# Rev. Johns 'Mothers' 1,094

By ELIZABETH WISSMAN

The Rev. Elsie Johns would make a very successful mother of, say, eight children.

Instead she might be called something of a mother to 1,094 persons at Clarenceville Methodist Church.

That isn't meant to sound flippant. Members of her large congregation invite her for lunch and dinner. They drop in to say "Hi" before going to work in the morning.

The minister officiates at their baptisms, their weddings, their unertal.

their funerals.

Mow 62, she has never married because the way she carfies on a ministry requires what she calls "full dedication".

On a given night, she can be found at a church dinner
and within an hour in Allen Park watching "one of my boys
abasing basketball."

playing basketball."
A CURIOUS BALANCE of the direct masculine approach
and the delicately feminine, this lady adores way-out hats and
adores the Detroit Tigers. The Tiger front office knows her
well for her letters asking for free baseball tickets for her

well for her letters asking for free observant texts for the young people.

Be doesn't like to see her church's four buses standing idle. She sees to it that they are constantly loaded with young-sters going to other churches for visits, Detroit's inner city. Belle Isle, the Zoo. You name it — Miss Johns sees that they've been there.

The story of what her bedrock faith has wrought has been told and re-told. A brief summary could say that this faith

worked a miracle.

On her first Sunday as minister of Clarenceville, when it stood at Collingham and Grand River, she found this note pinned to the pulpit:

"This church has no money and no congregation. Here's

the key."

That was back in June of 1941.

A feud had disbanded Clareneville's congregation and the Methodist Council had thoughts of closing the church.

It has now grown into an imposing \$320,000 edifice that

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stands on Middelbeit above Eight Mie.

The building of it is the story of Miss Johns' life.

The building of it is the story of Miss Johns' life.

SHE WENT to Clarenceville because her church's Council deemed it unthinkable to send an ordained minister to a church that coulding the story of Miss Johns' life.

Elsie, as the prefers he be salary, "prayed it through," and riends who had come with their children.

Typically, the next thing she did was establish a Sunday School for those children.

It might be said that Elsie thinks children are the key to their parents' hearts. Room after room over on Middlebelt is given to instructing youngsters in the ways of faith.

Down to the youngest they all call her "Elsie." In herle, warm voices he says, "Some people think it's direspectful. I wouldn't have it any other way."

This remarkable woman doesn't allow herself vanity about her accomplishments. It may be she thinks pride a sin. For many years, Elsie worked without pay. She hung onto her job as supervisor of bookkeeping and billing at National Twist and Drill serving as a part time minister, praying all the way.

She that curveille's full time minister in 1954. Through those years, the old church was completely re-modeled. In the beginning, with no water in the church, Elsie brought thermos bottles of water from her home in Highland Park.

Park.

During rest and wash-up periods, she sent the Sunday school youngsters down Grand River to the nearest gas station (by pre-arrangement with the owner).

THE MOVE TO Middlebelt was made a short time ago.

THE MOVE TO Middlebelt was made a short time ago. And Elsie init done yet.

In the near future, a new sanctuary will be built carrying out the oriental, functional design of the present building, which will become the educational unit.

The congregation owns 81 acres on Middlebelt with the present edifice extending wings over much of it.

The interior design of the current facility with dark wood beamed ceiling motifs will also be repeated in the new unit.

The plans are a far cry from the little broken-windowd sanctuary Elsie faced on her first Sunday 28 years ago.

"The thing has been a success in spite of me," she says.

"If all came into being because of the Lord. The glory really goes to God and the people."

goes to God and the people.

BUT IT TOOK the brains, stamina and prayers of Elsie to bring it into being.

It took her brain to think of establishing the congregation at the old church by working with the Clarenceville School and the superintendent's advice didn't daunt her. He said, "Go back to where you came from. That area (Clarenceville), by actual police statisties, is frightful."

The frightfulness was only a challenge to Elsie. And the years haven't dimmed her love of tackling the impossible. But she hann't much changed her original format in the new church. She still conducts Sunday evening services (150 usually attend). There are still two Sunday worship services and one on Wednesday evenings.

NOTHING CLOSES down in the summer months.

There are five choirs, three children's, one for youth, all supervised by Mrs. Paul Arenesman, who has been around since the early days.

S.D.D.

#### **Guest Speaker** At S'fld Church

At S'fld Church
Henry J. Heinjermans, General Director of the World
Wide European Fellowship,
will speak at the Southfield
Community Church, 2122 Indian (between Beech and Intaster, North of Eight Mile)
Sunday: morning, Jan. 22, at
11 a.m., according to Pastor
Raymond Bayne.
By morning Jan. 22, at
11 a.m., according to Pastor
Raymond Bayne.
It am one of their
missionaries under appointment, is now serving an internship at the Southfield
Community Church. After
completing his preparation.

completing his preparation, Mr. Furst will serve in Ger-



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FRESH FISH FRIDAYS

### New Temple Former Newsman Will be Plans Special Guest at St. John Lutheran Ceremony

Rabbi Ernst J. Conrad will officiate at the first baby-naming ceremony at the official control of the control o

iticpation in as many activities as feasible.

Ities as feasible family outing someoned by the congregation was the bus trip to Toledo to see the exhibit at the Art Museum. "The Age of Remand." Another program of this kind is Rabbi Conrad's Sunday morning Bible class which discusses archaeology and the Old Testament; both parents and "senior" teenagers attended.

parents and "senior" teen-agers attended.
Rabbi Conrad's subject for the family service on Jan. 20 is "What's In A Name" The congregation will meet in its temporary home, the Birming-ham Unitarian Church, Lone Pine and Woodward Avenues, Bloomfield Hills. mfield Hills

Senior Citizens Club Senior Citizens Social Club will meet Thursday, Jan. 26 at 12 noon in the First Meth-odist Church Social Room.

St. John Lutheran Church of Farmington will have an outselfful perival Sunday, January 22. The Rev. Thomas Waber, of Gracious Saviour Lutheran Church in Detroit, will speak at both 8:30 and 11 a.m. services. Mr. Waber has an unusual background beginning with a professional broadcasting a program of the service of the se

North Africa.

IMMEDIATELY after the war, Mr. Waber was on the staff and faculty of the University of Illinois as director of education programming. In 1946, he ploined the staff of WA. FA.BC in Detroy and the WA. FA.BC in Detroy and the water of the staff of WA. FA.BC in Detroy and the water of the staff of the sta

REV. THOMAS WABER

REV. TIOMAS WABER i deak strewn with job possibilities, including one as a network of the properties o

JUDSON BAPTIST CHURCH

Meeting in
EAST JR. HIGH SCHOOL
25000 MIDDLEBELT ROAD
Worship Services, 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School 10:45 a. m.
Youth Training Hr. 5.45 p.m.
Evening Gospel Hr. 7:00 p.m.

Mid-Week Prayer Service Thursday, 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Fred G. Ferris, Pastor BR. 3-3275

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Iimely Book

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of the Women's Society
of Christian Serred,
of Christian Serred,
of Christian Server,
of Chri

HIGHLAND PARK

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28600 Lahser Southfield

Southfield
Badon H. Brown, Pastor
SUNDAY
9:30 a.m. Worship Service
& Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship Service
& Sunday School
5:45 p.m. Youth Groups
7:00 p.m. Gospel Hour

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Farmington
In Springland Subdivision
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GR. 4-2860

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Parish Visitor Mrs. Sidney Eva Parsonage GR, 4-7368 Office GR, 4-6573

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11:00 A.M. MORNING SERVICE OF WORSHIP

11:00 A.M. CHURCH SCHOOL Classes from Toddlers through Twelfth Grade

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Parsonage GR 6-0487 Church Office GR 4-5830 Carl H. Schultz, Minister

CLARENCEVILLE METHODIST CHURCH

20300 Middlebelt Rd.
Livonia, Michigan
9:00 a.m. Worship Service
10:15 a.m. Church School
11:15 a.m. Worship Service

6:30 p.m. Youth Groups 7:30 p.m. The Evening Service Wednesday — 7:30 p.m., Prayer Service

Orchard Methodist Church 30450 Farmington Road
Farmington Road between 13 and 14 Mile Roads
FRANK A. COZADD, Minister - QR. 6-0170
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ELSIE A. JOHNS, Minister
GR. 4-5902

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William D. Mercer Frank F. Benish Roy Syme J. Thurston Nos orship Service 10:45 a.m. nureh School 9:30 a.m.

Nursery — Both Services

SUNDAY SCHOOL

GR. 4-0584

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15:45 P.M. 3 Youth Groups
7:00 P.M. Evening Worship
7:30 P.M. Wednesday
... Prayer Service
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Jesus Christ Himself
Being
the Chief Cornerstone"
Eph. 2:20

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