

Freedom of Worship, Not Religion, Found in Russia

By LOUIS CASSELS
United Press Correspondent

A visit to Moscow convinced Rep. Brooks Hays (D-Ark.) that "the Russians have freedom of worship — but they don't have freedom of religion."

Hays is president of the Southern Baptist convention. He and the Rev. Claren W. Cranford, president of the American Baptist convention, flew to Moscow last month for a good-will visit with Russian Baptists.

They reported their impressions in separate interviews in Washington this week. Hays will give a formal report to the Southern Baptist convention, which meets in Houston, May 20-23.

They found, as have other visitors to the Soviet Union, that worship service in Russian churches are heavily attended. At an early Sunday service at Moscow's First Baptist church, for example, every one of the 1,400 seats was filled long before the opening hymn, and more than 600 worshippers stood throughout the two-hour service.

Aware Of Restrictions
But as Baptists who attach great importance to evangelism, Hays and Cranford were acutely conscious of the restrictions which the Soviet Communist government has placed on church activities.

"The reason I say that the Russians do not have freedom of religion," Hays explained, "is that they are not free to propagate the faith. The churches cannot operate Sunday schools or conduct any kind of educational programs. They are not permitted to acquire property to open new churches."

Only the government can carry on "educational functions" in Russia. And in state-operated schools, Russian children are taught that religion is an "outworn superstition." They are told that the Soviet government tolerates religious worship because it makes the old folks feel good. But that young people are expected to take a "scientific"—i.e., atheistic—view of the universe.

Soviet Communist leaders believe that this strategy will be more effective in the long run than open persecution of the churches, and that it will virtually eliminate religion from Russia within one or two more generations.

Is it working?

Mostly Middle Aged
Hays and Cranford saw some evidence that it is.

Events Scheduled At First Assembly

The Men's Fellowship group of First Assembly of God, 1108 West Main st., will hold its monthly meeting Saturday at 8 p.m. in the church annex. In addition to a business session, William McKinley of Medford will address the group.

At the 11 a.m. worship service Sunday, the mothers will be honored with choir selections and an address by the Rev. R. E. Cull, pastor, entitled "Whose Adorning."

The loyalty campaign of the Sunday school is still in progress with the theme "Ever Faithful" having been chosen for the campaign. Myron Hansen is the school superintendent.

The public is invited to all services.

Central Point Church To Honor Mothers

Central Point — "The Mothers We Need" will be the sermon topic of the Rev. Paul O. Kroon, at the Community Bible church, Central Point, Sunday. There will be recognition given to the oldest and youngest mothers present and also to the mother with the largest number of children in attendance at the Mother's day service.

"An Unpopular Subject" will be the title of the sermon at the Sunday service at 7:30 p.m.

The Women's Missionary society will sponsor a mother and daughter missionary meeting, Tuesday, May 13, at 7 p.m. at the Fellowship hall at the church. Mrs. Peter Wittenberg, missionary to Germany, will be the guest speaker.

Mr. Wittenberg, who has spent several years of missionary work in Germany, will be the guest speaker at the church Thursday, May 15, at 7:45 p.m.

SERMON SUBJECT
"Adam and Fallen Man" will be the subject of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, sermon at 11 a.m. Sunday. The public is invited.

Middle-aged adults greatly outnumber young people in Russian church congregations.

"On the other hand, we did see some young people at services," Hays said. "And the Baptist leaders told us that about 20 per cent of their church membership consists of young people."

"We asked them what they did about religious education, and they told us: 'Our homes are our Sunday schools, and the grandmothers are our Sunday teachers.'"

Cranford said Russian Baptists are allowed to hold prayer meetings in private homes, as well as formal worship services in churches. He said the prayer meetings are "where they do most of their evangelism."

"The vitality of religion in Russia seems to depend, even more than in other countries, on the every-day witness of Christian laymen in their private lives," Cranford said.

Music during the Gideon service included a cello solo by Miss Julia Gandt, piano offertory number by Miss Virginia Gandt, and a vocal solo, "How Great Thou Art," by Mrs. Gandt.

The skating party at the Ashland rink last Wednesday night was well attended. Chuck Sturgill led the devotional period for the county-wide group from various churches.

Good News clubs will soon close their weekly meetings and will present their program Sunday at 7 p.m. on May 25 in the brown church.

The children themselves will present their songs and flannelgraph stories so that those not familiar with the Child Evangelism work may know something of the typical lessons given at weekly meetings.

Activities Told By First Christian

Sunday morning at First Christian church, the Rev. William C. Piper, minister, will preach on "Women of the Bible." The choir will sing, "Lord, Our Dwelling Place," with a baritone solo by Jerry Conner. "Mother Dear" will be sung by Miss Lynn Ann Latham and Miss Donna Demmer.

For the evening service Mr. Piper will be preaching on "The Family of God." Monday at 8 p.m. the official board will have the monthly meeting. All members of the board and any interested members of the congregation are invited to be present.

The first annual Mother-Daughter banquet was held Thursday evening with approximately 70 women in attendance. Miss Oyeta Walden presided for the program with Mrs. Ethel Latham, Miss Priscilla Shafer, and Mrs. Joy Stockstill assisting. Mr. Piper presented the honor to the outstanding church mother, Mrs. C. C. Drummond. Miss Shirley Hopkins, Miss Joyce Hunter, Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Ralph Matlack, and the Misses Lynn Ann and Julie Latham were in the program.

At 5:30 p.m. Sunday the film "One In 20,000" will be shown by the young people of the church. Parents and members of the congregation are invited to attend.

Phoenix — The Rev. W. A. Saladin, Phoenix First Presbyterian church, will speak on "Motherhood is a Christian Service," Sunday during the 11 a.m. service.

The oldest, youngest and the mother with the most children present will be honored at the service.

A meeting of the session will be held at 3 p.m. at the church and the young people will meet at the manse that evening.

Seven of the young people accompanied by their sponsors attended the young people's meeting at Roseburg last week end.

A Mother's day tea will be held Saturday from 2:30 until 4 p.m. Mothers of children in the church school will be guests of the teachers and officers of the school and are invited to attend with their children.

Beginning Sunday, May 18, the Sunday school will start at 9:45 a.m. instead of 10 a.m.

Officers and teachers of the Sunday school met at the home of Mrs. Ray Clafin, superintendent, Tuesday afternoon. Among the items of business discussed was the staking of claims for helping missionary work at Haines house in Alaska and Tokyo.

Also discussed was the setting aside of funds to help pay church camps expenses this summer for young people.

YOUTH AND PARENTS
Parents and youth of the Junior High department of the First Methodist church will meet for an evening of fellowship and discussion Tuesday, May 13, at 7:30 p.m., according to Mrs. Verne Wilson, youth division superintendent. The youth taking part in the 11 a.m. church school classes, who attend the services of worship of the church, or attend the 5:30 p.m. MYF sessions, are invited to take their parents.

MOTHER'S DAY PROGRAM
Phoenix — A Mother's day program will be held during Sunday school Sunday at Phoenix Church of the Nazarene.

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The chancel choir will sing at both services and Louis Clayton, tenor, will sing the solo "The Living God." Fred Gatter of the Every Member Canvass will speak at the services briefly regarding the challenge of Christian stewardship facing the church. There will be a coffee hour between the services and after the second service.

A large number of new members will be welcomed at both services Sunday and will give their public confession of faith in Jesus Christ. They will each wear a pink carnation and will sit in a group at the front of the church.

The Senior High Westminster fellowship is having a special meeting Sunday at 5 p.m. to which the parents of the high school young people are invited. The meeting will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Frohnmayer, 1856 Spring st. After a time of recreation and fellowship, Jim Lacy will lead a meeting on "The Christian and His Driving." All parents of the senior high youth are invited to attend the reception.

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The service was conducted by the southern convocation of the Diocese of Oregon of which Mr. Bolster is dean. Transportation to Myrtle Creek was provided by Robert S. Rix, Houston R. Pitts, Neil Stone, and Leonard A. McCullough.

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Any people who would like to provide jobs for the young people may call the church office, Spring 2-2830, and give their name and address.

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