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1998

The Oldtimers' Grapevine, Volume 8 (January - December 1998)

William K. Fox Sr

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THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE

VOLUME V111 - NO. 1

RAYMORE, MISSOURI

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1998

T. J. Bottoms Built on the All Peoples' Tradition.

The recent tragedy of the Rev. T. J. Bottoms' sudden illness and death points to the historic "show case ministry" of All Peoples Christian Church and Community Center as allies of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

There are other church-related "show case" ministries like Inman Christian Center (Texas), and Kentucky Appalachian Ministry which also have allied relationships with the Disciples of Christ. They en-

Continued on page 2)

All Peoples C. C.- A "Show Case Ministry" by Dan Genung,

Retired Organizing Pastor



our fourteen years of residence.) She demanded: "Are you going to have a nursery? I can't get a job unless you have a nursery."

Recognizing the need for child care for working mothers, we began a preschool which grew to forty-five youngsters with Mrs. Lenora Vickland, former director of the Japanese Kindergarten, in charge.

Older children swarmed the playground, including teen-agers who found ways to break into the church. We met their challenge by organizing athletic teams and clubs for both sexes. After several weeks we began a Sunday service, attended by two Chinese youngsters. In time, ten to twelve others began to come.

(Continued on page 2)

Claremont, CA- All Peoples Christian Church began in Los Angeles, CA as a home missions project of the United Christian Missionary Society of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in buildings owned by the Society.

Facilities had been occupied by the Japanese Christian Church and Institute until wartime (i. e. World War II) hysteria following Pearl Harbor resulted in the evacuation of persons with one-eighth Japanese blood.

The properties remained vacant for eight months while the Society staff studied the needs of this cosmopolitan and gang-infested area. Then my wife, Frances, and I were enlisted to go and establish whatever type program seemed feasible, and, if possible, to organize a church. Feeling like explorers, we arrived on Columbus Day, 1942.

One of our first Sundays in Los Angeles an excited woman charged through the front door. (Our doors were never locked during

Inside This Issue

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The All People's Mandate Continues.

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We visited neighborhood families, meeting many newcomers from the South who were seeking wartime jobs. One need we met was an English class for mothers who could not read letters from their sons overseas.

We understood the curiosity and hostility some displayed, but felt we were making progress until the "Zoot-Suit Riots" in the early summer of 1943. Members of different gangs chose our playground as a "hideout." Not interested in sports, gang members stood around, interrupted club meetings, and glared at rival groups.

Some physical damages occurred. On three occasions guns were drawn, but violence was avoided. We found jobs for several and the army relieved the tension by drafting many others.

In 1945 we began worshipping regularly in the church sanctuary, with 20 to 30 present. In another two years we formed a congregation with 43 charter members, average age twenty-six. By 1956



when we ended our ministerial services at All Peoples, the church roll numbered 318.

We tried to guide the congregation toward meeting the felt needs of program participants and to challenge them to recognize unmet needs. An annual **Bread and Water Banquet** with such speakers as Ronald Reagan, Gale Storm, Jane Russell, and football great, the Rev. Dan Towler, taught the importance of sacrificial giving.

Retreats were held with spiritual leaders like: Stanley Jones, Kirby Page, and Allan Hunter. Children and adults adventured in God's out-of-doors at church camps and conferences. Christmas Sunday 1997 one mother told me: "My son learned to pray at camp, and prays daily now that he supervises forty airplane mechanics."

The Society provided a scholarship for Kei Kokubun, a Chapman student, to enter Seminary. Kei was ordained and followed me as pastor of All Peoples when I retired. Another product was Joe Ide, administrative assistant from 1950 to 1990. Joe continued as a volunteer for six more years until a week before his death.

Rev. Kokubun was followed by outstanding leaders, Denton Roberts, Eric Latoni, and now, the late T. J. Bottoms. Harsh Brown was administrator for five years, working with Kei. Denton Roberts and Tom Norwood guided the separation of church and the community center. After earthquakes and arson destroyed the buildings, he raised funds for new structures.

Sandra Reynolds Bryant, as a two year old, entered the nursery, was active in all activities, earned advanced college degrees and today is Executive Director of All Peoples Christian Center.

At the 1997 Denver General Church Assembly Sandra served as

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 1)

able concerned Christians to demonstrate Christian conviction.

But twentieth century social history and crisis in America has found the All Peoples Church/Center facilities in a strategic metro location. Thus it has provided a logical place for highlighting the demonstration of meaningful church response.

The ten years of ministry by T. J. Bottoms as the Senior Pastor at All Peoples Christian Church of Los Angeles, CA was crowned with a provocative and meaningful address on Reconciliation to the 1997 General Assembly of the Church in Denver,

The overwhelming inflow of Asian populations into metro Los Angeles; the impact of the Rodney King Episode and Los Angeles Police on the nation and world; the recent legislative onslaught on the existence of

(Continued on page 3)



For Those Whom the Bells Toll

(Continued from page 2)

Affirmative Action law in California; are some of the social developments in which All Peoples has been, and continues to be immersed.

The mission of the All Peoples congregation and that of the Community Center has been one from the onset, even though they are separate corporations.

Concerned church persons from other parts of the nation continue to come to All Peoples Church and Center to have on-site experience in dealing with critical urban community challenges.

In this issue, OLDTIMERS'

GRAPEVINE has been able to get the founding pastor of All Peoples Christian Church, Daniel Genung of Claremont, CA, now retired, to share his memories of the early days of mission at All Peoples Christian Church and Center -WKFox, Editor-

Kansas City, MO- A widely spread representation of ministers and friends from congregations metro Kansas City, state of Kansas, and staff from the General Offices of the denomination in Indianapolis, IN gathered at Swope Parkway United Christian Church January 24, 1998 to celebrate the Homegoing of George Ellison Lakes, Sr. The eighty-four year old veteran Disciples of Christ pastor and widely respected churchman, died unexpectedly January 17, 1998.

Lake's more than 60 years of ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) began in 1937 when he graduated from Southern Christian Institute, Edwards, MS. This



event also launched more than 60 years of marriage to his school-mate, Georgia Watkins.

Pastoral ministries began in Vicksburg, MS and extended to Parsons and Wichita, KS for 38 years until a first retirement in August 1979 and move to Kansas City, MO.

During his first retirement he rendered more than 18 years of interim ministry in Kansas and Missouri. He continued

to participate in the life of area, regional and national church organizations. The National Convocation of the CC recognized his leadership in 1992 by granting him the "Liberation Award."

Lakes came out of retirement in 1990 to accept a call to be the associate pastor at Swope Park United Christian Church when the Senior Pastor, K. David Cole was elected moderator of the denomination's General Assembly. He again retired in April 1997.

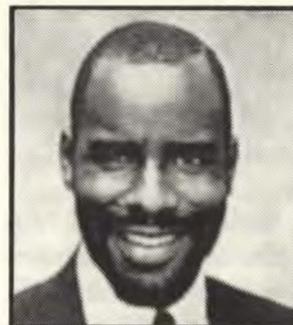
George Lakes leaves to mourn his loss a wife, Georgia; three sons, two daughters; two sisters; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren and a host of other kin.

Bottoms Has Passed the Baton On.

(Continued from page 2)

vice-moderator. She presided with charm and dignity over the meetings involving some 8,000 Disciples of Christ.

(Among Sandra's predecessors as Executive Director of the All Peoples Center were the late



Zelma Watson Duke, and Carnella J. Barnes.

In 1974 Disciples of Southern California established an award to "recognize continuous and consistent leadership for peace and racial justice exemplifying the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King." Eleven out of the 22 recipients

(Continued on page 4)

Coin Sale Supports War Patriot Project

Washington, DC- Oscar Haynes, a veteran Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) leader in the District of Columbia, recently informed The Oldtimers' Grapevine that February 13, 1998 the United States Mint began the issue of 500,000 commemorative silver dollars honoring more than 5,000 African Americans who served in and supported the Revolutionary War.

Mr. Haynes, a retiree and former Disciples of Christ regional and general church officer, was a denominational representative on an interdenominational/interfaith committee organized by the Black Patriots Foundation to guide legislation in the United States Congress which en-

dorsed the issue.

The Mint will charge \$35 for each coin, with \$10 going to the Black Patriots Foundation to assist in the building of a monument on the Mall honoring the African American soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War. It will have a family of four on the front and Crispus Attucks on the back.

Project leaders will still need to raise half the Monument Project's costs from private sources. The actual unveiling in February will be linked to the 216th Anniversary of the American Victory at Yorktown, VA which signaled the virtual end of the Revolutionary War.

A related effort in 1998 will focus on supporting legislation to commemorate the 275 anniversary of the birth of Crispus Attucks, an African American and the first American patriot to die for the cause of independence. This will be an observance held by many throughout the nation.

H.R. 1776, The Black Revolutionary War Patriots Commemorative Coin Act has the full cooperation of the Office of Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin. The Honorable Mary Ellen Withrow, Treasurer of the United States, will attend the unveiling.

The Black Patriots Foundation has been key in achieving progress thus far.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUPPORT

Philip N. Diehl, Chairman of The Citizens Commemorate Coin Advisory Committee informed Mr. Haynes in September 1996 that their endorsement of the Black Revolutionary War Patriots Commemorate Coin Act was based on "the Foundation's agreement to amend the legislation to commemorate in 1998 the 275th anniversary of the birth of Crispus Attucks, the first American patriot to die for the cause of independence." The Committee was also assured "that at least one-half of the Foundation's funds must be raised through private sources..."

All People's Ministry Bearing Fruit

(Continued from page 3)

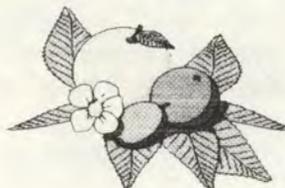
are or have been members of All Peoples Church. Four others served on the Center board.

T. J. Bottoms, the dynamic young pastor (38 years old) of All Peoples Christian Church was in his tenth year as the Se-

nior Minister when he died in a local infirmary December 18 from what doctors termed "an inoperable brain tumor."

He had guided All Peoples through Golden Anniversary celebrations in 1992 and other major festivities in 1997. He was a most noble and

worthy bearer of the All Peoples Christian Church historic mandate for Christian mission.



**OUTREACH
CHARACTERIZES
THE COLE MIN-
ISTRY:**

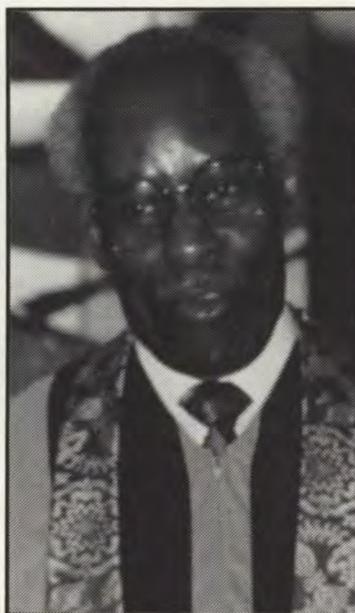
A Retirement Celebration Steering Committee, with Edna Brannock as chair, and Sallie Edwards, Leslye Sims, Al Waller, and Deborah Wilson as members designed the week-end activities to embrace the broad reaches of Dr. King David Cole's ministry to-date.

The Friday formal dinner, though entertaining, lifted up a "Memory Lane" of family and community building memories. The awards of Pension Fund Pin and a congregation love gift, symbolized high quality ministerial service.

The Saturday evening pot-luck dinner affair and Sunday worship and reception gave opportunity for church and community to say "Thank You."

Pulpiteer David Cole Honored on Retirement

Kansas City, MO- Representatives from church and community life in metro Kansas City and general church unit staff from St. Louis, MO and Indianapolis, IN joined members of the honoree's family in the Holiday Crown Plaza Hotel Friday, January 30, 1998 to celebrate the retirement of the Rev. King David Cole climaxing 24 years of pastoral ministry at Swope Park United Christian Church.



The current and immediate executive heads of the central administrative office of the National Benevolent Association gave citation to Dr. Cole's for his services to NBA.

With his very capable wife, Violaruth, by his side, Dr. Cole had given

signal service to the congregation as its Senior Minister. During that period, he guided the congregation through a meaningful building renovation program, while giving dedicated pastoral services to an appreciative membership.

A Sunday morning wor-

ship enriched with music and drama, including a message by John Foulkes, Assistant General Minister and President of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) from Indianapolis, IN.

Foulkes, like others, highlighted the even-handed and steady role King David Cole adopted as Moderator of the 1.2 million member denomination's General Assembly when an emotional and potentially divisive election campaign emerged in 1991 for the office of General Minister and President.

Dr. Cole was the second African American to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly. Walter D. Bingham of Louisville, Ky., now a retired pastor in that city, was the first.

K. D. Cole: Involved Churchman 

A feature article on King David Cole by Londia R. Granger which appeared in the THE DISCIPLE (11/89) outlines Dr. Cole's varied involvement in church. To up-date add pastorates and similar relationships in four states plus nine more years.

"Mr. Cole has held many positions in the area, re-

gional and general manifestations of the church. He is a former moderator of the Mid-America and Greater Kansas City regions, and is member of the administrative committee and general board. He is a board member of the National Benevolent Association and Foxwood Springs Living Center. He is a member of the

NAACP and has chaired a committee on hunger. He was elected as moderator at the Indianapolis General Assembly and was installed on the night of his ninth wedding anniversary. Mr. Cole is married to Vi, a teacher for thirty-eight years who is a native of St. Louis, Missouri. Together they have five adult children."



For Those Whom the Bells Toll



Jos. Galloway's Death Impacts Piedmont

Chatham, VA- The editor of the *Star-Tribune* which has served Pittsylvania County since 1869 recognized the death of Joseph L. Galloway January 25, 1998 with the following front page streamer headline: "Chatham loses educator, faithful public servant." He was 78 years old.

Galloway, a retired school principal, senior pastor, and town councilman and mayor, was about to complete his year of being honored as "Citizen of the Year" by the Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce in 1997.

His distinguished career included 31 years in the county school system as a teacher, principal and coordinator.

Pastor Galloway served in Martinsville as senior minister at Mount Olive East Christian Church 10 years and Fayette Street Christian Church 25 years.

He was elected to the Town Council in 1974 and served as vice



mayor and mayor before retiring in 1992. He was the only African American to ever serve on the council.

Joseph Galloway was a leading board member of mainline community organizations and had held all the major offices in the district, regional church associations, National church administrative boards coveted his membership.

Sherman Saunders, the executive director of the area's Community Action Council who had worked with Rev. Galloway since 1970, said: "He was a humble man... a man of vision. He had tremendous insight... He was always at peace with himself."

An over-crowded church in Chatham heard several echoes of praise and respect from lay and clergy from the Piedmont Area.

Pastor Galloway was a native of Mount Airy, N.C. served as a first lieutenant with the 372nd Infantry Regiment, an all-black unit during World War II.

After the war, he returned to earn liberal art and master's degrees in education, elementary education administration and supervision. He took additional seminary preparation in three schools.

Rev. Galloway is survived by his wife, Rebecca of Chatham; son and daughter-in-law, Elbert L. and Renee of Richmond, VA; son Julian Vann Galloway of Danville, VA; daughter and son-in-law Gaylon Rita and Robert Hopkins, Timothy, Robert III, and Rebecca (grandchildren), of Birmingham, AL;

two sisters, Josephine Galloway of Mount Airy, N.C.A; and Rebecca Olds and her husband, Danzo of Virginia Beach, VA; three brothers and their wives James (Jackie) Galloway, Pittsburg, PA, Edward (Helen) Galloway, Cleveland, OH, and Donald Galloway of New York City.

MANY FAITHFUL "FOOT SOLDIERS" HAVE DEPARTED

Among those is Ruth T. Lewis of Dayton, OH. The "Sunset" on this veteran and dependable member of Summit Christian Church September 28, 1997.

Senior Pastor J. Thomas Johnson officiated and gave the eulogy. Mrs. Lewis had been an employee of 24 years at Wright Patterson Air Base. Her husband of 64 years, Howard Lewis, preceded her in death. One of their two sons, Russell Thompson, survives.

SEND THE GRAPEVINE THE NAMES OF HOME GOINGS.

GOD FINDS REPLACEMENTS

"Giant witnesses" in the Lord's work leave by death or retirement, but God finds worthy replacements.

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Thanks for the Lift!

(Continued from page 6)

For example, in St. Louis, MO at Centennial Christian Church. The Rev. T. Eugene Fisher, Sr., formerly senior pastor at Faith United CC Canton, OH, accepted the "call" to succeed retired Senior Pastor Samuel W. Hylton, Jr. Swope Parkway United in Kansas City, MO has called Eric Cole, formerly of Greensboro, NC and the Mississippi Boulevard CC in Memphis to succeed retired Senior Pastor King David Cole. Jack Sullivan, formerly at United CC in Detroit, MI, has been called to be the Regional Minister for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Northwest. Robin Hedgeman of Cleveland, OH, formerly a regional associate minister for Disciples in Ohio, called to replace the late W. Dickerson at Bethany CC as senior pastor.

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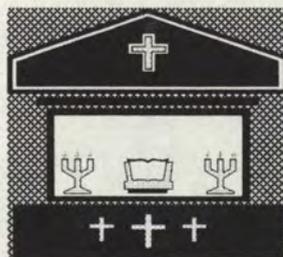
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THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE

LENT: A TIME FOR INNER CLEANSING



Ash Wednesday, February 25, launched the 1998 Season of Lent.

This is the 40 day period plus six Sundays when we prepare for Easter by intensifying personal effort to achieve spiritual inner cleansing

Transfiguration Sunday marked the end of Epiphany when scriptures studied described

instances when God revealed the divine nature of Jesus in wonderful ways.

Lent invites us to walk through Galilee with Jesus on the Galilean Ministry. It leads to the last most critical and eventful week of his life.

That week includes the crucifixion and agonizing death, but climaxes

in triumphant victory on Resurrection Sunday!

Let us pray for each other as we confess our sins, pray, read and study The Word.

Include supportive Christian devotional literature and associations, as we prepare the inner self to reexperience the joy of Resurrection Sunday!



March - April 1998
Volume VIII, Issue 2

Inside this Issue

- Veteran oldtimers sharing current experiences;
- Pointing to a few you may or should know;
- Lifting up a couple who "Finished the Course;"
- Challenging you to share some of the blessings and/or tests in your life;
- Why don't you send something to us that can be shared? Send to:
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Networking church-related seniors into Christian community

The Oldtimers' Grapevine

What are they Doing Today?

The Ken Teegarden's Share-

"**T**he bad thing about retirement is that we don't get to see long time friends very often. We enjoy getting "The Oldtimers' Grapevine" because it gives us information about many of those longtime friends.

We have been in Fort Worth 13 years since I retired as GMP. After serving on the faculty at Brite Divinity School and as Interim Regional Minister for the Southwest Region, I am now trying to get retirement right! Wanda and I are members at University Christian Church— I am an "honorary elder" and she serves on the Older Adults Committee. I still go down to Brite for chapel and to visit with students in the coffee lounge.

Our main enjoyment about being in Fort Worth is that our two sons and daughters-in-law. David and Suzi, and Kirk and Carol, are nearby. David is a gastroenterologist in Tyler, and Kirk lives in Weatherford and is a radio producer in Fort Worth. Our four grandsons are around, too: Grant graduated from TCU and is his second year of law at Texas Tech; Sloan and Matthew are seniors at TCU and Blake is a freshman at TCU.

I still serve on the board of the National City Christian Church Corporation

where there is lots of excitement about the arrival of Alvin Jackson as the new Senior Minister...Keep up the good work on The Oldtimers' Grapevine!



Editor's Note: I was fortunate to work in the General Office as an associate of Dr. Teegarden when he was the General Minister and President. He guided church leaders through an arduous process for pointing our congregations, regions, and general church units toward operating more fully as a covenanted Church. THE DESIGN was eventually developed which helps us relate to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Among my personal reasons for appreciating Dr. Teegarden is that I credit him for the preset television that wakes me up every morning. It was a retirement gift given to me by the General Church Office in December 1983 when he was the GMP and I was the Administrative Secretary for the National Convocation of the C. C.

Kentucky: the Disciple Heartland

The Walter Bingham's Share-

A Scholarly preacher's voice can be heard booming forth from the heart land state of the Early New Testament Restoration Movement. It is the voice of Walter D. Bingham who retired in December of 1991 after more than thirty years of service as the senior pastor of Third Christian Church in Louisville is. Since that time Dr. Bingham, the first Moderator of the denomination's General Assembly who was of African American descent, has provided interim and consultant ministries for congregations, including Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, and most recently, Central Christian Church, both in Louisville, KY.

Walter's commitment to unity and cooperation within the Body of Christ was nurtured during his pastoral ministry and his membership on the board of directors for the denomination's Council on Christian Unity. It has continued in retirement. He has served as a mentor and participant in the lectionary study with young ministers in Louisville and Southern Indiana for the past six years. He is also an active member of the Louisville Interview Team of the Committee on the Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky.

His interest in church union undoubtedly began with his marriage to Rebecca, a lifetime member of the Episcopal Church. She joined Walter in retirement from the Jefferson County Public Schools June 30, 1992 after three and a half years as a librarian and twenty-six and a half years as Director of its Library Media Services program.

Rebecca's retirement agenda is focused on "fitness," and deals with the physical, mental/educational, and religious aspects. Her physical fitness activities center on water aerobics,



Walking, and a local YMCA's exercise Program which incorporates line dancing as an aerobic activity. She also belongs to a "Retired Educators and Friends" group.

The religious aspect includes being active in the vestry and lay Eucharistic ministry at her local Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky. She was one of four lay deputies from the Diocese taking part in last summer's General Convention of the Episcopal Church. She is also on the Executive Board of the Kentucky Council of Churches. She is now in the third year of a four-year Education for Ministry Course offered by the extension program of the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I was among a number of Disciple church staff to be with the Bingham's when Walter, as Moderator of the denomination's General Assembly headed the representative church delegation sponsored by the Division of Overseas Ministry's first "Church-to-Church Visitation" in 1972. DOM President Bob Thomas and Dept. Executive Joseph Smith were the architects of the venture that included visits to Hawaii, Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, India, and ended in the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland.

We knew Walter as a flawless moderator in the heat of a plenary debate; an able and thoughtful speaker

on philosophical and theological issues; but we had never really heard him pray. The evening we flew from Hong Kong To Bangkok, Thailand, unruly currents of wind suddenly engulfed the plane and nearly flipped the huge passenger ship upside down. As books and papers flipped into the air, and foodstuffs, coffee and other beverages slid off the trays, Walter was among the few whom remained remarkably calm.

Rebecca said he was a serious prayer mode with the confidence that God's sustaining hand would stem the crisis. A few moments later the winds subsided the ship righted itself. From that point on the tour membership not only had confidence in the strength of Walter's even-handed moderatorship but also in the effectiveness of his quiet

Florida: Disciples in Orange Juice State

A "Round-up" by Roland Huff, a retired President of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society-

DR. A. DALE FIERS AND WIFE, BETTY- As many know, Betty Fiers has been fighting cancer for over a year. In April of 1997 she was given four months to live. Through her valiant efforts, her medical care, and the prayers of her friends throughout the church, she has miraculously proved the doctors wrong. In fact, in the last few weeks she has grown stronger and is eating better again. What this means no one knows. We do know that Betty has been, and is, a wonderful inspiration for those about her through it all.

Dale (Fiers) (i. e. emeritus first General Minister and President of the Denomination) brought greetings and

Continued on Page 3

congratulations in behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to the First Christian Church in Mandarin as they dedicated their new sanctuary on April 26. Upon returning home that day, unfortunately, he fell, cut his forehead, and cracked a rib. This will not slow him up for long, however, for he will soon be back in water aerobics and using the equipment in the exercise room.

JAMES AND DUDLEY SEALE- Jim and Dudley have been residents in Cypress Village for over a year now. Each summer they serve as host and hostess for Disciples House in Chataquah, New York. They will soon be leaving for this assignment again.

Jim (i. e. a retired President of the Disciples of Christ) Historical Society), served as chairman of local arrangements for N.B.A.'s first Miracle Day project. Jim recruited 137 volunteers who refurbished Edgewood Christian Church's entire building on April 25th, including painting the whole building inside and out, and upgrading electrical and plumbing systems.

The building has never looked so good. In addition to the building being used by the Edgewood Christian Church, it will also house the worship and activities of a newly established Hispanic congregation.

NBA will sponsor five such Miracle Day projects across the country in 1998. They plan to increase the number of projects each year.

HOWARD AND MARY LOU DENTLER- Have you wondered where Howard and Mary Lou Dentler are? They recently moved from their retirement home in Iowa to Cypress Village. This was like coming home for the Dentlers. Howard is a native of

Florida, and his last pastorate before coming to the General Office as Deputy General Minister and President was Central Christian Church in Jacksonville, Florida.

ON April 26th. Howard was the dedication speaker for the First Christian Church in Mandarin, Florida (a part of the Jacksonville metropolitan area) as they dedicated their beautiful, new sanctuary. Howard was seminary roommate with Ed Adams, pastor of the congregation. Howard, also, presided at the marriage ceremony for Ed and his wife, Elaine, forty years ago.

LAURA FRANCES SHEAFOR, WIDOW OF THE LATE ROLLAND SHEAFOR, who was a retired president of the Board of Church Extension for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)- Laura recently moved back to Cypress Village and is enjoying being back among her many friends there again.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Several personal notes could be attached to each of the faithful servants mentioned in Roland Huff's summary. One must be share regarding Dr. A. Dale Fiers, who led me through a couple years of orientation to general church work.

I sat in General Minister and President Dale Fiers' office for about an hour and half to receive his personal interpretation of what I was expected to do. After the first half-hour I stopped taking notes and just tried to absorb what I thought I was hearing.

When he was about finished, I paused to put a diplomatic question to one of the most highly respected "Church Diplomat of Diplomats." As I contemplated my frail body and mind plus a lone secretary in the Office of the National Convocation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) I finally asked: "How was a lone administrator

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with one secretary to do all of the things he outlined without additional staff?

"Why Bill," said Dale, "Don't you understand? The whole staff of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is available to you!" That bowled me over then as it still does today. But Dale was right; church staff and leadership throughout the church are linked together in common ministry and support. And when you understand and function in that manner, effective ministry is accomplished.

FROM NOTES TO THE EDITOR:

LOIS LONG THOMPSON in Claremont, CA- (former chair of the Division of Homeland Ministries Board and daughter of the late John Long, who was the last president of Southern Christian Institute, Edwards, MS before it ceased operations.) "We always enjoy getting The Oldtimers' Grapevine... We had a couple of 'Mini SCI Reunions' this (past) summer. We visited Josephine Miller, Thelma and Ray Huber and all had dinner together at the Huber home in Sacramento. Then in September Seretha Miller Powell, Hattie Davis Johnson, Bobbie Davis Smith and Lillian Hester Berry came for lunch in our home in Claremont.

I am still in touch with Thelma Cowan and Mary Frances Thomas Endicott. Our year in Denver we enjoyed being with Edward Cecil Rollins. There are so many happy memories."

LAMBRINI STERGIOPOL, Athens, Greece- retired administrative office staff in Division of Homeland Ministries and the Office of the General Minister and President- A recent note from Lambrini indicates she is "doing as well as possible considering... I take one day at a time and thank the Lord each day...we are experiencing winter..."

Continued From Page 3

MABEL METZE of Indianapolis, IN, retired missionary to the Philippines and Homeland Ministries staff, echoes from Christmas Letter reflects Holiday blessings. "Last year when my 90th Birthday was such an Event, I knew I had to share it.

I was born September 24, 1907, so this year (1997) had to be "it." Several weeks in advance of that date this year, Bernice Chao invited me out for my birthday dinner. Our friendship had been growing since 1974, when I returned from the Philippines and found the US-China Peoples Friendship Association burgeoning

"... so many of my friends in US-China were honoring me on my 90th birthday. When we arrived at the Chinese restaurant... Joe and Winnie Smith were there, and Bernice. I'm hazy on how they got there.

It was a lovely birthday...Joe and Winnie had paper-cuts made at the Seminary in China...

I had three birthday cakes... And, on top of the cakes, at least 72 cards!...

I've noticed my aging. Other people probably do too! I'm slower to comprehend what I see or hear, and sometimes I don't even want to! I'd rather sleep. I do want to care more spontaneously about what happens to other people. Here I've had this long lifetime to develop that caring, and I'm still a novice at it. It's easy to be preoccupied with my own pain or my own thoughts. Maybe I'm doing what my uncle said years ago about my grandmother. "She's closing up her little house, and pulling down the blinds." May it be in preparation for awakening in that place Jesus went to prepare? How glorious!"

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Having had the pleasure to work with Mabel on the field in hands-on service, it's hard to imagine her "closing up her little house, and pulling down the blinds." But I'm sure she is prepared for that Greater Day.*

DAN GENUNG of Claremont, CA, retired pastor of All Peoples Community Church, shares a poem.

For every hill I've had to climb
For every stone that bruised my feet
For all the blood and sweat and grime
For blinding storms and burning heat
My heart sings but a grateful song:
These were the things that made me strong

HONORED WOMEN FROM THE MAGNOLIA STATE

JACKSON, MS- During the 114th Regional Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Mississippi held at First Christian Church April 24-26, 1998, **RUTH P. HOBBS** of the United Christian Church in Jackson was one of three persons recognized as "Honored Lay Women for 1998.

The Mississippi Regional Church responded to the 1998 Quadrennial Assembly for Women program committee request to choose three lay women from the Region to be honored on June 24-28, 1998 at Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN by nominating nine women from the Mississippi Christian Women's Fellowship. Ruth Hobbs, Carolyn Montgomery, and Hazel Riggs were eventually selected to represent Mississippi. The remaining six nominees were Ann Pickett, Lillie V. Jackson, Isabell Smith, Vivian Hilderbrand, Maxine Chance, Jo Darrett, and Nauvice Kilrpatrick who were designated "Congregational



Hazel Riggs, Regional Staff-Tubelo, MS



Ruth P. Hobbs, Former MCMC President, Jackson, MS

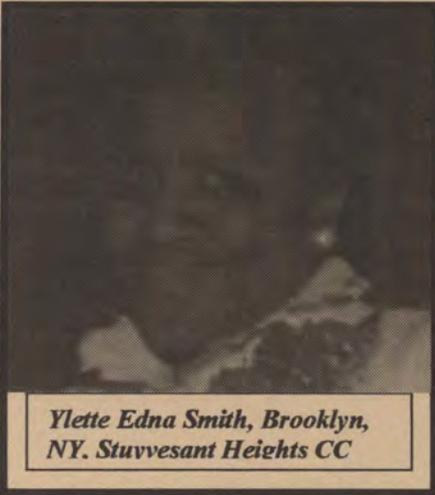


Carla Montgomery, Regional Bd. Moderator, Jackson, MS

Honorees" by the Mississippi Christian Womens Fellowship. Involvement in church and community was key .

Continued on Page 5

Continued From Page 4



Ylette Edna Smith, Brooklyn, NY. Stuyvesant Heights CC

BROOKLYN, NY- Ylette Edna Smith, a faithful member of the Stuyvesant Heights Christian Church since the late 1950's, was recently awarded the "President's Award" during the Church Women United (CWU) in Brooklyn, nc. 21st Annual Luncheon. The event took place at Brooklyn's E;Caribe Country Club.

Mrs. Smith has been actively involved in Sunday School of her congregation as a teacher and superintendent, and served the Christian Women's Fellowship as worship and group leader. She is in her second year as the president of that group.

Thirteen other women received awards.



RAYMORE, MO- Franes Chambers, a veteran retired Christian education specialist, has fought through critical illness, but remains a dutiful volunteer and a dedicated advocate for walking as an exercise. She provides the following advice: "Let me encourage you in the simplest form of exercise and one of the most helpful for good health. Studies show, for instance, that walking

faster than 15 minutes per mile actually burns twice as many calories as runners going at the same speed. Brisk walking can also boost the immune response and improve circulation.

"To begin, walk at a comfortable pace for only 15 to 20 minutes. Your goal should be 3 to 5 times a week at first... Remember, no equipment is needed except comfortable, well-fitting shoes with flexible soles (preferably rubber soles). Arm swing makes walking a total body activity. Keeping elboes bent at a 90 degree angle relieves some pressure on the heart... "No pain, no gain" is a myth. The greatest benefit is a sense of over-all well-being and enjoyment."



Status of Disciples Housing Project

Indianapolis, IN- According to Staff Writer Sally Falk Nancrede of *The Indianapolis Star*, in an April 14, 1998 update article on the plan to convert the former international headquarters of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) into a retirement housing project, the properties in the Irvington Community of East Indianapolis remain "empty and in limbo."

It has been previously reported that the Mansur Real Estate Services had been named to expedite a conversion program for the former denominational headquarters building which would end in 80 reasonably priced retirement apartments.

In March 1998, however, plans had to be "placed on hold" again because the Indiana Housing Finance Authority did not vote affirmatively to grant the project tax credits.

Two years ago the Housing Finance Authority did grant the project tax

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credits, but that action was made to the Retirement Housing Foundation of

Long Beach, Calif who did not follow through on the original project plans.

The Board of Christian Church Services, operating as the legal property owner for the church and the Mansur Realty Services organization will have an application presented again for another vote of the Housing Authority by June 25, 1998. If a positive response is made by the Authority, construction is expected to begin by October of 1998.

Another aspect of the conversion proposal is the conversion of the oldest part of the Missions Building headquarters facilities into a community and arts center. This part of the complex was built in 1902. It was called the Bona Thompson Library and used by Butler University as its library before it moved to the northside of Indianapolis.

The Irvington Historical Society continues to provide leadership for the implimentation of this idea and the Indianapolis Foundation has made a conditional grant of \$150,000 toward the projected cost of \$500,000 for this aspect of the venture.

REALITY KNOCKS

Knew I was getting old when I started getting some urges and couldn't remember what they were for. *Lien106*

I knew I was getting old when I realized that my children belonged to the A.A.R.P.
WALKERDOYL

I knew I was old then I couldn't find anyone who knew about Burma Shave signs. *CMDRBIX*



Bells toll for those who "fought a good fight," "finished" their "course," and "kept the faith." - II Timothy 4:7

Detroit's Free Press Staff Writer Niraj Warikoo, editorializing on the death of Robert L. Jordan March 10, 1998, the pastor emeritus of United Christian Church congregation which he had served for 38 years, wrote: "The Rev. Jordan established the first black Disciples of Christ Church in Detroit, growing it into a vital 500 member congregation with his strict but loving personality, He wrote three books on Christian and black theology..."

Born in Knoxville, Tenn., the Rev. Jordan moved to Detroit in 1936 and started his church with a handful of parishioners in a storefront before moving it to West Chicago Boulevard.

Jordan received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Bethany College in 1969 during the school's 128th. Annual commencement.

During the 1940's and 1950's African American Disciples of Christ members of the National Christian Missionary Convention elected him Chair of the enterprising Social Action Commission which brought steady pressure to bear on the denomination to uphold and demonstrate the biblical and constitutional principles of justice and equity for all people.

Eventually he was elected president of the Convention. Two years ago during the 14th. biennial session of the National Convocation of the Christian Church in Birmingham, AL, he received the "Liberation Award."



Jordan used his earned degrees from Chapman College in Claremont, CA and the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI to major in being an effective pastor, dedicated to the nurture and growth of the congregation. He was a founding member of the Interdenominational Ministers Alliance of Detroit.

congregation. Its main value lay in the concepts suggested for some understanding of the status of race relations within the denomination, and a rationality for the manner in which African American Disciples and others tried to devise ways to deal with some of the institutional church concerns.

Several persons he motivated to commit their lives to the Christian ministry were present during the memorial celebration held March 14 at United Christian Church.

In the latter years of Jordan's ministry metro Detroit became an area where the seeds of Black Theology were being planted. The concept of a Black Jesus was vigorously advanced in Detroit and some of its advocates were received national recognition. In response to the fervor in Afro theological thought, Dr. Jordan privately produced and published "Black Theology Exposed," Vantage Press. 1982 which stressed a greater reliance on gifts and resources already resident within the African American people and community

Robert Jordan died from heart failure at age 91. He is survived by two sons, Robert and Kenneth; a daughter, Emma Jackson; nine grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. His wife, Maisie, died in

1993. Senior Minister Jack Sullivan conducted the Memorial services in association with other ministers.



Robert Jordan, center, is congratulated by Perry Gresham, right, president of Bethany College, after receiving the honorary Doctor of Divinity from Bethany.

"Two Races in One Fellowship," was produced and privately published by Dr. Jordan with the support of the



William T. Percy, the seemingly tireless 96 year old retired president of the Board of Church Extension for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) died in Tucson, Arizona March 30, 1998. Commenting on the legacy of Bill Percy, current President of BCE James L. Powell, said "Bill Percy had a vision for church growth and vitality that never left him even in retirement...His legacy across the continent is of new and revitalized churches made possible by Bill's deep faith and enthusiastic persistence."

The native of Anderson, IN, was a graduate of Butler University in 1923, and recipient of an LLD degree from Indiana University Law School in 1926. Following employment for a bank and an insurance company, he joined the staff of the Board of Church Extension in 1932 at the height of the Great Economic

Depression. Eventually he became the Executive Secretary of BCE in 1945 in the midst of World War II. There were great demands of leadership in secular and religious institutions during these periods. Percy combined his personal faith in Jesus Christ and the church with his administrative skills and knowledge of law and economics. He shared liberally with the churches. Phillips University and Christian Theological Seminary eventually honored him with doctor of divinity degrees.

During "A Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of William T. Percy" conducted April 4, 1998 in the Washington Park East Cemetery, First Flag Chapel, Harold R. Watkins, a retired president of BCE, used the initials in Bill's name to emphasize the "qualities and attributes" which enabled Dr. Percy to serve the churches in the manner that he did. Watkins described him as being "warm and wise...", "trusting, trustworthy and truthful..." and "practical, purposeful and prayerful..."

Senior Minister R. G. Erickson, pastor of Downey Avenue Christian Church, where Bill Percy was once a member, assisted in the memorial service. A memorial service had also been held April 2, 1998 at First Christian Church in Tucson, Arizona.

Pictures via courtesy of BCE - Dept. PR



In a light moment, BCE Treasurer James Hamlett and BCE President James Powell, award retiree, Bill Percy, a "Doctorate of Time Management" in 1994. Dr. Percy had come to Indianapolis to be honored by the School of Law at Indiana University.

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AN EDITOR'S APOLOGY: Technological frustrations arising from the operation of a new computer system, including software have made us very late in publication and distribution. However, six issues will be printed and mailed in 1998 as promised.

Secondly, in the January/February issue the editor sincerely regrets that he mistakenly announced the "call" of Eric Cole to fill the Senior Minister slot at Swope Parkway in Kansas City, MO. Confirmation from a primary source had not been received. Hopefully, no individual or group was inconvenienced by this error. This was not in accordance with our practice. **WKF,SR - Editor/Manager**

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Networking church-related senior citizens into Christian community

The Oldtimers' Grapevine

What Are They Doing Now? -

The Smiths of Robin Run!

By Joe and Win

The invitation from THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE to share something about where we are and what we are doing reached us just as we were preparing to leave our Indianapolis home at ROBIN RUN for two month's of residence in Hand Lake, Pine Tree, Minnesota. We have spent our vacations here since 1964 when five families, under the leadership of the late Christian social activist Barton Hunter, bought out an old fishing camp. This summer our whole family joins us there for a brief reunion.

We are still on a pilgrimage of learning and growing with "no stopping place down here." Through the urging and guidance of our son and grandchildren, we have been introduced to the mysteries and miracles of computers and e-mail.

Doing in the sense of achieving is not at the top of our agenda. Win celebrated her 86th birthday last October. However, she keeps a full calendar and makes good use of the telephone planning more meetings and enlisting volunteers for various services.

We volunteer for help with an adult care center maintained under the leadership of a Catholic nun in a Presbyterian church.

We helped to organize a unit of Bread for the World in Robin Run and meet once a month to write letters to our legislators advocating aid for the hungry at home and abroad. We serve with a



Joe Smith participates in the Annual Heritage Day Festival by demonstrating how Hoosier pioneers sharpening an axe on a grindstone. A Log Cabin containing artifacts used by pioneer Hoosiers is preserved on the Robin Run campus.

group who plan monthly sessions on issues of public concern for the Robin Run community. Joe occasionally participates in activities at the log cabin, which is frequently used to acquaint students from the local schools with pioneer life in Indiana

Joe serves as an elder in our local church and Win promotes joint activities between our congregation and the predominantly African-American congregation with whom we share a building

We find that retirement does not necessarily mean relinquishing involvement in the life of the church and

Continued on Page Two

The Oldtimers' Grapevine

the world. Now, though living in a retirement community we have new housing developments crowding us on two sides. We live at the entrance of the village and look from our bedroom window across busy 62nd. Street to Northwestway Park where a 2 million-dollar Aquatic park is nearing completion. On Saturday and Sunday dozens of youth fill the several soccer fields.

When I (Joe) take the 2-mile walk around the perimeter of the park I meet a generation, gender and racial cross section of our community. Almost all return a genial greeting. Refreshed, I return with the thanksgiving that retirement does not mean the end of human relationships. Rather, it brings a daily reminder that life is abundant only when it is shared.

Editor: The Joe Smiths helped many of us understand that oftimes that "over in the mission fields," the presence of the Jesus Spirit has often preceded the presence of Christian missionaries. During the first "Church-to-Church Visitation" we also saw Joe and Win demonstrate reconciliation and forgiveness in Osaka, Japan when Joe gave an embrace of forgiveness and love to a former Japanese soldier who had held them in captivity in the Philippines while they were serving as missionaries to China.

Musings of An 89Yr Old

By Lorenzo J. Evans

At age 89 it takes me a long time to do anything..I don't do too much anymore except enjoy my family and attend church. Indianapolis is home, but I am no longer on any Boards or committees. I leave that to my daughter, Eddie, who is very busy with the Regional and General (Church) Boards and committees. I enjoy my grandchildren. Allison is 14 and lives here in the city with her mother, Stacy. My other grandchild (Eddie's son) works as a research chemist for Monsanto and lives in suburban

Chicago. He is an active layman at the Christian (Disciples of Christ) church in Maywood, IL.

I do continue to do some work with the laymen in Faith United Christian Church where I have membership. I am particularly interested in helping them raise money for the **Star Supporter Fund**.

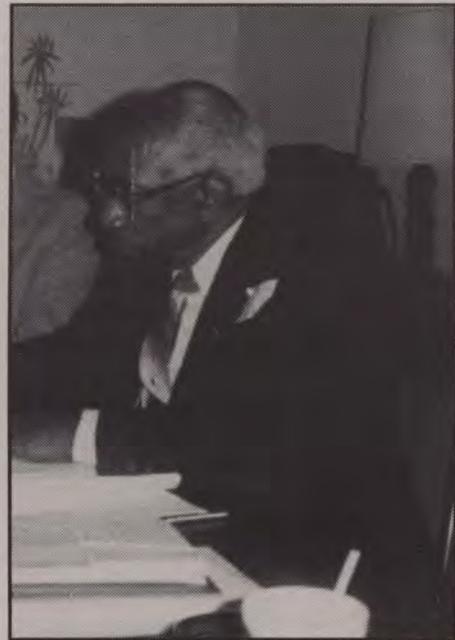
I recall meeting with a group of men under a tree in Detroit, MI back in 1948 when the National Christian Missionary Convention was in session there. This conversation with this handful of men under the tree gave birth to the idea of **The Star Supporter Fund**. At that time there was only a handful of black Disciples of Christ preachers with seminary degrees serving congregations as pastors. The laymen I talked with under that tree developed the vision that all black Disciples of Christ intent on Christian ministry should have an opportunity to attend a seminary. They felt that the laymen in the churches should help by developing a financial base. Thus, **The Star Supporter Fund** was born!

I would dare say that today ninety-five percent (95%) of the black Disciples of Christian ministers who have attended seminary have done so with assistance from **The Star Supporter Fund**. However, today grants from this fund are not only given to African Americans, others in need have also benefited. Divinely motivated and determined black laymen planted the seeds for this Fund.

I have seen our church change in many ways during my 63 years in the ministry. I think of my work with the United Christian Missionary Society and the days of traveling by car in order to save money and avoid unpleasant incidents in the South. I remember staying in people's homes where there was no plumbing or electricity. But we did not consider it a hardship because we were doing the work of the church.

I also remember traveling with my white colleagues to meetings at Texas Christian University and not being allowed to eat with them or to stay on

the campus. It was a bittersweet experience when this same University,



Lorenzo J. Evans was a tireless worker devoting long hours directing Christian leadership training. During his first years of retirement he joined the late lay leader, A. C. Stone, to lead additional congregation-centered events.

some thirty years later, awarded me an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. Oh how we have changed. Yet we have miles to go. None-the-less, we do all for the glory of God and this is what counts in the end.

Editor: There is no General Church staff person alive who has made a greater positive impact on Christian workers than Lorenzo J. Evans. He has always come across to me "as a sincere practicing Christian." The former pastor, Young Men's Christian Association staff member and military chaplain didn't preach many sermons as a church field worker. However, his sermon on John 3:16, is one of the most impressive demonstrations in effective homiletics I've ever experienced. We're glad he is still among us at 89.

Life After Strokes: An Opportunity to Serve.

By Enoch J. Henry, Jr.

You know strokes left my left side almost dysfunctional- And I'm a lefty!

I moved to Bethany Towers in Hollywood, CA in October 1997. I like it! I'm bringing memorial messages and counseling. In other words, I'm "back in the trenches." I didn't know some folks are so afraid of dying. Death is on a roll here; sickness a plenty. So I keep pretty busy. Our senior community numbers a little better than 100 residents. I'm a member of two minorities: the male minority of three; and the African American minority of one!

The House Chaplain, Ben Moore died last year and has not been replaced. I don't want full-time responsibility, but I'm filling in where possible.

I have church membership in the Hollywood-Beverly Hills Christian Church. Margaret (Peggy) Clark is the senior minister. We were associated in church work when she was in the Northeast Regional Area of New York and also when she served as Regional Minister for the Pacific Southwest. Home for me is next door to the church

Allan A. DeGroot said it best, and I take liberties: "We still have miles to go and promises to keep before we sleep..."

Editor: It gives me personal delight to share this status report on Dr. Henry. I remember our trip on a New York City subway train several years ago when, in a strangely weakened physical condition, Enoch nearly collapsed on my lap. As general church staff we were working together in a Regional Church event in Brooklyn.

Somehow we struggled to the church event that was taking place and Enoch refused to give up. This fervent preacher, pastor, and administrator continues! How wonderful to know that years later Enoch J. Henry Jr. refuses to give up. Praise God!

Retired Journalist: With Concern for Justice

By Louise Moseley

In December 1971 I retired after 21 years of work in publicity, promotion, and editing for several national agencies of the Christian Churches. My last six years of service were as associate editor of the former outreach emphasis magazine called *World Call*. Soon after I joined the staff, it merged with *The Christian Evangelist* to form what was first called *The Christian*, and now *The Disciple*.

In 1973 my husband, J. Edward Moseley, died while still active as a freelance writer and editor for several of our church agencies. Since the years of "restructure" much has changed in terminology. "Agencies" are now called "Divisions" and the "Brotherhood of Churches" has become "The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

After Ed's death I decided to move here to the Lenoir Retirement Center in Columbia, Missouri. It was one of the first homes for elderly offering independent living in a village of small houses and duplexes. We had visited Lenoir when Ed was doing promotional writing for the National Benevolent Association. Several of our friends were already there. Among them were Virgil and Florence Sly Lin and Thelma Cartwright, Bill and Margaret Starn, and Eric and Jessie Carlson. So I felt at home immediately on arrival in Columbia. I bought one side of a duplex and have lived here contentedly for 25 years.

During these years I have worked with the Christian Concerns Department of Broadway Christian Church; the Christian Women's Fellowship; Church Women United of Columbia; and given seven years of volunteer service in a local hospital. This involvement has brought me in touch with many new friends and filled the days with rewarding activities.

Recently, several of us at Lenoir have been active in the Missouri Alliance for

Clean Government. We have collected several signatures of registered voters in our district seeking to get a bill on the November ballot to reduce the amount of campaign money candidates can accept from private donors. The bill also seeks to determine the length of campaigns for state offices. It has been an interesting exercise. I hope to live to see the bill enacted. Probably I will. I'm only 89 now.

Editor: Louise Moseley has been an early and continuing supporter of The Oldtimers' Grapevine. I still remember the quiet, but effective manner in which she and Ed worked as journalists within the evolving structures of the Church.

From Sage and Servant

By Spencer and Kitty Austin

We are enjoying creative retirement in Robin Run Village. Kitty heads the Volunteer Office for the community and seeks to enlist other residents for the many helpful activities, which enrich life in our village.

We find Robin Run a vibrant, refreshing and reassuring fellowship, which maximizes opportunities for meaningful life during the sunset years.

We are grateful that the Christian Church has sponsored such retirement facilities across the country.

Editor: Many of us remember the rich, vibrant, and statesmanlike Christian leadership the Austin's have given Christendom through the years. I'm tempted to describe one or more of the many creative encounters we enjoyed in National Christian Missionary Convention, National Convocation, Reconciliation Steering Committee and General Cabinet sessions in which we were co-laborers.

But one thing we do miss here at Foxwood Springs is the rhubarb patch we had in our garden in Indianapolis, IN behind our garage. We got the start for that patch from our neighbors, the Spencer Austin's.

The John R. Compton's and Another Retirement!

By John and Lucile Compton

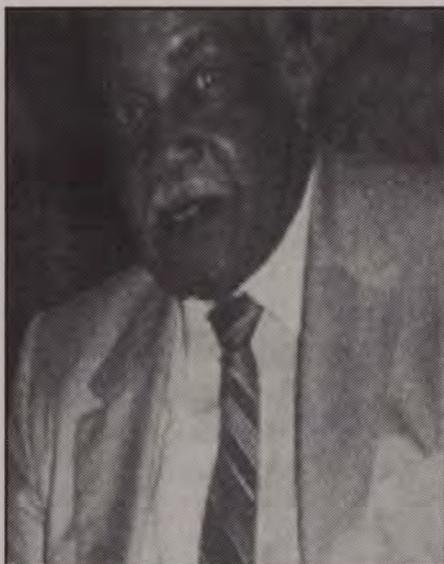
John retired in 1989 after seven years of service as the President of the Division of Homeland Ministries for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada. The D. H. M. Board then named him President Emeritus of the Division. In 1990 Mrs. Compton retired from the Cincinnati Public School System as a classroom teacher and school administrator.

For the first time in their many years of professional service, Lucile's retirement opened a way for John and Lucile to do some work together. John served on the staff of the Christian Church Foundation and gave administrative leadership to the establishment of the Black Disciples Endowment Fund. Lucile assisted him as the part time program secretary. This program continues under the directorship of Samuel J. Hylton, II of St. Louis, MO who retired from the pastorate and succeeded John as the Endowment Fund director in 1997.

During 1990 John accepted a call to provide interim ministry services for the Hill Street Christian Church in Louisville, KY. As the year progressed, the Bond Hill Christian Church, which was only five minutes from the Compton residence in Cincinnati, OH, was in need of pastoral services. John accepted an offer to serve as its pastor where he has been the senior minister for the past eight years. June 7, 1998 the congregation gave the Compton's a "retirement dinner."

The congregation cited the Compton's for "many years of service and tireless efforts and dedication."

After about four years of the Compton leadership, Bond Hill found need for more space and facilities. Opportunities came for them to move into the Forest Park Christian Church facilities in



As the Compton's enjoyed their second retirement dinner they remembered the loyal support of members of the Canton and Cincinnati, OH congregations.

Forest Park, OH. As Bond Hill moved into these new facilities, it changed its name to St. John's Christian Church and became co-owners Forest Park Christian Church. The building housing both congregations is now called "The Disciples Center." A joint congregational Search Committee for a Pastor recently nominated William Edwards, the former Executive Minister for the Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church, Memphis, TN, to succeed Dr. Compton and become the Senior Minister for both the St. John's Christian Church and Forest Park Christian Church.

Editor: When I was attending Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, IN in pursuit of another seminary degree, I remember seeing John Compton rushing through hallways of CTS. He commuted from Cincinnati, OH and his pastorate at United Christian Church in pursuit of his seminary degrees. Having received his educational foundation at Jarvis Christian College and family support, he was ready to blaze several trails in Disciples of Christ history.

Still Bearing "Cross and Crown"

By Thomas and Virginia Liggett

Thomas and Virginia Liggett, the retired leaders in theological education who have affirmed quality higher education and applied Christian ethics, both overseas and at home, have resided in a West Coast retirement community in Claremont, CA known as Pilgrim Place, for more than 10 years. While confronting challenges to family survival, they have pursued a balanced path of involvement in meaningful retirement living.

Tom has served on the Board of Directors and the Search Committee to find a new Executive Director at Pilgrim Place. He has chaired the Admissions Committee and been the treasurer for the Annual Festival. Virginia has joined him as co-chair of the Vespers Committee.

Dr. Liggett's energies, insight, and continuing interest in high quality education has been fulfilled through his completion of 10 years on the Chapman University Board of Directors. He has served on the Academic Affairs and Church Relations committees and Co-Chaired the Search Committee to select the new Dean of the Chapel. The Liggett interest in education continues through his membership on the Board of Directors of the Claremont Community School of Music and a campaign committee to raise funds for the Senior Program Endowment.

Other involvement by the Liggetts in their retirement years include supply preaching for both UCC and Disciple congregations; writing articles for various publications, including THE DISCIPLE; and active membership in the local Democratic Party.

Underlying it all is their faithful Christian witness, maintained as members of the First Christian Church in Pomona, CA. Tom and Virginia

Continued on Page Five



Tom and Virginia Liggett as they receive the Crown and Cross Award from the Pamona Christian Church after ten years of faithful service.

both serve on the Outreach Committee and are currently and the Scholarship and Permanent Funds committees. February 1998, after 10 years of such faithful Discipleship, the Pamona congregation gave them the "Cross and Crown" award.

Editor: T. J. Liggett has always impressed me as always on the edge of the surge for a larger grasp of the Liberating Truth. We were members of the group making that first "Church-to-Church Visitation" some 26 years ago. (Dr. Liggett was the president of the United Christian Missionary Society and was also one of the potential nominees for the next General Minister and President of the Church.) One day while in Osaka, a few of us joined him and wandered aimlessly by strange stores and finally into something looking like an ancient temple-like arcade building. As we made our way through the halls, we ran into a pleasantly smiling Japanese man paused to engage a conversation with what he knew were rambling Western tourists. We discovered that he was an administrative staff member for a Japanese religious group who held a job similar to Dr. Liggett's in U.C.M.S.

THANKS TO THESE DONORS SINCE THE LAST ISSUE:

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HONORED SENIOR TEACHER

Tulsa, OK- After years of teaching and working with young people, the Christian Women's Fellowship of Pine Street Christian Church honored Zenobia Mayo for her appointment as Dean of the Booker T. Washington High School student body. Max Morgan is the minister at Pine Street Christian Church

Mrs. Mayo plays the piano for the congregation and is active in the church. She has three children. She is a graduate of Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, TX and part of the Disciples of Christ pioneer Ratten household. (The Rattan household included Ruth R. Patterson, now in Philadelphia, PA and the late Charles C. Mosley, Sr. and James Rattan, all college teachers and administrators and church leaders.)

REIREE LOSES MATE

Indianapolis, IN- Elsie Blanchard, longtime employee of the Christian Church Services unit lost her husband May 27, 1998. Elsie serviced Missions Building staff some 30 years.

The Oldtimers' Grapevine

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Bells toll for those who "have fought a good fight...and kept the faith."



VENITA O. C. WADDLETON:

A Versatile and Tireless Teacher

Topeka, KS- After an extended period of illness, Venita Odessa Carney-Waddleton, died May 27, 1998 in a local infirmary. The native Topeka resident, with bachelor and master degrees from Emporia Teachers College and the University of the Pacific, spent the heart of her professional services as a faculty and administrative staff member for Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, TX for fifty years.

Venita came to Jarvis in 1929 as a teacher of commercial subjects in the business department. She soon was known as "the business department" since she taught business law, typing, shorthand, business arithmetic and commercial geography. Eighteen months after her arrival she was given the additional assignments of secretary to the President, bookkeeper, and recordkeeper. Later, she served as registrar and business teacher. She held on to the job of College Registrar until her retirement in 1979.

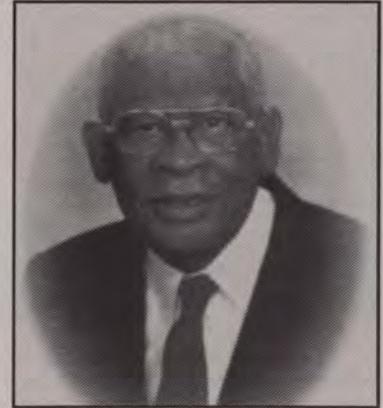
Dr. Waddleton served during the tenure of seven college presidents (i. e. J. N. Ervin, Peter C. Washington, Cleo Blackburn, John B. Eubanks, J. O. Perpener and Earl W. Rand).

A crowning contribution was made to the school and higher education during her retirement when she compiled a pictorial history of Jarvis Christian College entitled *Unroll the Scroll*.

One of her final public appearances occurred at the **Jarvis Christian College Founders' Day Convocation** March 29, 1994 when Jarvis recognized surviving members of the family who gave land for the college. President Sebetha Jenkins selected Venita to bring the keynote address. At the time she was 87 years old but she rose in her graceful and stately manner to give those attending this challenge: "Don't let Jarvis become a foot note on the pages of history!"

Dr. Waddleton had been a member of Second Christian Church in Topeka, KS before residency in Texas where she was a member of the Mount Zion CME Church in Whitman, TX.

Her husband Travis Waddleton, whom she married December 26, 1943 at Winsboro, TX, preceded her in death. Survivors in her family include three sisters, H. Josephine Strong, Muriel Hendrickson, and Ardenia E. Brown, all of Topeka, and a host of other relatives and friends.



FRANK B. BRADLEY:
A Man For All Seasons

Washington, D.C.- Frank B. Bradley, an ordained Disciples of Christ minister 80, had his homegoing service, June 4, 1998 in Michigan Park Christian Church, after 56 years of faithful ministerial service. Representatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); metro congregations; state government and the University of the District of Columbia gave tributes. Oscar Haynes, a longtime associate with Frank Bradley in Christian social action, represented the National Convocation. Senior Pastor Deloris Carpenter gave the eulogy and the Michigan Park choir provided the music.

Married to Celestine Mary Mims, and father of two daughters, Rosie M. Bradley of Chicago, IL and Laura A. Bradley Squire of Hyattsville, MD, he began services to congregations in 1942 in Parsons, KS. He went on to Rockford, IL, and then Montgomery, AL. before moving East in 1950 to serve Second Christian Church of Hagerstown, MD for fifteen consecutive years. The Eastern Seaboard had become the springboard for a steadfast witness in Christian Discipleship.

In the mid-1960's when African

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American Disciples of Christ within the Northeastern Seaboard were scattered in purpose, he was the chief catalyst for the formation of an EASTERN SEABOARD CONVOCATION.

When the hot fires of unrest in the cities burned fiercely in the late 1960's, he was the engine generating support for a Community Center at 12th. Street Christian Church. Thus the Christian Church in the Capital Area to have at least one demonstration in Christian concern for meeting community need.

When the smaller congregations in the area (i. e. Hagerstown, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore) were struggling to survive, Frank continued bi-vocational employment and was available to serve these congregations.

Jarvis Christian College, one of Frank's alma maters, recognized his achievements by initiating him into their newly established **Pioneers' Hall of Fame** in 1997.

**JAMES T. FOWLER, SR-
Survivor of Pearl Harbor and
Dedicated Disciple**

Alexandria, VA- James T. Fowler, Sr., died in his residence here May 24, 1998. He was born April 18, 1919 in Longview, TX to Mrs. Ira Mae Fowler and Lonnie Fowler. James Fowler was the youngest of their three children.



Memorial Services were held in the Light of the World Christian Church of Indianapolis, IN June 6, 1998 where Senior Minister, Bishop T. Garrott Benjamin, Jr. brought "Words of Comfort" and officiated.

Fowler finished Jarvis Christian College with a major in education when he was 19 years old. Too young to teach he enlisted in the U. S. Navy in 1938 to confront the challenges of the enemy as well as the Navy's notoriously known system of racial discrimination.

Fowler served honorably for 8 years during the height of World War II. He served throughout the Pacific Campaign on the USS San Francisco, a decorated battleship, and was a survivor of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. During this historic surprise attack he was aboard the USS West Virginia battleship when it was sunk. James Fowler attained the rank of Chief Petty Officer while aboard both battleships. Thus he was in charge of all food

supply and meal preparations. He was awarded the bronze and silver stars, the Purple Heart, and two Presidential Citations for his combat duty. An Indianapolis television station sent a videotaping crew to Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1976 to create a documentary of James T. Fowler, Sr and other Pearl Harbor survivors.

Mr. Fowler returned to Indianapolis, IN and civilian life where he was a successful employee in the U. S. Postal Service and Eli Lilly Company. He entered the automobile insurance business in 1954 and in 1956 started and managed the largest minority-owned insurance agency in the state of Indiana.

He married Perle L. Peoples, daughter of the late Robert H. and Zellie Peoples, Disciple of Christ Church leaders. Fowler was a dedicated and active member of the Light of the World Christian Church (formerly Second Christian Church) for more than 40 years. At his death he was both a deacon and Elder Emeritus. Fowler was a faithful lay leader in the congregation while Dr. Peoples was the pastor and also under the leadership of his successor, Bishop T. Garrott Benjamin, Jr.

His wife, Perle, preceded James Fowler, Sr. in death. Five sons and three daughters residing in five states; 21 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews throughout the U.S.A survive him.

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THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE

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August 1998

Raymore, Missouri

SERE S. MYERS: The "BRIDGE BUILDER" AT THE CENTURY MARK! A Journey of Faith, by William K. Fox, Sr., Retired Adm. Secretary of the National Convocation

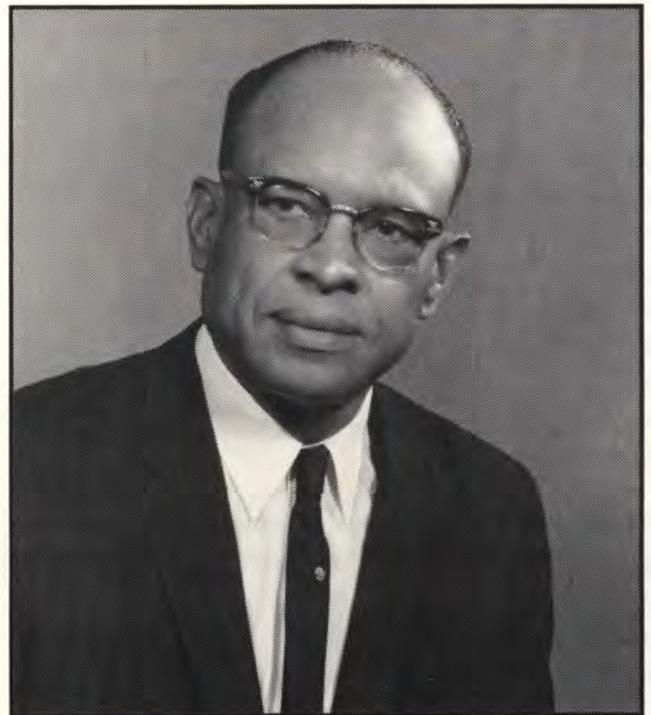
A Century Birthday Celebration will be held September 26 in Kansas City, MO. for pioneer Disciples of Christ church leader, Sere S. Myers. The Myers' children will honor their beloved father who was born nearly one hundred years ago to former slaves Frank and Dora Dean Myers in the log cabin on their 400-acre farm in Clay County, Mississippi.

Miraculous circumstances enabled Sere, the youngest member of a family of 14, to live out his childhood and youth during that critical epoch in American history known as the "lynching era." That was the 50 years following Reconstruction after the Civil War when nearly 800 African American were viciously murdered by lynch mobs. There were more blacks that were victims in Mississippi during this period than in any other state.



Sere Myers at age six with sister, Daisy, and their parents, Frank and Dora Dean Myers

His grandfather who was a white northern Yankee who was killed in the Civil War. The maternal



Dr. Sere S. Myers, Centurion- September 25, 1998

Grandmother, Anderson Dean, was a freed slave formerly owned by the Dean family who permitted their slaves to marry and rear families. The Deans were well to-do farmers who owned and operated a 1200-acre farm.

These factors in the family background no doubt enabled the Myers Household to successfully cope with the prevailing rule of Jim Crow and social practice in Mississippi which sharply separated the races. Legally speaking, former slaves were given citizenship and the right to vote, as well as safeguards from a return to slavery, when Congress ratified the 13th, 14th.

Continued on Page 2

and 15th. Amendments to the United States constitution between 1865-1870. But few black people were able to bridge the wide gaps between the races to receive the citizenship rights provided by the "slave amendments."

SURVIVAL WITHIN THE JIM CROW CULTURE

It was against this prevailing social backdrop that predominantly white church bodies, like the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), joined predominantly black church denominations to establish "mission schools" in the South. The goal was to offer black children and youth opportunities to secure quality elementary, secondary and higher education at low cost, as an option to receiving the mediocre public education usually afforded blacks in that region on a short term basis.

When young Sere Myers finished the elementary schools of Clay County at fourteen years of age, he learned about an opportunity for receiving an education like this was available in a work-study program at Southern Christian Institute in Edwards, MS. It would enable him to go to school at no cost to his family. At the time the price of cotton was fluctuating in the market place and cotton farming had an uncertain future. The Frank Myers family was suffering from these economic uncertainties.

Due to the family's lack of resources, young Sere Myers went against his mother's wishes and left the family farm in Clay County and traveled southwest to Edwards, Mississippi and Southern Christian Institute. There he would receive his high school and junior college education. Even though he was less than 200 miles from home, his limited operating funds made it impossible to return home for three years.

He worked on campus jobs for ten cents an hour to earn money to meet daily needs and focused on

getting a foundational education. Sere drove an oxen team and an eight wheel wagon threw gravel; hauled logs to the sawmill, carried slabs, and stacked lumber, until he was appointed the superintendent of the entire mill operation. Later he was chosen to operate the power generator for the campus.

In addition to keeping a work schedule, Sere sang in the Glee Club and Concert Choir; played a good tennis game and became a fine baseball pitcher sought by Rube Foster to play professional baseball. At seventeen, when the U.S.A. experience in conducting World War I taught the nation the importance of using leadership resources available in the black soldier, he and five other young men from Southern Christian Institute were sent to Howard University in Washington, D. C., along with 1,700 students from other Negro colleges in the U. S. A. for military instruction.

He was among the sixty selected from that group to go to Des Moines, IA for extensive officer training. But World War I ended before such training was necessary. He returned to S. C. I. to be commissioned "Commander of Boys," a service for which he received a citation from President J. B. Lehman. In 1922 he graduated from Southern Christian Institute as valedictorian of a class which included Rosa Page Welch, Vance Smith and Lula Perkins.

Cornelius W. Arnold of Los Angeles, CA, who attended Southern Christian Institute during this same period in history, says "*Sere Myers was gone when I arrived at S. C. I. but I soon learned that he had been a good student baseball player. When I went to Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, TX, says Arnold, "students were still talking about him..."*

Continued on Page 3

A BUDDING "BRIDGE BUILDER" BEGINS- In Austin, TX

Sere S. Myers had potentials for being a good farmer; baritone soloist, tennis and/or baseball player; or a career military officer, but he publicly committed himself to be a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Upon graduation, he was ordained at Southern Christian Institute. Under the guidance of SCI President J. B. Lehman, who was also the denomination's "Superintendent of Educational and Evangelistic Work for Negroes," he was recommended to the East Twelfth Street Christian Church of Austin, TX Search Committee to become its pastor.

The youthful Myers had learned how to save a little money, but never enough extra to buy a coat, two suits, and a watch. He eagerly accepted the "call." The twenty-five-member congregation was blessed with Anglo benefactors who were members of the First Christian Church. Initially they helped to purchase the church building and supplied most of the operating budget. They also provided the pastor's \$25 per month salary, including books and other leadership tools for the minister. This freed up the young pastor to devote himself mainly to preparation for worship and to render ministerial services. Soon he was drawing upon his God-given leadership abilities and early work experiences to successfully conduct his first pastorate.

After four years the little congregation of twenty-five had grown to one hundred members. During the last two years of tenure he was called upon to divide his ministerial services with the Grove Street Christian Church of Houston, TX where internal problems were preventing church growth. It was during his relationship with the Houston congregation that he baptized young high school lad named Emmett J. Dickson. They cultivated an early friendship.

The flow of history would bring Myers and Dickson together again in the mid-nineteen forties to work closely on the reorganization and improvement of the National Christian Missionary Convention and its role in predominantly African American Disciples of Christ church development.

Myers' selection as pastor of the predominantly Black Disciples of Christ congregation in Austin and Houston, reflects the way in which Disciples of Christ home missions structures tried to establish and/or strengthen congregational beach heads within burgeoning African American urban communities. Between 1920 and the dawn of the Great Depression in 1930 some fifteen to twenty black pastors and evangelists were serving in twelve states. They received modest support and general guidance from a Joint Executive Committee related to the united home missions units of the church along with representatives from African American Disciples of Christ.

BEGINNING THE BRIDGE OF FAMILY.

The Bridge Builder not only was challenged to strengthen congregations in Austin, and Houston, TX. He was also engaged in securing a wife and begins the development of a family. Soon after Seer's successful discovery and marriage to Martha, and the birth of their first two children, Stacy and Jean, the nation confronted social and racial strife and was eventually plunged into the Great Depression.

These times were not the best for black people in general. The summer of 1917 Preston Taylor and a few other dedicated Disciples of Christ leaders met in Nashville, TN to form the National Christian Missionary Convention. However, in New York a New York City Fifth Avenue March July 28, 1917 was organized for thousands to march in silent protest against lynching and racial inequalities.

The Faith Journey of "The Builder" and the Church

World War I was underway and blacks were leaving the South for jobs in the industrial areas of the North. "The migration... peaked between 1920 and 1940. According to Beck and Tiknay's Research, Southern states lost almost 700,000 blacks...The percentage of blacks that lived in urban areas also leaped from 17 percent in 1900 to 33 percent in 1930."

During World War I federal spending had grown three times larger than tax collections. Attempts by government to balance the budget in 1920 had laid the foundations for a severe economic recession.

BUILDING GIRDERS FOR THE BRIDGE- in Oklahoma City, OK

This was the social and economic climate within which Myers was challenged to lead the East Sixth Street Church of Oklahoma City membership of 45 in 1926 to a membership of two hundred and fifty in 1932.

Era Holmes and Lola B. Greer, faithful members of the East Sixth Street congregation in Oklahoma City, OK says S. S. Myers was the leader at our congregation for eight years. He stands at the top of the list of East 6th. Street Christian Church ministers. He was a builder of men, women, and children. He believed in family life. East 6th. Street loved his family. While serving us he had two children; Stacy and Jean. His wife, Martha, was our leader in missions...

"The young women built a tennis court on the church lot...Rev. Myers and Rev. J. B. Holmes tried to teach us all how to play. We learned to play at Southern Christian Institute where they taught us to play pretty good, but not good enough... East Sixth Street loved the Myers' leadership."

A former pastor of this same Oklahoma City congregation, **Enoch W. Henry, Jr.** of Hollywood, CA says, "I first became acquainted with the Myers Magic when I eventually succeeded him at the historic East 6th. Street Christian Church of Oklahoma City. From all indications he was quite intelligent, polished, possessing a business-like manner, and 'pawer in the valley.' (a good preacher). As one communicant put it, 'No one could say her communion on her like Rev. Myers and E. W. Henry.'

Spencer Austin, a retired minister and church administrator of Indianapolis, IN, remembers Dr. Myers as "... a pastor in Oklahoma City while I was in student ministries in the state and attending Phillips University. He was recognized as a young, effective, black minister who had promise of helping create an educated... ministry which could lift the level of church life... among black congregations throughout the brotherhood..."

When S. S. Myers began his ministry in 1922 until his call to come to Kansas City in 1932, an average of 600 banks would fail each year. Merging corporations would swallow up more than 6,000 previously independent companies until by 1929, only 200 companies controlled over half of all industry in America. The richest one-percent of the population owned 40 percent of the nation's wealth. The Ku Klux Klan reached its height in membership (9 million) in 1924, but declined drastically in 1925 after financial and moral scandals rocked its leadership

By the time of the stock market crash, which began with "Black Tuesday" October 24, 1929. more than half of all Americans were living below the minimum subsistence level. Blacks were leaving the rural South and heading to the major cities of the North and the Coasts to struggle for survival. The worst years of the Great Depression came in 1931-33 when stocks,

Continued on Page 5

deposits, money supply, and farm prices had all lost and unemployment had reached 23.6 percent.

BUILDING GIRDERS FOR THE BRIDGE- in Kansas City, MO

These same economic conditions eventually brought the once promising Woodland Avenue Christian Church of Kansas City, MO to a crawl by 1932. William Alphin (1916 - 1924) and C. A. Craggett (1924-1932) and provided valiant ministries for this congregation. However, during the Craggett administration the negative forces of the Great Depression were too much. Plans to buy a new building had to be dropped. Historian Rami Schwartz records "Millions had no shoes, yet footwear factories were operating at marginal capacity. Hundreds of thousands had no food, yet gallons of milk and silos of grain were dumped and burned. Meanwhile, the concentration of wealth increased... Herbert Hoover, isolated in the White House, tried to deal with a crisis he could not understand, while one quarter of the nation had no regular source of income."

Congregation historians Clarence Cates and Francis McGee describe the launching of the Myers' ministry at Woodland in these words: "The beginning of his ministry at the Woodland Avenue Christian Church was dark...with the United States in the midst of a depression. Half of the families in the church received relief funds and the other half was poorly paid. This automatically placed the minister 'on relief.'

Church attendance was poor and organizations, dying. The parsonage was on the verge of being repossessed. The small membership and meager finances made it possible to heat and light the church only once a week. The homes of the members were sometimes used to supplement the inadequacies of the church.

For approximately twenty years there was no church office and Rev. Myers and his wife

willingly received church (telephone) calls at their home. The church income was less than \$1,400.00 yearly. Rev. Myers first Christmas week at the Woodland church yielded him only \$2.75.

The church was divided in spirit and in fellowship. A state of disorganization prevailed. There was no unity of purpose or ideas. Upon many occasions, the pastor and a few of the charter members were forced to walk from house to house through deep snow and cold winds to collect enough money to buy coal for the Sunday service.

The general pattern in those early years was clubs, loosely working within themselves. Because of the lack of unity, the church operation costs were scattered among various clubs. There was much dissatisfaction and a great sense of insecurity.

Throughout all these trials, the church members retained their faith, love and willingness to work. They were sustained by their faith and belief in God, 'in whom they lived and moved and had being.'" Caton and McGhee conclude "They had faith in themselves and in their new leader."

George Coates has a vivid memory of Pastor Myers' inability to become satisfied with failure. Coates recalls that he transferred his membership from Second Christian Church in Fulton, MO to West Paseo Christian Church of Kansas City in 1959. Eventually he became a deacon and a few years later was elected president of the Deacon Board.

Coates reports that soon after that "I received a letter in an envelope from the church. To my surprise, it was from me! I was very angry that Rev. Myers would send out a letter over my name without consulting with me.

I immediately went to the church to confront Rev. Myers. He admitted that he had prepared and sent the letter to all deacons. I lit into Rev. Myers with a defiant voice and let him have 'a piece of my

mind' I told him that I didn't like the letter and the deacons would be told that I didn't write it.

Rev. Myers was very attentive and had a smile on his face. That irritated me and I got real angry with him. When asked why he was smiling, he told me that he was happy that I was upset because he only did that because past presidents had failed to have deacon meetings. I assured him that I would have deacon's meetings and that I would work with him but he had to assure me that he would not send out anything over my name without approval. We worked well together and I resigned as president of the Deacons after serving ten (10) consecutive years."



Sere S. Myers and Martha Myers, Deceased

During the first sixteen years of ministry in Woodland Christian Church there was an earnest effort made to evangelize and expand the mission of the congregation. But there continued to be inadequate facilities, poor equipment and extremely limited finances.

A critical companion challenge was family survival. Conditions made it mandatory that both pastor and wife lock arms to wrestle with the prevailing socio-economic factors and maintain family and carry on a self-sustaining, bi-vocational ministry. They wanted to provide a quality home and formal education for their children. Successful attempts in being a real estate agent and eventually a real estate broker helped them to achieve these objectives. Business and administrative skills gained by Myers in the process were channeled to the pastoral ministry and larger denominational leadership.

Enoch W. Henry, Jr. of Los Angeles, CA, the retired pastor and church administrator, says, "*Dr. Sere was a planner, plugger upper, and bridge builder. His finger was stuck in the hole of a dyke. He has spent a lifetime plugging walls and building bridges.*"

These skills were refined as he dealt with interpreting the need for an effective witness for the Disciples of Christ among African Americans in metro Kansas City and across racial lines. Pastor Myers, accompanied by Woodland Avenue music groups led by Dr. M. M. Queen was given opportunities to interpret the challenge to groups within established congregations like the Country Club and Budd Park Christian Churches. Eventually the Woodland Avenue congregational vision was shared with the newly emerging district organization called the Joint Board of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church in Kansas City. In 1939 This Board endorsed the idea of assisting Woodland Avenue build a new church building and pledged to aid in raising the necessary funds.

Continued on Page 7

Marking the SERE S. MYERS' CENTURY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION - 9/1998

Dr. Myers had an opportunity to address the Joint Board of the church organization giving guidance and support to Disciples of Christ congregations in Kansas City during its meeting at Independence Boulevard Christian Church October 11, 1943. This was more than a half century ago when intentional church planning and development was not as organized and practiced within the denomination as it is today. The Great Depression had wiped out any help, which had gone toward strengthening the Disciples of Christ witness in predominantly African American communities. Myers was not receiving any outside assistance as he had been in Austin, TX.

The following excerpts from Pastor Myers presentation reflect the depth and expansiveness of the Woodland Avenue Church Vision. The words used characterize the skill he had developed in building bridges across racial and group divisions:

"This is a great hour for Woodland Avenue Christian Church. A thrilling and exciting hour for me. An hour we have waited for with enduring patience. May we seek God's blessings upon this program tonight, and upon the men and women who shall carry this work to a full fruition.

"In the spirit of deep humility and profound gratitude I come to acquaint you with the work, struggles, accomplishments, aims, and needs of the Woodland Avenue Christian Church, and to interest you in sharing with the Christian churches of Kansas City, through the Joint Board, in providing a well equipped church building for our people. I believe it is fitting and right for the weak to look to the strong for help...

"It is needless for me to raise the question, 'Am I my brother's keeper?'... Your interest, love and efforts are proof enough for us..."

Dr Myers continued by giving a brief history of Woodland Avenue and a sketching of the demographic factors related to the parish area where "five beautiful lots" had been secured "in the center of the best Negro community in Kansas City..." He then described the mission challenge in this manner:

"Ninety-eight percent of the churches serving Negroes in Kansas City, MO have only a basement and an auditorium. Preaching is their major emphasis. They lack facilities, equipment, and vision to meet the needs of the people of the communities. They are out of date and cannot make an adequate bid for the youth of today and tomorrow.

"To provide the kind of church needed, with the equipment, modernized, is to place the disciples fifty years ahead of other churches. Because of these unmet needs, in the field of religion, the youth are left to wander into the pool halls, dives and dens of vice, thus increasing juvenile problems at great percentage. The Y,W.C.A., Y.M.C.A. and the Catholic Church are the only institutions active at work and offering a program in recreation under wholesome environment.

"The Plea of the Disciples makes its greatest appeal to trained minds. This is the time for the Plea to be presented for thousands of boys and girls who are finishing high school and hundreds going to college...."

"What the Negro community thinks of the Disciples will be determined by the kind of church building we build..."

"Investment in this New Church will lead you into a better understanding of the Negro race. The man who has never been a traitor to his country, although he has never enjoyed full freedom..."

"It will pay rich dividends in Christian character and good citizenship..."

The Faith Journey of "The Builder" and the Church

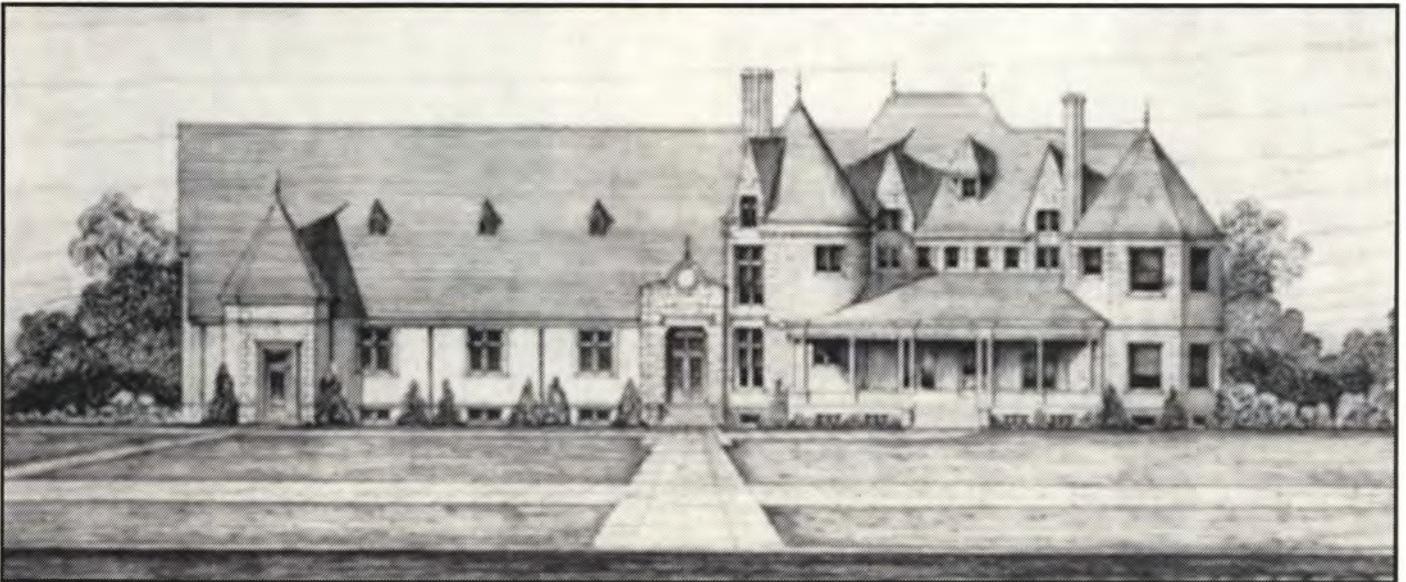
Woodland Avenue Church was involved in sacrificial efforts during the early 1940's to do its part in building the new church building. Sermons



and related presentations like the one Dr. Myers gave to the Joint Board were heard often during Sunday morning worship at Woodland Avenue. One Sunday morning while his dad, Sere S. Myers, was conducting the worship, his son, Sere, came forward to his father and said:

"Dad I want to sign one of the bonds for ten dollars. Without thinking, the father said, "No, take your seat!" Then in after thought, Pastor Myers called his son to the pulpit and asked, "If you sign the bond, how are you going to pay the ten dollars?" The reply was, "I have a CALL paper route, and I make fifty cents per week. I will pay twenty-five cents a week until I have completed my pledge of ten dollars." Pastor Myers accepted his son's pledge. When the next 10 months had passed, his son had paid out his \$10 pledge. Upon its completion, little Sere reminded his father that he had kept his pledge. "Now," he asked, when are they going to build the new church?"

September 29, 1946 the ground-breaking service for the West Paseo Christian Church was held on the corner of 25th. Street and West Paseo Boulevard. Sunday, January 23, 1949 the structure was formally dedicated in fulfillment of the Pastor's dream and many in the congregation and friends throughout the metro area.



The West Paseo Christian Church building became a for many of the congregations related to the National Christian Missionary Convention. The congregation had hosted one of the annual meetings while they were on Woodland Avenue. They hosted another National convention gathering after they entered the new structure as West Paseo. The story of how Pastor Myers had guided the congregation to build the new facility in cooperation with other Disciples of Christ congregations in Metro Kansas City caught the interest of National Convention leaders.

He was elected to serve on the Convention Board and other official units of the organization.

Ozark Range, Sr, the retired Director of Black Ministry in the Denomination's Division of Homeland Ministries, now a resident of Greenwood, MS, was overwhelmed when he first saw the newly constructed West Paseo church building. Range says:

"About the time Dr. Myers was serving the National Christian Missionary Convention as its president, I was a young pastor just beginning my involvement in the life and work of the NCMC

Having been afforded the opportunity to attend the NCMC in Kansas City, MO I stood in awe of the majestic beauty of the physical plant of West Paseo Christian Church where Dr. Myers was pastor. Having never seen our churches housed in such an imposing structure, you can imagine how a Mississippi lad must have felt. I was and I am of the opinion that Dr. Myers is a spiritual oak among us."

The years from 1939 to 1946 when Sere S. Myers was intensely involved in mounting a campaign to guide Woodland Avenue toward building new facilities on West Paseo, the world community was struck with some earth-shaking events. The

United States was coming out of the Great Depression when the Japanese struck Pearl Harbor, plunging America into World War II,

sometimes termed "the largest tragedy in human history." Our nation experienced the boom of a war economy as Germany's Adolph Hitler

invaded Poland and promised ever widening gloom.

BUILDING ACROSS DEEP VALLEYS OF DENOMINATIONAL DIVISION ON RACE, ORDER, AND MISSION- in the U. S. A. and Canada

Meantime, within the churches, especially a denomination like the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), there was quiet but continual agitation for the church become a believer and example of better race relations. The eleven o'clock hour on Sunday morning was, indeed, the most racially segregated hour on the American scene.

In 1943, just as Pastor Myers was in the midst of constructing the new church facilities on West Paseo, some leaders in the National Christian Missionary Convention were caught up in the debate on race and "open membership." There was consideration of withdrawal from the main body of the Disciples of Christ denomination, and the development other of church relationships or going it on their own.

A major debate on race was brewing within the wider church scene. During and soon after World War II there was a quiet surge of predominantly white denominations toward racial integration.

The Disciples of Christ were already in a lagging process toward restructure, and among the nagging challenges was to find ways to racially desegregate as a step toward actual racial integration. Many black Disciples of Christ questioned the sincerity of those involved in the discussions.

However, separate church structures, aligned mainly along racial lines did exist and portrayed the symbol of a divided body of Christ. Thus the

International Convention of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church was perceived by many to operate mainly for white Christians. The same was true of State Missionary Societies, which seemed to serve mainly white congregations. The National Christian Missionary Convention originally involving the counsel and participation of white leaders, was regarded essentially as a means for serving the needs of predominantly black congregations.

Leadership of the fledgling National Convention was developing a sense of pride in the opportunities for administrative experience in directing the flow of their own destiny. Previous relationships with the majority group leaders had often proven paternalistic. Most National Convention leaders affirmed racial integration as a legitimate goal, but not at the expense of losing group identity and having real partnership in the Mission.

Unfortunately, leadership elements in parts of the more conservative branches of the Restoration Church movement sensed this frustration. Some tried to exploit it for untoward denominational and personal reasons. Candidates for the office of NCMC president in those days sometimes developed a political structure and ran a campaign. Persons within the more conservative branch of the Restoration Movement who desired to woo National Convention congregations into their wing of the Movement are believed to have made intentional efforts to sway the 1944 National Convention presidential election.

It was widely known that The Rev. W. H. (Baltimore) Taylor of Baltimore, MD, the incumbent president, was eager to succeed himself in Lexington. Reportedly he had support from leaders within the more conservative branch of the Restoration Movement. Rev. Taylor seemed to have the same objectives as the other leadership of the National Convention. However, his faulty

theological rationale, views on "open membership," along with a strong emphasis on race, seem to have sown more seeds of distrust and further frustration, rather than provide enlightenment.

The April 1943 issue of THE CHRISTIAN PLEA carried a three column report with a front page caption entitled "President W. H. Taylor Launches National Convention Drive." The "report" describes an extensive tour of congregations which he took through Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio for the announced goal of raising \$5,000 which had been agreed by the annual convention meeting in Kansas City. However, the highest offering received from a congregation on this tour, according to the report, was \$10.00.

However, the status of the African American Disciples of Christ was utter confusion. There was real possibility for splitting ranks over misunderstandings in race relations and the ultimate direction of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Divine Providence provided for the entrance of Sere S. Myers of Kansas City, MO. He became a catalyst to offset this from happening and for building bridges of understanding.

Foster T. Craggett, a retired Disciples of Christ minister in Los Angeles, CA and son of the minister who preceded Myers as pastor of the Woodland Avenue Church, attended that Lexington, KY convention. Here is his description of the 1944 NCMC presidential election:

"This was the National Christian Missionary Convention which was meeting at the E. Second Street Christian Church...In the Mid-Forties the church and the homes where we stayed were hot, hot, hot.

"Needless to say, the temperature of the business sessions and some of the program events were on par with the weather...one of the staff...told about his visit to the church of the incumbent president

Marking the SERE S. MYERS' CENTURY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION - 9/1998

(i. e. W. H. Taylor) which was most inhospitable and unpleasant. It was good that Emmett Dickson with his tall height was able to stand the two and prevailed on both of them to 'cool it down.' I am sure you will also remember the White Evangelist from the Christian Standard who was there to "save" all of us, and you should recall that he had favorable support from some of the delegates who were in accord with the incumbent president...

"The incumbent president had made known the desire to be re-elected for another term. Some, however, wanted to make a change...the name of S. S. Myers was submitted as a candidate for the office of president...a standing vote was taken. The presiding officer requested that those on the main floor who were in favor of the incumbent to rise and be counted. The incumbent received a respectable number of votes.

"The presiding officer then asked if any one in the balcony wished to vote for the incumbent. No one stood. And now those voting for S. S. Myers on the main floor were asked to stand. The number doing so exceeded that of the incumbent... 'Will those in the balconies please stand.' Those who were sitting in the balcony were "Young Turks;" third generation younger ministers with their wives and young people who were in attendance at the convention. They all rose to cast their votes for S. S. Myers..."

W. H. (Baltimore) Taylor lost the bid for re-election. However, it was apparent from the election that Taylor had been sowing seeds of distrust and frustration and that such seed could grow great division and unrest in the ranks. The newly elected president of the National Christian Missionary Convention and the Board of Directors already had a priority agenda set for them. With the help of leaders on the field and other concerned Disciples of Christ members. President Myers went on an extensive tour of the



Scenes from the former NCMC annual gathering that inspired trained and cultivated leadership and nurtured group identity.

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July - August 1998

congregations on the Atlantic Seaboard, Washington-Baltimore Area, Piedmont District, Cotton Belt States, and selected congregations in the unorganized areas to reinterpret what the National Christian Missionary Convention was trying to do and how the NCMC efforts would eventually tie into national church structures.

Samuel W. Hylton, Jr. of St. Louis, MO, the retired pastor, now Director of the Black Disciples Endowment Fund, observes that *"It is at this point we need to appreciate the value of the S. S. Myers ministry on the occasion of his 100th Birthday Celebration and salute him as "a man of competence, courage and compassion,"* He understood how to function as a black person "living essentially in a white nation" with what *W.E.B. DuBois* described as a position of "double consciousness"...*living in two worlds seeking freedom and justice in a world which was attempting to deny freedom and justice."*

Hylton feels that "double consciousness" describes the position of African American Disciples today who "are black Disciples holding membership in what is essentially a white denomination... *Dr. Myers was the right person in the right position at the right time. He had the vision and the patience to guide the church through this period of transition. What was needed was a leader to work for unity and to work for liberation and justice at the same time."*

Ruth P. Hobbs, the retired public school teacher and church leader, from Jackson, MS recalls the Myers' Christ-like manner in addressing critical problems like those presented in Lexington. She remembers meeting him on the sacred grounds of Southern Christian Institute, Edwards, MS where she discerned *"a simple, invincible goodwill. One could readily see that he had a natural closeness with the reality of Jesus and a deep understanding of Discipleship. His tone of voice was calm, yet firm. He spoke with a tone of authority and could quite easily capture the attention of his listeners..."*

Myers made reports on that initial tour to Board of Trustee meetings, which followed. The substance provided guidelines for developing standing commissions that would bring the races and the church closer together.

Lorenzo J. Evans of Indianapolis, IN, a retired General Church director of Christian Education, was a staff member for the NCMC during the four years Sere Myers was President, says:

"The Convention had its own staff. Emmett Dickson was the executive secretary and C. L. Parks, later succeeded by Charles Webb, Sr. was director of evangelism. I joined the staff as director of Christian Education. Prior to taking this position, I had been employed as membership secretary for the Butler Street YMCA in Atlanta, GA. When I was asked to take the job with the NCMC for much less money than I was earning with the YMCA, I remembered the commencement address Dr. Myers had given at Southern Christian Institute, Edwards, MS in 1933. At that time I vowed to respond when the church called me. So in a way I'm indebted to Dr. Myers."

When the NCMC was on the verge of splitting over the issue of "open membership," he stood firm and led the Convention through a turbulent period... He was always open to discussion, willing to consider divergent ideas, all of which put him a cut above many men..."

Alan Dale Fiers, the General Minister and President, Emeritus for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in Jacksonville, FL says:

"The 100th. Birthday of Dr. S. S. Myers is an occasion for celebration... In the later 1940's while he was President of the National Christian Missionary Convention, I was a trustee of the United Christian Missionary Society. The two organizations had a close and historic relationship. Dr. Myers chaired a special Commission dealing with the merger of program and services of the U.C.M.S. and the N.C.M.C. It was at this time I first became aware of Dr. Myers leadership."

Myers Led by Christ and the Holy Spirit and the Saints Anchored the Faithful



NCMC Organized by Preston Taylor and First Generation Pioneers.... 1917



PRESTON TAYLOR

Rosa Page Welch, S.C.I. Classmate of Sere S. Myers, and World Renown Singer and Ambassador of Goodwill



DR. and MRS. S.S. MYERS



Taylor's Greenwood Cemetery... Legacy of Founder and Benefactor for Church and Community.... 1906



Louisville Bible College Prepared First Evangelists... W.S. Sims, P.H. Moss, R.W. Watson, Foster Craggett.....1914

Myers Led by Christ and the Holy Spirit and the People Came Together for Empowerment



Ministers Wives Fellowship Provided NCMC Annual Meetings with Warmth, Heart & Hope..St. Louis, 1954



In foreground, Raymond E. Brown, Pioneer NCMC Officer & Leader in Enabling NCMC Congregations to receive Board of Church Extension Services



L.L. Dickerson, Booster for Ministers' Partnership of Laity for Star Supporter Scholarship Fund



West Paseo Christian Church



Norman S. Ellington, A Creative Lay Leader for "Star Supporter Fund" and "Mother-to-Mother" Programs.... 1952 - 1968



Children Coming Together



Emmett J. Dickson, First Executive Secretary for the National Christian Missionary Convention, Inc.



Dr. A. Dale Fiers



NCMC Christian Men's Fellowship Leaders have Dinner Program at 1954 Convention featuring General Minister and President A. Dale Fiers & his wife, Betty

Myers Led by Christ and the Holy Spirit and the People in a Living Witness



Sere S. & Martha Myers in West Paseo Christian Church Pastor's Anniversary Reception Line



NCMC Annual Meeting. Loudon Avenue Christian Church, Roanoke, VA
Emphasis on Justice Issues.... 1961



Dr. Jessie B. Mosley



Norma Twitty



The Arnolds



Foundational NCMC Lay Leader Harvey Thomas Planning with co-Christian Men's Fellowship Leaders



Standing under the picture of Benefactor Preston Taylor is: Sere S. Myers, Robert L. Peoples, William K. Fox, Sr. and Emmett J. Dickson



Carnella L. Jamison Barnes, First NCMC Field Secretary for Services to Christian Women



Ministers Fellowship Fostered Bonding & Encouraged Support of Servants in Ministry... Indianapolis, 1962... at Second Christian Church, The Traditional Point for Strategy



Lorenzo J. Evans, First NCMC Field Director for Christian Education and A.C. Stone, Dynamic Lay Leader & Advocate for Christian Stewardship

"The positions we held in the creative and oft times turbulent 1950's and 1960's brought us together in new and deeper ways as the Brotherhood struggled to resolve issues having to do with the nature of the church, race relations and God's design for the structure of the church. At this time I was President of the United Society and later succeeded Dr. Gaines M. Cook as Executive Secretary of the International Convention. I also carried responsibility for the

Commission on Brotherhood Restructure. Dr. Myers during this period served on the Board that dealt with the merger of the International Convention of Christian Churches and the National Christian Missionary Convention.

"It was in negotiation of these crucial issues that Dr. Myers demonstrated his sense of wholeness of the church in fellowship structure and mission. His leadership was a crucial factor in the adoption of the Provisional Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

Kenneth L. Teegarden, also an emeritus General Minister and President of the denomination, a resident of Fort Worth, TX, concurs with Dr. Fiers in his assessment.

"Sere S. Myers," says Teegarden, "was an important member of the 'Joint Committee on Merger and New Brotherhood Relationships' which worked tirelessly to bring unification about. (Teegarden chaired this Committee.) He was anxious to see the merger occur, but was even more committed to preserve the historic purposes and values of the NCMC... In every session of the Joint Committee, S. S. Myers made sure that everyone was aware of the importance of the Greenwood Cemetery and that its preservation would be assured."

John Compton of Cincinnati, OH, the retired pastor and President Emeritus of the Division of Homeland Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) reviews the merits of the

Myers ministry with these words: *Dr. S. S. Myers was a man who did his homework. Because he did his homework he was able to influence the direction of the National Christian Missionary Convention as well as have opportunities to share his influence with the wider church.*

Walter D. Bingham, retired pastor and church college professor, residing in Louisville, KY, remembers S. S. Myers' concern that the

restructure process in the denomination, not dilute the historic purposes and values of the NCMC. Bingham says:

"At one session of the St. Louis Assembly of the International Convention during the business deliberations, Dr. S. S. Myers, in an impassionate but thoughtful speech, expressed fears, and concerns about restructure, but also his hopes and prayers for the process. He articulated his contention that the work started by the National Convention in 1917 (fifty years earlier) be preserved in a meaningful and participatory way

for African American Disciples in any 'restructuring of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It was a defining moment for our church in creating the ultimate Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) approved at the General Assembly the following October in 1968 in Kansas City, Missouri..."

Marjorie Chenault Parker, of Indianapolis, IN, and the first administrative office secretary for Emmett J. Dickson and the NCMC office, believes Dr. Myers *"envisioned the wholeness in church operations and missions during seventy-eight years of his illustrious ministry..."*

Marjorie Parker refers to the "formula" for sharing which S. S. Myers consistently said should be implemented.

"...there must be sharing in the total administration of Brotherhood agencies by being on policy making boards and committees... by all races... sharing in the work and employment at all

Continued on Page 17

levels... sharing in the drama and exhibition of the work of the church as performed in the organized

life... sharing in the financial support of causes and concerns... sharing both faithfully and loyally in the activities, fellowship and aspirations of the Brotherhood (Church)..."

Sere S. Myers tireless hours of effort to reclaim Greenwood Cemetery in Nashville, TN and restore it to a viable business operation which serves the needs of the total community, assured the preservation of the Preston Taylor legacy, not only for African American Disciples of Christ, but for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as a whole.

Ruth P. Hobbs and **Ernest J. Newborn, Sr.** recall the days "when Black Disciple leaders thought that the Greenwood Cemetery, a legacy left by the pioneer African American Disciple minister, Preston Taylor of Nashville, TN, would be a liability." Attempts were made to practically "give it away." Dr. Myers, single handedly, refused to give up and legally secured the NCMC ownership.

John R. Foulkes, Sr., Associate General Minister and President and Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) affirms the continuing reality of the Greenwood Cemetery operation with this statement:

"Greenwood Cemetery has and will be the only means by which an indigenous, self sustaining national ministry of persons of African descent provide a prophetic ministry to brothers and sisters of Anglo and European descent. That prophetic ministry has become increasingly critical as the racist foundations of this United States culture have become more evident.

"Greenwood's contributions to the Taylor/Davis Endowment Fund over the years have more than

doubled that fund. The prospects for the future may enable that fund to not only undergird the staffing of the continuing NCMC enterprise, but the enabling of programmatic resources for the fulfillment of the Preston Taylor vision."

BUILDING IN RETIREMENT in Metro KC

Dr. Myers retired in 1974 after serving West Paseo Christian Church 42 years. King David Cole of Fort Fort Worth, TX now retired, succeeded him. Pastor Cole says "He was considered our 'Emeritus Minister' and he remains my personal counselor and guide.

After a fire destroyed a large part of the church facilities, the congregation merged with the Swope Park Christian Church on Swope Parkway and became the Swope Parkway United Christian Church. Pastor Myers has provided intensive interim ministry services as a key member of a ministerial team serving congregations like Central Christian Church, Kansas City, MO.

Richard L. Hamm of Indianapolis, IN, the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) states:

"I wish I could write more specifically about S. S. Myers. However, I did not meet him until 1975 (and was not ordained until 1974)..."

"My contact with him was primarily around the matter of Central Christian Church, Kansas City, Missouri. I was serving on an Area committee at the time and I remember how determined and faithful Dr. Myers was in assuring that Central Christian Church received what it needed in the way of support and assistance from the Area to insure its future. The congregation was at a critical juncture in its life and needed that assistance. It was in this matter that I encountered Dr. Myer's deep passion and tireless energy forthe church of Jesus Christ. It was an inspiration to me as a young pastor starting out in ministry."

BUILDING FAMILY- the Myers Household

Five years ago the S. S. Myers birthday celebration featured a special family reunion. With "Papa Myers" at the center, a

challenge was lifted to all assembled to

Enrich, and make our legacy, rich, meaningful and beautiful.

Give it character, with dignity

To bless the human race, to make planet earth a safe place to live.

Father Myers advised "Homes are built on the foundations of wisdom and understanding, "Where there is knowledge, the rooms are furnished with valuable and beautiful things. (Proverbs 24.3) The members were urged to "love

one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. (I John 3:1)

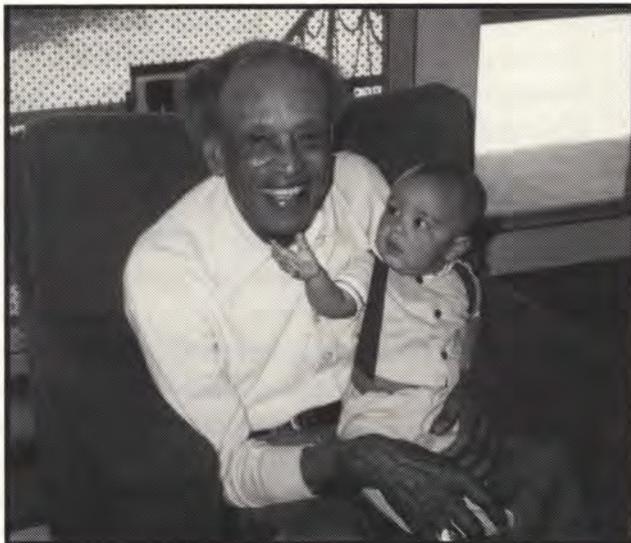
The family assembled was reminded that *faith, hope, and love are the three great valuables of the world;*

That pride, ingratitude, and carelessness are the three great sins;

That the sources for help, strength, powers, and salvation are in God, the Father; God, the Son; the Holy Ghost; and the Bible.

All were challenged to "*choose whom we serve; choose life to live; choose to be honorable; choose to be a good husband and a good wife; choose to honor father and mother; and choose to be an obedient child.*"

And finally, repent, confess, and forgive.



Sere and Martha enjoyed the opportunities for nurturing the grandchildren and great grandchildren.

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MEMBERS OF MYERS' HOUSEHOLD: JOYS OF THE CENTURY BIRTHDAY!



Dr. Sere. S. and Martha Myers (now deceased) have two sons and two daughters. Stacy Beatrice Williams is married to Dr. William R. Williams, M.D. and lives in Los Angeles, CA. Millicent Eugenia (Jean) Battle Ewing is a florist married to Ephriam Ewing and lives in Kansas City, MO. Sere Spaulding Myers is an oral surgeon and married to the former Mary Jane Stewart, also living in Kansas City, MO. Michael Torrence Myers, has been a governmental employee and married to the former Joyce Williams, now residing in Boston, MASS. S. S. Myers has thirteen grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

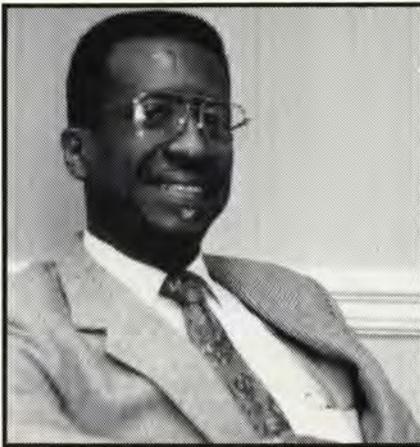
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPRECIATION FOR SYMPOSIUM CONTRIBUTORS: Cornelius and Alpha Arnold, Los Angeles, CA; Spencer Austin, Indianapolis, IN; Walter D. Bingham, Louisville, KY; George Coates, Kansas City, MO; John R. Compton, Cincinnati, OH; Foster Craggett, Los Angeles, CA; Lorenzo J. Evans, Indianapolis, IN; A. Dale Fiers, Jacksonville, FL; John R. Foulkes, Sr., Indianapolis, IN; Lola Greer, and Era M. Holmes, Oklahoma City, OK; Richard L. Hamm, Indianapolis, IN; Enoch W. Henry, Jr, Los Angeles, CA; Ruth Powell Hobbs, Jackson, MS; Roland K. Huff, Jacksonville, FL; Samuel Wilbur Hylton, II, St. Louis, MO; Marjorie Chenault Parker, Indianapolis, IN; Ozark Range, Sr., Greenwood, MS; Kenneth Teegarden, Fort Worth, TX; and King David Cole, Kansas City, MO.

-WKF,SR - 7/20/98- Raymore, MO

Reporting: Where are They Now?" What are They Doing?

From A "Warrior" in the "Steel City"

Rufus Lewis, Jr. the sixty-five (65) year old senior pastor of the Macedonia Christian



Church of Birmingham, Al, will don a cap gown in December 1998 to receive his Master of Divinity degree at the Beeson Divinity School in Samford University.

The proud father and grandfather has good memories of his thirty-four

years of service as a postal employee, and his early involvement as a leader in the Disciples of Christ' Christian Men's Fellowship in the Alabama region and general Church.

After Lewis retired from the United States Postal Service in 1989, he became intently engaged as a lay minister. Rufus Lewis' dedicated performance has merited his selection as the first African American president of the Alabama Regional Church CMF; membership on the General Church Board and the Administrative Committee; and secretary for the National Convocation of the Christian Church Board of Directors. He is the current president of the Alabama Convocation of the Christian Church.

When asked why he returned to school in his sixties and receive a seminary degree, he said: "My goals seem to be theologically centered... I am

the proud pastor of Macedonia, We are involved in many ministries. We have recently integrated. We are proud to have Rev. Earl Murray, who is retired and a former Macedonia pastor, as the Assistant Pastor.

Among our membership are Daniel and Sandra Gourdet, former missionaries to Zaire. Her father, Elder Willie George Rucker, was funeralized May 30, 1998...

I don't know what God's plans are for me but I am open to His will and call.

Editor's note: We have followed the witness of Rufus Lewis, Jr. from the days when he was an eager to learn and do Christian layman, while he quietly blazed new trails through rugged religious terrain, until he decided to give total commitment to Christian service. He has provided an inspiring view of a Christian at work.

Another "Preacher's Kid" by Gilford Ohmsted

We've been living in one of the garden homes since 1991. It is a privilege to be invited to report in the OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE.. Denise and I

live here at Foxwood Living Center in Raymore, MO.

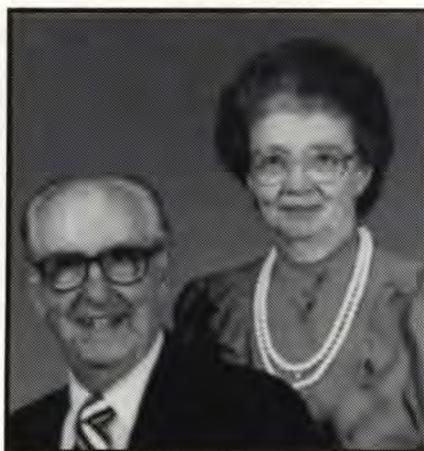
We get to see long-time friends who live here like Bill and Reubena Fox, Eugene and Bonnie Frazier, Wayne and Geneve Selso, Ian and Cynthia McCrae, and Dale and Betty Miller.

After the first three years of residency, I was elected Chair of the Human Resource Council which is comprised of the twenty-four parish leaders and their coordinators who monitor the interests, needs, and concerns of 700 or more residents.

I serve as an Elder at Raymore Christian Church, and in 1997 was Moderator of the World Outreach Department. My interim ministries have included First Christian Church in Pomona, CA where among that wonderful membership was T. J. and Virginia Liggett; First Christian Church in Pittsburg, KS; and supply preaching in Plattsburg and Warrensburg, MO; and Swope Parkway United Christian in Kansas City.

It was real satisfaction to be brought up to date on the ministry of Dr. John R. Compton in the recent issue of THE GRAPEVINE. I had the privilege of being a member of the General (National) Church Steering Committee for our RECONCILIATION FUND program when it began in 1968-69. John was the Administrative leader of the Commission at that time. Then in 1978 when I completed my six year term as Regional Minister in Indiana, I was very pleased to have Dr. Compton become my successor. I believe he was the first black person to be Regional Minister in any of the 35 Regions. It was also good to see a note about Spencer Austin, from

whom I learned a great deal about Christian stewardship and administrative skills.



As I look back across my life, I am thankful for the fact that my college and seminary education was received in 3 different institutions, from 3 different Protestant communions. I owe so much to my dad, John G. Olmsted, who was a Disciples of Christ minister in Ottawa, Kansas while I spent my freshman

year at the American Baptist related Ottawa University. My sophomore year was spent at Wm. Penn College in Oskaloosa, IA where I gained an understanding of the Quaker-Friends and the Christian position on non-violence and pacifism and their challenge to Quaker-Friends congregations to give at least 50 percent of all their receipts to Outreach Mission.

The balance of my collegiate and graduate work was at Drake Bible College and Drake University where I became

thoroughly grounded in Disciples of Christ traditions.

I am pleased with the opportunity we had to lead the Countryside Christian Church, Shawnee Mission, KS (1961-66) congregation to strive toward giving 50% of every dollar to Missions, Benevolence and Education. We reached 37% and my successor, Eugene Frazier motivated that congregation to achieve 48%.

I must pay deep respects to my lovely wife, Denise, who shared with me and the congregations we served, her deep commitment to Jesus Christ and the Church. She contributed wisdom she received from taking teacher education courses at Drake University and additional knowledge through her completion of a Master of Arts in Religion degree program at Christian Theological Seminary. We are thankful for the good health we enjoy, and for rich blessings God continues to give us each day.

Editor's Note: I served with him on that General Church Steering Committee for the Reconciliation Fund. today he still gives 105% of effort to task the Lord leads him to do.

Continued on Page 22

"Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other." Psalm 85:10



Betty Fiers is Asleep

Jacksonville, FL- Memorial services for Elizabeth (Betty) K. Fiers, 89, Were held at 11 a.m. July 6, at Riverside Avenue Christian Church here. Burial was at Campbell Cemetery, Bethany (W. Va.) College.

Mrs. Fiers died peacefully in her sleep, June 28, in the family home at Cypress Village in Jacksonville. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in February 1997.



Betty Fiers was the spouse of the Rev. A. Dale Fiers, Sr., the first general minister and president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The couple would have celebrated their 67th wedding anniversary July 14.

Elizabeth (Betty) K. Fiers was born Jan. 15, 1909, in Wheeling, W. Va., and was a member of the First Christian Church in the city. She and the Rev. A. Dale Fiers, Sr., were married July 14, 1931, at First Christian, Wheeling.



Betty Fiers was a gracious "First Lady" in the Office of the General Minister and President who associated freely with the other good ladies related to the Office. Here she was greeting Wanda Teegarden, left, and Reubena Fox, center. Her husband, Dale Fiers is on the far right.

This past year Betty and Dale have offered up a truly magnificent witness to faith and to faithfulness in marriage," said General Minister and President Richard L. Hamm.

An active laywoman, Betty Fiers was president of the International Christian Women's Fellowship from 1966 through 1970. ICWF is an association of Disciples women across the United States and Canada. She Also was a member of governing bodies with Church



Women United and the national Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Indianapolis, Fiers served two terms as a member of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. Fiers' work with the commission led to her being named a "Sagamore of the Wabash," a state designation that recognizes outstanding humanitarian service. She also served on the YMCA board of directors and was active with the Church Federation and the United Way.

Besides her husband, she is survived one son Alan D. Fiers, Jr., Arlington, Va. A daughter, Barbara Louise Joyce, preceded her in death. Barbara's spouse, Hugh E. Joyce, resides in Beaverdam, Va.

Your freewill donations make it possible for us to function as a nonprofit operation.

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Sere S. Myers was elected second vice-president of the International Convention at Dallas, TX in 1966. More than 10,600 were registered. Above are pictures of all officers installed as taken by "The Convention Daily."

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Young Sere S. Myers was "discovered" as a baseball pitcher when his school team, Southern Christian Institute of Edwards, MS was playing arch rival Alcorn State College of Alcorn, MS. The opponents had knocked out the SCI pitcher in the first inning by scoring two runs. Sere was brought in from center field, where he had been playing, and given the ball to pitch. S. C. I. lost because they could only score one run. However, Sere struck out twenty-two batters and became the ace of the S. C. I. pitching crew from the point on. LateM Mr he refused offers to play professional baseball. Myers is third from the right in the second row. The score board behind reveals the "Victory in Defeat!"

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THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE

November 1998

November 1998

Raymore, Missouri

This Issue Features:

- Volunteerism and The Shoemakers
- New OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE leadership
- Challenge to Share Old Pictures and Materials
- Enablers to Aid Seniors Address Issues

Inside this issue:

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The Shoemakers: After a Half-Century of Service, Still Serving – by W. K. Fox, Sr

What retired preacher would voluntarily gather rickety and squeaky old, chairs worn out by his neighbors, painstakingly renew them and return them for continued use?

What minister's wife would receive sore ribs and a painful wrist from a fall at home in the morning, but later join her husband for 500 mile drive to a small college in Northeast Texas to do hands-on-mission work for a week?



Charlotte & Glenn in Hawkins, TX at the famous Jarvis Christian College "Bell"

These actions characterize the dedication of two individuals. They are Glenn and Charlotte Shoemaker, residents of

the 750 member Foxwood Springs Retirement Community in Raymore, MO. The following describes how these two got together in the first place and what they have been doing together for more than fifty years.

Using whatever means of travel you prefer, it is still more than a 2000 miles one way journey from the rural hamlet of Kalispell in the northwest corner of Montana to the town of Eliza

(Continued on page 2)

GRAPEVINE Operations Strengthened

Raymore, MO- The OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE board of directors, under the leadership of its President, Sere Stacy Myers of Kansas City, MO,

convened in August 1998 to elect Mrs. Sybel Thomas of Chicago, IL, a lay church leader and practicing accountant, as the vice-president, and Ms

Linda McKnight, an active member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ, and former General Church unit employee,

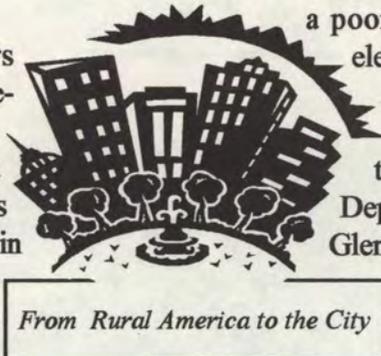
(Continued on page 2)

Riding the Greyhound Bus to College...

(Continued from page 1)

Elizabethton nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountain Range of East Tennessee.

More than 60 years ago Glenn Shoemaker made that 2000 mile trip on a Greyhound Bus from his home in Klaispell, MT to Johnson Bible



From Rural America to the City

College near Knoxville, Tennessee to enroll in a work-study program which would enable him to secure a college education.

Glenn was the middle member of a poor rural farm family of eleven who were trying to overcome the negative impact of the Great Economic Depression of 1929. Glenn really wanted to get a college education!

At the same time, a Charlotte Hampton was a few miles away from Johnson Bible College in Elizabethton, TN serving as a part-time secretary in a church while going to high school. Life for Charlotte and the Hampton family of three seemed adequate. She enjoyed singing in the church choir that was directed by her father, a veteran choirmaster. She enjoyed even more the invitations she received to go with student

(Continued on page 3)

"Baby boomer" Smith-Londo in Japan Shares Ideas on Bereavement and the "Cloud of Witnesses"

Neyagawa-shi, Osaka, Japan—Sheryl Dianne Smith-Londo, a "baby boomer" and OLD-TIMERS' GRAPEVINE supporter now teaching English in Japan, has some special insights on death and bereavement which will interest GRAPEVINE readers.

The native Mississippian, Mrs. Smith-Londo recently reported that she had received scholarship award support from The National Hospice Organization, USA to attend their Second National Conference on Spiritual Bereavement Psychological As-

pects of Hospice Care which met August 19-22, 1998 in Pittsburgh, PA. She has formulated basic assumptions and rationale about the bereavement period which occurs following death.

(Continued on page 3)

New Leadership and Talent on GRAPEVINE Board

(Continued from page 1)

as the Financial Secretary/Treasurer. Dr. Ernest J. Newborn, Sr. of Indianapolis, IN, a retired Administrative Director of the General Church Recon-

ciliation Fund, and a faithful member of the founding OLD-TIMER'S board, was approved as the Associate Editor. Newborn has performed as a contributing editor since the inception of THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPE-

VINE in 1991. Mrs. Thomas has been a reader and donor to the GRAPEVINE during every year of its existence. Thomas and McKnight were also elected as members of the Board.

Working Your Way Through School...

(Continued from page 2)

ministers from nearby Milligan College to lead revival programs in towns and villages. The students preached the sermons and Charlotte sang the solos.

When Glenn Shoemaker and a classmate at Johnson Bible College received an invitation from the Hampton's to come over to Elizabethton TN for a weekend church service followed by a home cooked dinner, they readily accepted. It turned out to be one



Senior adults with "Hands in Service" living out Christian community at Jarvis CC.

of the best decisions Glenn ever-made in his preparation for full-time Christian service. That home cooked meal was the beginning of the Glenn/Charlotte connection. The connection continues until this day.

Following a brief courtship and marriage, the Shoemakers were secured for an ecumenical student ministry in Oak Ridge, TN during the early years of World War II. This was a real learning

(Continued on page 4)

Smith to Relate Learning from Japanese to Christians

(Continued from page 2)

After the NHO reviewed her proposal, they invited her to conduct a workshop on the subject in Pittsburgh. Cheryl says her workshop focuses "on the protracted (50-100 year long) bereavement period... observed by the Japanese. In Japan, after someone dies, is funeralized and cremated, there are rituals after 7 days, 49 days, 1 year, 3 years, etc. until the person has been dead 50 years or until no one alive remembers them. Even then, they are remembered as part of the 'cloud of witnesses', i.e. the ancestors.

During this time the deceased is informed of family happenings,

shown respect, and cared for by the family and community. Although we call this 'ancestor worship' in the West, I contend that this is a mislabeling of the activities carried out to remember the dead. Recently in studies done at Harvard with children who've lost a parent, it 'has been found that the deceased continues to play a role in the lives of the bereaved. There is a continuing connection or bond with the deceased that is consoling or supportive.

This relationship changes and grows as mourners move in time away from the death, but it is not severed,' so says the description of a plenary session scheduled during the NHO conference.'

You can imagine my excitement when I read this and realized that my theory is being confirmed in other places, i. e. the idea that the Japanese are allowed to grieve at a natural pace which is consoling, supportive, and supported by their community.

Sherl Dianne, a former short-term missionary to Japan and English teacher sponsored by the Division of Overseas Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), is currently engaged in documenting her conceptions through field visitation of hospices in Tokyo, Hamamatsu, Kyoto, and Osaka, Japan. She intends to relate findings to the practices of Christian spiritual care givers.

Sharing God's Blessings Through Service

(Continued from page 3)

experience for the inexperienced student pastor.

College was followed by seminary preparation at Phillips University in Enid, OK. The Shoemakers were eventually bound together in faithful ministerial service to congregations in Tennessee, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, and Illinois.



Charlotte Shoemaker Works on With sprained wrist & new friend, Laura Orr

Today they take pleasure to look back with pride to their experiences in leading efforts in stewardship and evangelism; to major building programs instituted or completed in Fredonia and Winfield, KS; Pryor, OK, Garland, TX and Kansas City, MO; until retirement in 1991 after ministerial service in Decatur, IL. Today Glenn remains available for interim ministries.

Charlotte Shoemaker, a graduate

(Continued on page 5)

What Are You Doing With Your Old Pictures?

Atlanta, GA- Don Legg, veteran Disciples of Christ minister, campus pastor, regional staff and retired Corporate Secretary of the National Benevolent Association, attached this note to the picture shown here and recently sent to the OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE:

"This picture goes back fifty years, at which time I came under the spell of the charismatic branch of the Brotherhood- the black Disciples. The part of my spiritual growth due to that group was really initiated at the Easter Sunrise Service, 1946, when Rosa Page Welch came to Peoria (IL) to bless us with her spirit and talents..."



The picture taken in 1948 shows the dynamic African American Disciples of Christ Church leader, Cleo Blackburn, Director of Flanner House and Housing, Indianapolis, IN, seated on the

living room floor of Don and Betty Legg, and surrounded student members of the Illinois Disciples Foundation, Champaign-Urbana, IL. They had invited

(Continued on page 5)

The rewards of interactive association

(Continued from page 4)

from Milligan College in Elementary Education and Music, has continued for over a half century as a quiet help-mate in the ministry of her husband. She shares out of her experience as a church office secretary for more than 39 years; membership in choirs directed by her father; ventures in public school kindergarten teaching; and in being a successful mother for their four children: two sons and two daughters.



Glenn works on one of 12 outdoor tables he completed in May 1998 during the Jarvis H-O-M

But ever since Jack Oliver recruited Glenn in 1969 for volunteer camp and conference work at the Tall Oaks church camp near Kansas City, he and Charlotte have been dedicated to volunteer ministries. They enjoy engagement in the creative restoration and renewal of articles, equipment and facilities used in the service of the Lord. Glenn feels good patching up old benches and chairs, or building

(Continued on page 6)

One Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

(Continued from page 4)

Cleo to be the Religious Emphasis Week Speaker at Bradley University, Peoria, IL where Don Legg was the campus minister.

Cleo Blackburn was a professional sociologist and minister whose gifts of oratory and reason enabled him to capture the minds and commitments of individuals and funding sources to support the development of Flanner House and its several humanitarian programs.

He eventually expanded his services to be president of Jarvis Christian College and an interim pastor for Second Christian Church (Indianapolis, IN), now

the Light of the World Christian Church. He was always a speaker in great demand.

Editor's note: When Don Legg was the Corporate Secretary of the Central Office for the National Benevolent Association he worked closely with an Ad Hoc Task Force formed by the National Convocation. In this capacity, he joined NBA President William Gible, and others, to gently guide NBA toward its enlightened understanding of the importance of racial and ethnic diversity in its national operations.

Would You Share Old Pictures and Papers?

There has been longstanding interest in the preservation of the experiences and events involving African American and othechurch-oriented seniors within a variety of denominational groups, especially as they relate to the church and the establishment of better human relations.

Let me know if you have such-material and are willing to share with others. Write to:

William K. Fox, Sr.
500 Mott Dr - #102B
Raymore, MO 64083

A Journey to Jarvis for Ethnic Enrichment

(Continued from page 5)

new platforms and tables, or painting and reuniting furniture.

Charlotte enjoys manicuring the hands of senior residents in the Health Center or in the Alzheimer Unit, or working on the files in an administrative office; or cutting and sewing up shoulder bags for children to receive during the annual BACK-TO-SCHOOL community service



Fellowship and food at the President's Residence a "Must Feature" at Jarvis H-O-M!

church project. The Shoemakers do this kind of thing at least three days a week.

During the past four years they have added a new dimension to their volunteer involvement. They have been engaged in a one week Hands-On-Mission" experience every summer at the African American administered and oriented Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, TX.

(Continued on page 7)

Cole, Thomas and Hannah Receive "Liberation Award"

Lexington, KY— Retired Pastor, pulpiteer and a former General Church Moderator King David Cole, of Kansas City, MO; Internationally known lay church leader and accountant Sybel Thomas of Chicago, IL; and Pastor, church administrator, and prophetic minister William Han-

nah of Indianapolis, IN (now deceased) were awarded the Liberation Award by the 15th. Biennial session of the National Convocation of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church August 8, 1998.

The Liberation Award was estab-

lished within the first four years of the operation of the National Convocation of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church as a way to lift up those church persons who had significant involvement in moving the Disciples of Christ Church toward racial and ethnic togetherness.

Jarvis Inducts Six More into Pioneer Hall of Fame

Hawkins, TX— Noted author and motivational speaker, George C. Fraser of Cleveland, OH was the featured presenter at the Fifth Annual Pioneer Hall of Fame induction ceremony October 10, 1998 at Jarvis Christian

College.

The formalized dinner affair moderated by Jarvis President Sebetha Jenkins inducted Pastor, Teacher, and Church Administrator William K. Fox, Sr. of Raymore, MO; Educator, musician,

and lay church leader Jeannette W. Smith of Houston, TX; Educator, and church/community leader Gloria Hare-Knox of Southfield, MI; Mathematics professor, researcher, and Edu-

(Continued on page 7)

Hands-on-Mission at Jarvis Christian College

(Continued from page 6)

The Shoemakers declare this to be an intentional effort to enrich their multiracial and cultural understanding through ground-level association with dedicated people like President Sebetha Jenkins and her highly committed staff and faculty engaged in higher education for a predominantly African American student body.

This four year college has had an historic relationship to the Chris-



Dr. Jenkins in her 9th. Year as president and now a Shoemaker friend.

tian Church (Disciples of Christ) for nearly a century. However, the student body of some 500 to 750 in Hawkins, TX has students representing many of the faith and non-faith groups currently found in African American communities. The pictures used here reflect the HANDS-ON-MISSION experiences the Shoemakers had at Jarvis Christian College. Persons interested can contact Dr. Sebetha Jenkins, President for additional information. Phone: 903-769-5700.

Pioneer Hall Inductees Now Number 45

(Continued from page 6)

cator Marcella Hill of Washington, D.C.; Athletic Coach and School Administrator A. L. Gholston of Gladewater, TX; and Entrepreneur and Commu-

nity Leader Bismark Thomas, Jr. of Terrell, TX.

All inductees are retired and have had varying degrees of association with the history and programs of Jarvis College.

Pioneer inductees are committed

to render ongoing support to the College. The program was initiated by President Jenkins in 1994 and now has 45 inductees.

INFO ON MAKING DONATIONS TO OLDTIMERS!

As of August 15, 1998 all donations to THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE are to be sent to newly elected Financial Secretary/Treasurer, Linda C. McKnight in Jeff City, MO.

Your name will be put in the Donor listing in the next issue. Please look at the numbers behind your name in the address on the last issue of your OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE to see when you made your *last donation*. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

Please send all donations to
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6634 Jefferson City, MO
65102-6634

The Clingans Launch "Disciple Seniors" by Harvey Lord*

Don and Jacquie Clingan of Springfield, Illinois will launch a new endeavor in October, 1998. It is designed especially for the people who most often read *The Oldtimers' Grapevine*- persons who are Gray and Proud! More than a hundred and twenty-five such persons have been invited to be among the founders of this new project.

Don Clingan has invested his life in the needs and concerns of the aged, and now that he and his wife, Jacquie, are themselves retired, they are in no mood to stop. He laments the underuse of this great pool of talent by the churches, and also the church's tendency to ignore the special problems of seniors. The Clingans are determined to help correct that.



They write, "Today we live in an aging society in an aging world where the church is an aging church. Now some may complain about an aging church... but we say more power to the oldsters who give significant power and energy to their congregation's life and beyond... It is amazing to see how many seniors use their freed up hours to give significant service to others."

Dr. Clingan is a National Interfaith Consultant on ministry with the Aging. His last parish was the First Christian Church in Springfield, where he served almost eight years before retiring. Prior to that he was the founding Executive Director of the National Center on Ministry with the Aging sponsored by the National Benevolent Association and Christian Theological Semi-

nary.

Working in cooperation with the Disciples Justice Action Network (DJAN) and other volunteer retirees, Harvey and May Lord, who are DJAN Coordinators, the Clingans will form the new group of Disciple Seniors. This beginning will occur as part of Campaign for Justice '98, DJAN's conference on social justice issues, which took place at Christian Theological Seminary, October 8-11 this year.

For more information, write to Don and Jacquie Clingan, 41 Westwood Terrace, Springfield, IL 62702, or Harvey and May Lord, 4733 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, IL 60615, or read the next issue of *Call to Justice*, DJAN's quarterly newsletter, edited by non-retiree Doug Job.

*Co-Coordinator for *Disciples Justice Action Network (DJAN) Chicago, IL*

Myers Reaches One Hundred!

Kansas City, MO- A large delegation of family members from across the nation, plus national and local leaders of church organization joined in a gala Century Birthday Celebration for the Rev. Dr. Sere Stayce Myers September 26, 1998 at the Community Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church on the Plaza. Accolades were received from many groups.

Family and church leaders lifted up the bridge building ministry of the renowned Disciples clergyman.



Dr. Myers is surrounded by six of his 11 grandchildren. Shown here is a lawyer, 3 dentists, and a physician.

For Whom the Bells Toll:



A PROPHETIC PREACHER-

Indianapolis, IN- William Hannah, former Administrative Secretary of the National Convocation of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church, died September 13, 1998 after a prolonged struggle with cancer.

The memorial service was held September 19 at Martin University with The Rev. William Edwards of Cincinnati, OH bringing the eulogy.

A group of nearly twenty minis-



Dr. Hannah urged a personal Christian witness.

terial associates of Dr. Hannah attended to contribute comfort and support.

Dr. Hannah always brought a fresh Word from the Lord which was intentionally designed to disturb those entwined in tradition and submerged in a blind trust in religious routine and custom for routine and tradition's sake.

His formal preparation for Christian service was secured at Hiram

(Continued on page 10)

A FAITHFUL CO-MATRIARCH

Edwards, MS- Elbetha Hicks Miller, born September 13, 1901, died peacefully Friday, July 31, 1998 with two of her daughters in attendance. The Memorial Service was held in the Friendship Baptist Church of Edwards. She was matriarchal head of a household consisting of eight

children, 23 grandchildren, 33 great grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. Her husband, Chalmas Miller, who preceded her in death in 1975, parented



eleven children. The three who preceded her in death are Edgar C. in 1979, Vera L. in 1990, and Chalmas, Jr in 1993.

(Continued on page 10)

A FAITHFUL CO-MATRIARCH

New Orleans, LA- Mrs. Seretha Hicks Stamps passed away September 20, 1998 in New Orleans, LA approximately one month following the demise of her faithful sister Elbetha Miller (See article above.) She was memori-

alized here at the Central Congregational United Church of Christ Friday, September 25, 1998. Internment ritual was conducted September 26, 1998 from the Greater Northside M. B. Church in Jackson, MS where

she had been a faithful charter member.

Born in Learnet, MS to the late Simuel and Louisa Hicks September 13, 1899 as the second child

(Continued on page 10)



(Continued from page 9)

College, Hiram, OH and Pittsburgh Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA. Hannah gave evidence of this de

votion to Christian reformation when he provided unique initiatives in establishing the Fifth Christian Church in Cleveland, OH.

He became the first the first African American Disciples of Christ



to serve the General Church as Executive Secretary of the Dept. of Evangelism and Membership Development in the Division of Homeland Ministries; returned to pastoral service as the senior minister for Faith United Christian Church.

He retired to continue this uniqueness in Servanthood by establishing the University Christian

Community Church, currently worshipping in Martin University Chapel, Indianapolis, IN.

Leaves behind a wife, Sharon; Keys Hannah; children William L. Hannah, Frederick Keys, Helen Mack, Reatha Gales, Shereah Miles; mother Alma Eubanks Hembrick; brothers Milton, Marion, Eugene, James Hannah, F. Hembrick; sisters Arlena McDowell, Inella Bradshaw, Sarah J. Wilson; six grandchildren.

(Continued from page 9)

However, the main connection Elbetha Miller had with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) begins with her residence on the property of Southern Christian Institute of Edwards, MS where she and her late husband, Chalmas, Sr. raised the eleven members of Miller family,

while both were full-time employees on the schools agricultural maintenance staff. From 1941 to 1953 they were members of the S.C.I. campus Church until joining the Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Edwards. She spent 40 years there as "Mother of the Church" before transferring to Hosanna M.

B. Church in 1996.

Mourning her loss are eight children; 23 grandchildren; 33 great grandchildren; three great great grandchildren; a brother-in-law and host of related kin and friends.

(Continued from page 9)

and oldest of nine children, her life was near to the century mark. Grounded in deep religious faith, the fruits of her marriage December 14, 1919 to Andrew L.

Stamps included seven children, three boys and four girls. Even though the county of Hinds did

not provide any education beyond the 8th grade, they managed to send their children to Southern Christian Institute in Edwards and Jackson State College in Jackson, MS

Mourning her loss are five children, twenty-five grandchildren, twenty-eight great grandchildren,

one great-great grandchild and two brothers-in-law. Various vocations and professions are represented throughout the household.

One daughter, Effie S. Burford, Indianapolis, IN, is a Disciples of Christ minister and a niece, Sebetha Jenkins, is president of Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, TX.

Thank You Recent Donors!

Gene and Nancy Rutherford, Flo Kallenbach; Frances E. Chambers, Louise W. McConnell, Helen C. Battmer, Hugh R. Palmer, Wilbur L. Stone, Gene and Nancy Rutherford, Glenn/Charolotte Shoemaker, Raymore, MO; Rufus Lewis, Jr., Birmingham, AL; Thomas/Joellen Wurth Johns, Leawood, KS; Bess R. Terry, New York, NY; Cheryl Diane Smith-Londo, Neyagawa-Shi Osaka, Japan; Donald F./W. Jacqueline Clingan, Springfield, IL; Sebetha Jenkins, Hawkins, TX; John/Odatta Redd, Martinsville, VA; Robert Clarke Brock; FL; Virzola Law, Austin, TX; Lester/Viola Miller, Mary M. Watson, Jean M. Battle, Berda Sewell, Hazel E. Batsell, Robert/Priscilla Hill, Kansas City, MO; Louise L. Mosley Columbia, MO; Rolland K. Huff, Jacksonville, FL; Robert H. Hall, Spencer/Kathleen Austin, Lorenzo J. Evans, Wade D./Margaret Rubick, Indianapolis, IN; N. Vernon/Lola Blankenship, Lexington, KY; James/Eva Martin, Las Vegas, NV; Amy Hoh-

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OUR NEW NEWSLETTER LEADER TEAM MEMBERS!

***Sybel Thomas, our new vice-president** succeeds Flo Kallenbach who remains a faithful reader and donor. Sybel will share many of her talents.

***Linda McKnight has managed fiscal matters for the denomination's Higher Education Division and Jarvis Christian College.** She is currently employed as a financial manager and will be our Financial Secretary/Treasurer.

***Ernest Newborn will continue officially as the helpful associate editor he has always been.**

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Ronald Osborne: Theologian, Historian, Statesman Passes On

Eugene, OR (DNS) -- Ronald E. Osborn, 81, a widely respected Disciples minister and scholar, died here October 1. He was a renowned church historian, and architect of church history who served as the first moderator of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Osborn was born Sept. 5, 1917 in Chicago, Ill.. His memorial service was held Thursday, October 8, 1998 at First Christian Church, Eugene. Internment took place in Pleasant Hill, Oregon Saturday, October 3.

"We've lost a giant among Disciples -- a vibrant warm voice for Christ and the church," said the Rev. A. Dale Fiers, Osborn's colleague and friend in the formative

years of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Drs. Osborn and Fiers served together on the Commission on Brotherhood Restructure in the 1960s. Until 1968, the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) was referred to as a brotherhood, made up of national and state societies.

They were societies of individuals," Fiers explained. Osborn, he said, was instrumental in the "giant leap" to a design for the church that moved from the "interests of a collective group of individuals" to a covenantal body expressed in congregations, regions and general ministries. "All of these manifestations of the church were within the church universal, not apart from it," Fiers

said.

Osborn was "one of the - if not the - primary guiding figure" in developing the elegant pattern for restructure, Fiers recalled. Osborn was the chief author of the preamble to The Design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) which is regarded by many as an affirmation of faith.

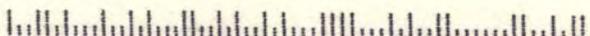
Osborn was a professor of church history at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, for 23 years and dean of that institution for 11 years. Subsequently he served as professor of church history at the School of Theology at Claremont, Ca. He is survived by Nola Osborn, three children and numerous grandchildren. *-adapted from DNS-*

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THE OLDTIMERS' GRAPEVINE

Volume VIII Issue 6

December 1998

Raymore, Missouri

Special points of interest:

- Senior church persons providing an affirmative presence in the church
- Gifted middle-aged lay persons enabling an ethnic and intergenerational mix in the church
- Seniors 80 years old and older still climbing up the mountain

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“Joy to the world! the Lord is come...”

Centuries ago Isaac Watts was deeply moved as he meditated on the words of the hymn writer in Psalm 98: “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord ... Sing unto the Lord with the harp... With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise... Let the sea roar... Let the floods clap their hands... Let the hills be joyful before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth; with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.”

The message sank deeply into the heart of Isaac Watts! A Holy Spirit caused beautiful words of hope to flow from his soul and onto the paper before him. That

message of joy continues to flow from Watt’s interpretation of Psalm 98 as we move through Advent toward the Manager Scene.

Listen carefully amidst the din of jangling and clanging cymbals of a highly commercialized Christmas time. Soon you will hear the singing of angels drifting through.

“Joy to the world! the Lord is come:

Let earth receive her King,
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav’n and nature sing,
And heav’n and nature sing.”

This joy can break through



difficulties and embrace us in wherever place or condition we stand. Such joy has caused warriors to stop fighting. Such joy has brought a hush to those in tears, and visions of hope of release to those in shackles.

May you experience a share of this joy today and in the new year ahead.

Newborns Provide Ecumenical Leadership in 1998

Indianapolis, IN- Pivotal leadership in 1998 was provided in ecumenical church structures in metro Indianapolis by the Ernest Joshua and Janice Newborn, Sr., the husband and wife team.

Dr. Dr. Newborn, the re-

tired Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) regional and general church staff minister, served as the first vice-president of The Church Federation of Greater Indianapolis from 1995 until June 10, 1998 when the Federation Presi-

dent, Dr. James B Lemler, rector for the Trinity Episcopal Church and president of St. Richard’s school, left for other church duties.

He was called to serve as dean and president of Se-

(Continued on page 2)

Interfaith Groups Demonstrate Alternatives to Violence

(Continued from page 1)

abury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill.

As first vice-president, it became Ernest Newborn's responsibility to serve as the Interim President until November 8, 1998 when new officers were elected at the Church Federation's annual meeting. Newborn, who has been a co-pastor at the Immanuel Presbyterian Church and a deputized consultant for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana, has been active in the Church Federation since 1978. He played an important role as a member of the Federation's Development and Executive Committees.

Meanwhile, Janice Newborn, an elder in Northwood Christian Church and retired senior associate for the Office of Disciples Women of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), has been an active leader in Church Women United in Metro Indianapolis. She served as the Metro president for Church Women United in 1998 and was as one of the three women selected from the Indiana Region's Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for special



INSET: Ernest and Janice Newborn. An Indianapolis Star photographer catches Interim Church Federation President Ernest Newborn as he announced the Prayer Vigil at a Press Conference.

honor during the '98 International Christian Women's Fellowship Quadrennial. There had been fifteen nominees from the Indiana Region.

While serving as the Interim President of the Church Federation, Ernest Newborn helped the Federation perform the role of catalyst for a citywide interfaith peace rally July 25, 1998. A mass rally was held in the central city while prayer vigils were held simultaneously at 350 locations throughout metro Indianapolis. The 350 locations were sites in the city where violent deaths had occurred since early 1996.

The July 25 was chosen because it

marked the third anniversary of the riot which took place in Indianapolis in protest of an incident of police brutality. The protest generated three consecutive nights of unrest. The Prayer Vigil was an idea generated as a means for the churches to lift up hope and reconciliation in response to rage and hopelessness.

Dr. Newborn was one of the registered visitors who attended the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches December 3-14, 1998 in Harare, Zimbabwe. The 4000 delegates and visitors were dealing with the theme: TURN TO GOD - REJOICE IN HOPE.

Some Recently Ailing Friends: Include in Your Prayer Circle.

***Lucile Compton, of Cincinnati, OH** lodged in a center for treating an extended illness. Contact: Husband, John, retired pastor and general church administrator, and family at 1020 Clearbrook Dr. Cincinnati, OH 45229-1104

***Erma Toler, Bakersfield, CA** at

home for convalescence and chemo following hospitalization. Contact: Husband, Tom, retired pastor and participant in general church life, at 1301 New Sine Rd - C-18, Bakersfield, CA 93309-3505

***Violaruth Cole, Kansas City, MO** at home for convalescence and rehab fol-

lowing extended hospitalization from a stroke this summer. Contact: Husband, King David, retired pastor and general church leader, at 4326 E. 52nd., Kansas City, MO 64130.

***Hannah J. Toomey, Casey, IL,** pas
(Continued on page 4)

A Living Room Interview With Marthetta McMickle

By OG Reynard

Introduction: The life and work of Park Manor Christian Church has been enriched for the past 42 years by senior citizen member Marthetta Geneva Alford McMickle. She recently gave *The Oldtimers' Grapevine* this living room interview.

OG- Several questions come to mind as we page through your album and see pictures of you sitting at a piano or an organ surrounded by children and youth. We also see certificates and scrolls from the Association of Disciple Musicians and the church on your walls. How did you become so deeply involved in the life and ministries of Park Manor Christian Church?

MCMICKLE- When I was a resident in the core city of Chicago, I made my primary confession of Jesus Christ as my Lord as a thirteen year old youth in the Cosmopolitan Community Church. A few years later when I married, I gave birth to two sons and moved southwestward to a fringe area called the Chatham community.

It was several miles from the Cosmopolitan Community Church parish area. Securing adequate transportation proved too difficult for me to return to Cosmopolitan Church with two young children.

OG- But there were many churches between your home in Chatham and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Park Manor community. How did you make the decision to select membership at Park Manor?

MCMICKLE- The Holy Spirit often leads of us to make such decisions through Christ centered church mem-

bers. I was led into the membership of Park Manor Church through a long time friend, Lesly Smith, a sister of the legendary Ambassador of Goodwill, Rosa Page Welch. Lesly invited me to attend the annual Birthday Club Tea, a major church-wide fund-raising event for the congregation.

Before leaving the Tea, Lesly gave me a brief tour of the church facilities, including the Junior Church Chapel. That tour sold me on bringing my two young sons and myself back to the Park

Manor church. Soon after I became an official member of the congregation.

OG- You seem to have a large number of pictures showing you at a piano and surrounded by children. Some of these scenes appear to be in a church sanctuary.

MCMICKLE- Yes, my tour of the Junior Church Chapel at

Park Manor made an immediate and lasting impression on me. First, it let me know that the congregation had a concern for children and youth. I was anxious to get my two sons in a congregation where this would be true. After attending programs at the church for several weeks, we learned that this was a genuine commitment by Park Manor and its leadership.

OG- As a young mother, did you get involved in some of those children's activities?

MCMICKLE- I surely did. When my children got a little older, I was able to

give time to serve as organist and choir director for the Junior congregation. Later, I became the director and accompanist for the Youth Ensemble. I was engaged as a Sunday School

teacher and directed the Vacation Bible School for four years.

OG- What kind of impact did this total involvement in church life have on your two sons? They must have been at your side all the way.

MCMICKLE- As I reflect on those early years of motherhood and

family building, I like to feel that my church involvement had a positive impact on my sons. Both received their basic religious orientation within the life of Park Manor Christian Church. My oldest son, Paul, is good citizen and responsible resident of Chicago, IL. Marvin, my youngest son, caught some of my dedication to church work. He has earned his master and doctorate degrees in ministry. He is currently in Cleveland, OH with his wife, Peggy and son, Aaron, where he serves as the senior pastor at the Antioch Baptist Church.

OG- Were you able to secure enough income from the church as an instrumentalist to aid your husband in operating the home and building a family?

MCMICKLE- My work experience brought me to many interesting places and communities. I was a trained beautician as a young lady in the early 1940's and was employed as a teacher in the Madame C. J. Walker chain of beauty schools. I spent three years in



Marthetta G. A. McMickle

"I like to feel that my church involvement had a positive impact on my sons."

Still Time to Teach Twice Weekly and Play Organ!

(Continued from page 3)

Washington, D. C. functioning in this capacity.

As my sons grew up and family obligations increased, I returned to Chicago to briefly engage in a variety of employment before settling on a clerical job at the Michael Reese Hospital and Medical Center. I retired from that employment after 19 1/2 years. That freed me to become fully engaged in teaching piano to children, holding student recitals, and be involved in church and community activities.

OG- Throughout all of those years you seem to have maintained a serious interest in church music and in being a church instrumentalist.

MCMICKLE- Yes, early in my affiliation with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) I learned about the Association of Disciple Musicians. I've attended many of their annual meetings and paid my own way. That body elected me to a three year membership on the Association's nine-member Planning Council.

OG- You must now be in your mid eighties? Has your journey into seniority lessened your involvement in

church activities?

MCMICKLE- I'm a little slower in accepting opportunities to be a Woman's Day Speaker, or hold key offices in the Christian Women's Fellowship and Crusaders CWF affiliate, like I used to do. However, I still teach a large Bible Study Class on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening.

The Senior Minister and his associates can still count on me in a pinch to be an organist for memorial services held at the church, if the regular church instrumentalists are not available.

Years ago when I was more active in the general church, I was one of the seventy-seven women whose life story was included in the International C. W. F. publication called "Christian Women Share Their Faith." In 1975 I was author of a Lenten meditation booklet entitled, "Do You Now Believe?" But today I do not have the kind of mental and physical energy to accept these kind of assignments.

OG- It will be a pleasure to share this outline of your Christian stewardship with Oldtimers' Grapevine readers. You have helped us understand the meaning in all of these pictures in the family album and certificates on the

walls of your home. The Park Manor Christian Church's Senior Pastor James Demus, III and the membership is blessed to have your constructive presence



Retained Identity! True Story!

I was standing relaxed in the dining room food service line, when suddenly I felt somebody's head slide slowly down my back and calf of my legs. Turning around cautiously I looked down to see the anguished face and twisted frame of a little old gray haired lady.

A dining room attendant rushed over and stooped down to whisper: "Don't try to get up! Wait right there until a nurse comes to assist you!"

Looking up the fallen one replied, indignantly, "Nurse! Call a nurse? Why I'm a nurse!"

-OG Reynard-

Some Friends to Include in Your Prayer Circle

(Continued from page 2)

tor, at home, 401 N. 48th. St. - Apt. 6, Belleville, IL 62223 following successful surgery

***Roland Huff**, retired president of the

Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 13651 Myrica Court, Jacksonville, FL 32224, in full recovery from unexpected bypass surgery.

***Charles Mills**, retired overseas church mission staff and travel agent, 5330 Caring Cove, Indianapolis, IN 46268, recovering from a recent

stroke.

***Charles Berry**, eminent higher education leader and a retired president of **Jarvis Christian College**, P. O. Box 212, Grambling, LA, in rehabilitation from a second stroke November 18. Contact Mrs. Sarah Berry, wife.

FOR WHOM THE BELLS TOLL:

Palestine, TX- One hundred and one year old Mother Ophelia Gustavia Henry, faithful widow of a veteran Disciples of Christ minister and mother of seven daughters and three sons, had a peaceful homegoing November 4, 1998.



Ophelia G. Henry

She was given a Memorial Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving November 10, 1998 in New Fellowship Christian Center Church. Senior Pastor V. Charles Jackson provided the eulogy and Claude Walker was Officiant

Mother Henry's 87 years of charter membership at New Fellowship

Church were highlighted by partnership with her husband Enoch W. Henry, Sr, as he provided pastoral leadership to that congregation and others in the area for many years. She received formal liberal art preparation in English and Christian education at Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College in Palestine. This enabled her to provide a variety of church and community services, and also provide loving parental care for their ten children. Her husband and two daughters preceded her in death.

Among those joined in a supportive presence were Ministers J. O. Griffin and Charles Faulkner of the Texas Christian Missionary Fellowship; Mrs.

Gylie Griffin, Texas Ministers Wives Fellowship; Lorene B. Holmes, External Relations staff from Jarvis Christian College; and Obie Bowser, Associate Pastor at New Fellowship.

Cherishing her memory were five daughters and three sons, residents of California, Georgia, and Texas. Two of the sons are practicing ministers. One, Kenneth E. Henry, is a professor of church history in a seminary in Atlanta, GA. The other, Enoch W. Henry, Jr., is a retired pastor and general church staff member in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) serving as a part time chaplain to seniors in Hollywood, CA. Others cherishing memory of Mother Henry are 18 grandchildren, and 26 greatgrands.

OTHER HOMEGOINGS IN 1998

***Charlene F. Stewart**, retired Missions Building service staff of Indianapolis, IN, was a volunteer musician who involved church headquarters employees in seasonal volunteer choral and worship events. Her homegoing was May 14, 1998.

***Deloris A. Turner**, a church administrator, thoughtful preacher and pastor who was actively engaged in a persevering ministry at the Central Christian Church, Kansas City, MO, died June 29, 1998. She gave in to cancer after a courageous struggle and service to regions and the general church. She was memorialized July 1 and -2, 1998 in both Kansas City and Martinsville, VA by faithful family members and a host of friends.

***Robert Hampton Boyd**, a retired engineer whose demise was August 31, 1998. He was an active Disciples lay leader in Little Rock, AR, Ray-

more, MO congregations and a constructive resident within the life of the Foxwood Springs Retirement Living Center community.

***Ralph Johns**, Raymore, MO, a ninety-five year old retired finance manager and versatile community and church worker went, home December 1, 1998. A Memorial service was held at Foxwood December 5. He aided his son, Tom A Johns, the pioneer executive administrator of the Foxwood Springs Living Center, in recruiting residents for Foxwood by handcrafting miniature models of garden homes used to market Foxwood.

***Roland Thompson**, Cincinnati, OH, passed away October 12, 1998. He was an outstanding Baptist lay leader who was devoted to his wife, Pearl, and daughter, BCE staff member Deborah Thompson He was a violinist in Cincy Symphony and often performed in

Disciples of Christ CMF Regional Church retreats; a regular chaperon of his wife to CWF events; attendant at major Disciples of Christ plenary events in support of his daughter, Deborah, who gave his eulogy.

***Roy David Clinthorne**, whose homegoing was October 6, 1998, was a retired Fisk university physics teacher and practicing dentist. He was active as a charter member of Faith United Christian Church and participant in many civic affairs/

***Beulah Dillard Warder**, a 103 year old faithful mother of five, minister's wife, church pianist and veteran leader in Christian education in Faith Memorial Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, OK, was memorialized August 14, 1998. Her son, Nathaniel Warder, is a veteran Disciples of Christ key lay leader in Central Christian Church of Kansas City, MO.

LINDA C. MCKNIGHT, NURTURED WITHIN DISCIPLES OF CHRIST TRADITION—*Denomination's Newly Elected Church Finance Council Corporate Secretary and Treasurer*

Indianapolis, IN- Linda C. McKnight, a native Missourian and life-long member of Centennial Christian Church, St. Louis, MO, has been elected Corporate Secretary and Treasurer by the board of the unit (Church Finance Council) assigned by the denomination (i. e. Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to administer all of the funds received from the congregations to maintain the general church and related institutions. She began service in this important position December 1, 1998.



Ms Linda C. McKnight

Following formal preparation for a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration at Culver-Stockton College in Canton, MO, and receipt of her Master in Business Administration and major in Finance and Management, from Webster University in St. Louis, MO, she began professional services in the general Disciples of Christ as the Corporate Secretary and Treasurer for the Division of Higher Education unit.

After a five year tenure in this general unit, she spent the next nine years as a fiscal administrator for four accredited

institutions in higher education. Based on a review of her performances at Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, TX; Southern University, Shreveport, LA; Lincoln University, Jefferson City, MO; and the University of Missouri at Columbia, MO, the Search Committee for a Corporate Secretary and Treasurer of the denomination's Church Finance Council recommended the employment of Linda C. McKnight.

In addition to her professional services for the church, Ms. McKnight has been a treasurer for the Board of Trustees of the National Convocation of the Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church, and is currently chair for the Investment Committee for the Greenwood Cemeteries Corporation, an affiliate of the National Christian Missionary Convention, Inc. in Nashville, TN

Ms McKnight shares her abilities and talents in her home congregation and with the general church. In August 1998 she accepted the call of the OLD-TIMERS' GRAPEVINE newsletter board of directors to serve as their first Secretary/Treasurer. Soon after, she was called to share her professional services with the Church Finance

Council unit of the general church. She has agreed to perform in both capacities; the former, a volunteer service, and the latter, a professional position.

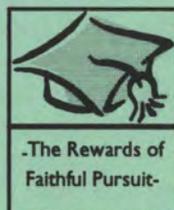
Peace on Earth

AT PRESS TIME: The Jarvis Christian College Office reported that December 3, 1998 persons from the surrounding communities and the campus provided a "standing room only" audience in the college chapel to hear the first combined Jarvis College Choir and Community presentation of THE MESSIAH.

A sponsoring Task Group from both the college and nearby communities guided the recruitment of singers from those communities through auditions. The college music staff directed the combined choir rehearsals and the actual performance.

THEY'RE "STILL PRESSING ON THE UPWARD WAY..."

JAMES T. SMITH, Indianapolis, IN- Associate Pastor, Light of the World Christian Church. The eighty-four year old supportive staff to Bishop T. Garrett Benjamin recently received an earned Doctor of Ministry degree from the United Theological Seminary of Dayton, OH. Minister Smith



The Rewards of Faithful Pursuit-

retired from operating a business several years ago to enter into full-time Christian service at Light of the World under the direction of Bishop Benjamin. While providing valuable pastoral services, especially in the area of visitation of the sick and shut-in, he earned a Master of Di-

vinity degree while in service. Bishop Benjamin has regarded Dr. Smith's services as a foundational part of the congregation's outreach to its expanding membership.

♥
Enoch W. Henry, Jr, Hollywood, CA- On October 11, 1998 the Holly-
(Continued on page 7)

Your Sharing and Caring Keeps The Oldtimers' Going. Thank You!

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"...the Upward Way"

(Continued from page 6)

Wood-Beverly Hills Christian Church honored retired pastor and general church program staff with a certificate of appreciation and induction in the congregation's "Hall of Fame." He joins others like Myron Cole, Poen Moore, and Cleveland Klihover. The certificate reads "To Rev. Dr. Enoch Henry in Appreciation of Service for Reconciliation in the Christian Church From 1969 - 1998."

Margaret (Peggy) Clark is the senior minister at the Hollywood-Beverly Hills Church, Beverly Hills.



Walter Blackburn, Indianapolis, IN- After four years of planning, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, OH has picked architect Walter Blackburn, Disciples of Christ layman, to design what is said "will become the largest and most expensive African American Historical and cultural center in the world. According to Indianapolis STAR staff writer Steve Mannheimer, "Scheduled to open in Cincinnati in 2003 the Freedom Center will include a building of 125,000 square feet and a garden of nearly 40 acres, together costing more than 880 million." (It is believed that most of the money will come from private sources.)

Mannheimer reports that "The Cincinnati chapter of the National Conference for Community and Justice, formerly the National Conference of Christian and Jews, proposed the Freedom Center four years ago during its 50th anniversary."



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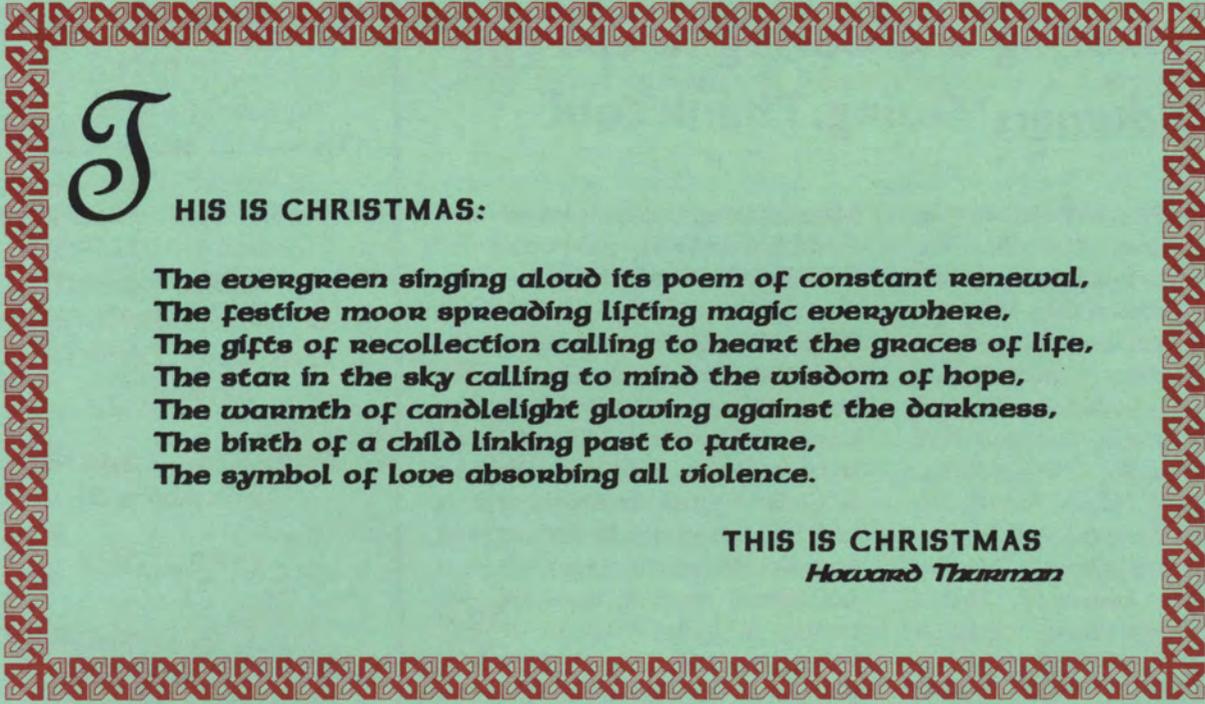
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T

HIS IS CHRISTMAS:

*The evergreen singing aloud its poem of constant renewal,
The festive mood spreading lifting magic everywhere,
The gifts of recollection calling to heart the graces of life,
The star in the sky calling to mind the wisdom of hope,
The warmth of candlelight glowing against the darkness,
The birth of a child linking past to future,
The symbol of love absorbing all violence.*

THIS IS CHRISTMAS
Howard Thurman

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