

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHMEN UNITED

# Contact

Number 4

September 1970

## NORTH CAROLINA ACTIVITIES

By J. Lewis Baker, N. C. Contact Man

On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings September 21, 22, and 23, an outstanding team of speakers, including Dr. John E. Richards, Rev. Wm. E. Hill, Jr., and Dr. G. Aiken Taylor, spoke on various aspects of the crisis that threatens our church in a series of P. C. U. rallies held in the Synod of North Carolina.

Planning for these rallies was initiated some months earlier when the P. C. U. Executive Secretary met with the North Carolina contact men in Burlington. As our planning continued many helpful ideas were gained from the account of the Georgia rallies given at the P. C. U. meeting in Asheville in August.

Contact men in the cities where the rallies were to be held secured the meeting places and made overnight arrangements for the speakers. In the providence of God excellent churches were secured in which to meet—the historic Sugaw Creek Church in Charlotte, the Northside Church in Burlington, and the First Church in Goldsboro. As the time for the rallies approached printed invitation sheets were distributed to the Presbytery contact men and to other interested individuals and churches. Mr. Kenneth Keyes of Concerned Presbyterians graciously consented to supply envelopes addressed to the members of Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., in the Synod of N. C. About twelve days before the first rally, over 1650 letters of invitation were mailed out to members of Concerned Presbyterians, members and supporters of P. C. U., and other interested individuals. Articles and pictures of the speakers were sent to newspapers in the immediate area of the rallies. Notices were sent to other newspapers, to radio and T.V. stations and at least one church bought a display advertisement in a local newspaper.

Many individuals, churches, and groups across the Synod undergirded the rallies with their prayers and also made their own mailings. In all, well over 2,000 letters were sent out. As we sought to use all the means of publicity available to us, at the same time we realized that apart from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the rallies would accomplish nothing.

A group of over 300 (almost all men) attended the opening rally in Charlotte. Special music was provided by a

soloist from the host church. Rev. Paul G. Settle of the Northside Church in Burlington, and the P. C. U. contact man in Orange Presbytery, led the singing and moderated the question period following the speakers. The Synod contact man presided. The program consisted of hymns, Scripture, prayer, the addresses, and the question period.

Dr. John E. Richards, Executive Secretary of P. C. U., presented the history and purpose of our organization. Stressing the fact that we are a constitutional church with a definite polity and doctrinal confession, he noted efforts to turn our church from its constitution. In the face of this challenge, he said, P. C. U. came into being. He noted how a group of ministers met in the summer of 1967 to pray about conditions in the church, and how, during the next two years, God seemed to be saying that we ought to do something concerning the things we were praying about. From this came P. C. U. and the Declaration of Commitment in 1969. He indicated that minister signers now number about 625. Sessions who have committed themselves to the Declaration number more than 300, with almost 90,000 communicants in their churches. Dr. Richards paid tribute to other groups who stand with us in the same doctrinal position: *The Presbyterian Journal*, the Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship, Concerned Presbyterians, Inc., and the Reformed Theological Seminary. He quoted Dr. Wm. Childs Robinson's statement that "God has not left His Church without a witness." Stressing that this is no time to be idle, and noting the need for additional supporters and the need for financial contributions, Dr. Richards called on those present to work diligently in this cause.

Rev. Wm. E. Hill, Jr., founder, Executive Director, and evangelist with the Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship, stirred and challenged the group with his message on "The Crisis in Evangelism and Missions." Using the illustration of the woman who carried furniture, piece by piece, out of her burning home, only to remember too late that her baby was still inside, Hill said this is a parable of the church today. We are doing many good and worthwhile things, but in the light of what we are overlooking, many of our efforts are foolish and stupid. Using Paul's ministry in Ephesus as a pattern for Biblical evangelism, Mr. Hill noted Paul's message: repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ; his method: disputing, persuading, and testifying publicly and from house to house; and the results: conversion of church people; opposition which produced division and separation; special miracles of healing; religious quackery; fear falling on everyone and the name of Christ being magnified; open, public confession of sin; and a mighty growth of the Word of God. Some would contend, Mr. Hill said, that what we need to unify the church is a great revival. But revivals do not unite belief and unbelief. A revival would split our church wide open. But, he said, may God grant that the split might come that way rather than in the way it seems to be coming. There is, indeed, a crisis of evangelism in our church—we need a great revival—but for 40 years we have been failing. And, he said, it has been a failure of the evangelicals, as well as of others in the church. This is a part of the reason we have the crisis in the church today.

Dr. G. Aiken Taylor, Editor of *The Presbyterian Journal*, gave the concluding address on "The State of the Church." In the face of distressing news in the world, we would look to the church as a bulwark from the storm, but, he said, the news from the church is equally disturbing. With a long list of facts illustrating the distressing conditions



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SOUTH CAROLINA representative is Harry T. Schutte, pastor Covenant Presbyterian Church, Columbia. Address 3100 Covenant Rd., Columbia, S. C. 29204.

in the church as a whole and in our own denomination, he said that we have now reached the point where it is impossible to exaggerate the danger in the church today. The Presbyterian Church, U. S., he said, is not long for this world. If the plans of church leaders go according to schedule, then the funeral will be in 1974 when the U. S. and U.P.U.S.A. Assemblies hold joint meetings in Louisville. The building may still remain, he said, and some of the people may be the same, but the name over the door will be different. We may very well have reached the point where the only way to save our church may be to turn our backs upon Richmond, Atlanta, and Nashville. Quoting W. J. Williamson of Concerned Presbyterians, he said we must "Pray for preservation; fight against liquidation; and prepare for separation." We do not intend to leave the church, he said, — the church may leave us. We will not blindly follow men no matter where they lead. We follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

A total of approximately 700 attended the three rallies. The question period following the addresses was well-received, especially in Burlington where it lasted almost an hour as about 25 persons either asked questions or made statements. Special music was provided there by a trio from the host church. Attendance in Goldsboro was around 150. Some typical questions concerned church property, restructuring, UPUSA union, the social implications of the gospel, deviations from our constitution and youth's lack of interest in the church.

Many favorable comments have been heard since the rallies, and we trust that these rallies have been a significant aid to our witness in the Synod of North Carolina. We are grateful to God for His guidance in our planning and His presence in the rallies. It is our prayer that He may use them for His glory.

### OTHER ACTION IN PCU

Reported By John E. Richards, Executive Secretary

● UNDER THE LEADERSHIP of Contact Men, vital group activity is going on throughout the constituency of Presbyterian Churchmen United. Such activities have taken the form of small gatherings of leaders for the purpose of fellowship and planning, and Rallies for education and encouragement.

● REV. CHARLES TURNER, Contact Man in the Synod of Appalachia, assembled his Presbytery leaders in Knoxville on September 15. Together, plans were made for subsequent activities in that area. Following this meeting a group of 25 lay and ministerial leaders met in Knoxville on the evening of September 26 to discuss the issues now before the Church.

● A JOINT RALLY WITH CONCERNED PRESBYTERIANS was held at the Cedar Springs Church in Knoxville on Sunday afternoon, September 27. This meeting was planned and conducted by the Rev. Sam Cappel of PCU and Ruling Elders Oscar Tedford and Ben Powell of Concerned Presbyterians. The dynamic program and worship services of the fast growing and evangelical Cedar Springs Church enhanced the effectiveness of those who witnessed in this area. Executive Secretary of PCU addressed the Rally on the History and Purpose of PCU. Ruling Elder Kenneth Keyes, President of Concerned Presbyterians, speaking on the issues before our church pointed out 9 reasons why we should not unite with the UPUSA (Northern) Church. The Sanctuary of this large church was filled almost to capacity and intense interest was demonstrated in the discussion.



TENNESSEE leader is Harry S. Hassall, pastor of First Church, Murfreesboro. Address: Box 1097, Murfreesboro, Tenn. 37130.

VIRGINIA leader is Kennedy Smartt, pastor of West End Church, Hopewell, Va. Address: Atlantic Ave. and 16th St. Hopewell, Va. 23860.

WEST VIRGINIA contact man is Paul Bohn of Melrose and Grace Churches, Princeton. Address: Box 610, Rt. 5, Princeton, W. Va. 24740.

●REV. MICHAEL BOLUS of the Calvary Presbyterian Church and Ruling Elder Edwin A. Meeks of First Presbyterian Church joined in sponsoring a Rally for the Holston Presbytery area. Calvary Presbyterian Church was filled to capacity with worshipers vitally interested in the message of PCU which was given by the Executive Secretary, and moved enthusiastically by the clear and forthright witness of the leader of Concerned Presbyterians. The spirit was good and the meeting was attended by people of divergent viewpoints.

●THE SECOND MEETING IN VIRGINIA was held at the West End Church in Hopewell. This magnificent church affords a broad, dynamic program under the leadership of the Rev. Kennedy Smartt. Mr. Smartt, who is Contact Man for the Virginia area, sponsored this meeting along with Ruling Elders Ed Odom and Ed Tyler, from Richmond. More than 300 people attended with groups representing many churches of Hanover Presbytery. An unusual and encouraging interest was evident from the churches of Richmond.

●ON TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 29, Dr. Richards and Mr. Keyes spoke to a Rally at First Presbyterian Church Farmville, Virginia. The Rev. Sam Zealy, PCU Contact Man for the Appomatox Presbytery area and Ruling Elder T. J. McIllwaine had made thorough preparation for the meeting and approximately 300 were in attendance. This was the first such Rally which had been held in this section of Virginia. Those in attendance were enthusiastic and appreciative. Even though some people of divergent view were present, no open criticism or hostility was expressed. Richards, speaking on the History of Presbyterian Churchmen United, paid tribute to Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship, Concerned Presbyterians, Reformed Seminary, and the Presbyterian Journal as other evangelical groups which God has raised up within the Presbyterian Church US to bear a true Biblical witness in this crisis period of church history. In concluding his message against church union, Mr. Keyes announced that he had just received a message that Harmony Presbytery in South Carolina, and East Alabama Presbytery, had on that date taken action that they would not go into church union and that they would defend the right of congregations to control their own property.

●UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE REV. ERSKINE JACKSON a rally was held in the First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, Miss. The Rev. Donald Patterson, Chairman of The Executive Committee of PCU, is pastor of this church. Over 900 leaders assembled to hear Dr. G. Aiken Taylor speak on "The State of The Church" and listen to Judge Leon F. Hendricks explain "The Church Property Issue." John E. Richards, Executive Secretary of PCU gave an encouraging report on The Progress and Work of PCU. This was the first rally held in Mississippi and proved to be an enthusiastic expression of faith and fellowship.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS notices should be sent to the Executive Secretary, as listed above.

## IN SUPPORT OF MISSIONS

The August issue of "Contact" presented an address that had been delivered by missionary Dwight Linton. The fact that Mr. Linton's address struck a responsive cord is evidenced by the many requests for additional copies of the issue in which his address was printed. He has rendered the church at large a real service in this frank presentation.

From its very beginning Presbyterian Churchmen United have made special prayer for our faithful missionaries. There are many missionaries of our church who are faithfully declaring the Gospel of Salvation through Christ alone. We need to support them not only with our prayers, but with our money. How best to do this should be determined by local Sessions as they fulfill their constitutional responsibility in designating the benevolent funds of their church.

If any church or individual wishes to give to dedicated missionaries, the names of such missionaries can be furnished by the PCU Office. Many of our finest missionaries are signers of the Declaration of Commitment; they deserve our appreciation and consideration.

## STEWARDSHIP PLANNING

As you plan your giving at the close of 1970 and your projected giving for 1971 please consider PCU. This organization has no denominational budget from which to draw but is totally dependent upon the voluntary gifts of its supporters. Contributions are fully deductible as authorized by the Internal Revenue Service. Make checks payable to Presbyterian Churchmen United.

### 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 _____

## PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

We do earnestly call upon all signers of the declaration of commitment to appoint a special time on each Lord's Day for specific prayer that Christ, the Great Head of the Church, may lead us according to His plan and purpose. — Executive Committee of PCU.

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