121 are Sisters, and 107,856 are Lay teachers. An estimated total of 1,400,000 Catholics attend non-Catholic Colleges and Universities.

Almost every Diocese publishes a weekly newspaper; a total of 461 Catholic newspapers and magazines are published in the United States and Canada. Some of the largest and most influential Periodicals are "The National Catholic Reporter," "Commonweal," "America," "Columbia," "U.S. Catholic," "St. Anthony Messenger," "Catholic Digest," "Catholic World," and "Ligourian." Periodicals reflecting a more conservative position, include "The Wanderer," "Twin Circle," and "The National Catholic Register."

Roman Catholic charity and welfare work is conducted by many different organizations, religious and otherwise. The National Conference on Catholic Charities helps to coordinate work on State and National levels; work is also conducted by several Religious Orders of men and women devoting full-time to the relief of the poor in homes or in Institutions; there are also Bureaus of charities in many of the Dioceses. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, is perhaps, the largest and most effective Charity Organization; numerous others - the Little Sisters of the Poor, the Sisters of Charity, the Daughters of Charity of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Sisters of Mercy, and the Third Order of Franciscans - are active among the poor in Catholic hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the aged. There are 730 general and special hospitals treating over 31,000,000 patients annually; 1 out of every 3 beds in the Nation's private hospitals has been provided by the Catholic Hospital System. There are 461 homes for the aged and 219 orphanages.

The members of the Hierarchy are also members of the United States Catholic Conference, which operates as a Clearinghouse of Information; this is not a Council or a Legislative Body; so, the resolutions of its meetings do not have the force of law. It facilitates discussion of all policies affecting the interests and activities of the Church and unifies, coordinates and organizes work in social welfare, education, and other activities. Every Bishop in the United States and its territories and possessions has a voice in this Conference.

A new phenomenon of the Church will have important effect in the shaping of future structures: Parish councils, created to aid the Priests in the Management of the Parish and composed of Laity, have consultative powers; while new Diocesan Senates, composed of Priests, assist the Bishop in the setting of the policies in the Diocese.

While most Roman Catholics belong to the Latin Rite, there are at least 20 groups of Churches and an estimated 10 to 12 million other Catholics belonging to the Eastern Rites. These Catholics hold identical doctrinal beliefs and recognize the Authority of the Pope, but they differ in language, liturgy, customs, Church laws, and tradition. Generally, they follow 1 of 5 Historic Rites: Byzantine, Alexandrian, Antiochian, Armenian, or

Chaldean. Across the World, the main Eastern Rite Bodies are, the Catholic Copts, Ethiopian Catholics, Syrians, Chaldeans, Catholic Armenians, Malabar Catholics, Byzantine Catholics, and Maronites.

Some 605,000 Eastern Rite Catholics, mostly Ukrainians and Ruthenians, live in the United States. Smaller groups include, the Maronites, Melkites, Romanians, Russians, and Armenians. All these Rites are jurisdictionally related to one or another of the Eastern Patriarchs.

The Roman Catholic Church today, finds itself in an era of change, tension, and some dissension. Pope John XXIII and Vatican II, brought about new programs and approaches in the fields of Ecumenism, religious liberty, the liturgy, Biblical studies, and social action. Priests now, face their people as they say Mass; Masses once said only in Latin are now said in the modern vernacular of the people. Many Catholics may choose to practice confession, by sitting down and discussing their sins and Spiritual problems face-to-face with the Priest, and many of them may choose one of several forms of penance. Before Vatican II, Catholics were forbidden to attend meetings of the World Council of Churches; now Catholic Bishops have entered into theological dialogue with several of the larger Protestant denominations. A Catholic Pentecostal Movement, stressing the charismatic gifts of speaking in tongues, healing, interpretation, and Prophecy, now claims 300,000 Catholics, meeting in charismatic prayer groups across the Country. Dissension is found in the questioning of the Authority of the Bishops, celibacy, birth control, abortion, and the anti-sex positions of many of the Fathers of the early Church.

Vatican II opened the way for many of these changes and reforms; it now remains to be seen what the newly elected Pope John Paul II, will do with or about them. It is a crucial day for this great, Historic Church.

OLD CATHOLIC CHURCHES

Old Catholic Churches in the United States are outgrowths, but unconnected branches of the Old Catholic Movement and Churches of Europe. The European Bodies originated in a protest against the doctrine of Papal infallibility, adopted by the Roman Catholic Vatican Council of 1870; Roman Priests in Germany, who refused to accept the doctrine, were excommunicated and organized the Old Catholic Church, under the leadership of Dr. Ignatz von Dollinger, in 1871. A similar break occurred in Holland and Switzerland, where other Old Catholic Churches were established.

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This revolt did not break completely with Roman Catholicism. It rejected Papal Infallibility, the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, Compulsory Celibacy of the Priesthood, and in some instances, the Filioque Clause of the Nicene Creed, but kept much of the other doctrine, creeds, customs, and liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church. It was also most anxious to preserve the Orders and the Apostolic succession of its Priests and Bishops, inasmuch as they considered Apostolic succession as vital in a valid Christian Ministry. Much confusion has resulted in conflicting claims of succession and validity of orders, especially in American Old Catholic Churches. All Old Catholic Bodies in this Country, were at one time or another, connected with European Bodies, but that is not true today; most American groups have severed their connections with Churches abroad. Someone has said, that most of the Old Catholics in America, are either dissatisfied Angelicans or former Catholics; and there is some truth in that, if not all the truth. Several attempts have been made; however, to merge Old Catholic Churches with those of the Church of England or the Greek Church, and gestures have been made toward membership in the World Council of Churches.

Old Catholic Missionaries were in America soon after 1871, establishing scattered congregations. Father Joseph Rene Vilatte, a French Priest, ordained by the Old Catholics in Switzerland, attempted to organize these congregations and at once, became the storm center of the rising confusion. Vilatte himself, vacillated between rival bodies; he studied at a Presbyterian College in Montreal and twice returned to submit to

the Roman Catholic Church, dying at last in a French Monastery. Vigorously opposed within his own Church and by American Protestant Episcopalians, whose ranks he refused to join, he went to Switzerland in 1885, for ordination as an Old Catholic Bishop and was finally consecrated as an Archbishop by Archbishop Alvarez of Ceylon, who claimed orders through the Syro-Jacobite Church of Malabar. He returned to America to found the American Catholic Church.

Separated and competing as they are, the Old Catholics in the United States, have a firm common doctrinal basis. The doctrine is similar to that held by the Greek and Latin Churches before those 2 bodies separated; among the Old Catholics, it is now more Eastern Catholic, than Western. They accept the 7 Ecumenical Councils of the Church, held before the division into Eastern and Western Bodies. Bible reading is encouraged and national tongues, rather than Latin, are used in all Worship. There is a strange blend here, of Orthodoxy and Rationalism, both in doctrine and in ritual.

There are 4 main divisions of Old Catholic Churches in the United States, with an approximate total of 97,000 members in 100 Churches - the American Catholic Church (Archdiocese of New York), the North American Old Roman Catholic Church, Christ Catholic Church of America and Europe (no information available, aside from membership, which is 7,100 in 24 Churches), and the American Catholic Church (Syro-Antiochian). The African Orthodox Church, a black group, is listed often as an Old Catholic Body, but is actually Protestant Episcopalian in origin and connection. The Polish National Catholic Church, may be said, to have certain Old Catholic origins and doctrines, but it has been listed separately in this Book, in consideration of their distinctively nationalistic character. The Liberal Catholic Church is also related to the Old Catholic Movement.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Four Churches of Historic importance constitute the United Church of Christ: the Congregational Church, the Christian Church, the Evangelical Synod, and the Reformed

Church. The first 2, merged into the Congregational Christian Churches in 1931 and were joined by the, by-then, merged Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1957. The Union was completed in the adoption of a Constitution at Philadelphia in July, 1961.

The background of these 4 Churches are important enough to be studied separately.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Congregationalism has been an issue in Christianity from the beginning; it began, as Gaius Glenn Atkins suggests, “without a name and with no sense of its destiny.” Even before the Reformation broke over Europe, there were little dissenting groups of Churchmen in England, “seeking a better way,” than that of the established Church (Anglican Church or Church of England). As the Reformation developed in England, dissent took corporate form in the Puritan Movement, of which, Congregationalism was the most radical wing.

Until a few years ago, it was generally believed that, Congregationalism had its rise in Separatism, a Movement that began in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and that held that, the Church of England was Un-Christian; that to attempt to reform it from within, was hopeless; and that the only course for a true Christian to take, was to separate himself from it completely. Recent Historians; however, have proved that, though Robert Browne and other Separatist Leaders, developed Sundry Ideas that were identical with those of early Congregationalism, the 2 groups were wholly distinct, the former being perfectionists, who refused cooperation with other branches of the Church, the latter being as cooperative as possible, without giving up their principles.

John Robinson, one of their most influential early Leaders, first enters Church History as a Separatist, in 1609, he fled persecution in England and settled at Leiden in the Netherlands with the exiled congregation from Scrooby in Nottinghamshire. There, he met William Ames, Congregationalism’s first great theologian, and Henry Jacob, its first

great pamphleteer and organizer. These men were also fugitives from the Ecclesiastical Courts of Britain. By them, Robinson, was converted from rigid Separatism to the Position of Congregationalism.

For 12 years, Robinson and his Congregation, enjoyed peace and freedom, under the Dutch; but haunted by the conviction, that their sons would not grow up as Englishmen, a large part of the company sailed for America in 1620 aboard the Historic Mayflower. In a hostile New World, with the wilderness before them and the sea at their backs, they helped lay the Foundations of the American Commonwealth; the Democratic ideals of their Plymouth Colony, worked out slowly and painfully, were the cornerstone of the structure, which gave us our free State, free schools, and free social and political life.

Other Congregational Churches were established at Barnstable, Salem, and elsewhere along the Massachusetts Coast. Between 1630 and 1640, 20,000 Puritans came to Massachusetts Bay. It was inevitable that the "Bay People," who came direct from England and the "Plymouth People," from the Netherlands, should join forces, which they did, establishing thereby, an all-powerful theocratic Government over both settlements.

Church and commonwealth were this theocracy's 2 instruments. It was a stern - and at times, an intolerant - regime. Suffrage was limited to Church members; Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams were banished; Baptists were hauled into Court; and 4 Quakers were hanged on Boston Common. It was a dark, but a comparatively short period, ending with the Act of Toleration in 1689.

In 1636, Thomas Hooker, led a company of 100, to what is now, Hartford, Connecticut; the Freeman's Constitution, drawn up by Hooker and his Associates, became the model of the American Constitution. Dissenting from the rigidity of current Church Worship, Congregationalists such as, Jonathan Edwards of Northampton, played leading roles in the Great Awakening, which broke in 1734; that Revival was marked, not only by the eloquence of George Whitefield, but by the vigorous writings and preaching of Edwards,

whose Books are now regarded as American Classics.

Emerging stronger than ever from the Revolution, in the preparation of which it played a great heroic part, Congregationalism was concerned for the next Century, with the significant developments: high education, Missions, the Unitarian Separation, the formation of a National Council, and the production of a Uniform Statement of Belief. In the field of Education, this Church had already made tremendous contributions: it had founded Harvard in 1636, Yale (1707), was a Congregational Project for the Education of its Clergy; Dartmouth (1769), developed from Eleazer Wheelock's School for Indians. These, with Williams, Amherst, Bowdoin, and Middlebury, were among the first Colleges in New England. By 1953, there were 48 colleges and 10 theological seminaries in the United States, with Congregational Christian origin or connection.

Interest in Missions among American Congregationalists began the day the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth. The Mayhews, David Brainerd, and John Eliot, were soon at work among the Indians. Eliot spent 7 years mastering the Indian tongue, put the Bible in their language, and published an Indian Catechism in 1653, the first Book to be printed in their language. By 1674, there were 4,000 "praying Indians," in New England, with 24 native Preachers. When the wagon trains went West after the Revolution, the families of Congregational Ministers and Missionaries, were prominent. Manasseh Cutler, a Preacher from Hamilton, Massachusetts, was instrumental in framing the famous, Northwest Territory Ordinance of 1787; and other Ministers led in the founding of Marietta, Ohio, the First Permanent Settlement in the Northwest Territory.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, was organized in 1810, and was concerned, at first, with both home and foreign Missionary work. On it, served not only Congregationalists, but Representatives of Presbyterian, Dutch Reformed, and Associate Reformed Churches. This was the first Foreign Mission Society in the Country and it was inter-denominational. The first 5 men ordained, were the 5 young men, who had participated in the famous "haystack" meeting at Williams College. After them, came Missionaries, to more than 30 foreign Countries and in American territories, not the least

of which, was Hawaii, where Congregational Missionaries, within 25 years, taught a whole Nation of people to read and write, laid the foundations of a Constitutional Democratic Government, and made, of their beautiful islands, a sociological laboratory, filled with many races. The Congregational Achievement in Hawaii, is one of the greatest in the whole History of Protestant Missions.

The rise of denominationalism worked against the inter-denominational complexion of the American Board and by mid-Century, the non-Congregationalists had all withdrawn to go their separate ways. The American Board was no longer inter-denominational.

Moving Westward, Congregationalists from New England, came into contact with Presbyterians, moving out from the middle and southern states. To avoid competition and duplication of effort, a plan of Union was worked out, under which Ministers and members from both Churches, were exchanged and accepted on equal basis. Adopted in 1801, the plan eventually worked out to the advantage of the Presbyterians; it was discontinued in 1852, leaving the Presbyterians stronger in the West and the Congregationalists with a virtual Church Monopoly in New England. But the plan did much to inspire new Congregational Missionary work. In 1826, the American Home Missionary Society was founded; it was active in the South before the Civil War and especially effective there toward the end of that conflict with its "contraband" schools for blacks, one of which, became Hampton Institute.

Meanwhile, differences of opinion, between the theological Liberals and Conservatives, were developing within the Church. Strict Calvinists and Trinitarians were opposed by Unitarians, and a famous sermon by William Ellery Channing, at Baltimore in 1819, made a division, inevitable. The American Unitarian Association was established in 1825. Almost all the Older Congregational Churches in Eastern Massachusetts went Unitarian; only one Congregational Church was left in Boston. Debate and legal action over property and funds were not finished until about 1840.

In spite of the Unitarian defection, Congregationalism continued to grow. It assumed

such proportions, that a National Supervisory Body became necessary and a series of National Conventions or Councils, evidenced the growing denominational consciousness of the widely, scattered Independent Local Churches. A National Council held at Boston, in 1865, was so effective, that a Regular System of Councils was established. Following Conferences between the Association into which the Churches had grouped themselves, the first of the National Councils was called at Oberlin, Ohio, in 1871. Known as the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches, it met biennially and acted as an Overall Advisory Body for the entire fellowship.

The Council of 1913, at Kansas City, adopted a Declaration on Faith, polity, and wider fellowship, that has been accepted by many Churches as a Statement of Faith. While it did not, in any way, modify the Independence of the Local Churches, it did give a new Spiritual Unity to the Church. It read as follows:

“Faith - We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and love; and in Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord and Saviour, who for us and our salvation, lived and died and rose again and liveth evermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who taketh of the things of Christ and revealed them to us, renewing, comforting, and inspiring the souls of men. We are united in striving to know the Will of God, as taught in the Holy Scriptures, and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the Mission of the Church of Christ, to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind, exalting the Worship of the true God, and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, and reign of peace, and the realization of human brotherhood. Depending, as did our fathers, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit, to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the World into the Kingdom of God; and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

“Polity - We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul and the right of private judgment. We hold to the autonomy of the local Church and its independence of all Ecclesiastical control. We cherish the fellowship of the Churches, united in District, State, and National Bodies, for counsel and cooperation in matters of common concern.

“The Wider Fellowship - While affirming the liberty of our Churches and the validity of

our Ministry, we hold to the Unity and Catholicity of the Church of Christ, and will unite with all its branches in hearty cooperation; and will earnestly seek, so far as in us lies, that the prayer of our Lord for His Disciples, may be answered, that they all may be one.”

The “Wider Fellowship” is taken seriously; unity and cooperation across denominational lines have been outstanding characteristics of Congregationalism all through its History. Christian Endeavor, the largest Young People’s Organization in all Protestantism, was founded by a Congregationalist, Francis E. Clark, in 1881; by 1885, it had become an Inter-denominational Organization, known all over the World, as the United Society of Christian Endeavor. In 1924, the Evangelical Protestant Church of North America, was received into the National Council of Congregational Churches, as the Evangelical Protestant Conference of Congregational Churches; the 2 mergers, with the Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Churches coming comparatively close together, again, witness to the widening fellowship and vision of the Congregationalists. Into the most recent merger, they brought 47 Church-related (not Church-controlled) colleges, 11 theological seminaries, foreign Missions stations in Africa, Mexico, Japan, the Philippines, India, Ceylon, Greece, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Korea, and Micronesia, and home Missionaries in every State in the Union and Puerto Rico.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Christian Churches, like the Congregational, were born in protest against Ecclesiasticism and the denial of individual freedom in the Church. There were actually 3 revolts, which resulted in the establishment of Christian Churches in New England and in the South.

The first came in 1792, when James O’Kelly, a Methodist Minister in Virginia, withdrew from that Church in protest against the development of the Superintendency into an Episcopacy, especially insofar as it gave the Methodist Bishops absolute power in appointing Ministers to their charges. O’Kelly and his followers organized under the

name, Republican Methodists; this was later changed to “Christian,” with the New Church insisting that the Bible be taken as the only rule and discipline, and that Christian character be made the only requirement of Church membership.

Abner Jones, convinced that “sectarian names and human creeds should be abandoned,” left the Vermont Baptists to organize at Lyndon, Vermont, in 1801, the First Christian Church in New England. This was done, not so much in objection to Baptist Organization or doctrine, as from a desire to secure a wider freedom in religious thought and fellowship. Like O’Kelly, Jones insisted that piety and character were to be the sole test of Christian fellowship.

In the Great Awakening, which swept Tennessee and Kentucky in 1801, there was a great deal of preaching, that either ignored the old emphasis on the doctrines of the various denominations involved, or was often in direct contradiction to them. Barton W. Stone, accused of anti-Presbyterian preaching, led a number of Presbyterians out of the Synod of Kentucky to organize a Springfield Presbytery. This Presbytery was discontinued as its members gradually came to accept the ideology of James O’Kelly and Abner Jones, and adopted the name “Christians.” Stone, an ardent Revivalist, was deeply influenced by the preaching of Alexander Campbell and led many of his followers and Churches into the fold of the Disciples of Christ. But the large majority of his Christian Churches remained with the Original Christian body.

The groups under O’Kelly, Jones, and Stone engaged in a long series of Conferences, which resulted in their Union on 6 basic Christian Principles:

1. Christ, the only Head of the Church.
2. The Bible, sufficient rule of faith and practice.
3. Christian character, the measure of membership.
4. A right, individual interpretation of the Scripture, as a way of life.
5. “Christian,” the name taken as worthy of the followers of Christ.
6. Unity, Christians working together to save the World.

No Council or other Body in the Christian Church has ever attempted to draw up any other creed or statement. Their Creed is the Bible. Their interpretation of Bible teaching might be called Evangelical, but no sincere follower of Christ is barred from their membership because of differences in theological belief. Open Communion is practiced; baptism is considered a duty, but it is not required: immersion is used generally, but any mode may be employed.

The Union of the Congregational and Christian Churches has been thoroughly Democratic, leaving both free to continue their own forms of Worship and each with its own polity and doctrine. Adhering strictly to the Congregational Idea, each Local Church is at liberty to call itself, either Congregational or Christian, and the same choice is found in the self-governing District and State Associations into which the Churches are organized.

EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH

The Evangelical and Reformed Church was the product of a Union established at Cleveland, Ohio, on June 26, 1943, between 2 bodies of Swiss and German background, with basic agreements in doctrine, polity, and culture - the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States.

The Evangelical Synod was the younger of the 2 bodies, originating with 6 Ministers, who met at Gravois Settlement, near St. Louis, in 1840, to form the Evangelical Union of the West. They were Ministers of Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the Evangelical United Church of Prussia. Two had been sent to America by the Rhenish Missionary Society and 2, by the Missionary Society of Basel; the other 2 were independent, one coming from Bremen and the other from Strasbourg.

The Evangelical Union of the West, was a cooperative Ministerial Association until 1849, when the First Permanent Organization was established. As the Movement spread

to the east and northwest among German-speaking Lutheran and Reformed people, Headquarters were established at St. Louis and a New Name, the German Evangelical Synod of North America, adopted. A series of amalgamations with 4 other bodies of similar belief and polity - the German Evangelical Church Association of Ohio, the German United Evangelical Synod of the East, the Evangelical Synod of the Northwest, and the United Evangelical Synod of the East - resulted in the Formation of the Evangelical Synod of North America, giving it a membership of 281,598 at the time of the merger with the Reformed Church in the United States.

The Reformed Church in the United States had its origin in Switzerland and Germany, and particularly in the flood-time of German immigration to Pennsylvania in the eighteenth Century. More than half the Germans in Pennsylvania, in 1730, were of the Reformed Persuasion; their congregations were widely separated along their frontier; and lacking Ministers; they often employed school teachers to lead their services. Three of their Pastors, Johann Philip Boehm, George Michael Weiss, and Johann Bartholomaeus Reiger, were deeply influenced by Michael Schlatter, who had been sent to America by the Synod (Dutch Reformed) of South Holland; with him, they organized in 1747, a Coetus (synod) in Philadelphia. It was a synod directly responsible to, and in part, financially supported by the Synod in Holland, from which it declared its Independence in 1793, taking the name of the German Reformed Church; and in that year, it reported 178 congregations and 15,000 communicants. The word, "German" was dropped in 1869; from that time on, the denomination was called, the Reformed Church in the United States.

Reformed Church Missionaries went early across the Alleghenies into Ohio and south into North Carolina. An overall synod of the Church divided the Country into 8 Districts or Classes in 1819, and an Independent Ohio Class was formed in 1824. Franklin College (now Franklin and Marshall) was founded at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with the support of Benjamin Franklin; a theological seminary was opened at Carlisle and later moved to Lancaster; an Academy, that later became Marshall College, was established in 1836. The Synod of Ohio established a theological school and Heidelberg University at Tiffin,

Ohio, in 1850. The Mother Synod in the east and the Ohio Synod were united in the General Synod in 1836, which functioned until the merger with the Evangelical Synod of North America in 1934.

Difficulties arose in the early years of the last Century over the languages used in the Reformed Church; the older Germans preferred the use of German, and the second-generation members demanded English. Inevitably in a Church of such mixed membership, there were Conservatives and Liberals in conflict. Some of the Churches withdrew and formed a separate synod, but returned in 1837, as wiser heads prevailed and compromises were made. New District Synods of both German-speaking and English-speaking Congregations were created, and 2 Hungarian Classes were added in 1924, from the Old Hungarian Reformed Church.

By 1934, the Boards of the Church were directing a widespread home Missions work and foreign Missionary work in Japan, China, and Mesopotamia. There were 12 Institutions of higher learning, 3 theological seminaries, and 3 orphanages. There were 348,189 members in the Reformed Church at the time of the 1934 merger, largely concentrated in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Few difficulties were encountered in reconciling the doctrines of the 2 bodies when the Union was finally accomplished. Both Churches were German Calvinistic; the Reformed Church had been based Historically on the Heidlebert Catechism, and the Evangelical Synod on the Heidelberg Catechism, the Augsburg Confession, and Luther's Catechism. These 3 standards of faith were woven into one in the New Constitution of the Evangelical and Reformed Church in these words:

“The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are recognized as the Word of God and the ultimate rule of Christian faith and practice.

The doctrinal standards of the Evangelical and Reformed Church are the Heidelberg Catechism, Luther's Catechism, and the Augsburg Confession. They are accepted as an authoritative interpretation of the essential truth taught in the Holy Scriptures.

Wherever these doctrinal standards differ, Minister, members, and congregations, in

accordance with the liberty of conscience, inherent in the Gospel, are allowed to adhere to the interpretation of one of these confessions. However, in each case, the final norm is the Word of God.”

Two Sacraments - baptism, usually administered to infants, and the Lord's Supper - were accepted; confirmation, generally before the thirteenth or fourteenth years, ordination, consecration, marriage, and burial, were considered as rites. Although hymns and forms of Worship are provided for general use, a wide freedom of Worship is encouraged.

Church Polity, when this Church joined the Congregational Christians in 1957, was modified Presbyterian; each local Church was Governed by a Consistory or Church Council, elected from its own membership. Local Churches formed a Synod, of which there were 34, each made up of a Pastor and Lay Delegate from each Charge; the Synod met twice a year and had jurisdiction over all Ministers and congregations, examined, licensed, and ordained all Pastors, and elected its own Officers - a procedure quite different from that of the Congregational Christian Churches. It led many to wonder whether a Union between 2 such different Forms of Government could possibly work; their wonder or hesitancy is a root cause for the dissension of the few Churches that have, thus far, refused to cooperate in the merger.

The Evangelical and Reformed Church was a thriving Church in 1957-60, when the details of Union were being worked out. There were 810,000 members in 1959, in 2,740 Churches, 8 colleges, 3 theological schools, 2 Academies; foreign Missionaries in India, Japan, Hong Kong, Iraq, Africa, and Honduras; and a wide-spread home Missionary work in the United States, among the People of the Ozarks, the American Indians, the Volga Germans, Hungarians, and Japanese.

THE BLACK MUSLIM MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

Orthodox Islam does not want to be identified with the Black Muslim Movement in America, which it condemns, as Spurious and Heretical. Black Muslims are not viewed by Orthodox Muslims as true Muslims or as part of Islam.

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But given the inroads, the Black Muslims have made in the black community in America and the fact that they are now sending Missionaries to Africa to convert other blacks to their message, it would be unwise to ignore them.

ELIJAH MUHAMMAD

Since Elijah Muhammad was the most well-known Leader, of what is now called, the Nation of Islam, it is important to understand the background and beliefs of this man, who so profoundly influenced the black community in the United States.

EARLY LIFE

Elijah Muhammad was not always known by that name. He was born on October 10, 1897, under the name of Elijah Poole, the son of Wali and Marie Poole.

Elijah's father was a Baptist Pastor, who sought to raise his children in the Christian faith. But one of his 13 children, would eventually, do everything in his power to destroy the Gospel that his father and mother had always loved and preached. This erring child was none other than, Elijah Poole.

A FATEFUL MEETING

After moving from his native State of Georgia to Detroit, Michigan in 1931, Elijah Poole came under the influence of a colorful religious teacher by the name of, Wallace D. Fard.

WALLACE D. FARD

Not much is known about Fard, except that he was a peddler of “African” clothing, who claimed to be “a brother from the East.”

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Some Black Muslims claim that, he was born in Mecca, but they have never produced any documentation to prove this.

Seeking to give his followers an African identity and pride, he urged them to renounce their birth names and to adopt Muslim names, such as Muhammad.

He also told them to dress like the Arab Muslims did in the Middle East. Of course, he was the one to sell them the robes and other items they needed.

Under Fard’s influence, Elijah renounced the Christian faith of his parents and his birth name. Fard, then gave him the Arab name of Karriem.

THE WATCHTOWER AND ISLAM

The source of much of what Fard had to say about the Christian Church and its doctrines, came from the teachings of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, or as they are commonly known, the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

The Watchtower denied all the essential teachings of Historic Christianity, and went from house to house proclaiming that Jesus Christ was only a human Prophet and not divine in any sense.

The Watchtower’s reduction of Jesus to mere humanity, laid the foundation for Fard to introduce his unique brand of Islam.

Going from house to house, using Watchtower literature, Fard tore down his black follower's faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

THE WHITE MAN'S RELIGION

Having accomplished the first part of his task, he introduced Islam as the next logical step to get away from Christianity, which he mocked as "the white man's religion."

Of course, since Fard was himself a white man, this would lead one to conclude that the Nation of Islam was just another "white man's religion" also. It is interesting that Black Muslims today, are following the religion of a white man, whom like in the days of slavery, they call Master Fard Muhammad!

FARD'S PLAN

Fard's plan was simple. He took them from the Watchtower to Islam, from the Bible to the Quran, and from Jesus, to Muhammad. And the driving force, which fueled this process, was Racism.

BLACK RACISM

Fard taught that the white race was the "devil," while the Black Race was divine. He went so far as to say that, black people were Gods, because they were black!

This, of course, would mean that Fard himself was a "white devil." But this obvious problem is never answered by Black Muslims.

Despite the obvious absurdity of Fard's teaching, it was appealing to those blacks, who so keenly, felt oppressed and needed a way to rebel against, what they identified as "the man." Accepting Fard's Religion, was one way to strike back at the white man.

Given the horrors and injustices that black people have suffered under white racism, Fard used Black Racism, as the bait on the hook, to draw them into his religion. Of course, he did not bother to tell them that, Islam has always been as Racist as any white society.

ELIJAH TAKES OVER

Wallace D. Fard suddenly disappeared in 1934. What happened to him remains a mystery. Many think that he was killed to get him out of the way.

Regardless of why or how he disappeared, his demise gave Elijah the perfect opportunity to take over the Black Muslim Movement. It was at this time that, his name was changed to Muhammad, from Karriem.

Under Elijah Muhammad's guidance, the Movement grew and became wealthy beyond his wildest dreams. This was due to the natural genius and organizational skills of Elijah Muhammad, who went so far as to repay his Master, by proclaiming that Fard was Allah, incarnate!

BASIC TEACHINGS

The basic beliefs of Black Muslims are found in Elijah Muhammad's two Books, The Supreme Wisdom, and The Message to the Black Man in America.

FARRAKHAN'S NEW TEACHINGS

But it must be also pointed out, in all fairness, that today, Louis Farrakhan has gone way beyond the teachings of both, Fard and Elijah Muhammad, and is now teaching his own unique doctrines.

Thus, the present beliefs of Black Muslims, are a combination of the teachings of

Wallace Fard, Elijah Muhammad, and Louis Farrakhan.

FARRAKHAN TAKES A RIDE

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During his 1991, Saviour's Day Sermon, Louis Farrakhan spoke of his encounter, with a giant plane, shaped like the wheel, described in the Book of Ezekiel. It's "eyes" were actually, thousands of people, looking out the windows.

This wheel-shaped plane is in orbit, forty miles above the earth and is what some people would call, a UFO.

Farrakhan stated that, he was taken on board and went for a ride in this Heavenly vessel.

While he was aboard, he heard the voice of, none other than Master Elijah Muhammad - which supposedly proves that, he is not dead, but alive - and it was Elijah, who built this mighty ship!

This "wheel" ship, would one day destroy the white man and usher in the Day of Black Power.

Farrakhan, also claimed that, 1,500 little planes, from this giant "wheel," follow him at all times!

Neither Wallace Fard nor Elijah Muhammad ever taught such things!

THE NATURE OF GOD

There is much confusion and contradiction in the Black Muslim Concept of God.

On the one hand, they state that here is only one God, whose proper name is, Allah.

This sounds, on the surface, to be the Basic Creed of Islam. But the “Allah,” in which the Black Muslims believe - is radically different from the Allah of Islam, as well as the God of Judaism and Christianity.

The Allah of Islam is an eternal, uncreated, immaterial being. Allah is not begotten, nor does he beget. Thus, he is not a man.

But the Black Muslim Concept of God, as a man is neither Jewish, Christian, nor Islamic!

According to Louis Farrakhan, “Allah” created himself out of a darkness that is material in nature. This material is “electricity.”

Farrakhan teaches that Allah is not uncreated, immaterial, or invisible, in the sense of being, a Spirit. God is a man of flesh and blood. He is a real human being.

MANY GODS

Although he states, at the beginning of his Sermon during the 1991 Saviour’s Day Celebration, that he bore witness that there was only one God, later on in the same Sermon, he stated that the “24 Elders,” mentioned in Revelation, were great scientists, who were actually Gods!

He went on to say that, 12 of these Elders were “major” scientists and Gods. Among them, was one Supreme Being or God, who is over this particular time period. He even used the phrase, “a temporary God.”

One of these major scientists (Gods) created the moon, by blowing up the earth. Later on, he made the white man out of his evil side.

It would seem that Farrakhan's Professed Monotheism means only that, there is one temporary God for this world, at this time. But is this Monotheism?

This is actually, Polytheism, and more in line with the Theology of Mormonism, than with Judaism, Christianity, or Islam.

GOD IS A MAN

According to Black Muslim Theology, Allah is a man - and, none other than, Master Wallace D. Fard Muhammad. He was Allah, in human form!

This part of their Creed, is found in point 12, of the Statement of Faith, which is usually printed on the back of their Newspaper, The Final Call:

12. We believe that Allah (God) appeared in the Person of Master W. Fard Muhammad, July 1930; The long-awaited "Messiah" of the Christians and The "Mahdi" of the Muslims.

Once again, while Mormonism has always taught that God was a man of flesh and blood, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, have always believed in the immaterial and non-human nature of God.

DIFFERENT MANIFESTATIONS

When Fard died, Allah did not die with him. God, then manifested himself in Elijah Muhammad, who was revealed to be the long-awaited, "Messiah" of the Jews, the "Jesus" of the Christians, and the "Mahdi" of the Muslims.

DIFFERENT FORMS

While the physical form (the man in which Allah manifests himself may die, Allah himself, cannot die. He simply manifests himself in a new human form, through whom, he reveals his wisdom and truth.

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While both Bahaim and Hinduism teach that God reveals himself in a series of incarnations, this is absolutely denied by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

THE 1991 SAVIOUR'S DAY

Who is the present manifestation of Allah? In the 1991, "Saviour's Day Celebration, Louis Farrakhan was introduced, as the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6-8. He was proclaimed, as the "child who would be born" and the "son who would be given," because he was "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace," etc.

It was stated that, Farrakhan healed the sick and made the blind see. It was implied clearly that, he was now "God, manifested in the flesh."

THE CHRISTIAN "SPOOK"

The Christian Doctrine of the Invisible and Spiritual Nature of God, was denounced, as a lie. God was a man and not some King of "Spook."

ON THE BIBLE

Elijah Muhammad did not have much respect for the Bible. He warned his followers that, the Bible was pure "Poison," because it had been corrupted by the white man. The Quran was far superior.

He went, so far as, to call the Bible a "graveyard of the black man," because it was

used by white people to keep black people down.

Farrakhan, however, holds up the Bible as the “Word of God” and quotes from it far more times than he quotes from the Quran.

His Sermons, at times, are so filled with Biblical Texts and Imagery, that one would think he was in a Christian Church!

ON JESUS

Elijah Muhammad’s Jesus was not a white man, but a Black African. He was only a mortal man like the Arab Prophet, Muhammad. People should no longer look to a “dead” Jesus, according to Elijah.

Farrakhan goes on to ridicule the Virgin Birth of Jesus, by teaching that since Allah was a man, he had sexual intercourse with Mary to produce Jesus.

ON MANKIND

Elijah continued Fard’s Racism, by teaching that the Black Race was the First and the Last, the Creator of the Universe, and the Origin of all Other Races. Black people were actually Gods.

On the other hand, white people were not created by Allah. An evil black scientist, by the name of YaKub, made the white man out of his dark side.

YaKub spent 600 years creating him. Thus, white people are devils and not really human beings at all.

AN OBVIOUS CONTRADICTION

There is an obvious contradiction between the teaching that white people are intrinsically evil and the teaching that a white man, by the name of Wallace D. Fard was Allah, incarnate.

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Another contradiction, which should be pointed out, is that if a black scientist/God, by the name of YaKub made the white man, then why blame the white man for being evil?

DEATH AND THE AFTERLIFE

Using Jehovah's Witness Theology, Elijah Muhammad denied that people went to Heaven or Hell at death. He taught the Watchtower concept of "soul sleep."

Like the Witnesses, black Muslims deny that there is a Hell in the afterlife, but teach that "Hell" is here on earth.

ON THE END OF THE WORLD

Following the Watchtower literature, which proclaimed 1914, as the "beginning of the end," Elijah Muhammad twisted it to mean that, 1914, signaled the end of the white man's rule and the beginning of Black Power.

Elijah went on to Prophecy that Allah would personally intervene in the 1970's, by destroying the white man and putting black people in control of the World. This fit in with the teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses, who were proclaiming 1975, as the End of the World.

The obvious failure of Allah to intervene in 1975, as predicted by Elijah, is a tremendous embarrassment to Black Muslims today. This False Prophecy totally destroys any attempt to view him as a Prophet.

FARRAKHAN AND ARMAGEDDON

The present Black Muslim Leader, Louis Farrakhan, has publicly predicted, that Armageddon is near. According to him, the giant “UFO” “wheel,” will soon destroy the white man.

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MALCOLM X

The other serious embarrassment of the Black Muslim Movement, in America, was the murder of Malcolm X.

The son of another Black Baptist Pastor, Malcolm Little converted to the teachings of Elijah Muhammad. Elijah, himself, changed Little’s name to that of Malcolm X.

After 12 years of devoted service to the Nation of Islam, Malcolm woke up to Elijah’s many moral problems, such as his 13 illegitimate children, his greed and jealousy, and the constant strife, which filled Elijah Muhammad’s life.

These things began to bother him. How could Elijah be from Allah and do all the evil things he did?

It was during his pilgrimage to Mecca, that for the first time, he clearly saw the Heretical and Racist Nature of the Black Muslim Movement in America. They were not Muslims at all. The whole thing was a sham.

MALCOLM X SPEAKS OUT

After much soul searching, Malcolm publicly renounced the teachings of W.D. Fard and Elijah Muhammad and began to warn the black community about the Racist and Heretical Nature of the Nation of Islam. He also warned people that he might be killed for his courageous stand.

This action by someone so well-known in the Movement and in the black community, at large, could not be overlooked. A Black Muslim death squad assassinated Malcolm X in a public dance hall on February 22, 1965.

But the damage had already been done. The Movement fell apart and has fractured into many warring sects.

ELIJAH'S DEATH

Elijah Mahammad died in 1975. Since that time, Black Muslims have claimed that he actually is still alive and that he is the Christ and the Saviour. They even held a "Saviour's Day" Celebration in honor of Elijah Muhammad, Fard, and Farrakhan.

They are now claiming that Elijah Muhammad did the Miracles of Christ, such as healing the sick and raising the dead. Of course, not one of these Miracles has ever been documented.

LOUIS FARRAKHAN

Under Louis Farrakhan's flamboyant Leadership, the Nation of Islam Movement is growing and prospering today. As Allah in human form, his will and word are absolute.

The stated goal of the Movement, is to set up a separate, "Nation of Islam," complete with its own Military and Justice System.

TERRORIST MONEY

The main mosque in South Chicago has been renovated through a large gift of money from Libyan Dictator, Khadafy, a known Sponsor of Terrorism throughout the World.

The financial bonding of Farrakhan to Khadafy, is potentially dangerous, by anyone's standard. Is it any wonder that Farrakhan followed Khadafy in publicly supporting

Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War?

KILLING FOR ISLAM

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In a videotape of the 1991, "Saviour's Day" Celebration, the Head of Farrakhan's "Army," stated that, he was tired of hearing people say that they were willing to die for Islam.

What he wanted to know was if they were willing to kill for Islam. The time is coming, he said, when they must kill all that is white, that is not right.

During this celebration, Farrakhan acknowledged that when he went to Mecca, the Black Muslim Movement in America, was condemned as Heretical by Orthodox Islam. But this did not seem to bother him in the least.

CONCLUSION

What was the legacy of Elijah Muhammad? It was one of deception, fraud, Racism, greed, immorality, and murder.

He did not raise the black man to new heights or give him the dignity he needed. Elijah's attempt to fight white racism with black racism only compounded the problem.

And his rejection of the Gospel, was actually, the rejection of the only way for all people, regardless of color, to find true dignity.

It must be viewed, as just one more indigenous American Cult, like the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons.

Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God (AG), officially the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, is a group of over 140 autonomous but loosely associated national groupings of churches which together form the world's Pentecostal denomination. With over 300,000 ministers and outstations in over 212 countries and territories serving approximately 66.4 million adherents worldwide, it is the sixth largest international Christian group of denominations.

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The Assemblies originated from the Pentecostal revival of the early 20th century. This revival led to the founding of the Assemblies of God in the United States in 1914. Through foreign missionary work and establishing relationships with other Pentecostal churches, the Assemblies of God expanded into a worldwide movement. It was not until 1988, however, that the world fellowship was formed. As a Pentecostal fellowship, the Assemblies of God believes in the Pentecostal distinctive of baptism with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Beliefs

The doctrinal position of the Assemblies of God is framed in a classical Pentecostal and an evangelical context. The AG is Trinitarian and holds the Bible as divinely inspired and the infallible authoritative rule of the faith and conduct. Water baptism is understood as an outward sign of an inward change, the change from being dead in sin to being alive in Christ. As an ordinance, Communion is also practiced. The Assemblies of God also places a strong emphasis on the fulfillment of the Great Commission and believes that this is the calling of the church.

As classical Pentecostals, the Assemblies of God believes all Christians are entitled to and should seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit. There are many, however, who teach that one receives the Holy Spirit at the moment of confession of Christ. The Assemblies of God also believe in the use of other spiritual gifts and in divine healing.

History

Origins:

The Assemblies of God has its roots in the Pentecostal revival of the early 20th century. The Pentecostal aspects of the revival were not generally welcomed by established churches, and participants in the movement soon found themselves forced outside existing religious bodies. These people sought out their own places of worship and founded hundreds of distinctly Pentecostal congregations. By 1914, many ministers and laymen alike began to realize just how far-reaching the spread of the revival and of Pentecostalism had become. Concerned leaders felt the desire to protect and preserve the results of the revival by uniting through cooperative fellowships.

In April 1914, about 300 white preachers and laymen were invited from 20 states and several foreign countries for a general council in Hot Springs, Arkansas, United States, to discuss and take action on these and other pressing needs. A remaining fellowship emerged from the meeting and was incorporated under the name General Council of the Assemblies of God in the United States of America. In time, self-governing and self-supporting general councils broke off from the original fellowship or were formed independently in several nations throughout the world, originating either from indigenous Pentecostal movements or as a direct result of the indigenous missions strategy of the General Council. In 1919, Pentecostals in Canada united to form the Pentecostals Assemblies of Canada which formally affiliated with the Assemblies of God USA the next year. The Assemblies of God in Great Britain was formed in 1924 and would have an early influence on the Assemblies of God in Australia, now known as Australian Christian Churches. The Australian Assemblies of God was formed in 1937 by a merger of the Pentecostal Church of Australia and the Assemblies of God Queensland. The Queensland AG had formed in 1929; though it was never formally affiliated with the AG in America. The Assemblies of God of South Africa was founded in 1925 and like the AG Queensland, was also not initially aligned with the US fellowship.

Prior to 1967, the Assemblies of God, along with the majority of other Pentecostal denominations, officially opposed Christian participation in war and considered itself a peace church. The US Assemblies of God continues to give full doctrinal support to members who are led by religious conscience to pacifism.

International fellowship.

In 1988, the various Assemblies of God national fellowships united to form the World Pentecostal Assemblies of God Fellowship at the initiative of Dr. J. Philip Hogan, then executive director of the Division of Foreign Missions of the Assemblies of God in the U.S. The initial purpose was to coordinate evangelism, but soon developed into a more permanent organism of inter-relation.

Dr. Hogan was elected the first chairman of the Fellowship and served until 1992 when Rev. David Yonggi Cho was elected chairman. In 1993, the name of the Fellowship was changed to the World Assemblies of God Fellowship. In 2000, Thomas E. Trask was elected to succeed Cho. At the 2008 World Congress in Lisbon, Portugal, George O. Wood, General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God in the United States, was elected chairman. At the 2011 World AG Congress in Chennai, India, D. Mohan, General Superintendent of the All India Assemblies of God, was elected vice chairman.

The Assemblies of God has missions programs that are designed to establish self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing national bodies in every country. As of late 2006, the Assemblies of God World Missions Research Office reported constituencies in 212 countries and territories, with over 5,000 adherents added per day. As of 2005, the fellowship operated 859 Bible schools, 1,131 extension programs and 39 seminaries outside of the United States.

Assemblies of God

World

Assemblies of God

Fellowship

Classification: Protestant
Theology: Pentecostal
Leader: George O. Wood (Chairman)
Region: World Wide
Congregations: 357,760
Members: 66,383,778

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