

Contact

Number 1

May 1970

● **CONTACT IS AN occasional publication** of Presbyterian Churchmen United, intended to help maintain contact within the PCU fellowship. Each signer of the Declaration of Commitment is being sent a copy, and the clerk of each committed session is being sent a number of copies equal to one-tenth of that church's reported membership total. Ministers, sessions and other supporters are invited to read this first issue carefully and to share with the PCU executive secretary their ideas for making the publication more useful.

● **IN ADDITION TO THE MORE** than 600 ministers of the Presbyterian Church US who have taken their stand, the fellowship includes 263 churches whose sessions, by official action, have backed the declaration. These congregations have 71,760 communicant members, including 2651 elders and 2954 deacons. Additional thousands of individuals have indicated their support.

Many sessions are just learning of PCU and its stand. As they study its history and purposes they are declaring their commitment. Readers are urged to find out whether their sessions have taken action and to encourage such a stand when it has not already been taken. The executive secretary's office will furnish additional information and assistance, if requested.

● **RUMORS to the contrary** notwithstanding, the men who signed the declaration of commitment are a dependable lot. They are standing fast. Of the more than 600 ministers who affixed their signatures, only 7 have withdrawn their names. Of the many thousands of elders and deacons who indicated their support, only 1 has asked that he no longer be identified with PCU. Noting this, a member of the executive committee commented, "No one should be surprised at the fact that these men stand fast because if they were not men of courage and stability they would not have signed the statement in the first place!"

● **ATTENTION WILL BE FOCUSED** on the issue of restructuring synods and presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church US during the next few months. Since PCU is committed to Reformed doctrine and representative government, the outcome of this debate should be of interest to all supporters. A committee is recommending that the General Assembly, meeting this June in Memphis, reduce the number of synods and suggesting that those synods reduce the number of presbyteries. These steps, if taken, could open

the way for successful assaults on the denomination's doctrine and polity. The potential of the new presbyteries and synods has been carefully studied by a DOC signer, Harry Hassall of Murfreesboro, Tenn. His mimeographed paper on this issue is available on request from the PCU office, at a cost of 50 cents for handling.

● **MISSIONARIES ARE AMONG** the most ardent supporters of PCU. As news of this movement has reached them at their scattered stations overseas, many have come forward and taken their stand. Signatures have come from six foreign fields. Lay personnel have indicated their support. Evangelization of the world was declared to be the primary mission of the Presbyterian Church US when it was organized. This Scriptural goal should be a reality in the personal and congregational goals of all in this fellowship. The faithful missionaries who have taken their stand should be supported with regular prayer and other manifestations of interest and concern.

● **THROUGH REGULAR PRAYER** and Bible study, leaders of PCU have sought to place the organization under the sole authority of God as He speaks through His Word. While PCU claims no ecclesiastical authority it does seek to follow the pattern of Presbyterian polity in its own government. Thus, its decisions on policy are made collectively by a group of men pledged to uphold Reformed doctrine and representative government. No one makes policy for the organization; 12 men compose the policy-making executive committee. In matters affecting work in a particular area they are assisted in the decision making by the synod contact men.

● **IN THE RANKS** of PCU are many men of conspicuous academic attainment. The executive committee invited nine of these scholars to form a "College of Scholars" to assist PCU in several activities. All nine accepted membership in the initial group. They are: Robert F. Boyd, professor at Presbyterian School of Christian Education, Richmond, Va.; R. W. Cousar Jr., professor at King College, Bristol, Tenn.; C. Darby Fulton, Nashville, Tenn., missionary statesman and former professor at Columbia Seminary; Robert F. Gribble, Leander, Tex., professor emeritus of Austin Seminary; William A. McIlwaine, Atlanta, Ga., retired missionary and former seminary professor in Japan; Henry J. Mueller, pastor and youth leader, Highlands, N. C.; William Childs Robinson, professor emeritus of Columbia Seminary, Decatur, Ga.; Morton H. Smith, professor at Reformed Seminary, Jackson, Miss.; Robert Strong, pastor, Montgomery, Ala.

● **DEDUCTIBLE IS THE WORD** for contributions by individuals to PCU (as far as U. S. income taxes are concerned). PCU obtained a civil charter under the laws of Mississippi as a religious and educational organization and then applied to the IRS director in Atlanta, who wrote on March 16: "Based on information supplied, we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. . . . Contributions made to you are deductible by donors as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers or gifts to or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes under the provisions of section 2055, 2106 and 2522 of the Code."



ALABAMA contact man for PCU is James Baird, pastor of First Church, Gadsden. Address: Box 676, Gadsden, Ala. 35902



APPALACHIA leader is Matthew McGowan, pastor of Central Church, Chattanooga. Address: 1815 McCallie Ave., Chattanooga, Tenn. 37404.



ARKANSAS-OKLAHOMA representative is Lardner Moore, retired missionary and supply pastor. Address: 411 N.E. C. St., Antlers, Okla. 74523.



FLORIDA contact man is Adrian R. Munzell, pastor of Kendall Church, Miami. Address: 8485 S. W. 112th St., S. Miami, Fla. 33156.

● **SYNOD CONTACT MEN** have been chosen to lead the work of Presbyterian Churchmen United in each area of the General Assembly. Readers are urged to get acquainted with these men and with the presbytery contact men with whom they will be working. The first eight are listed alphabetically by synods. Others will be pictured as space is available.

Things are beginning to happen "at the grass roots" for PCU as these leaders begin work. In Alabama one meeting has been held for ministers and wives in Montgomery. Another is planned in Birmingham. Presbytery leaders got together with the synod contact man in Georgia and planned a series of area meetings to include outside speakers. A preparatory gathering was held in Virginia, and a rally including laymen is scheduled May 16.

● **SIGNERS of the declaration** and their supporters are encouraged by the executive committee to keep in close touch with each other and to seek opportunities to meet with one another. Special efforts to meet together for prayer are urged. From time to time suggestions for prayer will be offered. The initial suggestion is to pray for the signers of the declaration - - individually. Following is a list of the ministers who have added their signatures since the declaration was first published:

O. Chauncey Acrey
James W. Allen
O. M. Anderson
Walter D. Arnold
Henry M. Bailey
James B. Billman
Taylor O. Bird
J. A. Booth
George C. Bowman
Ralph A. Brown
Paul K. Buckles
Al S. Burdette
Robert Ernest Burnett
Charles G. Burton
Robert H. Camenisch
E. H. Carleton
Robert A. Clark
John R. Clarke
Willis Cornelius
Cecil V. Dalton
Peter DeRuiter
R. M. Dickson
A. T. Dyal
Charles W. Echols, Sr.

C. G. Forthman
L. K. Foster
Paul Bucher Fowler
Taft A. Franklin
Charles R. Galbraith
James Marion Gilbert
Curtis C. Goodson
Vance A. Gordon
Donald M. Green
J. C. Grier
B. David Gullett
Thomas L. Harnesberger
James Douglas Heck
Gerald A. Heersma
James C. Hicks, Jr.
H. Keith Hill
Fred W. Hoffman
Doyle Hulse
George H. Hurst
James Herbert Hurst
Harry K. Jeanneret
A. Emerson Johnson II
Albert Sidney Johnson
William R. Johnson

Laurie Voltz Jones, Jr.
Robert O. Kantner
A. H. Key
Paul D. Kooistra
Robert Koren
Thomas M. Lemly
Thomas Dwight Linton
Samuel Lipsey
Samuel T. Logan, Jr.
Richard L. Love
John A. Luddy
Robert M. Lytton
Jacob S. MacKorell, Jr.
James O. Maner
John J. Martin
B. A. Meeks
J. M. Moore
James L. Moss
Cameron D. L. Mosser
W. F. McElroy, Sr.
James L. McGirt
Charles E. McGowan
Charles H. McLean
James W. McNutt
W. L. Newman
Louis G. Novak
Lannie Parnell
Waiser Penland
Lyle W. Peterson
Wythe M. Peyton, Jr.
William S. Porter
Ira H. Rawles
E. W. Reid
D. Edward Renegar
William E. Riddle, Jr.

Ernest T. Severs
W. Hiram Sharpe
Weldon W. Shows
Stephen J. Sloop
Frank E. Smith
W. Ted Smith, Sr.
William S. Smith
Frank Edward Soules
Ernest L. Stoffel
Bert H. Styles
L. Sherwood Taylor
T. Reichardt Taylor
Calvin C. Thielman
Frederic D. Thompson, Jr.
Vincent O. Titterud
Harry Samuel Topham
Robert Lee Turner
John G. Viser
DeForest Wade
James R. Wagner
Howell Cobb Ware
T. Barton West
T. J. Wharton
A. W. Whitaker, Jr.
Roy F. Whitley
Bruce H. Wideman
Linwood G. Wilkes
Glenn M. Willard
Bill Williams
Carl W. Wilson
Maynard C. Woltz
Donald E. Wood
J. R. Woods
Charles W. Worth
Frank R. Young
Troy L. Young

● **MATERIALS ALREADY IN PRINT** are available from the executive secretary's office in quantity. Three pieces which have been attractively prepared and folded so they can be mailed in business (no. 10) envelopes are already in great demand. Costing \$2 per hundred, they are: "Presbyterian

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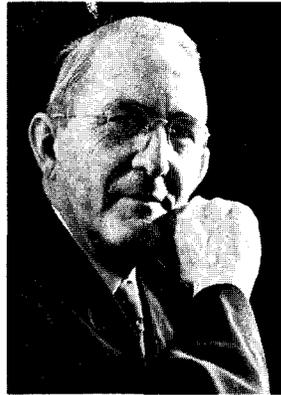
CHANGE OF ADDRESS notices should be sent to the office of the executive secretary, as listed above.



GEORGIA representative is, Charles E. McGowan, pastor of the Chapel Woods Church, Decatur. Address: 2901 Wesley Chapel Rd., Decatur, Ga. 30034.



LOUISIANA contact man is A. M. Schneider III, pastor of the Jackson Street Church, Alexandria. Address: Jackson St. at Ida, Alexandria, La. 71301.



MISSISSIPPI leader is Horace Villee, pastor of the First Church, Columbus. Address: 112 N. Seventh St., Columbus, Miss. 39701.



MISSOURI representative is L. Vern Trueblood, pastor of Kirk of the Hills Church, St. Louis. Address: 12928 Ladue Rd., St. Louis, Mo. 63141.

Advice To Merger Leaders: Put Doctrine First

(NOTE: Presbyterian Churchmen United was invited by the Joint Committee of 24 negotiating union between the Presbyterian Church US and the United Presbyterian Church USA to make a presentation at its Jan. 26 meeting at Alexandria, Va. Following is the text of Executive Secretary John E. Richards' prepared statement.)

Mr. Chairman, Brothers And Sisters
In Christ:

I have come here in response to an invitation extended to Presbyterian Churchmen United, an organization of Ministers and lay people of the Presbyterian Church in the United States distinguished by its adherents having signed a specific Declaration of Commitment; the movement is young and growing, having now over 600 ministerial signers and many thousands of lay supporters. Our declaration, history, and purposes are set forth in a document attached to this paper ("Presbyterian Churchmen United, History and Purpose"). We have been called "conservatives," "constitutionalists," "biblicists," "progressives," and "evangelicals." Perhaps some truth is found in each of these names.

I cannot speak for all the members of PCU but dare to believe most of what I say is fairly representative of our general sentiment.

In the beginning let me say that we are sensitively aware of certain things that may be relevant to your task as a committee on Church union. First, we are probably living in the twilight era of organizational ecumenism. While spiritual ecumenism will always continue, as our Lord calls people of all ages into one fellowship in Him, the merging of various branches of the visible church as a movement has passed its prime. The spirit of this age seems rather to divide groups into those of more particular beliefs rather than to unite groups under some vague generalities. Even in the Roman Church this change is evident, and it may become evident in a complete reshuffling of the Protestant scene.

Second, we are aware that liberal, neo-orthodox and contemporary theology as taught by most of the larger theological

schools of our day have failed to capture the souls of men and have seriously depleted the pulpits of the Biblical message of salvation, with the inevitable result that local churches and pastors turn their interest to new or more satisfying sources of ministerial training. These sources may not be in either of our communions.

Third, we are aware of what seems to be the dying struggle of the social gospel. While much good has been done and will be done for the social order by good men, those who try to reform society and the body politic without Christ are soon strangled by the company they keep. To identify Christian effort with civil disobedience, racketeering, or Marxism means another defeat for Christianity.

Fourth, we are aware of the effort of some to destroy the institutional Church. With some this was an honest effort to renew the Church by driving it into the streets. The effort was abortive, for the voice of the Church is more lost in the street than it was in the pulpit. It is drowned out by secular voices who selfishly seek more of the world's material, more of its political power, more of its recognition.

Fifth, we are aware of a deep and sincere reaction from the pew and the local churches against centralized power from above and programs sent down to the individual from above. While there still abides a true respect for God, the layman has little respect for denominational boards or agencies that seek to play God.

Sixth, we have been for a long time aware that there is a changing attitude in America concerning the ownership of Church property. For a long time some connectional denominations have been held together by the concept that the property belonged to the general church and could not be withdrawn with a local congregation. Last week in its refusal to hear the appeal from the Georgia Supreme Court's decision in favor of two local churches in Savannah, Georgia, the United States Supreme Court seems to say it will not interfere if a state court awards property to a local group which has left its denomination because of substantial deviation by the denomination from its former doctrinal position. In short, the lesson seems to be "we cannot walk off and leave our

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHMEN UNITED

(Check One)

Category I— Supporter. (Open to lay officers and members of the Presbyterian Church US, as individuals.)

Category II— Full membership. (Open to ordained ministers.)

Category III— Full membership. (Open to sessions, as units. Signature below certifies action taken in regular meeting.)

"Wish to make the Declaration of Commitment my/our own, and to support the aims of Presbyterian Churchmen United."

Signed _____

Name printed or typed _____

Address _____

Name of church _____

Zip Code _____

Presbytery _____

ADVICE TO MERGER LEADERS cont'd

creed and then successfully sue our churches if they walk off and leave us."

Seventh, the gravest of all awareness that presses in upon us is the dearth of revival in our land. The Holy Spirit does not seem to find in the emphases and programs of our denominations instruments usable for sending showers of spiritual blessings. There was more honest revival in the respective military camps of the Confederacy and Unionists when our ancestors were at war than both our denominations' boards and agencies have produced in the past several years. Such spiritual outpourings of the Spirit as have come, have come to particular churches, individuals, and separate groups dedicated apart from the general denominational life.

Eighth, with reference to our two denominations, our historical awareness hardly reaches back into the 19th century. We are of the 20th century. If, as history tells us, our ancestors were together in the first half of the 19th Century, this does not of itself give us the feeling that we should be together now. On the other hand being separate in the last half of the 19th Century does not of itself cause us to feel that we should be apart in the last half of the 20th Century. The criteria should rather be what do we believe now and to what are we now committed.

SURE FOOTING

In the dark shadows of the awareness which I have at least partially described, the conservative feels for a sure footing upon which he may tread; he reaches out in faith to that which has been conserved through the ages; he searches his soul to learn how God would have him move forward into the future. What he finds is both the anchor from the past and the dynamic of the future. So firmly does he believe these things that he is willing to recommend them

MATERIAL ALREADY IN PRINT cont'd from Page 2

Churchmen United — History and Purpose" (the document which presents the full text of the declaration as well as a brief history and the list of purposes); "The Road Ahead" (Frank Barker's Atlanta rally address); and "Why I Am For

to you to be included in any plan of union which you might decide to recommend.

EIGHT SUGGESTIONS

First, let the ordaining principles for officers in the Church be holy vows taken by the officer to Almighty God concerning those things that he believes and agrees to uphold, so that, not only are the tenets of faith for his instruction and guidance, but are the expression of his covenant with the Lord of life made in solemn worship to Him. Only thus can brethren be truly one in His service.

Second, let all officers accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God written, the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Bible, which is self-attesting, is God's revelation to man. Each part is to be understood and interpreted by other Scripture and none of it is to be changed to suit the pleasures of men nor the peculiarities of a particular age.

Third, in keeping with our mutual heritage, let any plan of union declare our allegiance to the Reformed theology, relinquishing to the trash heap the idea that such theology should be defined as "a faith that is always reforming itself." Christ, who is Head and Lord of the Church, is the only one who can reform His church. This He does by His Word and Spirit. Our allegiance to the teachings of the Bible as enunciated by John Calvin and the Westminster divines is a noble body of truth in which the covenanter places himself under the authority of Christ as He speaks to us in His Word.

Fourth, let any plan of union dissolve any hint of universalism and point us to Christ who is necessary to save men from hell and give them eternal life. "The only redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal son of God, became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, forever."

Fifth, let the plan state with crystal clarity that the primary mission of the Church is the redemption and nurture of souls in accordance with the great commission of our Lord. Such a mission lays upon us in compelling terms the urgency of New Testament evangelism. As converts are nurtured and grow in Grace they are to produce fruits of the spirit in compassion, service, generosity, and unselfishness. As men are reconciled to God in Christ they are equipped to become reconciled to each other.

Sixth, we would recommend the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms as the single Biblical creed sufficient in itself as an admirable summary of the Scripture and expression of our Faith. It carries in it the spirit of permanence. The Confession of Faith has stood in its essential integrity for 350 years because it is a faithful interpretation of the Word of God. It is not founded upon, nor should it be changed to meet, the tempo of any particular generation.

EMPHASIZE PARITY

Seventh, to remove the dangerous threat of clericalism, let the plan reemphasize the Presbyterian principle of the parity of the eldership. The church desperately needs to hear the voice and feel the influence of the laity. God has called by His Spirit every man that comes to him in faith. If we close our ears to the pew we will have shut ourselves off from one of the greatest channels through which God communicates to the Church.

Finally, if a plan of union is to win the respect of the lay constituencies it must deal with the question of Church property in an honest, fair, and loving way. If the proposed union produces more divisions than it eliminates, those who divide should be permitted to go their way as brethren, taking their possessions with them and without resorting to civil courts.

The Declaration of Commitment" (C. Darby Fulton's Atlanta rally address). Available at no charge are commitment cards (suitable for either individuals or sessions) and cards for ordering the rally tapes. Orders should be addressed: PCU, 263 Candler Dr., Macon, Ga. 31204.

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