

What They Write

Comments for this column should be written briefly and bear the signature and address of the writer, which the editor reserves the right to print. What appears here does not necessarily represent the Advocate's point of view.

Defends "Festival" Program

To the Editor:

I certainly did not rejoice in all aspects of the "Festival of Faith" at Cobo Hall in Detroit this year. I also agree with the editor that it should be called "Festival of Christian Faith." On the other hand, I must take exception to several implications in the letter to the editor by my respected colleague, Rev. G. Vernon White.

If one of our "Protestant beliefs" today is not a belief in the possibility of peace, then Protestantism is as badly in need of reform as was Roman Catholicism in the early 16th century and we won't accomplish much by trying to "warm over" the one that started in Luther's day. I hope Protestantism has not come to feel that peace is no concern to the followers of "the Prince of peace." This would certainly indicate that the previous Reformation had failed utterly.

That Harold Stassen is any longer a "Presidential aspirant" was news to me. After hearing his views about how to make and keep the peace, most of which seemed to me thoroughly realistic and therefore Christian, I only regret that he has not in the past held that high office. If he had, we might not now be bogged so hopelessly in the soggy cold war which poses its constant threat to all humanity, a threat which does not discriminate between Protestants, Roman Catholics, people of other faiths or atheists.

As a member of the program committee for the festival, I know that Mr. Stassen did not do quite what we asked him to do. Or rather he failed miserably to make clear what I think he felt he was doing but which needed much more spelling out and explanation. He was asked to show how a Christian layman can live his faith in a vital way in our time. I believe Mr. Stassen has done that far more effectively than most of the laymen who so easily criticized him after his speech. He has often proclaimed his Christian convictions to his own political disadvantage. The importance of the laity is certainly a Reformation belief and, if people failed to see the connection between that and Mr. Stassen's speech, it was partly due to Mr. Stassen's neglect but more to the ignorance of people as to what the Reformation really was. Those who feel that an afternoon devoted to thinking about peace in our time is "an afternoon wasted" or "disgusting" are the best evidence I know that a new Reformation MUST come soon.

Four and a half centuries after Witten-

berg I am not convinced that Martin Luther had all the right answers. There was, to be sure, a glory in the Reformation but it is time to press on from the glory of the past to a new glory of the future. There will be no such glory unless Christians, including Protestants, see that work for peace is not "disgusting" nor a "wasted afternoon." The glory of the future does depend upon the Christian faith, upon something mightier than either Roman Catholicism or Protestantism has shown us in the past or is showing us today. I am all for a Festival of the Christian Faith if it can furnish some new and vital insights as well as review the old ones. That was what made the Reformation so vital in its day and since.

Finally, the registration cards turned in indicate that the attendance was not "less than 5000" but considerably more than that. We always do well to get our facts. I am convinced much has been learned from the Festival experience this year and that it will be better next year. If Martin Luther and Calvin had given up as quickly as some modern Christians, we wouldn't have even a

General Lauds Japan's Christian University



ms photo

NEW YORK — General Douglas MacArthur greets Dr. Nobushige Ukai, president of the International Christian University in Japan. The Japanese educator called on the General in New York to express appreciation for his efforts in helping to establish the university, now celebrating its 10th anniversary. Gen. MacArthur said it was his "sincere belief that the future security and well-being of the Japanese people will be enhanced by their respect for the precepts which have motivated the founding of this great center of learning and of spiritual awareness." International Christian University is supported by 14 Protestant agencies in the United States.

church today, much less a festival of faith. The tabulations show the Methodists led the attendance with almost 1000. Glory be!—John W. Parrish, Ferrisdale.

Wonders Who Will Implement Council of Bishops' Statement On Race

To the Editor:

On the night of Nov. 13 a very interesting discussion took place at Central Church, Detroit, between five Methodist Bishops and a group of concerned persons about the Methodist stand on race. At one point I raised this question: "How will the Council of Bishops follow up their statement on race with action?"

I was told that each Bishop was free to act on his own. I asked whether there was anything binding upon the separate Bishops to follow this fine statement with resolute action. I was told that each Bishop would have to do as his own conscience directed on this matter. This means to me that any decision the Council makes is only binding on the Bishop who decides to take the witness and the statement seriously. If a Bishop lives in an Area where the race problem is an explosive issue, he may, if he desires, refuse to implement the statement made by the Council.

I am distressed deeply to learn that The Methodist Church is everywhere a connectional church except at the highest echelon of its authority. Though the Bishops are subject to Annual Conferences and General Conference directives, it is seldom that these conferences can speak with real courage to the Bishops. And seldom has genuinely prophetic action been taken by these conferences and given as directives to the Bishops. I should then like to know: who are the Bishops responsible to? To whom must they report concerning their intentions concerning this statement on the race situation? The answer I feel is that they must actually report to no one. They can do rather what they individually please with this statement. In some cases it may mean that a Bishop may actually work to oppose the intention of this statement.

It so happened that when 28 Mississippi Methodist ministers signed a moderate statement on integration in that state, they were threatened by their congregations and eventually some 20 of them had to leave the state. Other Bishops did not force the Methodists of the Southeastern Jurisdiction to accept these men. Instead they eased the problem by transferring these ministers to other Jurisdictions, thus provided a way of escape and so raised the issue of freedom of the pulpit for the whole Methodist Church. In this case the connectional system worked against

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"Luther" Comes to Broadway

the best interests of the Church and in violation of the Council of Bishops' statement on race.

I ask, where is the authority in The Methodist Church? Certainly it does not seem to live in our Council of Bishops or in the statements and agreements they make. This I deeply regret. —Richard C. Raines, Jr., Detroit.

Preaching and Practice

To the Editor:

The article, "Michigan Churches and Civil Rights," in the November 14 issue has prompted this comment.

It was the privilege of the writer to "sit in" at a meeting of the clergy in an unnamed Michigan town of a few thousand. The ministers were discussing sermons on integration and recommending definite legal action to assure open occupancy in the community. Good!

Then someone asked about the half dozen colored families in the community, "Have any of you clergymen ever called on them? Have you ever invited them to attend your Church? What have you personally done to assure them a welcome? What has the membership of your church done?"

The answer was "That has nothing to do with the matter at hand."

I wonder, I wonder if the Master were here if he would not say to them as he said to some church leaders of old, "This ye ought to have done and not left the other undone?"—A Wondering Subscriber.

Urges Preparation for EUB Union

To the Editor:

The announcement of certain details in the proposed plan of union of the Evangelical United Brethren and The Methodist Church has certainly provoked thought and comment. I am somewhat distressed to see that most of it revolves around the peripheral issue of a name for the united body.

A matter of genuine concern to me is the general lack of enthusiasm or even interest on the part of some local EUB and Methodist churches, particularly in communities where congregations worship in buildings fairly close together. This usually happens when neither group has much knowledge of the early history of the other. They are unaware of the cordiality which existed between our early leaders, and the many parallels of doctrine and organization that continue to this day.

There is little doubt that ecumenism, of which this union is a token, is too frequently non-existent on the local front. Isn't right now the best time for local churches to have the exciting opportunity of hearing each other's preachers,



Photo by ...

NEW YORK — A dramatization of the life and personal trials of the Protestant Reformer, Martin Luther, opened on Broadway and appeared destined to have a long run. Critics generally hailed the play, by England's John Osborne, as a thoughtful and provocative study of the man whose rebellion against the established church touched off irrevocable change in the religious world. Starring in the production is Albert Finney in the role of Luther, who also played the part in the long-running London production. With the Reformer (above) is John Moffatt as Cajetan, Cardinal of San Sisto, who attempts to persuade Luther to retract his criticisms of the church.

and to talk through differences and likenesses? The Conference Boards of the two denominations are already finding ways of working together that bode well for the future. Let us hope that local congregations, too, will discover many avenues of cooperation and conversation before the union reaches its final stages.—James E. Leach, Albion.

Would Better Prepare Youth

To the Editor:

I am much in accord with Neil R. Parker and his article on "What Methodist Youth Want." (Nov. 7 issue)

I think it is about time we Methodist adults wake up to the fact that our youth want to do something to strengthen our church.

I have attended Board meetings, Commission meetings, and worked with Sunday school teachers. We wonder why our youth are losing interest in the church, not attending Sunday school and MYF the way they used to. Then we discuss the kind of material we use to teach our youth and children. We don't want to be bothered with a lesson that will take some of our valuable time during the week to prepare. We want something simple that can be given with little or no preparation, after all we are busy adults!!

Then we discuss the atmosphere in which our youth have to study their lessons. We say let the Junior and Senior Highs use the same room but divide the classes with a draw curtain between them. We know that 30 to 40 young people need more room but after all when we were young there were 80 to 100 people who held their classes in the sanctuary only.

We can talk about remodeling the church to make it more pleasant to the eyes, but we seem to lose interest when we begin to discuss the need for more efficient classrooms.

How can we expect to recruit more ministers when our churches are not preparing the youth to be dedicated, unselfish servants of Christ? Are we setting an example of what we want in our future ministers?

Let us think about the statement that Bishop Gum of Louisville made at the special session of annual conference last month. He said "The preacher is called of God" and added that what the church has become is the fault of the minister.

Let us make our church a place that would produce the ministers that we need so badly. Let us look at ourselves to see if we are the dedicated, Christ-centered, laymen that our church needs. —Lew Bowen, Lawrence.

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Legislative Information Committee of the Michigan Council
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Lansing Legislative Memo

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CIVIL RIGHTS ROUNDUP

Michigan and the nation seethe in a climactic struggle over Civil Rights. The high tide of the Washington March for Jobs and Rights August 28th has receded. The difficult and sometimes disappointing task of winning effective legislation in Washington and Lansing is caught up in a political rip tide. This Memo will seek to outline and assess the Michigan scene and the Washington outlook.

THE MICHIGAN SCENE

Michigan's new constitution provides its mandatory Civil Rights Commission with broad inherent powers according to the ruling by State Attorney General Frank J. Kelley. These powers include jurisdiction over the determination of discriminatory practices on the basis of race, creed, or color in the areas of (1) job employment, (2) education, (3) public accommodations, (4) housing.

Kelley's ruling preempts the right of municipalities to establish binding local civil rights ordinances other than that proclaimed or determined by the Civil Rights Commission. In effect, Local Human Relations Commissions would operate under the rules and procedures established by the Michigan Civil Rights Commission.

A strong Commission has been appointed by Governor Romney. While its effective date of legal existence is January 1, 1964, the Commission has been hard at work under the Co-Chairmanship of Damon Keith and John Feikens. The Commission includes four Republicans and four Democrats. Rev. Dr. A. A. Banks, Jr., Vice President of the Michigan Council of Churches, President of the Wolverine Baptist Convention, and Chairman of the Council's Committee on Christian Race Relations and Civil Rights, is typical of the outstanding leaders named to the Commission.

The Commission has been hard at work developing a six-month budget for the period January to June, 1964, and a full year's budget for fiscal 1965 (July 1964 - June 1965). Outline structure for staff has been studied. (Candidates for the post of Executive Director are being interviewed.) The integration of the present Fair Employment Practices Commission into the enlarged program is being planned. A backlog of key policy rulings is building up due to requests for guidance from sister state governmental agencies and local government.

The Commission confronts an unprecedented situation. Until the courts clarify its powers, it will be wielding unique authority. The New York Civil Rights Commission, as well as the few other

such state commissions have their powers defined by legislative statute. While precedents, procedures, and rules established by the previous Michigan Fair Employment Practices Commission, and other state civil rights commissions will be helpful, in many situations the Michigan Civil Rights Commission will be pioneering in the most explosive period of race relations in our history.

ANTI-OPEN HOUSING PETITION

One of the most dramatic areas of change is in the field of housing. The clear prospect that formerly all-white neighborhoods will be confronted with efforts by Negroes and other minorities to purchase homes — and that these efforts will be supported by the Michigan Civil Rights Commission which will seek to ensure non-discriminatory practices by real estate agents, brokers, mortgage firms, banks, and all other parties to the process of the sale or rental of real estate — this prospect has galvanized real estate and home owners groups to seek to set the clock back and undo the Civil Rights achievements of Michigan's new constitution.

Coventry Cross Coming to World's Fair



rns photo

NEW YORK — The famed Charred Cross of the Cathedral Church of St. Michael in Coventry, England, will be displayed at the New York World's Fair. The cross, which stands here beside the ruins of a 500-year-old tower and spire and the outer walls of the cathedral destroyed by fire bombs in 1940, will be brought to the Music Garden of the Protestant and Orthodox Center at the fair by the U.S. Conference for the World Council of Churches. The Conference, an organization of the WCC's 30 member churches in this country, is sponsoring the exhibit "to symbolize the over-arching unity of the Churches and to emphasize the basic doctrine of resurrection and reconciliation."

Their method is an initiative petition to the Michigan Legislature that was circulated in September and October by the Greater Detroit Home Owners Council and the Michigan Home Owners Council to enact legislation described on the petition as follows:

"An act to define certain rights of Michigan residents and residential property owners; to define discrimination as applied to the use, sale, or renting of such property as used in Article V, Section 29 of the Michigan Constitution ratified April 1, 1963; and to define the duties of the Civil Rights Commission in relation thereto."

The aim of this initiative petition was to exempt real estate brokers and representatives from the "powers and duties of the Civil Rights Commission to investigate alleged discrimination or to secure protection of civil rights of any person under said section, and said commission may not make any rules or regulations or take any proceedings to the contrary" as stated in Section 2 of the proposed legislation.

The ruling by Attorney General Kelley on the constitutional powers of the Civil Rights Commission raised the question whether or not the Legislature could so exempt real estate brokers or any other group. It became clear that the constitution itself would have to be amended. Rumors are flying around the state that various home-owner groups and real estate associations are planning a petition campaign with the purpose of placing on the November 1964 ballot a Constitutional Amendment that would alter the Civil Right provisions and achieve the aim of the aforementioned initiative petition.

Should this occur, Michigan would be torn from one end to the other with a deeprooted struggle over the basic Civil Rights policy of this state. At the same time in Washington the Civil Rights legislation, now apparently deferred till the summer or later of 1964 will be in the storm center of the politics of a national election.

WASHINGTON OUTLOOK

Political observers and congressmen themselves (i.e. Dingell, Michigan) have publicly stated that the Federal Civil Rights legislative package cannot successfully run the gauntlet of a House of Representatives vote followed by a Senate Committee review and a filibuster on the floor of the Senate before the close of the session after Christmas or earlier.

A coalition of Republicans and Democrats in the House Judiciary Committee are pushing a far-reaching bill to Committee vote. As of this writing, Title I of the bill prohibits the use of subjective literacy tests and technicalities by southern registrars to bar Negro voters in federal elections. Title II prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color or national origin in

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