

Monday, August 18, 1980

Nardin Park United Methodist Church New minister, congregation both hold ties to central city

By LORRAINE MCCLISH

Rev. William Ritter describes himself as "enmeshed in the city of Detroit."

He comes to pastor at Nardin Park United Methodist Church, which takes its name from a park in the Joy Road-Grand River area, and whose congregation still feels a strong tie with the place of its birth in the central city.

"A great number of the congregation stem from the church's beginnings," Rev. Ritter said, "and carry a strong sense of that history."

Rev. Ritter is a native of Detroit and returned to take his first assignment as a pastor in nearby Livonia after study in Albion College and Yale Divinity School.

"So I have a long association with Detroit, as they do," he said, speaking of the 1,500 members in the congregation.

"I do not believe the suburban church is an isolated enclave," he continued. "Detroit's Renaissance will be our Renaissance. When the city suffers, we suffer."

"We bear a responsibility to the city at large. It is an interlocking relationship, not a place to dump conscious-

ness. While I was with Newburgh (United Methodist Church) I built a network of relationships with people and churches in the entire metropolitan area."

REV. RITTER gave but two Sunday sermons in June to his new congregation before he took off for a month-long tour through the British Isles. He acted as tour guide for the trip planned long before he learned of his transfer to the Farmington Hills church.

As he built a network of churches in Detroit, so has he built a network of relationships with pastors and churches throughout the British Isles.

He did this by periodically exchanging pastorates with Methodist ministers there. The exchange was complete with homes, cars, lives.

"I would weed his garden and feed his cat and live in his house and really very much live his life," is the way he described the exchange. "And I keep alive a lot of those connections." The connections proved fruitful for the members of the tour who were housed on several occasions in private homes of those Rev. Ritter had met on previous visits.

All told, he said he counted 43 per-

sons he re-established relations with.

THE RITTERS are now residents of Lincolnshire Subdivision, located about a mile from the church he serves on 11 Mile and Middlebelt Roads. It is a different experience from living in a parsonage immediately next to a church.

"I feel like a neighbor," he said. "I have a new-found sense of identity with a neighborhood."

Rev. Ritter expects that he will involve himself in Farmington area community affairs, the same as he did when he resided in Livonia and served on several of that city's committees and commissions.

His wife Kristine holds a degree in home economics and teaches gourmet cooking classes. This summer she helped teach in Nardin Park's vacation Bible school. Next fall she will work with the church's youth club.

The couple have two children — Bill, 13, and Julie, 5. Bill, an eighth-grader at East Junior High this fall, returned from the British Isles only to begin a tour of southeastern Kentucky. This trip is part of a work camp experience for teens in Appalachia. Julie will be a

first grader at Middlebelt Elementary School next month.

DURING THE 11 years Rev. Ritter served Newburgh Church in Livonia, it doubled in size, both in membership and in building additions. Nardin Park is one of the largest United Methodist congregations in the eastern half of Michigan.

Of the size of the edifice, he said, "Any kind of program is possible here."

Rev. Ritter calls himself "a liberal, both politically and theologically."

He believes the church, its ministry and gospel are helpful and healing needs to a congregation, but his sermons, he said, "are mainly addressed to major issues that effect everyday life."

He added that Nardin Park churchgoers can expect a series of sermons this fall stemming from Alvin Toffler's last book, "The Third Wave."

Rev. Ritter said the theme will be of missionary work. He said: "The church has three ways to be a mission — with dollars, and that's not bad; with its building, and we serve the entire community here with our co-op nursery school; and with its people, for people. That's the hardest one of them all."



Rev. William Ritter comes to Nardin Park United Methodist Church from nearby Livonia. While he served the Newburgh United Methodist Church, the congregation doubled in size. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

'... as a matter of fact' Hope for the asthmatic lies in understanding the disease

By LORRAINE MCCLISH

Dr. Bruce Dubin reaches out to persons suffering from asthma with a new booklet called "Asthma as a Matter of Fact."

The booklet is distributed free of charge, and his target audience is everybody.

"Everybody who has asthma, who has a question about asthma, who are newly diagnosed as having

'I want to clear the air of the belief that asthma is just an allergy, or that it is all in your head. People commit suicide over this. People die from this. It is not a childhood disease.'

—Dr. Bruce Dubin

asthma, friends of the asthmatic, members of the family of an asthmatic, and that is just about everybody."

The Farmington Hills resident is publishing the booklet, which will be available about the first week in September, in the hopes of squelching myths and misconceptions that surround asthma and giving the sufferers a sense of hope.

"I want to clear the air of the belief that asthma is just an allergy, or that it is all in your head," said Dr. Dubin, who is a director of the American Lung Association.

"People commit suicide over this. People die from this. It is not a childhood disease, another myth."

"But when it does hit in adulthood, it can rob you of everything you've ever worked for."

DR. DUBIN developed asthma when he was an intern in Martin Place Hospital. He finished his internal medicine training there; then switched to study at National Jewish Hospital and Research Center in Denver to learn about his own physical problem.

He admits to being "somewhat of a crusader" on the subject because too many asthmatics he meets are allowing the disease to debilitate them when this does not have to be the case. He cites a typical case of an asthmatic patient:

"The doctor will give them quibron. That doesn't work so they try marax. That doesn't work so the patient proceeds to Dr. B.

"Dr. B. prescribes tedral. The thing the patient doesn't know is that marax and tedral are the same.

"So when tedral doesn't work, they try sclixophyllin, and this can go on throughout a lifetime."

Dr. Dubin uses a wholistic approach with his patients. He pulls in every aspect of the individual's way of life to work out a program that is best for living and achieving all that is within the asthmatic's capabilities.

"Each is unique so the form of therapy must be extremely individualized. I've had patients who were in such fear of having an attack it was enough panic to trigger an attack."

THE ASTHMA specialist said he wants the sufferers' story known, not because he wants to make martyrs of them in the eyes of those they live with, "but just to let others know what is going on in their lungs."

The disease, he said, is not hereditary because it does not follow strict genetic rules. It is not psychosomatic, yet it does have some psychological components.

"And it is no minor disease. These people have difficulty sleeping and eating, to say nothing of breathing. They might be frightened of somebody else's house plants or pets, so there is a social factor here. Lighting up a cigarette might put their lungs into a spasm.

"So entire families are involved in all of this," he said. Dr. Dubin believes the patient's hope lies in understanding his own disease and learning preven-

tive measures to ward off an attack. In turn, this will ultimately result in a full control of the disease.

"Asthma as a Matter of Fact" will be sent upon request by writing Dr. Bruce Dubin, 1385 E. 12 Mile, Madison Heights 48071.



State sweetheart

Betsy Gilker, a 1980 graduate of Farmington High School, was voted Michigan DeMolay Sweetheart for 1980-'81 and doubled up on the awards by also capturing the title of Miss Congeniality in the competition. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Gilker took the title after being declared Sweetheart for District 14 DeMolay. Miss Gilker will enter Michigan State University in September.

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