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# A Survey of Adult Membership Training Experiences for Evangelical United Brethren

Frank Wooldridge

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A SURVEY OF  
ADULT MEMBERSHIP TRAINING EXPERIENCES  
FOR EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN

by

Frank W. Wooldridge

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the  
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Bachelor of Divinity

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Hardly a week passes in most communities surrounding a major metropolitan center that a new family does not move into town. No longer does the cleric or lay worker need to look to distant fields for those who are not being challenged by the Gospel. As they came into the new community, they brought in addition to their household goods, their former church attitudes. They were Baptists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Nazarenes, Penticostals, and Presbyterians. When they moved into the community served by the Evangelical United Brethren Church, they became the responsibility of the local church in that community.

Can people from such varied backgrounds be brought into a local church and work together harmoniously? What can be done to help these people from such differing religious environments become part of and contribute to a smoothly operating church? Some of them have served a probationary period in their former church before they were accepted for membership. Others were accepted for membership on the basis of their "conversion". In addition there are some who had completed differing length courses of study in all the phases of the beliefs and practices of their church.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this study was to discover adequate means for adult membership preparation prior to admission to the Evangelical United Brethren Church, and on the basis of research findings to

propose a suitable program for such training. The attempt was made to answer the question, "What type of training experiences should be provided to orient those coming from differing backgrounds, into the Evangelical United Brethren Church?"

### JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

In view of the high mobility of people it became necessary to examine the present status of membership preparation to determine whether it was adequate to inform those who desired to come into the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Population prediction indicate the Pacific Area of this denomination should have a 22% increase in population by the year 1970. Not only does the Western third of the Church face a high mobility, but every part of America will experience similar movement of people.<sup>1</sup>

A second aspect of the problem is the artificial division of thought which made membership preparation either an emotional conversion, or an intellectual understanding of doctrine.

### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to an inquiry into the factors which have determined the present program, those factors which should be included in any proposed program, and what is being done in the Evangelical United Brethren Church as well as some denominations which have

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<sup>1</sup>"Age of the Pacific," Newsweek, December 21, 1959, vol. LIV, no. 25, p. 44-47.



developed material in this field, and the proposal of a program utilizing available sources.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

For the purpose of this study certain terms are defined as follows:

Applicant. The program and material which were under consideration are designed to be put into operation with those who were seeking to unite as members with a specific Church. The words, applicant, prospective member, prospect: were used as synonymous referring to this person seeking admission into the Church.

Catechism. Many terms which have been in use for a period of time acquire either dual meanings or two separate meanings. Catechism is one of these terms. Within this study it is used in reference to a formal method of instruction viewed by some as of little value in bringing a needy soul to the Saviour. Later it is properly defined as oral instruction.

Catechetical Class. Catechetical classes were those that followed the more traditional lines of question and answer. These were normally found in the more liturgical church. When the presentation used in the material was such that the definition used here was not in harmony, the term was placed in quotes. The only exception was in the use of the title under which it was published.

Church. For the purpose of this study when the word Church was used without the name of a particular denomination it referred to the Evangelical United Brethren Church. In the sections where it was

necessary to avoid the repetition of the name of another denomination the word church was used without the first letter capitalized. When the word "church" stands without a context it refers to the church universal.

Churchmanship. Churchmanship was used to refer to instruction, classes, experiences, and curriculum designed to further prepare those who were already in a position of full membership, to more fully understand the belief or enter more fully into the life of the church.

Conversion.

"Conversion involves decision, choice, surrender, faith, but also the workings of the grace of God. This new birth is 'not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God.' Salvation is by grace through faith.....The redemptive activity of God in the life is the fundamental fact of.....conversion.....decision is involved in conversion, but conversion is more than decision."<sup>1</sup>

When this term is qualified by another word e.g., emotional, intellectual, the emphasis is upon this aspect to the exclusion of the work of the Holy Spirit in the person's life.

Membership classes. Membership classes differ from the program in that the classes meet only as long as needed, usually these are of far shorter duration than the program and consist primarily of instruction by the pastor.

Membership curriculum. Membership curriculum refers to the body of subject matter considered to be essential for inclusion in any of the methods of preparation prior to reception as a member, when applicable to those moving from limited to full membership.

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<sup>1</sup>The Board of Bishops, What Constitutes a Convert, p. passim.



Membership preparation. Membership preparation is used as a cover term to include all the various methods of making ready for reception into the membership relation. Where all connected with the church are viewed as members or where a partial or limited membership exists the steps necessary for reception into full membership are included as part of membership preparation.

Membership training experience. Membership training experiences refer to the type of preparation where the applicant not only is made familiar with the belief and organization through instruction, but a sizeable part of the preparation is done through an experience the person enters into.

Membership training program. The variation of training programs require that the various programs be labeled for clear identification. Membership training program refers to those programs where an established content and number of classes are required of every applicant.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

The first two-thirds of the study was given to the first half of the problem; that of the survey of the materials available and their development. The fifth chapter presented the proposed solution to the other part of the problem. Chapter Two was a historical study to determine those influences which have effected the attitude toward and the content of membership preparation. This survey covered the period from the birth of the Church until the merger in 1946. In evaluating the program of membership preparation, it was necessary to know what the doctrine of the church was as held by the Evangelical

United Brethren Church, and what was the purpose of membership. This study formed the first half of the third chapter. The second half of that chapter continued to develop the basis upon which the materials and programs were evaluated. In that the survey worked with educational materials, it was necessary to have a criteria for evaluating these programs. The closing section of the third chapter summarized these findings and provided a standard for evaluating the curricula. The fourth chapter contained the evaluation of the various programs and materials located through the sampling of other denominations as well as the survey of the Church. Chapter Five was the proposed program of membership preparation for the Church. The final chapter was used for the summary, conclusion, and recommendations for further study.

#### METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Questionnaire. A questionnaire was used to determine the type of preparation prevalent in the Church; the materials used; and the attitude of the ministers toward the material available. This questionnaire was sent to a sampling of the ministers selected both at random, and by recommendation from Conference Directors of Christian Education. The ministers and conferences selected represented five percent of the charges within the church, but at the same time seventy percent of the membership of the denomination was represented by the Conferences contacted through the Directors of Christian Education. Of the one hundred forty eight ministers contacted, ninety eight responded. The conferences which were contacted for recommendations as to the ministers who had



developed a program along this line or who had done an outstanding job were: California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana North, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio Miami, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Of these replies were received from California, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio Miami, and Wisconsin. All of the conferences of the Church were contacted by random selection, to insure representation. Those conferences named immediately above who did not name sufficient pastors as well as those who failed to reply, were included in the random sampling to give coverage of the full Church.

Research Method. The various denominations were selected to give a sampling of the preparation material these other groups made available for their ministers. To determine the curricula used the departments of Christian Education of the denominations were contacted, this was the material used for the evaluation, and comparison. Where it was possible an active minister of the denomination was contacted to determine the usage of the material within the local church.

### ASSUMPTIONS

This study was based upon the following assumptions: that the church is the body of Christ, that it is the agency He is using to reach the world that is lost, as well as the agency used to enable individual followers to unite in a concentrated effort to do His work. That while the church is a spiritual body it is also a social organization, and that as such it must prepare those who are its members to be able to take an active part in its program.



Also the assumption that those uniting with the Church desire to be as effective a member as possible. That the Church has a responsibility to enable these to fulfill this desire. As the Church enables those entering it to become effective members it will be able to function more harmoniously. The more harmoniously the Church functions the more effective it and the individual will be in the purpose of their Lord, namely to lead more to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL SURVEY OF MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION

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### HISTORICAL SURVEY OF MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION

In driving along many highways today, one cannot help but wonder why the roads are not straight. The answer is found in the history of the development of roads. With the exception of a few, most roads follow either the animal trails, which because Indian trails, or the property lines; these became wagon trails, and finally they developed and widened into the roads of today. To understand the highways of today, a knowledge of their past is necessary.

The same is true of the educational program of a church. A knowledge of its history is essential to an understanding of its present program. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the program of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and its predecessors to uncover the early program and attitudes which have entered into and influenced the present preparation of prospective members.

### THE PERIOD OF CONCERN

The factors that early entered still effect the preparation of church members today. The period from 1800 until 1946 was a formative period. The purpose was to bring to light those underlying attitudes, decisions, and desires, that what, why and the way it was done, could be better understood.

#### The Beginning and Background of the Church.

Both the Evangelical and the United Brethren Churches were

born during the Second Great Awakening of 1800. The purpose was not to trace the events leading to the formation of these bodies, but some facts were lifted. The primary purpose was to bring the Gospel to the Germans. The Church fathers considered working as part of the Methodist Church, which at that time preached the same message as the founders of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, but the Methodists were sure the German language would soon die out.

The background of these early bodies, while differing in many ways, had some points of similarity. The majority of the people came from Lutheran, Reformed and Mennonite backgrounds. In many cases the contact with these other churches was a formal one only, and very spasmodic. Jacob Albright was a typical example of this type of connection. His parents were Lutherans, but the home was open to all traveling ministers. He was brought to see his need of Christ through the influence of the Lutheran pastor and a Reformed layman who was also an associate of Otterbein, but was not assured of peace until he sought God himself. At first he joined the Methodist Church. Many of the early converts came from similar circumstances. There was a connection with the church in the past, but ministers were few, and many of them had been led astray by the theological plagues of Europe. The result was that the people had a vague concept of the possibility of a peace with God, but were only too well aware of the need in their own life. Many of these persons had been trained in the Reformed or Lutheran churches.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>S. P. Spreng, History of the Evangelical Church, p. 11.



Both the Lutheran and Reformed Churches used the Catechism to train those available in the Christian Faith. The Mennonite groups used a less formal, but equally effective way of preparing their prospects for membership. Here the training experience took place in the home. The parents passed on to the children by example and in conversation the content of their religious belief. It may be this lack of formal training was partially the reason Martin Boehm felt inadequate when he was called by lot to preach, prior to the call he received from Christ while he was plowing in the field.<sup>1</sup>

The three leaders furnished a good example of that which was found in the early church; Otterbein had the advantages of both the catechical and formal training as offered in the Reformed Church. He had catechism from the church as a youth, and the formal training at the University for the ministry, yet it was not until the Holy Spirit had completed his preparation in the broom closet one Sunday afternoon, that he was able to go on to his greatest effectiveness.

Boehm had the background of a very simple life. Supposedly the total group was under the direct leadership of the Holy Spirit, yet he received his instruction not through the accepted channel, but while he was plowing and praying. Albright was led through the instrumentality of traveling preachers, Methodists, Lutheran and United Brethren to seek peace with God.

It would seem as if the times were almost alive with a hunger

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<sup>1</sup>A. W. Drury, History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, p. 28.

for peace with God not found in the empty forms of many churches. The people while far from God and some outwardly antagonistic and atheistic had been unable to shake a deep seated belief in God. It was this underlying conviction that held in spite of the prevalence of 'public proclamation of rejection of a belief in God, that must be recognized. The people didn't have to be taught many basic facts of belief for two reasons; first, they already knew them; and secondly, the emphasis was on a warm heart and not on the verbal expression given to this experience.

Initially the early leaders had one primary purpose; that, to save people from the wrath to come, and bring them into the experience of the fullness of the Holy Spirit. To accomplish this, they went everywhere preaching and exhorting. It was some time before the problem of bringing these converts into membership arose. At first, these groups were more a fellowship of like-spirited people, than an organized church. The one requirement for membership was the mutual witness that "we are brothers" in Christ.<sup>1</sup>

As the group adopted a more formal organization, the need for membership requirements became more prominent. But even here much of their experience caused difficulties. Many of the people had bitter memories of seeking peace in a church only to be required to review the Catechism. This, as far as they could see, only intensified their sorrow. Many of the ministers who seemingly had

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<sup>1</sup>Drury, op, cit., p. 90 Cf. R. Albright. A History of the Evangelical Church. p. 81.



the best training possible were unable to help those who sought peace with God; some even scoffed and opposed those who claimed the experience of the forgiveness of their sins.<sup>1</sup> The result was an indifference to and/or denial of the value of catechical instruction.

As the church expanded the younger generation was rapidly turning to the English language, with this change there was made available the teaching of the Methodist Church, as a result many of the converts of the early pioneers turned to the "English Methodists", from the "German Methodists."

In summary the contribution of this background was: (1) attempts to transmit religious knowledge through catechism had seemingly failed to lead to a proper relationship with God. As many saw it, the question was either to be converted and have peace, or to be taught the facts of religion in a catechism and have no real peace. (2) There was some knowledge, and basic Christian belief held by many of the people. (3) Conversion in a prescribed manner was the primary requirement for membership.

#### Membership training.

From the preview of the period it would appear that nothing was done in the matter of membership preparation. Had it not been for the leadership this may have been the case, but already mention has been made of one requirement for membership preparation and

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<sup>1</sup>Drury, op. cit., p. 90



another assumed. The requirement of conversion<sup>1</sup> may seem so obvious that it would be taken for granted, but it is the key that gives meaning to all that is and was done in membership preparation. The other assumption has been the preaching message, not the twenty minute sermon of today once a week, but the all day affair that resulted in six to twelve hours of Bible teaching and indoctrination.

Another training experience in wide use then but almost forgotten now was the class meeting. This was obviously the real training experience. The class meeting was an informal meeting for spiritual examination under the leadership of the lay class leader. Voluntarily the members would share their experiences in the Lord. The leader would probe to reveal to the individual further places of needed growth, where concepts were false these could be corrected. The small groups were able to make an extremely valuable contribution to the life of the individual.<sup>2</sup> Only in recent days has this type of an experience become acceptable again. Today it is called variously, "Group dynamics" or in the church, "Koinoia" groups.

#### Requirements for membership.

As these organizations began, their primary purpose was to carry the Gospel to those who had not heard it. They were so concerned about the union of the believer with Christ, little else was of concern to them. From the accounts left of the beginning days, the groups were not accorded the place of respect enjoyed today. This was a time of open

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<sup>1</sup>Personal Correspondence of H. Block, Wisconsin to the author November 20, 1957, Conference Historian, "The main requirement for membership was Conversion, without it there was to be no reception of members."

<sup>2</sup>Albright, op. cit., p. 187.

opposition to the name of Christ. In 1786 the prediction was made that by 1800 no church would be left. Princeton Seminary had only one professing Christian, only the social churches were tolerated, but the "fanaticism" of those who preached forgiveness of sins brought open opposition.<sup>1</sup> All who followed and supported these who were proclaiming Christ's power to transform were viewed as a class of people to be avoided. Rather than the social advantage that is accorded members of the church in some places today, church membership was an open invitation for ridicule. Those who joined would give serious thought before taking such a step. In the face of this the primary initiative was placed upon the one wishing to join.

The only formal requirement for membership in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ was that the person answer the following question, "have you experienced the pardon of your sins, and are you determined by the grace of God to save your soul?" Providing the answer was in the affirmative and no moral charges were brought, the person became a member. Provision was made for those who were unable to answer this question properly to become, and be listed as, 'a seeker'.<sup>2</sup> But four pages follow of what members are expected to do upon pain of expulsion, included are some doctrinal statements, e.g. acceptance of "the Bible to be and contain

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 10-14.

<sup>2</sup>Origin, Doctrine, Constitution and Discipline of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

the whole word of God," a determination to be saved, lead a good life, and to be an example of piety in all areas of life. The point on piety covers two pages. In the light of the above, the one coming into membership must have had some instruction in order to make the rules of conduct and items of faith clear. Not only was the class meeting used for this type of instruction, but those who failed to attend were considered to have backslidden, and were either dropped from membership, or not considered fit persons for membership.

In view of the nature of the church as an organ to promote an unpopular, easily twisted aspect of Christianity, care would be taken to prevent inner decay. Those that sought to join were only too well aware of the uniqueness of the group they were uniting with. Not only were they aware of the stigma of uniting with the church, they were willing to make any sacrifice to do it.

In the year 1880 the Discipline published by the Evangelical Association included the following as the procedure for the reception of members. First, make an announcement publicly inviting those present who desire to seek admission, and privately seek out those who should be candidates and speak to them of uniting with the Church. Then in the service the General rules of the Church were to be read followed by an invitation for those who desire to unite with the Church to indicate their desire. Those that respond were to be asked the following questions:

"Are you fully determined to renounce every sin, and to seek redemption in Christ and in observing our General rules to live according to the Word of God, and to continue steadfast in godliness until death? Are you determined, by the grace of



God to do so? Answer aloud, yes."<sup>1</sup>

The General rules referred to above describes what was expected as evidence of those serious about their salvation. It should be noted also that mention is made of the minister seeking out privately those who should join.

Catechism. That the early leaders had access to the Catechisms of their former churches has been mentioned previously in the study. The first produced by the church was the work of Otterbein which would place it between 1780 and 1810. Dreisback translated a catechism into German in 1890.<sup>2</sup> From the comments at the beginning of this translation, it is obvious that catechism was considered as belonging to the coming generation. These followed the traditional arrangement of question and answer with the Scripture reference given as a basis for the answer given. W. W. Orwig in the preface to his catechism begins by pointing out the effectiveness of the catechism as well as the need for sound doctrine in order to prevent eternal damnation. After mentioning the commission he was under by the church to write, he continues by saying:

"He ever kept in view that he was not writing for the learned, but for the children and inexperienced minds. He endeavored, therefore to explain the principles and fundamentals of the Christian religion, in a plain, concise and thorough manner, so as to enable the youthful and inexperienced mind to comprehend them. The Scripture passages in proof of the doctrines advanced, should be committed to memory by the catechumens, after having learned the

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<sup>1</sup>The Doctrine and Discipline of the Evangelical Association,  
p. 63.

<sup>2</sup>Albright, op. cit., p. 92.

questions and answers of a section; and then the catechist or teacher may, at each session, take occasion to form new questions from those Scriptures texts and more minutely explain and inculcate the several doctrines.<sup>1</sup>

While catechisms were available and the efforts put into them would in itself commend their use, a question remains as to how widely they were used. The following quotation illustrates the point.

"Some as yet do not seem to see the necessity of a sound intellectual basis for Christian experience, but the board is determined to make this one of their major emphasis in seeking to undergird the evangelistic fervor of every church in the Conference."<sup>2</sup>

This does not come from an early day in the history of the church, but rather from the Conference Session of 1958. Being aware that today, amid the hose of material and an active emphasis on membership preparation some still are not using it: it is not surprising to learn that those from an earlier day did not use their catechisms. Dr. Riebel, whose dissertation was on Religious Education in the Evangelical Church states that the catechism was not widely used.<sup>3</sup>

#### Summary of the period 1800-1875

From the material gathered, the following attitudes and materials were found to have influenced the early membership preparation. (1) Catechisms were prepared and available from 1806 to the Evangelical side of the church, and by Otterbein for the

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<sup>1</sup>W. W. Orwig, Catechism of the Principle Doctrines of the Christian Religion, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>C. Harris, ed., Official Proceedings of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup>From personal correspondence by Miss Ruth Krammer, Librarian, Evangelical Theological Seminary, Illinois, November 10, 1958.



United Brethren. (2) Due to previous experience this type of preparation was held in disrepute. (3) The church was in the midst of a revival which was in part a revolt against the intellectual but emotionally barren approach to Christianity. (4) The revivalistic spirit set the course of the church for a number of years. That is the physical-emotional accompaniments of a revival-conversion became the identifying marks of one ready for church membership. (5) The class meeting provided an ideal opportunity for the training of members, (6) the "separateness" of the church gave it an exclusiveness as well as a social stigma.

Between 1875 and 1900 a change took place in the theological climate that has had far reaching effects. An intellectual approach to Christianity could not have been prevented from returning. Unfortunately the issue arose in such a way as to cloud the major concern; and resulted in the forced choice between either remaining true to the faith, or adopting an intellectual approach and also rejecting the traditional beliefs and the emotional aspect of Christianity. It would seem the first effect of the division in thinking, was the separation of the Church. The one side insisting that only an emotional conversion would prepare a person to join the church. Nothing else was needed. The other side maintained that a decision to follow Jesus was necessary, but this was augmented with the individual adding to his consecration a training designed to enable him to understand more fully the meaning and reason for his changed life. A third position developed, that of educating the person to be a Christian; the basis was the concept of moral behavior, to know right is to do right; therefore no conversion experience is

needed. Thus the Faith-Reason battle continued to stir up the dust. Only in the past few years has there been any indication of the reconciliation of the two opposing views. The solution of the conflict does not lie in the victory of either an emotional conversion experience or an intellectual understanding of the basis and working of Salvation. The two are needed to compliment each other.

### THE PERIOD OF CHANGE

Some of the formative influences were traced from the beginning of the Church until the rise of the controversy over Faith and Reason. Only today are we beginning to be able to see the issues more or less clearly. From the seed planted by Darwin in his Evolutionary hypothesis American theologians were forced to re-examine all the traditional beliefs, or to examine his theory and decry his work and that of the men who followed him. German rationalism landed on the beachhead and its devotees, such as Ingersoll, went out to conquer every strong hold of the faith.<sup>1</sup> Not only did the church face a changing social and economic world, but science was insisting that the religious world recognize their contribution.

"The church at first "reacted" defensively to the religious revolution, then on second thought, many adopted completely both the results and the method of science. . . Those who reacted in a purely defensive way failed to grasp the truth in the new scientific discoveries and set the heart and mind of the church against the truth recently discovered. It made it difficult for the Christian Church to relate itself. . . to the . . . intellectual life of America! Those who adopted the total "scientific method" failed to remain critical and as a result were unable to be of

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<sup>1</sup>J. C. Brauer, Protestantism in America, (Philadelphia, the Westminster Press, 1953) p. 218-230.



help to the people."<sup>1</sup>

Following closely upon this separation of science and those who felt that God and His revelation needed to be defended, came to a new understanding of how people learn, think and make decisions. The outgrowth of this was a new approach to teaching.<sup>2</sup>

#### The educational transition.

Prior to and through the first half of the 19th century man's mind had been viewed as a special creation of God, spiritual in nature and totally different from the physical body. Mind was possessed by man alone. With the rise of the evolutionary theory, examination and experimentation produced serious questions about this theory.

Faculty Psychology, which had held the field for years was based on the concept of man's mind as a spiritual creation, unique to man. Under its sway, man was viewed as having the potential to develop various faculties, memory, judgment, reason, etc. Development of these faculties was obtained through the various mental gymnastics, the study of the classics, mathematics, and the like. By developing one faculty the others were also developed.

Experimental Psychology, as it entered the field was not a unified field, but many divergent views with a goal of relating the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 213ff.

<sup>2</sup>Russel Mixter, "How does Darwin stand today," "Eternity" February, 1960, vol. 11, no. 1, p. 38. In a review of Paul A. Zimmerman ed., Darwin, Evolution, and Creation. In spite of the authors strong defensive position, they "concede that evolutionary theory has had such beneficial effects as leading education" to better methods as based on the growth process.

content and method of education more closely to the individual. Man's mind was seen as part of his physical equipment, whether endowed by a creator, or the result of evolution. What was before thought of as separate faculties, was now seen as differing functions of the mind. The major contribution of this emphasis was in the recognition of individual differences and capacities. Environment and hereditary became factors to be reckoned with.

Not without a struggle did the educational change take place in educational circles.<sup>1</sup> The Church had much the same reaction only more involved. Many of those who accepted the results of modern science also accepted German rationalism. Rationalism generally rejected the traditional theological positions and the inspiration of the Bible. These thoughts were so closely tied together that those who sought to benefit by the use of the results of modern science, were classified with the ones who had departed from the faith. To use modern educational process resulted in being labeled as a "liberal." To be a liberal was to deny the person and work of Jesus Christ, and the authority of the Bible.

The advance of the church has required someone to face the issue, and present the facts in a way the church will see the value, though some may misunderstand. In 1884, Dr. John M. Gregory, a minister as well as being the first president of the University of Chicago, produced for the Congregational Church a classic in the use of modern educational theory within the Sunday School. The

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<sup>1</sup>R. Freeman Butts, A Cultural History of Western Education, pp. 476-480.



value of this work can be seen in the fact that Baker Book House republished it in 1954. His purpose was to share the fruit of his study with those who are teaching the Sunday Schools, this is "his offering on the altar of sacrifice to God."<sup>1</sup>

Summary of the period of change.

Through some very stormy periods the church was forced to face, first some revolutionary scientific transformations, both in theory and in fact. Difficulty was encountered where the church feared that the new theory would attack its dogma. Only after the church was able to re-evaluate its basic attitude to science were the results of these new discoveries usable by the church.

## THE PERIOD OF ADVANCE

### 1875 - 1900

In 1876, Dr. Anton Hulster presented his book, The Doctrine of the Soul, an early attempt to reconcile evangelical Christianity and the findings of science. The fact that it was not published by the Evangelical Publishing House may indicate the lack of interest in this type of work at this time, to an extent it may also express the amount of defensiveness present in the Church.<sup>2</sup> Others who were to write in this period echoed the same spirit. Jonthan Weaver in 1892 published a small book to amplify the beliefs outlined in the confession of faith.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>John M. Gregory, The Seven Laws of Teaching, p. viii.

<sup>2</sup>Albright, op cit. p. 308.

<sup>3</sup>Jonthan Weaver, A Practical Comment on the Confession of Faith of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.



The traditional catechisms with its question and answer,

Question 1. Do you believe that there is a God?

Answer. I believe that there is a true and living God. But The Lord is the true God, he is the living God and an everlasting King; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation. - Jer. 10:10

For the Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh rewards. - Duet. 10, 17.<sup>1</sup>

not only were carried into this period and were either revised or new works issued, still the main contribution of the period was in the efforts to present the old message in a new fashion. Bishop Weaver's commentary of the confession has already been introduced, with no mention of adverse reception. It can be assumed from this little if any opposition arose because of the departure from the traditional pattern of presentation. The materials produced prior to this time were retained and were the sources used in the Church for study. The extent of the use of the catechism has already been indicated. These had proven themselves over the years, and had the prestige, age and tradition to help support them. One other factor that may help account for the fact that so many were produced is that they were very adaptable for discussion, lecture, or for use as a source book. Education had already been introduced into secular fields, new concepts of learning, now these were entering the church.

The church was more concerned with the training of the members, than with the preparation of prospective members. Courses were available in all the various areas of Church life and interest; Church History, Doctrine, Bible study, Missions, and

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<sup>1</sup>Orwig, op. cit., p. 5.

Bibliographies. "The Evangelical Series," "The Albright Series," both were geared for the present members. These were part of a larger family of materials in vogue outside the church as well as within. Yet somehow membership preparation was bypassed. Occurring about the same time was the conflict, division, and the ensuing legal hassels in both the Evangelical Association, and the Church of the United Brethren. For over twenty-five years strife and unrest could be found consuming the energy that normally would have been channeled into more productive ends. The efforts were directed to building up the present membership, and enlisting the uncommitted to the same side as the local church was on. That many of those not members were brought into the church cannot be denied, but whether they were won out of party strife, to show the other side we are ones in the right, or out of a concern for the individual cannot now be determined.

#### 1900 - 1946

The lack of materials early in this period leads to the suggestion that while the issues surrounding the division within the Church were resolved, tensions still existed. In addition, the First World War came in at the first half of the period. Once the war was over talk of the reuniting of the Evangelical side of the church began. In 1928 E. W. Praetorius issued a hand book for the young people which has since the union of the Evangelical and United Brethren been revised and reissued.<sup>1</sup> Another effort along the same line was made

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<sup>1</sup>E. W. Praetorius, Handbook of Religion for Youth, Foundations for Youth.



by W. E. Peffley in a small booklet designed for use in preparatory classes. Two other books came out more along the line of the study books than along the line of a membership preparation, both by Dr. S. P. Spreng, one on the history of the church, the other on the doctrinal beliefs.<sup>1</sup>

The United Brethren followed the same pattern of developing material primarily for young people, and younger age groups. C. W. Brewbaker wrote a guide book for use in the training of youth in 1922.<sup>2</sup> Dr. J. W. Owen added to a brief history of the church intended "for the young people of the church," a section which indicates it was intended for use in training them for membership.<sup>3</sup> It was not until 1942 that a pamphlet was published without mention of young people or youth as its intended readers, and this was published not under the leadership of the Board of Christian Education, but under the Home Mission and Church Erection Society to introduce the church to the people that were being reached in new areas. In the introduction it states the purpose was to do this, and does a remarkable job within a few pages.<sup>4</sup> In the beginning there are found the membership vows, and the doctrinal statement, leaving the invitation to join in the mind of the person.

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<sup>1</sup>Samuel P. Spreng, What Evangelicals Believe, and History of the Evangelical Church.

<sup>2</sup>C. W. Brewbaker, Christian Growth and Conduct.

<sup>3</sup>John W. Owen, A Short History of the United Brethren Church.

<sup>4</sup>U. P. Hovermale, The Church of the United Brethren in Christ.



Summary of the period 1900 - 1946.

Due to various reasons the results of more usable and effective methods in the educational process were not applied to the membership preparation until late in the period. In other areas of education the church was beginning to use these findings, but adult education as yet had not received the attention by the church which was necessary if it were to realize its potential.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Having traced the history of the Church from its beginning, it was found that the matter of adult membership preparation was left in the hands of the pastor, and was done through personal contact. In the early days of the church the class meeting served as an ideal situation for the necessary training. The class leader assisted the pastor in this. A genuine conversion experience was a pre-requisite for all who desired to unite with the Church, but care was taken to avoid the extreme of either an emotional or intellectual conversion.

Not without a struggle did the church come through the conflict of theology, anthropology, psychology of teaching, and church polity. Only within the last few years prior to union was any serious consideration given to the prospective adult member. The next chapter contains an evaluation of the material provided by the Church for its ministers, as well as comparison of the material developed by other churches.

CHAPTER III  
DETERMINATIVE FACTORS IN MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION

## CHAPTER III

### THE DETERMINATIVE FACTORS IN MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION

Behind any program developed, there are certain concepts which determine the direction, approach, and development of the program. In membership preparation there were two factors which determined the program. These were, one, the purpose of church membership; and the other, the educational means through which the preparation is guided. The purpose of this chapter was to examine these concepts, in order that they might be used as the criteria in the evaluation of the materials available. This was developed within the chapter, first to answer the question regarding the purpose of church membership, by defining the church. After this was done, then the purpose of membership could be examined. The factor of the educational means used to guide the person, did not require as extensive examination, because various evaluation guides are available.

### DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE CHURCH

The beginning point of understanding church membership preparation is a clear understanding of the church as viewed by the denomination. The Confession of Faith includes the following definition of the church. In the words of the former United Brethren Confession:



"We believe in a holy Christian Church composed of true believers in which the Word of God preached by men divinely called, and the ordinances are duly administered; that this divine institution is for the maintenance of worship, for the edification of believers and the conversion of the world to Christ. "<sup>1</sup>

Again in slightly different language the Confession of the former Evangelical Church.

"The visible Church of Christ is the community of true believers, among whom the word of God is preached in its purity, and the means of grace are duly ministered, according to Christ's own appointment. "<sup>2</sup>

The statements from the Confession of Faith indicate the church has a unique nature. The concern of this investigation is Church membership. The nature of the Church will determine who is qualified to become a member. When an organization possesses a unique nature, only persons sharing this nature are proper persons to be admitted to membership. A problem was confronted in the brevity of statements within the Confession of Faith. This resulted in a study of the doctrine of the church as taught by instructors within the Church. The sources used were, (1) the Systematic Theologies produced within the denomination, (2) text books used at the graduate schools providing ministers for the Church, (3) and study booklets provided by the leaders of the Church for the use of its members.

Dr. Gamersfelder's Systematic Theology states that the subject

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<sup>1</sup>The Discipline of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, p. 10. (Italics not in the original).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 27. Italics not in the original.

of the Church properly belongs under the classification of Soteriology, as it "represents the concrete results of the redemption."<sup>1</sup> The Church Universal "includes the whole company of believers in all parts and in all time. It signifies redeemed humanity."<sup>2</sup> Still he also understands Matthew 18:17 to show that Jesus recognized the local church not only would come into being but that it would have definite areas of responsibility.<sup>3</sup> The local Church is "any group who habitually gather together at the same place for worship." A denomination is any number of local Churches that agree on special points of doctrine, and are united under one form of government.<sup>4</sup> The Church while being a social organization to give expression to "the Christian life, which had its source in God. . . . differs from other human societies in its religious character." The church is united by the common bond each believer maintains to Christ.<sup>5</sup> In organization no pattern was set, but the environment of the Church determined the form of her development.<sup>6</sup>

As no other work of this nature has been done inside the church in recent times it became necessary to turn to the other sources used today in the preparation of ministers and the training of the lay members of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

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<sup>1</sup>S. Gamersfelder, Systematic Theology, p. 545.

<sup>2</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 546.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 546.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 547.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 549.

Professor Alan Richardson defines the church as:

"the whole believing, worshipping and witnessing Christian community throughout the world, in all its historical, continuity across the centuries and in all its historic denominations".<sup>1</sup>

Beyond this he has little to say except as the Church bears witness to the claims of Christ, both verbally and by its existence. In another source used to study the nature and work of the church,

"the church is not so much the 'ark of salvation as the' bringer of salvation; not only the kingdom of God's mercy and redemption, but the instrument of His mercy and redemption."<sup>2</sup>

From the New Testament writings he lifts the thought that the Church is the "Body of Christ;" "the Bride of Christ; the Church is likened to a flock of sheep."<sup>3</sup> The picture of the church is that of "a living organism, gathered out of the world by God through Christ for His special purpose, a saved and saving remnant; made alive by faith in the living Christ."<sup>4</sup> The emphasis is on the unity of the ecclesia, those who have been called out to form a corporate society, of God's peculiar people.<sup>5</sup>

Dr. J. Arthur Heck, the instructor in the course of the study of the Church at United Theological Seminary has written a book that

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<sup>1</sup>Alan Richardson, Christian Apologetics, p. 50. This and the next book listed were used as text books at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in the year 1955.

<sup>2</sup>William Robinson, The Biblical Doctrine of the Church, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 72-88.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 60.



that includes a section on the Church.<sup>1</sup> While this was intended for laymen, it presents his approach to the subject. After describing the early church as those who had followed Jesus while he was on earth, but without any of the externals that are associated with the church; the organization is accounted for; by saying:

It was not long until this distinctive group, committed to Christ and steeped in the gospel of a crucified risen and glorified Christ began to express its inner spiritual unity through organized life and activity.<sup>2</sup>

The Church is a living organism of called out ones, chosen people whose purpose is to continue the "witness to Jesus Christ in our world," and to be 'the agency through which Christ is continuing to carry on His redemptive work among men."<sup>3</sup>

One further work was considered at this time, that is the text from which the author studied in an interdenominational school. Dr. H. O. Wiley, writing from the Wesleyan Arminian view was the most recent author to do so. Speaking of the church he brings to the front the same definition which had already been found.

The Christian Church is therefore the assembly of called out ones made up of the divinely adopted sons of God. Christ is its glorious head. From Him it receives its life through the indwelling Spirit and as such discharges a two fold function as an institution of worship, and as a depository of the faith. The Church is also the Body of Christ. . . . . The Church is not merely an organization. It is a living organism.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>J. Arthur Heck, A Theology for Laymen, cf. Bulletin, United Theological Seminary, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 130

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>4</sup>H. O. Wiley and P. T. Culbertson, Introduction to Christian Theology, p. 366.

In organization three views are presented. One, that as the church is spiritual, none is needed; second, that the Scripture present the plan, but those using differing forms support this theory; and third, that principles are given upon which the church is to build its own form to fit the local situation. It is of interest to note that Bishop Weaver of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ is quoted. As this represents the present situation in the Evangelical United Brethren Church, the quotation is taken in full.

It is our opinion that the government in the New Testament was not exclusively Episcopal, Presbyterina, or Congregational, but a combination of certain elements of all - from a careful review of the whole question, we conclude that it is nearest in harmony with the practice and writings of the apostles to say that the authority in the visible Church is vested in the Ministry, and the laity taken together.<sup>1</sup>

Direct mention was made of the conditions of church membership.

"it is the duty of every Christian, not only to openly profess his faith in Christ, but to enter into fellowship with the body of believers in his community and to take upon himself the responsibility of church membership."<sup>2</sup>

From the study of the doctrine of the church, it was discovered that there was agreement on the concept of the Church. It is a unique organization comprised only of those who share the experience of having responded to God's call on their lives. The local church was found to be made up of those who meet to worship and work together as "called out ones" of God. The Church has been charged with the responsibility of inviting those who have not yet done so, to respond

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 373. Cf. Jonathan Weaver, Christian Theology, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 374.



to the invitation of God to be "born again" of the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ.

### THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

In the review of the doctrine of the church it has already been apparent, that part of the definition of the church includes the purpose of its existence. From the Confession of Faith the function of the Church was seen to be the preaching of the Word of God in its purity; the administration of the means of grace; the maintenance of worship to the end that the believers may be edified; "and the conversion of the world to Christ."<sup>1</sup> Building on the basis of the church as the body of Christ (Col. 1:24) as well as the definition discovered earlier, the purpose of the church is to continue the work for which Christ assumed a human body. The "Body of Christ" exists to spread the gospel. "The Church is in the world to redeem it by being a spiritual 'power house' from which spiritual power goes out into the world."<sup>2</sup> From this point the development was followed that lead to a discussion of how the church was to accomplish this. Not by manipulating political powers, nor by legalistic means was the church to achieve her goal, but by the personal dynamic of her members.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Heck elaborates the purpose of the church in the first of a series of study books produced by the church. This was a four year series under the general theme, "Christ and His Church." The four

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<sup>1</sup>The Discipline, loc cit.

<sup>2</sup>Robinson, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., cf. chap. VIII



years respectively; "The Nature of the Church, " "The Mission of the Church, " "The Resources of the Church, " and "The Future of the Church. " In the first chapter of the first year's study the question was answered, "What is the Church?" In part this was answered through its purpose.

1. The Church is the continuing witness to the fact of Christ - to His coming into the world, and to His saving efficacy in the world. It is the only agency which can, by its very nature, represent and demonstrate to the world the real and the full significance of Christ to the world. In the church, the world may continue to see Christ and become aware of the things that Christ can do for people. . . .
2. The Church is the agency through which Christ is continuing to carry on His redemptive work among men in the world. . . . The Church must do those things that Christ would do if He were still among men on earth. . . .
3. The Church is the agency or the field within which the world must find the revelation of the glory of God as it once shone in the face of the Son of God.<sup>1</sup>

Both Dr. Wiley and Dr. Gamersfelder spoke of the organization of the church as foreseen by the Lord and necessary for our life on earth. This organization was not just for the sake of organization, but the purpose of organization is that the aims of an organization may be reached. The aim of the church is that the will of God may be done on earth. The end that the church works toward is that human souls may be saved.<sup>2</sup> To do this the church administers the "means of Grace, " which are: Preaching of the Word, Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In his conclusion on the church as a divine institution he states, "that church

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<sup>1</sup>J. Arthur Heck, "What is the Church, " The Nature of the Church, ed. by H. W. Kaebnick, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Gamersfelder op, cit. p. 551.

membership is a rational and Scriptural duty and withal a great privilege."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. W. C. Clymer, the instructor who used the book by Robinson, as a text in a course on The Nature and Work of the Church in the other institution of the church also has written in a study book for the Church.<sup>2</sup> In this work the emphasis was upon the fact that the church is not a self satisfied unit but that "the mission of the church is to the whole world."<sup>3</sup> While this includes a social concern for the standards maintained, the mission was basically to witness to the gospel. A danger to be avoided by the church in its attempt to have its every activity contribute to the goal of Evangelism is that sharp edge of its evangelistic thrust be destroyed. An opposite danger would be the omission of the social and educational aspect of the evangelistic endeavor. As the church can not be separate from its members, the evangelistic efficiency of a church remains dependent upon the desire and the putting into effect that desire by the individual members of the church. "This springs from an experience of God's grace in forgiveness."<sup>4</sup>

The church and membership summarized.

While the views presented here have different interpretations of the other areas of the Christian Faith, on the point of the church

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid

<sup>2</sup>Wayne E. Clymer, "The Scope of the Mission," and "The Evangelizing Community," The Mission of the Church, ed. by H. W. Kabnick.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 55.



there was found remarkable agreement. This may be listed as follows: The Church Universal is made up of all who have been redeemed through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Local as well as larger groups have developed and apparently have been blessed by God as they work through an organization to continue the purpose of God for all men to hear the Gospel. As the Church is of a unique nature only those who have experienced the forgiveness of sins and thus share this unique nature are proper persons to be admitted to its membership. The purpose of membership is to enable the Church to more adequately fulfill its mission. From the emphasis on the means of growth to be administered by the Church, further growth is to be expected of the ones who unite with it.

Any program of membership preparation must not only introduce the prospective member to the doctrine of the Church, but also either assure that the person has this unique nature or keep them from weakening the effectiveness of the Church. As the person would be expected to support an organization, unique as it may be but still an organization they must be prepared to support and work within it. As some of the churches have differing beliefs the member must also be familiar and in harmony with the beliefs of the church they join.

#### ELEMENTS OF GOOD CURRICULUM

As it was necessary to know the purpose of church membership to understand the content of a membership program, so it was also necessary to have a frame of reference for the evaluation of materials. Within the area of Christian Education one can find guides for good



curriculum. These were used as the basis upon which the standard was developed both for the evaluation and as a guide in the proposed program. The principles of good curriculum were reviewed. This gave a brief and yet comprehensive background for the understanding of good curriculum.

#### Principles of evaluation.

As was pointed out in the preceding section a program of this type must either prepare the applicant for membership or place such a barrier before him that entrance will not be possible. The purpose is not to be restrictive rather the curriculum should so challenge the individual that there will be developed within him a desire to make a favorable response to the claims of God through Jesus Christ upon him.<sup>1</sup> This was not to be understood to mean a single "yes"; more of a continuing "yes" to all the present and future claims the individual may be brought to recognize through the operation of the Holy Spirit in his life. Young adults are the ones who are establishing their homes, getting settled in their life work (which often means a move).<sup>2</sup> These then were the ones that would most likely be the adults that make up the bulk of the applicants. To be able to challenge them, it is necessary to understand the needs of these young adults. With few differences the more mature adults will have similar needs.

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<sup>1</sup>Special Committee on the Curriculum Guide, A Guide for Curriculum in Christian Education, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Kuhn, A Critique of Adult Christian Education, p. 9

While in a particular area the expression of the need required a different type of experience to satisfy the underlying want, the basic need was still the same. An example of this could be seen in the single young adult, and the senior adult who has lost his life mate. Both were alone and needed to feel part of a group. Again the persons who have moved need to become part of the new community to which they have moved, whether they be a young couple in their first home, or a retired couple moving to a smaller house now that their children are grown.<sup>1</sup> The needs and characteristics of adults are further listed in Appendix 1.

But the response of the individual to the Gospel cannot be secured merely by the application of an understanding of the needs of the individuals. Basically the needs of the individuals were spiritual. The only source that can give a sure answer to this need is the Bible. The response of the individual to the Gospel was best achieved when the Scriptures were kept in the place of primary importance. Not only must the truth of the Word of God be brought to bear upon the applicant, but he should gain an understanding of the reasons the Christian values the Bible so highly. The result should be that he is able to use it as a guide in his personal life. In addition, the contribution of the total Christian Church should be introduced to the person, relating the historic sweep from the Apostolic Church down to the local situation.<sup>2</sup> As this was done the individual would both know

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<sup>1</sup>Professor Robert D. Bennett's class lecture material. Source The Christian Educators File, p. 3-13, Unpublished. See Appendix II.

<sup>2</sup>A Guide for Curriculum in Christian Education. op.cit., p. 32-51-



what his Church believes, and why it believes it. Obviously this cannot be a full study in the History of Doctrine, and systematic Theology, but only as people are grounded in thought are they able to withstand the diverse teachings prevalent today.

Christian Education has come to recognize the value of training which takes place outside the formal classroom situation.<sup>1</sup> With this insight came also a new concept of teaching, or more properly, of the location in which learning takes place. In the application of this to membership preparation, members could be trained through the experiences they faced every day, as well as in the various services at the Church. The problem to be avoided is an extreme which would include all experience with the church as part of the curriculum of membership preparation.

A good curriculum... is not a haphazard accumulation of materials nor a partial approach to experiences which have no beginning and come out at no end.<sup>2</sup>

Membership preparation has been found to be a specialized type of training experience, as such it would need a more detailed curriculum. The material for both the learner and the instructor did not qualify as good material unless this need was met. The need for this definite direction became apparent as the training was projected beyond the class room. The transition of the teaching from a "telling session" to a "thinking session," did result in genuine learning; but extreme caution had to be exercised to prevent the "thinking" from choosing

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 44.



its own path, and not covering the material outlined.<sup>1</sup> The use of materials which presented the plan of study in an attractive manner, helped to prevent the wandering. It also had been discovered that an appearance of permanence on the part of the materials added to their value on the part of the pupil.<sup>2</sup> Dr. LeBarr has developed an outline for the evaluation of printed curriculum materials, which has already been used as a source for part of the material. This reflected the findings of a Bible-centered, pupil orientated approach to Christian Education. This criteria as it reflected the principles already noted and provided great help in the evaluation and building of the program was included in Appendix II.

#### THE STANDARD OF EVALUATION

While the material to be considered was not standardized, yet it was necessary to consider it under definite areas. Three general areas were followed: 1. Guidance given to the leader. 2. The content of the material, and 3. The effect upon the individual.

As there were no courses given in the training institutions for the ministers of the Church that prepare the ministers to lead this type of a group the material is the logical place to look for the instruction. The question was asked, "Is this written so a person who has never experienced this type of a training experience would be able to accomplish the task, or is the lack of clarity such that the person

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<sup>1</sup>Lois LeBarr, Education That is Christian, pp. 148-152.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p.221.

must make a detailed study of catechical procedure to know "what the business is all about?" In that the Evangelical United Brethren Church has assigned ministers to a field without formal preparation as either a student, or as one who is taking the reading course. "Is the material such that one with this type background able to use it successfully?"

As the purpose of membership should be to enable the applicant to take an active intelligent part in the total life of the church, it became necessary to determine how much the program would assist him to do so. Is the total life of the church presented in such a way as to create interest? After completing the training program had the questions been answered or was the applicant about to enter the church "on confusion of faith?"<sup>1</sup> Does the individual know where to turn for help in further questions and problems that may arise?

In the survey of the material not Evangelical United Brethren, the purpose adopted was to glean suggestions to aid in the improvement of the present material.

### Effect

Not only is the actual content of importance, but the impression upon the applicant may well determine their effectiveness in the Church for a considerable length of time. The physical appeal of the books and other materials used will create an impression as to both its value and importance. In the course of this investigation the author was handed a well bound volume, which had served not only as a catechism book, but also the resource for its owner through the

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<sup>1</sup>L. H. Evans, Life's Hidden Power, p. 33.

years. Not only did the content speak of eternal values, but the book itself was intended to last for some time. Another impression will be upon the attitude of the applicant, in the area of continuing growth. Is the material presented as a totality of the final answer, or is the person challenged to continue to inquire into every area of the Christian life?



**CHAPTER IV**  
**EVALUATION OF MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS**

## CHAPTER IV

### EVALUATION OF MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

The critical evaluation of adult membership training experiences for Evangelical United Brethren required the inclusion of a survey of other churches, as: (1) by the inclusion of the wider survey, a more adequate basis of understanding was developed, and (2) the people which came to the Church, in many cases, came from other denominations. Through a knowledge of the content of other programs it was possible to adapt the program proposed in the next chapter to create a favorable impression on those who came from other communions.

In making this investigation, the denominational official responsible for the promotion of Christian Education was contacted to determine the materials used, and the type of program available. The denominations selected gave a representative sampling of the field. Those chosen represented the various theological and liturgical expressions prevalent in this country.

The three basic protestant patterns of Calvinism, Lutheranism, and Arminianism, were included. Only those who had a program of some merit are reviewed here. Others either had no program or their program was in a state of transition. The programs evaluated here were those recommended for use at the present time by their respective denominations.

#### Arminian bodies.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church is the Church of which

the Bishop, when he wrote, gave it a great value by laying such a solid foundation with scripture. Christian Beliefs for Christian Youth, written by Bishop J. G. Howard, represents the most adequate work in the field of Membership training.<sup>1</sup> As it was intended for young people, the language and content were not adapted for adults. Both of the two books named, have presumed a knowledge and acceptance of the Church and its teaching. This has resulted in a lessened effectiveness when used with persons, unfamiliar or in opposition to the beliefs of the denomination. Missing is a book that is inclusive of the total requirements of membership preparation written for adults.

Free Methodist Church. The forward movement of the Free Methodist Church has developed two promotional tracts, both containing material designed to introduce an individual to the Church and its program.<sup>2</sup> In both their doctrine and emphasis are stressed, and as an introduction they are able to do a fine job in setting a standard which could well be followed in other material. No program of training has been established and publicized, yet some printed materials are at hand for those who desire to use them, in the form of five pocket size pamphlets. In quality these do not match the standards maintained in the previous material. These cover areas of doctrine, history, and outreach, the last including organization of the Church. A fourth "written especially for new converts and probationers" spell out in

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<sup>1</sup>J. G. Howard, Christian Beliefs for Christian Youth.

<sup>2</sup>C. Hoyt Watson, The Free Methodist Church, and Virgil L. Realy and Marvin L. Galbreath, Presenting the Friendly Church.



detail what is expected of a member of the Church, both in his relation to the Church as well as in his daily life.<sup>1</sup> While these are available, this Church depends upon the personal contact and the home to do the majority of its training. Dr. Olmstead in another pamphlet recognized the need for a person to know the organization which he is about to join and continues:

probably nearly all of you have either been brought up in Free Methodist homes or have been in one of our Churches or Sunday Schools long enough to have a fairly correct idea of the most important things for which the Free Methodist Church Stands.<sup>2</sup>

The strength of this preparatory program is also increased by a probationary period served before the individual is received into full connection. This personal contact and the interest shown in the preparatory member, provides the most intimate association and exchange of thoughts, thus eliminating those who are either undesirable or who do not feel they could be at home in the Church. The points at which weakness may appear lie in the dependence upon the preparation on the local group and the pastor, either one has the potential of becoming highly subjective, or even a source of local standards resulting in a different standard within the group.

The Methodist Church, had as much as any other group surveyed by this investigator. Two guide books were available, the one an earlier work, but still in use.<sup>3</sup> The reason for this may well be accounted for

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<sup>1</sup> B. L. Omstead, Serving God and The Church, p., Cover.

<sup>2</sup> B. L. Omstead, Our Church at Work, p. 1

<sup>3</sup> Quotation from Rev. Dayton Loomis, Pastor of The Methodist Church, Canby, Oregon, in a personal interview with the author. W. Anderson, A Church Membership Manual for Methodist Pastors. W. E. Hartman, Membership Manual for the Methodist Church for Pastors.

by its inclusion of the full texts of the books used for the different age groups within the one volume. Ample provision for the mechanics of the class is furnished, with practical suggestions for the total program. With a host of material of varying emphasis, the pastor would be able to adapt to the local situation, although this may result in differences within the denomination. A strong point was found in this program in the attention given to follow-up, and to the backslider.

The Church of the Nazarene, had no material of the nature under discussion here as far as preparation for the prospective member is concerned. Materials designed more for the training of the member had been developed. A promotional piece intended for the pastor outlines the program of training for Churchmanship. The goals are to make the members more active in the appreciation and expression of their Christian life as expressed through the Church. Eight separate courses are used to cover every area of the Church, its beliefs, history and organization. The program is administered by the Christian Service Training Commission, utilizing textbooks available. Bible Study, The Living Word;<sup>1</sup> History, The Rise of the Church of The Nazarene;<sup>2</sup> Church Membership, You and Your Church;<sup>3</sup> Sanctification, Holiness

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<sup>1</sup> E. C. Wolf The Living Word.

<sup>2</sup> M. E. Redford, The Rise of the Church of the Nazarene.

<sup>3</sup> H. W. Reed, You and Your Church.



in Practical Living;<sup>1</sup> We Are Witnesses for evangelism;<sup>2</sup> Stewardship, My God and My Gold;<sup>3</sup> and for doctrine, Essential Christian Beliefs.<sup>4</sup>

In actual practice the study course is not widely accepted by all of the ministers.<sup>5</sup> Although should it be used it would acquaint the members with the Church and its life.

#### Calvinistic Bodies.

The Southern Baptist Convention, did not have a training program for applicants prior to being admitted to membership, their process is to accept those who have professed Jesus Christ as Saviour, and have been baptized.<sup>6</sup> As a convention, the problem of assimilating new members was just now being faced. The pastor outlines a program which had been found to be effective in other churches which had some usable ideas. Immediately upon being received into the fellowship of the Church, the new member was greeted by the pastor, the membership committee, welcomed into the official fellowship and extended the right hand of fellowship, then ushered into a new member room. In this room the meaning of membership was explained in terms of the relation to the Church. A "Spiritual Buddy" is assigned, and the training program

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<sup>1</sup>L. T. Corlett, Holiness and Practical Living.

<sup>2</sup>Ellis, We Are Witnesses.

<sup>3</sup>E. C. Wolf, My God and My Gold.

<sup>4</sup>S. White, Essential Christian Beliefs.

<sup>5</sup>Quotation from Rev. George Wilson, Church of the Nazarene, Canby, Oregon, in a personal interview.

<sup>6</sup>From a personal interview with Dr. Price, Pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon, and the author.



was introduced. For the next four weeks the pastor taught a class that goes into the meaning of membership more fully than was possible in the new member room. This was concluded by a banquet for the new members. Materials are available for the class and for the type of study included in the Churchmanship classes used by the Church of The Nazarene, through their Training Union, making possible a full coverage of the life and meaning of the Church and its faith.

The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, had the most recently developed curriculum of any of the denominations surveyed in this investigation, published in 1957. The use of a series of filmstrips was the heart of this study, geared to be used by all the age groups, the six strips form the frame of the lesson for the adults. The Pastor's Guide has both the theory and the practice of the membership preparation, in one volume for all the age groups.<sup>1</sup> Separate text books were available for the applicants to use as study books at home.<sup>2</sup> This was by far the most inviting series developed to date in the estimation of this investigator. The use of projected aids, not only could help to hold the attention of the prospective members, but the material presented could have a more permanent impression upon the ones present.

#### Lutheran Groups

Evangelical Lutheran Church, had no organized program for the

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<sup>1</sup>The Pastor's Guide, Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the USA.

<sup>2</sup>The Way of Discipleship was written for adults.

preparation of its adult prospects, although materials were available and apparently used.<sup>1</sup> There were two types of courses contained within books that make the preparation of members easy. One type was part of a series to help the people apply their Christian faith to life, which had as its primary purpose the explanation of the plan of Salvation and its outworking as viewed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church.<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of enabling its prospective members to know the views of the Church, this does a commendable task. The weakness was in its single emphasis, rather than including the total area of introduction to the total Church. The other approach was in a correspondence course.<sup>3</sup> This had the advantage of being usable by a single person and would make for a uniform doctrine, and appreciation of the Church. Neither book had the binding to make them permanent, but the emphasis is on committing it all to memory.

United Lutheran Church, had promotional material designed to motivate the pastor to plan to have an adult catechism. The emphasis of the adult program was to instruct the present members as well as those who are "from the world, or from other denominations" prior

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<sup>1</sup>Quotation from Rev. Gordon Trygstad, Pastor of the Zoar Lutheran Church, Canby, Oregon, in a personal interview with the author.

<sup>2</sup>G. H. Gerberding, The Way of Salvation, or M. Anderson, The Adult Class Manual.

<sup>3</sup>A. W. Knock, Pillars of Truth.



to their entrance into the Church.<sup>1</sup> While the guide was primarily concerned with the catechetical training of the young people within their churches, many of the suggestions given are adaptable for the adult phase. The mechanics of the program were included from the beginning planning, class session and follow-up. The curriculum materials recommended for adults are of such nature as to make them usable as well as being comprehensive. As a number of texts are suggested the pastor, who has the responsibility of the instruction, was able to select the materials best suited to the local situation.

### RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Mechanics of the questionnaire. The mechanics were established on two basis: one to contact the Directors of Christian Education for selected conferences, and the other, a random sampling to bring the total of ministers contacted to five percent of the active ministers of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. The conferences were selected on the basis of membership ratio to the Church, geographical location, and the number of members to the number of new members received. These Annual Conferences were: California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana North, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio Miami, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. The request was for the names of the ministers within the conference who had done an outstanding job in membership

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<sup>1</sup>Planning Your Catechetical Program, Board of Parish Education, United Lutheran Church, p. 10.



preparation. Replies were received from the Directors of Christian Education of the following conferences: California, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio Miami, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. The random sampling was used to reach the remaining five percent. The questionnaire was returned by sixty-four percent of the ministers receiving one.

Conferences represented in the response were: California, Canada, Dakota, Eire, Florida, Indiana South, Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Maryland, Nebraska, New York, Ohio Miami, Ohio Sandusky Ohio East, Ohio Southeast, Pennsylvania, Pacific Northwest, Rocky Mountain, Texas, West Virginia, West Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine what materials were being used, and the extent to which they were being used; as well as the comparative evaluation placed upon the denominational material in relation to the material available to other communions.

Findings of the Questionnaire.<sup>1</sup> Three-fourths of the pastors require some type of instruction prior to recommending a person for membership in the Church. But this instruction varies from informal counseling to twenty-four session classes, with six hours as the average. Two-thirds of those responding indicated they endeavored to have all coming into membership in the local Church attend the preparatory class, but this was qualified in both directions, some merely encouraging the individual to participate in the program, others reported

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix III

that the council of administration would not consider for membership any who had not taken this local orientation irrespective of former connection. The little booklet Our Church was used by more than ninety percent either as the text or as supporting material, the next closest was the booklet What We Believe, and the Discipline both with approximately fifty percent usage.

The two-thirds ratio re-appears in regard to the adequacy of the material to meet the need of the field. Although about ten percent of those answering in this area qualified their feeling of the materials ability to meet their need. Forty percent of the response included a reference to a felt need for a more adequate material to work with as the individual is instructed in the distinctive features of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Yet only thirty percent failed to express an indication of weakness in the program and materials related to membership preparation. It became obvious from this that some work needed to be done in providing more adequate materials for the pastor to work with. Only one-fourth recognized the need to make a personal application of the material to the individual, but close to fifty percent made some provision through either discussion or the questions from the group.

In the replies, mention was made of the need to place the emphasis on the spiritual qualifications of the individual. For many indicating this preference, the program and emphasis was the result of a long period in the ministry. One pastor indicated his program as:

I have first demanded a personal experience and dedication to Christ, then I have sought to give the person the information they individually need. Much of this is done privately with adults



and through classes with children. My problem with Church members has not been because of Church ignorance, but spiritual ignorance and lack of devotion, hence little feeling of responsibility to promote the work of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Evaluation of the Materials Located Through the Questionnaire.

Five of the nineteen pastors who indicated they had developed some type of a program or material forwarded a copy to this investigator, only one of these ministers have made copies of their material available to other ministers. None of these materials match in durability format or content that which is available in the book by Praetorius. Some of the pastors stated they had developed a series of slides or had adapted some of the filmstrips available by the denominations.

Summary of the Questionnaire. Sufficient number of the pastors replied that they would appreciate different types of materials to work with in the preparation of members to indicate a real need in this area. Material, giving guidance in the advantage of counseling with the individual and the use of audio-visual aids would be appreciated. The greatest need felt is for an over all program that would include the above as well as a total program for the guidance of the pastor in the establishment of membership training classes.

## SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Many of the denominations surveyed are faced with the same type of a problem as the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Some have attempted to solve this problem through the development of curriculum

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<sup>1</sup>Quotation from a questionnaire.



to aid the pastor. Within the Church some of the pastors were making an attempt to care for the local situation by utilizing some of these materials available. Those pastors who had used either the materials available from the Church, or had developed their own, believed the individuals received into membership through this program became more effective members.<sup>1</sup> In the next chapter a membership preparation program was proposed to fill this felt need.

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<sup>1</sup>This was illustrated in two Evangelical United Brethren Churches in the same community, the investigator discovered. Their record of attendance, giving, and conversions were approximately the same. One pastor had used membership preparation, this church had about three hundred members; the other pastor had not used membership preparation, this church had five hundred members.

## CHAPTER V

### A PROPOSED PROGRAM OF MEMBERSHIP TRAINING

## A PROPOSED PROGRAM OF MEMBERSHIP TRAINING EXPERIENCES FOR THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

Half of the group surveyed indicated a felt need for a more adequate program of membership preparation. The materials available, without the support of a definite program, failed to meet the requirements of the local parish. The program needed would have to be adaptable to any local situation, and yet have enough content to give definite direction to the pastor.

### THE PASTOR AND MEMBERSHIP TRAINING

#### The Pastor's Opportunity

Failures in the use of catechetical instruction has discouraged both pastors and the laymen from endorsing it as a means to lead prospective members to an intelligent commitment to Jesus Christ. The charge usually was that, while they were catechized and confirmed, it was not here that Jesus became Lord and Saviour. Other persons, familiar with the findings of educational research cringed at the thought of catechism as a dry, dull meaningless memorization of answers to loaded questions. In view of the above, it was in order to examine the meaning of "catechetical" and "evangelism". With an understanding of these two concepts, the place of evangelism in membership preparation was made clear.

Building on the principles brought to the reader's attention in this chapter, a program was proposed to fill the need using the materials available.



The Meaning of Evangelism. Webster defines the word as "the preaching or promulgation of the Gospel, especially in revival services". For many this is the total content of their approach to the term. Its very use not only speaks of one method, but it carries an unpleasant connotation; one that speaks of extremes and abuses.

The word can be traced to "good news" euaggelion and euaggelizo "to bring good news". But as such, the word evangelism is not found in the New Testament. The word for the person called an evangelist came from the same roots. While the word evangelism was not a New Testament word, it is a New Testament concept. Evangelism is "teaching or preaching the Gospel". Any way of bringing "The announcement to all men that Jesus Christ is come to seek and save the lost".<sup>1</sup> The message of the New Testament is this, the book of Acts being full of the various means in which the disciples went "everywhere preaching the Word". It is this which is meant by the word evangelism.

"Evangelism attempts to bring all men into living active fellowship with God through Jesus Christ...and through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit".<sup>2</sup> The concept of evangelism is the concern and not the word. Evangelism is a spirit that must prevail in every activity of the Church.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>S. J. Stamm, The Meaning of Evangelism, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup>D. C. Bryan, "Evangelism", Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, p. 408.

<sup>3</sup>Stamm, loc. cit.

The Meaning of Catechism. If evangelism caused concern as a stereotyped method to be given over to "the fanatics", then catechism was to be abandoned to those at the other extreme. All too often catechetical instruction was viewed as a substitute for a conversion experience...a tool used by either those of a dependence on ritual, or rejectors of man's need of salvation.

Again a word study will establish the basis; katecho catechism, catechize-to instruct orally: (katechoumounos catechumen-those being) instructed orally. As was seen again the word holds a different meaning than that usually given.

The catechumen of the early Church was one who was "receiving" rudimentary instruction in the doctrines of Christianity. Here was an early application of the truth that an informed member is a better member. The early Church saw,

"The importance of systematic, instruction, both public and private (as) emphasized throughout the Old Testament and New Testament" (although it might not take the form of catechizing in the modern pedagogical sense).

What was true of evangelism was also true of catechism...the method has been abandoned due to abuse, but not because its purpose is not valid. It was rejected due to the fear of it becoming an end and not a means to a greater end.<sup>2</sup>

Before the place of evangelism in catechetical instruction was reviewed, it was well to emphasize that neither term is of special value, only as

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<sup>1</sup>P. H. Pike, A Study of the Teaching Method of Catechism.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 6.



only as they convey a concept should they be valued. Should "membership training", or "churchmanship class" be a more readily received and accepted term, it became more profitable to use these terms. The same would pertain to the term commitment being substituted for evangelism. Yet care must be exercised that the terms are not abandoned merely because someone else has abused them. To do so would soon result in the need for a new language. It is better to use and thus retain these historic terms with their correct meaning.

Catechetical Evangelism as spoken of here was formal oral instruction in the doctrines of Christianity with the purpose of bringing the catechumens to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

The Place of Evangelism in Catechetical Instruction. Understanding the place of evangelism in catechetical instruction is only part of the work, another aspect can be seen by asking three simple yet important questions. Is there a need? Is there an opportunity? And can it be done? Whether catechetical instruction was used in preparation for either confirmation or church membership, the need to lead the individual to accept Jesus Christ was not only a high goal, but absolutely essential.

Confirmation, while not a sacrament, still can be held in a high place of importance both in the Church life as well as the individual's life. The Roman Catholic Church holds this to be a sacrament at which time the Holy Spirit comes to the believer. Lutheran groups especially have used this to a great advantage. As they see it "confirmation is a rite by which a baptized person renews his baptismal vow, publicly



confesses his faith and is received into communicant membership by the congregation".<sup>1</sup> The importance of this last statement was not seen until attention was called to the report of a Church with 1,000 members: seven hundred of which are confirmed. Confirmation it would seem was a formalized rededication expected of its more spiritually mature members.<sup>2</sup> Confirmation, the end of catechism, was a step that was looked forward to by all who had been raised in this atmosphere. When this expectancy had been developed, those who attended came prepared to open their lives to Jesus Christ.

While catechetical instruction was not prevalent in the Wesleyan Arminian Churches, it has been used. Should a pastor come into a situation such as this, the need may force him to continue catechetical instruction. Should a church be located in an area where other communions are present that use the method, self preservation alone may force a pastor to use it. A third situation arose when persons from communions that used this method were either presenting themselves or their children for membership instruction. In the above cases the pastor may have felt compelled to give catechetical instruction, but must the invitation to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour be something alien to such a procedure?

For a more wholesome approach the pastor begins with the premise:

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<sup>1</sup>E. H. Berterman, Instructing the Catechumen Preparatory to Confirmation, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>The St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church, Annual Report, p. 20.

the first and primary requirement for Church membership is a desire to serve Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The time spent in instruction would give the pastor an opportunity not afforded in any other service of the Church to probe the depth of the individual's desire and motive to be a part of a church fellowship. It must be recognized that an intellectual knowledge of the beliefs of the Church is not sufficient for membership and the reverse is equally false, a conversion is not sufficient. It is impossible to lead a person to invite Christ into his life without first giving some factual knowledge of the beliefs of the Church.

The instruction period could also afford a two-fold opportunity in regard to assuring that all who join the Church are saved. For those who were converted prior to the class it should enable the pastor to assure himself that conversion was genuine and not just an emotional release, and that it had depth rather than being a superficial decision.

When catechetical instruction is given it is imperative that it be done with the purpose of bringing the catechumen or prospective member to a place of personal decision to accept all that has been taught not only as fact but as an integral part of his life. Failure to do this would defeat the purpose of the class. To teach a person that Jesus died to save them without bringing them to accept the personal involvements and benefits is to fail to accomplish the task before them.<sup>1</sup> The very nature of the Church as the body of Christ requires that everyone who is a part of it not only subscribe to various beliefs regarding to the person and work of Jesus Christ, but be so committed to them that

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<sup>1</sup>Stamm, Op, cit, passim.

they become active in their participation both of the benefits and responsibility. Not only must a person believe that Christ died for them, they must experience cleansing from sin and constantly seek to bring others to the same experience in Christ.

Evangelistic Catechism in the Local Church. It is one thing to realize that a period of organized instruction can be used very effectively to bring persons to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, but it is quite another thing to put such a program into operation. What follows is a series of suggestions to help implement this.

I. The Instructor:

1. Should be totally in agreement that a soul without Christ is eternally damned.
2. Should have a compassion to see all brought to an acceptance of Christ, at any cost to himself.
3. Should be concerned that those who seek salvation in Christ Jesus, know what they are seeking.
4. Should know what and who he is teaching.

II. The Membership Class:

1. This class should be required for membership: the class should not be viewed as an automatic step into membership, rather it should be an instruction period in preparation for accepting Christ and possibly joining the Church. Where this method is used, the class would be more an investigation into what is involved in being a Christian. The natural step would be to accept Christ and unite with the Church. It is to the advantage both of the instructor and



pupil if it is not held as an automatic step into Church membership.

2. Should be so organized that the instructor is able to get to know the needs of each individual. The exact size of class would vary with the person involved.
3. Part of the class program should be a personal conference between each individual and the pastor. If the invitation to accept Christ has not been given, this would be an ideal time. A conference with the full family would also be in order.<sup>1</sup>
4. The class should be viewed as a means to leading each pupil to make an intelligent acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. This purpose should be made known to all involved before the beginning of the classes.
5. The class session should never become a dry meaningless meeting. True catechetical classes should never degenerate to a question and answer period with the pupil on a witness stand.

Rather it should resemble the spiritual instruction and challenge of class meeting. When this is accomplished the catechumen will grow both in knowledge and grace.

Summary of the pastor's opportunity . When catechetical instruction is permeated with an evangelistic passion, the result will be a constant flow of converts, converts who not only have made a decision but also know what is involved in that decision. Church members who should be able to take an intelligent part in the

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<sup>1</sup>W. N. Roberts, Catechetical Evangelism, p. 10.

evangelistic outreach of the Church as they both know what they believe, what the Church teaches, and how it is equipped to serve Christ. No matter how far they depart from God, what they have learned will remain.<sup>1</sup> Confirmation, when used, should be a time of public testimony to the saving power of Jesus Christ. Hearing of the joy their classmates have in Christ may well be used to bring the unrepentant to Christ.

The goal then is to make "catechetical instruction" synonymous with "class meeting" and "confirmation" synonymous with "public confession of Christ."

#### The Pastor's Selectivity.

In chapter two the subject of the Church was under consideration in regard to its function and definition. The unique nature of the Church as the redeemed of Christ was disclosed. Another position regarding who should be considered in the Church exists in other communions today. In that some of the prospective members may come from these groups, it was essential that the pastor be aware of this. This view was that as all who are the natural procreation of the mother and father in a home are members of the house, so all who are members of the household of God either through creation, "we are all sons of God", or for others through baptism, are members of the Church universal and, therefore, must be members of the local Church of their choice.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A Catechetical Story

<sup>2</sup>cf., E. W. Hartman, Membership Manual of the Methodist Church for Pastors, p. 23 - 26.



The requirement of membership and the pastor's need to exercise care in this realm is emphasized in the chapter on Church Membership in the Discipline.

Because Church membership is a sacred fellowship involving high privileges and solemn obligations, and because uniting with the Church is one of the important events in life, applicants seeking admission shall be carefully interviewed by the minister and the significance and duties involved made clear.<sup>1</sup>

The minister is permitted to receive persons into membership "only when persuaded as to the genuineness of their faith and their understanding of and willingness to observe the rule and regulations of the . . . Church."<sup>2</sup>

The promises made by the prospective member furthers the selectivity of the persons to be admitted to membership.

In order that the congregation here assembled may know your purpose and be assured that you are proper persons to be received into the membership of The Evangelical United Brethren Church, we ask you to answer the following questions:

Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and that therein only is revealed the way of salvation; and do you take this Word to be your rule of faith and conduct? If so, answer,  
I DO.

Have you received Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord and do you now confess him? If so, answer,  
I HAVE RECEIVED HIM; AND DO NOW CONFESS HIM.

Do you promise to renounce all ungodliness, to follow Christ to make diligent use of the means of grace and sincerely to seek the advancement of the Kingdom of God? If so, answer,  
YES; BY THE HELP OF GOD.

Will you faithfully endeavor to know your privilege and responsibility as a Christian, and as a member of The Evangelical United Brethren Church? Will you be loyal to the Church, and sustain it with your regular attendance and uphold it with your earnest prayer? If so, answer,  
YES, I WILL DO SO.

Will you contribute of your means to the support of the Church, as the Lord prospers you, and will you render Christian service

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<sup>1</sup>The Discipline, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 347.



according to your ability and opportunity? If so, answer,  
I WILL.<sup>1</sup>

The duties of the member further place limitations on the pastor as far as his recommending individuals for membership. Only those whom he believes will earnestly endeavor to maintain this standard can ethically be recommended. This means that only those who have been converted and who are genuine in their desire to continue to grow as a Christian, are proper persons for membership. As evidence of their sincerity applicants for and members of the Evangelical United Brethren Church are expected to abstain from those things, and conduct which is forbidden in the Word of God. On the positive side they are expected to make full use of the means of spiritual growth, leading their families into the fullness of God and express it through service. Their new life is expected to express itself through the loyalty to God and His Church. Specifically the Church expects its members to maintain a life of prayer, Bible study, witnessing and fellowship.<sup>2</sup> Seldom can a person judge the sincerity of a stranger, the use of a training program gives ample opportunity for the pastor to make a more sound judgment.

#### The Pastor's Responsibility.

If instruction is to be maintained in the Church, the pastor must accept it as his responsibility. Neither the General Conference nor have any of the Annual Conferences of the Church a membership

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 349.

<sup>2</sup>The duties of members as contained in The Discipline of the Church are found in Appendix.

training experience other than the ability to answer the above questions. A few of the local Councils of Administration have required a more formal instruction prior to accepting persons for membership.<sup>1</sup> Yet even this has been under the influence of the pastor. Only as the pastor is convinced of the need of making this an integral part of his program will its effect be felt in the Church.

Many of the pastors surveyed, stated they would like to require this preparation but had abandoned it due to failure. One pastor reported that over a score of years he was able to not only enforce the taking of this type of instruction, but in the event the participant failed to complete the course to his satisfaction, was required to wait until the next year to take the course again.<sup>2</sup> This type of a program can not be put into effect in the first year, but takes a period of time and steadfastness on the part of the minister. Any indication on the part of the minister that he would relax this requirement would spell defeat to the program.

#### INTRODUCTION TO MEMBERSHIP

Everything that the Church does should speak of its uniqueness. Believing that the spiritual decisions of life are of supreme importance, and that the Church is best able to help in these decisions, the Church holds a place of equal importance. This being the case entrance into the Church should indicate the value placed upon it by its members.

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<sup>1</sup>From a questionnaire returned in the survey.

<sup>2</sup>From a personal interview with Rev. Lloyd Uecher, Pastor Salem, Oregon. The incident referred to above is with a high school fellow, but with the same determination this expectancy could be developed for adults.



First Impressions Count. From the moment the stranger walks up to the Church, he is forming an impression of the Church. The physical appearance of the building by itself will create an impression that may do great harm or an untold amount of good. Every avenue the Church uses to make itself known in the community enters into this consideration, from the condition of the paint on the building to the advertisements in the local paper. These are supported by the worship folder, and the tracts used to welcome and invite the individual to the services and activities of the Church. Referring to an imaginary young couple, John Scotfeld observes:

If the choice confronting young couples were merely between one Church and another, the matter would not be so serious. . . . But in many, many cases this is not the choice they make. It is not, "Which Church?" but, "Shall we associate ourselves with any Church?" And every honest observer of American life knows that because of crudities and deficiencies which our generation is inclined to regard as trifling, thousands of promising young people have dropped out of our Protestant churches. Perhaps they should not be so particular, but they are. The responsibility of the Church is to do its work in such a way as to commend its Gospel even to the critical.<sup>1</sup>

When the applicant remembers the elaborate reception given to another group the exaltation of the new member will become an indication of the importance of membership. Every Church, when printing material will need to exercise sound judgement, to be sure that its descriptive material is reflective of the standards needed to give a true impression. This should speak primarily of the services and activities of the local Church. A booklet similar in format and content to The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, is needed to give more detailed information of the total Church. The use of

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<sup>1</sup> John Scotfeld, The Church Beautiful, p. 31.



pictures and diagrams commends this to those who may only have a passing interest. Until a publicity booklet is developed along this line, Our Church would be helpful to those whose interest has been challenged.

Selling Membership as the Norm. When the suggestion of making membership important has been carried out, the first step has been taken to make it unnatural for an individual to accept Christ but not unite with His Church. The advantages of belonging to the Church and identification with it in its program, and helping in the work that Christ has called him to, should be used as motivation to bring him into membership in the Church. With due caution the negative aspect of remaining outside of the Church must be presented.

Most Christians are "not good if detached". Rootless and up-rooted plants do not grow and bear fruit. We only grow when we take root in one Church and there serve with all our dedicated power.

.....  
If you count these things worthwhile which have claimed the loyalty and devoted service of the members of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. . . why not. . . and unite in the Church fellowship. . .<sup>1</sup>

In this again the attitude of the minister will have a large bearing upon the effectiveness of the program. Once the attitude, that they are just as effective a Christian without joining as they would be when they join, is accepted by the local Church, or the pastor, a gigantic task awaits the one who attempts to correct this.

The Courtship. One of the pastors contacted in the questionnaire commented that when the individual had already begun to work in the Church prior to joining, the tie was stronger and the same

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<sup>1</sup>Ralph Holderman, Why Join, p. 10.

normally followed. Whether the applicant works or not, does not seem as important as whether he senses a responsibility for the Church. The first phase of this is to bring him to the place that the local Church is "his Church," after this the matter of taking an active interest in the program is easier to achieve. The first time a permanent resident is present in the Church, it is an indication that they are prospective members. A possible exception would be those who normally attend elsewhere, but due to a special occasion are present. The various organizations should be notified of the persons presence, and the invitation extended. Letters, calls, etc., should express the desire of the Church to have them continue to worship with them. After the person has continued to attend for more than a few weeks, a "spiritual buddy" should take over the follow-up to make him feel that this is his Church.<sup>1</sup>

The Reception of the New Members. In all the preparation for the time when the new members will be received, the attention should be focused upon the fact that this is an extremely important event in their life. The program for the day should be planned in advance and rehearsed. As much as possible the full service should be geared to the reception of them as members. The reception should take place on Sunday, if this could be arranged. Following the service, when feasible, a banquet with the new members as guests of honor would help to highlight the day. Pictures of the group, reunions, etc., all add to the memory of becoming part of the Church. One danger must

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<sup>1</sup>This is an adaptation of the program used by the Southern Baptist Convention. Reference is made to the evaluation of their program in Chapter IV.



be watched at this point and that is that the joining of the Church becomes more important than the fact of conversion, but this balance can be maintained with care.

## THE TRAINING EXPERIENCES

It has been impossible to limit a segment of the contact with the Church and say, "At this point, membership preparation begins: and here it ends". Attention has already been called to the fact that every impression made by the Church to an extent is membership preparation, but the program for the sake of definition must have limitations. The program will be detailed in three separate activities. The worship experience, the observation experience, and the class experience.

### The worship experience.

The purpose of the Church has been defined as the building up of the believers and the conversion of the unsaved. In the worship service both of these elements were included. As the prospective member attended these services he was under the influence of the Word of God and the claims of God upon his life. Under normal conditions the applicant will have previously had a conversion experience. Conversion is viewed in the Church as follows:

That which expresses the essential character of The Evangelical United Brethren Church is the emphasis upon a definite experience of personal salvation through repentance, faith and a full surrender to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and a life of holy living through the cleansing and empowering of the Holy Spirit. ... Such a process of living begins in the experience of conversion. It is not the resultant of a natural bent of life, but of a work of God wrought in the inner sanctuary of man's being. It is not an achievement through a course of learning, although Christian teaching is a vital element in the process. It is not merely a change of life through a decision, although decision is implied,



Jesus said it is a new birth through the power of God. Conversion involves decision, choice, surrender, faith, but also the workings of the grace of God...If the process of living the Christian life is to begin with decision only, it is limited to that which is human...The redemptive activity of God in the life is the fundamental fact of the doctrine of conversion. We, therefore, reaffirm the basic conviction...that men must be converted. It is still true that unless men are converted they will perish. Our Gospel is the Gospel of conversion. The task which confronts us is to lead men into this experience.

.....  
Decision is involved in conversion but conversion is more than decision...If decision is all we are achieving then we are failing in our evangelism...Let us ever be mindful of the fact that salvation implies a new creative act of God.<sup>1</sup>

But the worship experience is more than merely occupying a pew on Sunday morning and having experienced conversion; all the services of the Church enter into worship. When the believer worships God in spirit and truth the totality of life becomes a worship experience. In training young people the suggestion has been made that the pastor keep record of the Church attendance of the pupils.<sup>2</sup> Church attendance would seem to be in the same category as conversion, a presupposition, but the applicant may be helped to be more faithful, for that matter the full Church could benefit, if the fact that attendance records were kept on each one individually.

#### The participation experience.

An extremely valuable tool in the training of prospective members is their participation in the area of study.<sup>3</sup> When the study of the Sacraments is under consideration, either have the class assist, or help make the preparation for the next observance. In the

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<sup>1</sup>Board of Bishops, What Constitutes a Convert, passim.

<sup>2</sup>E. W. Hartman, op cit., p. 94.

<sup>3</sup>H. A. Fischer, Method in Teaching, p. 50.

study of organization of the Church, if possible include their attending the business meetings of the Church. With proper planning this could include, the Council of Administration and the meetings of its various boards and committees. Possibly the Conference Superintendent could adjust the schedule for the Local Conference.

Another expression of the same type of training may be achieved through the use of student teachers, the members of the class preparing and leading. Possibly easier areas of activity to get these applicants busy, can be found in the auxiliaries of the Church. The purpose here is not so much to "rope the guy in", as to let him see the Church at work from the inside.

The class experience.

The heart of any procedure used to orient prospective members lies in the actual instruction given to them. In the proposed program it would be in a series of six classes, as this was found to be the average required through the questionnaire. In view of the high responsibility placed upon the pastor, it would seem wise for every prospective member to be required to attend the course ; included are transfers from other Evangelical United Brethren Churches. The room should make the group feel comfortable, but not lost or crowded. Materials close at hand, and usable for audio-visuals.

Pre-Session Introduction. Prior to the beginning of the class sessions, by at least six weeks, but preferably eight to ten weeks, the pastor should announce the class sessions and invite those who may be interested to speak to him concerning attendance. A word of caution is needful here lest the pastor overlook the necessity of making clear that completion does not mean that the person will be eligible for membership; only that opportunity will be given for them



to express their desire to make application and be considered for membership. The decision to join must be made by the individual without pressure. When a local Church requests an individual to become a member, extreme care must be exercised to prevent a lowering of the standards. No Church in the connectional system has the right to abrogate its responsibility this way. When the prospect requests to be considered for membership, the Church faces no problem in regard to enforcing the disciplinary requirements for membership. The problem is created when the Church encourages the individual to join by lowering the standards.

Two weeks before the classes start the pastor would distribute the text books and a general description of the course. This could be done through letter or personal contact. The text book recommended by this investigator is: Foundations for Youth, it has the distinct advantage of not rephrasing the Biblical description, but giving the reference and thus requiring the one using it to also use his Bible. Advance reading is to be encouraged.

Time. In working with adults many problems arise that are not present in the training classes for younger ages. Working hours, the need for a baby sitter, or if older adults are included, the night dampness, may present a peculiar situation. Many of the pastors surveyed found the Church School hour suitable for the training session. Others expressed another time as being more favorable. Undoubtedly the local situation will affect the time schedule, but this consideration does not give the individual the authority to dictate to the Church. While the demands upon the time of the prospective members must be considered, when the person wants to join the



Church, time usually can be found. "Man usually finds time for those things he wants to do; and an excuse for the things he doesn't want to do" Sunday afternoon, or just prior to the evening service, may avoid the alternative, another night out.

The length of the session will depend again upon the individuals included, as well as upon the number of sessions. In view of the average being six hours, it would indicate that this is workable at the present time. Six sessions are the minimum that will make possible the inclusion of the program to be outlined. When the pastor is able to lead the group into an active discussion, more time will be needed, but the value to the people warrant the extra time. Only through the use of lecture will the time be held to one hour.<sup>1</sup>

Method of Instruction. Three ways or a combination of them are the prevalent ways of instruction. The Question and Answer; the Lecture; and the Discussion. The Discussion includes the advantages of the other and few of the disadvantages. The advantages of this method are:

1. It stimulates thought because all the class enters into a process of some clear thinking.
2. It puts everybody on an equal basis.
3. Vital interest is created from the beginning.
4. Formality and tightness are pushed into the background.
5. The viewpoints of others are respected and tolerated.
6. Horizons are extended and thought is broadened.
7. The daily practical needs of the pupils find a connection in the course being taught.<sup>2</sup>

The second method to be used in the class session would be the

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<sup>1</sup>The Pastor's Guide, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup>Fischer, op. cit., p. 37.

use of filmstrips. The projection equipment is not expensive, and visual aids provide a way whereby the content can be presented in a concise fashion. In one class session the lack of suitable filmed material will necessitate the use of either, turn over charts, chalkboard, or for the more energetic, slides could be developed.

## THE CLASS CONTENT

Session 1. Man's Need and God's Provision. As entrance into the Church is based upon the personal experience of Salvation, the beginning point is with the individual and his relation to God. With only twenty-three percent of the members received coming into local churches from other Evangelical United Brethren Churches, and sixty-two percent being received on a confession of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord,<sup>1</sup> the responsibility of this becomes clear, as an opportunity to challenge many for Christ. This first session serves a two fold purpose of presenting the need of man's redemption and God's answer. When the group is made up of individuals, all of whom have responded to the invitation of God through Christ under the pastor's ministry, this first session will give added strength to the work already accomplished.

Visual Aids. Redemption, the second article filmstrip number one, The Apostles Creed.<sup>2</sup> This filmstrip, along with the guide, would make it possible for the pastor to adapt the session to fit the

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<sup>1</sup>Raymond M. Veh (ed.), Year Book of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup>The list of all the Audio Visual Materials used in the program, will be found in Appendix V.

need of the particular group.

Outside reading. Section One of Foundations for Youth, pages fourteen through eighteen. The pastor would suggest the Scriptural passages that would best answer the question, for the first lesson this would be accomplished in the letter.

Session 2. God's Ability to Provide. The aim to aid in the understanding of the Triune God, as expressed in the Person of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit. The needs, interest, and intellectual ability of the class would, to a large measure, determine the degree to which the lesson would discuss the Trinity and the attributes of God. The first lesson was upon what God had done for man in Salvation, this lesson extends to cover God, His power, and all that has been done in man's interest.

Visual Aids. Redemption, The Second Article, Filmstrip number two, The Apostles Creed. It may be that the instructor would rather develop a set of charts using the symbols of the trinity as the basis of the discussion.

Outside Reading. The rest of section one of the text, pages nine to fourteen and eighteen through thirty. For the purpose of explaining the Trinity the pastor might find some help in the little book by C. S. Lewis, Beyond Personality, in addition to the Systematic Theologies.

### Session 3. The Bible.

Aim. To introduce the story of how the Bible has been transmitted through the ages until the present day. And to give a brief historical review of the content of the Bible, that those who are not familiar may have a frame of reference for future use.



Visual Aids. The Saga of the Bible, The American Bible Society, this filmstrip may be either purchased or rented. Alternate; The Bible Through the Centuries. In addition to the filmstrips, the pastor should make available for inspection the various translations of the Bible.

Outside Reading. Text, section four.

#### Session 4. The Church.

Aim. To trace the history from apostolic times to the present and reason for the existence of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. The emphasis of the class would be determined largely by the background of its members. In the event an ignorance of the basis of the Reformation exists this should be emphasized in addition to the birth and growth of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. A second, but equally important goal, should be realized in this session, that being the organization and administration of the Church.

Visual Aids. The Wild Olive Branch, this is the filmstrip made of the historical pageant presented during the General Conference in 1958. Either a chart, slides or chalkboard would be needed for the presentation of the organizational pattern of the Church.

Outside reading. Text, section seven.

#### Session 5. The Church at Worship.

Aim. To enable the members of the class to see the purpose of the Church, and to give an understanding of the purpose and means of worship.

Visual Aids. The Word and the Sacraments. The instructor would find it necessary to make some changes in the script. An al-

ternate Filmstrip: How and Why We Worship. Our Worship Service.

Outside reading. Text, sections six and eight.

#### Session 6. Growing in Christ.

Aim. The person coming into membership has already accepted Christ, but the Christian life doesn't end there. This last session would be to show the means and the direction in which the Christian should grow. As no filmstrip available does this satisfactory, the one leading will have to direct the discussion in the areas not covered in the filmstrip used. A threefold emphasis is needed; the need for a life of prayer, the sanctified life, and the social expression of the Gospel. The local situation will determine which of the three, needs the greatest emphasis, as related to the extent of Christian experience in the class members.

Visual Aids. This investigator has been unable to locate suitable material to fulfill this need. Two filmstrips can be adapted, with changes in the script. Take My Life, and The Difference.

Outside reading. Text, pages eighteen to twenty-one and sections two and three; pages thirty-one through sixty-one, and Section five, pages seventy-five through seventy-seven.

### CHURCHMANSHIP TRAINING

Having once taken the individual into the fellowship of the Church, his training should not cease, rather it should continue, and expand. In the preparation course many subjects will only be introduced, and interest stimulated. By having a series of courses, possibly parallel or part of the Leadership Training program where-

by credit could be earned, this need could be met. Areas of study could be Doctrine, The Bible, Church History, The Organization of the Church, Missions and the Christian Life. Books are available which could serve as texts for some of these classes, for the others, texts would be needed. Through the scheduling of these six courses immediately following the membership Training program, and starting in again in the Autumn a total of nine months could be given to the study of the Christian life and its expression in the Church.



CHAPTER VI  
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Summary.

The history of the birth and growth of the Evangelical United Brethren Church was traced to discover the early attitudes and circumstances which had influenced the existing program and use of membership training. This was recorded in chapter one.<sup>1</sup> To be able to understand the purpose of membership preparation the concept of the church was examined to determine: what the nature of the church was, and the purpose of membership.<sup>2</sup> This formed half of the basis for the evaluation of the situation which exists in membership preparation today. The latter half of the second chapter formed the rest of the basis of evaluation. This was the educational procedure used to guide the persons through the period of preparation.<sup>3</sup> The survey of the materials available and in use in both the Evangelical United Brethren Church, and those denominations selected to provide a sampling of other communions is recorded in the fourth chapter.<sup>4</sup> The Evangelical United Brethren Church had no program for its ministers to follow in the preparation of candidates for church membership. The materials available did not meet the requirements to qualify

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. ante. pp. 10-28.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. ante. pp. 29-38.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. ante. pp. 38-44.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. ante. pp. 46-58.

as "good". A program was proposed using the sources available.<sup>1</sup> The materials included for use in the program were selected as either the best available, or the most adaptable for the local situation.

### Conclusions.

Through the research involved in this study, as well as the critical analysis of the various methods of preparing an individual for membership, the following conclusions were reached.

1. The conflicting thought relating to membership preparation which entered the Church at an early time, is still present in varying degrees within the Church today.
2. The choice of an emotional conversion or intellectual conversion does not exhaust the possibilities, a genuine conversion includes the best elements of both, without the danger found when one element is isolated from the other. Where one form has been emphasized to the neglect of the other, it often has been from the desire to avoid the abuse of the opposite extreme.
3. The intellectual conversion provides the factual material upon which a later genuine conversion may be based; while an emotional conversion, without proper grounding may introduce obstacles to future intellectual undergirding of the individual's relation to Jesus Christ.
4. The present materials, while adaptable, are not adequate for incorporation in a permanent program of membership preparation.
5. The ministers not only are aware of the need, but some have developed programs which they are using at the present time.
6. Those who are using a program for the preparation of members

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. ante. pp. 60.



prior to entrance into membership in the Church, have found that the people appreciate the help it gives them to be a more effective member. These pastors feel that the members who have had the advantage of this preparation become better members.

7. The pastor's attitude toward any such program will determine largely the results of such a program.

8. The lack of a fully integrated program has had an adverse influence upon the reception of this type of a program.

#### Recommendations for further study.

Further study would be profitable in the following areas:

1. A totally integrated curriculum for membership preparation is needed to provide the leadership, and the materials to enable the ministers of the Church to do the job they would like to be able to accomplish.

2. A manual which could be part of the curriculum is needed at the present time to give a more complete coverage to the areas of study for the applicants for membership.

3. A series of filmstrips is needed as part of the curriculum mentioned above, but these could be developed separate from the total curriculum.

4. The possibilities of Churchmanship training needs to be investigated to enable those who have been admitted into membership without proper familiarization with the Evangelical United Brethren Church, may be acquainted with the Church. The proposed program of this study could serve to fill this need until such a training experience is provided.

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APPENDIX I  
CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULTS

## APPENDIX I

### CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Ages 18 - 25

#### Physically

They have matured.

Utilize their youthful energy in purposeful activity in their working projects together.

They have reached their adult height and weight.

Plan physical activities that they enjoy.

They are facing problems of sex.

Integrate sex teaching into the whole program of the church.

#### Mentally

They are interested in news, literature, etc.

Establish a church library. Evaluate your Sunday school papers to see if they are meeting the needs of the young people.

Their humor is more purposeful.

Promote enjoyable parties and projects for them.

They are more critical in their thinking and more logical. They are more intolerant of the imperfections of their associates.

Continue to cultivate good attitudes toward one another. Encourage them in evaluating themselves in relation to each other.

#### Socially

They have special interest groups. They mix naturally.

Programs must take into consideration special interests, but social functions should be mixed. They need understanding and insight.

They enjoy skill games and individual competition.

Physical activities should be included in the social program, but should not be overdone.

They are ready to pledge their loyalty to service.

Direct their loyalty to Christ and His work. Show them a service that will add to their future and to their present life activities.

They recognize authority and seek direction.

Provide leadership that can give tactful suggestions.

Be a friend rather than a director.

They are conscious of public opinion and accepted modes of behavior.

Find good things about them to encourage.

Know the level about the achievement of each individual.

Set goals they can reach.

They are less critical of social situations.

Plan programs for developing good social attitudes.



Emotionally

They have developed more emotional control.

Seek to have them make the decision to have the Holy Spirit take complete control of their lives.

They can now think through their responses.

Provide an incentive for self-control. Use every response in the program.

Emotional experience must be used and brought under control for the use of the Lord. Provide Gospel teams.

Organize committees to work on projects.

Spiritually

They have a definite rationalization or religious thought.

Give them the vision of their responsibility and of their place in the work of the local, national and international work of His kingdom.

They have great inner expression and feeling.

Give them the principles of how to make the choice of a vocation and the choice of a life partner -- a choice that is pleasing to God.

They desire an understanding of religious experiences.

Encourage them to pray in every circumstance, in joy as well as in sorrow, in their fun as well as in their work.

GOD DOES NOT COMFORT US THAT WE MAY BE COMFORTABLE,  
BUT THAT WE MAY BE COMFORTERS.....

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT

Ages 25 - 40

Physically

They have stopped growing, but desire activity.

Plan recreational activities occasionally.

They have habits that they have carried from youth.

Encourage good Bible study.

Plan interesting and worthwhile projects.

They sometimes have a nervousness that may come from their unwillingness to go ahead because they have been pushed, or an unwillingness that may be traced back to their home conditions.

Give them a project that they want to do and that they enjoy doing.

Mentally

Their ability to memorize has reached its peak, but it can be stimulated.

- Provide an adequate program in the church.
- Have a memory work chairman for each age group.
- They have the ability of developing a taste for higher learning.
- Suggest classes of occupational training and opportunities of learning available to them in your locality.
- They are independent in their attitudes.
- Utilize their knowledge and ability in the service of the church.
- They are developing as outstanding leaders.
- Provide leadership training in the church program.

### Socially

- They have a widening interest in world affairs.
- Encourage discussion groups at their programs.
- Help them to see the Christian views.
- They are in positions of leadership, or are shy in taking such positions.
- Give them opportunity to lead a social or a meeting. Assure them of your help if they need it.
- They are prone to be jealous of someone if they can do a better job.
- Stress their being humble followers, willing to give encouragement to those who are working.
- Their aims and goals of social standing have been made.
- Encourage them to live within their means and to be individuals, rather than to try to be something they are not and cannot be.

### Emotionally

- They have responsive emotions and inner satisfaction.
- Worship is their greatest means of emotional outlet. Remember this in planning your program.
- They have dreams and anticipations that are coming true.
- Give them an opportunity to help other young people who are planning their future.
- They are prone to have a fear for the future and besetting worries.
- Encourage good Bible study and prayer as individuals and in groups.

### Spiritually

- They have religious thoughts and beliefs that have been reconstructed
- Have a paper in which you recommend good literature.
- They are unwilling at times to make adjustments.
- Pray definitely that God will deal with them and will show them His best.
- Encourage persons of a pleasing Christ-like nature to visit them.
- They have a zeal to do good.
- List projects in which they may participate.

WE CAN NEVER HELP THE WEAK BY TEARING DOWN THE STRONG



## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT

### Ages 41 - 60

#### Physically

They have middle-age maturity.

Respect their suggestions in the work of the church.

They have lost their youthful vitality, and it takes more will power to do the usual tasks.

Adapt the project, the type of work to the person.

They are in a period of change (women).

Consider their abruptness and outbursts. They do not mean what they say as harshly as it sounds.

They are in a period of nervous breakdowns.

Do not overburden any one person with program planning or with other work of the church

#### Mentally

They have a decreasing ability to memorize.

Have a small assignment of memory work.

Use much repetition and review.

They desire something appealing if it is to be learned.

Say the same thing in a more appealing and more attractive way.

This takes study and research, but it is worth it.

Their good judgment is prominent.

Give them an opportunity to express themselves.

They have a knowledge that has been gained by experience.

Use them in teacher training.

#### Socially

They have an interest that is becoming more practical.

Give guidance in their choice of interests.

They are quite settled in their life responsibilities.

Show them the responsibility that they should have in the work of the church.

They do things well, or they do not want to do them at all.

Have leaders that are patient and are helpful in seeing that all goes well.

They have sometimes lost out because of trying to live above their means and abilities.

They need the encouragement of the verse, Phillipians 3:14.

Today we begin again, and forget yesterday's failures.

They enjoy humor and a good time and laughing occasionally.

Plan simple socials for this age group.



Emotionally

They have a tendency to worry about little things.

They have an inner sadness that they are no longer young.

Show them that even yet there are Christian goals that can be attained and that it takes mature Christians to attain them (visitation, counseling, etc.).

They have a concern for the welfare of young people.

Give them counseling as to what they can do to encourage the young people. Teach them the characteristics of intermediates and senior age groups.

They have a need of being stabilized as to the future.

Teach prophecy and the signs of the times. Encourage daily Christian living.

Spiritually

They have an indifferent attitude toward making adjustments in their lives.

Pray for them. Be of encouragement to them. Give them literature.

They have a zeal to do good.

Do things with them if they are timid. Introduce new persons to the right companions.

Encourage personal work.

.....

One woman takes her extra time and knits it into lace,  
 Another takes the extra time embroideries to trace,  
 The lace may wear a year or two, perhaps go out of style,  
 The colors of embroideries fade in just a little while.  
 But she who twines her extra time in lives of lad and lass,  
 Produces that which shall endure when time and tide have passed.  
 (author unknown)

.....

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT

### Ages 60 - 75

Physically

They have a decrease in bodily strength.

Decrease their responsibilities.

They have a tendency to become overweight.

Encourage healthful eating as an aim in Christian living.

Mentally

They enjoy dwelling on things they learned in their youth.

Use them on a program occasionally to tell of spiritual experiences they have had and of the history of the organizations of the church.

They have good judgment. This judgment is based on experience.

Use them as counselors and leaders.

They have a good basic knowledge gained through experience and study.

Let them recommend some key books for your library.

Socially

They have a decrease in social interest.

Work harder to find a program of interest for them.

They have many business responsibilities and friends.

Emphasize their responsibility in winning their business friends to Christ.

Teach them that they must always put the Lord's work first before business responsibilities.

They are interested in young people in the occupational field as their own.

Group together for counseling purposes those of the same interests.

They are at the age of retirement.

Use them around the church for improving church property.

Group them together on projects.

Emotionally

They become emotionally upset over the actions of young people.

Make them prayer warriors for the young people of the church.

They dwell on the ills of the body.

Give them things to do that will make them forget themselves.

Spiritually

They are in a period of spiritual ripeness and right living as

Christians. Those unsaved are very set in their religious belief, which is in "Things" rather than in a "person".

Have good books and a circulating library. Be sure to have a system for circulating the books to shut-ins.

They are holding the most responsible positions in the church, such as deacons, deaconesses and trustees.

Remind them of their great responsibility to God and His children. Their life is to go parallel with their speech.

.....

THERE ARE TIMES WHEN GOD ASKS NOTHING OF HIS CHILDREN  
EXCEPT SILENCE: PATIENCE: AND TEARS.....



## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ADULT

### Ages 75 and over

#### Physically

They are reaching the feeble stage. They become cold easily because of the lack of motion and blood circulation.

Provide transportation for them to and from church.

They have a decrease in the senses.

Rather than gifts of sweets, give them fruits, native dishes of food, and common foods that they enjoy.

Present them with a large type Bible if they do not have one.

#### Mentally

They have forgotten things of a few weeks past, but remember their youth very vividly.

Be a good listener.

They harbor the thought continually of being left out.

Show them by visits, kind deeds and expressions of love that they are thought of and are a part of the church program.

#### Socially

They have less interest in things, but more interest in persons.

Visit them regularly. Be a good listener.

They can take only a little responsibility, but need a bit to feel needed.

In your conversation, find out the things they like to do-

They are sympathetic with themselves. They are critical of abrupt changes.

Let them talk, but change the subject tactfully if they are becoming excited over the subject being discussed.

They are in a period of continual social adjustment.

Take this into consideration in their actions and in their attitude.

#### Spiritually

They are in a period of constant and abiding comfort if they are Christians.

Give them young people as prayer partners for whom they can pray and whom they can encourage.

They are thinking of the life to come.

Talk to them of heaven and the love of God to them. If they are not saved, emphasize the terrible danger of leaving this life for eternity unprepared. Show them God can use them even yet in service for Him in making others happy, and in praying for missionaries.

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<sup>1</sup>Class Lecture Material, Prof. R. D. Bennett, Western Evangelical Seminary, Portland, Oregon, from material furnished by the Department of Christian Education, Wheaton College, quoted in the



APPENDIX II

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PRINTED MATERIALS

## APPENDIX II

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PRINTED MATERIALS

The Scriptural principles explained in this book work out in the following criteria for evaluating printed materials:

- I. Use of Content
  - A. Is the Bible regarded as the objective, propositional Word of God, the infallible guide to faith and practice, the source of authority?
  - B. Is the curriculum centered in the Word of God--the written record revealing the Living Word?
  - C. Does the content emphasize biblical essentials; regeneration, growth in grace, service?
  - D. Are the biblical facts used in an accurate and forceful manner?
  - E. Is the extrabiblical content true to Scriptural principles and introduced for the purpose of making the Bible relevant to daily life?
  - F. Is the whole curriculum unified and comprehensive, with each part properly integrated in the whole? It is comprehensive if it attains the nine ultimate aims of Christian education: right relation to God the Father, Son, the Holy Spirit; knowledge and love and practical use of the Bible; formulation of a Christian world and life view; a progressively closer walk with Christ; assuming of responsibility in the church, for the lost everywhere, and in the civic community.
- II. Use of Experience
  - A. Is the individual helped to grow continually and to take definite steps toward balanced maturity in Christ?
  - B. Is provision made for major and minor decisions so that the pupils develop their own personal convictions?
  - C. Is provision made for pupil purposing, the solution of vital problems, and the carrying out of ideas?
  - D. Are the pupils' personal, immediate experiences used whenever possible rather than vicarious experiences?
  - E. Does the curriculum stress the essential elements in the pupils' experience and minimize the less essential (spiritual progress primarily; mental, psychological, social, physical, secondarily)?
- III. Relation of Content and Experience
  - A. Is the Bible used functionally to produce changes in pupils rather than as an end in itself?
  - B. Is the material selected and graded to meet the present interests, needs, and capacities of the average pupil at the various age levels?

- C. Does the curriculum make provision for meeting the needs of home, church, secular school, and community?
- IV. Meeting the Needs of the Pupil
  - A. Does the material appeal to and challenge the individual?
  - B. In the activities suggested for pupils, is provision made for individual differences--between pupils, classes, geographical areas, etc.?
  - C. Are the psychological needs of the individual met: freedom from guilt, security, affection, recognition, new experiences?
- V. Meeting the Needs of the Teacher
  - A. Is the material self-explanatory, practical, definite?
  - B. Is the material flexible enough to meet the needs of large and small churches, trained and untrained teachers, pupils with diverse backgrounds, diverse geographical areas?
  - C. Is the general tone of the material one of spiritual warmth, vitality, challenge?
  - D. Does the curriculum provide inspiration, biblical background, and teaching principles in addition to definite suggestions for lessons?
  - E. Does it guide the teacher in using life situations of his own pupils to make the Bible real to them?
- VI. Meeting the Needs of the Agency
  - A. Does the curriculum take advantage of the distinctive needs and possibilities of the agency for which it is prepared? (For the Sunday school: primarily instruction and worship; for the Vacation Bible School: all four elements of instruction, worship, expression, fellowship; etc.)
- VII. Mechanical Features of Printed Materials
  - A. Do the high quality and standards of the material reflect its eternal values?
  - B. Is the material printed in a manner that facilitates teaching and learning: layout, type, binding, vocabulary, illustrations?

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<sup>1</sup> Lois LeBar, Eduction That is Christian, pp. 219-222.



APPENDIX III  
RESULTS OF  
MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION QUESTIONNAIRE

# RESULTS OF ADULT MEMBERSHIP PREPARATION QUESTIONNAIRE

## APPENDIX III

1. Have you required instruction prior to recommending adults for membership? yes 74 no 19
2. Approximately how many hours are required or included? average 6
3. Do you expect all adults to take this instruction regardless of their background? yes 53 no 25 Are EUB's excluded? yes 23 no 41 Others excluded? (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Please check the material you are now using for adults.
 

|  |                |    |
|--|----------------|----|
| These Evangelical United Brethren,     | Eller          | 16 |
| Christian Beliefs for Christian Youth, | Howard         | 21 |
| Foundations for Youth,                 | Praetorius     | 3  |
| A Theology for Laymen,                 | Heck           | 4  |
| Our Church,                            | Allen & Miller | 71 |
| What We Believe . . . . .              |                | 44 |
| The Discipline . . . . .               |                | 42 |
| Other The Meaning of Church Membership | Ucker          | 4  |
5. In your instruction which is your major teaching method?  
 lecture 17 discussion 24 question & answer 13
6. Distinctive features \_\_\_\_\_
7. Have you developed your own material? yes 9 no 32  
 if you have will you please forward a copy to me, postage will be repaid by return mail. yes 4 no 2
8. Do you feel the present material is adequate for your needs? yes 49 no 28
9. Do you feel the present program of membership preparation is adequate in your situation? yes 29 no 38
10. Are you familiar with the programs and materials of other denominations? Which ones? yes 20 no 49
11. In your opinion how does our material compare with theirs? Superior 1 Equal 18 Inferior 11
12. In which areas? Program \_\_\_\_\_ Format \_\_\_\_\_ Content \_\_\_\_\_ Guide \_\_\_\_\_
- Comments and suggestions \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comments to the effect of favoring new material 50  
 Comments to the effect of being satisfied 4  
 Comments to the effect the only need is for spiritual preparation without any other instruction 7

It is not necessary to sign this questionnaire.  
 Thank you again for time and much needed help in this project.  
 Conference \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX IV  
DUTIES OF MEMBERS



## APPENDIX IV

### DUTIES OF MEMBERS

#### 1. Evidence of Sincerity

Every Member who is serious about his personal salvation and his desire to follow Christ will give evidence of his sincerity by avoiding that which is forbidden in the Word of God and by endeavoring to do that which is enjoined therein. He will not only avoid the evils specifically forbidden in the Holy Scriptures, but will also refrain from that which cannot be practiced in the name of Christ. He will endeavor to love God with his whole heart and to serve Him with all his strength, faithfully discharging every duty belonging to the service of God.

#### 2. Means of Grace

Every member of the Church should be faithful in attending the stated services of Divine Worship in the Church, in observing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in reading and meditating upon the Scriptures, in engaging in private prayer, and in participating in the public meetings for prayer and Christian fellowship.

#### 3. Family Piety

Heads of families should be diligent in conducting Family Worship, in providing religious instruction and guidance for the household, and in setting a good example in all manner of Christian living.

#### 4. Love and Service

Every Member of the Church should be zealous in works of love and mercy. He should speak evil of no man, but should show Christian love toward all, give to the poor, and "do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith."

#### 5. Christian Stewardship

Every Member of the Church should study the principles of Christian stewardship, and, dedicate himself, his time, his talent and his substance to God and the advancement of His Kingdom. In recognition of God's ownership he should practice systematic and proportionate giving. (Mal. 3:7-12; I Cor. 16:2.) He should regard Christian liberality as a privilege and sacred duty, and freely give of his substance for the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad, for the

maintenance of the Local Church, and for the support of the agencies and enterprises of the general Church.

## 6. Unity of the Church

Dissension in the Church, both in spirit and practice, should be avoided. Members should ever be diligent to maintain the unity of the Church, local and general; they should not speak disparagingly of one another, but pray earnestly for, and in honor prefer one another and together labor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

## 7. Duty of Obedience

The foregoing rules, as taught in the Holy Scriptures and enjoined upon believers, are herein set forth for the guidance of the Members of the Church and for the proper regulation of the Church; Should any Members violate or habitually neglect these rules, those who have been appointed to watch over them shall in love admonish them; but if, after repeated and prayerful admonition, they do not reform they shall be dealt with as those disobedient to the Order and Discipline of The Evangelical United Brethren Church.

# SPIRITUAL CULTURE

## 1. Faith

"Without faith," the Holy Scriptures teach "it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6) Through faith the believer becomes aware of God and of the reality of His presence. Through faith he becomes confident of God's mercy, a partaker of His saving grace, and conscious of His favor and fellowship. Faith is a means of development. Progress in the Christian life is made through the diligent exercise of faith and the performance of those duties which belong to the life of a believer.

## 2. Prayer

Christ prayed much, and said that men "ought always to pray and not to faint." (Luke 18:1.) He taught His disciples to pray, and gave to them that brief but comprehensive Pattern Prayer which embodies all the elements of true petition. Prayer is not simply a Christian duty, but also the blessed privilege of every sincere and trustful heart, and an effective means of sustaining and culturing the life of the soul.



### 3. Bible Study

The reading of and meditation upon the Holy Scriptures are important factors in sustaining and developing the spiritual life. Christ and the Apostles, and the Saints of all the ages, by precept and example, have borne witness to this great truth. The Bereans were "noble. . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily." (Acts 17:11) "Thy word," said the Psalmist, "have I laid up in my heart that I might not sin against thee." (Ps. 119:11.) The Bible should be studied daily, prayerfully, diligently, and systematically, so that the believer may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18), and become effective in Christian service "that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (II Tim. 3:17.)

### 4. Witnessing

The Gospel by its very nature is designed for all nations and intended for all men, and the Church is under solemn obligation to make known its saving truth to all mankind. Christian witnessing is the method given by Christ by which this is to be accomplished. Moreover there is no way as effective as witnessing for a Christian to cultivate his own spiritual life. As the believer through his witness shares with others the truths of the Gospel and his own experience of Christ, he cultures his own soul.

### 5. Worship and Fellowship

Corporate worship and Christian fellowship are means to culture the inner life of a Christian and to build the Christian community. (Ps. 95:6; 122:1; Heb. 10:25.) It is the privilege and obligation of every Member of the Church, therefore, to participate in and to promote Christian fellowship and corporate worship.

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<sup>1</sup>The Discipline, pp. 81-84.



APPENDIX V

VISUAL AIDS FOR THE MEMBERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

## APPENDIX V

### VISUAL AIDS FOR THE MEMBERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

- Session 1. Redemption, The Second Article, filmstrip number one, The Apostles Creed. Produced by Church-Craft Pictures Inc. Available through the denominational book store. \$6.00 for a set of two (see below). Forty frames.
- Session 2. Redemption, The Second Article, filmstrip number two, The Apostles Creed. Produced by Church-Craft Pictures Inc. Available through the denominational book store.
- Session 3. The Saga of the Bible. FS-1, produced by the American Bible Society. 450 Park Ave., New York 22, New York. Rental \$2.00, purchase \$6.50. Sixty frames and record.
- The Bible Through the Centuries. Art by Harold Minton. Available through the denominational book store. Color \$5.00. Sixty frames. \$3.00 black and white.
- Session 4. The Wild Olive Branch. A filmstrip of the historical pageant presented to the 1958 General Conference. Available through the denominational book store.
- Martin Luther. Produced by Concordia Films, an adaptation from the film. With record \$10.00, w/o record \$5.00. Seventy-three frames.
- Session 5. The Word and the Sacraments. Produced for use in the Communicants Class by The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Available through the Westminster Book Stores, Los Angeles, or New York. \$4.00 The Pastors Guide, \$3.75 the guide for all their classes and the script for the filmstrips (see session 6). Color.
- Our Worship Service. The origin, meaning and use of the elements of worship in the evangelical protestant church. \$5.00 color, eighty-two frames; available through the denominational book stores.
- How and Why We Worship. Art by Harold Minton. Why we worship; the places of worship; individual, family and corporate. \$3.00, sixty-eight frames, available through the denominational book store.

## Session 6.

Take My Life. A dramatic presentation of the growth and outworking of the Christian's life. Produced for use in the Communicants Class by the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Available through the Westminster book stores. \$8.00, color, ninety-six frames; tape or record \$4.50.

The Difference. A family situation shows the difference prayer makes as they try to live the Christian life at home and in the community. \$5.00, color; \$3.00, black and white. Available through the denominational book stores.



