

Africo-American Presbyterian

"AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—John viii, 35.

VOL. L.

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, APRIL 19, 1928.

NO. 16.

DEVELOPING A PROGRAM OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES

(Paper prepared for the Missionaries' Conference held at Selden Institute, Brunswick, Ga., February 7-10.)

By George R. Marsh, Sabbath School Missionary

It is a great thing to be young. It is more invigorating to look forward than to look backward. In youth, one's structure is to be built. The materials are at hand. The plan remains to be chosen and the work to be done.

The style of life is continually changing, dangers and temptations appear under new forms, and it has become necessary to adapt our teaching to the actual emergency. The infidelity of the day is not what it was twenty years ago. The mode of doing business is not the same; the popular amusements are different. The current literature has been essentially modified. Some things have been changed for the best, some for the worst, but I know of no social improvements which have made the world, upon a whole, any safer place for the young or old.

In view of these things, Christian leaders are attempting to promote a program for young people, with regard to their interests, characteristics and needs; a program that, if followed, will prepare them for the experiences and life relationships of adult manhood and womanhood.

The activities of the earlier years must be enriched and expanded to form personalities capable of fine leadership. If the opportunities for this expansion are missed in these critical years, they are exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to recover.

Young people are asking one question with great persistence: "Is it really possible to follow Christ in our day?" A religion confined to certain times or to certain places of worship can not possibly satisfy the young people of the present time. They face an extremely difficult situation, as they take up their full share in the life of the world today. The Church should not be satisfied without pouring out its best for them that they may have all the light and guidance possible. Does not Christ call His followers to take Him seriously in all things and put the whole strength of their lives into the advancement of His kingdom?

Our great aim is to help the young people accept and carry out their share of responsibility for the promotion of Christ's cause. The world is calling for Christians who know how to put their religion into practice; for, if the cause of Christ is to triumph, there must be a generation of Christians who can apply His spirit and principles in the home, in social life, in business and industry, and in politics and public life.

For some years there has been recognized a ringing challenge to certain young people to act in Christ's purpose for their lives and to enlist as ministers or missionaries. Too often this has been assumed as a peculiar kind of call and that it would not be experienced by those in ordinary walks of life.

Surely there have been few greater mistakes. Christ calls every Christian to share His great purpose for mankind.

Young people should early be taught to serve. The Christ whom young people are to follow came to serve. He proclaimed that, "He who would be greatest must be servant of all." He went about doing good. So young people must be enlisted in actual service for Christ and his fellowmen.

Worship is one of the basic elements in the young people's program—worship which means

man's attitude toward God and his feeling toward his fellowmen. This is the original spring of life. It is the motivation of service, for though we speak with the tongues of men and of angels; if we have the gift of prophecy; if we know all mysteries and all knowledge; if we have faith to remove mountains; and though we give all of our goods to feed the poor and give our bodies to be burned and have not love we are nothing.

Young People's worship include hymns, prayer, Scripture reading, offering and messages. The last may take such form as a talk, story, or a selection from devotional literature.

Young people should give attention to good religious music if they are to worship well. The hymns selected should express real religious thought and feeling. The music must not be limited to three or four hymns already worn thread bare. The number and variety of hymns that can be sung well should be constantly increased. This will require study and every group of young people should make a study of the great hymns. A good musician might be asked to lead the group in a study of hymnology, making clear the beauty and worth of hymns.

In young people's services of worship and in their own lives, prayer should have a large place. No one can exaggerate the value and importance of prayer—that which unites hearts with God and seeks to know His will. Prayer is the greatest resource for fine living and for all Christian service. More careful thought should be given to prayer than is usually given. Both for public and private prayer one should do very serious thinking, for cooperative thinking may develop some prayers that really express spiritual aspirations and help in drawing near to God.

Groups and individuals ought to make a study of prayer and those who are to lead in prayer in young people's meetings should be asked considerably in advance. A number of choice prayers on various subjects may be collected. Many persons and causes need our prayers: viz., friends, institutions, those in authority, the nation, the Church, those doing Christian work, and many others.

A brief study of Christ's life will show that He lived in the atmosphere of communion with God, and prayed long and earnestly before making all great decisions.

Perhaps no other means of worship has been so badly misused as Scripture reading. Too often the Scripture is hastily selected and read without force or appreciation. A great opportunity is lost when the Bible is read carelessly, and in such a manner as to hide from others the boundless wealth which it holds. Man may enter into the truths of God and share the spiritual vision of the greatest souls of the ages by reading and hearing the Scriptures aright.

Responsive and unison reading should be well done with everyone taking a part.

Very important in the young people's program is the offering. Giving is too often considered a formality or a matter-of-fact business to be slipped in somewhere when the opportunity presents itself. Young people frequently fail to recognize giving as a part of worship. It is one of the most beautiful parts. It is a means of pouring out one's self to God, the return to

Him of His own, and the participation of the individual in the work of the kingdom.

No offering should be taken carelessly or as a matter of course. Everyone should know for what purpose gifts are intended. The manner of giving the offering may help to make it worshipful. Let nothing irrelevant or careless be done. The spirit of the service should not be broken.

During the taking of the offering, instrumental music may be had or the stanza of a prayer hymn be said, or a prayer of consecration may follow. Many services of worship may include a spoken message. Probably it will carry the theme of the service more than any other part. Different methods are available. There may be a well prepared talk on the topic by some one, or several very short talks by different persons, or an appropriate and effective story well told. The wealth of devotional literature found in the writing of those who have lived close to God and learned the secrets of the spiritual life, offers a treasury from which selection may be made for this part of the service.

Every young person should desire to make his life be of real significance both immediately and in the future. He can not tell where his life will be placed or in what capacity it will be used. Therefore he should learn to live and to labor that his years of service may be a direct and unquestionable contribution to the welfare of men and to the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

Next in importance in the program for young people is recreation. The aim of recreation is to help young people find and develop Christian friendship and fellowship, to guide them in applying Christian principles and purpose to their social life and to assist them in maintaining their lives on the highest possible plain. In order to attain this aim many churches and leaders of young people should broaden their ideas in regard to recreation and give the term new content. Today the word recreation is used to denote all those activities which help for finer and better living. Those things which young people do, not because they must, but because they choose; those activities in which they participate with a feeling of joy and freedom from routine; those experiences from which they emerge cheerful when they have been discouraged, relaxed when they have been under nervous tension and stimulated when they reached a point of lassitude.

There are group experiences, such as games, music, dramatics, athletics and the fellowship with other young men and women, growing out of these events. There are family experiences, as evenings at home, when all enjoy a good time together. There are individual experiences, such as reading and the pursuit of various hobbies. All these are classed as recreational.

The result obtained from recreational features are:

1. The Activity Produces Physical Renewal—that is, the development of muscular strength, bodily skill and physical poise.

2. It will Provide Mental Stimulus—that is, spur the imagination, quicken the reason, and sharpen the perceptions of young people. It will help them to acquire good taste, and open up to them new fields of interest.

3. It Results in Social Broadening. There will be a widening of friendship circles, a new understanding of comradeship between young men and women and higher standards of relations between them.

Appreciation of other people

will be increased which includes people of different social status and people of different nationalities and races.

It Aids in Spiritual Awakening. As the three foregoing changes take place in the lives of young people they will have a new zest in living and will recognize that their bodies are indeed the temples of God. Their quickened minds will see God in the tasks of every day, in the out doors, and in the achievements of man. Their broadened social consciousness will help them to see God in others. They will start eagerly upon the adventure of discovering the best in life. They will have standards of recreation which they can apply wherever they may be.

A careful survey would be necessary to locate all the young people in any church, but in most churches there are well known places where they are found. The first group is composed of those young people who are church members and attend the services of worship and the mid-week prayer meetings. The second group is of young people of the Sunday school of which this is their only contact with the church. The third group is made up of different societies, clubs, etc., of the church. Fourth, some Sunday school teachers and leaders of societies for younger boys and girls.

Heretofore each of these organizations has had its own program. The great purpose of the Church now is to build a unified program for all young people in the church.

Behind the "Building with Christ" program is the desire to reach every young person in the church and the fullest opportunity for developing a Christian life. The main concern is that the church be made available for all young people, the worship, instruction, service and recreation necessary and desirable for Christian living and action.

"Build today, then, strong and sure,

With firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall tomorrow find its place."

COULTER ACADEMY, CHERAW, S. C.

By Miss M. L. Brewer.

Our church and school were well represented at Fairfield Presbytery which met in Winnsboro, S. C. Among those who attended were Dr. Long, our pastor, and Mrs. Long, who is the Presbytery President. Mrs. Alphonso Powe and Miss Odesa Cox were delegates from the Women's and Young People's Missionary Societies. Miss Brewer represented our faculty. Mr. Lewis Long, who is very anxious to become a minister, was taken under the care of the Presbytery.

A district meeting was held here April 2nd. Miss Barr, the field representative of the Board of National Missions, was the chief speaker of the day. Miss Barr brought much information and inspiration. Dr. C. J. Baker, of Atlanta, Ga., also attended this meeting and gave a very interesting and helpful address.

Last Friday morning the members of the school and quite a number of visitors were favored with a rhetorical under the supervision of Miss W. M. Gillespie. After the program we listened to some very encouraging remarks by Mrs. Mary Cotten.

Recently the Boys' Dormitory was partially destroyed by fire. Several of the boys suffered severe losses.

The Easter program was under the direction of Mrs. Spencer and Mrs. Cotten. Envelopes

(Continued on page 3)

NOTES FROM ST. LUKE, ORANGEBURG, S. C.

The Atlantic Presbytery which convened here in our church last week—April 11-14—was conceded to be one of the best in a number of years. It was well attended, and interesting and harmonious to the end. Many issues vital to the Presbytery and the Church at large were discussed edifyingly to the delight of all who heard them.

A number of visitors dropped in from time to time. The impression made on the church and the city at large was very favorable indeed.

The Presbytery opened with an appropriate sermon by the retiring Moderator, Rev. S. H. Scott, of John's Island. Rev. W. T. Frazier, D. D., of Charleston, was unanimously chosen as Moderator and Rev. G. E. Henderson, of the same city, as temporary clerk.

The Women's popular meeting was held on Thursday night with a varied program of music, debate and addresses. A very interesting feature was a debate between Mr. Vesta Harper and Miss Cassandra Maxwell of the local church. The subject discussed was: Resolved, That the Girls are More Useful to the Church Than the Boys.

Mrs. M. M. Jones, of McConellsville, made a fine address.

The collection realized was good.

The welcome services were distributed over two nights—Wednesday and Friday. Prof. Philip Harris, a professor at the State College, represented the local church. Dr. J. W. Randolph, President of Claflin University, spoke in behalf of the educational interests. Hon. Hugo S. Sims, a leading attorney of the city, represented the citizens at large. Rev. H. M. McCord, pastor of the First Presbyterian church, brought the greetings of the churches and expressions of harmonious inter-racial relationship.

Dr. R. S. Wilkerson, President of the State College, made an earnest plea for cooperation between the forces of the church and those of the educational interests throughout the State.

These splendid addresses were responded to very appropriately and earnestly by Dr. Wm. Metz, of Edisto Island, and Rev. G. E. Henderson, of Charleston.

Sabbath at 11 A. M., Dr. Frazier, the Moderator, preached a very able sermon on "The Proper Treatment of One's Enemies," which made a profound impression on the audience. Notwithstanding the inclement weather the services were well attended.

At three o'clock in the afternoon a Model Sunday School was conducted by Prof. A. A. Adier, ably assisted by Prof. W. C. Lewis, our Superintendent, and Prof. J. W. Harper, Assistant. The methods recommended for doing successful work and in impressing and holding the interest of the young people and in making them a greater factor in the Sunday school life, were most excellent and will help our young people greatly.

Sunday evening at 8 o'clock the closing sermon was preached by Rev. S. H. Scott, who emphasized the place of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and the individual.

The principal and alternate ministerial commissioners to the General Assembly are Rev. G. E. Henderson and Rev. T. H. Ayers; lay commissioners are Prof. A. H. Clement, of Charleston and Elder Freeman of John's Island in the order named.

Things in our church are moving on harmoniously in every way. Our people are on the alert and fully alive to the entire program of the Church in all of its departments and spheres.

The various auxiliaries—the Sunday school, the Christian Endeavor and the Ladies' Missionary Society—are functioning and are contributing factors to the life and services of our church.

Our music, under the direction of Mrs. Kate Maxwell, together with her faithful and efficient choir was a great source of inspiration in all the services of the past week.

T. H. AYERS, Pastor, Orangeburg, S. C., April 16.

THE SPRING MEETING OF McCLELLAND PRESBYTERY.

The Presbytery of McClelland held its Spring session with Oak Grove Presbyterian church, Slighs, S. C., April 4th through the 6th. The retiring Moderator, Rev. J. M. Johnson, D. D., preached a strong sermon from St. Matthew 16: 18.

Rev. C. W. Francis was chosen Moderator and Rev. H. Y. Kennedy was made clerk pro tem.

Dr. B. F. McDowell and Rev. E. A. McCorkle were elected ministerial commissioners, principal and alternate, respectively, to the next General Assembly, and Elders N. Smith and C. B. Johnson were elected lay commissioners, principal and alternate, respectively.

Drs. G. W. Long, G. T. Dillard and Rev. D. T. Murray, Presbytery of Fairfield; Dr. J. M. Miller, Presbytery of Atlantic; Rev. N. Bell, Presbytery of Catawba; Revs. A. H. Reasoner, Presbytery of Pittsburgh, and P. A. Flaek, Presbytery of Rogersville, were granted seats of corresponding members of the Presbytery and Prof. A. A. Adair and Mr. H. N. Sullivan were granted the privilege of the floor.

Rev. D. S. Collier was given permission to labor outside the bounds of the Presbytery.

Messrs. Claude and Elliott McAdams were examined as to their Christian piety and motives for entering the gospel ministry. Their examination was entirely satisfactory to the Presbytery and they were taken under the care of the Presbytery and recommended to the Board of Christian Education for aid to pursue their course at Johnson C. Smith University. The reports from the churches showed progress along various lines. There were evidences of many additions by letters and professions to the rolls. These rolls have, nevertheless, been generally kept down by deaths and dismissals for various causes.

The clerks report to the General Assembly of 1927 showed a net total of 962 communicants. This year's report will show a net total of 887 communicants—a decrease of 75.

Dr. C. M. Young, Chairman of the Committee on Program and Field Activities, still wears a broad smile since the Presbytery rolled up its full quota with a surplus of \$44.18. The Presbytery elected Dr. Young Benevolence Treasurer for all the churches of the Presbytery. All moneys for benevolence, from whatever source, are to be sent to Dr. C. M. Young, Harbison College, Irmo, S. C., and he in turn will forward the same to the Boards and Agencies per your designation. This is a forward step taken by the Presbytery in the right direction. This method will eliminate discrepancies in the final checking up with the Boards and Presbytery.

On Thursday evening, April 5th, the Presbytery engaged in a men's popular meeting. The following subjects were discussed with profit and interest: Christian Education by Rev. O. M. McAdams and Prof. A. A. Adair; Church Obligations by

(Continued on page 4)