

Religion in the News

Mt Olivet holds revival

Reverend John H. Jackson, Pastor of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, announced the beginning of Mt. Olivet's Ninth Annual Revival Services, September 24 to September 29.

The Mount Olivet Baptist Church will begin its Ninth Annual Revival Services September 24th-September 29th. September 24th the service will be held at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The 5:00 p.m. service will be a Youth Vespers Program with participating youth choirs of the area. Monday through Friday services will be held at 7:30 p.m.

The Evangelist for the Revival Services will be Dr. M.C. Williams, Minister of New Hope Baptist Church in Denver, Colorado.

The public is invited to attend.



DR. M. C. WILLIAMS

CU in CHURCH

Methodists aid flood victims

by Leonard M. Perryman

WOULD YOU BELIEVE:

--An irregular stretch of gravel, concrete chunks, uprooted trees, stinking muck,

and trash that was once called Irving Street in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.?

--A house sunk so deep in

a hole that you can see only its roof at ground level?

--A 60-year-old man with six heart attacks, a mortgage on his mud-filled home and facing \$28,000 in repair bills who says, "Of course I'm going to rebuild. The Lord was good to me; I'm still alive."

--A four-church circuit where members from three churches have come for two months to clean up, and to help run a feeding station for 100 flood victims daily in the fourth church that was under water for 96 hours?

--A school teacher from 100 miles away who took a load of supplies to flood victims and stayed six weeks to direct volunteer relief operations because "I like trying to help people who feel God has abandoned them."

Does that strain credibility? Perhaps not. However, it's not what the average United Methodist hears about every day. But those are just a tiny fraction of the overwhelming facts of natural disaster, human suffering, hope and Christian love that make up the story of Wilkes-Barre, Kingston and northeastern Pennsylvania towns ravaged almost beyond description by the June floods.

What are United Methodists doing in response to the multi-billion dollar catastrophe in five Eastern states (\$2,000,000,000 in the Wilkes-Barre vicinity alone)? A catastrophe that brought \$4,313,000 in damage and loss to pastors, other church workers, their families, church buildings, parsonages, homes for the aging, a school and other property -- not to mention uncounted millions in losses to church members in homes, possessions, jobs and security. More than \$2,000,000 of the loss was in the Wyoming United Methodist Conference, mostly around Wilkes-Barre.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), charged by the 1972 General Conference with a mandate for relief/rehabilitation in the U.S., as well as overseas disasters, moved into action along with many other agencies.

The program at West Nanticoke Calvary United Methodist Church now feeds about 100 persons a day, though earlier more than 500 meals a day were served. He estimated that 17,000 meals have been prepared since the center opened a week after the flood, which meant only a matter of days after water receded from the building itself. Rev. LeRoy W. Flohr and the Flood Relief Committee said the program has meant more than just three good meals a day for residents of flood-damaged homes in the vicinity. People have used mealtimes as an opportunity to share personal experiences during and after the flood, providing a "real psychological lift."

The National Disaster Fund grant, said the Flood Relief Committee, means people will

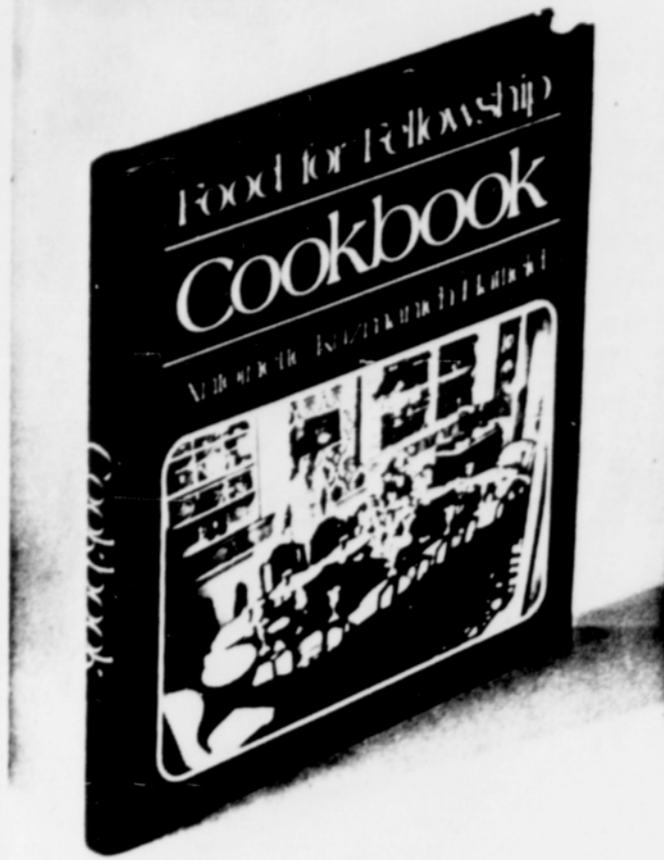
Food furthers fellowship

In her new book **FOOD FOR FELLOWSHIP COOKBOOK** Antonette Kusmanich Hatfield, who has entertained in a governor's and senator's home and hosted two U.S. President's wives, shares her "secrets" of group entertaining. In 140 illustrated pages the wife of Oregon Senator Mark O. Hatfield tells how to make the most out of social activities, especially in the church.

Aware of the alienation that is present in many churches and families, Antonette writes in the introduction to the book, "Fellowship in the early Church meant getting together for the purpose of sharing and sustaining each other... Today we seem to have become so formalized in our worship that sometimes we wonder if the fellowship which sustained the early Church has been lost."

Her book contains many tips on the creative use of food in bringing people together and helping them to share with another.

The book is distilled experience gained in her years as an active church member and entertaining which includes being chairman of the First Lady's Prayer Breakfast for Mrs. Lyndon Johnson and general chairman of the luncheon given by the senate wives for Mrs. Richard Nixon in 1970. She has authored two best selling cookbooks, one which is now in its fifth printing.



Her latest book, **FOOD FOR FELLOWSHIP**, arranged in 24 "around-the-clock" sections, is for both the gourmet cook and the beginner. Sections cover every situation from snacks for preschoolers in Sunday school to the wedding dinner. Suggestions on how to use a particular event or activity meaningfully are included

along with menus and recipes geared for medium and large groups and tips on how to organize food preparation for maximum enjoyment of all participants. Table arrangements and instructions on how to set up an effective buffet are included with suggestions on when to use them. Recipes are indexed.

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"not be forced back into their kitchens to prepare food before the kitchens have been properly cleaned and sanitized, or before full utilities have been restored."

The feeding center is only one example of how pastors and members of churches in the Wilkes-Barre region, and in all flood areas, organized immediately to help victims.

One vignette may suffice. First United Methodist Church in Kingston, one of the strongest in Wyoming Conference (over 1,000 members), had put up a new building 13 years ago after a fire destroyed a former plant. On June 23 the church along with more than 90 per cent of Kingston (on a flat

flood plain directly across from Wilkes-Barre) went under when the Susquehanna River became a five-mile-wide lake.

The minister, the Rev. Charles F. Gommer, Jr., returned immediately after the flood receded. Though water had been 10 feet deep in the sanctuary, and though a beautiful pipe organ and other equipment were sodden and damaged, the minister decided the church should go into service immediately. Within a matter of days, a day-care center which the church had operated principally for children of low-income families was back in operation. Only now it was different.

"The flood was a great economic leveler," said Mr. Gommer, and the center has been serving children of flood victims, poor, middle class and well-to-do. "Even if you're a family that's well off, when Father has to go back to work and Mother faces the heart-breaking task of trying to restore a mud-filled house, somebody has to take care of the children. That is where our day-care program comes in. Of course, we will probably get back to our original clientele, but a new bridge of understanding among persons of different economic levels can't help but have been built from this shared experience."

Zest of Life

By Carnegie "Happy" Pullen

THE SIX DAYS OF CREATION--how long were those days? This is a question that has baffled theologians, Bible students, and scientists for thousands of years. How long were the days of Creation?

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," says Genesis 1:1. That is a compact sentence to encompass all that has happened in heaven and earth--in the cosmos--since Atom 1.

But when did Creation begin; and how long a time did the process take? We offer no conclusions, but only clues.

Time did not just begin 6,000 years ago; nor a million, nor a hundred billion years ago. Scientists have had to struggle against great handicaps with atomic clocks, carbon dating methods and other means, and have not come anywhere near a unanimous figure of how long time has existed, or even how long the earth has stood.

The earth and moon show unmistakable evidence of having hung in the sky, hurtling as guided missiles, or "space capsules" around the sun for some billions of years, rather than a mere few thousand years; as some Biblical chronologists claim.

One clue is that perhaps God created the universe in two stages; one stage having taken any number of hundreds of billions of years before the six days of Creation specified in Genesis 1 began. This is only a theory, but one worthy of consideration, offered by some practical and logical theologians. Let us consider the first two verses of Genesis 1.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This long and almost infinite process may have been going on for unaccounted billions of years before God began to reckon the six days of Creation as specified in the remainder of the chapter.

That God took uncounted eons to create the vast universe, probably in rough, unfinished form, before beginning to count the specific six days of Creation in Genesis 1, does not do violence to the Biblical account. It would merely mean we must adjust our limited concepts of time to an infinitely longer time scale. Another question the logical mind asks is, "What was God doing during the illimitable span of time?" But He does not need to answer that question unless He chooses. Yet, Jesus said, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things." John 14:26. Therefore such knowledge is accessible through the Spirit.

If we consider the six days of Creation which God specified as beginning when He said, "Let there be light; and there was light... and God divided the light from the darkness."

"And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." Gen. 1:3-5. If we look at the problem in this way it takes a great weight of credulity off the minds of the Agnostics and skeptics, and the Christian doubters.

By the Genesis account of Creation God did not create

the sun until the fourth day. In the Creation account God was speaking specifically of the twenty-four hour day: "The evening and the morning were the fourth day." Gen. 1:19. The Bible scholar wonders how these things can be. In the scheme of Creation so many conditions for the elaborate scheme and web of life, so greatly dependent upon each other, and upon prevailing ideal conditions, the Creation as we know it must have been cast into perfect form with a remarkable degree of simultaneity. So many conditions favorable to life, and life subsistence, must have come into existence almost instantaneously.

Can logical Christians believe this? What method of Creation that fits all the facts can a Christian or an unbelieving scientist contrive? God could produce as much or all of Creation He wanted to in six days!

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