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The Ohio State University

Ph.D. 1984

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AN EXAMINATION OF CENTENARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
USING THE PHOTOGRAPH AS ARTIFACT

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

by

Wilbert R. Norman, Jr., B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1984

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To the Memory of
George Jackson
and
Steve Biko
Excerpts from "Multiplication"

by Eric Gale

transcribed by Robin Bargar
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CHAPTER I

Historical Overview of the Independent Black Church

The Christian church in America in the eighteenth century was represented by the puritanism of the Calvinists in New England and the authoritarianism of the Anglicans in Virginia. (Washington 1973: 35) Both churches had become elite churches and as such created an "establishmentarian religious climate" where "orthodox theological refinements" were expressed in "rational discipline and stiff moral character" and "Puritanism, Anglicanism and power were synonymous." (Washington 1973: 36-38)

The rationalism of the elite, as dull as it was to the ordinary folk, gave way, before the first half of the eighteenth century, to a series of religious revivals that were to become known as the (first) great awakening. In Washington's words:

The great awakenings were high tides of white emotionalism. They awakened the need for Christianity to become an indigenous missionary or evangelical movement in America. And so it was for the first time a concern with all men. It was unleashed with a fury, affecting every institution from education to government. Most important . . . . was the fallout from these missionary efforts, the newfound enthusiasm for reaching blacks
with the gospel. The great awakenings knew no denominational boundary, uniting Christians across previously unbridgeable gaps.

The first great awakening began at local levels in New England in 1720, surged in Northampton in 1734, and became a national revival in 1740. It was marked by sermons that cut to the quick, seeking to produce an immediate experience of personal sin. Preaching was often an open-air event. In order to produce evangelical religion, preachers deliberately brought tears to the eyes of the listeners. This highly charged, highly emotional, experiential excitement occasionally got out of hand and became public demonstrations of spiritual rejuvenation where crowds broke into sobbing, crying incoherent expressions, fainting, and falling down.

... It is important to note that the first great awakening was a white affair. Blacks were permitted only at the edge of the crowds. ... The limited number of blacks who were brought in on the periphery of these occasions rejoiced in this opportunity for release from pent-up frustration.

For in communal religion a bond was easily made between whites and blacks who knew the same sense of being cut off from spiritual roots and the same joy of finding them again. (Washington 1973: 37-38)

Although most blacks stood on the edges of the revivals, some had had a special relationship to the Quakers prior to the revivals. The Quakers are associated with the very first efforts of Christians to call for the abolition of slavery but the dissemination of this idea did not take effect until it was expressed by the Methodists and Baptists after 1750.

(Washington 1973: 38)
The democratic fervor of the Revolutionary War and the spiritual momentum of the first great awakening combined to create a turning point in "religious freedom and toleration" for the slave.

When the war ended, the interest in blacks did not. Baptists and Methodists reaped the greatest harvest, in terms of expansion and engagement of blacks, for the singular reason that they were both lay- rather than clergy-oriented. They both became American sects of poor whites. (Washington 1973: 39)

There was a second great awakening between 1790 and 1815. This revival period saw Methodism firmly entrenched among the poor and ignorant whites on the frontiers but also reaching larger and larger numbers of blacks. The establishmentarian churches like the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians and others, found no expression among the blacks at the time and even the Quakers, who had expressed "the idea of a permanent relationship between freedom and the gospel," had gotten caught up in class consciousness, widening the gap between themselves and ordinary folk. Poor whites and blacks were swelling the ranks of the converted in the revivals of the second great awakening. (Washington 1973: 39)

One of the most important trends to come out of the special amalgam of democratic ideas of the revolution and spiritual rejuvenation of the revivals was a religious fellowship between white and black communicants. (Washington 1973: 40-41) "Racial togetherness was seen more as the rule
Blacks were being manumitted in increasing numbers as the result of religious preachments and the Revolutionary War's influence. Freedom in the society and liberty in the churches were fast becoming viewed as their right, not their privilege. This was a new experience for most whites, an exhilarating one for many blacks. The excitement following on the heels of independence made blacks sentimental favorites of freedom lovers and the delicate balance of their numbers made non-discriminatory religious worship possible. (Washington 1973: 42)

But non-discriminatory religious worship came to an end as the eighteenth century wound down and the once poor Methodists and Baptists began to acquire property and slaves. The economic development of the country was on the move and the church moved with it: (Washington 1973: 48)

Institutional or denominational separation of blacks from whites was not immediate. It was preceded by segregation of blacks by whites, entrances by side doors, assigned sections on the main floors and balconies of churches. The stage was set against participation by blacks at any level of decision-making.

Briefly put, poor whites who treated blacks as equals in the fellowship of the converted rapidly joined the traditional American way of treating blacks as different. (Washington 1973: 43)

That brief moment in history where fellowship without barriers of race or class, where revolution and religious rejuvenation had been uplifting secular and spiritual forces and where white religious teachings had been brought to
blacks, usurping all others, created an experience that was hard to transform. Christianity, after all, had made it possible for black people to gain a measure of mental balance and physical survival in an otherwise oppressive and often deadly environment. Slaves had no protection outside the Christian benevolence of their communicants and/or masters. Christianity signified a system of beliefs that allowed for hope of freedom on the one hand, and a check on physical and mental anguish on the other.

An interesting offshoot of segregation in the church was that blacks were forced to relate to each other in a very ethnic way. Ethnic unity became the only way for blacks to assert themselves against embarrassing religious participation. But ethnic unity did not come solely as a response to segregation. Washington suggests that blacks might have been willing to endure separation within the sanctuary as long as that did not interfere with their accustomed worship practice. But when they were hindered as worshipers, their tolerance had broken.

One Sunday morning in 1787 a group of black Christians who were worshiping in St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia were forced to leave the church. This incident is commonly referred to as "the beginning of the black church," i.e., organized black religion. Richard Allen, a free black, was one of the founders of the new
ethnic organization to become known as The Free African Society. He recalled how he and his friends were ejected from the church:

A number of us usually sat on seats placed around the wall, and on sabbath morning we went to church, and the sexton stood at the door and told us to go to the gallery. He told us to go and we would see where to sit. We expected to take the seats over the ones we formerly occupied below, not knowing any better. We took those seats; meeting had begun, and they were nearly done singing, and just as we got to our seats the elder said, "Let us pray." We had not been long upon our knees before I heard considerable scuffling and loud talking. I raised my head up and saw one of the trustees, H_M_, having hold of the Rev. Absalom Jones, pulling him off his knees, and saying, "You must get up, you must not kneel here." Mr. Jones replied, "Wait until prayer is over, and I will get up, and trouble you no more." With that he beckoned to one of the trustees, Mr. L_S_, to come to his assistance. He came and went to William White to pull him up. By this time prayer was over, and we all went out of the church in a body, and they were no more plagued by us in the church." (Washington 1973: 48)

The Free African Society was an ethnic ethical fellowship. Washington has described its purposes as the "uplift of blacks in their own eyes and those of whites by spiritual and ethical means."

In a word, power was sought from God not merely for the purpose of worshiping him but also for the purpose of internal unity to fight external oppression. (Washington 1973: 51)
The organizers of The Free African Society were free men who had considerable learning for blacks at the time. They sought separation so that they might seek the "fullness of pure Christianity."

African in the Free African Society was used to connote . . . a pride in descent but not a return to African culture. Free indicated their condition and the determination to be responsible as free men always are for their lives in community (society). (Washington 1973: 52)

The Free African Society was to become the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The AME Church was the first black church to be organized in this country. The AME Church did not set out to africanize Christianity but was mainly concerned "with developing the soul of the American African, his value as a Son of God, his responsibility to God, and his appreciation of God's love." (Washington 1973: 55)

Washington asserts that " . . . there was no theological difference with the Methodist church, they adopted the 29 articles of religion, the catechism of faith, the general rules and the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church." (Washington 1973: 54)

Black independent churches became established sects and the only difference between them and the established white churches was their refusal "to accept racial segregation and discrimination." The following independent churches were to come into being during the nineteenth century: African
Methodist Episcopal Church (1816); African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (1821); African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church Incorporated (1866); Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church in U.S. (1869); Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church (1869); Union American Methodist Episcopal Church (1870); Christian Methodist Episcopal Church (1870); National Baptist Convention U.S.A. Incorporated (1880, 1895, 1915); Reformed Methodist Union Episcopal Church (1885); and the Independent African Methodist Episcopal Church (1885). (Washington 1973: 55)

The independent black churches brought to life black folk religion and the black cult. Black mutual-aid societies, charities, relief, and all forms of organized social life for the improvement of the community were rooted in the churches. The birthplace of all sources of value. . . . Instead of making the worshiping community one which sought power to change the social conditions in which blacks were trapped, the worshiping community of black churches became centers of ecclesiastical programs. That is, the authenticity of black folk religion is the unity between spiritual and social powers which finds expression in the first blush of the independents - the coming together for ameliorating suffering. . . . The black church in the period of slavery attacked it as an institution with both its clerical and lay members involved in abolitionist movements and the underground. Black churchmen were the unsung heroes of the thirty years preceding the Civil War. Black churches were the backbone of the educational and political development of black Americans. It was this tradition of seeking power and demanding its
expression in the basic needs of black people which permitted black independents to grow in numbers and attract black people to them who deserted white churches by the thousands following the Civil War. (Washington 1973: 57)

The AME (1916) and the AMEZ (1921) churches were established before the Civil War, while other independent black churches came into being after the war. On the eve of the Civil War the independent black church had become a concrete part of the black community. But there were other spiritual forces that came out of the slave community that made a contribution to religious development in the black community after the war.

In most slave communities slaveholders did not allow their slaves to organize "Christian" services, but some did. Two reasons cited for the prohibition of worship service during the height of the Great Awakening were: fear of what the organizing of Christian spiritual energy among the slaves might mean for the system of slavery, and the psychological conflict of having to treat fellow Christians as subservient. In spite of the prohibition of Christian worship in some slave communities, those very same communities were the ones that gave rise to what would be called the "invisible institution." The invisible institution was characterized by the fact that slaves practiced their religion in secret.

Some slaveholders who had been reluctant to permit the slaves to worship among themselves did allow white or
acceptable black preachers to preach to the slaves and in so doing to convey to them that it was their Christian duty to obey their masters and to prepare for the afterlife. The invisible institution evolved among the slaves not only as a means to usurp worship prohibition but also to counterbalance "Christian" messages that were calling for their submission and subservience:

You slaves will go to heaven if you are good, but don't ever think that you will be close to your mistress and master. No! No! There will be a wall between you; but there will be holes in it that will permit you to look out and see your mistress when she passes by. If you want to sit behind that wall, you must do the language of the 'text' obey your masters. (Raboteau 1978: 213)

Wash Wilson, a former slave, recalled his own experience of the "invisible institution":

When de niggers go round singin' 'steal away to Jesus', dat meant dere gwine be a 'ligious meetin' dat night. De masters . . . didn't like dem 'ligious meetin's so us natcherly slips off at night, down in de bottoms or somewhere. Sometimes us sing and pray all night. (Raboteau 1978: 214)

The prohibition of slave worship was a serious matter for many slaveholders and "slaves faced severe punishment if caught attending secret prayer meetings."

"My boss didn' 'low us to go to church, er to pray, er sing. When he ketch us prayin' en singin' he whipped us . . . . He didn' care fer nothin' 'cept farmin'." "The white folks would come in when the colored people would have prayer
meeting, and whip every one of them. Most of them thought that when colored people were praying it was against them. (Raboteau 1978: 714)

These secret prayer meetings were extremely important to the mental and spiritual needs of the slaves. It gave them a balance between the pain of today and a hope for the future, a means to communicate as an ethnic group without reservation, and a forum for expressing their desires for freedom. But:

Secrecy was characteristic of only part of the slave community's religious life. Many slaveholders granted their slaves permission to attend church, and some openly encouraged religious meetings among the slaves. Baptisms, marriages, and funerals were allowed to slaves on some plantations with whites observing and occasionally participating. Annual revival meetings were social occasions for blacks as well as whites. Masters were known to enjoy the singing, praying, and preaching of their slaves. Nevertheless, at the core of the slave's religion was a private place, represented by the cabin room, the overturned pot, the prayin' ground, and the "hush harbor." This place the slave kept his own. For no matter how religious the master might be, the slave knew that the master's religion did not countenance prayers for his slave's freedom in this world. (Raboteau 1978: 219)

One of the most important leaders in the slave community was the slave preacher. Although the slave preacher was often illiterate that did not hinder him from presiding over events of importance to the religious life of the community:

... The slave preacher often had native wit and unusual eloquence. Licensed
or unlicensed, with or without permission, preachers held prayer meetings, preached and ministered in a very difficult situation. Carefully watched and viewed with suspicion, the preacher had to straddle the conflict between the demands of conscience and the orders of the masters. As one former slave put it, "Back there they were harder on preachers than they were on anybody else. They thought preachers were ruining the colored people." (Raboteau 1978: 232)

The slave preacher had to be very careful about what and how he preached. Any indication that freedom of any kind was implied in his sermons could mean direct physical punishment or loss of his privileged status as a preacher. Preachers, generally, were not subjected to the same harsh labor as the field hands. So a sermon could be either the measure of a preacher's accommodation to white expectations or an expression of black needs. The preacher needed considerable skill to negotiate that balance and many would rely on the power of the spirit to strike the right tenor.

Another strong religious force in the slave community, pervasive throughout all regions of the south and influential on most plantations, was "conjuring." Conjure grew out of a rich tradition of folk beliefs and practices that were believed to have originated in West Africa from countries like Dahomey (today known as Benin), Ghana and Nigeria, and came with the slaves through the West Indies to the American south. These beliefs and practices included magic lore, herbalism, ghost lore, witchcraft, fortune-telling, and folk
medicine.

Like Christianity, conjure was a system of belief, a way of perceiving the world which placed people in the context of another world no less "real" than the ordinary one. Many slaves, and whites as well, knew the world of conjure to be real because they had experienced its power. In part, conjure was a theory which made sense of the mysterious and inexplicable occurrences of life . . . . The concept of suffering for the guilt of the father is biblical; the concept of being victimized by a "fix" is conjure. Both attempt to locate the cause of irrational suffering.

Among Africans and their descendants in America illness which did not respond to natural medicines and the sudden, unpredictable occurrence of misfortune were the result of another's animosity. Slaves believed adversity was due not to blind fate or mere happenstance but to the ill will of someone working through a conjurer.

Not only was conjure a theory for explaining the mystery of evil, but it was also a practice for doing something about it. Because the conjure doctor had the power to "fix" and to remove "fixes," to harm and to cure, it was possible to locate the source of misfortune and control it. Therefore the conjurer, as a man of power - and supernatural power at that - enjoyed a measure of authority in the slave community directly proportional to belief in his power. (Raboteau 1978: 276)

Conjure and surviving elements of traditional African religions were the primary religious experiences of the slave before their introduction to the Bible. As the Bible became increasingly important two kinds of religious experiences vied for the spiritual attention of the slave: Christianity, which
rested on evangelical Protestantism, albeit with an Afro-American interpretation, and the conjure of traditional folk beliefs and practices that survived the passage from Africa through the West Indies to the southern plantation.

Christians who saw a conflict between conjure and Christianity would often look at the former as belonging to the realm of the devil. But Raboteau suggests that the conflict between Christianity and conjure was more theoretical than actual:

Even those slaves who condemned conjure as evil did not deny its reality. Moreover among black folk there was a refusal to dichotomize power into good and evil — a refusal which . . . (some) . . . see as African. In the slave community the power to heal and the power to harm resided in one person, the conjurer; in Africa these powers resided in any one of the gods who had to be propitiated in order to avoid misfortune and illness. There is an amoral quality to conjure which makes it stray outside norms of good and evil. Whether it was good or bad, one had to respect power that worked. In a world of practical power, good was power which worked for you, bad was power which turned against you. The primary categories were not good and evil but security and danger. Therefore an unequivocal rejection of conjure was not only unnecessary but foolhardy. To be safe, one kept on the right side of all spiritual power. (Raboteau 1978: 287)

Wilmore expresses the same thought in somewhat different terms:

The question was continually one of survival, mental and physical, and whatever the slave could appropriate from the
conjure man, or later from the charismatic Christian preacher, to deal with the aleatory aspects of his situation and to ward off the evil influences all around him, was seized upon as a gift of power from "De Lawd," who had not seen fit to extricate him from his plight, but nevertheless provided the means of temporarily preserving health and sanity. (Wilmore 1973: 15)

Traditional beliefs and practices and the biblical foundation of the invisible institution in the south amalgamated with the developing leadership of the free black Christian in the once integrated but now segregated congregations of evangelical protestantism in the north into an independent black religious movement, throughout the country, that would interpret Christianity as liberation, freedom, and equality.

All of these elements from the southern and northern church combined to produce a "negro style" of devotion and orthodoxy. Washington refers to this "negro style" as the genius of the negro religion:

The genius of the negro folk religion is not readily understandable apart from the awareness of the black and white streams of which it is constituted. The white stream began with the missionaries who beat a path to the door of the negro slave. Their main purpose was to extol the virtues of the next world. From the earliest days, the negro was much more concerned with the freedom of this world than with the religion of the next. He listened attentively to the religious and moral teachings of the whites, but his mind was elsewhere. He was resourceful enough to perceive that the best way to freedom in this world was through the religion of the whites, sanctioned as a means of harnessing his energy for production.
Born in slavery, weaned in segregation and reared in discrimination, the religion of the negro folk was chosen to bear roles of both protest and relief. Thus, the uniqueness of black religion is the racial bond which seeks to risk its life for the elusive but ultimate goal of freedom and equality by means of protest and action. It does so through the only avenues to which its members have always been permitted a measure of access, religious convocations in the fields or in houses of worship. (Washington 1964: 33)

The black church has always been held to be the institution in the black community that served as the foundation for reaching the "ultimate goal of freedom and equality by means of protest and action." This observation is particularly true in view of its social role in the twentieth century.

Core, a leading black theologian and a spokesman for the church during the radical period of the sixties and seventies, said that "the Christian church is that community of people called into being by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The beginning and the end of the Christian's identity is found in Jesus Christ. He is the one who is the subject of the churches preaching and who embodies in his person the meaning of his mission in the world. To ask, what is the church? Is to ask, who is Jesus? Without Jesus, the church has no identity. That was why Apostle Paul referred to the church as the body of Christ." (Cone 1970)

Black Christians saw Jesus Christ and the cross as symbols of the salvation that God had promised the poor, the wounded in spirit, and the broken-hearted. Jesus was
understood as the oppressed one, come to liberate the oppressed. A love for Jesus was synonymous with a love for freedom and equality.

In the summer of 1964 the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) staged a protest action in Mississippi. They suffered 2000 arrests, 63 shooting incidents, 12 beatings, and 5 murders. This unwarranted brutality against a non-violent protest fostered the growth of a radical consciousness in the black community. This radicalism was not directed solely against institutionalized racism. It focused on institutions indigenous to the black community as well. The black church came under attack. The new radicalism saw the black church as inadequate for dealing with contemporary problems and for developing and maintaining an attitude of non-white consciousness. Frances Welsing made the following observation:

Most fundamental and absolutely critical to the white supremacy system of religious thought was the formation of the image of a white man as the "son" of God. This white male image was then referred to as "Christ" . . .

Because of the nature of the human brain that functions on logic circuits, once a white male image is established in the brain computer logic as the Son of God, then the brain computer at deep unconscious levels automatically concludes that God the Father is also a white male, since black or other non-white males would have produced a non-white son . . . . Thus, any person accepting the Christian religion - whether conscious or it or not - has the image and concept of God as a white man . . . .
To be black and to accept the image of the white man as God is the highest possible form of a lack of self respect. Such perceptions and emotional response is therefore insanity.

It ensures that black people will always look up to white people and therefore will always look down upon themselves.

Only through obliteration of this brain computer logic circuit that "God is a white man" can the reality of black and other non-white liberation come into being. It is in this direction that we must propel ourselves in the final decades of the twentieth century. (Welsing 1974: 33)

Many young radicals active in such civil rights groups as Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), Revolutionary Action Movements (RAM), and groups that had developed out of black muslim affiliations were in agreement with the psychological dimension as described by Welsing. They saw economic dimensions in the church's history that questioned its suitability for developing a liberation consciousness. On this question, Grier and Cobbs observed that:

Religion was originally imposed from without for the purpose of keeping the slave enslaved and to safeguard the property of the master. First it had to be set down that conversion did not involve a risk to the slaveholder or the possible loss of his property. By 1706, six of the colonies had passed laws perpetuating slavehood even though the slave had been converted to Christianity . . .

By 1830, the economic and social structure of the South was completely dependent on the slave system and the
religionists were quick to develop a pro-slavery philosophy which justified their profits.

... The religion of frontier America, the emotional and highly personalized liturgy of the evangelical sects, found its greatest use not as a body of theological thought, but as a psychological strait-jacket designed to harness black yearnings for freedom. When, finally, slave-masters observed that their best, most controlled slaves were religious, religion for the slaves became necessity. It had become an undisguised instrument for their control. ...

The moral slave worked hard, accepting his lot in life as ordained by God. He was instructed to cultivate personal virtues and to ignore completely the oppressive environment. The slave was to build moral credits to be cashed in heaven but not on earth. Ambition made a poor slave, so religion required that he bridle ambition. Learning made him more rebellious, so the new religion made learning a dangerous thing. Where, effective, it converted blacks to perfect slaves and destroyed their determination to survive. In its demand for honesty, it opened their innermost thoughts to the master, and preaching as it did against violence, it bound their hands from being lifted in rebellion. It even provided a motivation in the afterlife for slaves to work themselves to death in this one. What better way to ensure passive and compliant slaves than by this use of religion.

In hard, cold truth it was against this perfect instrument that blacks were required to wage a successful struggle for survival or else abandon their hopes once and forever. (Grier and Cobbs 1971: 162-165)

The radical assessment of the black church, heatedly debated during the late sixties and early seventies, exemplified the seriousness with which most questions were examined
that addressed issues about life in the black community. It was felt, by many, then, that a deep look into traditional thinking, and a search for radical alternatives, were needed, to develop a non-white consciousness, i.e., a liberation consciousness. This was necessary to ensure the future of black people in a racist Christian society.

Approximately twenty years have passed since the black community was electrified by struggles to liberate the mind on levels of cultural, political, psychological, and social awareness. During these years, the socioeconomic status of most black Americans has not improved, radicalism has disappeared from Afro-American thought and action, and the black church is still the single most important institution in the black community.

Just as our compatriots did twenty years ago, we must also question the future of black people in this country today. What are black Christians thinking today and what is the relationship between Christianity and the black condition? In short, where does the black church stand today on issues of black consciousness and liberation?
The Original Problem

My own personal experience with radical thought in the sixties and seventies developed out of my work as a documentary film producer-director between the years of 1968 and 1971. It began in 1968 when I produced a political documentary on Bobby Seale, chairman of the Black Panther Party. Seale was on a lecture tour throughout Scandinavia. He had been invited by the socialist party of Denmark to lecture on the struggles faced by the BPP to curb the spread of police brutality in ghetto communities around the country. He talked about the oppressive conditions of racism and economic exploitation and the alternatives being sought by the BPP to improve the living conditions of black people. Seale explained how the party had organized free medical clinics, free breakfast and lunch for school children, free clothing, and free (liberation) schools.

My second film, based on political material from the BPP, and produced in 1971, was a short impressionistic piece on the BPP's interpretation of "Cultural Nationalism." In this film the party differentiates between political awareness and cultural awareness as vehicles for social change. Their point was that cultural awareness without political action was insufficient as a tool for changing the condition of black people in this country. The BPP was influenced by a marxist-leninist interpretation of socioeconomic conditions
and they advocated a revolutionary approach to solving America's problems.

My third experience with radical thought was induced by a trip I made in 1969 to West Africa to produce a film on imperialism and colonialism, as instruments of political and economic exploitation, in Africa. Talking with African politicians, inside and outside of Africa, was a tremendous learning experience in terms of understanding the relationship between foreign domination and indigenous growth.

My fourth experience took place in Washington, D.C. in 1970. I traveled to Washington to produce a documentary film on a group of black heroin addicts, who had splintered from a black muslim group to organize a drug rehabilitation center for heroin addicts in the Washington area. Their approach to the drug problem was radically innovative. They used former drug addicts as counselors because they felt that they were in the best position to understand and help other addicts. This group called themselves the Blackman's Army of Liberation and they mounted a frontal attack against drug use and abuse in the black community.

Each of the above experiences: economic exploitation and racism coupled with police brutality; political awareness grounded on knowledge of cause and effect instead of cultural mysticism; international politics and the exploitation of developing countries; and the devastating effect of drug use
and abuse on young people in ghetto communities, had a singular impact on my thinking and awakened me to the depths and complexity of problems faced by black people in a racist society. Eventually, they would compound into a point of view that considered it reasonable to seek a radical solution. The radical solution spoke of change and movement. It implied the amelioration of intolerable conditions. When exercised, it produced knowledge, understanding, and insight but it also incurred confrontation with the status quo and conflict.

My film work trained me to understand the dialectical tension in American politics. I learned to seek causal relationships. I wanted to know what really happens when variable A collides with variable B, producing a variable we may call C. How was variable C different from and similar to its antecedents and what actually happened to variables A and B in the collision? This training had influenced the breadth of my initial research concerns, making it reasonable to consider how Christianity influences ethnic self-concepts.

As I began my doctoral program in Autumn 1980 I set out to prepare myself to study the impact of Christianity on the black Christian in two ways. I wanted to learn how Christianity affected the psychological and social behavior of black Christians and how Christianity influenced the concept of "Blackness," if such a concept could be defined, in a
predominately "White" society. In a direct way, these ques-
tions are tied to the Christian symbol of Jesus Christ, son
of God, as a white Anglo-Saxon male and the potential iden-
tity crisis that can ensue when black Christians worship
such a symbol. I was also interested in learning if Chris-
tianity ensured that black people looked up to white people
while looking down on themselves or if it reinforced the
view that white people were superior and black people in-
ferior.

Rather than research these questions in abstraction,
i.e., through the debates of theoreticians, I decided to en-
ter a real community to learn, firsthand how such questions
manifested themselves in the day-to-day lives of practicing
Christians. I chose to conduct my research at Centenary
United Methodist Church in Columbus, Ohio. In considering
a research design I decided to use participant observation
for initial entry into the community. I began the study
around the rituals and symbols of the worship service and
as the research progressed I used a camera as a visual
method for facilitating the research process. I felt that
studying the rituals and symbols would be a reasonable point
of entry into the metaphors and psychological paradigms that
give meaning to Christian thought and behavior. My problem
was to get to the core of racial thoughts and self-identity
concepts through the study of myths, rituals, and symbols,
not only in terms of what people told me but also in terms of what could be evaluated from the practice of daily living.

**Modifying the Problem**

Fieldwork is exploration and certain research methodologies helped me to control the uncertainty that accompanies flexible investigation. I used participant observation, coupled with interviews, to discover community routines. Through direct contact I became familiar with individual histories and community activities. As my awareness and understanding of the community increased, so did the evidence that the matrix of complex questions that characterized my original problem was too complicated to be dealt with in six months time. It became obvious to me that a study of such magnitude, to be scientifically sound and humanistically credible, would take years.

In view of the fact that it is not unusual for research interest to change during the course of qualitative research (Shaffir, Stebbins, Turowetz 1980: 16), I decided to modify my problem. It would change from trying to understand the relationship between Christianity and ethnic self-concepts at such an early stage, to developing a research design that would lay the groundwork for a more comprehensive study. In essence, I would find some aspect of the community that I could understand and through which I could facilitate the preparation for further and future study.
The New Problem

The new problem takes the form of a modified research design, e.g. an ethnographic description of the community. The aim of ethnography is the understanding of another way of life, a learning from other people. The work of ethnography is recording, describing, explaining, and interpreting a culture. "Ideally, this describing . . . requires . . . residence in a . . . community, and the employment of a wide range of observation techniques (in) . . . face-to-face contacts with members of the (community) . . . and . . . direct participation in some (community) activities . . . ." (Conklin 1968: 172) The observation techniques used to support the ethnographic description were participant observation, the ethnographic interview, the projective interview, and photographic documentation.*

The purpose of the ethnographic description is to generate data that will facilitate a wider range of intersecting investigations. For example, developing awareness in one area of research interest should reveal data in contiguous areas, creating concentric circles of awareness that will eventually encompass a holistic grasp of the values and interactions that characterize the social, cultural, and, even, psychological fabric of the community. The quest for an ethnographic description is an initial step in the preparation for deeper study.

* These techniques will be discussed in the chapter on Methodology.
Significance of the Study

One significant aspect of the study is the material it offers for a broadened discussion on the use of the photograph in ethnographic study. Photographs provide an added dimension for acquiring knowledge. It is extremely useful to see people in their cultural setting: to see how they look; what they wear; the physical distance that marks their social interaction and other ethnographic indices.

All of these signs provide information that is immeasurably supportive to the ethnographic description. The question should not be whether to photograph, but how to photograph. What visual parameters make a photograph ethnographic, i.e., a vehicle for understanding the culture being observed?

In general, the photographs in this study would contribute to my research design by enhancing rapport, recording data, validating observations, stimulating interviews, and supplementing written conclusions.

My personal approach to a methodology for the ethnographic photograph was to use a wide angle lens. I placed myself at a point in relationship to the cultural event that put the event in the center of the visual field. I had prepared myself to recognize the event through participant observation. The wide angle lens compensated for the limitation of not being able to concentrate on everything at once. The wide angle lens also allowed peripheral action to make an
informational contribution to the content of the image. Two kinds of visual statements emerged during the process: the sequential action and the instant moment. By surrounding the natural flow of an event with shots from different angles I could create a sequence. By shooting the same event with different people at different times I created a representative set of instant moments, joined by a continuity of content instead of a continuity of action.

Two examples might help illustrate the point. The sequential examples* (Figures 1-4) and (Figures 5-8) are attempts to capture the feel and ambience of two church meetings. The first meeting was a Bible study group (Figures 1-4) and the second, the administrative board. (Figures 5-8) The instant moment examples+ depict different Sunday school classes. (Figures 9-16) Both the sequential and the instant moment photographs raise the question of what visual methods are most appropriate for generating substantive ethnographic information and, in a broader sense, what actually constitutes visual ethnographic information.

A second significant aspect of this study points to the opportunity it offers to help the photographer-researcher to consciously study ways to select, arrange, detail, and process his research photographs for scientific research.

* See pages 30-33
+ See pages 34-37
A final significance can be seen in the opportunity to evaluate the cross fertilization of anthropological research concerns (what people do) with sociological research concerns (how people interact) for fieldwork in qualitative research.
Figure 1  A Bible study group.

Figure 2  The minister leads the discussion.
Figure 3  Bible verses will be analyzed.

Figure 4  The traditional parting prayer closes the meeting.
The administrative board opens its meeting with a prayer.

The meeting is heavily attended and in full discussion concerning the budget.
Figure 7  The minister makes a point.

Figure 8  The same meeting shot from a different angle.
Figure 9  A class for very young children.

Figure 10  The classes are not always this small but small classes are not unusual.
Figure 11 An adolescent class is meeting in the small room used for other meetings.

Figure 12 The minister holds a class with young adults in his office.
Figure 13  The first adult men's class. The absence of younger men is not unusual.

Figure 14  The adult women's class. This class like the first adult men's class meets in the sanctuary.
Figure 15  A second adult men's class. I was not able to learn why there were two men's classes.

Figure 16  The general assembly before Sunday school is dismissed.
Limitations of the Study

This study was limited in its capacity to develop a broader sampling of research participants and photographs and to cultivate a more penetrating research design. It does not inform us about class, caste, and gender status in the church, nor class, caste, and ethnic status in the larger community. This limitation results from the fact that the researcher had only six months in which to conduct his research, only three of which were devoted to using visual methods to record data. While the time limitation did not hinder the development of positive and productive rapport, it did restrict the extent to which the researcher could reach into additional areas of research concerns. For example, the short time span made it difficult to gauge when the time was right to move into the more personal areas of the participants' lives. More time was needed to make the transition from public to private investigation become a reasonable consequence of the work in progress.

An additional limitation is the impressionistic, illustrative, and descriptive nature of the photographs. Again, time did not allow the development of a visual research design that would demonstrate the relevance of the photograph to the research problem. Nevertheless, the photographs proved to be useful in enhancing rapport, stimulating interviews, and providing some research data.
The photographic data, as they stand now, will not generate relevant theory, but with continued study and the development of a more comprehensive visual research design, a comparative analysis between early photographs and later photographs could generate some theoretical considerations concerning the reflexive development of the photographer-researcher.

Ideally, a researcher should strive for a balanced description and interpretation of the research community. But, because this study deals with only a few church problems and related activities, it can only represent an introductory view of the community.
Overview of the Study

This study is premised on an attempt to describe "the informal logic of actual life" in a church community by combining several social science research methodologies with photography. It is introduced by an historical overview of the development of the independent black church. The introduction sketches the inculcation of Christianity into the lives of black people from slavery to its post-bellum establishment as the central institution for social interaction. As a result of the church's entrenchment as a cultural system for black Americans it came under attack by radical thought in the sixties. This attack raised important questions concerning the church's capacity to service a liberated consciousness and some aspects of these questions constituted the original problem for this study. As the research progressed, the original problem was modified to seek an understanding of the research community as an existing social entity and not as the source for examining a hypothetical proposition. The first chapter closes with a delineation of the significance and the limitations of the study.

Chapter two reviews related literature. Sources are named which provided some understanding of culture, society, and the nature of social institutions. Of particular importance in this chapter were those sources which discussed visual sociology, visual anthropology, visual communications,
and interdisciplinary perspectives on the problems of photography as a research tool. These sources intimated that anthropological concerns and sociological concerns can amalgamate with the help of a potential research instrument like the photograph.

Chapter three describes the methodologies associated with the research design and the research process, both theoretical and practical, and the researcher's field experience in terms of entering the community and choosing a community event as the basis for collecting data.

Chapter four describes some research findings and chapter five offers interpretation and discussion of the field experience.

Chapter six summarizes the study and offers some conclusions and recommendations for further study.
CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

This study is influenced by an interdisciplinary approach to qualitative research in a church community. It draws upon anthropology and sociology for theoretical and methodological considerations for fieldwork and studies in photography for insights into the photograph's potential for making a "methodological" contribution to qualitative field research.

Anthropology Studies

(Spradley and McCurdy 1980) offered a basic foundation for understanding the nature and universal characteristics of culture. A theoretical model was advanced that showed culture to be a social instrument needed by society to facilitate the interpretation of personal and social experience and the generation of personal and social behavior. This model proposed a research methodology, suggested by (Spradley 1980) and (Spradley 1979), known as participant observation and the ethnographic interview. Noteworthy in the Spradley books was the delineated relationship between cultural description and interpretation (ethnography) and social experience and behavior (culture). Spradley's books
also schematized a paradigmatic approach to the actual practice of data collection, emphasizing aspects of making and writing a report. Spradley outlined ethnography's traditional approach to the empirical study of a community. Spradley's theoretical and methodological suggestions were augmented by contributions from (Geertz 1973), (Marcus and Cushman 1982), (Mead and Metraux 1953), (Benedict 1934), and (Bateson and Mead 1942).

Mead, Benedict, and Bateson and Mead typified ethnographic realism.

Ethnographic realism ... is a mode of writing that seems to represent the reality of a whole world or form of life .... Realist ethnographies are written to allude to a whole by means of parts or foci of analytical attention which constantly evoke a social and cultural totality. Close attention to detail and redundant demonstrations that the writer shared and experienced that world are further aspects of realist writing. What gives the ethnographer authority and the text a pervasive sense of concrete reality is the writer's claim to represent a world as only one who has known it first hand can .... (This) forces an intimate link between ethnographic writing and fieldwork. (Marcus and Cushman 1982: 29)

Geertz and Marcus and Cushman advocated a more experimental ethnography: an ethnography that would capture "the informal logic of actual life" (Geertz 1973) and/or allow "the reflexive intrusion" of the ethnographer (Marcus and Cushman 1982) to inform the description. Both Geertz and Marcus and Cushman felt that new insights could be won by
extending the boundaries of ethnographic realism. They imply that meaning can be read out of the ever "changing contexts of interaction," where conceptualization is based more on empirical understanding than a "fixed object of analysis." Their implication proposes that non traditional ethnographies i.e., ethnographies that do not rely solely on ethnographic realism to structure their descriptive and analytic content, may carry a degree of understanding that renders even the expected ambiguities of qualitative research cognitively functional. Inherent in this implication is the suggestion that more qualitative research should contribute to non traditional ethnography so that we might increase our knowledge of its potential for capturing "the informal logic of actual life."

Readings from (Blount 1974), (Goodenough 1981), and (Abrahams and Troike 1972), helped broaden and specify an understanding of the relationship between culture and language. Culture and language are similar, in many ways as social tools, but significantly different in others.

A model for making a theoretical distinction between thought and behavior was given by Harris (Harris 1980) in his work on cultural materialism. His emic and etic analysis of thought and behavior furnished a conceptual basis for structuring a descriptive format for this study.
Since culture functions in a social system it was necessary to gain an understanding of a "social system." (Berger 1963) provided a substantive explanation of the sociology of culture, but more as a basis for understanding the institutional structure in which culture must operate, than as a theoretical basis for understanding culture itself. Parsons, in (Lessa and Vogt 1979: 29), stated that institutions are maintained and changed through the motivational process in human beings. Both Berger and Parsons depicted society as a human product. On the other hand, (Berger and Luckman 1967) illustrated that it is the concomitant production of social events that gives substance to culture, which, in turn, influences the nature of social institutions.

The initial impetus for understanding religion as a meaning system was contributed by (Berger 1969), while (Lessa and Vogt 1979) presented an anthology of writings on the anthropological approach to comparative readings in religion stressing the origin and development of religion and the function of religion in human society. Important sections of (Lessa and Vogt 1979) were Kluckhohn's theoretical discussion on myths and rituals and Geertz's analysis of religion as a cultural system.
In a very direct way (Berger 1969) provided a theoretical template for explaining the sociological reasons for the differentiated manifestation of religious participation in the research community.

A sociological view of the institutional church and the denominational organization of corporate Christianity were fostered by (Sherer 1980) and further sociological perspectives came from (McGuire 1981). The McGuire book was a fundamental source for up-to-date definitional thinking in the sociology of religion. The Sherer book was a comprehensive description of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish patterns of organizational corporate structure.

The historical development of Christianity among black people was charted by readings from (Washington 1964), (Washington 1971), (Raboteau 1978), (Wilmore 1973), and (Hamilton 1972), and the psychological conflicts that are products of a racist society were characterized by (Grier and Cobbs 1968) and (Grier and Cobbs 1971).

An interesting footnote to the qualitative aspect of this study was provided by (Shaffir, Stebbins and Turowetz 1980) in terms of fieldwork experience and the procedures and expectations that accompany qualitative fieldwork.

*Studies in Photography*

Readings from the areas of visual sociology, visual anthropology, and visual communications have contributed to
an interdisciplinary perspective on the problem of how the photograph can gain methodological suitability as a research tool in social science research.

(Curry and Clarke 1978) provide a comprehensive introduction to visual sociology. They introduce the reader to visual sociology, or the sociologist's concern for the visual study of society, through a discussion of three areas of major concern to sociologists. In terms of how sociologists orient their visual perspective in sociological thinking Curry and Clarke discuss: (1) the significance of the documentary image; (2) research designs and methodology; and (3) theory construction.

According to Curry and Clarke the social document, i.e., the documentary photograph, "has enjoyed the longest history" in sociology's approach to a visual statement. (Curry and Clarke 1978: 15) They suggest, with this, that the visual statement, for sociologists, was influenced by the documentary photograph. The beginning of the social document is generally placed in the early twentieth century with the works of Jacob A. Riis and Lewis W. Hine. These photographers caught the attention of the political and public eye with photographs on the destitute and oppressive conditions under which immigrants had to live and work. (Newhall 1964)
But before these photographs became public, according to Clarice Stasz, "... sociology itself had a brief encounter with the camera ... in, ... turn of-the-century volume(s) of The American Journal of Sociology ... Between 1896 and 1916 thirty-one articles used two hundred forty-four photographs as illustrations and evidence in their discussions." (Wagner 1979: 119-136)

Stasz suggests that the photograph functioned as a social document for the sociologist. At any rate, it is important to consider that the photograph found use as a vehicle for the dissemination of social concerns very early and that this special kind of social vision has its influence on the visual statement of the sociologist.

Another important phase in the development of the photograph as a social document can be found in the photographs of photographers who were engaged by The Farm Security Administration (FSA) from 1935 to 1943 to photograph "all phases of rural America" in an effort to help fight the depression and to educate the American public about this tremendous problem. (Newhall 1967: 146-148)

Broadly speaking, the documentary photograph tended to concentrate on social constellations and structures with a view toward interpreting these constellations in socio-economic and socio-political terms. In the case of Lewis W. Hine, "... He wished to show working people in their
environments in a more detached and objective manner. Social photography was, for him, an educational process; a picture was a piece of evidence, a record of social injustice, but also of individual human beings surviving with dignity in intolerable conditions." (Trachtenberg 1980: 109) In the case of the FSA, on the other hand, the social significance of their photographs can be surmised from the guidelines given to the photographers to capture all aspects of the social, domestic, and occupational lives of their subjects. (Stryker and Wood 1973: 187)

The social document developed into a descriptive and illustrative artifact of social conditions. Because it described and did not analyze, relying heavily on narrative themes, it was felt to be "theoretically thin." (Curry and Clarke 1978: 16) In order to flesh-out the theoretical thinness of the photograph in sociological research, Curry and Clarke suggest that a research design be developed whereby the visual methods used to manifest the problem be relevant to the problem in terms of facilitating the research process. Concretely, these visual methods should help in: building rapport between the researcher and the research community; providing an instrument for recording research data; sharpening the observational skills of the researcher; providing an instrument that will facilitate the feedback process between researcher and research community; defining
the reflexive parameters of the researcher's biases and unconscious cultural values so that a more balanced interpretation and analysis can be actuated; stimulating more comprehensive interview sessions between the researcher and the research community; generating relevant theory; and supporting and supplementing verbal conclusions. (Curry and Clarke 1978: 20)

I found suggestions from Curry and Clarke to be helpful for my own fieldwork process in the areas of rapport building, data recording, the feedback process, some aspects of reflexivity, a stimulus to a certain kind of interview, and a support to the verbal report. In each of the above situations the photograph found useful application. These applications will get more specific description in latter parts of this study.

Curry and Clarke provided an extremely useful bibliography in the areas of visual thinking and visual literacy, visual sociology, visual anthropology, and photographic essays and criticism. They also offered exercises for students to increase their awareness of visual imagery and to strengthen the relationship between that awareness and sociological thinking.

. (Collier 1967) introduces a discussion on visual anthropology by asserting that perceptive sensitivity is a prerequisite for meaningful anthropological observation, and,
consequently, the basis for the visual records of cultural patterns. (Collier 1967: XIII) From the outset Collier is convinced that the photograph can function as an effective research tool. Reasons for this position are based on the camera's ability to be an extension of our perception and its mechanical support to critical analysis as a control factor to visual observation. (Collier 1967: 4-5)

But Collier cautions us that the camera has no selective capabilities of its own and that it offers no means of "evading the need for informed perception" nor avoiding the impressionism that can result from an inadequate research design. Collier proposes that a research design be developed "after an orientation phase of fact gathering and rapport building has given the researcher sufficient grasp of the new culture so that he can observe, identify and relate. Effective research design should replace the initial phase of visual impulsiveness with a structured scheme of selectivity." (Collier 1967: 70) An effective research design should also facilitate the selection of a sampling of informants and photographs that provide a comprehensive and balanced view of the community. The development of a research design and the task of sampling are conterminous, both having a direct bearing on the validity of the study.

A "structured scheme of selectivity" should not be understood to mean the absence of intuitive recording. Since we
cannot see everything of importance all the time, working intelligently with the wealth of measurable facts within cultural photographs requires selecting only the most significant variables. "But if we gather a large enough body of evidence, including intuitive recording, we may be able to form patterns later in the research." (Collier 1967: 71)

Collier's discussion on interviewing with photographs in (Collier 1967) and (Collier 1957) intimated that relevant use of research photographs could be made through their projective interpretation by community informants. (Collier 1967: 49) In (Collier 1957) two important theoretical questions were raised that emphasized the significance of the projective interview in the research setting: (1) How can photographs function other than as illustration?; and (2) How can you apply photographic imagery to direct research? (Collier 1957: 843) For each question an answer was proposed to be found in the projective interview: interviewing informants with photographs would take the photograph beyond mere illustration and, subsequently, establish the photograph as part of the research process. In my own fieldwork practice the projective interview provided feedback on the effectiveness of my observational skills.*

* See page 65 for a more detailed discussion on the projective interview.
The first anthropologists to make extensive use of the photograph, beyond the traditional record making capacity to which it had been relegated, were Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead. Mead described their innovative use of photography as an attempt at "... a new method of stating the intangible relationships among different types of culturally standardized behavior by placing side by side mutually relevant photographs." (Bateson and Mead 1942: XII) Mead also stated that they "attempted to make systematic samples of village organization, ceremonial and rites de passage, trance, painting, carving, the shadow play puppets, death rituals, and child behavior so as to provide a series of cross-cutting pictures of culture which could be fitted together and cross checked against each other." (Bateson and Mead 1942: XV)

The publication, in 1942, of BALINESE CHARACTER, marked a turning point in the anthropological use of photography. (It) ... converted photography from a method of illustrating and preserving vanishing or undescrivable single events or individuals into a method of furthering anthropological research. The shift in scale was directed primarily at the recording of types of nonverbal behavior for which there existed neither vocabulary nor conceptualized methods of observation, in which the observations had to precede the codification. Photography was used consciously to compensate for the changing sophistication of the observer, as photographs taken before a hypothesis was elaborated could be used to control the subjective choice of particular bits of behavior; for once the hypothesis was
formulated, the anthropologist might become too selective in what he photographed.

The change of scale from the traditional two-or three-hundred photographs to many thousands also made possible the new form of presentation used in BALINESE CHARACTER - the juxtaposition of details from many different parts of the culture without violation of the wholeness of each juxtaposed event. (Mead 1974: 170-172)

I found BALINESE CHARACTER instructive because it generated a feel for the ecological settings, space and temporal constellations, and certain types of social, cultural, and gender behavior patterns in the research community. Although photographs, like language, require a knowledge of the appropriate cultural conventions to be understood correctly, the visual structure of the photographs in BALINESE CHARACTER, in conjunction with the written text, demonstrated that knowledge can be generated when photography is incorporated into the appropriate research design.

"In 1976, Sol Worth delivered a paper at a symposium honoring Margaret Mead on her seventy-fifth birthday. That paper addressed the need for scholars to properly understand the uses and the limitations of visual communications:"

(Gross 1981: 34)

(Worth) distinguished between the use of visual images and media as research tools and as research material. In the case of the former, he used Margaret Mead's work with Gregory Bateson as an example of how pictures can be used by a researcher to illustrate patterns of culture. He wanted
to emphasize once again a point that we all forget too easily: that "the photograph is not the pattern," but something that we use as evidence to illustrate pattern. "Taking photographs, or looking, or taking notes are tools for articulating and stating patterns that we, as anthropologists, wish to show to others."

And there is an important corollary: the value of the photograph lies in the analysis. Researcher-photographers who understand what patterns they wish to present will take photographs which will be capable of showing these patterns to others. Success is not a matter of luck but of training, skill, and intention. Bateson's and Mead's photographs are valuable because they knew what they were photographing and why they were taken in ways which allowed them to be analyzed so as to illustrate patterns observed by scientists who knew what they were looking for." (Gross 1981: 34)

Larry Gross (Gross 1981) edited a compilation of writings by Sol Worth. Worth, a pioneer in the theoretical study of visual anthropology, died before he could complete his research and writings on communicated meaning through visual images. Worth formulated "two related sets of questions that he pursued for the rest of his life." (Gross 1981: 4) First, how is meaning communicated in various modes and media: are visual images in general . . . better understood in light of a general theory of communication as symbolic behavior; and what would this theory look like? And second, by teaching informants to use the camera . . . could the medium be used "to see whether the visual world offers a way of communication that can be used not only for us to communicate
to them, but . . . that . . . might make it easier for them to talk to us." (Gross 1981: 4)

In an effort to come to grips with these issues Worth worked on developing a semiotic of film, an anthropological politics of symbolic forms, and an ethnography of visual communication. His thoughts on these areas are laid out in (Gross 1981).

Worth is noted for his work in the area of anthropological theory and practice. He was concerned about the values and the biases of the researcher on research records. He argued that the "most objective . . . film or report included the view and values of the maker." (Gross 1981: 4) Researcher bias seemed particularly gravitating in view of the fact that "most anthropologists viewed film and photography only as ways to make records about culture (usually other cultures) and failed to see that they would be studied as phenomena of culture in their own right, reflecting the value systems, coding patterns, and cognitive processes of their maker." (Gross 1981: 6)

Worth was sensitive to viewing visual media as cultural artifacts, as well as simple research records. This sensitivity developed out of his activities as a teacher of filmmaking as well as an interest in the ethical problems posed by traditional anthropological research methods. Worth discovered that the films his students made often captured
feelings and revealed values, attitudes, and concerns that lie beyond the conscious control of the maker. This particular kind of subjectivity had a value that opened the imagination for seeing film as a cultural communicator in addition to being a recorder of fact. (Gross 1981: 4-5)

This realization led to an experiment known as the "Navajo Project." Worth collaborated with John Adair in teaching a group of Navajo Indians how to make films. After basic technical instructions the Indians made films about their concerns and their culture. According to Gross, the Navajo Project was "enormously successful." The films made by the Navajo filmmakers were widely screened and discussed as "a breakthrough in cross-cultural communications." (Gross 1981: 6)

In principle, Worth's notion to have the research community point the camera at itself seems a creative approach to getting an inside view. But short of this approach, which may have its own limitations in revealing deeper truths or be nonviable for logistical reasons, Collier and Worth have offered reasonable suggestions to this reader for maximizing the functional use of the photograph as a research tool.

By considering Collier's suggestion to treat the photograph as a feedback instrument and Worth's suggestion to treat the photograph as an illustrator of cultural patterns, i.e., approaching the research community with photographs of
their activities, the projective interview was adapted to aid the researcher in assessing his research methodology and the efficacy of the photograph as an instrument for promoting feedback.

Frank Webster, in (Webster 1980), highlights his discussion on communication as symbolic behavior by maintaining that photography is communication. In the sense that "communication rests on tacit and taken-for-granted assumptions and mechanisms which are constituted in the culture of the photographer who created an image and the viewer who received it. Both the photographer and the viewer experience a commonality which is the cultural backdrop to the act of communication. Webster proposes that culture provides the fulcrum for communication, and, consequently, is a necessary prerequisite for successful communication. (Webster 1980: 17-19)

Webster strengthens his allegation that photography is communication by defining photography as a selection and interpretation process with two aspects: (1) the photographer selects and interprets in the process of encoding a visual message; and (2) the viewer interprets in the process of decoding that visual message. Thus, photographic communication is an active process of interpretation by both photographer and viewer resulting from values and beliefs, held by both, that are based on a common cultural outlook.
But we are advised by Webster to recognize the paradoxical nature of photography.

Photography is . . . a unique form of communication stamped by its mechanical reproduction of the world. Its capacity for exact representation sets it apart from all other communicative systems. (Webster 1980: 154)

Unlike painting, sculpture or art, photography can be regarded in a significant sense as a non-human construction. It is of the world yet apart from the world. This nontranslatability is the crucial distinguishing factor of the photograph from verbal communication. It is, furthermore, the source of the photographic paradox. Photographs . . . do not require interpretation. They are simply there. Words, on the other hand, are quintessentially in need of interpretation since they are symbols. (Webster 1980: 156)

Photographs contain denotative and connotative elements, simultaneously. Denotative elements represent objective presence in a picture. They are iconic. They resemble the objects they signify. They reflect natural phenomena. Denotative elements can communicate without translation. Their meaning can be tangible to the viewer independent of the photographer's intention.

Connotative elements in a picture require interpretation. They are symbolic. There may be no visible connection or resemblance between the sign and the objects they signify. Connotative elements communicate through agreed upon convention. They have to be translated by both the photographer and the viewer in order to communicate.
Webster's interpretation of the paradoxical nature of photography raises some interesting considerations for the photographer-researcher. Research, like language, is an abstract system of communication. It requires the interpretation of arbitrary symbols to gain meaning. Because photographs have the character of mechanical reproduction, they may easily seem to lack the need for interpretation. But science is based on arbitrary signification and when photographs are used in a scientific context the photographer-researcher must be especially conscious of the need to select, arrange, detail, and process his research photographs so that they can participate in the arbitrary signification common to the discipline.

The photographer-researcher must also consider the need to select a view, out of the multitude of possible views, that will reflect the cultural vision of the research community. This vision must be, for the informant community, culturally accurate and relevant.

A concluding consideration, though not the last, is a recognition of the fact that photographs "are generally, not merely in need of translation - they are actually markedly difficult to translate." (Webster 1980: 162) This opens the photograph to many readings, thus, making it necessary for words to fix a particular interpretation. For the photographer-researcher, research photographs must be
supplemented by appropriate descriptive material.

(Wagner 1979) discusses the visual image in social science research and pedagogy, notably anthropology and sociology. This book accents the photograph as a system of representation and symbolization with emphasis on research applications, issues in research, issues in teaching, teaching applications, and problems and prospects in visual sociology, visual anthropology, and photography in the social science process.

Of special practical interest was the section "Research Application," because of the six articles written by social scientists describing and discussing their use of the still camera as a research tool. In another section, "Issues in Research," guidelines were suggested for using photography as a research tool and for evaluating the results of photographic research data.

Of special theoretical interest were the articles by John Collier entitled "Evaluating Visual Data" and "Visual Anthropology." In the former Collier proposed ways for gathering and analyzing photographic data, and in the latter uses for photographic research in nonverbal communication, e.g., kinesics (messages of body language), proxemics (messages of spatial positioning), and choreometrics (messages of cultural movement, like dance). In addition to nonverbal communication, Collier discussed some of the same issues dealt with in more
detail in (Collier 1957) and (Collier 1967).

In general (Wagner 1979) surveyed questions such as, can photographs record human behavior, what photographic strategies generate interesting data, what kinds of questions about the social order can be explored through photography, and how does photographic equipment constrict or expand the role of the social researcher. (Wagner 1979: 14)

By letting practitioners and theoreticians address these questions (Wagner 1979) offered the reader a valuable source for understanding the photograph as a "system of representation and symbolization."
CHAPTER III

Methodology

Participant Observation

Participant observation is a research method used to observe and subsequently describe a culture. The essence of this method is the understanding of a research community from the community's point of view. The method involves, in a basic sense, seeing what the world is like to the people who function in that world. Seen from a different perspective, participant observation helps the researcher to learn from the community as opposed to studying the community as some interesting object. Participant observation makes it possible to learn what community members do, know, make, and use. These experiences translate into cultural knowledge, cultural behavior, and cultural artifacts. Participant observation offers the researcher an opportunity to step outside certain boundaries of his or her own cultural matrix.

There are two aspects of participant observation that illustrate its importance as a research tool. One is participatory and the other observational. Direct participation in the activities of the research community allows the researcher a direct feel for the meaning of the activity. While
participating, the researcher will carefully observe all aspects of the activity and its surrounding interactional ambiance. Participant observation is designed to help the researcher develop: an awareness of important impulses; a widened observational focus through the insider/outsider experience; and a heightened introspective sensitivity to observed experiences.

My first activity as a researcher was to participate in committee meetings. I sat in on approximately 10 important committee meetings. These meetings were conducted by such committees as: the finance committee; the free lunch program committee; the usher board; the administrative board; the church school board; and the pastor-parish committee.

After establishing a measure of rapport I began to interview community leaders. I felt that the interview would help me understand what was not obvious through observation. What I did not understand I would ask about in the interview. I used a methodological approach characteristic of the ethnographic interview to guide my interview technique. The ethnographic interview is designed to help the researcher learn the cultural concepts of the community through direct interaction. It is distinguished by the need to learn how to formulate questions that are meaningful to the research community. I interviewed approximately 30% of the active church membership. Among the interviewees were church officers, young adults,
and members in long standing. Specific aspects of the meetings and the interviews will be discussed as they occur in related parts of the study.

Projective interviewing

Projective interviewing involves interviewing community members with photographs taken in the community during the research process. The photographs are interpreted by research participants with a view toward stimulating feedback, uncovering submerged aspects of the community, and self-expression. Projective interviews also provide a check on the observational skills of the researcher. They help structure the interview by presenting real pieces of the community for discussion thus minimizing the inhibitive effect of verbal probing.

Projective interviews with individuals offer psychological overtones like emotional associations, introspection, free associations, and reminiscences, while viewing photographs in groups offers insights on community structure and social interaction. The one disadvantage with group interviews is that emotional associations may be inhibited in favor of factual responses instead of personal responses. An effective visual research design should be founded on the cross fertilization of both individual and group interviews.

I conducted projective interviews with two groups and one individual. The interviewees, in all cases, selected
photographs that seemed to capture their reality. Their selec­tion verified the observer's understanding of their en­vironment and the efficacy of participant observation and visual documentation as research strategies. The interviews were recorded so that comments about the photographs could provide additional research data.

The first group interview was conducted with eight young adults. Their median age was 24 and there were six women and two men. Their occupations were: insurance agent; attorney; secretary; student; musician; public school aide; public relations agent; and bank teller. The interview was held in a small room in the Ebony House, which stands adjacent to the church. We met on a Wednesday afternoon in August. We did not have much space in that small room so the photographs were laid out on makeshift tables in groups. The interview session was congenial and the discussion was lively.

The second group interview was conducted with twelve middle-aged to older adults. Their median age was estimated to be between 55 and 65 years old. I could not get an exact age count because the women would not tell me their ages. There were nine women and three men. Six of the women and one man were still working, while three women and two men were retired. The active occupations were: federal worker; homemakers; teacher; locksmith; and employment service counselor. This interview was held in the fellowship hall of the
church on another August afternoon.

These two groups were chosen because they represented different stages of church involvement according to age. The young adults were on the fringes of church involvement (although they had been members since early childhood) and the middle-aged adults were in the thick of church activity. In spite of the difference in church involvement both groups expressed a real concern and love for the church community.

Finally, the individual projective interview was conducted with an adult male on the same day and immediately following the second group interview. When the group had dispersed he picked up a photograph (Figure 103) and began to talk.

A. Group Projective Interview - Young Adults

The first group of photographs that this group responded to were photographs of the social interaction (Figures 26-37) following the worship service. This ritual symbolized the laying on of hands and it produced an emotional experience that capstoned the Sunday service, sending the worshipers into a new week with social and spiritual reinforcement. I noticed this ritual very early in my observation but I was never able to discern a pattern as to who greets whom. The ritual seemed to be open and random, which was an interesting counterpoint to the fact that church members always seemed to occupy the same seats every Sunday. I was keen to have the
young adult group view the social interaction photographs to learn if, in fact, there was a pattern to the movement.

I explained to them that I made no effort to single out personalities but concentrated solely on the social exchange. I photographed this ritual on many different Sundays from many different angles. The only thing that remained constant was the focal length of the lens.

Ms. A: Centenary is based on a lot of older people. It doesn't look like there are any young people in the church. They are either being carried or on a cane. (Figure 30)

Researcher: Do you think the fact that we see so few young people is a characteristic of the church or just these photographs?

Ms. A: I think it is these photographs. But that is just a very recent phenomenon, I think. I think there are younger people. When I say younger people I'm talking about young teenagers. There aren't that many young adults but there are a lot of old people. (Figures 26, 27, 33, 35)

Ms. B: Well, maybe so, but they just don't come to church.

Ms. C: There are still quite a few of us left. We are not a dying breed, you know. Everybody is starting to go their separate ways now. Some come on holidays and some don't come at all.

Researcher: So could I imply that the absence of young adults in the photographs, especially at a very important ritual like this, indicates that there are not many young adults active in the church?
Ms. C: Yeah. You must have taken these when we all left church. It's about four in here altogether. I'm not saying that you are striking us out, you know.

Researcher: As soon as the minister would finish with the benediction I would jump up and whatever groups would be near me I would photograph and sometimes I would try to get to the back of the church before people got away but young people move so fast . . .

Mr. D: Yeah, they are in a hurry to get out of there.

Researcher: Why are young people in a hurry to get away?

Mr. D: That's a good question. I've never thought about it. I just see it happen all the time and they always look like they are in a rush to get away.

Researcher: Do you rush to get away?

Mr. D: No, not me. I always have to stay around to meet and greet people.

Researcher: Anybody else want to make a comment about why young people rush to get away? What do you think about that?

Ms. A: The one thing I have noticed and I think that everybody is so used to it, you know, if you've grown up here and everything, that you kind of take it for granted. You see what I'm saying. You don't see what you saw. What you saw is like the laying on of hands, one to another. But for us, like if you've been somewhere for twenty years, sometimes you can let that slip away from you where you really don't think that's important. That little thing is not as important as some other thing but maybe you just get tired of it.
It occurred to me while we were discussing the photographs to ask how the photographer was generally perceived and what influence the camera and the flash had on the environment.

Researcher: Did the presence of the camera and the flash affect, in your opinion, the normal church atmosphere? Do you think it changed the atmosphere in some way?

Ms. E: I noticed it distracted others. They would see this light flashing and they would turn around to see where it was coming from and it was taking their mind off of what was going on up in front. And in some people minds when they see a camera they'd want to style and profile. They think they're going to get their picture taken and put on a billboard somewhere. But it didn't distract me because I knew you were taking them.

Researcher: So the fact that you had some idea of what I was doing minimized the interference?

Ms. E: Right.

Ms. F: It did seem like an intrusion. I think after about the second month (laughter). I think the first couple of times everybody understood it but every time you looked up, because you had so many other things going on in service, you had baptizing and all this going on and here you come with the camera with this thing on it. And everybody said what has he got, you know (laughter). I think after a while we did think "We'll be glad when you are through with this, with the pictures."

Researcher: What I find interesting about your comment is that nobody made me feel that. I didn't really feel intimidated in any way, in spite of the fact that I was
intimidating other people because if you point the camera at someone who is not voluntarily standing in front of your camera it's intimidating. Do you feel that these images of interaction are communicating what's happening in the environment to people outside the environment?

Ms. F: I get the impression that it looks like a family. I mean it looks like it is a bond or something there. Where everybody feels real comfortable with each other. And I guess you can tell that most of these people know each other and have known each other for years and years. It doesn't seem fake to me because, if they didn't really want to do it, they could leave. I know, I left for years. Now that I know people a little better I'll stop and shake a hand but if I don't know nobody what am I going to shake a hand for? But most of these people really know each other so they are laughing and talking.

Ms. A: I feel that's a really good part of the service. That's one thing that I really like. You speak to people and everything and get a chance to talk. I think that a lot of young people leave because... I think that the friends that you make at church are a very important part of your life but they are not the mainstay of your life but they are not the mainstay of your friends. Whereas with older people and I may be wrong, these may have been friends that you have had for a number of years but the church provides more of a social life for older people. I think that young people have other things that they would rather do. There is a game on or meet some friends for a picnic or whatever or you were out late last night and you're tired.

But you know, young people spend time in the back talking to one another because this may be the only time that they get to see somebody which is why
there are more notes passed. But older people pass notes too (laughter).

Ms. F: I think that if you really want to get what people are feeling you have to get permission, and I don't know how you would go about this, but you would have to get permission from the entire group to picture them without their knowing it. Like closed circuit, or one of those one way mirrors because when people know they are being photographed they react differently, so I don't know. I mean these pictures right here may be very real but then they also may not be.

I think too that this is at a certain time. In that ten and fifteen minutes everybody is smiling because it is over and I think that's a good mood that you picked up on. I'm sure that if you went into the administrative board meeting and they were discussing something you'd probably get some real good pictures of glares and everything else (laughter).

Researcher: Pick out a couple of photographs that you find impactful, in terms of this particular event.

Ms. H: (Figure 32) This is one of the few examples in all those pictures where there are some young adults. I mean, you have three young women and you have some kids and that gives a little bit more balance to who belongs to the church. You do not get the idea that there are just older people.

Researcher: I wonder if it is not much harder for people who are familiar with the environment to look at the photographs to see other things than just the people they know.

Ms. A: That's true.

Ms. A: (Figure 36) Well, it's a picture of a mother and a daughter in addition to, two other people and Centenary has a lot of families. But then there has
also been, and it is not a recent phenomenon, an occurrence where families may go to another church. That just goes to show the change the church is going through and will continue to go through because that's just something that happens.

Mr. D______: I think the best ones are the ones which catch people off guard (Figures 32,33).

At this point the discussion of the interaction photographs was concluded and a new set of photographs were set out for viewing. This batch of photographs documented three social events: (1) (Figures 132-137) the State's Tea drive celebration party; (2) (Figures 38-46) the Methodist men's picnic; and (3) (Figures 62-77) the usher board picnic. The discussion resumed.

Ms. A______: I like the pictures of the Methodist men's picnic better than the others. They're happier. I think these are more festive. (Figures 38-46)

I like this picture of Reverend Dix because that is just like he is. (Figure 136)

(There are some comments about how large the children have grown. Figure 134 was interesting because one of the ladies was the mother of a boy who had been liked by most of the women present. When they were all adolescents together this photograph reminded them of the good times they had in the Junior Youth Fellowship and the Senior Youth Fellowship - there was much social reminiscing about those times.)

Ms. S______: I like these pictures because they show more interaction of all the age groups. I think it's a truer indicator of what
goes on at Centenary than the earlier pictures which only gave a very one-sided picture . . . just older people a few younger people. And here all age groups are interacting and getting along. That's basically what goes on. I think that over all this is the way I see Centenary. It is like a family. Everybody being close and having a good time. You have your separation into groups and ages and the young people fight the old people and vice versa, but I think overall I just view it as a big happy family. When young people come with kids we have all got a responsibility to help raise them. So this is why I like these pictures better than the other pictures. (Figures 38-46)

(At this point everybody shook their heads in agreement.)

Ms. A_______: (Figure 44) Oh, this is so cute. These little kids playing.

After talking about the pictures taken at the Methodist Men's Picnic the discussion drifted away from photographs to the special kind of Christian personality common to young adults in the church. We talked about the context of a cultural Christian* and how socialization in the church is more of a basis for young adult participation in the church than religious conviction (although there are exceptions). The discussion culminated around my assessment of the casual relationship between age and spirituality, with the young adults agreeing, in principle, with my assessment.

We turned our attention to a set of pictures taken around the preparation and serving of the free lunch program.

* See page 184
Ms. A: I like these pictures. Because what I like about being a United Methodist is that we are really involved in helping other people and not really into just ourselves and it causes a lot of problems in the church because people really can not accept the fact that the job of a Christian United Methodist is to serve others and you have to adapt your service to the times and service does not mean doing things that Jesus did and means having housing cooperations so that you can prepare yourself to help the community. It means having to share a living facility, it means having a lunch program. It means a lot of different things. And when you look around the city United Methodists are doing things, they are helping people. (Figures 47-61)

A lot of people don't understand it and it causes a lot of ramifications throughout the church and it usually evidents itself in the fact that our treasury is always suffering but I think that we are doing the job that Christians are supposed to be doing. And that's why I really like being a United Methodist. I really do.

Ms. D: But, you know, I hope too on that same token that when we do these things we do them in the spirit of loving, and a lot of times we see people and if their name isn't on that bulletin, honey, they are mad.

Ms. C: That is true.
B. Group Projective Interview - Older Adults

Self-directed Discussion

The second interview with photographs was conducted with the middle-aged adults and in order to facilitate the information exchange between 250 photographs and thirteen viewers I arranged the photographs in groups on tables, around which the viewers could move at random. I asked the viewers to note those photographs that captured the essence of the activity. After viewing the photographs we sat down to have a discussion. The discussion, as they were viewing the photographs, was self-directed. The viewers simply talked about what came to their minds. The sit-down discussion was a question and answer exchange between the researcher and the research community.
Mrs. S: I like this one (Figure 50). It shows the innocence of kids. It shows how engrossed they are. I think they must be waiting on a class to start.

Researcher: If I told you that they were playing when their mothers were preparing the free lunch program would that change the nature of the picture?

Mrs. S: No, I like that they can be so occupied in themselves. They must be five or six years old.

Mrs. M: We cleaned the pots (Figure 74, 75) because the food was very good. That was a good picnic. (Figures 62-75). Everybody seemed to be having a wonderful time.

Mrs. A: I know I did.

Mrs. M: I like it because you have different things. You know, you didn't focus just on one thing.

Researcher: Is there anything about it you don't like?

Mrs. M: Only me standing right there.

Researcher: What's wrong with that?

Mrs. M: Because if you take the right side it's not the good side and if you take the left one it's not the good side. (Figure 70)

Mrs. A: That's good of you. Look at this thing of me, I look like I'm ... (Figure 69).

Researcher: S made an interesting comment earlier. She said that I should have taken the pictures in such a way that the women don't look so fat. (laughter)
Mrs. B: They are already fat.

Mrs. M: I mean the camera takes what it sees.

Researcher: Well, let me ask you something. Suppose I were to use the photographs, with the so-called fat women, let me put it that way, to make a statement about diet and nutrition, wouldn't that be reasonable or would that be reasonable, let me put it that way?

Mrs. B: It's alright with me because I'm five pounds overweight.

Researcher: I mean for someone from a totally different culture if they were to look at the photographs and they would see that women were a certain size that would indicate something about the eating habits wouldn't it? So you can go deeper than just looking at fat people.

Mrs. B: Yeah.

Mrs. M: I'll tell you one thing. The older you get the better you look if you've got some meat on them bones because there is nothing in the world no worst that a wrinkled up little old lady. So see we can't have everything.

(I make the comment, at this point, that is is not just a matter of looking at pictures, it is also a matter of looking for information.)

Mr. J: I think they are great if you have something to explain what they represent. But I think you have got a good variety of overall church activities.

(This interviewee was asked to pick out a photograph of each situation that was characteristic of that situation. He chose (Figures 15, 93, and 128), but he did not elaborate on their significance. The number of people involved in this interview
was too large to make minute interpretation possible.)

Mrs. M: I like this (Figure 21) because it not only gives a picture of the church but somebody in D.C. could get an idea of the physical surroundings of the church, these just give nothing but the church.

Mr. J: There are no men in the usher pictures.

Mrs. B: Um um, only one that's holding the plate.

Mrs. M: That's right tell him like it is.

Researcher: Yeah, it is kind of obvious that on the days that I got the ushers there were no men. But you know something, I even asked someone, if there were any men ushers before I discovered that there were men ushers because every Sunday that I would try to catch the ushers there would only be women.

Mrs. M: That's probably because the men only usher one Sunday in the month.

I like these, I like all of these. Because these depict the fact that we not only come to worship but we come to socialize after church. (Figures 26-37)

Mr. J: I don't know if we want to say that though.

Mrs. M: I think that is the way it is supposed to be. That's the only way you get to know the people of the church.

Researcher: Do these photographs indicate that people are really socializing outside of the fifteen minutes after the ceremony in everyday life or just in this particular picture?

Mrs. M: I don't know. I can only speak for me. But the majority of these people here I only see them if there is something going on at the church. And on Sunday. And I think that is an important part of your life too.
Mrs. Ma: That is the only time you see them after church. Most of them. I might see one or two, but most of them I see after church.

Researcher: What does that say about the relationship of church members one to another outside of church activities? How would you comment on that?

Mrs. Ma: It may be alright because when I don't see them maybe somebody else might see them more than I do. I couldn't say that a whole lot was lacking there I'm not so sure.

Mrs. M: Well, then too, at one time there was a time when in most churches people lived near the church. So they come in contact with each other more on a regular basis other than on Sunday. But now Centenary is like a drive-in church. And people are scattered everywhere and so you do not see them as often.

Mrs. Ma: There are so many older people. And a lot of old people don't have a way to get around and that makes a difference.

Researcher: S__, do you have any insight that you can pass on to me?

Mrs. S: No.

Researcher: What does that mean?

Mrs. S: That means that I am so familiar with it that I didn't have a reaction to them.

Researcher: So the photographs in some sense captured the familiarity?

Mrs. S: Sure, I mean stuff that I see everyday is like this. But see you weren't even depicting this but what I would see is that we are the only group that goes up together (Figures 92,93) and the rest of them all go with their families. We still go together and that's what I like about these pictures. The minister takes
his before everybody else. But I don't have any other feelings. Like all of those scenes preparing the communion and all the work it takes to prepare the communion symbolize the way the church is. It takes a lot of work to put on a good service, to have all kinds of people here. For example, (Figures 83, 84) people who are normally not outgoing people doing things in the church that I just take for granted I suppose because I've been here all my life that's all. How they give away the flowers at the end of church and Mrs. ______ is in charge of that and that's what she's doing here (Figure 95). And this is really special because you have got a lot . . . (Figure 81). But like I said, I don't feel anything, really.

The photographs of the ushers prompted the president of the usher board to see the need for instructions. It is interesting to note that men and women usher separately.

Mrs.M_____: You know what, that's why we need to have some instructions.

Mrs.B_____: That's right. She looks real dignified on that. You took some very nice pictures of the ushers and they really showed up nice and showed what they were supposed to do taking collection.

Researcher: So actually you're saying that photography could be a tool for checking out the situation, for teaching?

Mrs.M_____: Because right here we could look at the picture (Figure 108) and see what was wrong. And this one is wrong too (Figure 123) because they should be in prayer position, both of them. You see these two are right and these two aren't.

Mrs.B_____: That's why we want to have rehearsal for them. Because they don't seem to remember what they are supposed to be doing.
Mr. J: Some people go into prayer position immediately when they step up there and then wait until he says the first word.

Mrs. M: Now that could be. You know this could be a good instrument to help everybody learn what has to be done.

Mrs. A: This is a good one (Figure 98). The bus for the senior citizens. I think that shows that the church has accomplished something. They have got a bus for the aged and they see that they come to church and they see that they get home. I think that's good because all of them are senior citizens and they are going to the bus. And you can see Centenary on there.

Mrs. B: Now this is a very interesting picture (Figure 60). I'll tell you why. Everybody seemed to be enjoying themselves at this food program and everybody in the kitchen felt like they were helping somebody that really needed help. Now that's the way I felt when I was in the kitchen.

A comment on Mr. _________. Mr. _________ greets everybody when they come in the door, and he wants to kiss on both cheeks. (Figure 26)

Mrs. M: That's true and when he decides to come in an usher has to take him up front and he doesn't want a man, he prefers a lady, but he's not going up there by himself.

C. Group Projective Interview - Older Adults
Researcher-directed Discussion

- Researcher: Did the presence of the camera and the flash affect the atmosphere in the church? Did the photographer interfere with the normal flow of church activities? I'd like to know what you felt yourself and what you saw other people feeling.
Mrs. B: I can't speak for everybody but it didn't bother me because I went right on doing my duty because I knew what I had to do.

Mrs. Ma: I don't think it had an effect on the atmosphere. I don't think it had any effect whatsoever.

Mrs. S: It bothered me. Maybe because when I'd think you'd be taking a picture I'd be uncomfortable and I'd kind of stop doing what I was doing and make sure I looked good and stuff. See if I saw you with the camera I would react differently if I did not see you with the camera.

Mr. S: It didn't bother me but I think it did distract a little bit, you know, when I would see it. But then I would forget about it. And that was only during the last part, during the services. You know, when you were in the services.

Mrs. C: It didn't annoy me. It's just that I don't take good pictures and I don't like taking pictures. I'm not photogenic.

Researcher: Do you think that any of the photographs captured any of the spirituality of the church?

Mrs. C: I didn't see any.

Mrs. B: For me, I think the communion was real sacred to the church. To me, that was my feeling. (Figures 90-93)

Researcher: Do you feel that in the photographs?

Mrs. B: Yes, I feel it in the photographs and I feel it when people go up to take the communion and especially when the ushers and the choir go up. It seemed like it's peaceful and serene, to me.

Mr. S: The one of them lighting the candles at the start of the service and the one just showing the altar "In remembrance of me." (Figures 24, 103, 104)
Mrs. C: I think most of those pictures just give you an order of service, more so than any spiritual thing in the church. It is just an order of service. Like communion and lighting up the candle is just an order of service.

Mr. J: I like the prayer before a meeting, and then at the end of the meetings when they held hands. (Figures 5,4)

Mrs. Ma: I liked the social interaction after service, that little fellowship with each other for a few minutes there. (Figures 26-37)

Mrs. C: Do you see any in there that you thought captured the spiritual aspect?

Researcher: No, that's why I asked the question.

Mrs. C: Because I don't see any of that nature. Like I said, most of them is just a procedure.

Mrs. M: I see a unity in the church.

Researcher: Do you think the photographs show any of the photographer's biases.

Mrs. Mg: With the photographs in general, you've got a lot of different things on there. People doing a lot of different things and this is what goes on in the church. People doing a lot of different things to coordinate activities.

Mr. S: These are things we are used to seeing and it doesn't hold any special feeling because it is something that you've seen all your life and the same scene has repeated itself hundreds of times when you see it on a photo it's just commonplace to you.

Mrs. Mg: A lot of people going about the Lord's business, doing the things that need to be done in the church, to make it the kind of church, that you want your church
to be. Helping others, working together, trying to accomplish common things.

Researcher: How would you have felt about the photographer taking photographs on the very first day of research before you knew what the person was trying to do? How would you have felt about that?

Mrs. Mg: You would have left a lot of questions in a lot of our minds. And then you might just irritate some of us by just doing that.

Mr. P: And somebody might have gone up side your head (laughter from all sides).

Mrs. Mg: Because you know, anytime you do the unexpected it causes stirs. And so I think you did it right. Gradually moving on into whatever you were planning on doing. By observing first and then taking pictures of what you observed.

Mr. J: How did the people feel in the lunch program with you taking their picture?

Researcher: Some people who had come to eat resented having their pictures taken and when anyone would object I didn't take a picture. But after the regular visitors to the program saw me with the camera on several Saturdays they dropped their protest and I could photograph them but there were always people who objected. The church members had no objection at all. They just wanted, at the beginning, to look good for the picture, so they asked me to let them know when I would take pictures so they could look good. But even this reserve was dropped with time. After a few sessions it didn't matter when or what I took pictures of. It was accepted by all that taking pictures was a part of my research. It was a concrete part of my fieldwork.

I think from the very beginning I mentioned that I was going to take pictures
but I didn't bring the camera until a lot later. But I would always drop hints about the fact that I wanted to take pictures even when I talked to Reverend Dix. The very first time when we had our first interview I told him that at some point I would begin to take pictures but I thought if I moved from downstairs to upstairs it would be more acceptable to the people than just busting in with the camera.

Mrs. C: I think that was the best way here at Centenary because Centenary is a conservative type setting. Usually they don't adjust rapidly to immediate change. I think they accepted it better the way that you came in because some of them just can't change. They can't accept anything any different from an ordinary service that has been going on for years in the church. They just can't accept that change.

Mrs. S: One thing you did, you took pictures of all types of people, you know, old, young, fat, skinny, men, women, pretty, and ugly which is good because a lot of times people just take pictures of the more glamorous people and they really don't get to the basic gut level feeling of a church. So you were good at that.

Researcher: So you think I got to the basic gut level feeling of the church?

Mrs. S: I think, looking at those pictures, you got to the basic gut level people and the feeling of the church. I mean you got all types and you got all phases of the population of the church.

Researcher: The only segment of the church population that is not as well represented as the others is the young adults. But that's because the young adults have a special relationship to the church in terms of attendance and participation. They don't participate as much as the
other people do and that's one of the things that came out of my discussion with them. They wondered where the young adults were in the photographs and we talked about it and everybody sort of accepted the fact that young adults don't really participate as much as other people do. That's evident by the fact that they are not present in the photographs.

Mrs. Mg: But you know what that does. That starts you to thinking why we don't have a young adult program that is more representative really, it just starts you to thinking. Maybe we need to work on some things.

Mrs. Ma: This is basically an old church.

Mrs. C: That goes right back to the kind of church that Centenary is. It is more conservative, more settled type, by young adults really not being represented in here.

Mrs. R: I'm glad that you chose the way that you did to come in. Because when you first came people were very suspicious of you and there were all kinds of comments, suggestions, and wondering why you were here. So really I think they were a little shaky at first until after they got to know you.

Researcher: Can you remember some of the comments, some of the things that people were concerned about?

Mrs. R: The main thing was that they were wondering if you were sent from the district office to observe us. To check on the church. With your tape recorder and then you were writing down everything that was happening. We were scared to walk across the floor. (laughter) So I guess it was just a matter of trying to find out what you were doing.

Researcher: That's reasonable too. Anybody else want to say anything about what you were feeling at the very beginning?
Mrs. Mg : I was just curious about why you were here and what you were doing. I was never suspicious or thought that it was anything but above board really.

Mrs. C : One of the comments that I heard was that they wanted to know if anybody had really checked your credentials. You know, if you are actually doing what you say you are doing. You said that you were from Ohio State working on your whatever degree but had anybody ever checked to make sure. That that's really what's going on. Of course, I did not say that. (laughter)

Mrs. Mg : You know I've been sitting here thinking especially why would a person spend this much time like you did if you weren't researching something. Why would you come into a church and not be what you say you are in the first place.

Mrs. S : You know, like you said, you could be checking up on the church. There are a lot of things you could be doing here. Like checking out the collection box.

Researcher: Now you all are exaggerating now aren't you? (laughter)

Mrs. Mg : In the first place con men don't stick around that long.
(Figure 103) prompted the following comments:

This picture just gives a good feeling. It captures the church feeling at the start of a service. The church looks nice. In most of the pictures you see a sporadic crowd, but even though there is not very many people there it has the appearance of a congregation.

Back when we were teenagers we had a large group and a large choir. Not only was it worship but we had a good time and we actually looked forward to church. So it was never the problem you're going to be there because you would see all your friends that you hadn't seen all week and have a good time. Plus, then, they had a lot of activities. We had hayrides and we would go over to peoples houses for pizza parties and we had MYF (Methodist Youth Fellowship). Half of the kids there liked each other and there was always this and always that and competition between the boys for the different girls. And it is something you can look back on and think about the great times you had. Now they don't have activities for that sort of teenage bracket and they don't have anything for them so the only socializing they do is when they get back there on the last couple of seats and that's their activities for a week in most cases. I look back on my time with fond memories and I don't think there is anybody left from that group.

There is such an age difference on the usher board that you can't really get into doing things together because there is such an age difference that people here don't want to do that, or this is too young for them and this is too old for something that you want to do and you just have to sort of pull everyone apart. I usually go along
with most of the activities. I might want to say, heh, let's go bowling. There are four or five of us that say yeah and the others say no. And if somebody says let's go for a bus ride around town you'd pick up a whole different group.

My father has always been on the usher board and he said that if you can't sing, at least, you can walk. And he always put all of us on the usher board and we just hung in there. You ain't got no excuses. If you can't sing, at least you can walk, smile and greet the people. One of his favorite organizations was the usher board and the majority of my brothers are ushers. Yep, that's enough reminiscing for me. That's a lot.
Photographic Documentation

An extremely important part of the research process was the implementation of the projective interview in conjunction with the photograph as research tools. Participant observation and the ethnographic interview had been adopted as methods for acquiring firsthand information. They allowed the researcher to recognize certain community patterns and to facilitate the collection of data. The photograph was used to support and supplement the information gained through participant observation and the ethnographic interview. The photograph was instrumental in stimulating feedback between researcher and research community, helping uncover latent aspects of the community, animating the research community to self-expression, and lessening the inhibition fostered by direct questioning.

I began fieldwork in January, interviewing in February and photographing in March. I designed my photographic approach so that it would synchronize with the rapport that I was developing with the community.

I began to photograph in the basement of the church. The church had started a free lunch program to extend its mission and ministry into the surrounding community. This program would provide poor people in the community with a free meal on Saturdays.

My first opportunity to attend a meeting of the free lunch program was on the fifth of February. The committee
was composed of women who had decided to express their Christian stewardship by preparing and serving free meals. There was a satisfying sense of spiritual and emotional commitment in the group because they had found a way to express their need for Christian giving and so I asked their permission to observe and photograph their operation.

In order to introduce the general church congregation to my activities as a researcher-photographer I began to put prints of photographs made at the free lunch program on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall so that they could be seen by all who congregated there after the Sunday worship service. This was meant to facilitate my activities as a photographer and to underline the significance of the photographic document as a visual statement about the environment. Occasionally, a church member would comment about the photographs but their reaction to this feedback process was expressed, primarily, by their increased tolerance of my un-failing presence, with camera and flash, at all kinds of church activities.

With time, I proceeded, in stepwise fashion, to photograph organizational meetings and worship service activities. I photographed all church activities that seemed useful for filling my need for ethnographic data. I shot a total of 1500 photographs over a time span of three months, 250 of which were used as resource material for the projective interviews. All of the photographs for this study were shot with
a wide angle lens. This allowed me to concentrate my attention on the immediate visual event while automatically including some ambience tangent to that event. The wide angle lens also gave me an acceptable level of image sharpness on the foreground and background planes of the image. Although wide angle lenses have a tendency to depress the image, making objects seem smaller than usual, a moderate wide angle lens on a medium format camera produces additional visual information without noticeable depression. I used a Bronica 645 ETRS medium format camera as my fieldwork camera.

When I began to photograph the community, a visual research design had not yet materialized. But by photographing in the basement of the free lunch program and moving, eventually, into committee meetings and social and ritual activities, it became evident that the photograph should provide an overview of community culture. Two functional aspects of the culture appeared suitable for visual data. One, I needed to record "the functional associations of the community," i.e., its material and welfare needs. Two, I needed to record "the functional relationships of the social structure," i.e., the typical roles of men, women, and children in the community. (Wagner 1979: 161) The first aspect found more comprehensive expression in verbal than visual data. This resulted from the fact that participation in committee meetings and talking with community members provided ready verbal data on the material and welfare concerns of the community but could not
find easy translation into visual data within the allotted research time of six months.

On the other hand, the functional relationships of the social structure could be seen in the photographs of community activities. The projective interview supplied the insights for the research findings in Chapter IV.* The photograph provided supportive evidence for certain social patterns. This illustrated its potential as a feedback vehicle and as a check on the researcher's vision. But it also demonstrated that the promotion of descriptive understanding can lay a foundation for more comprehensive study.

The projective interviews+ give examples of community self-expression, emotional associations, introspections, and reminiscences. But their most fruitful yield is found in the insights on community structure and social interaction.

* See page 177
+ See pages 65-90
The Research Community

Centenary United Methodist Church is located on 930 East Long Street in Columbus, Ohio. (Figures 17,18) Centenary is a member of an integrated corporate denomination which began at the end of the eighteenth century as two disciplined religious societies. Phillip William Otterbein organized the German speaking Evangelical United Brethren, while John Wesley organized the English speaking Methodist. In 1968, these two societies, which became established churches in the early nineteenth century, united into The United Methodist Church.

Centenary, although it has always been a part of Wesley's Methodist Church, has always been a black church. Centenary was established in 1900 by several black families who moved from North Carolina to Columbus, Ohio. They sought a place to worship. After occupying several temporary arrangements and changing names, they built the first unit of their church in 1939. The sanctuary was finished in 1940 and "from 1947 to 1949 a victory celebration and mortgage burning was held indicating the end of a long struggle to acquire a sanctuary dedicated to the worship of God." (Pace and Houston 1977)

Centenary is housed in an impressive structure. (Figures 19-21) It is a two story building that seats approximately 500 people in the sanctuary (Figures 22,23,25) and another 300-500 in the fellowship hall (Figures 58-61, 135-137), in the basement. There is a kitchen (Figure 47) on the east and
a stage (Figures 16, 48) on the north walls of the fellowship hall. The kitchen is used to prepare the free lunches on Saturday (Figures 51-61) and on other occasions requiring food. The stage is used for special events and for study sessions (Figures 1-4), committee meetings (Figures 5-8), and Sunday school classes (Figure 11). The fellowship hall is used as a general assembly room for the Sunday school (Figure 16) and any other gathering requiring a lot of space. (Figures 58-61, 135-137) There is a room behind the stage that is used for a Sunday school class. (Figure 9) The minister holds his class for young adults in his office. (Figure 12) The sanctuary is used for worship services (Figures 88-93, 103-108, 110-127) and ritual practices like baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and funerals. (Figures 22, 23)

Reverend Robbie Dix, Sr., the present minister, is married to Annie C. and they have four children. Rev. Dix served in the navy during World War II and was educated at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia. He received a B.A. degree, with a dual major in political science and business administration, from Morehouse in 1949. He also studied at Atlanta University in the summer of 1949. Rev. Dix has had extensive training as an insurance agent and he operates an office in east Columbus. He received his theological education at Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, Tennessee; Louisville Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky; and the Lexington
Theological Seminary, Lexington, Kentucky. He received his Masters of Divinity degree, in pastoral care, in 1973.

The membership size of the church was estimated, at one point, to be 470. At other points, it was estimated to be 200 and 259. In an effort to gain a membership count the finance committee used a two year old membership age percentage profile. This membership age percentage profile estimated that: 8% of the congregation comprised the ages from 1 to 12; 7% from 13 to 18; 10% from 19 to 30; 6% from 31 to 40; 10% from 41 to 50; 20% from 51 to 60; and 39% from 61 and over. This profile estimated, according to the finance committee, that only 16% of the congregation was supporting the church. In view of the fact that verifiable data was not available concerning the size of the membership, the following percentage estimates are very tenuous.

Thirty-seven church members were interviewed as part of the research study. In view of the estimated size of the participating membership, 37 represents roughly 30% of a 125 membership roll and 16% of a 250 membership roll. Out of the 37, 12 were selected because they sat on the following committees: the finance committee; the administrative board; the pastor-parish committee; and the trustee board, and because they were actively responsible for the church, i.e., they make the decisions affecting church polity. All 12 were members in long standing.
There are approximately 28 officers in the church who head various organizations and committees. Although all of the interviewees do not head committees, they are active committee members, representing approximately 50% of the officer corps and 30% or 16% of the general church membership (depending upon which membership count, 150 or 250, will eventually be validated).

The median age of the interviewee group was 52. They were married, with children and some grand-children. In the percentage profile mentioned above, the 41 to 50 age group makes only 6% of the age membership differential. But this group occupies a unique position within the church population because they represent a group that has post secondary education (with four having college degrees and the remainder with one or more years of specialized post secondary training) and some measure of economic stability (five are currently employed by the city government; three by the federal government - all with many years of service; and one was a city government retiree and two were federal government retirees).

The 12 interviewees (in the Field Experience section) do not represent an age nor socio-economic cross section of the church population. But they do represent an acceptable cross section of those directly responsible for the organizational survival of the church. As church leaders they set the tone for thought and behavior.
Figure 17

A view of Long Street looking eastward toward Centenary United Methodist Church.
East Long street, between Hamilton street and Seventeenth street is characterized by small businesses, night clubs, restaurants and professional services.
Figure 19

A frontal view of Centenary United Methodist Church.
Figure 20
A side view of Centenary United Methodist Church.
Figure 21

A view of Long Street looking west.
Figure 22

A view of the Sanctuary from the choir balcony prior to a Wake.
Figure 23

A frontal view of the Chancel showing the casket in front of the Chancel and the altar in the background.
The altar is adorned with flowers for the wake. But this same altar arrangement is characteristic of a normal worship adornment.
The congregation as seen from the right side of the pulpit during a typical Sunday worship service.
Field Experience

My first effort to enter the community was initiated by a letter to Reverend Dix. In this letter, in late November, I expressed a desire to conduct my research at his church. I made a couple of visits to the church in December and on my last visit I made an appointment to meet Rev. Dix the first week in January. After hearing my research intentions, in general terms, Rev. Dix gave me permission to begin the study. He suggested, though, that I attend a workshop he would conduct, with the newly elected officers of the church, on the organizational structure of the United Methodist Church. This was to give me an opportunity to introduce myself and my purpose.

A week or two after this initial introduction I submitted a written proposal to Rev. Dix and the chairperson of the administrative board, spelling out my research objective and methodology. This proposal was accepted as a statement of my research intentions and a guideline for my research behavior. The only expressed bargain that was struck with the community was that I be fair in my assessment and provide the church with a copy of the study. I was pleased by the opportunity to have my work reenter the community in such a direct way.

Being sanctioned by the minister and the church officers made my entry into the community uncomplicated. I developed rapport with community members by explaining to anyone who
asked, who I was and why I would sit, listen, look, and take notes. I strengthened this rapport by attending worship services on a regular basis and recording the sermons. After learning which committees were at the hub of church activities, I began to participate in, observe, and record the meetings of the finance committee and the administrative board. These meetings made it possible for me to organize person-to-person interviews. I tried to schedule two or three interviews a week. These interviews with church officers were augmented, on a biweekly or triweekly basis, with interviews with the minister.

January was the month for learning some general and specific characteristics of the community and making certain decisions concerning research procedure, e.g., when to determine if the community's tolerance level was high enough to allow photographs to be taken in the sanctuary during worship service.

It became evident the latter part of January that the financial problem of the church was a key issue and that it could lead to an open discussion about church affairs in the interview sessions, and, eventually, to a substantial level of rapport where deeper penetration would widen the scope of the research. The budget provided a good community issue for learning the ropes. This can be illustrated by mapping out the evolution of this issue as it unfolds in sermons,
interviews with the minister, committee meetings, and interviews with church officers.

The Budget:

One of the most important issues in the everyday life of a church is the amount of money available to the church "to enable it to fulfill its mission in the world in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ." (United Methodist Publishing House 1981) In addition to its outreach programs money is also necessary for its physical survival. During my research tenure, which spanned only six months, I was able to follow the thoughts and behavior of church officials in their efforts to deal with an outstanding church problem - money.

The events surrounding the budget problems will be drawn from the contents of sermons, interviews with church officials, and the business transactions of organizational meetings. These events will follow each other in sequential order and, as a result, delineate the unfolding of a point of view and a program of action. The story begins on January 9, 1983. It is a Sunday and the minister preached his first sermon on money for the new year. The subject of his sermon was: "Sometimes God can do some things that on the surface don't make any sense."

John 1: 1-14. The old testament scripture describes how God had revealed himself to Moses and gave Moses the task of freeing the Israelites from Egypt. The new testament scripture dealt with Jesus Christ being recognized as the son of God.

The old testament scripture tells us that Moses was a little uncertain about God choosing him to lead the Israelites out of bondage and he was not sure if the Israelites would accept him as their leader but God promised Moses that if he had faith and believed, he would help him to accomplish his task. Of course, we know, as the story continues, that Moses led the Israelites out of bondage across the parted Red Sea into the desert to freedom.

The minister compared the Israelites held as hostages in Egypt with the Americans held as hostages in Iran. He suggested that Moses was able to free the Israelites because he had faith in God's promise of freedom, but that Carter was not able to free the American hostages with military force from Iran, (in spite of the best minds behind the conceived plan), because his plan did not include God. Since God controls everything, God must be a part of the plan.

I suggest that the minister was trying to bring home the point that his congregation should believe that God will keep his promises and that God will answer prayers and that God is all powerful and that God will help them to find money:
God wants us to take chances on him. Let's do some things that are right and charge it to God. It if fails then let's put it on God. If we do it in his name according to his instructions, let's put it on God, if we can totally commit ourselves to God. If we can totally commit this church to God then we can put our successes and our failures on God. But we'll have to let God have his way.

I remember the statement that Jesus made, and I've seen this happen. He told them, that those who follow me, you must take up your cross and you must follow me. For if you try to save your life, you're going to lose it. That's what we're going to do with the church. We're trying to save it our way and we're going to lose it. It's going to slip away from us. And it's going to be gone and we're not going to know why because we've got all of this good plan and left God out of it . . . .

But if we ask God in it, insist that God be in it and listen to the mandates of God in our hearts. Let God rule us. Lead us. Let God be a power behind our decisions . . . .

I wish in nineteen eighty-three that these officers start planning this year. I hope that we plan a plan with God in the forefront. I hope we plan depending upon God. I hope we cut out all fund-raising activities for a year. I hope we don't have nothing, nothing to say we've got to raise some money for Centenary in nineteen eighty-three. I hope we try God one year and nothing but God. And let's serve each other and care for each other and let's stop worrying about money for this church. I believe that the money needed will come. Sometimes we put so much emphasis on money until we forget what we are about. We forget our (struggle?) I've said this over, and over and over again. Our job is not to raise money. Our job is to bring people to God. That is our job. No, fifty percent of our time should not
be spent talking about money making activities.

My beloved, maybe you say Rev. Dix is crazy. I'm crazy enough to look back at these six years I have been here and where we are and what we have done to want to try something different. That's how crazy I am. I would like for us to try for one twelve months on his terms.

... There is no place in the Bible for no church to raise no money.

The above message was delivered to the congregation on the second Sunday of 1983. The church has a 1982 budget of $81,321. The total receipts for the same year amounted to $67,851. The difference created a deficit of $13,470. In addition to the budgetary deficit that was carried over into 1983, the church was not able to meet its apportionments to the West Ohio annual conference budget. The church was assessed $11,369 as its share of the costs for supporting the larger church. The apportioned sum was based on the number of members on the membership roll, which was supposed to indicate the financial potential of the church. Centenary was only able to pay $6,500 in 1982. This represents only 57% of its assessed apportionments.

Conference askings and apportionments delineate an important financial link between the local church and the corporate church. Through conference askings and apportionments each local congregation contributes to the annual conference budget for the year. This money allows the United Methodist Church, as corporate entity, to meet its corporate mission.
A most significant aspect of meeting the apportionments to the conference for the local church is the benefits that may accrue to the local church from the corporate church as a result of being a financially dependable partner (but more about that later).

On January 13th, just four days later, I conducted an interview with the minister asking him about his ideas on money:

Minister Interview: January 13, 1983

Researcher: During the climax of your preaching you talked about the fact that people should place more faith in God. And toward the end of your sermon you talked about the fact that there is nothing in the Bible that has anything to do with making money. But at the same time, it's clear to me as an outsider looking at the institution of the church that it is absolutely necessary to think about making money otherwise you can't survive. . . . Now an institution can't survive without some financial basis. And unless you have a program to think about generating money, how are you going to survive?

Minister: Okay. Now there is a fine line between needing money and thinking that your primary emphasis is to raise money. You see, the church is not set up to raise money. That's not what it is for. It needs money but it is not set up to raise money. And its emphasis should not be on money. We forget what we are about because we let the need for the money dominate our thinking and our actions and everything will be trying to raise some money. Now that's not what the church is about. The church is to deal with sin. The church is set up to
help people find salvation through God. The church is set up for a fellowship of believers to come together at a certain time. To encourage each other if you have fallen behind, to carry out God's and Christ's commands of the holy baptism, to carry out God's and Christ's commands of the sacraments, see! The church is set up to be an instrument of God on earth. To carry out some of God's commands and Christ's commands.

Now in order to do that it needs money to operate. But it is not set up to raise money. And you have to keep people knowing the difference of what you are really about. And that's why I keep saying that the story* is important. Really, you know your purpose for being and if you forget that then you are floundering. And it's easy to forget that once you let money dominate your thinking or church thinking... that's why... Now the finance committee will meet Monday night and I'm going to ask them, let's not have any money raising projects this year. I think there are two things I wouldn't mind us having. One is to let the dinner continue because I think it is a nice fellowship hour once a month. And the other is to try to sell some Ebony and get subscriptions because I think it would be nice for Ebony to go into more black homes. Now this is different to me than having a woman's day where you ask people for an extra twenty dollars or one hundred dollars because I think that's unfair. Because there are some people in the church making fifty thousand dollars a year and some people making four thousand dollars and if you ask everybody to give a hundred dollars it's unfair to the person making four. See tithing is the only equitable way. Ten percent of what you receive, see, and not tax everybody the

* See page 280
same because it is unfair. And the only thing the Bible says about money is the tithe. Now this other thing is a man-made scheme. See we have got so many of our schemes involved in the gospel until sometimes it is hard to separate. It's man-made. I'm not saying that it is necessary or not necessary. I'm saying it's not biblical. The only thing biblical about giving is the tithe. And the only thing biblical about how you give it is that you bring it. That's why we decided last year that the ones who tithe we're going to let them walk up there and give it. Now that's biblical. Whether it is good or bad in this modern time, it is biblical. And so that's why we try to do that. But another thing is that we need to teach our people more of Christian stewardship, what it is, because we haven't done it. You see, schemes run out. You have a scheme for a year or two but then you have to have another scheme. But I don't like to scheme. They run out. You've got to keep doing something different.

I think we need to deemphasize. . . . Now I know money is a vital part of the religious experience, and if you don't give something then you're not doing right either. But I think that our care should be such that if people want to see this church survive they're going to support it and I believe that. If the ministry is such that people can get some fulfillment on their spiritual journey, if they want to see it, they're going to support it. If the ministry is such that people can see some of the things that they want to see happen, happen in the church, they're going to support it. You see what I mean? People will support it. When people are not supporting it, it is because these people not supporting

* See page 337 • Figure 111
it have lost something and therefore
the church is not important enough
for them to get their money.
We need to spend a year to try to
find out what it is they have lost
and if we can find that out and deal
with it then we won't have no money
problems.

On January 17th I sat in on the first finance committee
meeting of 1983. The finance committee is one of the five
basic administrative committees of every local church. (The
others are: the administrative board; the council on minis-
terries; the committee on pastor-parish relations; and the com-
mittee on nomination and personnel.) Second to the administra-
tive board, the finance committee is one of the most important
committees in the church. The basic purpose of the finance
committee is to insure that the church has adequate operating
funds. The finance committee has six major responsibilities:

1. It must compile the budget (it is responsible
   for the financial soundness of the church).

2. It sets financial goals (goals are set to
   meet the needs of the church. These goals
   are based on a knowledge of the congregation's
   potential to give).

3. It plans the annual funding programs (funding
   is related to the church's program or mission).

4. It communicates regularly with the congregation
   (the congregation should be informed, on a
regular basis, about the financial status of the church).

5. It keeps records and reports to the administrative board (all decisions of finances, programming, mission and other administrative aspects of the church are made by the administrative board).

6. It measures the church's potential to meet its financial commitments (measuring is the responsibility to look at the church's incomes to determine if the church is really being effective). (United Methodist Publishing House 1981)

Generally, measuring is gauged by the benevolent giving of the church. Low benevolent giving indicates that the income of the total church is suffering. As I mentioned earlier, benevolent giving is that part of the local church's budget as assessed by the corporate church to be apportioned for the World Service Fund. The corporate church measures the financial health of a local church by comparing their apportionment with the actual sum given. A local church is expected to give fifteen percent of its budget to benevolence. The giving potential of a church is measured by the number of members on the church membership roll. This makes it absolutely necessary that the local church have a membership
roll that realistically reflects those who are providing active financial support to the church. If a church has five hundred members on its roll and only one hundred members are contributing to the financial support of the church, the church is assessed an apportionment out of proportion to its real potential for giving. For the corporate church the local church's inability to meet its apportionment is seen as a weak commitment to the corporate mission of the world church. The corporate church has little interest in how the local church arranges its internal affairs so the burden for correcting the discrepancy between the number of members on the roll and the number of members actively participating in the survival of the church rests squarely upon those organs in the local church whose responsibility it is to address such discrepancies. The local church must discover why the 400 members are not supporting "their" church.

The finance committee meeting opened with a prayer wherein God was asked to bless the committee and the finances of the church, and it was hoped that the ministry and mission for the coming year would be one that God is pleased with.

The business meeting opened with a discussion about where and how to save money. Most committee members conceded the fact that the church's financial situation was extremely complicated, considering: the 1982 deficit of $13,000; the uncertain knowledge of how many members were on the membership
roll; the uncertain knowledge of how many members were actively supporting the church; that means had to be found to generate money without adversely affecting the mission of the church (which might be decoded to mean, affecting its potential for meeting conference apportionments).

One issue that crystallized out of the general discussion as key, was whether or not the church should continue to have traditional fundraising projects. The minister spoke out for a minimization of fundraising efforts because they tended to conflict with the spirituality of "the ministry and the mission of the church." Several committee members seemed to favor the fundraising projects because of their potential for fellowship and their cultural significance. Fundraising projects were a tradition that meant fellowship, fun, and money. The meeting adjourned with these issues on everyone's mind. Nothing was decided or resolved.

It should be noted here that the minister of the congregation exercises a unique brand of authority in the church, and, an uncommonly high degree of influence on thought and behavior. In principle, the administrative board is designed to determine church policy. But in practice this design is deemphasized and the real influence on policy lies in the message of the minister. This power can be illustrated by quoting part of a sermon - the instrument of power - delivered to the congregation on January 23rd:
I'll say this, I was minding my own business the last year that Roland B. Johnson was governor of South Carolina and Franklin D. Roosevelt was serving out his second term as president of the United States. All that was on my mind on the 22nd of May 1940 was getting my high school diploma and trying to get some money to go to college to be an attorney.


No walls didn't fall, neither did the lightning flash. But he came to me in a very quiet way as I was listening to a presiding elder from the CME (Colored or Christian Methodist Episcopal Church) church headquarters in Greenville, South Carolina, preaching our baccalaureate sermon, Dr. Caldwood. He said to me in my heart I want you to be a preacher. And then it just faded away.

You see, you criticizing me doesn't bother me very much. Because you did not call me to preach. That's number one. You did not call me to preach. You did not give me the authority to preach. God called me to preach. Therefore, I am concerned about how God thinks about what I'm doing and how I'm doing it. Because God sent me on this work and I have to answer not to you, not to the bishop. Because all you can do to me is tell the bishop we want another pastor. That's all. All the bishop can do to me is give me another assignment, that's all. That's all he can do to me. But God can do much more and I'm accountable to God and I don't ever forget that. Now if I can please you and please God at the same time fine. Now if I can't please you and please God, I'm going to try to please God. That's where I am. And I think God sent me to be a watchman to wherever I'm pastor to tell men and women, boys and girls, what Christianity is, what it is not. God said I want you to tell the people that the wages of sin is still death. It's still death, and God has a gift that's eternal
life. I want you to tell the people to have faith and trust in me. I want you to tell dying men and women that there is a God that loves them. I want you to tell boys and girls that there is a life for them through God.

My job is to tell you what God wants us to do and how he wants us to do it. God said it and we hear or we may not hear it. But I'm accountable and responsible for whatever I say, but not to you. I have to answer to God. If I may be wrong, I have to answer to God. God will be my final judge. God said if I tell you and you hear it, that's one thing. If I tell you and you don't hear it, that's another thing. He's going to hold me for telling you or not telling you, that's where I am today. I think you might as well understand this about me that is where I am according to the Bible. Not according to me or another theologian. But according to God's great word. Sometimes we have got so many other things mixed up until we think we can skate by God's word. What we believe in this church is you are either going to save your soul or lose it according to the word of God.

The above quoted sermon fragment was the minister's reply to criticism from dissatisfied members of his congregation. The minister, very astutely, observed in this sermon before making the above statement that criticism is a part of the pastoral territory, i.e., it is to be expected. But he still felt a need to delineate the boundaries of his tolerance for opposition. I am not suggesting any conscious effort at control on his part but I do suggest that his message leaves little doubt as to where the last word will lie in matters of confrontation.
In a latter part of the same sermon the minister voices his thoughts, again, on the question of money and the church. Pastoral power and authority rests not only in the pulpit but more significantly on its accessibility to the pastor and the pastor alone. Any use of the pulpit or the lectionary must meet with the pastor's approval. The pastor controls not only the word of God, but the word, period. This has a singular effect on the thoughts and behavior of a congregation. To contravene the pastor's point of view, regardless of how feasible or reasonable the contravention may seem, is to run the risk of oral, spiritual, and social discomfort (and this in view of the fact that those points that might produce contravention are not spiritual in nature, i.e., are areas where other church members may have some expertise). The potential for discomfort in expressing an oppositional point of view can be decoded out of a latter segment of the same sermon:

Sermon: January 23, 1983

I'm against anything of raising money in this church. I've been against it every since I've been here. And I'm against it. I want you to think of all of the money raising adventures you have been in. Have you ever known one person to confess God for being involved in a money raising activity in the church? I don't. I've never known a person to join the church. I've never known a person to increase their spiritual life and get up to say because we raise this amount of money, my life, my spiritual life has been increased. I don't. Maybe you do. See, our job in
the church is to save souls. That's what we are about. Our job is to teach men and women what the Bible says about sin. That is our job. Our job is to minister to each other in need. That is our job. Our job is to be involved in a mission of the community. That is our job. Our job is not to turn a church into a den of thieves. A man has written a book and I'm going to buy it next week. . . . You know when Jesus went into the temple and they had used the church exchanging money, making a profit, selling to the people, making a profit, and that's one of the few times that Jesus got mad. And he took him a rope and beat those people and ran them out of the temple. You have made my father's house a den of thieves and the man said we have got the church back to being a den of thieves. I don't think we should do it. I think we should depend on God to see that you and I and the members of this church give what it takes. Our mission and our emphasis should be on helping people.

. . . I believe that God, I believe this, maybe he'll disappoint me but I believe that God is going to take care of me if I do what he tells me to do. And I don't think you can do anything about it. I believe that and that's the way I am.

. . . The only thing that is going to save this church is that we lose ourselves in the word of God. Jesus said if you try to save it you're going to lose it but if you try to lose yourself in my work you will save it. My beloved, if we save it it's going to be because God still needs it. And if it's not needed. If it's not going to carry out the work of God it's not needed. Then we'll lose it. My beloved, I think we still need it and therefore we ought to lose our life this year in trying to do it the way Christ would do it. . . .

Suppose Jesus was back here and everybody agreed that this was Jesus. Most people has agreed that this was Jesus. And you're convinced that this is Jesus and they sent him to Centenary to do about two
years ministry. And we come up with the budget and we come up with our program. Would you step out and say that's how we're going to raise the money. We're going to have Men's Day, Women's Day . . . Is that what we would do? If Jesus was here would we have the audacity to stand in the presence of God's son and say we need $85,000 and the only way we can get it is to have some dinners, some fish fries and some taxation? Would you? But then we don't believe what we say we believe.

In my January 13th interview with Reverend Dix I asked him to describe the parameters of his job as a minister in the church.

Minister Interview: January 13, 1983

Minister: In the Methodist church the pastor is appointed pastor in charge. Now in secular terms I'm the administrative officer of this organization. And I'm the spiritual leader of the congregation. The bishop and the superintendent they don't look to no member they look to me. For benevolence or whatever happens they look to me. That's why I tell them sometimes, I say, if it fails they ain't looking at nobody but me. If I fail they ain't looking to you because they're volunteers. They don't have to be responsible to the bishop. You see, he sends me here. The cabinet sends me here and who they send that's who they hold. And then you're going to have to learn, if you're going to carry out a ministry to motivate people to want to be a part of it and have such a ministry that people want to be a part of it. And you do this by helping the people to build the ministry and the outreaches you are going to have. I mean, people involved in it, people will support it.
And my thing, is that I'm trying to be less responsible for programs. I appoint people to committees and they take it and go. I have meetings and give suggestions and hold them down sometimes and give my viewpoints and some experience on some things but people, let them run it, and I feel comfortable. Now the chairman of the finance committee called me awhile ago and asked me if I would be available for a meeting Monday night. The finance committee wants to meet to try to get their program together to cover 1983 financial program. Now I've got to write him a letter first. I've got some things that I want him to think about and I've got some things that I want the treasurer to think about and I've got some things that I want the finance secretary to think about. But how I'm going to have a chance to write that letter and get it to him, I don't know but I'll give it to him by Sunday. Now he has got his programs but my thing is that I would like him to know some things I'm thinking before he gets there so that he can incorporate them into what he's thinking. Basically I don't have much trouble with getting my point of view but I don't push for it. I don't have to have it.

On January 27th I conducted another interview with Reverend Dix where we talked about the importance of the sermon and how a church can fail.

Minister Interview: January 27, 1983

Minister: The gospel as an authority will take us beyond our pettiness . . . .

I think that Paul said that it is through the foolishness of preaching that men will change. I think Paul
said it but I know one of the apostles said it. That's why the sermon is so important. It didn't say through the foolishness of sin but the foolishness of standing up there trying to understand and tell people about what God's word said. It's that foolishness that changes people. Because somebody is going to hear it. Some people make some advancement every Sunday and some people don't. And it's through that foolishness and it is foolishness and Jesus said go ye to all the world and preach. He didn't say sing. He said go ye to all the world and preach. The gospel. Tell the people that the kingdom of God is coming and baptize. So God mandated preaching. Jesus mandated preaching. So it's through this foolishness that people are going to change.

... I don't let nobody pastor this church but me.

Researcher: What does that mean?

Minister: You have people who want to be the pastor. Who want to run the church the way they see fit and I'm the pastor this year. In this church. You see I'm that until June 15th. Now they might send somebody else here next year and he is going to be the pastor. But see a lot of people in the church want to dictate, call the shots, and want the pastor to run the church like they want it. They want to take over. But see I'm not going to do that. I draw the line somewhere. I tell people that I don't even let my wife pastor along with me.

Researcher: Do you think there should be ... some people say that an institution functions better when there is a consensus between the leadership and the people ...

Minister: That's not what I'm talking about now. I'm not talking about a consensus between leadership and the officers and
the people. I'm trying my best to do that, that's why we're in this . . . . like we are because I go over backwards trying to get involvement with the people. Trying to get the people more involved, see. Now that's different from letting a small group take over.

See the thing about it is that all we've got is persuasion. But I also have something else. Whether it is discipline or not I can move anybody out of the office they are in. I can do that. (pause in recording)

See, as the pastor of this church I'm responsible for this whole church's program. If it fails they ain't coming to nobody but me. Nobody, they're not going to call the administrative board chairman in, they're not going to call the finance chairman in, they're not going to call the treasurer in, they're not going to call the council of ministries in, they're not going to call the trustees in, they're not going to call nobody in. If anybody had to answer for it it's the pastor. So if I'm totally responsible for it, I should have the final word on how we carry it out. With input, you see what I mean. The church itself, the congregation holds me responsible for it. They hold me responsible for their money, if it's handled right. They just hold me responsible. The bishop holds me responsible for it, the superintendent holds me responsible for it, the general church holds me responsible for it. I mean everything holds me responsible for that church's program. So you've got this ultimate responsibility and you've got to answer to it then you should have the final word in seeing how it's going to be done and who's going to help you carry it out? That is why the pastor of the church is chairman of the committee on nominations and personnel. That's the only committee in the church that he is the chairman of.
Researcher: How can a church fail?

Minister: It can fail by arguments, confusion, cliques. It can turn into be something that it's not. No spiritual growth, no love, no harmony, no real concern about each other. And these are the failures that I'm concerned about. More than I am about the financial failure. Because the financial failure is a result of something else. One of the great tragedies of a church is that they count failure or success in dollars. And I think this is the wrong criteria for failure or success. In a church. It's not dollars. But they'll say we had a good program. We raised $5,000 and they don't say nothing about whether anybody was converted, you know, they don't say nothing else. I don't count failure that way and that's where some people want to count failure. Success is when we've raised the budget. Success to me is not if we raise the budget. You see, we can not raise the budget and still have a successful year. And sometimes it's hard to get people to see this. But our job is not to raise money and I keep emphasizing this. That's not what we are set up for. The banks are set up to raise money. We are not a financial institute we are a spiritual institute. And we either succeed or fail in terms of how we grow spiritually. And what we let this spiritual growth lead us into, caring about people and things of this sort. And where we can get over our shortcomings and where we can look at the sacraments, holy communion, in the right light. You see when we shift our emphasis from the spiritual growth to the financial growth then we'll just do anything and communion and baptism won't mean nothing to us. I think we fail when these things fail to have the meaning that is there and then we cheapen it and we take it for a show. And Paul talks about this and Jesus talks about this as damnation to your soul if you take it when you are unworthy. That's the failure of success.
On January 30th Reverend Dix related two stories to his congregation that were designed to elucidate the theme of that Sunday's sermon: Whose is it? He took his scriptural inspiration for Jeremiah 7: 1-1 from the old testament and Luke 12: 13-21 from the new testament. His first story was about a minister who had succeeded in convincing his congregation to tithe and his second story was about a man who had accumulated riches only to discover when he was about to enjoy them that he had to leave his earthly riches behind to meet God.

Sermon: January 30, 1983

One time Mr. Hinton was called to pastor a church in Columbia. This church had a building fund. Ten or fifteen years they wanted to build a new church. They had been having fish fries, and weiner roasts and bazaars and everything else over the years trying to get up a building fund to build the church. And about ten or fifteen years they had about $11,000 in the building fund. And Mr. Hinton took over as pastor. He told them that we will have no other programs to raise any money in this church. You know, that was a kind of shocking thing when he told me about it because I really thought all black churches couldn't survive without some dinners. At least I had never heard of one. He said we're going to do it without bazaars. We're going to do it without fish fries, and we're going to do it without chicken dinners, and we're going to do it without Men's Day and we're going to build this church. When he went in he said I came to help build a church. We're going to build this church. There were some people who were upset. Some of those people had their
whole lives in these programs that they had been having for years. And he prevailed. Over confusion, but he prevailed. He said I'm going to lift you from where you are and I'm going to bring you to where Christ wants you to be. We are going to accept no less from our membership than what the Bible requires and once you start tithing we don't have to worry about no money to build your church. and that the minimum of our giving requirements would be to tithe from everybody. Some kind of way that caught on in that church. I'll stand here before you and say that within three years from the day he took over no more fish fries, no more raising money, they had the church built and paid for. Not only was the church built and paid for but the people realized a different relationship with God. Religion and Christianity is to lift you up to where God wants you to be. Once we realize our relationship with God then we look at our relationships different, we look at our possessions different, we look at our life different.

After relating the second story Reverend Dix continues to try to elucidate the proper Christian relationship between God and material possessions.

What I'm trying to say to you, my beloved, if we carry a right relationship with God then we can handle our riches. When we can have a right relationship with God then we know whose it is. First we know whose we are.

Do we believe that we belong to God? You know we have to decide that. Do we believe all our blessings come from God? You know we have to decide that. Do we believe that God blesses us? Or do we believe that we do it ourselves? We have to decide that. Now once we decide that I do it myself then I look at the gospel, I look at God's word, I look at stewardship in one light. I do as I wish to do. That's what we are.
Now, on the other hand, if a person recognized that he or she belongs to God then everything you possess, you say, either directly or indirectly, it too belongs to God. Then if my whole life belongs to God and I'm tied up in the premises of God then I want to do what God tells me to do. God said it's very simple. You bring part of everything I've blessed you with to help other people out. Very simple. He says it over and over and over again. He called it tithe. He didn't say bring your last. He said bring your first fruit. Now if we can recognize this relationship with God then we're on a higher plane. We as Christians are supposed to be on a higher plane than a non-Christian. We are supposed to be up here believing in the promises of God.

The last meeting of the finance committee for the month of January took place on the last day of the month. Initial discussions uncovered the fact that the last five years had seen a deficit budget and that the church was operating at an assessed size that reflected a $300,000 operating budget. Of course, it was immediately acknowledged that the church was being assessed on a spurious membership number and steps should be undertaken to investigate the situation.

An $84,380 budget was projected for 1983. It had not really been decided, at the previous meetings, what method would be used to fund the budget. The methods discussed were tithing and fundraising projects. The minister was strongly in favor of deemphasizing the fundraising projects, whereas some committee members supported them. So, in view of some very real facts like: only 10% of the membership
tithe; the majority of the congregation is composed of senior citizens who are on fixed income; there is no instrument in place that could guarantee an increase in spiritual giving; there is no concrete knowledge, for the moment, at least, of how many people were actively supporting the church; and a contingency plan had to be agreed upon to meet the budget. It was decided that there would be two fundraising projects for 1983. The State's Tea would be one and the Ebony Drive would be the other. The urgency for agreeing upon a fundraising plan was underlined by the treasurer's report for the month of January.* The treasury has received $5,825.80 for January. The treasury had paid out $5,858.50. This left a deficit balance of minus $32.70. The striking thing about January's budget was its shortage of $1,205.86. With a projected annual budget of $84,380, January was supposed to show receipts of $7,031.66. The January deficit provoked immediate concern and prompt action. The general consensus at adjournment of the meeting was that special programs to fund the budget would be initiated. But stewardship, as an important Christian concept, would also be promoted in an effort to increase the spiritual giving of the church.

One of the most important concepts that 'set forth the theological grounding of the United Method. st Church' is stewardship. Stewardship is defined as:

* See page 175 . Tables 4,5
The living out of our commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord of life. It facilitates turning good intentions into positive actions. It enables us to see God's possibilities and opportunities in all situations, including the really tough ones. It invites us to be alert to where God is moving in human history and to respond by utilizing all that we have been given in that movement towards God's reign in human lives.

As Christian stewards, we accept life, family, church, community, possessions, gospel, power and influence, time, skills, and love and all the fullness of creation as a trust from God. Through the handling of all these gifts from the creator, we hope to find fulfillment for our lives and for the world, beginning where we are and touching the far reaches of the international community. Seeing these gifts as being loaned to us for a time helps us to be free to manage them in ways that maximize their usefulness and facilitate life-giving results. (United Methodist Publishing House 1981)

Stewardship had been suggested as an alternative to fundraising projects and in my January 13th interview with Reverend Dix I asked him to talk about his concept of stewardship.

Minister Interview: January 13, 1983

Minister: I'm a steward too, and I'm entrusted . . . but every person also has to realize that they are a steward and we are all entrusted with different amounts of God's substance. Now I've got one talent. God gave everybody at least one talent. I work under the assumption that I have one talent. And I take that one talent and I work it to death. I don't claim to have five but one. Because the scripture
says each according to his ability. Now he didn't say how much you could do with that one. Now you can take that one and do whatever you want with that one.

... The whole thing of the stewardship concept is that God wants you to have what he gave you. But he also wants you to share it with somebody else. And if he gave you this, he gave it to you. Some people try to earn a salvation. You can't work yourself into it. And whatever talent we have, we didn't earn it. God gave it to us. Before we even knew what it was. We wouldn't know what it cost to pay if we was trying to earn it. If I was trying to earn me another pound of salvation, what would I do, see? It is a free gift from God. And all of these things we have are free gifts from God. And you see, this is what these two or three sermons are about. We stop giving God credit for anything. I'm doing this. I bought me a house. I got me a good job. You know, we stop giving God credit for giving us the help. To give us the strength and the mind to get the Ph.D., to give us the physical strength to be able to cipher all these things. To give me eyesight to be able to read. And give me the ability to write these things down.

My whole thing is that God deserves some credit. You deserve some, but if you didn't have your health, if you didn't have your mind, if you didn't have the money it takes, then none of this would be possible. And the only thing that I reckon is that where does all of it come from? It has to come from somewhere. My thing is that all of life and everything here comes from God. And he lets you have a little bit of it to see how you're going to handle it.
During the months of January and February I developed an initial understanding of the financial situation of the church through messages from the minister's sermons, personal interviews with the minister, and information gathered while observing finance committee meetings. During the latter part of February I began to interview church officials in order to gain a more personal view of the problem. I asked the interviewees a series of questions about their life in the church. Portions of these interviews have been excerpted for this section. The bulk of these interviews took place in March with an occasional interview in February, April, and May.

It is important to acknowledge that most, if not all, of the interviewees had heard the minister's messages from the pulpit and were familiar with current financial reports. Equally significant is their membership in the church for many, many years. More important than personal biographies*, at this point, is the evolution of thought about the problem.

The interviewees held membership on the following administrative organs: finance committee; administrative board; pastor-parish committee; the usher board; and the trustee board. The first interview took place on February 17th.

* If this study were to be expanded into a deeper search for sociocultural and psychocultural meaning, the personal biographies of the participants would be of extreme importance.
Finance Activity Interview: February 17, 1983

Researcher: What is the size of the congregation?

Mr. : Right now I'd say we had about two hundred and fifty members really and we should have at least five hundred. Now 250 are actively participating and supporting the church. Those 250 come at least twice a month. About 100 people are directly involved in the survival of the church. If that many. But I would round it out to about 100.

... Break the average down to what it would be per month and out of that month, take that same figure and add to what had come in the $2,000 and then you get an average of what people are paying and I'm sure it would be low, very low. And that bothers me. And so, what Centenary needs now is to be rejuvenated.

Researcher: There seems to be two schools of thought concerning the church's financial problem. One school feels that Centenary can be rejuvenated through more spiritual involvement, i.e., that spiritual involvement will open up the pocketbooks. And the other school feels that people must be given something outside of their spiritual involvement alone, to open up their pocketbooks. In other words, cultural involvement is also important. And if you make the church a center of cultural activities with a spiritual foundation then that would motivate people to open up their pocketbooks. Both points of view are, of course, valid. Now what do you think will rejuvenate and what would be your suggestion?

Mr. : See, the thing that bothers me the most is that the bishop and the district superintendent and all the Methodist union, white, downtown, they could care less about Centenary. You know why? Because when they see our budget and how much we missed it by last year, and this is a part of their knowledge, you see,
for the records, if you don't have a certain amount of money, and you see Reverend Dix is trying to raise that money. And you see there is not that many people interested in how he is going about doing it. If Centenary was sitting on $500,000 in the bank, the bishop would be out there every other Sunday. Just sitting in the audience, you see what I mean. But they don't care nothing about Centnnary, there at 18th and Long. I mean they let that be known.

Researcher: I'm hearing that churches today, in order to survive, have got to think beyond just spiritual concerns. Is that what you're saying?

Mr: It all works hand-in-hand. On the practical side you need money to turn the light on. To be warm, for comfort, to cook in the kitchen, to pay salaries. And here we are talking about a part-time secretary. You know, this to me is going backward. You should have a full-time secretary. . . . But you have to start cutting back when you're not getting the money so, and that's the very practical side of it. So you've got to be practical. There's a spiritual side and there's a practical side. You are going to close the doors if you can't pay your taxes and if you can't pay your sewer bill and your telephone and your utilities. And your salaries and stuff like that. And you've got to pay your musicians or you don't get no music. But where does it start? See, you worry about money when you are not doing something. And black folk need more motivation than white people. White people make probably $30,000 to $50,000 and they'll donate $2,000 or $3,000 on any given Sunday. So they can take it off on taxes. But we don't make that kind of money. It's a sacrifice and right now we need a new bus and if I were to go back into trying to get a new bus or something like this, I'd want to pay cash for it, you see?
You've got to be excited about whatever you're doing, if you expect the people who are trying to follow you to be excited. . . . You've got to have a choir that's cooking, and a preacher that's cooking, and a congregation that's cooking, and then you don't have to worry about the meal coming out right.

Finance Committee Interview: March 1, 1983

Researcher: How would you assess Centenary's ability to address its problems?

Mr.: Basically I don't think Centenary is unique in the type of problems that we have. We don't have any monopoly on that, but I think your question is what do I feel that could be done to help evaluate these problems, or help solve these problems or deal with these problems? I believe in communication. I think better communication. I think more participation from a larger group of people. Because some of the problems that we have are due to lack of knowledge, the people not knowing. So, again, if we could get wider participation, better communications, I think we could get very close to solving our problems, not just financial but intellectual and any other problems that we have.

Researcher: How would you go about improving the communications in the church?

Mr.: Basically, that's something we're working on now. Trying to better communicate with the congregation from the financial viewpoint. It can be done through one or two ways: written or oral or a combination of the two. We are going to try a combination of the two. By getting out more written reports to the congregation and speak directly to the congregation about various issues and their concerns.
Researcher: Would you explain the organizational structure of the church?

Mr.: Centenary is a corporation and it is incorporated as a non-profit corporation with the stated purpose for religious worship. In addition to this we have a subsidiary corporation called Centenary Housing Corporation, which owns the houses that we rent out to others. These houses are not owned by the church per se. But the church is the parent corporation itself. So if something was to happen Centenary Housing Corporation can be sued and it can be sued in its own name because that is the legal right it has. No one individual or no group of individuals can be sued for any damages. Now the church is insured, all the houses are insured, and also the parsonage is insured and this is against fire and theft and whatever losses it may suffer. It is also insured against personal injury on the property. So if a person wanted to sue the church or the housing corporation for some negligence or for whatever they are suing they would have to deal with the insurance company first and if they didn't receive satisfaction through the insurance settlement then they would have the right to file suit but they could not file a personal suit against the chairperson of the administrative board or the chairperson of the finance committee or the chairperson of the trustee board. They could only sue the corporation.

To my knowledge all churches are insured in that manner. They would protect themselves under the corporation laws by incorporating as a non-profit or not for profit organization with a stated purpose. The same as any business corporation. There is a possibility under the corporation law, as a trustee of the corporation you can be held liable for certain actions or inactions. Say if we had 10 employees
and we failed to follow the guidelines for withholding taxes or if we didn't withhold federal taxes and we're required to do so by law we'd be liable for the taxes that the employer would have had to pay. And they would not go after the corporation but they would go after the person who was directly responsible for the negligence because this is human action.

**Researcher:** What are your ideas about the difference between relying on spiritual motivations or cultural activities to generate funds in the church?

**Mr.****: I doubt that it is possible to get the congregation to the point where they would give enough money to more than take care of the financial needs of Centenary through spiritual motivations. But along with this I feel that we have to be realistic until we reach that point. I feel that we should try a combination of the two. I have nothing against stewardship sermons, tithing, teaching the person the limits of what they are supposed to do as far as their givings are concerned. But we haven't gotten far enough along that line where if we didn't try some other methods to raise funds for the church we would just be so far behind financially until it would be impossible to obtain the budget for the church.

**Researcher:** Is the present financial situation unique or has that been the case since you've been a member at Centenary?

**Mr.****: Off and on. There has never been a time when we have had so much money that we could go and open up an investment account. But there have been times since I've been there where we didn't have to worry about paying the pastor's salary or paying the current expenses or buying needed supplies for the church school. There have been times when we could meet these obligations without any problems.
There have been times when money was very lean. Now I don't know if it's because of the economy or just what it is. These last couple of years have been very, very disappointing to me as far as the giving, as far as the amount of receipts that we have taken in is concerned.

Administrative Board Interview: March 2, 1983

Researcher: How would you assess Centenary's ability to address its problems?

Mrs._____: Well, for one thing, I would say all the officers that we have don't really go along with the program of the church so it's hard to be an officer and not demonstrate the kind of conduct the church is trying to get across to the congregation. A year or maybe two years ago when we tried to get more people to tithe... I made the remark at the administrative board meeting that it seemed like it would be up to officers. If you could get all the officers to tithe first then you could get all the congregation to do it and then somebody would say I can't afford to tithe, I'm on a fixed income. I'm not ready to tithe. So I said that if you can't get everybody to tithe why not try to find somebody to fill the office that would. And it developed into such a big argument and somebody asked if you want somebody to quit because they can't tithe. And I said, that's not what I'm saying. We just need to have more spiritual people as the officers of the church. If you're going to be up front you should go the whole route. You should get up, pray, and give your tithes so people can see it. The list of excuses you can mark them down. "I don't want to march up front and put my tithe in." "How do you know I don't tithe?" "I'm on a fixed income, I can't do this." So you just got tired of ever doing this
so you just said that I'm going to do what I feel like doing. So there are maybe 4 or 5 officers that do tithe out of the whole 30 some. So if you can't get the officers to go along with the program how are you going to get the other members to do it? If they don't have the faith to know that they can give their 10% and God is going to take them, how can you get that across to other people? And people were complaining about Reverend Dix trying to browbeat us every Sunday talking about tithing. If the administrative board were going to do this and we asked him to get up there and talk through the Bible about tithing and how important it is maybe we could come off of the financial difficulty that we have now and we wouldn't have to be going through all these drives and things. That's just one of the things and then you have a lot of people that . . . I don't know, you don't know if they have the office because they say that they are there or what and not really want to function in the office. It really gets hard because sometimes you feel like there are a lot better ways that the church could be organized if you had people who are not afraid to get up and say what they really think. And not always have to go along with everybody else. Even when they speak of the pastor they become unrealistic instead of just thinking of him as a position and not this one particular man. This is a position, so we are going to stop right here because we can't afford to keep raising the salary because that's not in the budget you know. Well, they say our pastor needs so and so, thinking of the man instead of thinking of the position. And it just gets to be a lot of headaches and arguments that . . . you know . . . sometimes you feel like people who are in office are not realistic, they're just going to do this to keep everybody happy. If you were running a business you wouldn't do that. But when you say something you sound like you are the bad fellow, you know?
Researcher: An interesting issue has developed since I have been at Centenary. The basic issue is how do we strengthen Centenary's financial position, through tithing or fundraising projects. What do you think?

Mrs.: I'm sure we'll always have some kind of drives until we can get people to tithe, but you're not going to get them to tithe if they don't feel spiritually inclined, and once they start they'll probably continue. Once you start it's like a vow to God that you're going to do this and you're not going to break a vow because you don't want to feel guilty, you know. I really didn't start tithing until late. When I became an officer I started tithing because I said I should. As head officer, I should tithe. . . . But I'd have to do it by the time they take out all of these other things, and when I started and each time I'd get a raise I'd just increase it so now at the first of the month I know that I'm going to put in my tithe and I don't worry about it. And I haven't missed it. And if I stop now I'd feel guilty because I'd probably do something else with the money and I haven't missed not having anything. We still eat and we still dress and I haven't really missed anything. But it has to be between you and God. You have to trust in God that you are going to be able to make it. Because most people say I can't give that much what if something happens, and I guess that is a strange thing with me. I never get too excited about things. . . . People think they're going to save money and they're going to have this when they get older. You know, you might go tomorrow and somebody else is going to be enjoying that money, you know. You can't take it with you and people just don't seem to get that through their heads.

Researcher: What would you suggest as a way to increase the efficiency of communication in the church?
Mrs.: Well, one of the things for me and I've talked to Reverend Dix about this is that he should stop trying to do so much and just stay out of it and let the people feel like they're doing something and stop trying to run everything. It would probably be much better.

Generally speaking, the pastor has the ultimate authority in the church in order to keep the peace, but that's why we have these other officers so that they can make some decisions, like what needs to be done. But if he decides that something needs to be done then that is what gets done.

Administrative Board Interview: March 9, 1983

Researcher: How do you think Centenary can solve its financial problems?

Mr.: Well, that's quite a problem. We've always had these drives to raise money. But if each and every member of Centenary would do their share and pay their dues, or tithes or what have you, we wouldn't have to have that at Centenary any more. But there are few churches that have gotten away from that and by us having quite a large number of senior citizens living on fixed incomes, where they are not really able to contribute too much toward the church. But we have some people that are able to do it and don't do it. I know, since I have worked on the finance committee for so many years and have seen what Mr. so-and-so, and Mrs. so-and-so contribute and been contributing for so many years and have never increased. I know that they can do better. Some of them haven't done any better but I think it would be a wonderful thing if we could support the church without having these fund-raisers. I really do. It can be done. But we have been so used to having dinners or selling tickets or doing something and it is kind of hard for some of them to
get away from it. But it can be done. But we've got to give it a try. If you don't give it a try then you'll never do it. If everybody would give $1.50 or $2.00 more a week we could get away from it. I think we can get away from it if everybody would give each and every Sunday. And just raise the givings $2.00 a week. We'd have enough money and I would love to see us get away from it. I really would.

Researcher: Has the financial situation always been as difficult as it is now since you've been working with the finance committee?

Mr. : Yes, it always has been. We have always had some kind of fundraising, practically ever since I have belonged to Centenary. Years ago we used to have, every year, what you called a Red and Blue drive. We had so many on this team and so many on that team. That was the big project. Then we had Men's Day and we had Women's Day. We don't have that any more. We got away from that. And we have done just as well by getting away from that. The only thing that we have been having here recently is the State's Tea and one year we had an Ebony Drive that was successful.

It's kind of rough, you know. We are supposed to have 500 or more members, and if each would just give $2.00 more a week, that would pull us out of the hole. We wouldn't have to have the drives. We'd be able to meet our conference claims.

Researcher: How do you assess Centenary's ability to deal with its internal problems?

Mr. : Again, I get back to what I mentioned before about people accepting leadership positions. Our current minister is a very strong-willed person. He has a lot of independence within himself. There are times that I feel that he takes too many things upon himself.
Not because he wants to but because someone else has failed to act. I think it is unfair to the congregation because when he takes on something someone else can do then he may not have enough time to take care of some of those things that you would expect a minister to do. I think that we have the mechanism in place by having the administrative board and the various committees. I don't know of any area of responsibility where someone hasn't been assigned that couldn't take care of an internal problem. Whether they do it or not remains to be seen. I feel that the structure is in place.

**Researcher:** The issue, as I'm understanding it in the church at present, and I don't know if this has been the case in the past, is that there are two approaches being considered for addressing the financial problems of the church. The one side is considering the tithe and the other side is considering the fundraising drive. What are your thoughts on the issue?

**Mr.** I don't think that it is an easy thing to solve. In fact, I made a recommendation that we have more of an awareness program of the church's finances, a weekly statement so that the congregation will know where its church stands financially as far as what's going out, what's coming in, and there has been seminar meetings, sermons, preaching on tithing, the Bible concept of tithing, and what the Bible says about what a person should give. And there are some members, for whatever reasons, who think that not a whole lot of emphasis should be put on the financial status of the church or they shouldn't feel that they are being harrassed to give more than they can afford to give. Regardless of what the Bible states. Yesterday they had a meeting on finance where papers were handed out that immediately showed that we are running about $3,000 in the hole already. Now individual members,
if they are interested in the church's finances, can see this in black and white. And perhaps maybe they will search their own budgets to see where they can give a little more. If they would perhaps be honest with themselves maybe they can't. But I do know that maybe their lifestyle has reached that point whereby even though they would like to give more maybe they have already overextended themselves. With the increase in taxes, with the increase in education for their children maybe its financially impossible for them at this time. Somewhere down the road perhaps maybe they can. But if a person is already overextended and perhaps their living expenses are 95% of their income, how can they give 10%? That's 105%. So that is something that had to be planned on and eventually worked in. If they have the intent to do so, many can work slowly toward it. But in a lot of cases it is something they can do only once. If they are concerned about their church and if they are deeply religious I feel that to continue to make them feel that they are not doing their part will cause them some problems. Because maybe they really want to but from a financial position they just can't. That can cause a lot of conflict and can cause a lot of resentment. Yet, how do you strike that middle road, where you get the necessary funds, yet not alienate good members, remains to be seen. It is not an easy problem to solve.

**Researcher:** Do you think that fundraising projects are detrimental to the spirituality of the church?

**Mr.** No, I don't think so. Especially if it is something that can be sort of entertaining to the members. People seem to work into a certain amount of entertainment funds. Just recently I went to see "Your Arms Too Short To Box With God" and there was standing room only. The tickets were from 12 to about $15.50 and it was
mostly black people there. So they find money for things they want. And another thing I thought about over the years where I worked with the youth groups I've gone on camping trips with them, I worked with Men's Day, housing program, the pastor-parish relations committee. I worked on the Bennett College Choir Committee and a few other things but I gave a three minute talk at Mattie Ruth's banquet and evidently they found it to be somewhat humorous and I received more comments on that three minute talk then all these other projects that I had been involved in together. So I think that people do like to be entertained.

Researcher: What convinced you to tithe?

Mr. _______: It was after I became more involved in the church and became more aware of the church's finances and need for money and the fact that we were falling short that convinced me that what I thought should have been sufficient . . . I felt that if everyone was giving what I was giving at the time even though I wasn't tithing there would be enough money. But then when I became more active in the church and I saw the people who had various illnesses, disabilities, and understood that to them maybe $2.00 a week might have been a strain on them, I realized then that even though what I felt was enough, in fact there were some people who actually could not afford to, that it wasn't enough and I felt that I would at least try to come up to minimum giving. So it was more becoming aware of the church's finances than it was a religious necessity.

Administrative Board Interview: March 21, 1983

Researcher: How do you think Centenary can and should approach its financial situation, also considering your 30 years experience with the financial problems of the church?
Mrs.______: Sometimes I think that they don't have as much trust in God as they should. I'm not one for all the selling. I think if they just really believed in God, put all their trust in God and remember that whatever they might have God is the one that made it possible to have it. And if they would tithe I think that would take care of the whole thing. But at any time at Centenary you're talking about more than $1,000, they freeze up. And that bothers me. Because I really do believe because God said if you knock the door will be opened, if you ask, you will receive and if you really, really believe that. . . . you would tithe. A lot of them will say, well, I'm on a pension. So what if you're on a pension? He's only asking for 10% of that pension. I really don't like the idea of all this selling. I really don't.

Researcher: How do you assess Centenary's ability to address its problems?

Mrs.______: I really don't know. . . . What Centenary really needs is, maybe, on several Sunday mornings is not to have a sermon but to get the Methodist Discipline out and educate the people at Centenary on the Methodist doctrines because, really, they don't really know it. I'm not sure that all of them know that there is such a thing as a discipline. I had to quit going to board meetings because they just irritate me so bad and I thought that wasn't Christian, I better go on down there and fuss.

Researcher: How large would you estimate the actively participating membership of the church to be?

Mrs.______: I don't know. I've never thought about that. But it's the same little crew. But the other side of that coin is. . . . You're the same ones always doing.
Anything that goes on is always announced in church and everybody has a chance to participate but it's the same crew.

Pastor-Parish Committee Interview: March 23, 1983

Researcher: Has the financial situation been basically the same since you've been there?

Mr. : Yeah, I'd say so. There's never enough. And you've always got to find ways to do it. I think one of the problems is that we don't have as many members as there are on the books. And one of my solutions to that and I guess it is supposed to be done and I don't know how often, but, the books need to be purged every once in a while and then we could get some kind of picture, a realistic picture of what you've got, and then maybe our assessments might be more realistic. Our benevolence, where it is now something like $13,000 a year, is based on something like 450 members and I'm not sure that we have that many members. Yes, I'm sure that we haven’t.

Researcher: What would you estimate the active participating membership to be?

Mr. : I may be low but probably around 150. Something like that, and that may be high.

Researcher: What do you base that on?

Mr. : I base it on what I see on Sunday mornings. I base it on what I know comes in there in those envelopes. See, I was just playing around with some figures in that last meeting we were in because I stopped listening to some of that stuff that was going on. But if we do have 250 members participating actively, giving $10.00 a week, we'd be so far above budget that we could begin to talk about building, you know. Our budget is $84,000 and we might come within $2,000 of that and that's why you need things like the
State's Tea.
The State's Tea is a money maker for the church and what we do is try to get 50 people, one to represent each state, and they raise money. Our goal was $10,000 last year. And we raised $7,500 which I thought was pretty good.

Although Reverend Dix gets up in church and talks about the church not being there to raise money... The reality of it is that we do need money and we don't get it on Sunday mornings, the kind of money we need, so we got to do some things. But I think along with raising money in the church with the State's Tea there is a lot of fellowship and a lot of fun that goes along with it. That's another part of my thing. Getting together and having fun together.

Researcher: There is an issue being kicked around in the church concerning an effective approach to dealing with the budget problem. One side of the issue favors tithing and the other side favors fundraising projects. Do you think that Centenary could, at present, increase the spiritual giving of its members?

Mr.: That's a hard question for me to answer. I don't tithe. I know one thing, presently, we can see how many people come up there. I just can't answer that. Maybe it can be. But I don't know whether it gets that way by browbeating people.

Researcher: Why don't you tithe?

Mr.: I don't want to. I don't think it's necessary. I still think that if enough people gave enough every Sunday then he wouldn't even be up there talking about tithing. If there is enough money coming in every Sunday to cover everything we need and to get us some of the things we want to do, he wouldn't be talking about it and I'm not knocking him. Because I like him and I'm not going to do it.
Researcher: Do you think you give enough on Sunday?

Mr. : Yeah, I don't feel any guilt or anything like that when I put in what I put in. And I think, again, if everybody put in what I put in he wouldn't be talking about it.

Trustee Board and Pastor-Parish Committee Interview:

April 14, 1983

Researcher: How do you assess Centenary's financial problems?

Mr. : Personally, I think that if they continue to go in the direction they are going eventually they are going to fold. Now last year we were $13,000 short. And the rate we're going this year we will be 22 or $26,000 in the hole. I haven't projected how many years it would take but at that rate it won't take very many, 8 or 10 years and it's gone. Now I don't know the solution. I wish I did.

You see, the Methodist are so proud they won't get out like the Baptist and have all this stuff, you know, hamburgers and all that stuff on the street, and beg for money and the Baptist usually find a way. The Methodist say that it's against their belief or religion or something like that.

Now with the number of people out of work I mean, you have to face this. Some of our members are out of work. With people out of work they're going to feed themselves and pay their bills and try to give a little to the church.

Researcher: Would you estimate the number of people who are actively supporting the church?

Mr. : One hundred and fifty to 250 and there are about 500 on the roll.

Researcher: Do you have any suggestions about how the financial problems can be addressed?
Mrs.: My personal view, I guess I don't go for a lot of social activities, okay. If I'm going to tithe, really make up my mind to tithe to one place, in fact I do think I'm tithing but I might not be giving all my resources to Centenary United Methodist Church. I'm giving it to some other organizations. And it happens not to be all Centenary. Maybe I need to pray a little more for the Lord to say now you give it to one particular source, you know. I might send something home to Texas, they have a program, I might send some money home to that church so I might give some Baptist church here in this city. You know, something like that. Fifteen dollars here, $25 here, for special programs, whereas I didn't take all of my 10%, if 10% is what you are supposed to tithe and maybe give it to one particular thing. So . . . to get Centenary out of its problems maybe more people should give all of their 10% to Centenary. You see what I mean. More people should tithe.

Researcher: Do you think there is a relationship between the financial difficulty of the church and the spirituality of the church?

Mr.: Sure I do. I would probably get up off more money myself if I felt better. If you really went in the church and enjoyed it and somebody said well, how about giving a little more. You'd dig down and get it. Even within yourself, I mean if you really wanted it and you felt that it was a good sermon and the songs were nice and I really enjoyed it and they said give another $1.00 or $5.00 and more than likely you can spare $1.00 or $2.00 more, but if they would say let's give a little more. They'd dig down and get it. But if it's dry and you didn't get nothing out of it and you were wishing it's over with and everybody's sleeping and you can just read their minds, when is this guy going to sit down? There is no use asking those people for anything because they ain't
going to give anything. If the sermon was inspiring and they said let's give some more money they'll going to get it because the spirit told me to give it.

Mrs._____: If you felt the spirit and it moved you would you give more? Well, in my opinion, I agree that if you hear a good sermon you might be moved to do better. I'm not saying that we don't have some good sermons in the church because sometimes you can go to church and the sermon is good but you're not really in it. You didn't come there with an open mind and an open heart. So the sermon could have been good and the music good but you yourself just don't have the spirit. So I'm saying that the spirit just hit you a number of ways now.

Because it's going to depend on how I receive the spirit. Or how the spirit comes to me. You see what I mean. So I'm saying yes, sometimes I'm motivated by the spirit, I mean, by the sermon, and sometimes I might be motivated by some reading and the spirit will come that way. Now whether it would make me pay more so that I'd feel as if I had done my part that day or if you would sing all day long and pray all day long or you could preach all day long and I'm not going to give any more then I have already done. So I'm just saying that the spirit just hits me a different way. You look for the spirit in different ways and it does come in different ways.

I don't know about the money if there is more spirit in the church. I might be in the middle of the road concerning those two schools of thought because I imagine that if I deep down wanted to I could give it either way. Either with the spirit or with the other.
Pastor-Parish Committee and Trustee Board Interview:

May 30, 1983

Researcher: Could you comment on Centenary's efforts to deal with its financial problems?

Mrs.: There are many in the church who for whatever reason do not support the church because they don't support Reverend Dix. There has been an element undermining his ministry ever since he's been there. You met Reverend Dix when he began to mellow. When he first came here he was the same person he is now but he took a different approach, a more dictatorial approach. So that I feel one of the reasons that we are not financially solvent is because many members just give a minimum. Okay, because they don't like him. These people are those who contrive reasons not to like him, okay? I think he has been the most forward minister that we have had and I've been there under three. I have never been able to tithe. I do know that there is a relationship between what I do in the church and what comes back to me. Now I'm not speaking just financially. But I mean my entire involvement. You know, I am worried sick if I can't get up and be down at the church on Saturday mornings. I wonder if the food is prepared right, if there's enough of it, if there's enough help down there, if the people's needs are being met. It worries me. So I cannot tithe but then I do what they call proportionate giving.

There are two types of giving. Proportionate giving is one where one contributes in terms of what one can afford at a given period of time and the other is tithing, which is a certain amount of the earnings.

Mr.: ... There's a new concern in the United Methodist Church's systematic approach to stewardship (SATS) and this is one of the things that Reverend Dix talks about all the time and I buy into
that... not to have any kind of drive. The man is simply saying that if you understand stewardship, all those drives are really unnecessary because you're going to try to put yourself into a position where you can tithe and that will automatically take care of the church and gives you time to concentrate on the fundamental processes of the church and that is intensive thinking about the religious aspect. Now I'll buy into that.

There are many people to me that are not against Reverend Dix's program. They just don't understand what he is trying to get them to understand. And a lot of people come to church have no concept of what it takes to run an organization of that size. They feel, probably, that $2 or $3.00 on Sunday, the same thing that happened umpteen years ago is what it takes. And this is why a copy of the budget is being passed out. So that they can see that the electric bill for the church is 8 or 900 or $1,000 that month.

Insofar as tithing is concerned and we'll say that over and over again, whatever you put in there, large or small, is your business and God's business.

In general, there was an even distribution of opinion concerning the appropriate approach to generating money. Of the 12 interviewed, 5 felt that tithing was the appropriate approach while 4 thought some fundraising project was more realistic, and 3 expressed a choice for a combination of the two. Those in support of tithing placed a heavy emphasis on faith in God. They suggested that even people of low income could tithe. The tenor of the tithing supporters played on the duty and responsibility of the Christian to support
the church.

Fundraising supporters took a different approach. They felt that the economic situation of a church member had a direct bearing on their ability to give and that drives could be a source of fellowship and social interaction. Drives were not only felt to be necessary in view of the economic weakness of black people (a deficit budget was not an unusual occurrence in this church) but a serious method for countervailing the inability of the largest percentage of church members (39% senior citizens on fixed income) to support the church. While the cost of living was increasing, pensions and retirement benefits were not. The supporters of fundraising projects were keen to observe that people should not be made to feel guilty about their ability to tithe (even some tithers felt awkward about the public show that accompanied their giving). Tithers could go to the front of the church and drop their tithe into a special box before the normal collection would begin. This public demonstration of privilege put a strain on those who were able to make a spiritual giving and those who were not. In spite of the Christian proclamation of equality, in the eyes of God, this public show of the spiritual giving did separate givers in the eyes of man. I suggest that this puts a monetary value on Christian giving, defining, unintentionally, the Christianity of those who can't tithe. The fundraising supporters
were also keen to point out the relationship between spiritual excitement and spiritual giving. They implied that spiritual giving is reflected in spiritual motivation - those people who received a high degree of spiritual motivation in the church would be prone to give more to support the church.

Those who supported a combination of spiritual giving and fundraising projects recognized the balance that could be struck between spiritual dependence on God and a secular solution to a secular problem. Supporters in favor of a combined approach understood the tithe to be a product of one's personal relationship to God and it was that relationship and that relationship alone that should influence the decision to tithe. They understood also that church members had other financial obligations which made giving a fixed percentage of their incomes highly impractical for domestic reasons. The general consensus among the combination supporters was that some kind of fundraising drive would always be necessary as long as spiritual giving was inadequate. They also consented that the problem of spiritual giving was not an easy one to address.

The lines between tithing and fundraising projects were not hard nor fixed. There was pliancy on all sides. The absence of firmly entrenched camps suggested a church community that is varied in the age, sex, occupation, and socio-economic status (thus unable to fortify fronts).
Age seemed to be the most noticeable category where thought and behavior related directly to different religious-cultural patterns. Spiritual involvement had a different character for each age group. Although this is not unusual in itself (one would expect different age groups to have different levels of consciousness), it is significant in assessing how the different consciousness levels interrelate to produce group behavior. In the section on Research Findings (Chapter IV) I will discuss in more detail the relationship between age and spirituality and how that relationship impinges on the activities of the church.

On March 13th the finance committee made a report* to the congregation. This report was significant because it spelled out the state of the financial problem to the general church membership. The chairperson of the finance committee delivered the report.

Finance Committee Report to the Congregation:

March 13, 1983

Mr.________: In order to meet the budget we need $7,032 per month. Unfortunately for the first two months we did not take in $7,000 that we needed in order to meet the budget. As a result of this some things that should have been paid these two months were not paid. Some things have suffered and a portion of our ministry has suffered as a result of this. So I'm sure you are concerned

* See pages 172-174
about what portions or what are the things that are suffering as a result of not meeting the budget. One of them is our conference benevolent askings. You'll be hearing about our conference benevolent askings from Mrs.____ because she has been asked to serve as coordinator of conference money that we take up for the world service benevolence making sure that we send it in and send it on the time demanded. I will quickly point out that of this $84,000 budget, $12,000 of this is earmarked for world service benevolence. That represents 14% of our budget. So every time we miss the budget that means that something has to suffer in the end. I will quickly state that we were able to pay the salaried people that we have on salary for the first two months. In January some of the utilities bills we have postponed paying them hoping that as time progressed and the weather gets warmer and the gas bill won't be quite as high we'll be able to catch up. But again, this does not make our job very easy, that we have to delay to make a payment so I'm going to hold it brief and I hope you've had a chance to look at the report and if you have any questions feel free to ask a question about anything. And if you don't have any questions now and you want to take it home and look at it. Sometimes it takes time to digest figures. Right now you probably have a lot of numbers and I'm sure questions will come up, but anytime you have questions feel free to ask any member of the finance committee and myself. And we'll be glad to take the time to discuss anytime you want to talk about it as far as finances are concerned.

A question from the congregation:

Mr.____: Brother Chairman, what recommendations do you have that possibly the church is able to meet our monthly receipts of $7,000 because there is a point that you
get to where you have missed it each month. By the month of June we'll be about 4 or $5,000 behind. What recommendations do you have to try to raise this money?

Reply to the question:

Mr._____: There have been several thoughts as to what we can do to increase our givings here at Centenary. We have finally decided on two basic projects. Number one right now is the State's Tea. We don't like to think of any programs as a fundraising program but as a result of the fact that we missed the budget in January by $1,206 and we missed it in February by $2,470 we decided that we are making the State's Tea a fundraising program but that we will use this as a method to try and increase the giving. We are also trying to get more people to start tithing. We're trying to get more people to become active participants as far as giving because out of this whole membership of approximately 500 people we only have about 250 members that give on a regular basis. So we are trying to reach these other 200 members or so to let them know that we still need them other than just having their names on the roll.

An observation from the congregation:

Mr._____: You might want to address that you have these other 200 odd people who don't come or give, why should we be assessed money because they are on the roll? Why not relieve them? Why should you be carrying dead weight so to speak? If they are not active members, why are we assessed for them?

Reply to the observation:

Mr._____: That's a good observation however I feel that there are enough there to deal with the situation because that comes under a different organization
in the church. Basically I feel the same way. Before you have someone on the roll it should be for the ongoing good of the church. But we don't have the authority, at least the finance committee doesn't have the authority, to recommend that any person be taken off the roll.

Response to the observation from the congregation:

Mr. _______: I was just going to respond to what Mr. _______ was saying. If a person is carried on the roll and does not give there is a procedure that you go through. We started this procedure last year and the first thing in the procedure is that that person has to be notified and asked if he wants to drop his membership and as long as the person shows once a year.

There are some very stiff requirements that you go through and we have not been able to drop some of these members because I think the discipline tells you that anytime a person shows or comes into the building or makes a contribution once a year, or if that same person requests not to be dropped from the roll, we can't drop them.

Question from the congregation:

Mr. _______: I think that we're worried about this year's budget. How did we come out last year? Did we go in the hole?

Response to the question:

Mr. _______: Last year's budget was about $83,000 and we missed it by $13,000.

Response from the questioner:

Mr. _______: Well, we missed it by $13,000. Then we raised salaries and what not like that. If we didn't make it last year, we missed it by $13,000, naturally we're not going to make it this year. I mean you're going to have to correct this situation from the last year's budget.
Response to the questioner's response:

Mr._____: The only thing in doing a budget is you have to prepare a budget based on what your needs are.

Like I said, the finance committee has been meeting on a regular basis and we've gotten very good attendance at our meetings and we have made the recommendations to the administrative board as to how we can do these things. One is to increase the giving. The other is to cut down expenses. And we have made some recommendations to the administrative board and they have accepted most of them and given us the okay to go ahead on with the ... We are also open for suggestions from any members of the congregation. The mere fact that you are not a member of a committee does not mean that you don't have the right to make suggestions or to make recommendations as to what we can do to improve the situation. So we are very open to your suggestions. If there are no more questions or comments, again, I can't overemphasize the point that we're always available to try to answer your questions and we have made plans to continue with the procedure of keeping you informed because there are no secrets, no secrets period.

The benevolence treasurer submitted also a report to the congregation.

Benevolence Treasurer Report:

Mrs.______: This is on your benevolence and Mr.______ told me that we are assessed $12,000 a year. And if we don't pay it, the church some kind of way has to pay it. And we have come up with a plan. Say we have 500 counted members, if each member would give $1.00 a Sunday or $5.00 a month, we have set aside mission Sunday for the 4th Sunday of every month, so if
you miss giving your $1.00 every Sunday but want to put it in the envelope and on your envelope you notice that you have current expenses, then your benevolence and this building fund and if you put your benevolence amount, now this is above your current expenses, then we will take this out as marked and send it in and Centenary will be recognized. Our highest amount for our benevolences is the pension for our ministers and if we don't pay our benevolence then whoever the minister is, his pension fund is very low. When our black students go to school and they want to get loans and we have not paid any benevolence then you certainly can't ask them to loan you money for your son or daughter to go to school. The clothing center has been cut from 5 days a week to 3 days a week because we didn't have benevolence and there's no way we can send anyone to ask them to borrow money for a clothing center. It's not the clothing center it's the community center. The community center helps those people in this neighborhood and when we received word that they were closing there was nothing that we could do because our benevolence hadn't been paid and we couldn't ask Reverend Dix or Mr. _____ or the board to go and ask them to loan us money to keep it running because Centenary has not done their part.

Every quarter we receive this paper and all the churches are listed as to how much they have given toward their benevolence and Centenary has never, as far as I know, received 100%. I think this last time it was 57% which is good but one day I would really like to see us receive the 100%. So for those who have left I wish you would pass on what Mr. _______ has said, what I'm saying now that the 4th Sunday of every month will be Mission Sunday and we are really stressing paying for our benevolence. So we don't have to have special program to pay for benevolence. I looked at the dictionary and it had 3 definitions. One was a generous gift,
an act of giving, and an act of good
disposition. So I'd really like for
us to think that we are giving our
share so every Sunday if you would
put $1.00, that's for every member
of Centenary and then if not every
Sunday, every 4th Sunday which will
be set aside for Mission Sunday. If
you would give $4.00 or $5.00, how­
ever many Sundays are in that month,
then maybe we can make our apportion­
ment.

The financial report to the congregation gave the general
church body an overview of the financial situation for the
first quarter of the year. The general church was informed
that a $84,380 budget was projected for 1983. This meant a
$7,032 monthly budget. At the time of the report the monthly
budget was already short $3,676.83. If the monthly deficit
would continue to grow at the present rate a yearly deficit
of more than $15,000 could be expected (the deficit for 1982
had been $13,000).

The general church was told that the administrative
board had approved two fundraising projects. The purpose of
which would be to generate money to offset the expected bud­
getary deficit. These projects would be the State's Tea and
the Ebony drive. The general church was also informed of the
fact that they had fallen short, by 43% of their benevolent
givings to the World Service Fund.

They had been assessed $11,369 and paid only $6,500
which represented only 57% of their assessed potential to pay.
It was insinuated that payment of the conference appor­tionment would have a direct bearing on benefits the church could reap from the corporate conference.

The State's Tea had a tradition at Centenary as a fund-raiser. One would volunteer to be a governor of a state, being responsible, as a result, for organizing a drive for money in the name of that state. With 50 states there would be 50 church members in charge of a fundraising drive. The governors were given approximately 5 months to raise roughly $200. If 50 people could raise $200, $10,000 would be the goal.

The Ebony drive is a plan devised by the Johnson Publishing Company, the publisher of Ebony, Black Stars, Jet, and Ebony Jr., to sell its magazines through churches and other organizations. The Ebony drive is a fundraising vehicle. Salespersons get a commission on the subscriptions that sell. The amount that can be made depends on the effectiveness and enthusiasm of the sales campaign. The Johnson Publishing Company helps its salespersons by offering them incentive prizes for a certain amount of subscriptions sold.

The second quarter of the year began with the knowledge that something had to be done to generate money for the normal operation of the church.

A meeting of the administrative board in April brought additional financial responsibilities to an already strapped
On April 11th the administrative board held an urgent meeting to discuss city code violations on a piece of property owned by the church called Ebony House. Ebony House was being used as a community center but its poor physical condition caused the city government to serve notice on the church to make immediate repairs if the building was to continue in use as a church center and Sunday school. The church attempted to get a loan from the city but the purposes for which the building was being used disqualified it for a city loan. This meant that the church would have to dig into its own empty coffers to finance the repairs. After discussing the feasibility of tearing down or selling the property it was decided that the property would be repaired, primarily because the church needed additional space.

The details needed to address these repairs were to be worked out as soon as feasible. The inevitable question of where the money would come from dominated the meeting. One committee member suggested that a pledge system be devised whereby dedicated church members would pledge a certain amount of money, above the sum they were already expected to give, to meet this new problem. This idea was underscored by the mentioning of times when people would mortgage their homes to save their church.

The meeting was adjourned with a request to the trustees to check out the violations, present a cost estimate for the
repairs to the board at the next meeting, and request the city to extend the time allowed to activate the repairs.

The second administrative board meeting in April met on the 25th. The trustees reported on the repairs needed, and presented two bids from contractors for repair cost. The lowest bidder ($1,409) was selected to do the work. Minor repairs would be undertaken by the trustees themselves. It was estimated that $3,500 would be the full amount to repair the house. In an effort to find the money without subjecting the general church to a loan, the plan suggested at the previous meeting to devise a pledging system was retabled, through the subtle coercion of the minister. The committee decided to address all of the maintenance and renovation needed on all church property. A 10 year or more maintenance neglect had taken its toll on the church's physical facilities. The pledging device was designed to raise between $15,000 and $20,000. The plan* was presented to the congregation on the 8th of May.

This new plan would increase the financial need of the church in 4 months from $84,380 to $104,380. In March the congregation was asked to finance normal church expenditures. In May the congregation was asked to finance normal expenditure plus maintenance and renovation cost. Although the additional money was to be placed in a building fund, it would, * See pages 175-176. The pledge plan as it appeared before the congregation on May 8th.
in principle, all come from the same source - the pockets of the membership.

In summary, 1983 began for the church with a $13,000 deficit from an $81,000 nineteen eighty-two budget. The financial needs of the church for 1983 projected an $84,000 budget. After the end of the first quarter the church was facing a deficit of $3,000 or more.

Two important fundraising projects, the State's Tea and the Ebony drive, had been launched to balance an expected deficit. It was hoped that the State's Tea would bring in $10,000 and the Ebony drive an additional several thousand dollars.

The second quarter of the year brought a request from the administrative board to the general church for more funds to deal with the maintenance and renovation of church property. An estimated $20,000 was requested to carry out these repairs. The financial need of the general church had increased to more an $100,000 at the end of the second quarter. One hundred thousand dollars represents a tremendous burden when one considers that the contributions made to the church in 1982 amounted to only $68,000 and that at the end of the third quarter of 1983 the State's Tea had only raised $2,200 instead of the projected $10,000; the Ebony drive generated only $500; the budget deficit had reached $12,000; the building fund had promised pledges of between $3,000 and $5,000.
but cash contributions of only $7,400 had been collected. The church was heavy in debt and money was simply not forthcoming at the end of the third quarter.
Local Church Operational Expenses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Council on Ministries:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Church School</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies, etc.</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecumenical Affairs</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evangelism</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Concerns</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pension Fund</td>
<td>$2,496.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$5,798.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Administrative Board:**                          |         |
| Lay Personnel Salaries                             |         |
| Music Department                                   | $5,100.00|
| Secretary                                          | $8,134.00|
| Custodian                                          | $4,894.00|
| Part-Time Office Help                              | $300.00  |
| **Total**                                          | $18,428.00|

| **Social Security/Work Comp.:**                    |         |
|                                                   | $1,050.00|

| **Buildings and Equipment:**                       |         |
| All Maintenance                                    | $5,000.00|
| Church Utilities                                   | $10,000.00|
| Insurance (Not Hospital)                           | $2,661.00|
| Taxes and Assessments                              | $1,000.00|
| **Total**                                          | $19,711.00|

| **Finance Committee:**                             |         |
| Envelopes & Records                                | $500.00  |
| Office Expense/Promotion                           | $500.00  |
| Postage & Supplies                                 | $600.00  |
| Nomination & Personnel                             | $1,000.00|
| Miscellaneous/Contingency                          | $2,600.00|
| **Total**                                          | $2,600.00|

| **Pastor-Parish Relations:**                       |         |
| Senior Pastor-Salary                               | $18,233.00|
| Utilities                                          | $1,500.00|
| Travel Expense                                     | $2,000.00|
| Hospitalization                                    | $1,000.00|
| **Total**                                          | $23,533.00|

**Total Local Church Operation Expenses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benevolent/Outreach Program</td>
<td>$11,369.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Methodist Union</td>
<td>$1,025.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Stewards Fund</td>
<td>$6,982.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$19,476.00</td>
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1983 Total Budget $84,380.00

Table 1 1983 Church Budget
### Table 2 Monthly Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECEIPTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plate Offering</td>
<td>5,039.91</td>
<td>4,015.50</td>
<td>9,055.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Service</td>
<td>281.25</td>
<td>241.75</td>
<td>523.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>124.91</td>
<td>96.41</td>
<td>221.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Offering*</td>
<td>218.48</td>
<td>218.48</td>
<td>436.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Total</strong></td>
<td>5,664.55</td>
<td>4,353.66</td>
<td>10,018.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bldg Fund</td>
<td>161.25</td>
<td>208.50</td>
<td>369.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banquet (Appreciation)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,520.00</td>
<td>1,520.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL RECEIPTS</strong></td>
<td>5,825.80</td>
<td>6,082.16</td>
<td>11,907.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                      |           |           |           |
| **DISBURSEMENTS:**   |           |           |           |
| **SALARIES:**        |           |           |           |
| Minister             | 1,776.00  | 1,134.00  | 2,910.00  |
| Musician             | 300.00    | 300.00    | 600.00    |
| Secretary            | 243.00    | 0         | 243.00    |
| Custodian            | 474.00    | 294.80    | 768.80    |
| Travel (minister)    | 167.00    | 166.67    | 333.67    |
| **Sub Total**        | 2,960.00  | 1,895.47  |           |
| Utilities            |           |           |           |
| Electric             | 182.74    | 133.90    | 316.64    |
| Telephone            | 266.17    | 146.71    | 412.88    |
| Water                | 75.40     | 0         | 75.40     |
| Gas                  |           |           |           |
| **Sub Total**        | 524.31    | 1,116.86  | 1,641.17  |
| Open Accounts        |           |           |           |
| Security             | 65.00     | 52.00     | 117.00    |
| Acc. Payable         | 67.00     | 30.00     | 97.00     |
| Bldg Maintenance     | 101.95    | 0         | 101.95    |
| Property Maintenance | 43.62     | 40.00     | 83.62     |
| Bus Maintenance      | 25.03     | 79.66     | 104.69    |
| Bus Fuel             | 20.00     | 20.00     | 40.00     |
| Typing Services      | 41.00     | 41.00     | 82.00     |
| Banquet              | 100.00    | 1,420.00  | 1,520.00  |
| **Sub Total**        | 422.60    | 1,682.99  |           |
| Taxes                |           |           |           |
| Federal              | 729.00    | 0         | 729.00    |
| State                | 41.00     | 0         | 41.00     |
| City                 | 57.00     | 0         | 57.00     |
| Property             |           | 312.84    | 312.84    |
| **SUB TOTAL**        | 827.00    | 312.84    | 1,139.84  |
| INSURANCE            |           |           |           |
| Property             | 247.55    | 247.55    | 495.10    |
| Hospitalization      | 574.87    | 0         | 574.87    |
| Pension Fund         | 209.70    | 228.29    | 437.99    |
| **Sub Total**        | 1,032.12  | 475.84    |           |
| SUPPLIES             |           |           |           |
| Janitoral            | 74.55     | 100.00    | 174.55    |
| Postage              | 20.00     | 0         | 20.00     |
| Church School        |           | 192.18    | 192.18    |
| **Sub Total**        | 94.55     | 292.18    |           |
| **TOTAL PAID OUT**   | 5,860.58  | 6,056.79  | 11,917.37 |

*Notes: Special Offering is before January 1, 2021.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>JANUARY</th>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance in Treasurer at 1-1-83</strong></td>
<td>280.13</td>
<td>245.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Receipts for</strong></td>
<td>5,825.80</td>
<td>6,082.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub Total</strong></td>
<td>6,105.93</td>
<td>6,327.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less Disbursements</strong></td>
<td>5,860.58</td>
<td>6,056.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at 2-1-83</strong></td>
<td>245.35</td>
<td>279.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL RECEIPTS TODAY**  $11,907.96  
**TOTAL PAID OUT TOTDATE** $11,917.37

| **Budget for the Year** | 84,380.00 |
| **Budget for Month**    | 7,032.00  |
| **Budget Short for January** | 1,206.20 |
| **Budget Short for February** | 2,470.63 |
| **Budget Short Todate**  | 3,676.83  |

Charlene Reese Treasurer  
David Pendergrass, Chairperson

**Table 3 Monthly Budget (continued)**
May 8, 1983

"O: All Members of Centenary
FROM: The Administrative Board
SUBJECT: Renovation and repairs of three pieces of church property: Church Building; Parsonage; Community Center and Sunday School Annex.

We are the owners of three pieces of valuable property—named above. All three pieces are in need of maintenance upkeep, because we have neglected them. The Administrative Board has met twice this month to discuss these needs; and have come up with the following program for your consideration:

To raise $15,000 - $20,000, to make the necessary repairs on the same three pieces of properties.

At the meetings of the Administrative Board on Monday, April 11, 1983, and April 25, 1983, several ideas were discussed concerning a solution to this problem: where will the money come from? Mr. Paul Johnson, put forth an idea that those present believed was feasible. The idea follows:

1. Ask each member or each family to be responsible for a certain amount of money. Starting with, $1,000, $750, $500, $400, $300, $200, $50.
2. Each person or family will decide how much they can give.
3. Many of the members did this in the past for this church, to get it built. This way we commit ourselves to keep it beautiful and functional.
4. This will keep the church from going into debt.
5. Whatever you give can be deducted from your income tax.

Conclusion:
These funds will be used exclusively for repairs. We believe we can get this work accomplished within $20,000, with much of it being done by some of the men and women of the church. It is hoped that you will give this proposal your prayerful consideration; and you let God lead you in your decision making. It is another one of those times, when all members must come to the aid of their church.

Table 4 Pledge Plan
143 - 145 N. 18th Street-

We have a list of code violations from the City of Columbus Code enforcement Division. These violations are already past the date to have them corrected. It is imperative that we start to correct these violations at once. If not we will be cited by the Court for failing to do so, and we will still have to correct them. It will cost as much money to tear the house down as it will to repair it. We must do one or the other, repair or tear it down.

We need $1,500 to start the work, and we need it at once. You decide how much you will give, and how you will give it. All at once, or in increments of certain amount weekly or monthly. What ever you are going to do, do it at once. We need to know before June 1, 1983.

There are a list of things that need to be taken care of at the church, and at the parsonage. This plan is to take care of all these repairs this summer.

Please, Please do your best.

RESPONSE:

(I) or (My Family)- will contribute the following amount toward the needed repairs on our Church properties:

AMOUNT:

$__________

NAME__________________________________________

ADDRESS________________________________________

PHONE NUMBER____________________________________

"o the Glory of God.

Table 5  Pledge Plan (continued)
CHAPTER IV

Research Findings

In order for man to finish himself, to provide some stability for his biological constitution, he must construct a human world, i.e., a social world, a culture. Culture, defined in general terms, is a web of significant meaning in social interaction that allows those socially interacting to interpret personal and social experience so that personal and social behavior is generated that produces and perpetuates the society in question. Although culture can be thought of as "a recipe for organizing the ingredients for a viable social life" it cannot eliminate instabilities in the lives of social beings. (Spradley and McCurdy 1980: 22)

The internalization of reality is extremely important to the human interpretation of life and its meaning. The internalization of reality allows the human being to see society as subjective reality, i.e., to see society as a reflection of one's own subjective being. To become a subjective being, to become a part of subjective reality, to internalize reality, one must become a member of society.

An individual is not born a member of a society. An individual is socialized into societal membership. Societal
membership requires participation in the dialectic of social interaction. For a socialized individual negotiating the balance between objective reality and subjective reality is a product of the socialization process. New members to society will go through stages of socialization with internalization, generally, being the first stage.

The internalization process begins when the individual, as baby or child, apprehends and interprets an objective event as having meaning. That is to say, when the subjective process of another manifests itself as subjectively meaningful to the new member.

...Internalization in this general sense is the basis, first, for an understand of one's fellowmen and, second, for the apprehension of the world as a meaningful and social reality. (Berger 1969: 130)

Important in the internalization process is the fact that I understand the other's subjective process and also understand the subjective world in which the other lives. With time, that world becomes my world. I am socialized into societal membership. According to Berger there are two important kinds of socialization. "Primary socialization inducts an individual into society as a whole" and "secondary socialization is any subsequent process that inducts an already socialized individual into new sectors of the objective world of his society." (Berger 1969: 130)
For example, the home and family produce primary socialization while the school and the work place produce secondary socialization. Berger elucidates the socialization process in the following way:

... Primary socialization is usually the most important one for an individual and ... the basic structure of all secondary socialization has to resemble that of primary socialization. Every individual is born into an objective social structure within which he encounters the significant others who are in charge of his socialization. These significant others are imposed upon him. Their definitions of his situation are posited for him as objective realm. He is thus born into not only an objective social structure but also an objective social world. The significant others who mediate this world to him modify it in the course of mediating it. They select aspects of it in accordance with their own location in the social structure and also by virtue of their individual, biographically rooted idiosyncracies. The social world is "filtered" to one individual through this double selectivity.

... Primary socialization involves more than purely cognitive learning. It takes place under circumstances that are highly charged emotionally. Indeed, there is good reason to believe that without such emotional attachment to the significant others the learning process would be difficult if not impossible. The child identifies with the significant others in a variety of emotional ways. Whatever they may be, internalization occurs only as identification occurs. The child takes on the significant others' roles and attitudes, that is, internalizes them and makes them his own. And by this identification with significant others the child become capable of identifying himself, of acquiring a subjectively coherent and plausible identity ...
The child does not internalize the world of his significant others as one of many possible worlds. He internalizes it as the world, the only existent and only conceivable world. It is for this reason that the world internalized in primary socialization is so much more firmly entrenched in consciousness than worlds internalized in secondary socialization. However much the original sense of inevitability may be weakened in subsequent disenchantments. The recollection of a never-to-be-repeated certainty - the certainty of the first dawn or reality - still adheres to the first world of childhood. (Berger 1969: 130-135)

Berger has pointed out that the significant other in the socialization process, that person (or persons) who is directly responsible for providing the child with its first subjectively meaningful experiences, causing a sense of self and a sense of the objective reality to develop in the child, is extremely important for self-concept, and considering the extent of secondary socialization, for one's world-concept, i.e., objective reality. As children, we cannot choose our significant others so our primary socialization plays a big role in shaping our identities and our reality-concepts. This does not mean that primary socialization reduces our relationship to the world to automatic responses, because as Berger has also pointed out, secondary socialization can offset the automatic character of primary socialization. But it does mean, that since our primary socialization is "primary," meaning, our first real experience of others and self, it is
responsible for many (if not most) human expressions that we carry throughout our lives.

It is interesting to note that many of the informants that I interviewed during my fieldwork spoke very candidly of childhood experiences with significant others, where the relationship was so impactful it seemed to bear directly on their Christian beliefs and practices as adults.

Two men, who became ministers in their later lives, told of how their grandmothers had recognized in them as children that "they would preach the word of God." This experience stayed with them throughout their lives and in spite of all the efforts on their part to negate this prediction, they became ministers. Not as young men but as seasoned adults. Several women told of visions they had as children and how their mothers and grandmothers, as examples and teachers, had a profound impact on their acceptance of and faith in Christianity. Their childhood experiences were extremely important in fueling the flames of Christian conviction.

In the dialectical process in which we all stand vis-à-vis society we internalize the subjective reality of our significant others as the first step to the objectivation and externalization of objective reality. Internalizing the subjective reality of our significant others also helps us to identify ourselves. Because there are aspects of our subjective and objective realities that lie outside of understanding or control, we must develop a system of social meaning
that will help to stabilize this uncertainty. Our significant others pass on to us their methods for creating answers to what are, in principle, unanswerable questions. They teach us religious beliefs and practices. Religion begins as a learning experience and it survives as a learned experience.

Religion is both an individual and a social experience and as such it helps us: to provide an ultimate meaning to our lives; to interpret the unknown; to control the uncontrolled; to personalize our human ideals; to integrate culture into our lives; to legitimize the social system; and most significantly, to project human meanings and social patterns onto a superior entity. In short, religion deals with the ultimate problems of human existence. (McGuire 1981)
The Age Difference

I found age to be an exemplary vehicle for illustrating different behavior patterns in the church. Age provided a category where differences in thoughts and behavior could be readily observed.

For the ages from 1 to 12 church is a very interesting playground. Children seem to enjoy the environment because of their peer relationships. They are taught the rudiments of Christian thinking but their attention is concentrated more on interpersonal relationships than Christian lessons. Although the children are well mannered and attentive they take advantage of every opportunity to play. Parents seem to understand. I observed no real effort to force children into compliance. I suggest that they understand that their belief systems have little significance for young minds.

In many Protestant congregations 13 becomes the age at which a child is expected to enter the spiritual body of the church through confirmation and baptism. Children from 13 to 18 are expected to accept the beliefs and the practices of their parents' religion. Church may still be an enjoyable environment but peer relationships make room for other types of relationships which slowly change the character of church participation.

The participatory mode of young adults (19 to 30) and adults (30 to 40) might be made lucid by considering a concept
I call Cultural Christianity. A cultural Christian is a Christian whose beliefs and practices are expressed more as learned responses than deeper spiritual needs. This is not because they are not willing to recognize any deeper spiritual needs but more an indicator of the level of their spiritual development.

Young adults and adults are generally enthralled with their own process of becoming. Their vision is directed inward and at the world (a difficult, normal, and desirable circumstance). Their Christian responses are understandably more influenced by conditioning than consciousness. Those who experience some measure of social validation in the secular world will be prone to minimize their emphasis on spiritual validation. A more direct way to say this is that primary socialization (home, family, church) is, momentarily, superseded by secondary socialization (school, work place, secular social environment).

In this state of educational, vocational, and possibly social enculturation (each state requiring some assimilation into an institutionalized process) the young adult and the adult are experiencing a kind of spiritual acculturation (a kind of estrangement from the primary socialization of the church). This becomes even more striking when we consider that the myths and rituals of the belief system into which they have been socialized have operated only on the
fringes of their consciousness.

Life for cultural Christians has been manageable, in general, without relying too directly on religious myth and ritual. But time, experiences, and a changing consciousness may eventually overcome spiritual inertia. When secular awareness seems inadequate spiritual consciousness intensifies, especially if a propensity toward spiritual consciousness has been already implanted through initial socialization.

I suggest that middle-aged adults in the church represent a revitalization of primary socialization. The spiritual development of a middle-aged adult is interesting, because it is measured, in part, by a balance that must be struck between the efficient operation of an organization (the church) and the spiritual lifeblood of religion, i.e., between reason and belief. As leaders of the organization, middle-aged adults must be both reasonable and spiritual. Middle-aged adults must be practical Christians. Their Christianity is tempered by concrete secular considerations.* This does not mean that their spiritual concerns are any less important than the secular. It only means that a significant amount of their attention must be focused on the maintenance and perpetuation of their spiritual home.

Senior citizens (61 and older) are the last age group to be considered in this age difference profile. Senior

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* See the interviews in Chapter III (Methodology).
citizens make up 39% of the church membership. This makes the percentage of senior citizens equal to the combined percentages of adolescents (17), young adults (10), adults (6), and middle-aged adults (6). This very high percentage of senior citizens may explain the minister's tendency to address his sermons to this audience and the church's difficulty in dealing with some of its secular problems.

**Young Adult Behavior**

**Mr. C:** When I was younger I was made to come to church. I was made to come to church up until I just moved recently. I had an opportunity not to come back when I moved out but I didn't and the reason I didn't is because after I have grown up and started to pay attention to what was going on in the church and started listening, because before I had heard it but I wasn't listening and paying attention and started participating I began to like it and I began to get a peace of mind and that's the reason that I continued instead of backing out like I would have done before.

Peace of mind, basically, is just satisfaction. For example, if I come to church during altar time and go up and pray for something and come back the next Sunday and I can see that my prayer has been answered, in some instances, that's satisfaction. So when I come back and repeat the process it goes on and on.

**Ms. E:** I never felt forced to go to church, although through high school I went. Well, because Sunday is Sunday. Sometimes I might have gone because I was maybe forced a little bit but not a lot.

Because it was a ritual, kind of and now it is to the point where I go because
I go for the fellowship and altar call and things like that.

Ms. F: My mother made us come to church until recently. She still tells us that we are in her house and she wants us to go to church at least once a month. Now she doesn't have to make us come to church. We like to come to church. But until we were 18 years old we were really made to come to church.

Mr. G: My mother made me come but then there was a point where it was just like getting up, brushing my teeth, washing up in the morning. You know, it just became a response, you know. Every Sunday morning I knew what I was supposed to do and so I just rolled out of bed and it was just like another day during the week. I knew I was supposed to get up and go to church. To me, it just became a response. Sunday, church.

Mr. H: My mother made me come to church too. If you want to go to the movie Sunday afternoon you go to Sunday school. But it is social. I'm looking at everybody in here, at the age group, and can they really say that they have a real Christian conviction, without having gone through an experience of life? You understand what I mean?

Ms. F: I don't profess to be a Christian but I'm trying to be one. And I'd like to be one. But the reason I come is not because of the social but that's part of it. Because that's the only time I see certain people, you know. But I couldn't say that the main reason I come is to socialize because I could socialize somewhere else.

Ms. J: I think it is a question of lifestyle. When you get out here you find out that it doesn't matter where you live the people are doing the same things. You find some people are going to church every Sunday. You find some people
that never go to church. I mean it never even crosses their mind to get up and go to church. I mean once you start making a few key decisions to do certain things it kind of determines your lifestyle. If you decide that you are not going to be a Christian then you are not getting up on Sunday morning, unless you're going fishing. It doesn't become a part of your lifestyle any more to get up and put a suit on on Sunday morning. You find other things to do and that's why I think it is like a routine but there is a conscious decision that this is how you are going to live your life.

Even though you do it every Sunday you have finally made that decision that that is what you're going to do because there are so many alternatives. You don't have to do this. Even teenagers don't have to come to church any more. At least, I don't think. If they want to they can just lay around. After a year their mom is going to stop fussing at them about it.

Mr. G: Well, that's what I was saying. I knew I was supposed to because after a certain point my mother didn't even bother to say it is time to get up and go to church. If I heard everybody else stirring I was up. But back to what you were saying about socializing. During those times when I was getting up because it was a habit or response, I was into the social hour because we had a group here, when I was coming up named MYF (Methodist Youth Fellowship). We were really active and we were really a close knit organization.

Now we may have not done things structurally but our advisers tried to keep us as structured as possible. And that was one way of socializing. I knew I could come to church and socialize because at that age we were so scattered out that my parents didn't have time to run me over on the east side of town. But if they knew that the MYF was having a
meeting then they were going to get us down to the church or they would take time out of their schedules to get us over to the south end or the east end or wherever the meeting was at. And that was one of the reasons I really came to church. To socialize.

It was often said by interviewees of different age groups that religion was a personal experience. Nevertheless, the above quoted interviews throw some light on the special position that adolescents hold in the religious environment. I think we can assume from these interviews that parents did not intend to leave the Christianization of their children to chance nor free choice. They wanted to extend the primary socialization process of the home into the church. Church was not to be a matter of voluntary involvement but a product of those same sociocultural elements that determined group identity. Adolescents had to be made to understand that certain personal sociocultural decisions must synchronize with group sociocultural decisions if the individual identity and group identity are to be compatible. The objectivized reality that traversed the internalization process and the externalization process must be the same for both the individual and the group.

It is within society, and as a result of social processes, that the individual becomes a person, that he (she) attains and holds onto an identity, and that he (she) carries out the various projects that constitute his (her) life. (Berger 1969: 3)
Berger implies here that parents must press their children into an identity that will not be in conflict with their own (in spite of the fact that the child may not like or understand the process). The point is that there must be a continuity of thought and behavior, if religious belief and practice are not to be a source of generation conflict. Although the effectiveness of any socialization process, as a result of its dependency on a significant other, is virtually automatic, some Christian beliefs and practices, because of their high tolerance for personal expression (evident, I feel, in the many denominations and sects that call themselves Christian) must rely more on coercion than moral, spiritual, or ethical persuasion when making their point to impressionable young minds. There are exceptions, of course, but I don't think they change the thrust of the argument - coercion is needed to help young minds transcend a lack of personal conviction or consciousness.

When adolescents have a peer group in the church that is important to them, church becomes important, and the normal tensions of socialization can be more readily tolerated. If peer interaction or some other type of interesting and dynamic activity does not hold their attention, then moving into young adulthood (becoming older) does not ameliorate the situation as long as one remains in the church. What I'm suggesting is that the Christian message must hold a special formulation for
adolescents and young adults if it is to speak to their needs and concerns as growing human beings in a complicated world.

Young adulthood begins at the age of 19 and continues into the late 20s. Young adults experience some significant rites of passage in the secular world: marriage; vocational opportunity; possible military service; and/or other social responsibilities that initiate them into adult society. At this point, if not earlier, young adults begin to command their own lives. I propose that those who suffered weak socialization processes in church, for whatever reasons, will slowly drift away. I also propose that even substantial socialization processes may not counterbalance the strength of certain social needs in the secular world. I propose further that the beliefs and practices of religious conviction take a second place to the struggle for placement in the secular world until the arrival of children awakens a consciousness in the parents to subject their children to the same kind of socialization process to which they themselves were subjected. Children may prompt young adults to reenter the church. Some of the middle-aged informants told me that they left church for many years before returning.

I asked a group of young adults whether they thought my assessment of young adult behavior was accurate.

Mrs. J: I could agree with you from a personal point of view because I grew up in the church, from a little girl on up. But
the minute I was away from home in another state and city I cut the church back completely for about five years. And it was only until I needed it personally that I got back into the church because I didn't have to go for my mama and nobody knew if I went or not. So I didn't go.

But when you get down and you need it that's when you find out what you turned your back on and I don't know whether you'd call that backsliding or not. Some people do. But it's only when you get out there and you see what sin is and see what the world really is as opposed to thinking you know what it is. And you don't really know what kind of peace you can have. And after going through a lot of confusion and pain and suffering then you value that little peace of mind that you get. That's all it is to me, just peace of mind. I don't really get anything else out of going to church because there is a lot of confusion in church and there is a lot of this and that going on. Just like on a job.

Ms. B: I don't think it has to be a negative thing, where something bad has to happen, maybe it's just ... well, for me I guess, I just missed it. I missed the fellowship too. As far as the friends and stuff like that. It wasn't any big revelation. It was just ... I didn't sit down one day and say ... oh, I guess I'm going to be a Christian.

Ms. C: I think the gist of what I took exception to was the fact that people's religion/Christianity, is all premised on some negative event coming into our lives and forcing us back into the church. And I think that when you talk about older people's religion being more fundamental, what you have to understand is that religion means different things to different people and for me and I think for some other young people, because I can't speak
for everybody, it is somewhere where you can go and get that support which is so important as a young person growing up.

All you need when you come to church is a group of people that really say, I missed you last week. Whether they meant it or not is not important. Young people who are struggling need that because they are catching it at work, from the family, and they are struggling every day.

Personally, when I first went to the university I didn't go to church because I was hanging out. But by my senior year it was important. It made me feel better. I think it is really good to be able to come some place and have a haven. Even if it is only for a hour and a half. And if nothing else touches you, then some old lady or some old man or one of your friends coming up and saying, how's it going or whatever. I mean that's part of the whole point of being religious.

I really don't know how to categorize myself but I know that there are a lot of things that I do that I shouldn't do so I really don't think I'm a Christian Christian. But I have trouble with the word saved and all that stuff, born again Christian. I don't like people putting labels on things especially when it comes to things like religion.

At some point when I was finishing college I would come to church and my views would change about things. I started to become a Christian because that is what I wanted to do and not because that is what was expected of me. Because as I was growing up everybody had to go to church on Sunday and you do this to help people who are worst off than you. You know, and that was just what you did. But at some point I accepted that as what I had to do as part of my responsibility. Because I saw, particularly as a black person, that I have a responsibility to everyone who is not as fortunate as me. And
I think that when you have certain talents that you have to help people. And one of my talents is liking to be around people and work with them. So I just accepted that. Oh, that's part of being a Christian? Well, that's cool, I like that. Oh, this is good, because I like to do that.

Mrs. J: I think that from 20 to 25 or something, I don't know. That's an arbitrary age, but there is a point when it's like a tunnel you're going through and how you are going to end up you don't really know but I think that inside this tunnel we are all making decisions about alternatives because a lot of that release that we get in church, we get it in church but some people get it in discos. They go to the disco and holler all night and then feel better and they are ready to go to work on Monday. Before it was your parents or somebody telling you you had to do it but then it comes to a point where you decide what you want to do with your life. Which alternative you're going to choose, whether you are going to go to another type of church. And it's up to you now to make a personal decision about how you are going to spend your Sundays.

Ms. C: I think that one of the fallacies not only with this church but with other churches is generally that a young person, whatever the age may be, there is a presumption which is almost a conclusive presumption that they just do not understand the nature and quality of Christianity due to their young age and supposed lack of experiences a lot of young people have really gone through changes growing up. You know everybody goes through changes growing up but I'm talking about those serious kind of changes that can destroy your home and destroy a child, you know. And I think we get too hung up in the quantity and not the quality of the
involvement and I think that we need to guard against that. Because all too often we just totally discount a whole group merely because of age and usually in churches it's the age. Oh, it's just those young people again, you know. It's just those kids again.

Mrs. J: We're talking about Christianity on one hand and the church on another. Christianity is independent of age, sex, creed or color. But I think the church is an institution. It's like school. Some people can apply themselves and get through school and some people can't and when we are talking about trying to run an institution, you know, how many young people 20 years old are ready to be chairman of the administrative board? It's not that you can't do it. It's not that you are incapable of doing it but how many really want to do it? You know, they want me to teach the Sunday school, but I don't want to do it. I want to sleep until 9:30. You know, it's just that simple. So I think that's what we are going into. It's not that you are not a Christian because you are 21 but your active participation in the institution. Which since Charles Wesley has been the same and is going to be the same forever. Getting into that routine and handling those responsibilities, like writing a check for Columbia Gas and staying there counting the money and doing all these kind of things that I really have little knowledge about what is going on. And there is the whole system there that people who are doing it now could do it in their sleep. I think that is where young people's problem comes in.

Ms. B: Now that's saying something about our position in the church. If we have to wait until we are 50 to be chairman of a board, that's not . . . but there could be quite a few who are interested but they'd be turned down, 9 times out of 10.

Ms. A: I don't think so, because look at D.W. He is the minister of a church. And
that's unusual for a young man his age to be over a church that big. Anywhere in the country. But he wanted it and he got it. You know, once you show the initiative there is very little people can do to hold you back. But I'm sure nobody didn't run to him and say here Mr. W do this. He had to go out there and let them know he was ready.

Ms.C: But if we are talking about the church invariably if a young person holds an office then not only is their ability to handle the responsibility at question but their Christianity is also questioned, you know. And there have been people who really have wanted to do things and I think the biggest problem with young people holding office is that they don't have thick enough skin. Because no matter what you do, you're not going to be right and you have to realize that and what I think happens is that a young person will hold the office and really feel that they are making some progress but they just can't take all the criticism so then they say, okay. Fine, let somebody else do it and then they drop out. Some may come back and be involved, some come back and are not involved, and some just don't come back.

Mrs.J: A lot of it is a matter of being tested in life. If your faith is shaky, you know, if somebody can come up to you and say you're not born again, come join my church and you'll be able to give eyesight to the blind and you run over there you know, it's like, how strong is your faith, because you're going to be tested. When you become 50 you have been tested so much that you can see it a mile away. For us, if we take it personally we say I'm just going through this nobody else goes through this but everybody is being tested constantly. And your faith has to be strong to survive within the church because Satan is right there waiting for you.
The next significant age group in the church is the 30 to 40 year old group. I found this group to be the least represented in the church. I can only speculate that the young adults who broke away from the church have not found their way back. I talked with some middle-aged adults who told me that they had spent many years outside of the church because the church didn't seem to be relevant at the time but that its relevance changed in direct proportion to the increasing severity of their problems in the secular world or the recognition of their responsibility for a certain kind of socialization for their children. I was able to conduct only one interview that might throw some light on why the adult age group is so non-participatory. According to the age percentage profile, the 30 to 40 age group makes up approximately 6% of the total church membership. The 40 to 50 age group also makes up about 6% of the total membership but with the adults being so low in active participation, the burden of church support rests squarely on the shoulders of the middle-aged adults. The significance of this fact will be discussed in the interpretation and discussion section.

I suggest that the adult age group will eventually find its way back to Centenary or some other church. This suggestion is based on my contention that primary socialization impacts so heavily on the individual that it links directly to self-identity and a deep psychological need for validation by
one's cultural and ethnic peers (ethnocentrism in this racist society, generally speaking, limits the amount and kind of social validation that people can expect outside of their cultural and ethnic boundaries).

Mother: I'm praying for these two boys to get back into church. Now as long as they were little they stayed in church but now they have got their lives to live so I let them live their lives, if they don't stray too far. But one thing Centenary has nothing to hold young people there.

Son: I'd like to respond on that one. When I was in Centenary they had the MYF program (Methodist Youth Fellowship) that was in the 50s, 60s, well about 1968 and at that time there was a lot of programs for the youth at that point in time.

Okay, we used to have a sleep-in in the church. What we would do to get money for trips and things like that was all the youth would get together and they would separate ladies upstairs, men downstairs, and we would have an all night sleep-in. And we would get up next morning, wash-up, and go about our daily business.

Reverend Harris devised that and it kept the youth interested. And through the years the programs just slid down. We also would take trips camping to Washington, D.C. a couple of times, things like that. And it kept the youth interested. But these programs just kind of faded out.

Researcher: Were you getting anything out of church outside of just youth activities?

Son: Well, I was an acolyte. I used to take care of the pulpit. I took care of all the video equipment. We used to show movies to younger kids. There was a lot of activity at Centenary. I was
also in the choir.

Researcher: When did that change?

Father: That changed actually before Reverend Dix came here. Part of it changed before he came here.

Researcher: So, maybe the late 60s and early 70s it began to change?

Son: Yeah, nobody pushed it. And now it is at it lowest ebb I would say. Let's go back to the Ebony House. The Ebony House kept a lot of the younger youth involved in the church. We'd go there and they had refreshments, they had games you could play. But then you still had a time to come together as a young Methodist and worship in your way or the church's way. And that kept everybody involved. You had ping pong, arts and crafts, a lot of things.

Researcher: Now, Ebony House, is that the house that is right next to the church? They changed its name?

Mr.: Ya, yeah. Before then it was across the street on Miami.

Researcher: So basically there is nothing for the youth there . . .

Mother: Just their parents (laughter) and when we had daily Vacation Bible School. I always worked in that and taught. We would have over 100 and some kids. At that time there were plenty of children. But now for Vacation Bible School we can't even get 50 or 35 kids out.

Researcher: Do you think that the youth who have grown up have not produced a generation is a reason for no children in the church?

Father: But what has happened is that my son's group have gone to other churches. The ones that he grew up with are gone. I
can't think of any that are there in the 29s and 30s. We lost a whole generation. And it's beginning to tell too.

Mother: We had 5 choirs at one time.

Father: We had choirs for everything. We had choirs that could sing an anthem that would take the hat off of your head. We had a gospel choir and if they didn't move you, you might just as well forget it.

Researcher: If you were to try to pinpoint the reason for that, what would you say?

Father: I really don't know. I mean to give a real truthful answer. I couldn't just pinpoint it and say... I think part of it has been the ministers. And again people have moved to different parts of the city. So there is a variation of things and sometimes we would get a minister if things weren't done just the way they wanted it done, it just wouldn't get done.

It can be inferred from the above interview that a church must be able to reach people of varied interests. To do this, it must have programs that speak to those interests. Some of the difficulties in speaking to different interests will be discussed in the section on interpretation and discussion.

I talked above about the participatory mode of young adults and adults by considering a concept that I called Cultural Christianity. Cultural Christians are those Christians with strong Christian socialization and weak Christian conviction (i.e., weak Christian experience). But there is an age group in the church that represents the paradigmatic
expression of Christian conviction (i.e., overwhelmingly convincing Christian experience).

The senior citizens that I talked to had a total commitment to the church and to their religious beliefs and practices.

**Senior Citizen Behavior**

**Christian:** I want you to hear this too because it is very important, plus the fact that it is just as true as any truth you've ever heard.

Late in the month of May in 1942 I was working as usual in the coal mine and I was not working with anybody. A great many men work alone. And it depends on what the foreman wants him to do and how he wanted him to do it. He had to be guided by his foreman. So I was working by myself and a voice said to me "Move back from where you are." So I simply obeyed. In a coal mine they do have a great many safety inspectors. See, mining law requires that and they are somewhat like a policeman. It's their duty to go around over the mine and see if they could find any unsafe conditions or anyone working in unsafe conditions. If so, they'll correct it by telling this coal miner what he should do about placing a timber here or whatever. Now, when he said move back from where you are I assumed that it was one of these safety inspectors. Without question I simply moved back, as far as I thought I should. The instant that I stopped the same voice spoke again, saying, "You are not back far enough, move back more." Just like that, so I simply obeyed. Now the vein of coal wasn't high that I could stand up in it. It was about the top of that refrigerator which means that I was slightly stooped and in the
meantime as I was obeying this man, as I supposed, I didn't look back to see who was talking I just simply took for granted that it was one of those men and stopped. The very instant that I stopped the face caved in. Just like somebody was holding it all up there and just let go. It brushed my helmet off my head so I turned immediately to see this man, to thank him. And there was nobody there. There wasn't anybody supposed to be there in the first place because I was not working with anybody.

All right, I was kind of excited. Because of that fact, I know that somebody said those words to me. And when I had a chance to look there was nobody there. All right, I had been married and my first wife had died and because of that I was living in a boarding house. I didn't need to live in a house any more and so since it was about this time of year, the boarders and the man of the house would be on the front porch just sitting around relaxing and waiting for his wife to get the supper ready. And I happened to be that day the last one out of the room or been to come out of the bathhouse. They had a bath house where you could bathe and put your clean clothes on and go to your home wherever it is. Now they were there and as usual I would sit on the porch and talk with them but I was very upset because of what happened. I thought that maybe if I would go to my room I would kind of relax. So each person had his own room and I closed the door and sat down in a chair and the instant I sat down the same voice spoke again. "Now that you are out of the coal mine, don't ever go back into a coal mine. You go to Columbus, Ohio." Now listen to this. "Now when you arrive there you search until you find this church" and immediately I could see the picture of the church on the wall, like it was a television image. And the church was 400 miles away from here. It showed me
what I can see right now as the front of Centenary church. And the voice said "Now you search after going to Columbus until you find this church and you go in there and it will be well with you." That's exactly what it said and so I obeyed. At that company that I was employed by if you wanted to leave you could simply go to the coal company office and ask for your wages in advance and they would give it to you and you could go on. And so they gave me mine and I came to Columbus. And I have been here 40 years next month.

Researcher: Did you grow up in the church as a youngster?

Mr.: Yes, I did. It was a Baptist church. At that time there was no other denomination there.

Researcher: You became a minister in the church. Can you tell me about that?

Mr.: I became a minister after coming to Columbus. I went to the seminary and completed a normal course of study for the ministry. I didn't come in the back way.

Researcher: So you have a very special relationship with God, then?

Mr.: Well, it must be so. I do have a picture of my grandmother, that's the mother or my mother. She was present when I was born and she died before I was big enough to remember her as an individual, but I have her picture and my mother told me some things about what her mother was like. She said she was a deeply religious woman and my own mother told me that she was the only person present when I was born and she made this statement. She says "I thank God at last that a preacher is born in the family." Now long after that same grandmother was dead and
buried it came to pass, in the official sense. See the point?

Researcher: Where did your grandmother live?

Mr.: She lived in the state of Virginia. In Russell county in a little town of Castlewood, off down there not far from Bluefield.

Researcher: Had your grandmother been a slave?

Mr.: No, she being Indian, they were not in slavery.

Christian: Well, I was real sick about 6 years ago. And I stayed in the hospital about 4 weeks or something like that. One morning about 4 o'clock in the morning and I was really sick. I was just flat on my back. I mean, I was really sick. I stayed unconscious for about 4 days. So I was lying there that morning about 4 o'clock and some voice came to me and says "Get up, you're going to be all right, you are going to get well, your work is not finished here." Just like I'm talking to you. It was just as plain, it said "Your work is not finished here, I've got a lot more work for you to do" and it said "Sit up in the bed." And you know, I got up and sat up in the bed and I looked around to see if the nurse was talking to me to see if somebody was in there talking to me and there was not a soul in there but me. And the next morning the doctor came in the room and he says "Mr., last night you were so sick you couldn't sit up and here you are sitting up in the bed." My color had turned back and he said "Your color has come back to you and you are sitting up, what happened?" And I told him, I said "The good lord
Christian: I had one special experience when I was overseas. Of course, some people think you are crazy when you have these things, see. We were way out in the ocean and had been out there maybe a month. I was standing up on the deck and I was praying. I didn't think I was going to get back so I was up there saying a prayer. Things were not going the way I thought they should be. I was looking up just watching and on the cloud there appeared a cross that was going from left to right and
then a voice said, something said, "Why thou worry?" And then when I looked around to see if anybody was behind me or near me, I wanted to see who said that. And then I looked up again and it was all gone. And I know I couldn't have been dreaming. I was in the service then and all the way down since then I had more fear of God than I had before. Because the voice said "Why thou worry?" Well I was out there and I guess I was really worried about whether or not I was going to get back home.

Researcher: You said you had more fear of God afterwards. What do you mean by that?

Mr. : Well, let me see if I can put it in context. You fear God when you are converted so far as right and wrong is concerned. I mean wrongdoers will get punished so you say I'm going to do this or that because you fear God. But after this voice I was even more careful.

Researcher: So you started to serve God more. You started to go to church more?

Mr. : I don't know if I started to go to church more or nothing like that but I was really fearful of the things that I could do. Not that I didn't still do wrong but I wouldn't go as far as I used to go. In other words, I didn't want to go further than somebody could reach and get me. I don't want to get out of reach. And that's just my personal feeling. I don't know whether it was happening but I saw this white cross on the cloud that was going from left to right and the voice said "Why thou worry" and I looked around because I thought maybe somebody was standing back there watching me. And you know, you can see a person and say you were worried and you was talking to yourself and I thought maybe somebody was talking to me and I looked around to see if anybody was there and I looked back up to see if the cross was there and everything had disappeared. Just like that. I remember the words exactly. And I said
to myself that I was worried so much that my subconscious might have told me that. And then I said I know both of these things can't be wrong and I know what I saw up there and I know I heard something because I looked around. And then when I looked around everything was gone.

Christian: I feel bad if I can't help somebody. I was brought up that way. My parents taught us when we was little if you can't help anyone, life is really not worth living. And you don't stray too much from what they taught you. But I find church very rewarding. If you put your heart and your soul into it. You've got to put your whole heart, soul, and mind into it.

Researcher: How do you do that?

Mrs.: You've got to live a Christian life, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

Researcher: Give me some insight into what Christian life is. What is that? What do you mean when you say that?

Mrs.: Well, I think everyone knows when they are a Christian and when they're not a Christian. You can't pretend that you are a Christian. You've got to show some of your good works. And it will rub off on somebody else.

Researcher: So, basically, helping people is Christian?

Mrs.: That's just a part of it. Helping and doing what I can.

Researcher: Do you have to be a church member to be a Christian?

Mrs.: No, not exactly. But you feel better if you are a Christian and go to church.

Christian: Um hum, I'll go along with that. With the condition that the world is in right now, I think Christians almost have to
join together at a certain time. I don't think we actually go to church enough. I think you draw strength from each other. Because, as the little boy said, "It's rough out there."

**Christian:** And you have more love for one another. You just have to join yourselves together as Christians.

**Researcher:** What does the church give you to make it possible to love people?

**Christian:** I think it comes through Bible study, although we don't have as much as we used to. I think Bible study is a very important thing in the church. And years back we never let a week go by without prayer service. And that was strengthening.

There were a lot of things that made you realize that you were a Christian. When you would have different meetings. Even at choir rehearsal. We would have choir practice and before we'd get halfway through everybody would be so filled up you just stopped. This is the type of thing that lets you know when you are a Christian. The songs that you sing. I can remember then we used to sing the anthem, "The King of Love My Shepherd Is," and I remember one Sunday I had the part in it and I was doing real good and all at once I just stopped and started crying, right in the middle of the anthem and this is something that doesn't happen with anthems very often. But you stop to think, the kind of love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never, now if that doesn't bring out something you just as well hang it up. But I did that and the pastor, he just got up and went right on with the service.

This is Christian to me. So these things are meaningful. They may seem simple to someone that is not in tune with what is going on. But they are important.
The senior citizens have given candid and poignant testimony to the significance of Christian belief and practice in their lives. Some of their experiences were similar but each demonstrated the personal aspect so important to the religious experience. The need for a personal expression has grown so intense over the years that self-identity and myth represent a symbiosis that defined thought and behavior in very fundamental ways - life and religion are synonomous.

All of my informants were socialized in the church. Their patterns of spiritual development were similar. The process begins with the internalization of myth and ritual through the subjective expression of significant others. The world becomes a meaningful reality as it is expressed by the guardians of that reality.

The process continues as the facticity of the objective world encroaches on the beliefs and practices of the spiritual world. In this field of sociocultural and socioreligious tension, secondary socialization supports the objective-factual world in its struggle against the myth-ritual world. For a while the facticity of the objective world supplants the spirituality of the religious world by becoming a part of subjective consciousness. The factual world becomes internalized. But since some significant aspects of life will remain incomprehensible and "the world internalized in primary socialization is so much more firmly entrenched in consciousness than worlds internalized in secondary socialization,"
the subjective consciousness refers back to those myths and rituals of early childhood that now take on meaning because they seem to offer some answers.

The pattern of spiritual development can be summarized as: an inability to participate as children - the company of other children being more important than the spiritual lesson to be learned; a rebellious participation as adolescent - religious beliefs and practices being less important than one's own problems; some degree of semi-participation as young adult - with the need to find placement in the secular world being a more pressing priority than spiritual need; an absence of participation as an adult - there is simply no time nor interest, i.e., secular responsibilities weigh more heavily on one's time and energy; a renewed participation as middle age adult - the quest for meaning in the secular world has not led to any relevant insights; and total participation as senior citizen - because thoughts and behavior become easier to synchronize when premised by religious conviction.

While this process may seem a simplification, the trend was overwhelmingly evident in the experiences related to me by research participants.

Age provided a category for observing difference in thought and behavior across the entire range of human activity in the research community.
Gender was another category that could have been singled out for studying certain thought and behavior aspects of the research community, but the limitations of this study did not allow any searching look into the significance of gender. It was obvious at the outset of the study that there were more women in the church than men. Women comprised 42% more of the officer corps than men and 50% more of the administrative board than men. Although I could not observe any gender pattern in monetary contributions to the church, nor ascertain the exact status of women in the church community, women did outnumber men on all levels of active participation. Their participation seemed to be an extension of their roles in the home and the general society, e.g., cook, child care, teacher, secretarial work, and the operational responsibility for service oriented committees and work areas. It should be noted that a woman is serving as chairperson of the administrative board for the first time in the church's 76 year history.

In spite of the fact that there was a big difference in gender participation I could not observe this difference having any influence on the age categorization as discussed above. The age differentiation seemed to hold true for both sexes, although the communication among women seemed easier and more likely to allow women to cross age barriers.

One of the most significant facts about the church is that it is an institution of families. Many families were
represented through 3 or 4 generations. This meant that family relationships might more easily obscure age barriers. For example, a group of women and young girls from the same family, or several cooperating families, might work together to prepare the meal for the free lunch program to feed the poor on Saturday (Figures 47-61). Otherwise, different age groups did not mix in significant numbers, regardless of gender.

In an effort to gain some perspective on the relationship of women to the church, I asked a group of young adults, composed of 6 women and 2 men, with a median age of 24, what they thought about the relationship between women and the church.

**Gender Difference**

**Ms.A**: I think that women get caught up in the whole atmosphere of the church. The need for church, because that's the place where you go on Sunday to get dressed up or whatever, whatever your perception may be but I think men's faith is just as strong if not stronger. But for the most part, men don't get all caught up in the accouterments, which is basically what church is to a lot of people. You have your Christianity, you have your faith, and then you have your church. I don't think that men get that caught up in that, especially when they have families. You know, you don't see that many young brothers in the church.

**Ms.B**: I feel women are like the backbone of America. That's my own personal opinion. I feel that women need that strength,
that will, that spirit from the most high, to keep a family together, to raise sons, to raise daughters, to the best of their ability, you know. Because after a while it's out of their hands, you know.

And I feel that a lot of men don't mind sending their wives off to church because it's safe, it's comfortable, and I feel maybe that's why there are a lot of women in church. They need that backbone and that strength. Because a lot of times men don't show emotions but women do and they can see when their husbands are hurting or their sons are hurting and they need that strength to do whatever needs to be done and I think that it's needed, personally. Just going back from granma's day and stuff. You know, they stayed in church and they sang those old spirituals. They needed that, I think, for the family and stuff.

Ms. C: I think it's a weakness. The fact that men aren't participating more. I don't know why it is in every church from the Catholics on down, or on up, depending upon how you look at it, the women are the bigger numbers. I think that it is alright until the women are the majority. Then I think that that shows that the families are in crisis or something needs to be done.

I think that's a big weakness. I think we are having a big problem with black families now and I think that is part of it, holding up a black institution and the black family. And I think the fact that black men are not participating is a reflection. They aren't participating at church either. Women have to kind of hold it because if we let go it's over. Because the children can't do it. And right now we just kind of got our thumb in the dike waiting until help comes. But we can't do it without the man. Regardless of how strong black women are supposed to be and that's a fallacy to me anyhow,
because I know I'm tired of it. Yeah, but we need that man there and if he is not going to be there, and if things start falling apart, who do we have to blame? Because we need that man there. If 1 out of 3 comes, that's better than none coming. Right now, I think we are getting down to the low count of 1 out of 3. And it should be 2 out of 3. I think you can do without that one but I really think the black man needs to start getting back into the church and the family.

You know, that's a fallacy that black women are strong, because we don't die young. If we were so strong we could do all this and live to be 300, but just because you are struggling along and you don't die right now that doesn't mean that you enjoyed it or that it was very easy for you. And now they use that as an excuse to really dump it on us and my generation. We really get to take it on the chin because our mothers struggled with 3 or 4 children and cleaned floors and survived and raised us. Now we're supposed to do that plus deal with 1983.

One of the reasons that families are falling apart is that men are not getting the message that they must participate more actively in raising the children and keeping the house. You know, you can't do it by yourself and I think a lot of black men are trying to do it by themselves and they are going up against the system, getting their heads whipped and then they come home and whip their wife's head and they don't go to church on Sunday so it's like a vicious circle that gets bigger and bigger. They really need to see that other black men are going through it. That's what church is all about. We are all going through the same thing, just holding out a hand to one another. And I think the fact that they are pushing that hand away is having repercussions in the family.
Of the categories, age, gender, and socioeconomic status, into which a study of this limited scope could be organized, age proved to be very fruitful in providing some perspective on behavior patterns in the research community.
Interpretation and Discussion of Field Experience

Money

United Methodists long have had a love/hate relationship with money. They hate to talk about it, yet talk about it more than any other subject. There is a mystique surrounding money. It is considered highly materialistic but, at the same time, takes its place in most churches as the symbol of personal dedication. Ceremonially, it is placed on the altar to the singing of the Doxology. The offering takes its place along with fried chicken and warm hearts as the authentication that a gathering is truly United Methodist.

In its own way, money as an offering is the most tangible form of our community as the church. Giving it serves as the most obvious common act in which all participate. The use of money displays the most shared endeavor of the entire community of faith. (Walker 1982: 11)

Although money seemed to be a symbol of personal dedication for some, an obvious form of participation for most, and a topic on all agenda meetings, I observed no systematic approach to its acquisition. Money was viewed, generally, as a necessary evil and not a building block for development and strength.

The special view of money that permeates the church atmosphere results, I suggest, from a dialectical tension between
attitudes about it on the one hand, and an objective need for it in both secular and spiritual matters on the other. Out of 20 recorded sermons, 7 (30%) carried some explicit or implicit reference to money. Although the church had a documented need for money it had no clear philosophy about its acquisition.

Excerpts from the 7 sermons follow as a basis for discussing their relationship to attitudes about money.

In reading the sermons keep in mind that the church will suffer a budget deficit in the 3rd quarter of the year and that efforts to raise money had been inadequate for assuaging this financial strain. Remember also that a budget deficit has been a reality for the church for several years, suggesting a direct relationship between the kind of thinking about money that commands the atmosphere, and the institution's ability to work with money. And remember, finally, that the single most important communications center in the church is the pulpit and the single most important communicator, the minister. The minister has 3 instruments at his disposal to help influence and persuade his congregation: (1) the Bible; (2) his theology; and (3) his personality.

Each sermon was accompanied by scripture lessons from the old and new testaments of the Bible. These lessons may relate directly to the subject of the sermon or they may make independent points. This was determined by the interest and
the mood of the minister. At any rate, the scripture lessons always preceded the sermon. The minister's theological position seemed, generally, to develop out of his biblical interpretations and/or personal experiences. I observed his theology as a weave of biblical interpretations and personal experiences into metaphors and parables as guidelines for thought and behavior. His pastoral perspective emphasized a love for Jesus and faith in God. The charisma of his personality is difficult to capture on paper but it was usually, forceful, authoritarian, and persuaded of the ordination to preach.

The 7 sermons were delivered over a 5 month time period with 4 being delivered in May. The first 2 sermons are reproduced in Chapter III. See pages 121-122 and 123-125 for Some Things Don't Make Sense To Me and pages 130-132 for Whose Is It.
March 13, 1983

"Have You Taken Your Life Back From God"

I have a subject that I would like you to think about as we go along in this sermon, "Have you taken your life back from God?" Have you taken your life back from God? God spoke of a plumbline in the book of Amos. Now if any of you have ever done any building or been around construction of your home or building you know what a plumbline is. A line with a weight on it that hangs straight down and the corners of the building should be plumb and in this passage of Amos, God put a plumbline down the midst of Israel. Evidently he wanted Israel to plumb the line, with the commandments and with their life. I think all of our Christian commandments should be measured by a plumbline. Are we truly plumb the line? As far as Christianity or as far as commitments we made at one time. As we continue on this discourse on how to truly be Christian, I'm talking about Christians that will plumb the line. Whenever your life is not plumb that you will recognize it and straighten it up.

"Have you taken your life back from God?" He said that the first step toward recognizing Christ, is when a person recognizes their need for God. Jesus said blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Not only must we recognize our need for God then we must want God in our lives. Many times we need things and we will make no effort to get them. The recognition of the need and then attempting to satisfy this need for God. Then he said the next step was when a person must truly take a look at himself, where his life is on his own, apart from God, and where God wants his life to be. God wants us to be like Jesus. When we compare the life of Jesus over against our life and when we recognize that we have a strong possibility of bringing our life up where God wants it to be then we become sad, sad over the condition that we find ourselves in. Sad over the life that we are living, apart from God.
We become so saddened and disenchanted to where we have carried ourselves until we'll moan over the condition we find ourselves in. And then God had to get you where he can use you. When you moan then you will become meek. God has to have you meek so that he can mold you as he would a piece of clay. Then we go to step 4 which is the 6th verse, chapter 5. It says blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness because they and they alone shall be satisfied. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after God for they shall be satisfied. Have you taken your life back from God? I keep saying that. We read a passage of scripture where a young man came to Jesus with a thought in his heart and a question on his lips. Evidently this young man had recognized a need for God. He probably had moaned over the situation and he had become meek because he came to Jesus on his knees. He said, "Master," not only master, but he said to Jesus, "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus looked at him and said, "You know the commandments. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not kill. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not defraud anyone. You should honor your mother and father."

You see, there is a price to pay for the Christian life. This young man looked at Jesus and he felt good in his heart. Because he said "Lord, these commandments I have kept from my youth up. I've kept these. I don't steal, I don't commit adultery. I don't lie on folks, I'm honest with those I deal with and I honor my mother and father." He said "I've kept all the commandments." But the price is a little more. Jesus looked on him and the Bible said that Jesus loved him. Jesus knew where the young man's heart was. His heart was on his possessions. Jesus looked clean through him. He said, "Now the real price you must pay. The real cost for eternal life to you is that you must sell all that you have, everything, take the money, give it to the poor, then come take up your cross and follow me."
You will have treasure in heaven." The young man thought about what Jesus said and he thought about all of his possessions and he compared the price that he would have to pay for eternal life and he was very honest, see he wasn't a liar. He was honest. He just said to himself, "This is more than I can pay. I'm not going to sell everything I have, give it to the poor, I don't want it that bad." The young man walked away. Jesus looked at him with a sad heart. You know what Jesus did? He didn't change from a plumb-line to get the building off center. He said this is the price you pay. If you're going to plumb the line in the end you must plumb it from the beginning. Either you plumb it or you don't have it or the house is going to fall. Jesus looked at him and said, "You know it's going to be hard for a rich man to get into the kingdom of heaven. It is going to be hard as it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle." Have you taken your life back from God?

There is a lot of theology in that little passage of scripture. The first thing is the young man sought Jesus. He felt a need for God. Evidently he looked at his life and he didn't like what he saw. He became meek enough to go to Jesus on his knees. Then Jesus took him through the easiest step first. Jesus knows where we are. He knows the things that we don't mind giving up. Another thing that Jesus told this young man, if you are going to plumb the line with God then you must have complete trust in God and complete faith in God. If you do not have complete trust in God you will never be a Christian until you completely trust God. One must want this relationship with God more than you want anything else. The Bible says in no uncertain terms that they who hunger, they who thirst after God shall be satisfied. Not just a mild need of God. You must want God enough to give up whatever stands between you and God. This young man's riches stood between him and God. As long as that was there he wanted his riches more
than he wanted God. See, to get God we
must surrender. To surrender our will, to
surrender our abilities. We must surrender
to God as completely as Jesus surrendered
to God in the Garden of Gethsemane When
life was hard on him. The pain and the
thought of what was happening was becoming
unbearable. Jesus cried out, "My God, why
have thou forsaken me? If it is possible
let this cup pass." Then on the next
breath he said, "Not my will but thine be
done." And this is where we've got to go.
Sometimes the pill is bitter. We must say
thine will be done and if we can say that,
we have surrendered.

Have we surrendered it all? Your Chris-
tian life, is it plumb? Have you taken
your life back from God? Who is in charge
of your life, you or God?
May 1, 1983

"Who Am I"

Nothing but God can make anybody a preacher. I think about what I really care about in life. Maybe I care too much about black folks. Maybe I care too much about our children and our youth. Maybe I care too much when I see so many of us and our children just throwing their life away. For nothing, not heading any place but to an early grave. Maybe I care because you and I as parents let golden opportunities past when we don't encourage them to learn all they can learn in grammar school. We do not encourage them to learn all they can learn in high school. Now we are all upset because the white people are tired of making fools out of black athletes and they say now they're going to make them have at least a high school education when they come to college to play football and we are all upset about it. We should have been raising cain about that 40 years ago. To go to college just to play football or basketball. That's all they let us play. We don't play no tennis and we don't get on the swim team. You just play football and basketball which is a highly lucrative business. Instead of telling our kids, if you can't make a C you don't have no business on no football team. I know you read this article the other day about this blue ribbon panel that Reagan put out to study the educational system. Where they say the whole system is in trouble. But in the last paragraph in the paper they show us where we are. The say 40% of the blacks that finish high school are functionally illiterate. 40% of us. I'd just like to keep crying in the wilderness, don't let it happen to your child. Don't let it happen to your grandchild. Don't let it happen to your niece or your nephew. Don't let it happen to those that you know. Spend 12 years in school and can't balance a checkbook. But know every television program on the air. And know every other thing that's
worth nothing. Don't let it happen to your children any longer. They're saying 40% can't even read and write. And that's not the saddest thing. At the University of South Carolina they recruited 7 or 8 athletes to play football and I don't think they could even write their names. My beloved, I think all these things in my solitude. I think why we are so casual with life. Why are we so casual about the most important possession you have? And I'm going to keep crying from this pulpit. Don't let another generation of our children grow up illiterate. God wants you to put first things first.

I think about the passages of scripture where God gave us the talents. He gave us all 1. Your child has 1. He may have 5 but he or she has 1. And you ought to see that that 1 is developed.

We go out into the world to compete, unprepared. Just unprepared. We think life if going to give us something. Nobody doesn't owe you a thing. I don't know where you got that from, that the government owes us a living. I don't know where we got that from, that the welfare owes us a living. I don't know where we got that from. Nobody owes you a living. The Bible said you will work and eat by the sweat of your own brow. All that you are entitled to is an opportunity. That's all. We need to change our thinking. In my solitude I think sometimes if any of this is getting over to you. How do you think about your relationship to God?
May 8, 1983

"The Family and the Home"

This day was important not so much for the sermon or scripture lessons, both honoring the woman, the mother, and the family, since it was Mother's Day, but for the special meeting that was held with the congregation by representatives of the administrative board immediately following the sermon. This meeting announced the launching of a new program to raise money. This meeting was striking because it was organized to ask the congregation to pledge an additional $20,000 to a building fund to cover the cost of maintaining and repairing church property. Two fundraising drives had already been set in place* and now the congregation was asked to strain for another contribution.

I'll ask you to remain please and we will give the benediction. I would like to ask the ushers to pass out those letters. I would like for every member to get one. If you are a visitor you can get one too if you wish it. The cuss it for a few moments. Then you take it home with you and make your decision. Then we'll give the benediction. I'd like somebody to come up here other than me. Mrs. _____, you're the chairman of this, Mr. _____ and Mr. _____.

The congregation is reading the letter.+
Please, let's don't get noisy because if we do, we'll get out of an attitude of worship. Please! Please! I don't think a family needs but one.

The ushers are still passing out the letters. The reading continues for several minutes while the organ plays softly in the background and some choir members sing in a subdued manner. After a pause the minister speaks again:

I think that you have one of these and I think you can see what it is. You can see what we have had a couple of meetings to try to do. Mrs. _____, do you want to make any statement on this?

Chairperson of the Administrative Board:

Can you hear me? After we discussed this at two meetings, Mr. _____ came up with this idea. That if you really love the church you would be willing to give a certain amount of money and we had also discussed that if you don't have it available you could get a loan or something on your own and pay it back on your own and maybe give a $1,000 or $500 or whatever you would like to the church. And we also made it very clear to the finance committee that this money would be going into a building fund and it would be used exclusively to get these repairs done on the house, on the church, and on the parsonage. And we want that to be clear to everybody, that it would be going especially for that purpose and not anything else. Because we had quite a bit of discussion about giving a certain amount of money for something and it being used for something else. So I do want you to know that it will be going into a building fund.

Chairman of the Trustee Board:

We have several repairs that need to be made on 3 pieces of property over at the Ebony House. The roof needs to be repaired,
overhangs, siding, well, there are several things I can't relate exactly now but any how the building inspector has been after us. He has given us about 60 days now. So we need your help. Anything you can give us. I see here that we need between 15 and $20,000 to repair all the properties. That includes some work here at the church. So whatever you can do we'd appreciate it. Thank you.

Minister: Mr. _____ came up with this idea about how we can get it financed. Everybody thinks it's a good idea. Now Mr. _____ will make his statement on it.

Member of the Administrative Board:

I did come up with this idea. Finally I went back several, several years ago when some of our parents put up property to save Centenary. During that thinking I was just wondering why some of us, instead of putting up property, could maybe just give and then you wouldn't have to pay back the loans or anything. In order to do this you have to have love of God and love of church in our hearts. I thought that with a $1,000 maybe we would get 20 people to give $1,000, maybe 20 to give $750, maybe 20 to give $500, 20 to give $400, maybe 20 to give $250, $150 or $50. Breaking it right on down to whatever your heart would feel like you'd want to give. When this money was all taken in and all the bills were paid you wouldn't have to pay this man interest downtown on this money. Because he would like to loan us some money so he would collect interest on it. But if we'd just give I think that would be wonderful.

Minister: Thank you. I would like to just pass on 1 or 2 items. One is that we must do something with the house at 143/145 North 18th Street. We have got a list of 7 page violations that must be taken care of one way or another. And it is going to cost more to tear the house down than it is to repair it. So we can't say just do anything with it.
And we are at least 15 days beyond the original date to get it fixed. So we are going to ask you, whatever you decide to do, we hope that you do it within the next week and let us know it. And then I would like to ask all the officers who will come to the administrative board meeting tomorrow night that you have your commitment in writing so we'll have that. I hope that all of you will be honest with yourselves and honest with God and give what you have. That's all we can ask.

We've got to do something because our 30 days was up in the middle of April. Now if you want to make your commitment and leave it here today, fine. We ask you to tell us what you can give any way you are going to give it. Whether it is all cash or check. We'll take cash or check.

Thank you, you've been so lovely and we would hope that you will get it together by tomorrow night.

Let us please bow our heads for the benediction.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord makes his face to shine upon you and be gracious with you. The Lord lift up his countenance with you and give you peace, Amen. Wish somebody a Happy Mother's Day if it nothing but an old man.
May 22, 1983

"Be Prepared"

I think of many things during the run of the week, as many of you do, and I thought of how unprepared some many of us are. Unprepared for what? We are almost unprepared for most of the things in life that will confront us. You know, sometimes you can read books and you hear people speak and one of the things that we have lived with in the black church is that the black church and black preachers over the years have always preached over there. This is one of the untruths that other people had put upon us and it is one of the untruths that some of our own people say about the black church, that the black preacher is always preaching heaven. Well, it's good to preach heaven but that's not true that that is the only thing that black churches ever preach. When you think about the history of black people in this country and you think of the involvement of the church in the lives of black people from the days of slavery all through the days of reconstruction, all through the era of the turn of the century up until now, the black church has been involved in our economic, our social, and political life. All of the issues concerning black people and just about every organization that ever fought the battles of black people originated either by a preacher or in some church. You go all the way back and the church has been involved in the total life of you black people. Who encouraged education? I'm sure it wasn't the white church who encouraged the building of some schools, For you and for me, for our ancestors? So the black church has been involved. It has preached over there, yes, because that is ultimately where we hope to end up. But it also has dealt with here. And some other things that they say about the black church is that it is emotional. I don't find nothing wrong with that. We are by nature emotional people. And the few of us who are black without emotion we join
the Methodist church, the Episcopal church, and the Catholic church. But the majority of us are in the Baptist, the Holiness, and that's where we are because we are an emotional people. So don't be ashamed when they say emotions run the black church, sure it does. I'm not very emotional so I can be content in the Methodist church. Now if I was emotional I wouldn't stay here at Centenary. You have a church set up for people who are not emotional and that's you. Most of these other black Methodist churches in the city are emotional. So don't become ashamed when they say that the black church is emotional. We are an emotional people, when you look at our roots. But I wanted to bring you to a point. Because the black church has always been concerned about the total individual. I want to talk today about a few things that are not going to get you to heaven. But it may make life a little better for you here. Be prepared. Three things happen to you when you are born in life. Only 3 things can happen to you. You live, you get disabled, or you die. It's as simple as that. Now are you financially prepared for these 3 different categories of our existence? Most of us aren't prepared to die. I'm talking about financially, I'm not talking about spiritually. We aren't prepared to live to old age and we are not prepared for any unusual sicknesses or disabilities that might confront us. If either one of these things happen in your life, you need some extra money. I don't know of a person, maybe you do, that ever died that left his family too much money. Do you know anyone that ever got totally disabled and had a chronic ailment that had too much money? Do you know any older person, had too much money? Do you know any person that died that left too little money? I know some of them. Do you know any old person that has too little money to live comfortably and decently? Do you know anyone that's totally disabled, struck down by an accident or some sickness with too little money to live a decent life? Jesus told these 10,000,000 to be always prepared. For you know not the hour nor the day that
the son of man will come. And I'm trying
to say to you today, our young people and
some of you who still have an opportunity
to make some corrections in your financial
situation, that you be prepared to die and
you be prepared for getting disabled, be­
cause all our living, all of the money that
we need and use for living, is based upon
the assumption that we can get up every
Monday morning and hit the clock and go to
work. That's where it comes from. You're
not as fortunate as William Simon, where
we can parlay from inside tips a $100,000
into $80,000,000. That's not our lot.
We have to go to work, and buy groceries,
and pay the mortgage and pay the house
note and send the children to school. And
if we can't go to work, our pay checks
soon stop and when they stop, most of us
don't have anything. I'm saying to you
that you need to plan, disability, and
old age. Most of our financial security
is tied up in situations that we have no
control over. We don't even have any word
in it. That's where we are always hung up
on group insurance. You don't have a say
so. Don't even have a vote on it. The
president of the company decides what he is
going to carry and who he is going to carry
it with, who it is going to cover and for
how much. You don't even have a say so.
We have let our whole security rest in
other people's hands saying I've got group
insurance. The company's got me covered.
You could get fired tomorrow. The other
thing you depend upon is social security.
You can't depend on social security for
anything now. Did you see this piece in
the paper just this last week that the
Supreme Court has ruled that health and
welfare can deny people social security.
Just as fast as they can prove it and if
you get tied up in social security, when
67% of all the people that put in for dis­
ability under social security are turned
down. What I'm saying, my beloved, I want
to say to you. You need to plan your own
financial future. You need to know when
you get totally disabled that you have a
certain amount of money that will come in
for the rest of your life. You need to
know that if you have a hospital bill worth $150,000 that you know that you have insurance to cover it. Don't think you can't run up a $150,000 hospital bill, because you can.

One of the things that I think we need to do as black folks, and I'm going to preach this as long as I live, when we die we need to leave somebody a big pile of money. That is what white people have done over the years. And black people will say I don't want to . . . We need to leave our children some money. Yeah, some of them will throw it away, that's right. But some of them will put it to good use. We need to leave some 100s of 1,000s of dollars, not 5 or 10.

What I'm saying, my beloved, is that we need to insure ourselves to leave our family some big sums of money so that they can do some things with it. We need to use our life to create money. That is what the white man has done. He insures himself and leaves $500,000 to his family. Yeah, they are liable to fight over it in court but somebody is going to get it. He'll insure his house and burn it down trying to get a pile of money. What I'm saying is that the only way we can pass money on in sums is to insure ourselves. When we die we leave somebody some money. Because regardless of what you say and I'm sure there will be some negative comments about this sermon, that's neither here nor there, we live in a money society and if we don't have any, you're just in a bad fix. You're in a world of trouble. Nc.: you talk to anybody that has gotten disabled and hadn't planned for it ahead of time. You talk to anyone that's old and living off of social security. You talk to anybody that needs money for health expenses and don't have the money.

All I'm trying to get you to see is that you have to plan. Some of us take life too haphazard. We are never ahead of our plans. We let life hit us from the back and what- ever it pushes us into that's what we're into. We don't know where we are going sometimes. Just like a wave in the ocean will just hit you and knock you down and
we don't have no defenses against it. I would like you young people to plan your own life and know that these are the 3 events you must prepare for. Living, disability, and dying. And the things that go inbetween.

My dear friends, Jesus and God sat down and planned. I think that Jesus talked about people being prepared. You need to be prepared for these events that will come in your life. And it hurts me to see all these money planning seminars they are having all over the city. You see 3 or 4 of them in the paper every week. White people are planning. They are planning their individual family's future. You are in a society where 2/3 are planning and we are the other 1/3 and we are not planning. Can you see where we are? We need to attend some of these seminars to find out what they are doing and how to plan for your future. What to do with the little bit of money we do get a hold of. So be prepared. I hope that I have shocked some of you into making some plans, or telling somebody how to plan if it's too late for you.
May 29, 1983

"Are You Fully Insured"

The first chapter of the book of Acts and the 8th verse, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." And I have a subject, "Are you fully insured?" Last Sunday was Pentecost Sunday. That is the day, 50 days after the ascension of Christ, that God sent his Holy Spirit into the world in a new fashion. From that day we can become fully insured. I'm talking about insuring our souls. Insurance is a contract stating that the insuring company promises that they will do certain things if certain things happen to you if you pay a certain premium. Now there are all sorts of variations on insurances. You can buy hospital insurance that will take care of all your hospital bills. Or you can buy one that will take care of only 80% of them. You can buy insurance that fully insures your house or you can buy one that only insures part of it. Are you fully insured? One of the first things that I've done at every church that I've gone to pastor is to ask the trustees to let me see the insurance on the church, because, generally, black folks underinsure everything and there was no difference when I looked at the insurance coverage of this church. And I looked at the building and I said that this building is worth at least twice what we have it insured for. But then I was told that we didn't have the money.

Have we fully insured our souls? So often we like to carry policies with deductibles because it is so much cheaper. I'm trying to teach my daughter how to sell insurance. I gave her some special instructions about certain things. If you don't settle on what I think you should have, I don't sell it. Because I don't want you coming back at me either when something happens to you. If you do not have the relationship with God to stand. This is one of the reasons that I spend
so much time, sometimes taking stands that are not so popular, trying to help you to see what full coverage with God means over against half coverage and coverage with a deductible. You see, you are responsible for all the deductibles. If you carry a hospital insurance and you've got a 80/20 deductible, if your hospital bill is $10,000, 20% of that is yours. But now if you carry full coverage, none of that is yours. But now, if you carry full coverage it costs more than it does if you are going to carry a policy with a big deductible. So to carry full coverage with God it's going to cost more.

God is an insuring company. God made the first contract with Abraham, promising certain things if he did certain things. Then God made another covenant, another agreement when he brought them out of Egypt. He said you do certain things and I will guarantee you certain things. God has not gone back on his word. He sent agent after agent after agent, to tell the people, my covenant still stands.

They killed off all these agents. Some of them they heard who told them that they're not covered, not fully insured, you're not paying your premium. Your policy is going to lapse and then you are trying to carry insurance with a too big of a deductible. Therefore you are not going to be able to call for the coverage. And then he sent his own son down, trying to get us to see the same thing. God does not want us to be half insured. He sent Jesus who paid the premium. The Bible tells us that Jesus paid the ransom for all. So the premium is paid. All we have to do now is to inherit the kingdom and the coverage. Power!

What did Jesus tell his disciples? He says, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you." Do you have power? Inner power? Power from God? Do you possess the inner power from God that Jesus promised in your life? If you don't possess it, you're not fully insured. If you don't possess it, it you don't feel it, if you don't feel secure in calling upon God in all of your anxieties and transactions, if you don't feel God in you sometimes, giving you the power
on high, you must be carrying too much of your own coverage. But the Bible tells us that when the day of Pentecost had come they were all gathered together and suddenly a sound came from heaven like a rush of mighty wind and it filled all the house that they were sitting in. They had prayed to the eternal fire... people started to doing all kinds of funny things. Some people started speaking in some other tongues and all sorts of things happened. But the main thing is, you don't have to speak in another tongue. The main thing is, you don't have to do all kinds of funny things, but the main thing is that sometime you ought to feel God inside of you. Every Christian ought to feel God sometime. Every Christian should never be hopeless because God guaranteed us full power.

My beloved, if you have gone along all this time and you don't feel God's power you are not fully insured. Don't carry too much of the coverage yourself. Turn it over to God. God is able and God is powerful. Let God be responsible for you. You know when we get this Holy Spirit, the Bible tells us in 2nd Corinthians, somewhere around the 5th chapter, that we are a new creation. We're a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and say I make all things new. Then you're a different person. Are you holding to your old hates? This is what keeps some of us from being insured. We won't turn loose some things that are dear to us and we won't let the Holy Spirit take over in our life. Because to let it come in and feel the power you must cleanse your heart of everything that is anti-God. Hating someone else is anti-God. And holding in things is anti-God and being jealous is anti-God. My beloved, to be God-like we must be loving. Because God is love. We must be forgiving, because God forgives us. We must be dependable. We must depend upon God. We must let God's will take hold in our life. And not hold to our will. Some of us can't turn this loose, therefore we carry too much of our own coverage and when something happens to us, we faint. We don't
have any answers. Sometimes we are ready to commit suicide. We're ready to get a divorce. We're ready to do anything because we don't have the answers. If anybody is carried by God, insured by God, they don't commit suicide. Are you fully insured? Your spirit? Your soul? Is it prepared for that place that God has prepared for it? Is it? Are you prepared to meet tomorrow?

I'm so glad that we can become fully insured. I'm glad that God called me to try and help tell the message. I'm glad that it is never too late. That's the other thing about God. It's never too late to join his insurance. You see, some insurance you can't join when your house is on fire. Nobody is going to insure your house once it catches fire. You can buy no insurance once your health changes. Once you get high blood pressure and sugar, it's over, as far as buying insurance. But now, with God, your house can be burning down and he'll still take you. You can be put out by mother, wife, or children and he'll still take you. You cannot do anything so bad that you will come and say, God I tried to do it without you; I had a lot of talent of my own but I surrender. I want to become fully insured. I'm not going to surrender part of me, I'm going to surrender all of me. God will take you at that moment and bless you. To become insured you must surrender all to Jesus. Sometimes we don't want to surrender but so much. My beloved, life is too uncertain and too many unusual things happen. Nobody, nobody knows what is going to happen tomorrow . . .

I wouldn't carry half coverage another day. And I wouldn't carry half coverage on my soul another day. We can become fully insured and then when things happen you go to God in Jesus' name. If we can't handle it, turn to God.

My beloved, it's left up to you whether you are going to continue to carry your coverage or whether you are going to let God carry it. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Amen.
In spite of its importance money has a low spiritual priority at Centenary. This depressed priority affects the institutional structure of the church. It is interesting to observe that money outside of the church enjoys the status of a necessary social instrument, while money inside the church is stymied in its need to serve a constructive function. This may be due, in part, to biblical interpretations that are used to socialize Christians into thinking of money as a source of evil. This socialization is promoted, most notably, by stressing Jesus' damnation of the rich and his vehement reaction to merchants in the temple. Both biblical parables make it difficult for many Christians to imagine money as having any potential for playing a constructive role in the spiritual life of the church. I suggest that this socialization dichotomizes money into: (1) a necessary and sought after commodity in the secular realm; and (2) a necessary, but to be avoided, evil in the spiritual realm. This duality is most noticeable in the outward display of money in stylish dress on Sundays, fashion being an accepted cultural code, and a reluctance to promote and operate socially organized schemes to acquire money as a church activity.

This duality creates a dialectical tension which can be elucidated in a comparative discussion of the 7 messages that follow in chronological order:
January 23, 1983:

The first of these messages, Some Things Don't Make Sense To Me, was a statement unfavorable to money making projects. Money making projects were seen to have no spiritual value. Ezekial 2: 1-10 and Ezekial 3: 16-22 from the old testament and Luke 4: 18-19 from the new testament were used to support this message. With the old testament reading the congregation was motivated to understand that God had sent Ezekial to preach to a rebellious people and that he was not to be bothered by those who didn't listen nor be afraid of what they might say because he (Ezekial) had been chosen to "be a watchman over Israel." Ezekial would not be blamed if the people didn't listen, but he would have to answer for not telling. This alerted the congregation to the significance of God's messenger.

The new testament scripture was to make clear the implication of being anointed to preach the gospel. When comparing the scripture lessons with excerpts from the sermon, we can discern an intention on the part of the minister to take a position on authority, to negate the acquisition of money as a church activity, and to intimate that he had been chosen to bring this message to the people.

The sermon's subject, Some Things Don't Make Sense To Me, referred to his incredulity concerning the congregation's hesitation to support the church through spiritual giving,
i.e., giving as a consequence of religious conviction. He wanted the congregation to depend on God, the way Ezekial and Jesus depended on God. He expressed his own faith by saying, "I believe that God is going to take care of me if I do what he tells me to do."

The significance of this message lies in its power as a direct expression of theological persuasion that, while pressing a point, makes it extremely difficult to find any redeeming value in sociocultural activity in the church, especially if it relates to money.

January 30, 1983:

The second message, Whose Is It, was a contextual sequel to Some Things Don't Make Sense To Me because it related a personal experience where money making projects had not been necessary to build a new church. This supported the already voiced assumption that money making projects had no spiritual value.

For Whose Is It, the scripture lessons were drawn from Jeremiah 7: 1-11 of the old testament and Luke 12: 13-21 of the new testament. The old testament reading tells of Jeremiah being told by the Lord to "stand in the gate of the Lord's house and proclaim there that those who mend their ways and doings shall dwell in the Lord's house." This meant that the temple of the Lord would be found wherever there was belief and faith. The new testament reading spoke of the
rich fool who had built new barns to store his rich harvest so that he could repose in ease and merriment only to discover on the eve of fulfillment that God had called for his soul. He was to die just when he had insured his future. These scripture lessons implied that: (1) it takes a true Christian to build a church; (2) planning for the future without considering God is foolish; and (3) faith in God is the mark of a true Christian.

Whose Is It was delivered on the last Sunday in January. The year was still new and a tone was being set to increase the spiritual involvement in church affairs. Although the financial situation, at the time, was not totally sound, due to a budget deficit being carried over from the previous year, it was hoped, nonetheless, that renewed spiritual involvement would meet aspirations for a more stable situation in the ensuing months.

March 13, 1983:

Three months later another message would bear on the issue of spiritual giving. This message would be similar to the January 30th message but it placed more stress on the sacrifices and rewards of being a good Christian.

The theme was Have You Taken Your Life Back From God. This theme was supported by old testament readings from Amos 7: 7-14 and new testament readings from Mark 10: 17-24. Amos was sent by the Lord to prophesy to Israel what would
happen if they did not plumb the line with the commandments and Jesus told the rich young ruler that he would have to give up his riches and take up the cross if he wanted to find eternal life. These scripture lessons stressed obedience and sacrifice.

The tenor of this sermon was a discourse on how to become a true Christian, i.e., to give up everything and take up the cross, and to surrender completely to God. The import of this discourse was reflected in a request from the minister to pledge loyalty to the United Methodist Church and uphold the church with prayers, presence, gifts, and service. The sermon was climaxed with the following questions: "Can you handle your life yourself? Can you handle it when you are sick, when you face death, when you're having problems at home? Who's in charge of your life?"

*Have You Taken Your Life Back From God* implied that spiritual value could only be found in total surrender to God. But it was also significant because it underlined the essential purpose of religion as a meaning system. Religion deals with the ultimate problems of human existence by projecting human meanings and social patterns onto a superior entity. (McGuire 1981) Religion fulfills a significant human need because it is indeed difficult to handle illness, death, emotional upheavals, and other uncontrollable events alone. But the individual need for crisis control and the social need for the expedient dispensation of mundane
necessities can become inseparably entangled and confused when the duality of money becomes involved.

The question arises as to why money needed for a decent secular world should be viewed any differently than money needed for a necessary spiritual world. Both are integral parts of the Christian life and both cannot survive without it. Why is a scheme to earn a secular dollar any less threatening to the spiritual self than a scheme to earn a spiritual dollar? Money is needed in both cases and, in principle, it is the same money.

These are difficult questions and further study is necessary to probe for answers to these questions. I suggest that deeper probing will uncover a link between the duality under which money must suffer and the structural weaknesses of the church.

It is interesting to note that the first 3 sermons, dealing with money, were delivered during the 1st quarter of the year. They emphasized the gospel and faith in God. As the 1st quarter drew to a close the deficit financial situation worsened. In May messages appeared that symbolized the tension between spiritual motivation and secular need. The church needed money for maintenance and repairs but little was forthcoming.
May 1, 1983:

The minister preached a very interesting sermon on May 1st. Although it was not directly linked to the question of money, it was singularly relevant to those church members who were parents and who had to think about money in terms of their children's futures. The theme of the sermon was **Who Am I**, and it played on a sense of identity that is a necessary factor for survival in a highly competitive society.

The sermon was supported by scripture readings from Epistles 2, Corinthians 5: 1-10 and the gospels of John 16: 16-22 and John 1: 19-23. The essence of the Epistles reinforced the idea that the love of Christ would control us if "we walked by faith not by sight." The gospel readings told of Jesus preparing his disciples for his ascension to God and John's inquisition by the Pharisees when he told them, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord." I think the last scripture reading was chosen because it would help stress the urgency if his message. A voice crying in the wilderness symbolized one who goes up against tremendous odds to make a point. The point to be made was the urgent need for black parents to encourage their children to get a functional education.

**Who Am I** was straightforward and relevant. One could not dispute the need for competitive skills in today's technical world. And one dare not argue against encouraging black children to learn. Functional illiteracy is a concrete
problem in the black community and it can only be combated through a conscious effort on the part of everyone in the community to treat the opportunity to learn as serious business. I included this sermon because it clearly demonstrated that there is no dearth of relevant secular concerns.

May 8, 1983:

On May 8th, after the sermon, *The Family and The Home*, the administrative board presented the congregation with a plan to raise money for renovating and repairing 3 pieces of church property. This plan was a pledging device designed to raise approximately $20,000 in pledges from church members. This plan went straight to the point by laying bare the urgent need for money.

The tone set in January against raising money in the church had shifted in the opposite direction to an open plea for monetary pledges in May. This shift did not enhance money's position as a constructive social tool. Necessity simply forced its acceptance as a necessary evil. No plan had been devised to educate for the shift and nothing was pinpointed as designed to increase spiritual giving. I wondered if this shift would go unregistered or if being told one thing at the beginning of the year and experiencing the converse 5 months later would have an effect on the morale and the institutional structure of the church. But, further study is needed to help fathom these questions.
May 22, 1983:

Be Prepared, the sixth sermon, carried a different kind of message. Financial security was its theme. For those who had questions about where their secular priorities should lie, suggestions were provided.

The scripture lessons for this sermon were Daniel 7: 9-10 and 13-14 from the old testament and Luke 24: 44-53 from the new testament. The scripture from Daniel prophesized the finitude of coming kings and the infinitude of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The gospel of Luke reveals to us the words of Jesus himself as he sat among his astonished disciples:

These are the words which I spake unto you, when I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophet, and in the psalms, concerning me . . . .

Thus it is written, and thus it beholds Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I sent the promise of my father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. (The Holy Bible, King James Version)

Upon speaking these words, Jesus blessed his disciples and departed into heaven. The implication of the scripture lessons was that terrible things would happen until Jesus would arrive to set them right and Jesus himself spoke of his
fulfillment of the prophecy to his disciples before ascending to heaven. The interesting thing about the sermon was that it did not seem to relate in any contiguous was to the scripture lessons. The sermon was a singular expression of secular concerns. It dealt primarily with money. The theme of the sermon was Be Prepared.

This sermon made practical sense because it made planning for the future a reasonable concept. It advocated the efficacy of effective planning. The curious thing about this sermon was that it stood in direct contradiction to what the church governing body was doing about its own need for effective planning. Church members were being advised to organize their lives around sound financial planning while the church itself was not organizing around sound financial planning. It is this kind of contradiction in the church that must in some way affect the expedient development of expedient perspectives toward expedient solutions, especially if these solutions are to be applied to church activities. Comparing this sermon with the one to follow makes a strong case for studying the dialectical tension between secular needs and spiritual concepts and its effect on thought, behavior, and social interaction.

May 29, 1983:

The last sermon in this series was Are You Fully Insured.
The old testament scripture lesson was taken from Genesis 3:
1-6 and 22-23 and the new testament scripture lesson from Matthew 11: 26. The scripture lessons implied that knowledge may be detrimental and that God has the final decision over the action of man on the day of judgment. Whatever man may deem reasonable according to his knowledge, God may deem unreasonable according to his judgment.

*Are You Fully Insured* led back to the idea that God was all powerful. God is the ultimate insurance and we should let God be responsible for our lives.

Another variable of dialectical tension is language. An interesting observation can be made by comparing the use of language in *Be Prepared*, which stressed the importance of financial security, with *Are You Fully Insured*, which suggested that security could only be found through God. The former talked about insurance in general terms. Insurance was delineated as being synonymous with financial security. The message suggested that insurance could provide a measure of control over the uncertainties of secular life. The language of this message was straightforward and nontechnical.

The latter alluded to faith in God as the guarantor for a fully inspired spiritual life. A language that would have been appropriate for communicating the former message, i.e., the technical language of insurance concepts, was used in the latter to elucidate spiritual concepts. The language of secular technicalities had crossed over into the realm of
myth. This interesting phenomenon points to a series of questions that demarcate significant areas for further investigation. For example, what kind of thought patterns are generated when spiritual concepts are communicated in secular technicalities? Do such thought patterns provide clarity, or functional efficiency, for negotiating secular society and/or clarity into the need for spiritual sustenance? Do such phrases as "God is the ultimate insurance" or "Let God be responsible for your life" confuse the fact that we are members of society, i.e., participants in the complexity of human relationships, and, as a result, bear directly on secular behavior? If society is a human product, a product of man, then is it not true that man is equally a product of society? And, if man is a product of society, is it not all the more urgent to understand where society is headed?

It is my hypothesis that the two messages discussed above contribute to the dichotomization of money as a social instrument and subsequently to the structural/functional weakness of the church as a social institution. This study is not designed to test this hypothesis. But it has indicated that the interdisciplinary research methodologies used for this study can contribute to the implementation of a research design suitable for testing my hypothesis. Such a design would consider anthropological, sociological, and psychological research concerns, using both qualitative and
quantitative methodologies coupled with visual research methods, for a holistic and balanced grasp of the community.
Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

This study attempts to describe some aspects of a community by combining social science research methodologies with photography. The original research problem reflected a desire to know how Christianity affected the psychological and social behavior of black Christians. After entering the research community for a firsthand look at the day-to-day lives of practicing Christians, I discovered that my original problem was far too complicated to be treated with any degree of scientific or humanistic integrity in the time allotted for field research. I modified my research problem from trying to get at the core of ethnic thoughts and self-identity concepts to developing an ethnographic description of the community. This description would lay the groundwork for a more comprehensive study of the community. The ethnographic description would evolve out of such anthropological and sociological research techniques as participant observation, the ethnographic interview, the projective interview, and the visual research document. The purpose of the ethnographic description was to generate data that would facilitate a wider range of
investigation, permitting, upon further study, a more holistic grasp of the community. A community event was chosen, being easily accessible during the early stages of the research process, to act as a wedge for penetrating submerged aspects of the research community.

Participant observation introduced me to the financial problem of the community as the event through which I could gain entry into the community as a researcher. The first community meeting that I attended was a meeting of the finance committee. I learned, then, how directly relevant the financial problem was for most community activities. Concerns about the financial problem provided a convenient vehicle for organizing interviews. My desire to learn more about the budget made it easy to approach community members. And they demonstrated a readiness to share their insights. Once the interview had been granted it was possible to extend its original purpose beyond budget concerns to include biographical information about the interviewee. I was able to gain basic information on family, educational, vocational, and social status and a brief description of their history as a Christian. These interviews also increased my rapport with the community by promoting direct person-to-person contact, and helping me to observe, identify, and relate to aspects of the community. They also helped to refine my research objectives and methods. I began to see a domino effect as one issue pushed into another. For example, two opinions began to surface concerning
the most effective way to bring money into the church as I gained insight into the budget problem. One advocated deeper spiritual commitment, i.e., a renewed sense of stewardship*, while the other favored cultural events that could broaden fellowship and extend the reach for money beyond the community. Each opinion indicated a different attitude about spirituality, culture, money, and the church and each opinion stimulated questions for investigation into personal spirituality, social consciousness, and ultimate problems of human existence. I was not prepared, at that point, to investigate at such depths but I discovered that a basic community event could lead to deeper study.

The budget problem was the most immediately accessible event during the initial stages of the research process but it was also an event in which all of the research participants had an interest. Gaining insight into the budget process through participant observation and the ethnographic interview did not provide any direct cues for structuring a visual research design. The photographic documentation began very much like the initial research process. I had to select a community event that was visually available, easily accessible, and suitable for coordinating the further development of the research process for visual research data. I chose the free lunch program because it offered the same potential for

* See pages 133-134.
providing visual information as the budget problem verbal. Although my interview sessions offered no immediate visual clues as to what kind of photograph would supplement and support the verbal information, it seemed necessary, nevertheless, to collect visual data of a relevant community event. Considering Collier's suggestion that most visual data will form patterns as the research progresses (Collier 1967: 71), I photographed the free lunch program as the first community event for visual research data.

In addition to strengthening rapport, photographing the free lunch program allowed me to consider the problem of sampling. I considered ways of developing an appropriate visual research design, and of bringing the visual data in synchronization with the verbal data. In other words, I thought of how to cultivate the ethnographic description.

The first step in synchronizing visual and verbal data took place through the projective interview. By the time I had initiated the projective interviews I had accumulated visual data on such community activities as: social interaction; community gatherings; ritual preparation and practices; worship services; and community organization meetings. The projective interview helped to focus the parameters of the research findings. It helped to process latent cultural patterns and a visual research design for collecting visual data tangential to the research problem.
Conclusions

A principal conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that the photograph has methodological suitability as a research tool in social science research. This suitability can be illustrated by a discussion of the photograph's use as: a support to building rapport; an instrument for recording functional relationships; an instrument for stimulating interviews and supporting verbal data; and a foundation for the feedback process.

As I stated in the Methodology chapter* I began photographing the free lunch program on Saturdays. On successive Sundays I posted prints of this program on a bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Community members would comment, occasionally, on the quality of the photographs. And eventually, I was asked if one of those photographs could be used on the front page of the church bulletin. The administrative board approved the use of (Figure 20)+ to grace the front of the official church bulletin. Toward the latter part of February I photographed the retirement banquet for the church secretary. These photographs were also posted in the fellowship hall. They were well received and this had the effect of characterizing me as a competent photographer. It also gave me an opportunity to explain the nature of my function

* See pages 91-92.
+ See page 102.
and interest as a photographer-researcher. I look advantage of every opportunity to express my desire to collect research data via the photographic camera. As my reputation as a photographer spread I was asked by community members to photograph certain special events, e.g., a social gathering; a fundraising dinner; and a birthday party. I was also granted permission to photograph a wedding, although the bride and groom had engaged a professional photographer. Since marriage was an important ritual in the church I wanted to have some visual record of the activities that surround its preparation and practice. Each one of these events strengthened my rapport with the community. They created an acceptance of the camera as an important part of my research process. When I was ready to enter the sanctuary with the camera, i.e., to photograph the community at worship, groundwork had been laid for a toleration of my camera and flash. When I began to photograph the worship service for the first time I was more nervous about infringing on their spiritual mood than they seemed by my presence. During the course of photographing in the sanctuary for the next two months, having begun in March, I experienced only two incidents where annoyance was registered by a community member who stood in front of the camera. And I suggest that this was more out of a feeling of not being photogenic, an expression I was to hear often, than a response to my role as photographer-researcher. As the research progressed, my freedom to move around with the camera
became routine. But this routine rested on rapport that had developed over a period of two months.

As my grasp of the community became firmer, a scheme of selectivity began to solidify. I began to see patterns. These patterns were observed at meetings, gatherings, general social interaction, and ritual practices. I developed a tentative visual research design based on an attempt to preserve the sense of the real event by following the thematic progression of the event. For ritual practice, e.g., the worship service, I tried to preserve the sense of the real event by following the thematic and sequential progression of the event over an extended period of time, say, a period of two months. I concentrated on each step of the progression on certain Sundays until I had accumulated visual examples of each sequential stage. For meetings I tried to preserve the sense of the real event by following the thematic, sequential, and chronological progression of the meeting, i.e., from commencement to adjournment. Both approaches were based on the assumption that it was necessary to record images and sequences that are real to the participant in preparation for interview sessions with the photographs. The photographic concept was guided by efforts to record events as naturally occurring and ongoing activities and to arrange the shots in such a way that they show a cultural environment, i.e., that they indicate the essence of a particular setting. This concept was supported by 250 photographs which were used as the visual research data
Projective interviews were held with two groups in the community. Each group represented a different age category. The first group was composed of young adults and the second of middle-aged adults. In viewing the photographs both groups responded to low participatory level of young adults as a significant part of the community population. This visual fact stimulated discussion in both sessions on the relationship between age and community involvement. There was only one session held with each group but it demonstrated a potential for identifying: essential research questions; significant research participants, i.e., experts in the community on community affairs; and configurations for visual research data, i.e., photographs that could be used for more interviews or other kinds of analytical evaluations.

Because of the many research variables and the many conceptual directions that projective interview sessions can take, it is advisable to structure these sessions around recognized patterns that might lead to deductions and conclusions. This offers a controllable process of investigation and selectivity. But it is equally important to remember that visual data will surface, in qualitative research, for which an immediate rubric may not be found, but which may find relevance at some later point in the research process.

Research photographs provide an added dimension for acquiring knowledge. It is extremely useful to see people in
their cultural/social setting. To see how they look, what they wear, and the physical distances that mark their social interaction, is stimulating to anthropological, sociological, and psychological judgments. Certain aspects of culture cannot be reduced to words or codes and in this sense the photograph provides support to the descriptive report. Photographs provide supportive evidence for certain social patterns, spatial and temporal constellations, and economic, social, cultural, and gender behavior patterns. All of these signs when systematically recorded will provide information that is immeasurably supportive to the ethnographic description. The question is not whether to photograph but what and how to photograph.

**Recommendations**

This study set out to develop a research design that would lay the groundwork for a comprehensive study of the community. Its purpose was to generate data that would facilitate a wider range of intersecting investigations. It was suggested earlier that concentric circles of research interest would develop from an initial point of investigation, eventually encompassing a holistic grasp of the values and interactions that characterize the cultural, social, and psychological fabric of the community. A study such as this represents an initial point of investigation. It is a point from which circles of investigation can flow. In keeping with the projected effort at a
holistic grasp of the community I recommend that further study be developed from an interdisciplinary research design, that includes anthropological, sociological, and psychological research concerns. I am not recommending that one student of the human condition be versed in the theoretical and methodological thinking of these areas but I do recommend that specialists from these areas, taking data from such studies as this as a starting point, coordinate their efforts for an interdisciplinary research design toward a common research goal. That goal should be a full understanding of human nature based on a desire to illuminate "the informal logic of actual life." (Geertz 1973) The procedures and methodologies required to accomplish such a goal would evolve out of a research design that considered anthropology's discussion of a shared body of learned knowledge (what people do), sociology's discussion of how that learned knowledge influences social interaction and the institutional expression of social interaction (what transpires between people), and, finally, psychology's discussion of the behavior of those who share that knowledge and the influence that such a knowledge has on ways of thinking about self and others (what occurs within people).

The recommendation for an interdisciplinary approach to qualitative research can be strengthened by also recommending that photography help the researchers to standardize their research process. In practical terms, this means that an
initial open photographic inquiry, i.e., the systematic creation of a visual inventory of cultural patterns, which offer narrative understanding of the community (a kind of documentary realism), provide the first step for a structured assembly of visual research document. This raw material can then be refined into codes that signify anthropological, sociological, and psychological research concerns. With each successive refinement visual data could be produced that is manageable in research analysis, i.e., allows a scientific reading. (Collier 1967: 5) But this kind of photographic observation cannot be accomplished by one photographer alone. It needs a team of photographers. It is not necessary and, probably, undesirable to have many photographers active in the field simultaneously. But it is necessary that visual records be composed by a team of photographers who are guided by the theoretical and methodological concepts developed by the interdisciplinary research team.

I believe with Mead, Collier, and others (Hockings 1975) that the written and/or verbal research record is no more veracious than the visual. Both require appropriate theory and methodology to find scientific application. I advocate the admission of the visual research record to the arsenal of research instruments used by social scientists to study the human being. Social scientists have relied primarily on the literary skills of its practitioners. So, in order to lay the groundwork for the visual document as an interpreter
of factual data, I recommend that social scientists be re-
quired to learn visual skills. They should learn how to en-
code and decode visual information. A command of visual
skills should become an integral part of their professional
training. When the visual document has been integrated into
social science thinking as a necessary and useful research
tool, social scientists will begin to understand how to struc-
ture and standardize its scientific reading. I find it
interesting to consider the tremendous contribution that can
be made to the study of the human condition if perceptive,
sensitive, and skilled vision was added to the present chest
of instruments used by social scientists to elucidate anthro-
pological, sociological, and psychological aspects of human
life.
APPENDIX A

Human Subjects and Protocol Forms
When submitting a proposal to the Behavioral and Social Sciences Human Subject Review Committee, we would appreciate your supplying the following information in summary form. Having the details prior to reading and reviewing the protocol can expedite the process. Please be as specific as possible so that the reader can have a rather complete and accurate idea of exactly what your subjects will experience when they participate in your research, as well as know the protections that have been included to safeguard the subject against adverse consequences (e.g., are they free to not participate if they choose, do they or their parents know exactly what they are getting into before they are committed to participate, will both their participation and any collected data be completely confidential).

1. In a sentence or two, briefly describe why the proposed project is of interest. The intent of this question is to give the reviewer a brief idea of the background and purpose of the research.

   This project is designed to provide a significant contribution to the scanty knowledge of the dynamic forces that underlie the rituals and symbols which pervade the religious activities of a major institution in the Afro-American community, i.e., a Black church.

2. Briefly describe each of the different conditions or manipulations to be included within the study.

   The research procedure for this study will be characterized by two anthropological research methodologies: (1) participant observation; and (2) the ethnographic interview. Participant observation fosters understanding of a research community from the community's point of view. The ethnographic interview provides direct interaction with the community, through the interview, rendering their experience interpretable within their contextual under-

3. What is the nature of the measures or observations that will be taken in the study? Is the research data will be collected by: (1) the photographic camera; (2) the cassette tape recorder; and (3) the notebook. The findings should help us evaluate how some rituals and symbols translate into paradigms for dealing with empirical conditions.

4. If any questionnaires, tests, or other instruments are to be used, please provide a brief description and either include a copy or indicate approximately when a copy will be submitted to the committee for review.

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**PLEASE TYPE**

REVIEW OF RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, OR RELATED ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTOCOL NO.  

SUMMARY SHEET

(USE CONTINUATION PAGES AS NECESSARY)

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S):

(If Graduate Student, list advisor's name first)

Typed Name Ojo Arewa, Sr.  

Typed Name Wilbert R. Norman, Jr.  

Typed Name Department of Anthropology - Social and Behavioral Science

Department & College 208 Lord Hall, 124 W 17th Ave. Campus, 422-6998

(Faculty Member’s Campus Address and Phone Number)

PROTOCOL TITLE (Include proposal title for externally-funded activities if the title is different from the protocol title):

Christian Rituals and Symbols: Their Significance for Ethnic Self-Concepts
5. Will the subjects encounter the possibility of either psychological, social, physical or legal risk? □ Yes □ No If so, please describe.

6. Will any stress be involved in the study? □ Yes □ No If so, please describe.

7. Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? □ Yes □ No If so, please describe and include a statement regarding the nature of the debriefing.

8. Will there be any probing for information which an individual might consider to be personal or sensitive? □ Yes □ No If so, please describe.

9. Will the subjects be presented with materials which they might consider to be offensive, threatening or degrading? □ Yes □ No If so, please describe.

10. Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?
    Approximately two hours will be demanded of those subjects who consent to be interviewed.

11. Who will be the subjects in this study? How will the subjects for this study be solicited or contacted?
    The subjects in this study are the members of the church which has consented to being the center of my investigation. The subjects will be asked if they want to participate.

12. What steps will be taken to insure that the subject's participation is voluntary? What, if any, inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?
    No inducements will be offered for participation. Consultations with the subjects will be held before they are approached to participate in order to ensure that their participation is voluntary.

ES-008C
13. It is important that a subject be informed regarding the general nature of what he will experience when he participates in a study, including particularly a description of anything he might consider to be either unpleasant or a risk. Please provide a statement regarding the nature of the information which will be provided to the subject prior to his volunteering to participate.

A copy of the proposal for the project has been given to the leading officers of the church (the minister and the chairperson of the administrative board) with the expressed desire that the proposal be made available to any church member who wanted some deeper insight into the nature of the study and the methods that characterize the procedures of the study.

14. What steps have been taken to insure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? □ Yes □ No If so, please include the form and if not, please indicate why not.

Due to the fact that the church membership has given its consent as a collective body it was deemed unnecessary to ask each member for a separate consent form. Consent forms are also not necessary because the subjects will not be identifiable as individuals but as members of a (public) collective.

15. Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? □ Yes □ No

The photographs taken will be made a part of the dissertation but here again the emphasis will be on social interaction and not individuals.

16. Will whether or not a subject participated in a specific experiment or study be made a part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? □ Yes □ No

17. What steps will be taken to insure the confidentiality of the data?

Names will not be named (from interview sources) and the nature of the information sort does not demand confidentiality.

18. If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subject or society?

19. Will any data from files or archival data be used? □ Yes □ No
The research protocol entitled "CHRISTIAN RITUALS AND SYMBOLS: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR ETHNIC SELF-CONCEPTS," by Ojo Arema, Sr. Wilburn D. Norman, Jr.,

(Principal Investigator)

Anthropology

(Department & College)

208 Lord Hall, 124 W 17th Ave.

(Campus Address)

presented for review by the Human Subjects Review Committee to ensure the proper protection of the rights and welfare of the individuals involved with consideration of the methods used to obtain informed consent and the justification of risks in terms of potential benefits to be gained. The Committee action was:

☐ APPROVED
☐ APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS BELOW
☐ DEFERRED - COMMENTS BELOW
☐ DISAPPROVED
☐ NO REVIEW NECESSARY

(Signature of Committee Member)

CONDITIONS/COMMENTS:

Subjects were deemed NOT AT RISK and the protocol was unanimously APPROVED WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. Provide evidence of permission from the pastor.
2. Provide copy of the script of solicitation to the subjects (this statement should include that photographs will be taken and cassette sound recordings will be made).

Comment: Approval applies only to data collected subsequent to approval of this Committee.

Waiver of written consent was GRANTED.

If you agree to the above conditions, please sign this form in the space(s) provided and return it with any additional information requested to Room 205, Ohio State University Research Foundation, 1314 Kinnear Road, Campus, within one week. Upon such compliance, the approval form will be mailed to you. (In the case of a deferred protocol, please submit the requested information at your earliest convenience. The next meeting of the Committee is two weeks from last meeting date.)

Date May 23, 1983 Signature

(Principal Investigators)

Date ______________ Signature

(Chairman, Behavioral and Social Sciences Human Subjects Review Committee)
Re: Additional information requested to meet the conditions for procuring approval of exemption from Human Subjects Review

Enclosed is a copy of a letter from Rev. Robbie Dix, Jr., pastor of Centenary United Methodist Church, stating that I had been granted permission to conduct my research in his church.

In addition to the letter is a copy of my 'Progress Report on Dissertation Research' which was submitted to the pastor and the administrative board as a "Script of Solicitation to the Subjects" for conducting my research. The progress report was accepted by the pastor and the administrative board as a statement of my research intentions. Section B of the report provided the foundation for granting me permission to take photographs and conduct interviews.

May I ask that when a final decision is made that a copy of that decision be sent to the abovementioned address. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Wilbert R. Norman, Jr.
One-Of-A-Kind Doctoral Candidate
June 6, 1983

Behavioral and Social Science
Human Subject Review Committee
The Ohio State University

Re: Wilbert R. Norman, Jr.

Dear Sirs:

The pastor and Administrative Board of Centenary United Methodist Church granted permission to Mr. Wilbert R. Norman, Jr. to gather information on the activities of a viable Black church. This information is to be the basis for a dissertation on the same subject.

This information was to be gathered from the following sources:

1. The pastor;
2. individuals and families;
3. observing the activities of the several church organizations, committees and commissions in their meetings and activities;
4. the Church in its ministry and mission programs;
5. also, with the camera at these activities and worship services;
6. his involvement in some of these activities.

I, along with the membership of Centenary know what this information will be used for. It has been a wonderful experience, and we eagerly await the completion of the manuscript.

Sincerely,

Rev. Robbie Dix, Jr.

RD/dm
ACTION OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

With regard to the employment of human subjects in the proposed research entitled:

CHRISTIAN RITUALS AND SYMBOLS: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR ETHNIC SELF-CONCEPTS

Ojo Arewa, Sr., Wilbert R. Norman, Jr. is listed as the principal investigator.

Anthropology

THE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES REVIEW COMMITTEE HAS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING ACTION:

[ ] Approved
[ ] Approved with conditions *
[ ] Disapproved
[ ] Waiver of Written Consent Granted

* Conditions stated by the Committee have been met by the Investigator and, therefore the protocol is approved.

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to retain a copy of each signed consent form for at least four (4) years beyond the termination of the subject’s participation in the proposed activity. Should the principal investigator leave the University, signed consent forms are to be transferred to the Human Subject Review Committee for the required retention period. This application has been approved for the period of one year. You are reminded that you must promptly report any problems to the Review Committee, and that no procedural changes may be made without prior review and approval. You are also reminded that the identity of the research participants must be kept confidential.

Date: MAR 15 1983
Signed: [Signature]

cc: Original - Investigator
File

HS-025B (Rev. 7/81)
APPENDIX B

Social Interaction Plates
Figure 26  The church member on the right takes the attendance while greeting arrivals.

Figure 27  For several minutes after every sermon there is touching and greeting before departing for home and another week of secular activities.
Church members generally congregate in groups when they exchange greetings.

Figure 29 Church information or other items of social importance are communicated.
Figure 30 According to a church statistic the elderly population of the church is 39%.

Figure 31 The young adults make up 10% and the adults 6% of the church membership.
Figure 32  I did not observe many young families in the church.

Figure 33  Middle-aged adults comprised 6% of the church population.
I observed a genuine concern for the younger generation but no intergenerational activity outside of the choir.

Figure 35  The majority population of the church is made up of women.
Sometimes it seemed as if the interaction after the sermon went beyond the mere exchange of greetings.

The assistant Pastor confers with a parishioner after the service.
APPENDIX C

The Christian Calendar
A church, like a society, is a complexity of human relationships exhibiting a wide range of interactive behavior. A church, like a society, needs a symbol system to give meaning to thoughts and behavior. In the complex matrix of human relationships, a symbol system makes the extensive range of interactive behavior possible, learnable, and transmittable. Culture makes it possible for socially interacting participants to share a common knowledge about thoughts and behavior. This common knowledge is evident in language and behavior patterns.

Language and culture allow important myths and rituals in the church to be readily communicated and transmitted. Myths and rituals are symbols because they are directly related to the social and psychological problems of society. They reflect the character of those problems and codify essential social values. They also define and establish order and meaning in such human events as "death, illness, emotional upheaval, barriers of rational understanding, and the awesome forces of nature." (Lessa and Vogt 1979: 66-78)

A myth is a belief in a body of doctrines about the world that allows perceptions of the world to serve as a basis for action. A myth is a form of intellectualization and as such "contributes to the substantiation of a whole range of values, norms, and attitudes in the realm of"
religious beliefs."

A ritual is a form of ceremonial practice. It is a way of behaving. Rituals reenact religious meaning. A ritual is a symbolic action that represents religion meanings which help to generate religious conviction. Rituals produce group consciousness and unity. Important myths and rituals of the United Methodist Church are embedded in the Christian Calendar of Worship. Others are founded in special rites of passage. Since the Christian calendar is so central to Christian worship, I think it can illustrate the functional significance of belief and practice in defining and expressing meaning in the lives of believers.

The Christian calendar is based on the concept that God revealed himself through actual events in historical time, centering these events around the life of Jesus Christ. These acts of God constitute the salvation history. This history is what Reverend Dix referred to as "the story." The story, as told in the new testament, describes: the birth of Christ (the incarnation of God on earth); the baptism of Christ; the ministry of Christ; the suffering of Christ; the death of Christ; the resurrection of Christ; and Christ's ascension into heaven. Christians rest their religious conviction on faith in this story and belief in its veracity. The Christian calendar divides the year into 6 seasons. These seasons reiterate the myth and provide ritual practice that tighten the bonds of unity and common purpose.
The first season is Advent. Advent marks the period of expectant preparations for the coming of Christ. Christ symbolizes the second coming of God. Advent begins 4 Sundays before Christmas. In some cultures advent is witnessed by the burning of a candle on each Sunday so that 4 candles are burning on the last Sunday of the season. I did not observe any special ritual ceremony to celebrate advent at Centenary but there was a change of Parament colors. Purple signaled the advent season. Purple is the United Methodist color for royalty.

The second season is Christmas. Christmas is the fulfillment of the advent promise. God gives himself to the world through the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas begins 12 days of rejoicing. The fulfillment is celebrated from Christmas to January 5th. Christmas is one of the most important periods of ritual ceremony because it is celebrated in the home as well as in the church. For Christmas, the Parament colors change from purple to white. White is the United Methodist color for purity.

The third season is Epiphany. Epiphany begins with Jesus' baptism. This season stressed his ministry and miracles. It underlines the various ways in which Jesus Christ made God manifest to the world in his mighty signs and teachings. Epiphany begins on January 6th and ends when the Lenten season begins. The Parament colors change from white to green. Green is the color of growth. Again, I was not able to
observe any special ritual ceremony that accompanied the witness of this season.

The fourth season is Lent. Lent is the season in which Christ makes his final trip to Jerusalem. This is the season of Christ's Passion and Death. Lent begins 6 Sundays before Easter. It approximates a time period from the middle of February to the beginning of April. The Parament colors change from green to purple. The color changes on Ash Wednesday. The lenten season is ritualized on Palm Sunday with the passing out of palm leaves to all churchgoers to commemorate Christ's triumphant journey into the city of Jerusalem.

The fifth season is Easter. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Christ. Easter crowns the Christian year. The sixth Sunday of the Easter season is ascension Sunday. This day ends Christ's historical visibility and begins his sacramental visibility. Christians celebrate Easter as a time of renewal. Easter Sunday is a festive occasion where everything is new. Easter is the second most celebrated holiday in the Christian calendar. Like Christmas, pageants and other forms of ritual presentation are performed to tell the story. Both Easter and Christmas are times of celebration when everybody in the church can participate in the ritual expression. The Parament colors change from purple to white.

The sixth season is Pentecost. Pentecost begins in June and ends in November. The pentecost season commemorates
the gift of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Christian church. The pentecostal season understands God sending the holy spirit to earth to dwell in his house of worship, the church. This season begins 50 days after Easter (Christ having ascended on the 40th day) and continues until advent. The Parament color changes from white to red. Red symbolizes the passion of Jesus. The Christian calendar begins with Advent and ends with the last days of the Pentecost season. (White 1981)

The calendar is the foundation for most Christian worship except the rites of passage (marriage, ordination, burial and baptism). These rites are celebrated on special occasions. Christian worship depends heavily on myth (the Bible) and ritual (the Sacrament). The myth is propagated every Sunday. It is drawn from the old and the new testaments of the Bible and is disseminated through lessons, hymns, prayers, and sermons. Certain ritual events take place every Sunday, e.g., the basic order of worship, the collection of money, the recitation of the creed, and a Doxology, but only two sacraments in the United Methodist Church find expression in regular ritual ceremony: communion and baptism. Communion is celebrated on every first Sunday of the month and baptism is celebrated whenever requested by the worshiper.

There are two historical events in the calendar where worshipers, through ritual reenactment of the event, reexperience the event for personal salvation: the birth of Christ
at Christmas and the resurrection of Christ at Easter. Celebration of the resurrection is not restricted solely to Easter. Every Sunday represents a weekly anniversary of the resurrection. Every Sunday is the Lord's day. Every Sunday is the start of the new creation. (White 1981)

While the salvation history unfolds throughout the calendar year with Christmas and Easter being the high points of biblical exegesis, a frequently celebrated ritual event in the church is the monthly communion or eucharist.*

Communion is a ritual ceremony where the communicants eat bread, as a symbol of the body of Christ, and drink wine, as a symbol of the blood of Christ. They reenact Christ's Last Supper with his disciples. The significance of communion as a ritual ceremony is captured in the practitioners' expectations to experience: thanksgiving through the unity of sharing; communion and fellowship; renewal through commemoration of the historical last supper; a spiritual covenant in the form of Jesus as a sacrificial lamb; and the mystery of Jesus through his presence in the bread and the wine of the ritual ceremony. Sharing, fellowship, renewal, and the experience of a spiritual covenant are essential elements for structuring Christian meaning.

Baptism, as a ritual practice, has an inordinate influence on faith, because it initiates the believer into a

* See pages 314-319
fellowship of worshipers. Baptism unites the believer with Christ; baptism incorporates the believer into the church; baptism signifies a new birth for the believer; baptism cleanses the believer of sin; and baptism prepares the believer to receive the Holy Spirit. Baptism signals a change in mental attitude. (White 1981)

The six seasons of the Christian year and the two sacraments of Christian worship are interrelated. They are two sides of the same religious superstructure. They are extremely important as supports for the belief system and all church members are socialized to accept the calendar as the spiritual edifice of the church. The Christian calendar is the foundation for religious belief and practice.

The general worship service is composed of two kinds of worship acts, the ordinary and the propers. The ordinary remains the same from Sunday to Sunday. It consists of the basic structure of the service: the Lord's Prayer, the offering, the creed, and a doxology. The ordinary is practiced every Sunday without fail and change. For some it is spiritually insignificant because of its unfailing orthodoxy, others revel in the repetition. The propers change from Sunday to Sunday. It is composed of scripture lessons, hymns, a variety of prayers, and the sermon. The minister will choose different scripture lessons, sing different hymns, and preach a different sermon each Sunday. A typical Sunday sermon consists of both ordinary and propers acts of worship.
APPENDIX D

The United Methodist Men's Picnic Plates
Figure 38  A couple of men in conversation.

Figure 39  The men sharing anecdotes.
Figures 40  More sharing of anecdotes.

Figure 41  It is not unusual that the young adults will separate themselves from the others.
Figure 42  This photograph shows different gender and age groupings.

Figure 43  The women are sharing anecdotes.
Figure 44  Children are generally free to play as they please.

Figure 45  The minister dispenses a refreshing drink.
Figure 46  A very interesting grouping of age is the very young and the very old.
APPENDIX E

The Free Lunch Program Plates
The church kitchen is located on the east wall of the fellowship hall.

The fellowship hall in the basement of the church is an assembly hall where most social activities take place. A stage is on the north wall in the background.
Figure 49  Children help prepare the table for the free lunch program.

Figure 50  Some children played while their parents prepared the meal.
Figure 51  Some adolescents work with their parents to prepare the meal.

Figure 52  There was usually a lot of busy activity to prepare the meal.
Parents at work.

The menu would vary from Saturday to Saturday. The cook in charge for that Saturday would generally decide what the menu would be.
Figure 55

Working on such a program gave the participants a tremendous sense of satisfaction.

Figure 56

Cooking was not the only chord that had to be performed. There was dishwashing and the preparation of the food for cooking. Volunteers could choose their preference.
Figure 57  In many ways the young children really enjoyed working with their parents.

Figure 58  Members of the community partaking of the meal.
Figure 59  On some Saturdays community participation would be higher than others.

Figure 60  It was not unusual on busy days for the program to feed approximately 100 or more people.
The minister would come on an occasional Saturday to speak to those who wanted to talk. He did not want to missionize those who had come to enjoy a free meal but he would offer to listen.
APPENDIX F

The Usher Board Picnic Plates
Food is a central part of many activities important to church social life. I felt sometimes that tasting someone's favorite dish was like listening to something important they had to say. Food made it possible to be attentive to one's neighbor in a very relaxed manner. There were a lot of stories shared about memorable dishes served at earlier gatherings. Food made it easy to talk and banter in a friendly way.

At almost every meeting that I attended, when a social gathering was proposed, it was suggested that food be a part of the gathering.

But there is another aspect of food that is alarming. I think an argument can be made for the fact that the foods enjoyed by the black community are causing many of the physical ailments common to black life in this country. If we exclude the obvious destructive link between alcohol, tobacco, and disease, we find that diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis, rheumatism, colon and stomach cancer, and obesity (which contributes to heart and respiratory problems) can be directly linked to diet.

This picnic was organized by the Usher Board as a means to visit a senior citizen who could not attend church. The picnic was held at her home and she was visibly uplifted by the visit. This picnic reaffirmed my observations about the church's concern for its elder citizens. Much of the spiritual message was directed toward their concerns.
The coordinator for the picnic collected money to pay for traveling expenses.

The trip will be made in the church van. The travelers are waiting for latecomers.
The picniers have just arrived and the table is being prepared to receive the food.

Each participant had cooked a special dish. It is interesting to note that the gender division of labor reflects the general society.
Figure 66  Chairs are being placed so that the meal can be enjoyed while sitting.

Figure 67  The picnic was held at the home of a former usher, who was too infirm to attend church. She was also too infirm to join the picnic.
Figure 68  Carving the turkey and shooing away flies

Figure 69  Here is an example of a "cultural" division of labor.
Figure 70  This photograph suggests a sense of community. Participants appear relaxed.

Figure 71  There was a tendency for men and women to group themselves according to gender. Men and women seldom socialized in mixed groups.
Figure 72  Food served an important social function in the community.

Figure 73  The remains of a turkey.
Figure 74  The remains of baked beans.

Figure 75  The remains of string beans.
Figure 76  A partially served home-made apple pie. The pie did not make the trip home.

Figure 77  Angel-food cake with High C provided an extremely rich serving in sugar.
APPENDIX G

Communion Preparation and Practice
Plates
Figure 78  The wine is prepared on the previous saturday.

Figure 79  Welch's grape juice is used for wine.
Figure 80  The juice will be kept fresh for the following morning.

Figure 81  The Sanctuary is cleaned and made ready for the communion service.
Figure 82  On the morning of the service a communion steward drapes the altar.

Figure 83  Thumb tacks are used to secure the linen in place.
Figure 84  The wine glasses are placed in a special altar tray.

Figure 85  Communion wafers are placed in wafer dishes.
Figure 86  The prepared altar bench is covered with another altar cloth.

Figure 87  The altar bench is now ready to receive the communicants.
Figure 88  The white linen is rolled up when the communion ritual is about to begin.

Figure 89  The pastor and the assistant pastor partake of the communion before they administer it to the congregation.
Figure 90  Usher board members go as a group to the communion bench.

Figure 91  A family at the communion bench.
Figure 92  Communicants take the wafer first. It symbolizes the body of Christ.

Figure 93  After the wafer they take the wine. The wine symbolizes the blood of Christ.
Figure 94 After the service family members join in dismantling the communion altar.

Figure 95 The flowers that stood on the altar may be given to members of the congregation.
Figure 96  When it is not possible to go to the bench the minister comes to congregation.

Figure 97  Many of the elderly have a difficult time walking to the altar for communion.
APPENDIX H

The Order of Worship
The Order of Worship

The church* day begins at 9:30 for those who attend Sunday school. For others, church begins at 10 or 10:15 in the morning. Senior citizens arrive with the church van at about 10:15 (Figure 98). Worship service is scheduled to begin at 10:30.

On a table in an anteroom to the sanctuary worshipers can pick up a program for the day's service (Figures 99-101). The ordinary acts of worship can be schematized the following way:

1. The lay leader prepares the congregation to be in a worship mood by saying, "Let the people be in silent prayer and meditation upon entering the sanctuary."

After this is said a few final adjustments are made on and around the altar by church officials before the service officially begins.

Many worshipers upon entering the sanctuary greet their fellow worshipers and sit down in quiet meditation and silent prayer in preparation for the service. After this ritual they look around to see who has

* There are three important elements of a Sunday sermon:

1. the scripture reading, which is generally drawn from both the old and new testament;
2. the subject theme of the minister's sermon; and
3. the minister's charismatic style of presentation.
arrived or they check their Hymnals and Bibles for the day's hymns and scripture lessons or they begin friendly conversations with their pew neighbors.

2. The musical prelude signals the start of the service. The musical prelude is generally played on an organ. When the participants in the processional have all assembled at the back of the sanctuary (Figure 102), the music rises to a full-bodied presentation and the procession begins.

The procession is led by an Acolyte (Figure 103) who lights the candles on the altar (Figure 104). The Acolyte is followed by the minister, who is followed by a singing choir (Figures 105, 106). The candles are significant because they symbolize the presence of Jesus Christ. The left candle is lit first because it symbolizes the spirit of Christ. The right candle is lit secondly because it symbolizes the body of Christ. This coincides with the spiritual and physical presence of Christ being represented by the pulpit, on the left, and the lectionary, on the right. The processional is ended when the choir is seated and the hymn has ended.

3. The Call to Worship is a ritual presentation where the congregation stands to sing, "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."
4. The congregation continues to stand while they sing a hymn.

5. The Invocation, a form of opening prayer that brings the entrance rite to a close, is recited by the liturgist, who may be the lay leader or the assistant pastor and, in the absence of either, the minister himself. The congregation continues to stand.

6. The congregation then sits and recites the general Call to Confession. The tone of this recitation is one of confession and it invokes God to, "forgive what we have been; help us to amend what we are; and in thy spirit direct what we shall be; that thou mayest come into full glory of thy creation, in us and in all men; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."

7. The liturgist recites a Prayer for Pardon and then the Lord's Prayer is recited by the entire congregation. The congregation is seated during both rituals.

8. A call and response prayer is recited by the minister and the congregation:

   Minister: O Lord, open thou our lips.
   People: And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.
   Minister: Praise ye, the Lord.
   People: The Lord's name be praised.

9. After the call and response recitation the congregation stands for Acts of Praise. The Acts of Praise is another kind of call and response in praise of
the Lord, e.g.:

Minister: Bless the Lord, O my soul;

People: And all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Minister: Bless the Lord, O my soul;

People: And forget not all his benefits . . . .

10. The Gloria Patri is sung while still standing. "Glory be to the father and to the son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen, Amen."

11. The congregation sits and the minister recites scripture lessons from the old and the new testaments of the Bible.

12. After the scripture lesson, the congregation stands to affirm their faith. For their affirmation of faith, the minister and the choir face the altar (Figure 107), the ushers adapt a position of prayer (Figure 108), and everybody recites the Apostles Creed in unison:

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of
saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen. (The Methodist Hymnal 1966)

While the affirmation of faith is being recited or any other ritual act is being executed that requires the congregation to stand (because standing is an act of praise to god), latecomers must wait behind closed doors (Figure 109) until the act is completed.

13. The Doxology is a singing praise to god and it is sung while the congregation is still standing from reciting the affirmation of faith:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

At this point, the minister opens the altar to any member of the congregation who wishes to offer a personal prayer to God. When these members of the congregation have regained their seats, the minister offers a pastoral prayer to God. This signals the formal end of the ordinary acts of worship.

14. Announcements are made and visitors are recognized.

15. The offering is lifted. There are two kinds of offering lifted. The first offering is for tithers. Church members who have pledged 10% of their resources to the church get an opportunity to come down the aisle and place their pledge into a special
tithers box (Figures 107, 110). This box stands to the left just below the pulpit and it is covered by a velvet material in the color purple, which is the color of royalty, and it has a cross on its side. After the tithers have dropped in their pledges (Figure 111), the lid is replaced and the box is placed on the altar. The offering is now opened to the general church body, i.e., non-tithers. The second box (Figures 107, 110), at the foot of the altar, is brought by the lay leader to the front of the chancel. He then says: "All things come of thee, O Lord; and of thine own have we given thee, Amen."

Meanwhile, the ushers walk to the front of the sanctuary with their plates (Figure 112) so that they may begin lifting the offering from the front of the church. While the offering is being lifted (Figures 114-118), the choir will sing several hymns (Figure 113). A male usher generally holds the offering box (Figure 119) at the foot of the chancel until the ushers bring the offering forward (Figures 120-122) to be deposited in the box. When the offering has been collected, the lay leader offers a prayer toward the congregation (Figures 123, 124), after which he takes the offering box to the altar to offer a prayer to God (Figure 125) before placing it at the foot.
of the altar.

When the last hymn has been sung that accompanies the offering, the part of the worship service that is known as the **proper acts of worship** begins. Here, the sermon preached by the minister varies from Sunday to Sunday.

16. The sermon is followed by the invitational hymn which supports the minister's invitation to become a member of the church. A closing hymn is sung and the Benediction is given. At Centenary, the minister would shake hands with his congregation while the closing hymn was being sung so that the end of the hymn would find him somewhere toward the back of the sanctuary. He would recite the Benediction from wherever he might be standing when the hymn ended. (Figures 126, 127).

During the singing of the closing hymn, the offering boxes would be taken into the minister's office where the money would be counted (Figures 128-130) and the receipts recorded by the treasurer in the financial records of the church (Figure 131).
APPENDIX I

The Order of Worship
Plates
Figure 98 The church van brings the elderly to and from church every Sunday.

Figure 99 Worshipers pick up the Sunday program before entering the sanctuary.
The Sunday program lists the order of worship. The ordinary and the proper acts of worship.

Figure 100

The Sunday program also contains announcements of activities and notification of those who are infirm and need help.

Figure 101
Figure 102  The minister, the assistant minister and the choir prepare for the procession.

Figure 103  The Acolyte brings the flame down the aisle that will light the candles on the altar.
Figure 104  The left candle is being lit.

Figure 105  Sometimes the children's choir joins the adult choir for the Sunday service.
Figure 106  The choir marches down the aisle during the processional.

Figure 107  The minister and the choir turn to face the altar to confirm their faith. The Tithers box is in the left foreground.
The ushers adopt a prayer position during all the rituals requiring a spiritual demeanor.

Latecomers must wait until it is convenient to enter the sanctuary.
Figure 110 The minister reads the creed or it might be a call and response prayer.

Figure 111 A Tither drops her tithe in the tithers box.
The ushers bring the collection plates to the chancel to be blessed before the collection is lifted.

The childrens choir sings a hymn while the collection is being lifted.
Communion stewards wear white and ushers wear white and black. Both lift a collection.

Figure 114

A communion steward lifts an offering earmarked for special services.

Figure 115
The communion stewards and the ushers work both sides of the pews simultaneously.

Figure 116

The choir will sing one or two hymns while the collection is being lifted.

Figure 117
A plate has passed from the center aisle along the pew to the wall aisle.

A male usher holds the collection box.
Ushers with full plates gather in order to proceed as a group toward the usher holding the collection box.

The ushers place their full plates in the collection box. The lay leader behind the usher makes ready to receive the box.
Figure 122 The same procedure as in Figure 121 but with a different collection group.

Figure 123 After the lay leader has received the collection box from the usher he recites a prayer.
Figure 124  Same procedure as in Figure 123 but with a different group of ushers.

Figure 125  The collection box is blessed at the altar. It is then placed on the right side of the altar.
Figure 126 The minister recites the benediction at the end of the service.

Figure 127 The same procedure from a different position.
Figure 128  The collection is being counted.

Figure 129  Coins are being sorted.
Figure 130  Bills are wrapped.

Figure 131  The collection is recorded by the treasury secretary.
APPENDIX J

The State's Tea Plates
Figure 132  The coordinator and his assistant tabulate the collected funds from drive.

Figure 133  A couple of the men enjoy refreshments before the outcome of the drive is announced.
Figure 134 A couple of women enjoy refreshments also.

Figure 135 The coordinator announced the results of the drive.
The minister comments on the results.

The benediction is offered after the ceremony has ended.


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Excerpts from "Multiplication"

by Eric Gale

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