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RESURRECTION MUSIC — WITH A REFRAIN

Music fills the air at Easter time. Any celebration of the Resurrection is bound to be accompanied with anthems of joy. There was no music on the morrow that Jesus took up Calvary’s Mount with the cross upon His back. Music was stilled during the noontide hours when His back was laid upon the cross. And there in the mid-afternoon when darkness veiled the sun and a cry of anguish pierced both the night and the faint hearts of the disciples. There is no record of music as they laid Him in the tomb. The Sabbath, designed to be a delight, evoked no songs from the contructed throats of the disciples on that particular day. Psalms could scarcely ring in temple courts that day, for the veil of the house had been rent by the Saviour’s death.

With the Resurrection of Christ music began to reign in the hearts of believers. The hosannas of the waving palm branches were but kindergarten tunes in faith’s hymnbook when compared with the full-blown praises of prayer that burst from the soul of men in which they were reborn by the knowledge that “He lives.” That music does notdim as the years recede from that great event. The living Lord all through the centuries has inspired the greatest vocal music.

The most loved and best remembered hymns and anthems have some sort of refrain running through them. We do not know that the Apostle Paul wrote any hymns, but the inspired words from his pen and the congregations of the New Testament, background for many, many hymns. This is the greatest resurrection chapter of the Bible. Its refrain is the clearest statement that can be found of the Gospel preached by the apostles. The Gospel is the good news of what God has done for sinners. It may have been the full benefit of that redemptive act. The Gospel began with angelic hymns at Bethlehem. At that time only heavenly beings knew the joy that would come to men when the story of Jesus was fully told. With the Resurrection of Christ the Gospel became a hymn rather than a song. When we look at the message of Paul in the third and fourth verses of 1 Corinthians 15, we are struck with the repetition of the refrain. They are the words, “according to the scriptures.” He had received and he had delivered that Gospel message:

“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.” We have said that when paul was no music among the disciples. It was because the disciples did not then realize that it was “according to the scriptures.” They had not generally applied Isaiah 53 to Jesus. They saw the cross as a moral lesson. It was a trial. It was a test. It was a step in the history of humanity. It was not the Redeemer’s death as understood by God. That is the meaning of the term “accompanied.”

The music of the cross with the above-mentioned refrain began only after the Christ had ascended. The inspiration that had inspired its music. Once more the refrain is coupled with a new verse, “He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” The reference is, of course, to Old Testament Scripture, the same Scriptures that Peter used on the day of Pentecost. He quoted from Psalms, the hymnbook of the Old Testament, when introducing the hymn tunes of the New.

According to the scriptures is a glorious and a much-needed refrain at Easter time in our present-day churches. Is faith at low ebb? Is hope dim? Is the future foreboding? Do men’s hearts fail them? Then let them look back to the Bible, to the Gospel which Paul received from the Lord and preached to his faithless, fearful age, a Gospel of Jesus toiled up Calvary’s cross upon His back. The music of the cross with the above-mentioned refrain began only after the Christ had ascended. The inspiration that had inspired its music. Once more the refrain is coupled with a new verse, “He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” The reference is, of course, to Old Testament Scripture, the same Scriptures that Peter used on the day of Pentecost. He quoted from Psalms, the hymnbook of the Old Testament, when introducing the hymn tunes of the New.

There exists among our members a “don’t care” attitude. Perhaps the teenage girl down there in the middle pew doesn’t care about anything more than the minute that the boy across the aisle. The mother may think of the church only in terms of her own children. The officials of the church sometimes seem not to extend their care beyond the confines of the local church.

Most of us, when we speak of the world growing smaller, are thinking more of the speed with which news travels than the possibility of enfolding more of the world in our arms of love. In a time when the use of radio, television, the ever-increasing speed of communication, and rapid transport puts within our reach we suffer from self-inflicted heart shrinkage. Pragmatism is no ancient evil; it is a modern heart ailment.

The family instinct ennobled by the knowledge of Scripture and a long Christian heritage, all too easily falls far below Christian standards. Love for our own little family ought to make us eager to project ourselves into the larger family relationship that goes beyond local church and purifies a burden on our hearts for the spiritual needs of far distant churches. Let’s fight off this “don’t care” lethargy that smites our souls like the new nerve gas that the military men are mentioning.

“The care of all the churches” is an expression coming to us from Paul’s apostolic pen. Read it in 2 Corinthians 11: 17. The great apostle had shed all provincialism like the dirty rags of his own pre-Christian self-righteousness. He looms up close to the goal which most of us can scarcely see in the dim distance.

The winning runner must have a great heart. Paul was a winner. He was writing to Christians in the land of the Olympics. He told them of his persecutions which he had survived with God-given endurance. He had a heart strong enough for all the troubles of that age, a heart large enough for all the agony of love which was within. So he writes: “Besides all those things that are without that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”

Do you let your heart reach out to all of your churches in all lands? Do you speak of the Church of Jamaica, of Nyasaland, of Nigeria, of India, of The Philippines, of China? They are your churches even though you do not sustain quite the same relationship to them that Paul had to all the churches. How often and how severely does the care of the local churches weigh upon you. It may be humanly impossible to effectively love all churches of all denominations, but God can give us grace to take upon us daily the care of all His churches by His denomination. One blessing of a denomination is that it provides practical limits and goals for the enlarging of our hearts.

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON

For April 24, 1954

Ahijah Foresees a Divided Kingdom

Basic Scripture: 1 Kings 11: 1-12; 24.
NUMBERS

Alfred R. Keller in the Chicago Call

We have all heard it said, and probably most of us have ourselves said it at one time or another, "We're not interested in numbers; we're interested in souls that could be saved." Just how far can we as Christians endorse this statement? Is it possible that an enthusiastic support of it would be disastrous for the Church? As a denomination can we hide our lack of growth behind this kind of rationalization? Just how important are numbers, after all?

First of all, we must all admit that the main task of the Church of Jesus Christ is to win souls, to evangelize the world. Another viewpoint is that the enlistment of great throngs of people, just for the sake of having a great number of followers, was not the prime purpose or effort in the earthly life of our Saviour, nor should it be of His Bride, the Church. Can and do endorse the above statement when it means that the numbers represent a soul - just one soul. But numbers should and do represent, as President Kenneth Van Horn and David Clarke had spent a great deal, a very great deal, of time here in the Twin Cities, and we had had much support and help and encouragement from New Auburn and Dodge Center. It did not seem possible that such intensive efforts could be made at this time. No great influx of new members had come to our fellowship. We had not been able to locate a permanent meeting place. Yet the beginning of this strength has been for our group; and we had a circle of friends, people who were not actually members but were friendly to us.

Deeper Life at Shiloh

Ellia Sheppard

A series of meetings was held in the Shiloh Church, March 11-14, with Rev. Charles Bond of Westerly as guest speaker. These meetings grew out of the feeling of many of the church that we needed other leaders who would make a special effort should be made to bring in from the community those who were not actively engaged in the work of the kingdom.

Believing in Christ's promise that we should "Ask, and it shall be given you," several prayer periods were arranged for the preceding week, asking God's guidance and His presence with us.

On the evening before these meetings began, a group of 18 gathered in the basement of the church for a covered-dish supper, prayer, and instruction. Then two by two they went out to invite the members of the community to the meetings. Some very profitable calls were made.

At each service there was special music by the orchestra under the direction of David Davis and by the choir under the leadership of Mrs. Charles Harris. Other special numbers included a piano-organ duo, a flute and clarinet duet, a vocal trio by two young people, the ladies' quartet, and the men's quartet.

The average attendance for the four nights was 117 with a high of 145 on Young People's Night. Several from the Marlboro Church joined with us in these inspirational meetings.

From the interest manifested we feel that many who attended would say, "Into the will of Jesus Deeper and deeper I go Praying for grace to follow Seeking His way to know." —From a hymn by Oswald J. Smith.

HOW WE STARTED A CHURCH

Theona Rasmussen

(Continued from last issue)

Evangelistic services began January 11. We were able to advertise in both the morning and evening papers in both cities on that interest. The meetings started. The weather during this week was extremely cold and part of the time it was stormy. As a result, the two coldest weeks of our winter were this week and the week of the tract distribution. We were very sorry that attendance was so poor at the services. We had planned services for two weeks but it seemed wise to cancel the second week and hope to hold meetings later in the spring.

At the meetings pastors Kenneth Van Horn and David Clarke had spent a great deal, a very great deal, of time here in the Twin Cities, and we had had much support and help and encouragement from New Auburn and Dodge Center. It did not seem possible that such intensive efforts could be made at this time. No great influx of new members had come to our fellowship. We had not been able to locate a permanent meeting place. Yet the beginning of this strength has been for our group; and we had a circle of friends, people who were not actually members but were friendly to us.

Of the interest, the feeling that in a thing of this kind, you either go up or down; you either advance or retreat; you do not stand still. We had not gone up in fellowship members to any marked degree. We had not gone up into a permanent meeting place. It seemed that the only advance open to us was to take the responsibility of designing ourselves a church.

So we came to a meeting where we knew the question would be raised, and several of us came opposed, more or less, to the idea. Questionnaires had been sent to our whole mailing list about forming a church; there had been seven replies, each saying, "I am for the move." But one family came to the meeting whom we really did not expect to be there and they came willing to help us form a church.

whole carloads of visitors from Dodge Center. Kenneth Van Horn preached an inspired and inspiring sermon. At the business meeting, As moderator, and Sarah Moore was clerk. Alta Leonard made the motion to form a church, and Dr. Steve Thorngate seconded it. After the meeting our new group stood in a circle and joined hands for the benediction. Later that evening in the band the choir started singing "Blest Be the Tie that Binds," and we all sang together. Un­ doubtedly each of us in that circle felt that he was present at a solemn and holy occasion, a moment when the right decision had been made.

Lloyd of Lone Rock probably would not insure our chances of survival as a church. With about half of the people in our country living in large cities, however, we have not collectively and individually a duty to see that there is no metropolitan area without a Seventh Day Baptist church? Either we have something to offer or we haven't. If we have, we must offer it to the urban half of the population, and in each metropolitan area a start must be made somewhere. We finds cause for concern in the fact that the number of our churches has decreased in the last decade, and that we are not increasing in place throughout the span of years that has marked the increasing urbanization of our population. Shall we then look to the city?

We regard the future with bright hopes, but no doubt the certainties of achievement will differ in degree from those hopes. We hope to keep in touch with our group and our friends, and to make new friends. We hope to experiment further with advertising, for it is probably a duty for a city church to keep its name before the public.

As for the 6 things we found, it seems to me they are these:

The advantage is that no one who knows about the Sabbath is ever wholly comfortable unless he is keeping it.

The disadvantage is that people clinging to their membership in their home churches, even though they may be very far away in time and place from those churches.

The duty applies to the whole denomination. Three different families in Min-
nesota that we know about studied out the Sabbath truth for themselves, but could find no church they could accept. Two of these families went to libraries, but found nothing about us. Libraries will accept books, and put them in their indexes. It really is our duty to see that there is something about our group in every library in our country. We are putting the book, "Seventh Day Baptist Beliefs. A Manual for Study" in the libraries here.

The need is for re-designed tracts. In a campaign such as we conducted, tracts that require much study should not be used. What is needed is a tract or tracts that tell the whole story in a few challenging words. This is possible on the front and back pages, as the even a casual glance will give the essence of the message. Material can be contained in "Statement of Belief," "Traditions of Men," and "What Is Your Decision?"

The essential is calling. That seems to have been proved here to be the indispensable factor for building membership, just getting out and going to people's homes and talking to them. There may be a very few people that you should not call on — where another approach is preferable — and when this is true, it is imperative that it be recognized; but for the most part, calling is the main thing.

The fundamental: You know what that is. It is faith. So how do you start a church? We had a toe hold in the community, five adult Seventh Day Baptists in three homes. We had two consecrated workers, Pastor Van Horn and Pastor Clarke, who were willing to spend time going about the town calling, investigating, exploring possibilities, trying, failing, and then starting. Then out of a million people in Minneapolis-St. Paul, we had 10 who came to a meeting where we explained the whole story of forming a church. Ten would have been enough for the Lord to save Sodom. We pray He will find it enough for starting a church in the Twin Cities.

The devil is not afraid of the Bible that has dust on it. — Anon.

PIETER TAEKEMA
Eva ten St. John

"Today — very suddenly — God took to him in his glory our beloved . . . Pieter Taekema, minister of the Seventh Day Baptist Churches in the Netherlands, at the age of 73."

This is a translation of a portion of the formal announcement of Brother Taekema's death, dated 31, 1954.

Pieter Taekema has passed his last examination. He was but what he became to Seventh Day Baptists.

Pieter Taekema was to see his country in great trouble. Early in 1939 Germany invaded the Netherlands. All communication with our Seventh Day Baptists in Holland was cut off. In the spring of 1945 the first message came through. "We have had five terrible years of incredible oppression, slavery, barbarism, plundering, massacre. Thank God we have come through."

At the death of Rev. G. Velthuysen, Jr. in November, 1936, Rev. P. Taekema not only became the pastor of both the Haarlem Church and The Hague, but had gained another church and two pastorates.

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MEMORY TEXT

"And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, yea, and we are found liars. But if Christ be not risen, then are ye also fallen. And if our gospel be not powerfull, how shall the house of God be built? for we are of God; so then the work that we do, we do it in God's name. Who hath blinded the wise? or who hath made his foolish? But if our gospel be of power, it is the power of God: for the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Forasmuch then as the Lord hath pleased to shew his salvation unto the Gentiles, let us go forth and speak unto them that are in the cities. For it is written, A everyone that thirsteth, come ye unto the rivers, and all ye that have a hunger, come ye and drink. He that trusteth in the Lord shall not be brutish."

1 Corinthians 15: 14, 13a.

APRIL 12, 1954

on cheerfully and full of hope for the future.

At our Conference session in 1920, Rev. P. Taekema was recognized as an accredited minister of the Seventh Day Baptist denomination. "Personally I beg to use this opportunity to write a few words," writes Mr. Taekema, "for sending my cordial thanks for the communication of my recognition as a minister in the Seventh Day Baptist denomination. To find favor with God, is the matter which most concerns us; still, favor with men, and especially with the brethren, is a valuable gift of God that may have a sanctifying influence upon our life. May the Lord enable me to become a gradually more efficient minister of the Word of God to the congregation and consequent also of the Word of the Holy Scriptures of which He is the center."

In August, 1937, at the World Conference on Faith and Order held in Lausanne, Switzerland, Rev. P. Taekema, with our Dean Bond, represented Seventh Day Baptists.

Past reports tell us he was brought to Christ and to the Sabbath, and helped in his education by Elder Gerard Velthuysen, Sr. The Missionary Board report for 1907 states: "The young man, Pieter Taekema, whom Brother Velthuysen was instrumental in bringing to the Lord, and the Sabbath, and in educating him for the ministry, is still pursuing his course at Amsterdam University. The young man is enduring great persecution on account of his religious beliefs."

Following the death of Elder Velthuysen in June, 1910, the Rotterdam Church appointed Pieter Taekema as their pastor. This was a challenge to his faith and principles.

A few weeks or months later P. Taekema, along with Dean Bond, wrote: "It is not a letter of bitterness or complaint, but one of thankfulness and trust. "We have behind us indeed a terrible time. . . . We cannot be thankful enough to our gracious Father for the wonderful leading and deliverance. He kept us from sickness and deliverance. He kept us from sickness and hunger. . . ."

Secular News

National Council Secretary Speaks

In a major policy address before leaders of Protestant and Orthodox communions, Dr. Ross, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, reported "encouraging progress" toward fulfillment of the vision that led to forming the council's "greatest instrument of church co-operation.

Reporting to the council's policy-making General Board for the first time since assuming top administrative duties last February 1, Dr. Ross cited important gains made by the council since 1950, including: (1) Creation of a highly complex organization that functions smoothly in "representing all interdenominational phases of our church life"; (2) Building new cooperative programs, such as United Church Men and leadership for previously isolated American churches overseas; (3) Advances in established work of the churches; (4) A "great gain in public respect for the new solidarity among the churches"; (5) "A new and broader fellowship among leaders of many denominations."

Dr. Ross declared that, in the brief life of the 30-denomination body, "the total accomplishments of the council are reaching and almost staggering in scope and significance." But he cautioned: "We are still far from fulfillment. Now that the organizational phase of our common life is largely over, he said, "The time has come when the council must get at its principal business." He then recommended to the governing group such long-term projects as: (1) Research to gain a picture of the total operations of the churches in U. S. life; (2) Program planning; (3) Closer working relations with state and local church council, (4) Deader public interpretation of the work of the churches; (5) Clarifying the "prophetic role" of the council, in every area of life where "religion must stand in judgment." (6) Calling on more laymen to participate in the work of the council.

Dr. Ross delivered his message before the 125-member General Board at the government's Sunday morning meeting held March 17 at the Marble Collegiate Church in New York City.
SABBATH RALLY DAY PLANS

The Sabbath Promotion Committee of the American Sabbath Tract Society has set May 15 as the date for the annual Sabbath Rally Day. A few suggestions for making it a successful day have been sent out to all pastors and Sabbath school superintendents. A larger participation than usual is hoped for. Special bulletin covers for the occasion, provided from Tract Society funds, will be sent to all pastors who wish to use them. The emphasis this year is on the Sabbath as "My holy day." There is a tendency for those who have grown up in the church to take the blessings of the Sabbath for granted. Let us pause to think what it means to "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy."

Nonresident members of churches are urged to write to the pastor of the home church sending him some word of testimony, some indication of earnest endeavor to "keep holy day" even though the exhortation of Heb. 10: 25 (not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together) cannot be properly carried out.

NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

MILTON, WIS. — Sabbath Day, February 6, our young people conducted the church service very commendably. Those taking part were Paul Green, Lucy Gray, Roy Burdick, Jim Stillman, Denise Kagarise, Dale and Roberta Thorngate, and Mirmi Seager. The cover design on the bulletin for the service was by Ann Randolph and Roger Williams.

On the next evening our high school young people were hosts to the youth groups of neighboring churches in Milton and Milton Junction at a "Youth Week Worship Service and Social." Kenneth Smith, pastor of the Albion and Milton Junction Churches, was the speaker of the evening.

At the Forum Hour Sabbath afternoon, February 27, Pastor Smith gave a talk on "The Church and Mental Health." He was at that time serving as chaplain at Mendota Hospital, Mendota, Wis., which was a requirement in his seminary course at Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill. The discussion of his work there was very interesting and instructive, giving us a less grim view of such hospitals as some of us may have had heretofore.

At the Forum Hour, March 6, we were given the opportunity to hear Dr. Vojtech Andic, Milton College professor in the Department of Business Administration, speak on "Czechoslovakia." Born in that country and a widely traveled man he has had a broad experience in international relations. Recently he was associated with the "Voice of America."

At the World Day of Prayer services Mrs. Jess Norenburg of Madison, Wis., told of the experiences she and her husband had in The Philippines two years ago. They were sent in the interests of all denominations in the development of Christian work. They also visited Japan where they found the people very friendly and interested in our way of living. These people have been aided by the service of United Church Women. — Correspondent.

The Milton - Milton Junction, Wis., community voted a very prominent speaker for the Lenten service held in the Milton Seventh Day Baptist Church, Friday, March 26. Dr. Ralph Schell, a highly successful Baptist minister from Chicago who has recently become the Executive Director of the World Council Assembly Committee, was the speaker. Pastor Kenneth Smith of the Milton Junction and Albion Churches presided.

Marriages

Deitrick - Atkinson. — On Feb. 6, 1954, Robert L. Deitrick and Ethel Atkinson, both of Coudersport, Pa., were united in marriage. Rev. Arthur Leon, the groom's pastor, officiating.

McCarthy - Saretzki. — Ruth Tacy Saretzki, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Walter Saretzki, became the bride of James McCarthy on March 27. The wedding was held in the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Hopkinton at Ashaway, with Pastor Osborn reading the double ring ceremony.

Births

Maxson. — A son, Brian Dean, to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Maxson (Marion Burdick) of Butler, Pa., on March 14, 1954.

Paquette. — A daughter, Diane Ruby, to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Paquette (Dorothea Clarke) of Plainfield, N. J., on March 26, 1954.

Shippee. — A daughter, Sherry Jean, to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Shippee (Alfreda Balby) of the Adams Center, N. Y., Church on December 27, 1953.

APRIL 19, 1954

 Forgiveness

When on the fragrant sandal tree,
The woodman's ax descends,
And she who bloomed so beautifully
Beneath the keen stroke bends.
E'en on the edge that brought her death,
Dying, she breathes her sweetest breath,
As if to token in her fall
"Peace to my foes, and love to all!
How hardly man this lesson learns,
To smile, and bless the hand that spurns;
To see the blow, and feel the pain,
But render only love again!
This spirit ne'er was given on earth,
One had it,—He of heavenly birth;
Reviled, rejected, and betrayed,
No curse He breathed, no lesson learns.
"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."
— The Prayer of Prayers.