

# ECUMENICAL BELIEFS

(With this issue, the Observer Newspapers bring back a former regular feature of the Church Section, the column Ecumenical Beliefs, by Observer-Editorial writers and church members. The column is offered as an opportunity for all interested church leaders to contribute messages of general interest. Four churchmen have been asked to contribute on a regular basis, and this newspaper will welcome contributions from any others who wish to share their views in the column. Articles should be between one and two pages of double-spaced typewritten copy, and may be mailed to the Church Editor, 271 S. Main, Plymouth. Today's contributor is the Rev. Paul Berche, pastor of the North-Western Church of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, 28111 W. 10 Mile, Farmington.)

We are being told with an increasing degree of regularity that Christianity has failed, the church is dying, and the church is irrelevant to our day. I have a hunch that some say these things because the church they are acquainted with has a spiritual dimension that is very low, offering little assistance to them in terms of practical-everyday-living-Christianship.

Christianity has not failed! Christianity has never really been tried! Man has failed because he has embraced tradition and custom which is something less than Jesus propagated while He was here on earth.

Morality is the center of much Christian teaching. Now, morality is good, but you must agree that it is far easier to live a "moral life" than it is to live a "moral life" besides much of the "morality" spoken of today is the double-

standard type. You know, the kind that says that in this particular case I have a special excuse for not living by "the standard." It is far easier, therefore, to hang on to our possessions, pleasures, and petty desires and to substitute our type of "morality" for the selflessness required in genuine Christianity.

Authentic Christianity is infinitely more than morality. It is basically selfless and God-centered. In fact, "Christianity" said Woodrow Wilson, "is not character, it is Christ." Mere acceptance of the teachings of Jesus as good principles to live by is not sufficient. Practical living by these principles, however, comes very naturally to the man who is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

The life-changing experience of receiving the person of Christ—Jesus Christ—into his life. Just here then, is the ex-

planation of the irrelevancy and seeming impotency of the church.

The endeavor to live by the principles of Christianity without the inward ability of the person of Christianity leads to frustration. There is plenty of social action and concern but no satisfaction or inner peace.

We keep the church alive and powerful not by attacking and crusading against social evils, but by individually and thus collectively influencing our own households, neighbors, school friends, work friends, and social friends with the vital livingness of this unique person in our practical, everyday, work-a-day lives!

The church dies and becomes irrelevant when it fails to recognize Jesus Christ as the supreme authority who wants to control our whole life.

Jesus and His disciples were dedicated to one thing: changing men! When the church ceases to change men, it has lost its reason for existing. The church that does not produce "born-again" men will have a difficult time existing. The church that is thriving with life-changing dynamics will always be in demand—and as up-to-date as tomorrow!

Rev. Lester Kinsolving's

## Religion Update

Within the brief span of three weeks during 1969, Christianity lost three of its most outstanding prophets, in the death of Catholic Archbishop Bernard J. Sheil, Baptist Pastor Harry Emerson Fosdick and Episcopal Bishop James A. Pike.

None of these three ever claimed infallibility in predicting the future, which is the modern concept of the word prophet.

Rather, they were in the mold of the Old Testament prophets: fearless seers for the truth as God gave them the ability to see it. And so, with only a string on their n-nds, given a more than ordinary perception, yet capable of embarrassing mistakes, such as Jeremiah's prediction of a Scythian invasion which never came about Chapter 1 verse 14.

Sheil, Fosdick and Pike also answered another description of a prophet: that of Jesus Christ, who included his own ministry in this rare social category rather than as a priest.

"A prophet is not without honor except in his own country" (Matt. 13:47). For just as Jesus made this statement shortly after being driven out of the synagogue in his own home town of Nazareth (they didn't like his brief sermon) so Sheil, Fosdick and Pike en-

countered some of their bitterest opposition from many of their own fellow churchmen.

DR. FOSDICK, at the age of 91 and 32 years after retiring as pastor of Manhattan's Riverside Church, was still being denounced last year by fellow Baptists such as Clark Pinnock and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Yet his main battles took place in the 1920s, when he was one of the strongest leaders of the movement to free Christianity from what was a Fundamentalist stranglehold—as well as the traditional Southern Baptist socially conscious.

The author of more than 40 books, he was a preacher of such prowess that even as a Baptist he was called to the First Presbyterian Church of New York, where he ministered until forced to resign by order of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

And, despite the fact that there were few social issues on which he did not take a stand, he was called to become pastor of Riverside Church by John D. Rockefeller ("I do not want to become known as the pastor of the richest man in the country," he commented at first. But he accepted the call after Rockefeller replied, "Do you think that more peo-

ple will criticize you on account of my wealth than will criticize me on account of your theology?")

ARCHBISHOP SHEIL, the title was honorary—given by Pope John XXIII—since he was only Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago) was renowned not only for having founded the Catholic Youth Organization but for his amazing courage in taking on awesome opponents.

He was one of the first of all Catholic clergy to denounce Generalissimo Franco, as well as the renowned right-wing radio priest, Father Charles Coughlin. When he became involved in the struggle of Chicago meat processors to raise their 35-cent wage, he was told by one Catholic banker that this would automatically exclude him from ever becoming head of an archdiocese.

Replied Sheil: "I wasn't ordained a priest to become an archbishop."

In 1954 he dared to take on the late Senator Joseph McCarthy, by telling the United Auto Workers:

"You cannot effectively fight tyranny with tyranny. We have been victims of a kind of shell game. We have been treated like state prisoners to be taken in by a city slicker from Appleton."

Within six months, Sheil had paid the price of prophecy. He was removed as head of his beloved Catholic Youth Organization.

OF THE THREE, the career of James A. Pike is best known, perhaps because of his reputation for the communications topics media. Rather than the lofty disdain and frequent eviscerations of some ecclesiastics, Pike could always be depended upon to provide intriguing statements and colorful actions, regarding just about every sociological and theological subject in existence, all of which was laced with a delicious wit.

When accused of publicity hunting, he would admit the fact, and observe that the church is not supposed to be a secret society.

His refusal to run away from anything in his spiritualism, which, although it is embraced by numerous bishops in England some scientists in the U.S., seriously cut into his effectiveness in the last years of his life.

And while many of his admirers in the Episcopal Church were sorry to see him go, they also saw him leave and denounce it, they could recall the methods used by a majority of the House of Bishops in censoring him—as well as the manner in which his successor as Bishop of California handled his resignation.

Yet it was this Bishop, C. Kilmer Myers, who despite their sharp controversy, was man enough to summarize Jim Pike as "responsible for more change and progress within our communion than any other man, clergy or lay."

The church has lost a prophet and the world has lost a great man.

Three women of different faiths will undertake to build "Bridges Toward Understanding" in a panel discussion scheduled from 1 to 3 p.m. Monday, Jan. 19, in Nardin Park United Methodist Church, Farmington.

They are Mrs. Mary MacDonald, district president of the Women's Society of Christian Service in the United Methodist Church, Mrs. Godfrey Alberti from the Lutheran Church in America and Sister Jean Elizabeth, O.S.F., coordinator of the Religious Education Program in St. Clare of Assisi Catholic Church, Farmington.

The discussion is part of a week of prayer for unity from Jan. 18 to 25.

Three areas of discussion will be worship, women in the community and Christian education.

Women from all churches in the Farmington area are invited to hear the discussion and participate in a question and answer session which will follow.

Refreshments will be served and pre-school children will have nursery care.

Also featured will be a display of books on the subjects discussed by the Cokesbury Book Store and the Catholic Information Center. The books will be available for purchase.



CLASPED HANDS FOR UNDERSTANDING—Representatives of three faiths will participate in an ecumenical panel discussion for churchwomen Monday, Jan. 19, in the Nardin Park United Methodist Church, Farmington. From left are Mrs. Earl McDonald, president of the Detroit West District of the United Methodist Church; Sister Jean Elizabeth, religious education coordinator for St. Clare Catholic parish in Farmington; and Mrs. Godfrey E. Alberti, chairman of Christian social action and concerns of Church Women United. (Evert photo)

## Mt. Hope Dedicates

The newly completed educational wing of the Mt. Hope Congregational Church will be dedicated at 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 19. The church is located at 30300 Schoolcraft, Livonia.

The Rev. John H. Alexander, executive secretary of the

National Association of Continuing Congregational Christian Churches, will give the dedication sermon. Assisting in the service will be Victor Beal, state moderator, and The Rev. Erwin Britton, moderator of the southeastern association.

## Farmington Chapter Set

A B'nai B'rith chapter for the Farmington, Franklin, West Bloomfield and Farmington areas has been chartered by the B'nai B'rith Women's Council of Metropolitan Detroit.

## New Temple To Discuss New Detroit

Mrs. Gerald Bright of Birmingham will discuss "What I have learned as a member of New Detroit" following the regular worship service of The New Temple, Friday, Jan. 23. Because of her connection with the League of Women Voters of Detroit of which she was administrative vice president, Mrs. Bright was asked by the newly organized New Detroit Committee to become a member of its board of trustees.

Her active participation has been with the New Detroit Communications Committee which has engaged in such activities as conducting a survey of black and white attitudes, funding TV programs dealing with racial problems, and helping to fund a consumer survey of prices in black neighborhoods compared to those in white.

Following the presentation, an extended question and answer period is planned.

New Temple services are held at the Birmingham Unitarian Church, Lone Pine and Woodward, Friday evenings at 8:30 p.m.

The group will meet at 12:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 19, in the home of Mrs. Milton Silverman, 6105 Pinecroft, Orchard Lake. For information about the chapter, contact Mrs. Edie Silver at 626-5049 or Mrs. Lois Weberman at 682-7757.

### Attend Church This Sunday

At The  
**Church Of Your  
Choice With  
Your Family**

#### UNITED METHODIST

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
of Garden City  
6442 Main Road  
Livonia 422-8628  
Minister: John N. Howell

**NEWBURGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
36500 Ann Arbor Trail  
Livonia 422-0149  
Rev. William A. Ritter  
425-0268  
9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Worship Service and Church School  
7 p.m. UMWFF

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of Plymouth**  
680 Church Street  
453-5280  
Ministers: Paul M. Cargis and Ronald K. Corl  
9:30 a.m. - Worship Service and Church School for all ages  
11 a.m. - Worship Service  
6:30 a.m. - Senior High Youth

#### UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**St. Mark's Presbyterian Church**  
26701 Joy Road  
Worship and Church School  
10 a.m.  
Church Office: CR 9340

**WARD UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LIVONIA**  
Farmington Road and Six Mile Road  
422-1150  
Worship and Bible School  
10:15 and 11:30 a.m.  
"The Christians Armor and Weapons"  
Dr. Benoit L. Weiss  
7 p.m.  
"The Day Gabriel Spoke to Michael"  
Rev. Franklin Williams Jr.  
College and Career Night  
Wednesday Evening  
7 p.m. - Classes for all ages  
Nursery Provided for All Activities

**ST. PAUL'S Presbyterian Church**  
27475 Five Mile Road  
GA 2-1470  
"Everlasting Welcome"  
Rev. William F. Whiteledge  
Rev. Arnold S. Dalsell  
Donald A. Drew  
Worship and Church School  
9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

**ST. TIMOTHY Presbyterian Church**  
16700 Newburg Road  
Worship and Church School  
9 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Rev. Carl A. Gundersen  
261-4844 464-1354

#### ROSEDALE GARDENS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Hubbard at West Chicago  
Worship and Church School  
9 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Richard C. Dunkelberger, Pastor  
Arthur Beumler, Jr., Associate Pastor  
William L. Lovick, Associate Pastor  
GA 614-2494

#### CHURCH OF GOD

**Riverside Park Church of God**  
11771 Newburg Road at Plymouth Road  
Livonia Phone 464-0990

#### ST. LUKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Five Mile at Haggerty  
Ernest L. Otter, Minister  
Worship School 10 a.m.  
Worship Service 11 a.m.  
Nursery Provided  
Phone 422-7491

#### ORCHARD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

30450 Farmington Road  
Between 13 and 14 Mile  
MA 6-6520  
Worship School, Nursery  
9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Rev. S. Hamner 851-4464  
Rev. M. Hughes, Assoc. Minister

#### ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

30900 Six Mile Road  
St. Mary, Pastor  
Hudson Falls, Associate Pastor  
9:30 a.m. Worship, Church School (high 4th grade)  
10:30 a.m. Morning Service  
Church School (high 4th grade)  
Nursery  
11:30 a.m. Fellowship  
All Aged - 6 p.m.  
Baby care provided for all services

#### ST. ELIZABETH'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

26431 West Chicago Road  
Southfield  
Rev. R.L. Morrell, Vicar  
KE 7-1122  
9:30 a.m. Holy Communion  
10:30 a.m. Holy Communion  
11:30 a.m. Morning Prayer  
10:30 a.m. Morning Prayer  
10:30 a.m. Church School, Nursery  
Visitors Welcome

#### SAINT JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

874 S. Boulevard, Farmington  
422-0190  
9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Rev. H. C. White  
Rev. B. Bryce Swiler

#### FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of Farmington

31111 Grand Road  
GR 4-4372  
Worship School  
9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
Rev. H. C. White  
Rev. B. Bryce Swiler

#### EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

24331 W. Eight Mile Road  
Edwin T. Crampton, Pastor  
9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.  
10:30 a.m. Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Morning Worship  
10:30 a.m. Evening Service  
Church: RE 9-2025  
Residence: RE 9-2025

#### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

You are cordially invited to attend Sunday School as listed below. Sunday Schools are conducted by all churches, and care is provided for children of pre-Sunday School age.

**Wednesday Testimonial Meetings at 8 p.m.**

**FOURTH CHURCH, Detroit** ..... 11 a.m.  
24400 W. Seven Mile near Telegraph

**FIRST CHURCH, Garden City** ..... 11 a.m.  
31111 Ford Road

**FIRST CHURCH, Plymouth** ..... 10:30 a.m.  
1100 West Ann Arbor Trail

## AREA DEATHS

**PRICE, SYMNER MAHLER**, 81, of New Britain Rd. at West 10 Mile, died Jan. 16 at the Detroit General Hospital.

Services were held in the Hebrew Synagogue, 10000 E. 12 Mile, at 10 a.m. Jan. 17. Burial was in the Hebrew Cemetery, 10000 E. 12 Mile.

**LOVE, FREDERICK**, 81, of 10000 E. 12 Mile, died Jan. 16 at the Detroit General Hospital.

Services were held in the Hebrew Synagogue, 10000 E. 12 Mile, at 10 a.m. Jan. 17. Burial was in the Hebrew Cemetery, 10000 E. 12 Mile.

**SHIRLEY DOLAN**, 81, of 10000 E. 12 Mile, died Jan. 16 at the Detroit General Hospital.

Services were held in the Hebrew Synagogue, 10000 E. 12 Mile, at 10 a.m. Jan. 17. Burial was in the Hebrew Cemetery, 10000 E. 12 Mile.

**JOSEPH P. BRODAK**, 81, of 10000 E. 12 Mile, died Jan. 16 at the Detroit General Hospital.

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