A Future with a History

The Wesleyan Witness of the Free Methodist Church

1960 to 1995

Volume I
A History with Promise

BY

David L. McKenna

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Edited By
David L. McKenna

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By David L. McKenna.

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A FUTURE WITH A HISTORY
by David L. McKenna

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Contents

A Future with a History

Dedicated to:

Hugh and Edna C. White

Outstanding Lay Leaders
of our generation whose
vision never faded

Faithful Lovers
of their Lord, their family, and each other whose
model is exemplary

Unswerving Loyalists
to their church, from local congregation to
distant mission field, whose
imprint is indelible
and

Humble Stewards
of all their resources whose
investment is eternal

A Tribute To

Hugh A. and Edna C. White

Partners in Ministry

God gave Edna and Hugh White the gifts of creativity and generosity, which they used to serve Him in many different parts of the Free Methodist Church. Before she was married, Edna teamed up with Esther Young to teach school and pioneer Sunday schools in the Kentucky mountains. These two single women faced wild animals as well as moonshiners and horse thieves as they worked to bring Jesus to people whom the "better folks" had forgotten. Hugh's father's ill health had caused Hugh to leave school after the eighth grade to run the family farm.

Seven years later, his father, then recovered, asked Hugh, "Would you like to go to Spring Arbor for high school?"

"I couldn't have been happier if he had said, 'Would you like to go to heaven?'" Hugh remembered.

After they were married and had two children, Edna always kept their bags packed to be ready to go where Hugh's job as a bank auditor took him. One day he called from Kentucky to ask the family to come down for the weekend. Of course Edna was ready; they lived there for three years. Edna was just as quick to respond to the Lord's call, visiting every family from the Ferndale Sunday school through two generations, taking food and clothes to them, along with Jesus' love. Hugh also taught in the Sunday school during all those years, leading a variety of classes from third grade boys to high school seniors. Always the evangelist, near the end of his life Hugh carried the Four Spiritual Laws when visiting his life-long friends in the hospital, and there lead at least one of them to the Lord.

During the Depression the church's school at Spring Arbor ran out of money, the creditors foreclosed, and the sheriff chained the doors shut. Hugh felt the Lord telling him not to let the school go under, so he went to the bank and bought the mortgage, promising to pay it himself. Later he creatively began the "living endowment" by

recruiting donors who together promised to give each year the amount equal to that which a substantial endowment would have provided. Under his leadership, Spring Arbor survived the Depression and, in the sixties, became a four-year college.

Another creative idea the Lord gave Hugh is the Free Methodist World Fellowship. In the late fifties independence movements were brewing across Africa. Hugh served for many years on the Missions Committee, and he and Edna visited our missionaries all over the world. He thus understood that the church had to restructure to recognize the strength and vitality, along with the continuing needs, of the church in these emerging countries. He developed the World Fellowship, which energized and freed the church overseas to grow so that now it is more than triple the size of its parent in America.

Hugh thought up the idea of the Division of Planned Giving to help people in our church dedicate more of their resources to the Lord. He then planned for it to become the independent Free Methodist Foundation which now manages more than $91 million, channeling its funds into various Free Methodist ministries. Tracking down Edna and Hugh's giving is difficult because they usually kept it hidden. Their children remember when their parents began to double tithe their income. This was the beginning of many major gifts to the Free Methodist Church. Following the Whites' visits to mission stations and needy Free Methodist churches, money would often appear for special projects. Their gifts included the youth building and gymnasium at the Ferndale, Michigan, church and Beta Hall, a three-story dormitory at Spring Arbor College. Working with various foundations and wealthy individuals, Hugh also secured many significant gifts for Spring Arbor College and other worthy causes.

Their two children and seven grandchildren have followed the example of Edna and Hugh in serving the Lord by entering the ranks of Sunday school teachers, missionaries, delegates, pastors, professors and trustees. They are trying to pass Edna and Hugh's creativity and generosity on to the 15 great-grandchildren.

– *Dr. Charles E. White, for the White family*

Foreword

No ministry group survives long that fails to reemphasize its origin and mission in each succeeding generation. Nor will any Spirit-created denomination remain a force for godliness that either veers from its mission or fails to understand the unfolding of God's sovereign guidance. The tension over what has been and should always be, in relation to what should be and never has been, will forever remain in a growing body that is committed to biblical truth and evangelistic outreach.

Perhaps as at no other time in its 135 years of existence, the Free Methodist Church stands at a crossroad. Stability, tradition, order, reliability and comfortable forms mark one path. In contrast, a spirit of innovation, cultural change, lowered interest in history, growth orientation and creative energy beckon for radical change. No longer will shibboleths or stories of past days satisfy the cravings of younger Christians. Nor will they satisfy the curious of the contemporary culture who question the meaning of our existence and the purpose of our mission.

In brief, the Free Methodist Church again seeks to define its soul, articulate its mission, respond to its origin and seek a fresh understanding of God's purpose for this day. Is our place in the religious world different from mainstream evangelicalism? If not, why exist? If it is, what is that place and nature of ministry in light of our understanding of Scripture and our origin? Is this understanding adequate to

fire our souls, challenge our youth, empower our ministers and mobilize our laity?

At Hebron, David enjoyed the luxury of the men of Issachar who "understood the times and knew what Israel should do." We too, look for those who understand the issues, clearly comprehend the alternatives and offer sound insight and advice.

If leadership is defined as understanding the issues and consequences better than those around them, the author of this work, Dr. David L. McKenna, comes with pristine leadership credentials. His skills of analysis coupled with his understanding of the church commend him to this task.

Ordained in the Michigan conference (now Southern Michigan Conference) in 1952, Dr. McKenna felt the call of God to complete doctoral studies. With his academic background, serving on the faculties of Ohio State University and the University of Michigan, and burgeoning leadership skills, he became president of Spring Arbor College in 1961 where he served for seven years. Following that, he served Seattle Pacific University as president for 14 years.

In 1982 Dr. McKenna's theological ability and leadership skills resulted in his selection as the fourth president of Asbury Theological Seminary. On his watch and under his leadership occurred the most outstanding growth in the institution's history. His further contributions include scores of articles and books produced by a variety of publishers.

During these years Dr. McKenna kept in vital touch with his church by serving as active participant in General Conference debates and serving on pivotal committees. Most recently, he chaired the Headquarters Relocation Committee. That body recommended to the 1989 General Conference that the denomination's headquarters be moved from Winona Lake to Indianapolis, Indiana. This was carried out in 1990, and the building named World Ministries Center.

Seldom do unusual wisdom, superior intellect, and a passionate love for the church reside in one person. All three flourish in Dr. David McKenna. His devotion to the task of "getting his hands around

the amoeba of the Free Methodist Church" has provided a challenge worthy of his finest effort.

Undaunted by unexpected physical difficulties and encouraged by his jubilant and faith-filled wife, Janet, Dr. McKenna has rendered a service to his church that will inform both its loyalists and critics for decades to come. His ability to synthesize the vast amount of changes during the past 35 years, making sense out of what sometimes may have appeared as nonsense, defines his superlative, landmark contribution to the church.

The result of this timely work (to be completed in the fall of 1995 with the addition of volume II) will provide a clear understanding of the defining moments, core values and future trends within the Free Methodist Church. In addition, Dr. McKenna's prescriptive element will be detected by careful readers as a golden thread clarifying our identity and our mission.

Not only will Free Methodists profit greatly by his insights. So also will those within other denominations that have experienced similar changes in the last four decades.

A Future with a History: The Wesleyan Witness of the Free Methodist Church will inspire your heart, inform your mind and bring you to a clearer understanding of the exciting challenges at hand.

John E. Van Valin,
Publisher

Appreciation

Publishing denominational histories requires substantial financial support. The value of such writing, however, can never be measured in currency. The effect on individuals, pastors, church workers, institutions of higher learning and the reservoir of ministerial knowledge continues for generations. An undertaking of this magnitude would have proved impossible without the generous support of many friends of the Free Methodist Church and the author Dr. David L. McKenna.

Profound gratitude is extended to:

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Author's Preface

Bishops of the Free Methodist Church have a keen sense of history. Shortly after the turn of the century, Bishop Wilson T. Hogue chronicled the first 40 or so years of the church in two volumes entitled *History of the Free Methodist Church.* Bishop Leslie R. Marston followed in 1960 with the centennial history under the title *From Age to Age: A Living Witness.* Both works are recognized for their scholarship and spirit.

Consistent with the sensitivity of their predecessors, the current bishops of the church – Gerald E. Bates, David M. Foster and Richard D. Snyder – called for the writing of an updated history from 1960 to the present with a view to completion on or before the year 2000.

Knowing of my pending retirement from the presidency of Asbury Theological Seminary, the bishops invited me to be the author. As a person whose life and career in the church spans the period under study, I responded with interest in the project, but withheld a final decision until I had time for prayer, reflection and counsel. When my wife, Janet, and I talked over our priorities for retirement, we remembered how much we owe the church, love its people and care about its future. All other projects of retirement fell into second place and we were ready to accept the bishops' invitation with a joyous "Yes."

But first we had to be assured of the resources to write a history that deserved to stand on the shelf next to the works of Hogue and Marston. Immediately, Miss Florence Taylor, secretary and administrative assistant to the Board of Bishops from 1952 to 1991, volun-

teered to do the work as research consultant for the history. In addition, Publisher John Van Valin engaged Robert Wood, retired editor of Francis Asbury Press with Zondervan Publishing Company, as editor for the project. Further expertise was then gained when distinguished research historians and representative church leaders responded affirmatively to an invitation for membership on the steering committee for the history. Those members are:

Gerald Bates – Bishop of the Free Methodist Church
David Bundy – Professor of Church History and Director of the Library at Christian Theological Seminary
Melvin Dieter – Professor Emeritus of Church History, Asbury Theological Seminary
Dwight Gregory – Superintendent of the New York Conference of the Free Methodist Church
Frances Haslam, Director of the Historical Center of the Free Methodist Church
Evelyn Mottweiler – Retired Director of the Historical Center of the Free Methodist Church
Richard Stephens – President Emeritus of Greenville College
Florence Taylor – Retired Administrative Assistant to the Board of Bishops of the Free Methodist Church
John Van Valin – Publisher of the Light and Life Press of the Free Methodist Church
Robert Wood – Retired Editor of the Francis Asbury Press of Zondervan Publishing Company

To complete the team for the writing of the history, Carolyn Dock, administrative secretary to the president of Asbury Theological Seminary, who had worked with me on other research and writing projects, agreed to coordinate the surveys and prepare the manuscript in the role as administrative assistant to the author.

A proposal was then presented to Glenn E. White, president of the White Foundation and a lay leader of the Board of Administration, with the plan to write the history in dedication to Hugh and Edna White whose love and leadership for the church stands alone in the

era under study. The White Foundation responded with a $30,000 grant as an incentive for individual gifts totaling $75,000, the budgeted amount for the project. A special letter went to individuals in the United States and Canada, explaining the project and inviting them to become Founders of the Vision or Patrons of the History. Their response met the funding need and set the project underway.

No word is adequate to express my personal gratitude to Miss Florence Taylor for her countless hours of work researching primary sources, compiling information on computer, and cross-checking the historical accuracy of the manuscript. Her encyclopedic mind is uncanny and her ability to put the flesh of firsthand experience on the skeleton of historical facts is amazing.

Publisher John Van Valin is a rarity in his field. While he must keep one eye on the marketplace and the other eye on the budget, he never lost focus of the purpose of the project nor compromised on its quality. He took risks of leadership to launch the project, remained flexible during my unexpected illness, yet kept up the "inspiration" of the publisher's deadline.

In the wisdom of Ecclesiastes 4:9 we read, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor." In the writing of this history, "many" have proved better than one and with each of them I share the "good reward of their labor."

David L. McKenna

A Future with a History

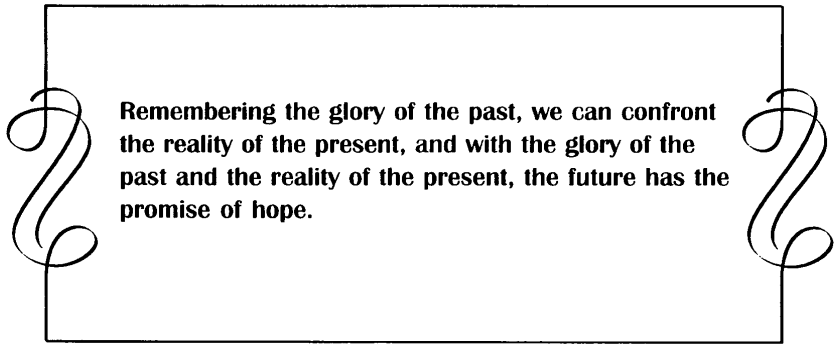
The Wesleyan Witness of the Free Methodist Church

Volume I
Part I

BENCHMARKS OF A CENTURY 1860-1960

"We are very firm in the conviction that it is the will of the Lord that we should establish free churches – the seats to be forever free – where the Gospel can be preached to the poor."

Editorial in
The Earnest Christian,
September 1860


Remembering the glory of the past, we can confront the reality of the present, and with the glory of the past and the reality of the present, the future has the promise of hope.

CHAPTER I

Lest We Forget

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Free Methodists are people with a story. Whenever they hear the inevitable question, "What is a FREE Methodist?" their best answer is, "Let me tell you a story." Simply and straightforwardly, then, they can unfold the drama of Free Methodist history beginning more than 150 years ago. It is a story of epic proportions, complete with political intrigue, personal sacrifice, spiritual conflict and far-reaching social consequences. Once the story is heard, the listener will know why Free Methodists find their mission for the future in the meaning of their history.

A STORY OF COMMUNITY

A sense of history has been lost in our secular society. Robert Bellah, in his book *Habits of the Heart*, notes that one of the greatest losses of a secular age is the richness of a "community of memory" through which people remember their past and find the foundation for a "community of hope" in the future. In their place, a secular society offers only a "community of interest" as temporary therapy for the loneliness of radical self-interest.[1]

A COMMUNITY OF INTEREST – Bellah's primary thesis in *Habits of the Heart* is that the American character is being shaped by radical individualism in a secular society. Self-interest is the motiva-

tional force that leads individuals to "be what they want to be for their own good" and "do what they want to do for their own pleasure." The reward is self-gratification, but the penalty is loneliness. Consequently, the search for community becomes therapy for isolation. Bellah writes, "In a 'community of interest,' self-interested individuals join together to maximize individual good."[2]

While adopting the language of a caring climate with such code words as "love," "intimacy," "belonging" and "identity," the fact is that the "community of interest" still perpetuates individual good in the pursuit of self-actualization. "Personal support networks" are a favored synonym for the community of interest. More often than not, the members come together around a single interest, such as alcohol or divorce, and are connected by this specialized need rather than by the needs of the personality or character as a whole. At best, the community of interest is a stopgap measure that may temporarily alleviate loneliness, but its memory is narrow and its hope is short.

A COMMUNITY OF MEMORY – According to Bellah, "community" is loosely used in popular language today. He sees community, however, as a strong word that means "a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision-making and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it."[3] As a community, they tell stories of its past, share practices of commitment to its purposes and speak a "second language" that only community members can understand. Because such a community cannot be formed overnight, Bellah adds, "It almost always has a history and so is also a *community of memory,* defined in part by its past and its memory of its past."[4]

In the memory bank will be stories of unforgettable events, significant institutions and exemplary individuals whom the community celebrates from time to time and transfers from generation to generation. At the same time, painful accounts of suffering, both shared together and inflicted upon others, will not be ignored or dismissed. Without remembering the suffering that goes along with the celebra-

tion, the community of memory lacks depth and offers no lessons from which the next generation can learn. Because secularism literally means "This Age-ism," history becomes a handicap and all meaning is wrapped up in the present moment. Current events are celebrated as "happenings" that come and go, suffering is reported by "sound bites" and heroes rise and fall in their "fifteen minutes of fame." A "community of memory" in a secular society is a contradiction in terms.

A COMMUNITY OF HOPE – By definition, a secular society that finds all meaning in the present moment has no promise for the future. Some Baby Boomers, for instance, hold little hope for society but great promise for themselves. In contrast, when aspirations for the future are added to the memory bank of stories in the community of memory, Robert Bellah sees the group transformed into a "community of hope." Optimism for the future is not limited to individual aspirations. As visions for the future are collectively shared and mutually developed, a sense of contributing to the "common good" adds qualitative meaning to life. Bellah sees religion as the primary example of a community of hope. He writes,

> Religious communities, for example do not experience time in the way the mass media presents it– as a continuous flow of qualitatively meaningless sensations. The day, the week, the season, and the year are punctuated by an alternation of the sacred and the profane. Prayer breaks into the daily life at the beginning of a meal, at the end of the day, at common worship reminding us that our utilitarian pursuits are not the whole of life, that a fulfilled life is one in which God and neighbor are remembered first.[5]

Religion, then, is the natural vehicle for a community of memory and a community of hope. With a sense of history, there is a line of continuity from the past to the present and from the present into the future. Try as it might, a secular age fails to meet the deepest needs of human longing and belonging.

A STORY OF REDEMPTION

A secular perspective of time is a direct contradiction with the biblical time line of redemption. God's perspective in history can be understood only as a continuous thread through the glory of the past, the reality of the present and the promise of the future.

REMEMBERING THE GLORY OF THE PAST – The theme for the book of Deuteronomy is "Remember." With God's miraculous act of deliverance from slavery in Egypt, a community of memory was created for the children of Israel (Deuteronomy 5:15). Throughout their history in the wilderness of Sinai, the establishment of the kingdom, and even into their days of suffering in Babylonian exile, their guiding hope was to remember what God had done in the Exodus from Egypt. Even today, Jewish children are taught to remember the miracles of their history. A vivid scene comes to mind. During a visit to the Billy Rose Museum in Jerusalem, a class of Jewish children sat on the floor listening to their teacher describe in detail the Jewish resistance at Masada in 70 A.D. when 900 Jews died rather than surrender to the Roman conquerors. At the close of the lesson, the teacher pointed an index finger into every child's face and then said, "Remember who you are. You are the children of Masada."

CONFRONTING THE REALITY OF THE PRESENT – The reality of the present requires the acceptance of what William Bridges calls "endings" and "new beginnings."[6] Some old things need to end and some new things need to begin for transformation to take place. Because the Jews became a people "stuck in place" while needs changed and revelation moved on, they missed the Messiah. During the long years of their Babylonian exile, for instance, some Jews remembered the Exodus and bewailed the silence of God in their plight. Others forgot the miracles of the past, exploited the commercial opportunities of Babylon and succumbed to the idolatry of the pagan culture. Only those who remembered the miracles of the past and repented of

the sins that brought them into exile became the remnant through whom God could work again.

ANTICIPATING THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE – To the Jews in Babylonian exile, who remembered the miracles of the past and confronted the reality of the present, God spoke again. He tells His people, "Forget the former things. Do not dwell upon the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland" (Isaiah 43:19). Into the harsh reality of their present condition as exiles in Babylon, God shows them how He is preparing the way for the New Exodus. They will have a story of their own. Not only will they be delivered from Babylonian captivity, but despite their rebellion, the children of Israel will still inherit the promise of redemption for the whole world because they are the seed through whom the Messiah will come.

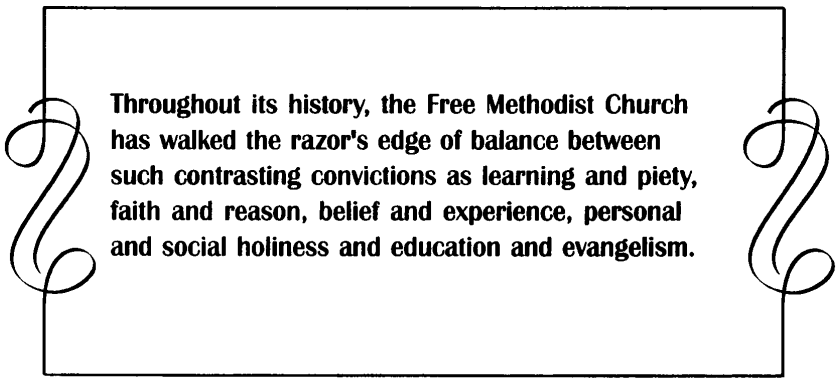
In the revelation is our biblical perspective for history. Remembering the glory of the past, we can confront the reality of the present, and with the glory of the past and the reality of the present, the future has the promise of hope.

FREE METHODISM AND REDEMPTIVE HISTORY

Free Methodists represent a counterculture in a secular society. They are not a church created out of a community of interest, but a company of the committed who belong to a community of memory and share a community of hope. More than that, they align themselves with the biblical time line of redemptive history. Remembering the glory of their past, they know who they are. At the same time, they know that it would be fatal to put the Free Methodist Church into a time warp in which the past cannot be distinguished from the present or the future. It would be equally futile to succumb to the secular temptation to find all meaning in the reality of the present. The crippling is the same, only contemporary. Stargazing futurism is no better.

Like revolutionaries who dream that future history can be written on a blank slate, visionaries, without a firm anchor in the past or an honest assessment of the present, become burned-out and charred reminders of a faulty futurism.

For these reasons, the movement of Free Methodism cannot be interpreted with dominance in any one era. To be biblically redemptive and historically sound, our updated history of the Free Methodist Church from 1960-1995 must begin not with 1960, but with a search for roots in history that even predates the founding of the church in 1860. Once the community of memory is established, then, our study can proceed to confront the reality of the present from 1960 to 1995. Memory and reality will not bring us to despair. Because Free Methodism has a chosen role in the biblical time line of redemption, its future can be anticipated with God's promise for a community of hope. This is the story of the people called Free Methodists.


Throughout its history, the Free Methodist Church has walked the razor's edge of balance between such contrasting convictions as learning and piety, faith and reason, belief and experience, personal and social holiness and education and evangelism.

CHAPTER II

From Birth Through Childhood

PRE-1860-1893

A church, even though ordained of God, is a human institution with a life cycle not unlike other living organisms. It is born to change and grow, but also subject to aging and death. Like other living organisms, the church goes through the stages of conception, birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence and early and mature adulthood in a predictable pattern of development. Between each of these stages is a transition period that usually involves some stress and strain as the living organism, or the church organization, leaves one stage and advances to another. At this crucial time, the way in which the stress of transition is handled determines whether the result is growth, stagnation or decline. Even more critically, transition is the time when the living organism, or the church organization, can become sick and possibly die. In such cases, external and drastic intervention may be required as therapy for renewal.

The difference between a healthy and an unhealthy church can also be read in the analogy of the living organism. Healthy organisms, or organizations, direct the bulk of their energy outwardly and proactively to accomplish a task or achieve a goal. Unhealthy organisms or organizations, in contrast, expend their energy inwardly on self-preservation or dysfunctional conflict. In such cases, both the efficiency of operation and the effectiveness of performance are lost. Yet there is hope. While neither living organisms nor church organizations are immortal, they can be renewed by redirecting the energy

toward the external mission, particularly during a time of transition. Furthermore, health can be maintained in the living organism, or the church organization, by preventive measures to keep the direction of energy flowing outwardly.[1]

As a new perspective on the Free Methodist Church, a synopsis of its history during the first century is well-suited to the life cycle of a living organism. Through this analogy, the church can be described at each stage in its development, seen in its times of transition, analyzed for the direction of its energy and evaluated for the results of its performance. Because the Free Methodist Church is not a perfect human institution, an overview of its life cycle during the first century of its history will not only personalize its successes and its struggles, but more importantly, it will reveal its readiness in 1960 to be the Spirit-guided and mission-driven ministry envisioned by its founders.

A RELUCTANT BIRTH
Pre-1860

CONCEIVING SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP – While the Free Methodist Church was formally born on August 23, 1860, its conception predates that event by many years. In the 1840s, a student at Wesleyan College in Connecticut named Benjamin Titus Roberts heard the evangelist Dr. John Wesley Redfield preach during a campus revival. Although Roberts had been converted earlier and changed his career plans from law to ministry, the ministry of Redfield stirred his soul with a passion for revival that he never lost. In one sense, when the intellectually gifted and socially sensitive Roberts confessed Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior and responded to the call to ministry, the first seeds of Free Methodism were sown.

B.T. Roberts became an aggressive witness to his faith and a fearless advocate for his convictions. Whether he knew it or not, he also embodied the principle believed by John Wesley and articulated by Charles Wesley when he prayed, "Let us unite these two, so long divided, learning and vital piety." To understand this principle of

integration between learning and piety is not only to understand Wesleyan theology, it is to understand the mission and meaning of the Free Methodist Church. Throughout its history, the Free Methodist Church has walked the razor's edge of balance between such contrasting convictions as learning and piety, faith and reason, belief and experience, personal and social holiness and education and evangelism.

B.T. Roberts met another crisis on his spiritual journey at a camp meeting in 1850, the year of his ordination, where Mrs. Phoebe Palmer and her husband propounded the work of holiness. Charles E. White, who has given Mrs. Palmer the title of "Grandmother of Free Methodism," describes her ministry:

> Mrs. Palmer's message at that camp meeting was simple: one could be endued with power from on high if he laid his all on the altar, trusted God to make him holy and then bore witness that God had kept His word. She taught that this was the entire sanctification that Wesley preached, the holiness that the Bible promised.[2]

In response to the call, B.T. Roberts testified,

> Two paths were distinctly marked out for me. I saw that I might be a popular preacher, gain applause, do but a little good in reality and at last lose my soul; or I might take the narrow way, declare the whole truth as it is in Jesus, meet with persecution and opposition but see a thorough work of grace go on and gain heaven. Grace was given me to make the better choice. I deliberately gave myself anew to the Lord, to declare the whole truth as it is in Jesus and to take the narrow way. The blessing came. The Spirit fell on me in an overwhelming degree. I received a power to labor such as I had never felt before. This consecration has never been taken back.[3]

Thus inflamed by the fire of Pentecost and empowered by the filling of the Holy Spirit, B.T. Roberts took revival with him wherever he went, whether to dying congregations as a pastor or to new fields

of harvest as an evangelist. True to his Wesleyan experience, he also brought with him the moral fervor of his biblical convictions about human slavery and compassion for the poor. As Elton Smith has pointed out, Roberts was a risk taker who had declared at the time of his sanctification, "Yet the determination is fixed, to obey the Lord and take the narrow way, come what will."[4] When his spiritual fervor and his moral fire combined with his pointed pen, trouble inevitably brewed in the established hierarchy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, where he served as a parish minister.

CARRYING BIBLICAL CONVICTIONS – B.T. Roberts did not intentionally incite a division in the church and among the clergy. A breech already existed between those who espoused spiritual revival in the church and those who protected the status quo of a church accommodated to the culture. But now, the fuel of name-calling flashfired the coals of controversy into open flame. In the Genesee Conference, in New York, where B.T. Roberts served as a pastor, the ministerial ranks were already divided into factions labeled "The Buffalo Regency" (the entrenched establishment of the Genesee Conference) and "The Nazarites" (the contenders for reform in personal and social holiness). Rather than confronting the fundamental issues of doctrine, ethics, spirituality and seeking a biblical path to reconciliation, however, politics and personalities took over.

The line in the sand was drawn when B.T. Roberts wrote a paper entitled "New School Methodism," a sardonic twist on the fact that the revivalistic Nazarites had been accused of abandoning the faith of "Old School Methodism." Roberts showed his paper to George Estes, a prominent layperson, who published and circulated the article throughout the conference without the author's approval. Once the word was out, however, the point of his pen became a barb as he accused The Buffalo Regency – the ecclesiastical power brokers of the Genesee Conference – with charges of:

– subordinating devotion to beneficence in doctrine;

- combining regeneration and sanctification into one experience;
- distrusting the profession of deep Christian experience;
- displacing the class meeting, love feast and prayer meeting with social parties;
- building elaborate churches with rented pews and professional musicians to attract a fashionable audience;
- encouraging by silence, the adornment of gold and costly apparel; and
- selling pews and holding bazaars as the substitute for biblical stewardship.[5]

While these charges are necessarily stated in the negative, they contain the essence of the biblical and Wesleyan affirmations from which the Free Methodist Church was conceived.

LABORING WITH PAIN – The political conflict that raged over the next three years in the Genesee Conference illustrates how vicious ecclesiastical politics can be. Charges of "immoral and unchristian conduct unbecoming a minister" were brought against Roberts in 1857, yet he was returned to his Pekin charge with an appeal pending with the General Conference of 1860. Adding to the irony, he was unanimously elected to preach the memorial sermon for W.C. Kendall, an esteemed pastor who died during the conference sessions. He also filled the honored role as chairman for the anniversary service of the American Bible Society.

Although B.T. Roberts might have launched a counteroffensive of political support for his position, he chose not to follow a course that would split the church. Instead, he appealed through the established ecclesiastical process from the district to the Genesee Annual Conference. Meanwhile, suspended from the ministry and under the compulsion to preach, he made the procedural error of joining the church as a layperson and then reapplying for probationary ministerial status before the issue of his ministerial credentials was settled in the higher court. Later, this decision would become the legal noose that

would hang him, but the action itself probably reflects Robert's naïveté in dealing with the subterfuge of a kangaroo court. His political savvy fared no better. By continuing to preach with revival results and opening himself to the charge of circulating the inflammatory article, "New School Methodism," the outcome of appeal became inevitable. At the Perry, New York, session of the Annual Conference in 1858, Roberts was expelled from ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church along with other clergy and laity who shared his views.

The die was cast. Although Roberts, like John Wesley, never set out to found another church, the momentum of spiritual revival and social conscience could not be stopped. Church history records a fundamental fact. When the enthusiasm generated by the movement of God's Spirit is stifled within the established church, new forms for its expression will be found. Laymen's Conventions became those new forms of expression throughout New York State during the time of Roberts' appeal and after his expulsion from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Laymen's Conventions in the East and West protested against the injustices of the Methodist clergy and particularly against the expulsions of B.T. Roberts and Joseph McCreery, clergymen whose holy lives and spiritual ministries condemned the charges as concocted and absurd. A denomination was in the making, but not by intent. The resolution for the first Laymen's Convention in Albany, New York, in 1858 read:

> "We trust that none will think of leaving the church, but let us all stand by and apply the proper and legitimate remedy for the shameless outrages that have been perpetrated under the forms of justice ... We recommend Rev. B.T. Roberts and Rev. J. McCreery to travel at large and labor as opportunity presents, for promoting the work of God and the salvation of souls.[6]

In the midst of these tumultuous days, the 1860 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church convened at Buffalo, stronghold of The Regency faction. Injustice was compounded as the General Conference:

- united in tacit support of human slavery and against the Nazarite faction;
- refused to investigate the Genesee Conference problem involving B.T Roberts and other expelled clergypersons; and
- sustained the Genesee Conference action against Roberts by a tie vote and refused to entertain further appeals for independent counsel, trial in a civil court, change of venue and trial by committee.

With all legal avenues closed and the breech irreparable, there was no recourse but the formation of a new church. Therefore, in August 1860 the invitation went out:

> A Convention will be held at Pekin, for the purpose of adopting a Discipline for the Free Methodist Church, to commence at the close of the camp meeting, Aug. 23. All societies and bands that find it necessary, in order to promote the prosperity and permanency of the work of holiness, to organize a free church on the following basis are invited to send delegates:
>
> 1. Doctrine and usages of primitive methodism, such as the witness of the Spirit, entire sanctification as a state of grace distinct from justification and attainable instantaneously by faith. Free seats, and congregational singing, without instrumental music in all cases; plainness of dress.
>
> 2. An equal representation of ministers and members in all the councils of the church.
>
> 3. No slaveholding, and no connection with secret or oath bound societies.
>
> Each society or band will be entitled to send one delegate at least; and an additional one for every forty members.[7]

BIRTHING A FREE CHURCH – In response to the call, 15 preachers and 45 laymen gathered at Pekin, New York, and vigorously debated the issue of whether or not a new church should be organized at this time. Roberts himself had been in doubt until mo-

ments before the convention opened. While sitting under an apple tree with other leaders just prior to the opening of the convention, he conceded that years of "hoping against hope" for the reform of the Methodist Episcopal Church had run their course and no alternative remained. So when Dr. John Wesley Redfield closed the debate by saying, "We are ready, and the West and East should move in this matter simultaneously," B.T. Roberts, along with two-thirds of the clergy and 40 members of the laity, voted the Free Methodist Church into being.

Was the timing right? Was the decision inevitable? Was the action schismatic? These are questions for judgment that are specifically addressed in Roberts' book *Why Another Sect* and Bowen's *Origin of the Free Methodist Church.* It is certain that B.T. Roberts never intended to found a church and it is equally certain that justice suffered in the ecclesiastical power plays that led to his expulsion. Small relief though it may be, in 1910 the Genesee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church rescinded its action and posthumously restored the credentials of B.T. Roberts. His son attended the service, graciously and honestly addressed the conference and received his father's ordination papers as the symbol of full restoration.

Pulled by conviction and pushed by injustice, then, the Free Methodist Church reluctantly came to birth. To students of organized religion, the new church would be categorized as a sect because of its revivalistic fervor, its emphasis upon personal holiness and its freedom from the constraints of an institutionalized structure.[8]

Like a newborn child, the Free Methodist Church entered its infancy with fervor and freedom to grow under the parenting of its first general superintendent, B.T. Roberts, who had proposed a standing committee of three to administer the new organization. Instead, the convention overruled his recommendation and elected him as their leader, to which Roberts responded, "To my surprise the choice fell on me. Lord, give me heavenly wisdom to guide me ... Let me have Thy presence and help, O God of powers!"[9] Roberts' election symbolized the balanced spirit that prevailed at the founding of the

church. His educational stature, theological understanding, journalistic discipline and ecclesiastical statesmanship served as the check and balance upon his evangelistic fervor, his experiential emphasis, his expressive preaching and his entrepreneurial vision. From its very beginning, the genius of Free Methodism has depended upon this balance.

A PRODIGIOUS CHILDHOOD 1860-1893

In the life cycle of organizations, the line from birth through childhood rises rapidly as the vision of its founder engages the commitment and mobilizes the energies of its members. Free Methodism is no exception. From the time of its founding in 1860 and through the next thirty or more years of its development, the church flourished as the B.T. Roberts' agenda for reform was implemented. Not only were the abuses that Roberts had experienced in the Methodist Episcopal Church addressed in structure and governance, but the doctrinal distinctives that led to the formation of the Free Methodist Church shaped its polity, program and practice. Without exaggeration, it may be said that the first generation of the Free Methodist Church from 1860 to 1893 reflects the spirit, style and strategy of Roberts' leadership vision. In the major events of this era, we see the norms upon which Free Methodism is built.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH – In the 1862 *Discipline* of the church, the twofold mission of Free Methodism is declared "to maintain the biblical standard of Christianity, and to preach the gospel to the poor." In the simplicity and the clarity of this mission statement, we feel the engaging and mobilizing power that accounts for the rapid spread of early Free Methodism. Directly reflecting B.T. Roberts' convictions, the statement defines holiness in both its personal and social dimensions. John Wesley's words can be heard again as he propounded the position, "'Holy solitaries' is a phrase no more consis-

tent with the gospel than holy adulterers. The gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness."[10] Furthermore, in these words we hear again the mandate for American Methodism as given in the organizing conference of 1784, "To spread scriptural holiness across the land and reform the nation." Thus, the missional taproot of Free Methodism is in the doctrine of biblical holiness with the interwoven strands of personal experience and social compassion.

THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS – When the "Articles of Religion" for the Free Methodist Church were written, two additions were made to the doctrines of the parent church. One was the doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments, a creedal point that had been missed in the Articles, but clearly taught in Methodist theology. The other addition, on the doctrine of entire sanctification, set Free Methodism apart on belief, experience and practice.

With biblical holiness specifically defined as the doctrine of entire sanctification, Free Methodism found the place to stand from which it could move its world in the growth era of its first third of a century. Marston sums up the significance of the doctrine when he writes, "From the event of its founding, the touchstone of Free Methodism's doctrinal integrity has been its faithfulness to the Wesleyan witness to entire sanctification as a distinct work of grace."[11] Again, B.T. Roberts led the way with his writings on holiness which were later compiled by his son Benson H. Roberts under the title *Holiness Teachings.*[12] In sum, Roberts defined the doctrine in these principles:

1. Holiness begins in regeneration and is consummated in entire sanctification.
2. Entire sanctification is the full cleansing of man's nature and his complete surrender of every power and passion to the Spirit's control, so that all his motives are promptings of perfect love toward God and all men.
3. The holiness of the entirely sanctified may be replaced by corrupting tendencies to sin again invading the nature, and

these inner propensities may lead to the outward transgressions of a backslidden state.

4. The process of sanctification, either initial or entire, does not make a man less than human.
5. The core principle of holiness is perfect love to God and man.
6. "Christian perfection" is a broader term than "entire sanctification" or "perfect love," applicable to any stage of a sincere Christian's development toward full maturity.

When the doctrine is translated into experience, Marston finds confirmation in four facts: (1) assurance of forgiveness; (2) consciousness of inner conflict; (3) inner cleansing that the Christian reaches through the crisis of entire sanctification and (4) the experience of the church through the centuries in its quest for holiness and the evidence of full deliverance from the inner pollution of sin that leads into victorious Christian living.[13]

Historians of religious movements in the second half of the nineteenth century are quick to point out that Free Methodism flourished on the high tide of the "Holiness Movement," which swept through the middle and late 1800s. Their judgment however, does not take away from the strength of the balanced view that Free Methodists brought to the movement on behalf of personal and social holiness.

THE EXPRESSION OF WORSHIP – Free Methodists inherited the charge of "enthusiasm" in their worship through the heritage of the Wesleys and early Methodism. When Roberts' protagonists in the Genesee Conference resorted to name-calling, they dubbed the reformers "Nazarites." Later, at the Pekin Convention in 1860, one third of the clergy delegates, who also called themselves Nazarites or the "Nazarite Band," voted against a new organization and separated themselves from the Free Methodist Church, primarily because of their demand for fanatical freedom in worship. Rather than remaining separate, however, they set out to disrupt the worship of the new Free Methodist churches until Roberts, in his role as general superinten-

dent, found it necessary to repudiate them publicly.[14]

Although the issue of fanaticism resurfaces time and time again throughout the early history of Free Methodism, Roberts framed a policy that guided his attitude toward freedom in worship:

> We do not fear any of the spiritual manifestations of the Spirit of God ... What we want is not noisy meetings, not still meetings – but the SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD in all our worshipping assemblies.[15]

Balancing the freedom of expression was the formality of the sacraments, the restriction against instrumental music and professional choirs and the stability of the hymnody.

In sacraments, the Lord's Supper held first formality of importance. Early on, the ritual of infant baptism was also adopted along with adult baptism as a sacrament of the church. The difference is the adult's public declaration of faith while the infant, whose parents declare their faith on behalf of the child, must confirm that faith in a public declaration after conversion.

Freedom of expression in worship was further balanced by the restriction against instrumental music and professional choirs. Such restriction was not new to Free Methodism. Early Methodism carried the same restrictions to preserve the distinction of Methodists as a "singing people" and to protect against the deadening influence of formalism in worship. Free Methodism's strong stance against instrumental music and professional choirs continued through the growth era from 1860-1893. At the same time, the hymnody, with the sound theological texts and singable tunes of Charles Wesley, lent order to the freedom of joyous praise.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EVANGELISM – Reflecting the convictions of its founder, B.T. Roberts, the Free Methodist Church declared a worldwide commitment to evangelism in the *Discipline* of 1862:

> "The provisions of the gospel are for all. The 'glad tidings' must be proclaimed to every individual of the human race. God sent the true light to illuminate and melt every heart.

> To savage and civilized, bond and free, black and white, the ignorant and learned, is freely offered this great salvation."[16]

Under the inspiration of this declaration and with the mandate of its mission statement, Free Methodism marched across North America during the period from 1860-1893. From the founding base in New York, Free Methodist churches and conferences moved west into Illinois and Michigan in the 1860s, south and west into Ohio, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin and Missouri during the 1870s, north into Canada and west into South Dakota, Kansas, Colorado, Texas, Oklahoma and California during the 1880s, south into Kentucky-Tennessee and far west into Arizona-California during the early 1890s.

Whether by limited perspective or strategic priorities, no distinction is made between domestic evangelism and world missions in the first *Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church. Neither professional evangelists nor professional missionaries were designated by title and function. Rather, the *Discipline* charges each annual conference to employ missionaries whose task is "to establish new churches, where the interests of the cause of God require."[17]

Church planting is not new! Every preacher appointed to a circuit carried the portfolio of a planter. Moreover, no one in the Free Methodist Church carried the official title of "evangelist" until the category was added to the 1874 *Discipline* for lay workers. Support for these missionary planters, clergy and laity, came from the voluntary gifts of local church members. As simple as it may seem, the march across America proves that it worked. The General Conference of 1882 marked a turning point in early Free Methodist history when delegates passed legislation to create a General Missionary Board with a view toward separating "foreign missions" from "home missions." At the next General Conference in 1886, funding for foreign missions was separated from general missions and four years later the division was complete when the General Conference ordered the General Missionary Board to "have charge of all the General and Foreign Missions of the Church established by the Board."[18]

Most significantly, at the same time that specific offerings for foreign missions were introduced, the apportionment for home evangelism was reduced from 25 to 15 cents per member. The action symbolized more than a new emphasis upon foreign missions. Aggressive evangelism at home had led to the emergence of Pentecost Bands whose enthusiasm, particularly among young people, pushed against the boundaries of church control. When the General Conference of 1890 enacted legislation regulating these Pentecost Bands, the stage was set for more than their eventual separation from the church. The fires of aggressive evangelism that characterized Free Methodism during the first 30 years of its history were banked if not snuffed.

THE EMERGENCE OF WORLD MISSIONS – At the same time that home evangelism began to wane, foreign missions came into its own. As noted earlier, in the first *Discipline* of the church, "Missions" was a generic term designating home evangelism with no reference to foreign missions. In fact, the first Free Methodist missionaries to India, Rev. and Mrs. Ernest F. Ward, went to the field in 1881 as independents with only the support of the Illinois Annual Conference because the church had no official body for overseas appointments. Not until the General Missionary Board was incorporated in 1885 did the Free Methodist Church send out missionaries to overseas fields. Once the tide began to flow, however, foreign missions rose to represent the new field of outreach for aggressive evangelism. Missionary appointments to Africa in 1885, the Dominican Republic in 1889 and South Africa in 1891, as well as confirmation of the Wards in 1885, led the way in this new ministry of the church. To record the names of the missionaries and tell the story of their sacrificial achievements is a history in itself which is best told in such volumes as Lamson's book, *Lights In the World* published by the General Missionary Board in Winona Lake, Indiana, in 1951.

REFORMATION OF GOVERNANCE – As would be expected, the leaders of the new church wrote a *Discipline* that redressed the abuses that B.T. Roberts, Joseph McCreery, Loren Stiles and others had suffered under Methodist Episcopal jurisdiction. First and foremost, the new Free Methodist Church provided equal representation of lay and ministerial delegates in all annual and general conferences. This provision balanced Free Methodism between an episcopal system, dominated by clergy, and a congregational system, ruled by laity. Roberts, of course, had been victimized by an episcopacy in Methodism that permitted no lay delegates until 1882, or 22 years after the founding of the Free Methodist Church.

In a companion move, the founding fathers rejected the title of "bishop" for the leadership of the church and in its place chose the term "general superintendent" as a further check upon episcopal dominance. Still further, three Restrictive Rules were established as legal protection for (1) general rules of conduct and the Articles of Religion; (2) laws requiring lay representation, an itinerant ministry and free seats in all churches and (3) provisions for clergy and laity to the right of an impartial trial and the right of appeal. Whether or not these Restrictive Rules could be amended became a point of issue through the next 90 years. In the end, the 1951 General Conference, with the concurrence of the annual conferences, "... restricted the provision for amending the Restrictive Rules as well as the Rules themselves."[19] From the very beginning, then, the nonnegotiables of governance were set for the Free Methodist Church.

MEMBERSHIP DISCIPLINE – In seeking a balance between Christian doctrine and conduct, the newly organized Free Methodist Church sought to define how its members should live as well as what they should believe. Following closely after Wesley's General Rules for Christian Conduct, the original *Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church was an adoption of the General Rules of the parent body with the addition of the prohibition against "... buying, selling or holding of a human being as a slave." Except for minor refinements of the General

Rules, they have remained intact throughout the history of the church. Applied specifically to members of the church:

> Free Methodists are to abstain from all use, processing or merchandising of tobacco, opiates, and alcoholic beverages; dress plainly and inexpensively; carefully observe the Lord's Day; avoid worldly amusements; refrain from membership in the oath-bound lodge; avoid profane language and evil speaking; maintain business integrity; and follow other regulations based upon the General Rules.[20]

Through the early history of the church (1860-1893), these Rules not only regulated the conduct of the membership, but also determined the qualifications for both entry and exclusion in the membership ranks.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – While the Free Methodist Church was born out of revival and identified as an "evangelistic" church, the complementary ministry of Christian education was not neglected.

B.T. Roberts, a well-educated man of intellect, undoubtedly influenced the direction when he personally purchased a tavern in North Chili, New York, and founded Chili Seminary only six years after the birth of the church. Notably, the chartered purpose of the seminary was for general education defined as "mental and moral culture" and taught in a classical curriculum of humanities, sciences and religion.

Not unlike the pioneers who ventured out on the fast-moving Western frontier, Free Methodists built their homes, their churches and a school in their march across America. In Michigan it was Spring Arbor Junior College (1873), in Nebraska, Orleans Seminary (1884), in the Dakotas, Wessington Springs Seminary (1887), in Washington State, Seattle Seminary (1891) and in Illinois, Greenville College (1892). In addition, there were the short-lived educational ventures of Evansville Seminary in Wisconsin (1880) and Neosho Rapids Seminary in Kansas (1887).

Observers of other revivalistic churches are surprised to learn

that none of these schools, despite the name "seminary," was established as a Bible college, none had the primary purpose of ministerial training and none was put under the control of the general church. The length and shadow of B.T. Roberts' education background and Wesleyan theology is clearly seen in the nature and philosophy of these schools.

While Christian higher education held high priority in the early development of the church, the spiritual nurture of children and youth was largely neglected because so much time and energy went into aggressive evangelistic efforts. Not until the General Conference of 1878 did a report of a Committee on the Sunday School awaken the church with this word of alarm:

> "It is a lamentable fact that many children of Free Methodist parents are being lost to the church. Even when converted many of them go to other denominations for their church homes. Is not the reason for this found in the lack of careful instruction in the Word of God? If our principles are unscriptural, let us throw them away; but if they are not, let us teach them to our children."[21]

Out of this General Conference came an action plan that required preachers to report on the results of their Sunday school work and the general superintendents to promote Sunday school conventions and teachers' meetings throughout the conferences under their jurisdiction. Four years later, at the 1890 General Conference, the general superintendents were instructed to develop a catechism as an instructional aid for Sunday schools, educational institutions and home study. Because of the concern for the lack of instruction in the Scriptures for youth and new converts, the new catechism grounded the doctrines of the church in the Word of God.

CONNECTIONALISM THROUGH PRINT – As Nathan Hatch observed in his book *The Democratization of American Christianity*, the Holiness and Pentecostal Movements took the lead in utilizing the emerging communication systems in nineteenth-century America.[22]

B.T. Roberts, with his gift for writing, took full advantage of the rapidly developing print media. Prior to 1860, he had already published *The Earnest Christian*, a journal through which he could communicate the convictions that led to the founding of the Free Methodist Church. The value of a regular journal, as a communication link with the members of the new church, was readily recognized, but finances prohibited its development within the denomination until 1886.

Meanwhile, private publishers kept the idea of *The Earnest Christian* alive and even published the first *Free Methodist* magazine in 1868. After several abortive attempts at purchasing these publishing interests for the denomination, the General Conference of 1886 voted to establish a denominational paper, purchase the privately held *Free Methodist*, plan and fund a denominational publishing house and employ a manager and elect an editor. In 1886, then, T.B. Arnold was elected editor and a publishing house was established in rented quarters in Chicago. The investment signaled the level of importance attached to the print media as a means of maintaining the connectionalism of the new denomination.

COMPASSION FOR THE POOR – B.T. Roberts' passion for social holiness expressed itself in two convictions that he preached and practiced. One was freedom from slavery. When the Free Methodist Church adopted the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, one change spoke volumes for the distinction of the new church. In place of a statement that could be interpreted to justify the slave trade, the Free Methodist Church left no doubt by adding the prohibition against "the buying, selling, or holding of a human being as a slave."[23]

With equal conviction and more immediate action, the Free Methodist Church captured B.T. Roberts' social passion for the poor. Roberts did not come late to this conviction. Immediately after his conversion, he took the risk of social censure by teaching a Sunday school class for young black women. Even more significant, Roberts' genuine love for the poor was demonstrated when he established a "free" church without rented pews in Buffalo, New York, between a bar and

a brothel. He and his wife opened their home to young women who were outcasts from society but converted under their ministry. As Roberts wrote in an article entitled "Mission Field": "To the young women who become converted we furnish a home in our family until the way is opened for them to take care of themselves in a respectable manner."[24]

Roberts' intractable position on "free churches" for ministry to the poor represented a natural extension of this conviction and the Church's Restrictive Rule, with no option for revision, translated that conviction into polity.

When slavery was abolished at the national level and free churches were established throughout the denomination, the concerns for social holiness among Free Methodists passed to other issues. Roberts himself courageously led the way into controversy by addressing the plight of the disenfranchised farmer (1874) and the need for economic reform (1876). More unanimity prevailed on legislation enacted by General Conference against secret societies (1866), the use and commerce of alcohol (1882), endorsement of political parties (1886), covetousness (1886) and, especially racial discrimination (1866). While affirmative action on racial equality may have lagged in practice during the history of the church, the declaration of 1866 still stands:

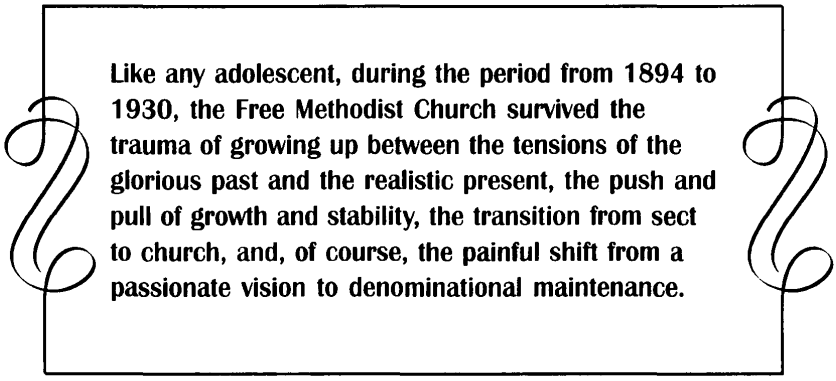
> To savage and civilized, bond and free, black and white, the ignorant and the learned, is freely offered the great salvation.[25]

No mistake can ever be made about the crowning character of the Free Methodist Church. The foundational doctrine of entire sanctification and the denominational discipline of simplicity cannot be ends in themselves. Rather, they are the spiritual means to the social end of Christlike compassion for the poor. The *Discipline* makes this purpose clear and unequivocal in the words,

> But for whose benefit are special efforts to be put forth? Who must be particularly cared for? Jesus settles this questions. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the

> lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up," and, as if all this would be insufficient to satisfy John of the validity of His claims, He adds, "the poor have the gospel preached to them." This was the crowning proof that He was the one that should come. *In this respect the church must follow in the footsteps of Jesus. She must see to it that the gospel is preached to the poor.* [26]

Thus, the convictions of B.T. Roberts and other founding leaders became mission and ethos, polity or practice for the Free Methodist Church during the period from 1860 to 1893. The infant church stood on its feet, took giant steps as a child and should have been ready to run as a vigorous adolescent into the future. Instead, the church learned what "storm and stress" means in the next stage of its life cycle.


Like any adolescent, during the period from 1894 to 1930, the Free Methodist Church survived the trauma of growing up between the tensions of the glorious past and the realistic present, the push and pull of growth and stability, the transition from sect to church, and, of course, the painful shift from a passionate vision to denominational maintenance.

CHAPTER III

From Adolescence to Early Adulthood

1894-1960

In the life cycle of human organisms and church organizations, a major crisis comes in the transition between childhood and adolescence. For the human, adolescence comes with puberty around the ages of 12 to 14 years. Churches, however, come to adolescence when the life cycle turns from the first to the second generations of leaders and congregations, or thirty-some years after its founding. Especially as the founding leader or leaders retire from the scene and second generation leaders take over, a crisis of vision, energy and commitment is not uncommon. A founding leader, in particular, finds it difficult to transfer to the next generation of leadership the engaging vision and consuming passion that led to the birth of the church in the first place.

The difficulty of transfer is compounded by the necessary development of an administrative structure to preserve the spectacular successes and coordinate the multiple ministries of a growing church. Form can take over function, and when it does the church will prematurely begin the aging process. But if the church can free itself of its founder's dominant role, without the loss of its founding mission and with the commitment of a new leadership team that can articulate the mission, the stress of adolescence can lead to the strength of adulthood.

The key to understanding the church at this stage in its life cycle is fundamental. In infancy and childhood, the leader's style is the

force that drives the organizational culture – its vision and values, rituals and rewards, policies and procedures. But from adolescence to adulthood, the organizational culture is the driving force for the leadership style.

Did the Free Methodist Church follow this pattern of development, from childhood to adolescence and on to adulthood, during the first century of its history? Would the church continue to grow to adulthood, as B.T. Robert's envisioned in his evangelistic thrust, or would it become prematurely old in its drive for organizational stability? By looking at the history of the church from 1894 to 1960, in the stages of its life cycle from adolescence to adulthood, the question will be answered.

A STRESSFUL ADOLESCENCE 1894-1930

Adolescence is traumatic, whether for individuals or institutions. Individuals come under tension between their dependence upon parents during childhood and their need for independence as adults. Institutions find themselves in similar circumstances, particularly as they succeed in fulfilling the vision of the founder, only to discover the need for the stability of organizational structures and administrative procedures to consolidate the growth. The danger, of course, is to drain the founder's vision of the energy that created the institution and engaged the imagination of its people in the beginning.

Institutions in their adolescence are caught between the "push" of agitation from the past and the "pull" of administration in the future. Temporarily, at least, growth is stalled between two worlds. As Kipling would say, "... one dead, the other helpless to be born." Relief comes through accommodation. Without repudiating the past, institutions resolve the tension by developing formal programs that channel and control the energy of the original vision. While efficiency is gained, some of the energy is inevitably lost.

The Free Methodist Church developmentally entered adolescence

in its life cycle at the General Conference of 1894. Although the early signs of adolescence began to show themselves at the General Conference in 1890, the tension between the prodigious growth of childhood and the stressful demands of adolescence became most evident at the next quadrennial session.

REPUDIATION OF B.T. ROBERTS – A sad but inevitable note sounded at the General Conference of 1890. For the first time in the history of the church, the leadership of B.T. Roberts was repudiated by three actions that were personal blows for the founder of the church. One was the defeat of his efforts to secure the ordination of women. Based upon biblical and historical grounds, Roberts had concluded:

> The Gospel of Jesus Christ, in the provisions which it makes, and in the agencies which it employs, for the salvation of mankind, knows no distinction of race, condition or sex, therefore no person evidently called of God to the Gospel ministry, and duly qualified for it, should be refused ordination on the account of race, condition, or sex.[1]

Despite the eloquence with which he advanced his position, the General Conference voted to disapprove the ordination of women by a vote of 35 to 29.

Compounding the disappointment that Roberts must have felt over his failure to secure the ordination of women, a majority of the General Conference also voted to uphold a recommendation condemning Rev. R.W. Hawkins' book on redemption as "unsound and unscriptural" because of what Roberts felt was a technical error in his position on the redemption of the body. As remarkable as it seems, this was the only major theological controversy in the early history of the church. Roberts, with his irenic spirit, took the modifying course of trying to resolve the issue without destroying Hawkins, a gifted man of good intent and faithful ministry. Roberts also argued that ecclesiastical censure could not be justified because the church itself

had not yet established its own doctrine on the issue. Still, the majority prevailed to censure R.W. Hawkins who soon left the church and died early.

Perhaps the final blow came with the decision of the 1890 General Conference to regulate the aggressive evangelism of the Pentecost Bands. So history tended to repeat itself as Free Methodism in 1890 had to deal with the issue of enthusiasm from "a church within the church," not unlike the controversy that brought Free Methodism into being in the first place. Roberts must have had history in mind as he tried to save the Pentecost Bands for the church rather than regulating them with the threat of expulsion. Although Roberts lost his case and the General Conference set rigorous rules for the Pentecost Bands, the issue did not go away.

For the next four years, under the leadership of V.A. Dake, the Pentecost Bands continued to strain the lines of relationship with the church until separation became inevitable. Roberts, however, may have seen the handwriting on the wall. Despite the excesses of the Pentecost Bands and the recalcitrance of their leaders, the action of General Conference symbolized the shift of the church away from the risks that must be taken and the creativity that must be exercised to sustain the energy of aggressive evangelism.

B.T. Roberts left the 1890 General Conference as a disappointed man, if not a disillusioned leader. In the biography written by his son B.H. Roberts, the founder spoke to his wife, "I do not know that I want to attend another General Conference."[2] And he never did.

REVERSAL OF GROWTH – If B.T. Roberts had a premonition that the Free Methodist Church had peaked in its growth, he was right. He died in 1893, without hearing the report of the Committee on the State of the Work at the General Conference in 1894. The committee reported soberly, "There are too many preachers who, instead of devoting themselves to earnest, faithful pastoral work, and to feeding the flock of God, want to be running hither and thither as evangelists."[3] Four years later, at the General Conference of 1898, the same

committee said, "We are compelled to admit that our work does not grow internally as fast as we desire. ..., We often enter new fields to the loss of old ones; thus we expand rather than grow."[4] More conclusively, when the Committee on the State of the Work reported to the next General Conference in 1903, the word was given that "foreign missions had far outstripped home evangelism along all lines."[5]

If the history of the Free Methodist Church has a turning point, this is it. As Marston notes,

> In Free Methodism's turning from the conflict to an increasing introversion lay the major cause of the church's lower rate of growth, beginning in the nineties and becoming painfully apparent by 1903. This introversion of interest and energy was to continue for many years.[6]

Despite the evidence of stagnated growth, a motion put to the 1907 General Conference to create a Commission on Aggressive Evangelism was tabled, and in 1911 a proposal to raise one million dollars for evangelism was rejected. Not until 1915 did the General Conference set up evangelistic boards in each annual conference "to carry on aggressive evangelistic work within its bounds."[7] From this small start, the 1919 General Conference established the General Board of Aggressive Evangelism and gave it separate identity from the General Missionary Board, under which home evangelism had continued since the board was founded in 1885. These actions illustrate a telling point. Without undue exaggeration, the rest of the history of the Free Methodist Church can be written in the multiplication of strategies and systems to jumpstart aggressive evangelism and get the church going again.

RELIANCE UPON PROGRAMS – With the waning of church growth, attention shifted toward the institutionalization of ministries within a denominational structure. Symbolic of the shift was the restoration of the title "bishop" for the leaders of the church who had been designated "general superintendents" since the time of the founding. While still maintaining the historic balance between clergy and laity in

the governing units of the church, the leaning back toward the episcopacy signaled the settling into an established denomination with more emphasis upon maintenance than on growth.

Missions, as already noted, became the growth edge of the church. Not only were foreign missions outstripping home evangelism at every point, but the motive for missions led to the organization of the Women's Missionary Society in 1894 for the chartered purpose of (1) the promotion of missionary intelligence (2) the deepening of interest in world evangelism and (3) securing sympathetic contributions for missions. Fulfilling her husband's legacy, Ellen Roberts, the founder's widow, was elected the first president of the organization.

As further evidence of the shift of energy and creativity from home evangelism to world missions, the Women's Missionary Society parented the Junior Missionary Society in 1898 and the Young Peoples' Missionary Society in 1919. Laudable goals for these organizations included winning the young to Christ, teaching them about the church and its ministries and guiding them into the service of the church, whether clergy or laity, at home and abroad.

Although expansion and growth in the North American church may have been stalled, aggressive evangelism continued to take overseas missions into new fields. Missionaries were appointed to Japan and Transvaal in 1895, China in 1903 and Brazil in 1928.

Christian education continued to grow as well during the era of 1894-1931. Los Angeles Free Methodist Seminary (Los Angeles Pacific College and High School) was founded in 1903 and Lorne Park Seminary (Lorne Park College) in 1924. The schools continued in the tradition of Christian liberal arts and though periodically facing financial crisis, came through the era with clear identity as Free Methodist institutions closely related to the church. There were, however, losses in the sector. Neosho Rapids Seminary was closed in 1895, Evansville Junior College discontinued operations in 1926 and Campbell Free Methodist Seminary at Campbell, Texas, closed in 1921. In each case, the decision turned on the lack of financial support.

Alarms sounded early in the era for Christian education of chil-

dren and youth. At the General Conference in 1894, the same Committee on the State of the Work that lamented the decline in growth added the warning that the church was not winning, discipling and holding its own children and youth. In 1903 the warning became a screaming siren when the committee reported, "The greatest problem before us, next to the maintenance of the experience and practice of holiness, perhaps, is the salvation of our children and young people."[8] Failure of Christian education in the home was cited as the primary reason for the loss, but there was also the surprising fact that the Sunday schools were not seeing the salvation of children.

As part of the corrective, the 1907 General Conference elected Rev. W.B. Olmstead as the first full-time general Sunday school secretary. The pastoral address of the bishops in that General Conference set the tone for years to come when they said,

> If, in our early history, the "struggle for existence" made necessary by almost universal opposition, and by our limited numbers, resources and equipments, made us less attentive to the children and the Sunday-school work than we should have been, we are now largely redeeming ourselves as a denomination from that neglect and its unfavorable results.[9]

The social compassion that prompted the Free Methodist Church to take its strong stand on behalf of freedom from slavery and free seats for the poor in worship also became more institutionalized in this era. Benevolent institutions were founded for the ministry of care for needy children and aged people. Following the lead of the Gerry Homes, New York, and Woodstock Homes, Illinois, which were founded in the late 1880s, the Deaconess Hospital, Oklahoma, was organized in 1900, and the Life Line Children's Home, Kansas, was chartered in 1908.

Significance is attached to the development of these institutions because, while they were officially recognized by the general church, they represented social compassion for the needy arising out of local, conference and regional church settings. As Marston notes, "But to this

day the general church has provided to these area institutions little more than an inspecting and accrediting service and the allotment of 'patronizing territory' to each from which it may solicit support."[10]

By and large, then, introversion characterized the Free Methodist Church during the era from 1894-1931. One cannot help but note the absence of affirmative events during the era, while negative actions stand out. In 1911, for instance, the Committee on Reforms got the General Conference to adopt resolutions of protest against worldliness, tobacco, liquor, moving pictures, trusts, divorce, secrecy, covetousness, light conversation, social evils and even longish sermons! At the same time, the church passed legislation that permitted women to be ordained as deacons, but categorically denied them elder's orders. The General Conference of 1915 added sanctions prohibiting entertainment in church buildings, and in 1923 passed legislation to counter the concern that Free Methodist doctrine was not being adequately taught in the educational institutions of the church. As backup to that legislation, the General Conference also required that two-thirds of the trustees and faculties of the schools be members of the Free Methodist Church.

So, like any adolescent, during the period from 1894 to 1930, the Free Methodist Church survived the trauma of growing up between the tensions of the glorious past and the realistic present, the push and pull of growth and stability, the transition from sect to church and, of course, the painful shift from a passionate vision to denominational maintenance. As the church entered the 1930s, the fragments of many programs that had developed over the years lay scattered on the landscape, organizationally uncoordinated and financially underfunded. Furthermore, the outlook of the church needed to be turned from a defensive mentality to a proactive outlook. To prepare the church for effective ministry in the next stage of its life cycle, a new vision was needed.

AN EXPECTANT EARLY ADULTHOOD 1931-1959

In the life cycle of organizations, a church comes to maturity when there is a balance between effectiveness in ministry and efficiency in administration. This is a delicate balance because the temptation is to err on the side of one extreme or the other. During the early years of the Free Methodist Church, we have seen that effectiveness in evangelism took precedence over efficiency in administration as a natural reaction against the heavy-handed hierarchy that had forced Free Methodism into existence. But by the turn of the century, the growth of the church had outstripped the support systems for consolidating the gains. Therefore, the process of institutionalization took over. Programs multiplied and new organizations proliferated. By the end of the era from 1894-1930, the church needed efficiency in administration in order to refocus the mission and restore the effectiveness of ministry.

REORGANIZING THE CHURCH – "How should the Free Methodist Church be organized for increased efficiency in administration and greater effectiveness in ministry?" In response to this question, the General Conference of 1931 undertook a complete reorganization of the denomination. Up to that time, separate boards administered the multiple departments of the church. In the reorganization plan, a central Board of Administration was created with "general supervision of all the activities of the church during the intervals between General Conference sessions."[11] From the membership of the Board of Administration, four commissions were created with responsibilities defined by their names: the Executive Commission, the Commission on Missions, the Commission on Christian Education and the Commission on Evangelism, Charities and Church Extension. Later, at the General Conference in 1939, a Board of Bishops was authorized for "counsel, general church planning and tasks assigned to it by the General Con-

ference and the Board of Administration."[12]

The process toward centralization of authority and coordination of ministries continued through the era of 1931-1959. In 1935, the Publishing House relocated from Chicago to Winona Lake, Indiana, and in 1955, the General Conference ordered all denominational departments moved to the same campus under the identity as "Free Methodist World Headquarters." Organizationally, Free Methodism seemed ready for a new era.

But another trend in governance must also be recognized. At the same time that the denomination moved to centralize functions, minuscule moves were forming a countertrend toward decentralization. In 1947 a long-standing struggle ended when the time limit on pastoral tenure was removed, and in 1955 local congregations were authorized to take a confidential vote on the return of a pastor as part of the decision-making process of the Stationing Committee. Long-term consequences would follow these trend-setting actions.

REDIRECTING THE FOCUS – After years of an introverted attitude and a defensive mentality, Free Methodism followed reorganization of ministries with redirection of focus. Evangelism, in particular, returned as the centerpiece for denominational priorities. Both internal and external correctives were needed. Internally, the church needed to look to the future rather than the past. In 1947 Dr. C. Hoyt Watson, president of Seattle Pacific College, led in launching the Forward Movement with the "clear conviction that Free Methodism must be more than a witness for the defense – its message and program must be employed in a great spiritual and evangelistic outreach."[13]

Externally, then, the church needed a symbol of its outreach. The Light and Life Hour, a radio ministry begun in 1944 with Dr. LeRoy M. Lowell in the Ferndale, Michigan, church, served as that symbol when the denomination initiated the broadcast and, under the direction of Dr. Myron F. Boyd, saw the program gain national and international stature in the rapidly developing field of religious broadcasting.

By 1955 the bishops could recommend in their Pastoral Address

to the General Conference that "evangelism and church extension be the major program of all agencies and departments of the church, and that our entire membership plan its stewardship of finances, time and talent in line with this emphasis."[14]

RETHINKING THE *DISCIPLINE* – Perhaps as a companion of introversion, the Free Methodist Church also tended toward a legalism of discipline for its churches and its members. History played a part in setting definitive rules that governed corporate worship and individual conduct of its members. As a protection against the formality of worship and the laxity of conduct in the Methodist Episcopal Church of the mid-1800s, Free Methodists developed a *Discipline* that specifically addresses these issues. In the *Discipline* of 1860, for instance, instrumental music and choirs in public worship were strictly forbidden. In the same *Discipline*, the General Rules of John Wesley were adopted along with Special Rules, which governed individual behavior. Wesley's sermon "On Dress," for instance, had to be read at least once a year to each congregation.

Contrary to later interpretation, legalism did not motivate this emphasis upon the conduct and dress of Free Methodists. Simplicity of life was a principle that arose naturally out of the doctrine of holiness. As noted earlier, an inseparable connection existed between personal and social holiness in Wesleyan theology. Within that context, another connection existed between the simplicity of life and compassion for the poor. Biblical stewardship called for simplicity in the style of life, worship and church architecture in order to provide both the witness and resources for the ministry to the poor. To separate the stewardship of simplicity from compassion for the poor, is fatal. Simplicity without compassion becomes legalism and compassion without simplicity becomes tokenism.

Pressure to change the prohibition against instrumental music surfaced as early as the General Conference of 1898, but the church held firm through a succession of proposals in almost every quadrennial conference until 1943. At that time, provision was made for a

local church to bring in one instrument, but without a choir, if two-thirds of the congregation favored the decision and the annual conference had already voted to approve music. At the 1955 General Conference, the remaining restrictions against instruments and choirs were removed with the decision solely in the hands of the local church.

Paralleling the release from this restriction was the equally volatile issue of the wedding ring, considered a symbol of worldliness. As far back as the General Conference of 1874, the prohibition against the wearing of gold included the wedding band. In 1939 the prohibition was expanded to include any finger rings and as late as 1943 the rule was reinforced. Heated debate centered on the question of whether this action would snowball into the same laxity and worldliness against which the founders of Free Methodism had protested. The founders regarded such adornment as barriers to spirituality in the Methodist Episcopal Church almost 100 years earlier. But after due discussion, the 1951 General Conference deleted all references to the wedding ring in the Special Rules.

In the midst of these controversies, the General Conference of 1951 received a committee report distinguishing between principles and prudentials in the Discipline of Membership. "Principles of conduct ... are clearly taught in Scripture, or are directly implied by the Word ... Prudentials are those rules formulated by the church and required of its members as aids to godliness."[15] According to this definition, prudentials, not principles, were at stake in lifting the prohibitions against instrumental music and the wedding ring.

RECOGNIZING THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY – Enlightened leadership foresaw the opening of the world as a "global village" in the years after World War II. Free Methodist overseas missions had continued to grow through the first half of the century as missionary statesmen and stateswomen put into practice the biblical principles of evangelism, church planting, discipling and leadership training implied in the Great Commission. Even more important, missionaries communi-

cated an affirmative vision for the future of the church that engaged the imagination and mobilized the energies of the people whom they served.

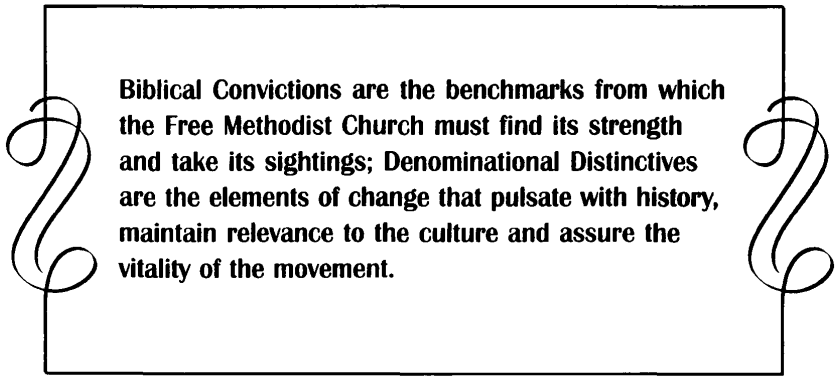
Perhaps most important, Free Methodist missionaries took with them in their portfolio the indigenous principle, which respects the culture of nationals and esteems their potential for self-governance. In that context, Marston wrote, "Increasingly the missionary aim must be the evangelization of groups of nationals in strategic centers, these to increase by indigenous evangelism and to be established by the development, indigenous so far as possible, of schools, hospitals and other cultural resultants of Christianization."[16]

On the threshold of the centennial year, then, the Commission on Missions made this request of the Board of Administration in 1958:

> The Free Methodist Church of N[orth] A[merica] is approaching the time when it must think in terms of a world church of related national churches, and plan with representatives of national Free Methodist groups looking toward the organization of largely autonomous national churches within the various countries now controlled in large measure by mission extensions of the home church.
>
> Therefore, the Board of Administration is requested to take steps toward setting up a World Planning Council for Free Methodism.[17]

The request was accepted and Free Methodism symbolically broke from the shell of its introversion, opened the door to the future and modeled the spirit of the founders of the church, not just overseas, but at home as well.

On this high note, the Free Methodist Church came of age. In 1960, with an eye to the future and a hand reaching out to the world, the church stood ready for its second century.


Biblical Convictions are the benchmarks from which the Free Methodist Church must find its strength and take its sightings; Denominational Distinctives are the elements of change that pulsate with history, maintain relevance to the culture and assure the vitality of the movement.

CHAPTER IV

A Calling to Fulfill

FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

Free Methodists are people with strong and deep roots in history. The taproot is theological; the entwining root is organizational. Biblical convictions serve as the source of life for the theological taproot, and denominational distinctives feed its entwining companion. Both roots go deeply into the past – long before the Free Methodist Church was founded in 1860. Bishop Leslie Marston, in *From Age to Age: A Living Witness*, shows the importance of these roots by devoting half of the pages of his book to a story that begins in the late seventeenth century and continues through the twentieth century. If time and space had permitted, Marston might well have written chapters that covered events prior to this period:

- Beginning with a grounding in biblical theology for the doctrines of the church;
- Proceeding through to the church fathers who framed the canon and the creeds in which Free Methodists believe;
- Including the patristic fathers of catholic (universal church) tradition who profoundly influenced John Wesley with their clarity concerning the doctrine of Christian perfection and holiness;
- Adding Jacobus Arminius who countered Calvin's predestination with human freedom of choice in matters of salvation, made possible by God's grace;

- Identifying the Free Methodist Church as an heir of the Protestant Reformation through the doctrine of justification by faith; and
- Tracing the line from the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church through to John Wesley's Twenty-Four Articles that he sent to the developing Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

As an historian, however, Marston had to make the difficult choice of the historical time line that he would develop as background for the founding of the Free Methodist Church. He chose to begin with the seventeenth century genesis of the Wesleyan Revival in England and its missionary outreach to the American colonies through the Methodist Episcopal Church. The defection, then, of that church from the biblical conviction that characterized the spiritual vitality and social witness of historic Methodism became the immediate setting from which Free Methodism arose.

Marston made another choice as a historian. He chose to write the story of Free Methodism in its first century as an *institutional response* to the defection of the Methodist Episcopal Church from its biblical moorings. He might have chosen to write the history from the perspective of the personal biographies of its leaders, the characteristics of its people as a community, the relationship between the developing church and the changing culture or the parallels between Free Methodism and the holiness movement, which waxed and waned as a major religious force during the first century of Free Methodism. Instead, exercising the discipline of a scholar, Marston focused upon the roots of founding principles for the Free Methodist Church that justified its existence as a denomination and defined its mission as a movement, ordained of God and guided by His Spirit. Those founding principles are:

1. *Doctrine*: The Scriptural doctrine of entire sanctification according to the Wesleyan interpretation;
2. *Experience*: A corresponding experience of cleansing and power;

3. *Worship*: Spirituality and simplicity of worship in the freedom of the Spirit;
4. *Piety*: A way of holy living that separates the Christian from the world; and
5. *Stewardship*: Full consecration for service to God and man.[1]

Marston concluded his centennial history with the statement "The founding principles of Free Methodism, still maintained by the denomination after a century, are still vital Christian issues, and therefore Free Methodism has a continuing mission."[2]

While accepting Marston's conclusion, the perspective of changing times suggests the need to refine and expand the founding principles of the Free Methodist Church. Precedence for this perspective came at the General Conference of 1955, when Principles were separated from Prudentials in church governance as a response to the reality of changing times. In like manner, there is merit in dividing the "Biblical Convictions" of the church from the "Denominational Distinctives." Biblical Convictions, of course, serve as core values, or nonnegotiable principles, for the church. Timing, wording and procedures related to these Biblical Convictions may change without the loss of principle, but if they are sacrificed in content rather than changed in context, the essential character of the Free Methodist Church would be radically changed. Denominational Distinctives, on the other hand, may be altered in response to changing times to increase the effectiveness of the church and its potential for growth. As the 1993 *Book of Discipline of The Free Methodist Church in Canada* notes with wisdom,

> In certain aspects, denominations change with the passing of the decades. They change because they are set in the pulsations of history which, like time itself, is an ever-flowing stream. They change because they stand vis-a-vis with culture and must interact with culture in order to be relevant. They change because change is the only alternative to death.

> Nevertheless, stable denominations have benchmarks from which they take their sightings. Such benchmarks give stability in the midst of change.[3]

Biblical Convictions are the benchmarks from which the Free Methodist Church must find its strength and take its sightings; Denominational Distinctives are the elements of change that pulsate with history, maintain relevance to the culture and assure the vitality of the movement. These Biblical Convictions and Denominational Distinctives are:

BIBLICAL CONVICTIONS

1. ***Faith*** *is both doctrine and experience.*
2. ***Worship*** *is both freedom and order.*
3. ***Holiness*** *is both personal and social.*
4. ***Growth*** *is both educational and evangelistic.*

DENOMINATIONAL DISTINCTIVES

1. ***Governance*** *is both episcopal and congregational.*
2. ***Stewardship*** *is both unified and diverse.*
3. ***Mission*** *is both local and global.*
4. ***Direction*** *is both connectional and ecumenical.*

The perspective for this updated history also advances the tacit understanding of Bishop Marston about the connections between and among the founding principles. Rather than seeing the doctrine of entire sanctification as an independent issue, for instance, the clarity of its proclamation directly influences the other founding principles of experience, worship, piety and stewardship of Free Methodist members. Even more specifically, when an organization is able to balance principles that tend to be on opposite ends of the same continuum, it is a sign of creativity and ongoing renewal.

The founding principles of doctrine and experience illustrate the case. A faith position may be formulated with emphasis upon doctrine, as in a creedal church, or upon experience, as in a confessional church. The tendency, as we have noted, is to tip the scale toward one extreme or the other. Wesleyan theology views doctrine and experience as complementary rather than conflicting. Even with heavy

emphasis upon experience as foundational to faith, Wesley's ready acceptance of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church, as the creedal base for Methodism, leaves no doubt about his position. Doctrine and experience are never independent. They confirm each other in a dynamic faith. Therefore, one of the tests of the viability of the Free Methodist Church during its first century is to determine how the complementary components within the Biblical Convictions and Denominational Distinctives are balanced and integrated over time. Of necessity, the assessment of these founding principles in the period 1860-1960 requires some repetition of historical actions and events – especially those that may have tipped the balance toward one end or the other.

BIBLICAL CONVICTIONS

Four sets of Biblical Convictions, based upon the theological position of the Free Methodist Church, can be discerned in the history of the first century of the denomination.

1. FAITH IS BOTH DOCTRINE AND EXPERIENCE – Marston identified doctrine and experience as two separate founding principles, probably because of their importance to the movement. Doctrine and experience, however, are not separate or conflicting principles. They represent two ends of the continuum defining a faith position. Depending upon the primacy given to doctrine or experience, denominations are identified as creedal or confessional. Free Methodism is neither. Rather, it is a balance between the two.

As we have seen, Free Methodist doctrine is defined within the background of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church and the abbreviated list of Twenty-Four Articles revised by John Wesley. At the time of the founding of the church, Wesley's Twenty-Four Articles were accepted with the addition of statements on "Entire Sanctification" and "Future Rewards and Punishment." With the exception of the embittered contest over the orthodoxy of R.W.

Hawkins' book in 1890, no major theological issue occupied the time or divided the ranks of the Free Methodist Church during the first one hundred years.

As with John Wesley, who wrote no systematic theology, Free Methodist leaders were practical theologians who worked out their faith in experience. The doctrine of assurance is an example. Rather than relying upon the development of a systematic theology to explain the security of the believer, as Calvin did with the doctrine of predestination, Wesley and his followers found their assurance through the confirming witness of the Holy Spirit that they were forgiven of sin and accepted as children of God. Whether in justification or sanctification, the experience of the church confirmed the doctrine. So, rather than being a denomination defined by the either/or of doctrine or experience, Free Methodists found distinction in the balance between creed and confession. They believed and recited the historic creeds of the church, but counted upon personal experience for their confession.

If anything, Free Methodists have tipped the scale toward experience. In both the doctrines of justification and sanctification, the confirmation of a crisis experience was proclaimed and professed. Especially for the cardinal doctrine of entire sanctification, the Articles of Religion specify,

> Entire sanctification is that work of the Holy Spirit, subsequent to regeneration, by which the fully consecrated believer, upon exercise of faith in the atoning blood of Christ, is cleansed in that moment from all inward sin and empowered for service. The resulting relationship is attested by the witness of the Holy Spirit and is maintained by faith and obedience.[4]

Still, with the counterbalance of sound doctrine, Free Methodists were checked against making the nature of the crisis a litmus test for the evidence of the indwelling Spirit. When Pentecostals, for instance, elevated the gift of tongues to evidence of the sanctifying experience, Free Methodists tended to repudiate this new movement, even

though they shared a common holiness heritage.

Bishops, in their pastoral addresses, took the lead in preserving the balance between doctrine and experience. For the 1894 General Conference, the general superintendents wrote, "... while we would be severely orthodox, we would do well to remember that orthodoxy cannot inspire and maintain spiritual life but that our spiritual life must intensify and maintain our orthodoxy." In 1907, they wrote again that the church had, "unfalteringly borne faithful witness through all the land to the great fundamental truths of Christianity, and particularly regarding the privilege and obligation of believers to be sanctified wholly in the present life."

Only once did the General Conference take on the role as a monitor of orthodoxy. In 1923, the section of the *Discipline* on the schools of the church was changed to require all teaching to be in harmony with the Scriptures "as generally interpreted by the Free Methodist Church and set forth in her *Discipline*."[5] Later, in 1943, the General Conference added the stipulation that all instructors in the religion departments of the schools must sign a statement agreeing with the church's position on the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification. In that action, the scale tipped toward doctrine. But without the legal mechanisms of church control over the schools or without the sanction of withdrawing financial support, the church had to count upon the loyalty of the schools to maintain the standard. This case is the exception. By and large, Free Methodism in the first century must be credited for maintaining the precarious balance between doctrine and experience, especially in relationship to entire sanctification. With the natural tendency to overweigh one side or the other, Free Methodism kept the integrity of its most important founding principle.

2. WORSHIP IS BOTH FREEDOM AND ORDER – When B.T. Roberts published his paper on "New School Methodism" in 1857, the nature and meaning of worship became one on the most volatile points of contention. Without regard for personal risk, he issued a

stinging rebuke against statements published in the *Buffalo Advocate* that denied Christianity as a system of devotion, demeaned worship as an affront to God and taught that emotional expression in worship is a detriment to the "development of genial and humane dispositions and the formation of habits of active, vigorous goodness."[6] Not only did Roberts denounce these statements as "a sneer ... not unworthy of Thomas Paine himself,"[7] but he charged the New School Methodists with an agenda in which "The Lodge must supersede the class-meeting and the love-feast; and the old-fashioned prayer-meeting must give way to the social party."[8] To add fuel to the fire, Roberts also cited them for building fashionable churches, furnishing them with elaborate rented pews for a select congregation and performing difficult music with costly instruments and professional singers, all of which served to formalize worship and stifle the Spirit.

Against this background of controversy, it is no surprise to find that the founding principle of Free Methodism regarding freedom and order in worship tips the balance toward freedom. In his rebuke against formal and fashionable worship as promoted by the New School Methodists, Roberts called for "... free churches, congregational singing, and spirituality, simplicity and fervency in worship."[9] Early on, however, Roberts had to face the challenge of the Nazarites who exploited freedom and indulged excesses in worship. According to Roberts' diary, they twisted the purpose of worship from the "salvation of sinners and the sanctification of believers" to having a "free time" without restraint, placed the Spirit's leadership above the Bible, gloried in reproach and resented reproof as persecution.[10]

The issue of imbalance toward enthusiasm persisted from the beginning of the church to the end of Roberts' life. Just a year before his death in 1893, he wrote an article entitled "Fanaticism" in which he repeated his warning against the dangers of freedom without the restraints of reason and, at the same time, pleaded for spiritual worship against the deadness of formalism. "We must never forget that the essence of our Christianity is not doctrinal beliefs, nor observance of forms, but the indwelling Spirit."[11]

As a check and balance upon excessive freedom in worship, Roberts called for the primacy of the Scriptures, the steadying influence of reason and the guiding wisdom of the Holy Spirit. The principle of spirituality and simplicity with freedom in the Spirit should then prevail. More specifically, the prohibition against instrumental music and choirs was intended as a guard against formality and an encouragement to spontaneous expressions of praise, conviction or burden among the worshipers. But more important than the prohibition were the affirmations of ritual, especially the Lord's Supper, as a regular part of Free Methodist worship. Marston saw this sacrament as crucial to the balance of freedom and order in the worship service. "Freedom of the Spirit? Yes – in the regular services. In the Lord's Supper, let it be the solemnity of His passion and the deep unutterable joy of His salvation into which His free Spirit leads the communicants."[12]

The hymnody that Free Methodists inherited from the Wesleys and Methodism served as another check upon excesses of freedom in worship. The doctrinal soundness and the praise-filled tunes of the Methodist hymnal are attested to by the decision to use the hymnbook until 1883, when Roberts led the development of the *Hymnbook of the Free Methodist Church.* Metrical tune books during the 1880s and the revisions of the hymnal, in 1910 and 1951 during its first century, indicate the continuing value of hymns tested by time and experience as a means of expressing freedom through order in the worship services.

3. HOLINESS IS BOTH PERSONAL AND SOCIAL – In the beginning, the founding principles of personal and social holiness were almost inseparable in B.T. Roberts' call for reform. He proclaimed and practiced compassion for the poor in his call for a "free" church as vigorously as he advocated the discipline of personal holiness among his people. Affirmatively, this meant demonstrating the Wesleyan motive of "faith working through love." Negatively, it also meant rules of discipline upon a member that prohibited "... wasteful personal habits,

the extravagant or immodest fashion of one's dress and the types of worldly amusements in which he indulges."[13]

Compassion for the poor motivated Roberts' unequivocal stand for free seats in the churches and freedom from human slavery in the nation. He won his case for free seats with the founding of the Free Methodist Church in 1860, and the nation abolished slavery as the outcome of the Civil War a few years later. Perhaps these successes proved to be Pyrrhic victories (winning at great loss) for the agenda of social holiness in the Free Methodist Church for years to come. America was becoming urbanized and industrialized and B.T. Roberts continued to write about such crucial issues as economic reform, farmers' welfare and industrial relations. But denominational focus shifted from social issues and toward the discipline of membership on matters of personal conduct.

John Wesley's General Rules, which were adopted in 1860 with the addition of the rule prohibiting the "buying, selling or holding of a human being as a slave," remained intact throughout the century. Special rules adopted by General Conferences from 1866 to 1951 regarding alcohol, tobacco, marriage and divorce, dress and secret societies better define the church during this era than its social witness. Yet resolutions of social conscience, relating to such matters as racial discrimination, militarism and war and stewardship of wealth and prohibition, continued to be filed and adopted.

The imbalance toward personal morality is evident in Marston's confession with optimism which he wrote in 1960,

> Conservative in matters of doctrine and firm in the discipline of conduct, the church may have lagged for a time behind the socially progressive pace of its reforming pioneers, but whatever degree of social indifference may have affected the Free Methodist Church in its mid-period or earlier, evidence points to a present effort to maintain the outward, social reach of the gospel, along with the upward reach of a personal faith.[14]

The evidence of which he speaks, however, is limited to the

1955 reaffirmation of the position of the early church regarding racial discrimination (1866) and reentry into the conflict over unionization in 1947 and 1955 with a strong right-to-work position. The courageous conscience, which led B.T. Roberts to risk his career in the Methodist Episcopal Church, may also have been dampened by the liberal agenda for the "social gospel" among mainline denominations at the turn of the century.[15] Whatever the reason, the Free Methodist Church after the 1860s became better identified with the discipline of personal holiness than the compassion of social holiness.

4. GROWTH IS BOTH EDUCATIONAL AND EVANGELISTIC – Churches grow primarily by one of two means: conserving the young through education or converting the lost through evangelism. Among all of the founding principles, the balance between education and evangelism is the most precarious, particularly for the Free Methodist Church. As noted earlier, Free Methodism began with strong motivation for both the camp meeting and the college. At the same time B.T. Roberts was leading in aggressive evangelism that took the new church on its march across America, he also personally purchased the land in 1866 for the establishment of Chili Seminary (later Roberts Wesleyan College) with these words of intent:

> While we cannot prize, too highly, the benefits of mental culture, we should not lose sight of that moral and religious culture, which lies at the foundation of correct principles and good character. Education and religion should by no means be separated. Indeed, to divorce them is dangerous, as is proved by the history of the past.[16]

Although the colleges founded under the auspices of the Free Methodist Church were expected to be vital centers for the promulgation of the founding principles, Roberts and other ecclesiastical leaders who followed him carefully protected the educational integrity of the institutions. The expectations did not include heavy-handed church control, a camp meeting climate, a Bible school curriculum or the dominance of a ministerial training program. In the early years of the

church, education and evangelism were neither competitive nor fully integrated into the mission of the church. Each had its own integrity; each pursued its own course without highly specific theological or legal restrictions and each made its unique contribution to the church.

A defining moment came for Free Methodism in 1947 when John Wesley Seminary Foundation was established at Asbury Theological Seminary, a free-standing institution in the Wesleyan and Holiness tradition. After the Board of Administration authorized the launching of a denominational seminary in 1945, Dr. George Turner, a Free Methodist professor at Asbury, suggested the alternative of affiliation with a well-established institution. Negotiations moved rapidly and in the fall of 1947, the new relationship with an accredited graduate school of theology began. By 1960, 179 Free Methodists had completed graduate degrees in theology at Asbury with almost all of them entering the pastoral ministry of the church. Leadership for the church across the spectrum, from the local parish to the mission fields, began to flow from the Foundation.

The affiliation with Asbury and the promotion of seminary education accents the importance of the role of education in the church as it stood on the threshold of its second century. It is a phenomenon, indeed, for an evangelistic church to give priority to graduate theological education. Although there were still other tracks to the ordained ministry, the expectations were raised and the seminary graduate became a prime candidate for leadership.

On the side of evangelism, the church came to a rude awakening at the General Conference in 1878. A Committee on Sunday Schools sounded the alarm:

> It is a lamentable fact that many children of Free Methodist parents are being lost to the church. Even when converted many of them go to other denominations for their church home. Is not the reason of this found in the lack of careful instruction in the Word of God? If our principles are unscriptural, let us throw them away; but if they are not, let us teach them to the children.[17]

This concern continued into the doldrum days of the twentieth century. As long as the conversion and transfer of adults covered the losses of the children of the church, Christian education did not seem necessary. But when evangelism waned and the losses appeared, the strategy shifted to Christian education of children and youth as the compensating hope. As Bishop Marston, a nationally noted educator as well as theologian and churchman, pressed home the point when he wrote his centennial history in 1960, "Free Methodism's growth increasingly depends upon its bringing its own children and youth into established church membership."[18]

This is not to say that evangelism was neglected during the first half of the twentieth century when Free Methodism was in the midst of finding itself. Most notably, we remember the start of the Forward Movement in 1947, a conscious and laudable plan to get the church to once again look forward through aggressive evangelism. Some weight shifted to the side of evangelism, but Christian education had momentum in its favor. When the church celebrated its centennial in 1960, the jury was still out.

DENOMINATIONAL DISTINCTIVES

A second set of founding principles adds insight into our understanding of the development of the Free Methodist Church during its first century. Organizational characteristics, rather than theological convictions, define these founding principles. The critical difference between the two sets of founding principles is the flexibility for substantive change in organizational emphasis without necessarily sacrificing the fundamental mission of the church. Free Methodism, therefore, may be identified by these organizational characteristics, but not defined by them. For this reason, "Denominational Distinctives" is chosen to designate these founding principles.

As with the Biblical Convictions, Denominational Distinctives come in four sets of organizational characteristics which may appear to be opposites, but in reality are complementary characteristics that are

balanced in the healthiest of organizations. In other words, they are characteristics that can be described as "both and," not "either or." Once understood, they become benchmarks from which we can follow the changing nature of the denomination throughout its history and into its future.

GOVERNANCE IS BOTH EPISCOPAL AND CONGREGATIONAL

As a natural reaction against the abuses suffered at the hands of the leaders and governing bodies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the founders of Free Methodism built into the new organization three specific protections designed to assure the balance between clergy and laity in church governance. First, in protest against the potential of injustice at the hands of all-clergy governance, equal representation of laity and clergy was guaranteed in the annual and quadrennial legislative bodies of the new church. Although it took until 1900 to implement fully the reform, the principle remained until the representation was equal. Second, the title of bishop (a lifetime appointment in the Methodist Episcopal Church) was replaced by the four-year-term election of a general superintendent who, in turn, was responsible to an executive committee elected by the General Conference.

Third, Restrictive Rules limited the legislative power of the General Conference by the requirement of a two-thirds majority vote ratified by a three-quarters vote by members of the annual conferences in order to change certain church laws: Rule 1: doctrine and standards of conduct; Rule 2: lay representation, itinerant ministry and free seats; and Rule 3: however, permitted no amendment to the rights of an impartial trial and appeal for both ministers and laity. In another tip of the scale toward the congregation, class leaders in the local societies were to be elected by the membership rather than to be appointed by the pastor, as it was in the parent body.

Because Free Methodism had no formal constitution until 1915, the aforementioned legislation served as the law of the church during its first half century. In practice, however, the leadership of the clergy, and especially the general superintendents, beginning with B.T. Rob-

erts, took the initiative to see the vision, state the mission and set the tone for the denomination. Roberts' visionary agenda of reform has already been noted. As the church grew, E.P. Hart was elected as the second general superintendent in 1874. Twelve years later, G.W. Coleman became the third general superintendent, and in 1890 the need to coordinate the work of the three resulted in the organization of a Board of General Superintendents, perhaps as another reaction against the senior strength and personal agenda of the founder, B.T. Roberts. In any case, the history of the Free Methodist Church in its first century can be written as a biography of its clergy leaders, and particularly those who served as general superintendents or bishops.

R.R. Blews' book *Master Workmen*, written in 1939 and updated as a companion to Marston's centennial history in 1960, represents that biographical history through the life and ministry of the esteemed leaders Roberts, Hart, Coleman, Jones, Hogue, Sellew, MacGeary, Warner, Clark, Zahniser, Griffith, Vincent, Warren and Pearce. As an addendum to the book, the bishops of 1960 could be included: Marston, Ormston, Fairbairn, Taylor and Kendall. Likewise, the biographies of departmental executives, educators, evangelists and missionaries – almost all of whom were clergy – could also be written as the leading influence in the direction of the church.

Complementing the strength of clergy leadership, the church made organizational moves that tipped the balance toward episcopal governance. In 1894 the motion was put to restore the title of "bishop" to the general superintendency. It failed, only to be resurrected and rejected again in 1898 and 1903, but finally on the fourth attempt in 1907, the majority was reversed and the title of "bishop" was restored. One cannot forget that during this same period from 1890 to 1907, the ordination of women was rejected as a nod toward the centralized power in the hands of male leadership. The hold was partially broken in 1911 when legislation was passed permitting women to be ordained as deacons, but without the right of proceeding to full ordination as elder. Women were thus blocked from leadership at the level of the superintendency in district, annual or general conferences. This

position on the ordination of women prevailed throughout the first century of the church and well into its second century.

Reorganization in 1931 confirmed the role of episcopal leadership for the church. Bishops presided over the four commissions as well the Board of Administration and the General Conference. Although equal clergy and lay representation on each of these governing units prevented ministerial tyranny and provided full voice and vote on policies and programs, the strategic position held by the bishops gave them a "bully pulpit" to influence the direction of the church.

Still another move toward episcopal governance took place with the order of the 1955 General Conference to centralize executive and departmental functions at Winona Lake, Indiana. The designation of "Headquarters" followed the earlier move of the Publishing House to Winona Lake in 1935, and symbolized the continued flow of power upward toward centralization and episcopal leadership.

In addition to the constant check of equal representation between clergy and laity in the legislative bodies of the church, limited but significant actions that leaned toward congregational governance were taken throughout the first century. As early as 1923, the three-year term for the itinerant ministry was unsuccessfully challenged, but in the next quadrennial session the term was increased to four years. In 1947 the General Conference lifted the time limit on pastoral appointments and, in the most significant move of the era, the 1955 General Conference authorized congregations to take a confidential vote on the return of the pastor. Although the results of the vote were kept in confidence and served only to advise the stationing committee on its appointments, the action moved governance away from the episcopacy and toward the congregation, a harbinger of the future.

STEWARDSHIP IS BOTH UNIFIED AND DIVERSE – When Marston cites stewardship as a founding principle for the Free Methodist Church, he is biblically correct to identify the principle with "full consecration for service to God and man" and true to Wesley's convic-

tion that Christian stewardship evidenced itself in compassion for the poor. This principle was consistent with Free Methodism's emphasis upon simplicity of lifestyle, plainness of dress and economy of church architecture. Not unlike John Wesley, B.T. Roberts took strong stands on economic matters, ranging from such national issues as money, banking and tax reform to the personal stewardship of possessions and earning abilities.[19] The *Discipline* as well makes clear the link between the stewardship of possessions and compassion for the poor.

> The Scriptures teach the privilege and responsibility of private ownership. Christians hold title to possessions under civil law, but regard all they have as the property of God entrusted to them as stewards. Although they may accumulate goods they lay not up for themselves treasures on earth (Matthew 6:19-20; Luke 12:16-21), but give liberally for the needs of others and the ministry of the church (2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:6-13).[20]

In this article, the biblical position enlarges the meaning of the stewardship of possessions to include support for the ministries of the church. Two crucial factors now come into balance. One is the linkage between the stewardship of possessions and compassion for the poor; the other is the connection between the principle of stewardship and support for the ministries of the church. We have already seen the weakness of the Free Methodist Church in its social ministries after the original issues of rented pews and human slavery were resolved.

Stewardship for the support of the ministries of the church reveals another balance point for the Denominational Distinctives of Free Methodism. As the church grew and denominational programs increased to solidify the growth, actions were taken to assure unified support from the tithes and offerings of the membership at the local level. In 1860 "Missions" meant home missions with the establishment of new churches and the extension into new areas. To support this work, class leaders encouraged their members to give, voluntarily, one cent a week for home missions and to contribute to a public

missionary offering taken by the local church. The funds were sent to the annual conference for discretionary distribution within the scope of home evangelism.

When the General Conference of 1882 divided "Missions" into "Home Missions" and "Foreign Missions," a mandatory fee of not less than twenty cents per member was in place along with a required offerings for missions within the annual conference. Not until 1890 did the General Conference divide the fees and offerings for missions into "Foreign Missions" and "Home Evangelism," with the latter suffering a loss from 25 to 15 cents a member and probably symbolizing the retreat from aggressive evangelism in that era.

Years later, when the scope of denominational programs began to outstrip available resources, proposals were advanced for a denominational budget under the name General Stewardship Fund. The General Conference of 1923 rejected the proposal and 24 years passed before the concept was accepted in 1947. With this action, the balance tipped toward mandatory support for denominational ministries through apportionments to local churches and annual conferences in the General Service Fund. Ruefully, Marston reveals his position on the concept when he writes,

> The psychology of a stipulated assessment worked against generous giving to the cause of general evangelism and church extension. Had not one done his duty to the cause of extending the church at home when he paid his conference claims? There were other factors crippling the cause of evangelism, but here we find a serious handicap to home expansion.[21]

Nevertheless, the stage was set for a continuing contest between the stewardship responsibility for world missions and home evangelism framed in the context of a general church budget supported by assessments or diversified funding through voluntary gifts.

MISSION IS BOTH LOCAL AND GLOBAL – The issue of funding for home evangelism and world missions prompts a look at an-

other Denominational Distinctive for the Free Methodist Church. When the church was organized in 1860, it was preoccupied with home evangelism. The unreached communities of the East and the rapidly expanding Western frontier served as its mission field. Not by accident, each annual conference had "charge of all missions within its bounds" with full authority "to employ missionaries to labor within its bounds."[22]

Perhaps it is only coincidence, but when Free Methodism reached the western seaboard, the General Missionary Board sent its first missionary. The California Conference was established in 1883, and the Oregon-Washington Conference in 1885, the latter date coinciding with the appointment of Miss M. Louisa Ranf to India. From then on, the balance between home and foreign missions began to tip in favor of a global outlook.

At the same time that the North American church became introverted and parochial, world missions provided the relief valve for the thwarted energies of aggressive evangelism. Dr. Byron S. Lamson, elected as Missionary Secretary for the General Missionary Board in 1944, spoke the vision that kept the Free Methodist Church from a choking parochialism when he said, "If we give ourselves to save the lost world, God will take care of His church." In 1860 "Missions" embraced only home evangelism; in 1960 the term meant world evangelism. As the balance tipped, Bishop Marston turned prophet with the centennial observation,

> The church's missionary enterprise now surpasses in magnitude the home church of forty years ago, and is increasing much more rapidly than the home church. At present rates of growth for the two, within ten years the overseas churches will overtake the American church in membership and perhaps in enterprise for the Kingdom.[23]

Will Lamson's self-correcting vision of world evangelism prove true? If so, when the Free Methodist Church closed its first century in 1960, the North American church could anticipate rejuvenation as it entered its second century.

DIRECTION IS BOTH CONNECTIONAL AND ECUMENICAL – The Free Methodist Church, from the time of its founding, enjoyed the advantage of its connectional relationship. Cohesion characterized a community of believers who were brought together, not just by disillusionment with a denomination that had lost its moorings, but especially by the commitment to biblical convictions. For spiritual reasons alone, the Free Methodist Church could be identified as a "connectional" church. But the term also extends to the unique structural network that Free Methodism inherited from its parent church, a credit to the genius of John Wesley.

Beginning with the class meeting – "a church within a church" – the mutuality of believers, seeking spiritual growth and accepting corporate discipline, prepared the way for the "love feast" where confession and forgiveness bonded the participants in a deeply moving community of faith. Societies, then, formalized the relationship in corporate worship, centered around the Word of God with freedom of the Spirit and the order of the Sacrament. Spiritual and structural connectionalism received further reinforcement through the organization of district, annual and general conferences that did business in a climate of communal celebration. No wonder that Free Methodists gained a sense of "home" when the denominational headquarters moved to a gracious campus and conference setting in Winona Lake.

Connectional strength did not make self-contained separatists or narrow sectarians out of Free Methodists. B.T. Roberts, as we have seen, characterized a "Renaissance Man" in his astute observations of both the religious and secular world. In the spirit of John Wesley, he reached out with an irenic spirit in cooperation with those of differing convictions or culture. As a college student, he taught a young women's Sunday school class in a black church and chose as the subject of his first oration the advocacy of abolition. Later, he risked his reputation by taking the unpopular stance in favor of the ordination of women.

Roberts brought that renaissance spirit with him to the leadership of the Free Methodist Church. As early as 1862, the General Conference appointed a committee to reach out to a group known as Bible

Christians in the spirit of fellowship and with the prospect of union. But the tone for cooperation with other Christians was set in the policy adopted by the General Conference of 1882:

> We have Christian fellowship and love, for all persons of whatever denomination, who show by their lives that they 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.'
>
> We will unite with all well disposed persons, in an open, Christian manner, in promoting social and civil reforms.
>
> But we cannot unite, where we are required to compromise our principles, in holding union meetings with any person, or denomination, whose practical standard of Christian character and church fellowship, is obviously below that plainly set forth in the New Testament.[24]

It is no surprise, then, to learn that in 1883 Roberts represented the Free Methodist Church as a charter member of the newly formed World Methodist Council. Joining even with those who expelled him from the Methodist Episcopal Church, Roberts had the confidence of his convictions that permitted him to participate in the larger ecumenical community. In 1886 as the National Holiness Association gained momentum as a movement, the General Conference adopted the resolution that read:

> Whereas entire sanctification gives the unity of the Spirit without regard to denominational preference, and Whereas we recognize that God has greatly blessed the holiness movement both within and without the Free Methodist Church:
>
> Therefore, Resolved, that we extend hearty fellowship and cooperation to all churches, associations, or other agencies that are in harmony with the Word of God in teaching and practice.[25]

Understandably, the Free Methodist Church became a stalwart member and leader in the National Holiness Association (later, the Christian Holiness Association).

The ecumenical spirit was further extended when the National Association of Evangelicals was formed in 1943. Although not a Wesleyan, Arminian or Holiness organization, its advocacy of a united voice and cooperative action on behalf of evangelical Christianity against both liberalism and a rigid fundamentalism prompted the Free Methodist Church to join and take a leadership role.

But ecumenicity has it limits. When the National Council of Churches was formed, Free Methodists were invited to join and refused. In fact, a major controversy developed in the 1950s when the Free Methodist Church was listed as a prospective member, though the church had already taken a position against membership. The church balked at the Council's syncretistic approach to doctrine, its liberal agenda and its goal of organic union.

Still, the Free Methodist Church was caught up in the trend toward organic unity in the optimistic days of the mid-twentieth century. Wesleyan Methodist and Free Methodist churches reopened their earlier conversations about merger, and in 1959 the Holiness Movement Church of Canada, including 5,000 members in Egypt, officially united with Free Methodists as one body.

So as the Free Methodist Church closed its first century, renewed confidence in its Biblical Convictions and Denominational Distinctives not only strengthened its connectional relationships, but also permitted it to contribute affirmatively to the larger holiness, evangelical and Wesleyan communities. The stranglehold of introversion seemed to be broken and the restored balance between the cohesive strength of denominational connectionalism and the confident spirit of ecumenical cooperation gave promise of a new outlook for the second century.

Through this overview of Biblical Convictions and Denominational Distinctives, we see the roots that shaped the Free Methodist Church in the first century. Changes in theology were minimal, but adjustments in structure and governance were significant. The shifting and reshifting balance between complementary principles is particu-

larly valuable for understanding the movement of the church as a dynamic organization.

According to the relative weight of emphasis upon one side or the other of these founding principles, how would the Free Methodist Church be described at the turn of its first century in 1960? Its faith would be defined by *experience*, its worship represented by *freedom*, its discipline by *personal holiness* and its strategy by an emphasis upon *Christian education.* Likewise, among its Denominational Distinctives, the scale would tend to be tipped toward the *episcopacy* in governance, a *unified budget* in stewardship, *global missions* in scope and an emerging *ecumenism* in outlook.

Although this interpretation is open for debate, it does give us a benchmark against which to study trends in the church throughout the period of 1960 to 1995 and into the future. History serves us well when we view Free Methodism as a dynamic movement rather than a static organization.

A Future with a History

THE WESLEYAN WITNESS OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

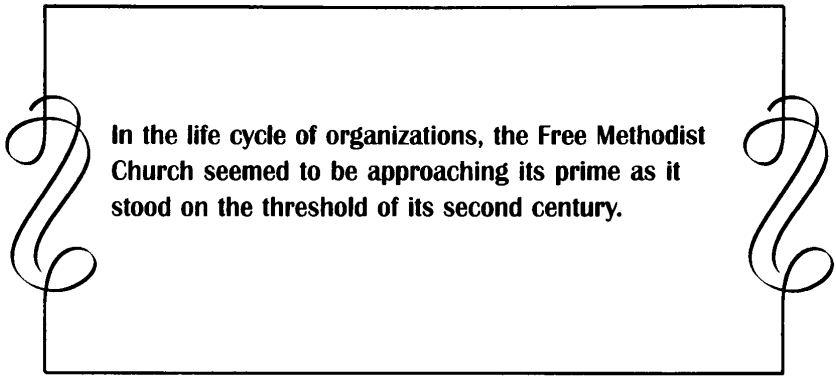
Volume I

Part II

PREVIEWING OUR ERA 1960-1995

As the church began a century ago, so let it continue to meet the perpetual need of the human spirit with the Bible's doctrine of full redemption; with the reality of an inner experience of cleansing and power that verifies the doctrine both in the inner consciousness and in the outward life; with the simplicity of spiritual worship untrammeled by elaborate ritual; with a life of daily devotion that separates from the world even in the world; with a full consecration of self and possessions to the service of God and man. All of these principles are necessary to maintain *from age to age a living witness.*

Bishop Leslie R. Marston


In the life cycle of organizations, the Free Methodist Church seemed to be approaching its prime as it stood on the threshold of its second century.

CHAPTER V

On the Threshold of Change

PRE-1960

Free Methodism is a product of its times. While its message and mission set it apart as a denomination, it still reflects the social, moral and religious culture of America during the first hundred years of its existence. We have seen its development from the viewpoint of the life cycle of an organization, its birth, infancy, adolescence and early adulthood. We have also viewed its theological position and organizational style as a shifting balance that helps explain the ebb and flow of denominational vitality throughout its first century.

Now it is worthwhile to turn the perspective one more time and view the period from 1860 to 1960 in relationship to the social, moral and religious environment by which it was influenced and with which it interacted. A brief overview of the era, bridging over two centuries from pre-1860 to pre-1960, will serve as background for a more specific look at the trends in the social and religious culture of the post-World War II years, which set the stage for the years to come.

Finally, a summary assessment of the readiness of the church for the challenges of its second century will take us to the threshold of our updated history from 1960 to the present.

BRIDGING TWO CENTURIES

Free Methodism was founded in turbulent social and religious

times. The decade of the 1850s rocked under the industrial and urban revolution that threatened all institutions that held tightly to the status quo. Adding to the tension of those days, a chasm running from the industrial North to the agricultural South divided the nation over the symbol of human slavery. Moreover, as cities developed and factories started up, the onslaught of economic depression left in its wake a new class of poor and disenfranchised. More often than not, in circumstances like this, a depressed and demoralized people, caught in limbo between changing worlds, turns to God.

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING – The 1830s are remembered as a time of great awakening, led by Charles G. Finney, known as a crusading evangelist, a prominent college president and a risk-taking reformer. Prayer groups began in the cities, revival came to churches and masses were converted. Sad as it may seem, the Methodist Episcopal Church no longer served as an instrument for revival. Consequently, the Spirit of God bypassed the established church and found expression through the young, the poor and the disenfranchised. Under the impulse of the Spirit, "bypass" organizations of the parachurch type sprang to life in response to spiritual and human needs that the established church failed to meet. Prime examples out of the continuing awakening are the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association. Although not a parachurch organization, the Free Methodist Church might well be considered one of those bypass instruments of spiritual awakening.

SOCIAL REFORMATION – A genuine spiritual awakening always involves social conscience. As the Great Awakening of the 1740s fueled the call for political freedom from England in the seventeenth century, the great awakening of the 1830s brought fire to the demand for social freedom in the abolition movement. Free Methodism, with its inseparable doctrine of personal and social holiness, became part of that voice.

In the Reconstruction Period following the Civil War, social re-

form, as an outgrowth of spiritual awakening, turned to the founding of human service agencies based upon Christian compassion. The Red Cross, for instance, joined the YMCA and the YWCA as an organization motivated by Christian compassion and human concern. Even the United Way, founded in the 1880s, began with the scriptural impetus, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Although resolutions brought before the General Conference during the Reconstruction period addressed some of these larger concerns, by and large the church withdrew from the field of social action and concentrated on home evangelism and church planting in its march across America.

One notable exception to this all-absorbing interest was the continued planting of new Free Methodist colleges. During the late 1800s Free Methodist schools joined scores of denominational colleges that were founded across the Midwest, the Central Plains and the far West. Motivation for this movement might well have come from the desire to conserve the young for denominational membership or protect them from the influences of public education and a secular culture, but also to transmit the heritage of faith from one generation to another. A review of the original charters of Free Methodist schools reveals the larger and more affirmative purpose, at least in formal documents.

FREE METHODISM'S MIXED SIGNALS – As Free Methodism came to the end of the nineteenth century, the reality of a larger world challenged the smug isolationism of Western culture. Although there is little official connection with the Student Volunteer Movement, which set the goal of winning the world within a generation and produced such missionary giants as E. Stanley Jones and John R. Mott of the Wesleyan tradition, the awakened interest in world evangelism did not miss the Free Methodist Church. With the sending of its first missionaries overseas in 1885, a trajectory based upon the Great Commission was set for long-range impact in the future, but not without a trade off. At the same time that the door of world mission swung open, the door at home almost slammed shut. Aggressive evangelism

suffered as the church retreated into an attitude of consolidation, and its social conscience became blunted when liberal theology made the "Social Gospel" the centerpiece of its message.

From then on, Free Methodists, along with other holiness groups, either spoke with muted voices on issues of justice, e.g., economic justice, or retreated to a safer position on matters of personal morality such as alcohol, tobacco and gambling. Political issues were studiously avoided, except when anti-Catholic sentiments reached the point where the 1943 General Conference adopted a resolution supporting the separation of church and state, which became the framework for opposition to a Vatican embassy for the United States. An even stronger statement was made in 1951 when the church formally protested the plan of the President of the United States to send a personal representative to the Vatican. In a companion protest, the church also adopted a resolution against public aid for parochial schools.[1]

WALKING THROUGH THE STAGES

Even though loyal Free Methodists believe that their mission is ordained by God, that their ecclesiastical integrity is independent of the culture and that their role in Christian history is unique, an amazing parallel exists between the development of the church and other denominations, whatever the faith position. In fact, to read about the stages of denominational development as seen by scholars in the field is to raise the question, "Was the Free Methodist Church the model for the study?"[2] Free Methodism walked through every stage in its development as a denomination.

THE DISSENTING STAGE – In the pre-1860 period, the incipient Free Methodist Church represented the "dissenting" stage of denominationalism in which its leaders struggled for space, identity and community as a disenfranchised religious group. They found space in American culture by espousing the cause of abolition, created their identity in the religious subculture by protest against the spiritual

compromise of the Methodist Episcopal Church and found community around the doctrine of sanctification. With regard to the doctrine of sanctification, Marston contends that the Free Methodist Church in 1860 was "... the only denomination in America aggressively holiness in emphasis."[3] Although this assertion of uniqueness may be contested, the combination of social advocacy and religious dissent, related to the founding of the Free Methodist Church, cannot be ignored.

THE MISSIONARY STAGE – Once the church was formally organized, Free Methodism entered the "missionary" stage of denominational development. Rather than remaining in the "dissenting" stage, the church, in its prodigious childhood years from 1860 to 1893, took an affirmative outward look toward the goal of making a Christian America. Fired by this motivation, the church fit hand in glove with the missionary style, which "... accented initiative, risk taking, mobility, openness, experimentation, vernacular idioms and popular expression – traits that Baptists, Methodists and Christians [and Free Methodists] both espoused and institutionalized."[4]

Free Methodism's march across America, planting churches, holding camp meetings, sparking revivals and winning converts or attracting transfers, represents this missionary spirit at its best. Statistics of that expansive era are incomplete. If the membership growth came primarily from transfers who were also dissenting against the laxity and liberalism of their former church, this may be a factor in the slowdown beginning in the 1890s. In its most expansive period of membership growth, Marston notes, "Had the rate of increase from 1886 to 1894 continued to 1960, Free Methodism in America at its centenary would number 650,000" rather than 30,000."[5]

THE DENOMINATIONAL STAGE – Regrettably, when the missionary zeal waned, the church, during its period of adolescent development from 1894 to 1930, turned inward toward what Richey calls "Churchly Denominationalism." Almost in copycat fashion, churches come to this stage in their denominational development when the free

enterprise of missionary evangelism produces a multiplicity of uncoordinated efforts and agencies. In Free Methodism these ventures included the General Missionary Board, the Women's Missionary Society, the Young People's Missionary Society, General Conference Evangelists, the General Board of Aggressive Evangelism, Free Methodist colleges, benevolent institutions, the Free Methodist Publishing House, the *Free Methodist* magazine, the Sunday School Department and a myriad of committees functioning through the General Conference and the Board of Bishops.

To add to the complexity, if not the chaos, each enterprise or agency had a person in leadership with a singular aim of advancing his or her specialized ministry. Energy and attention, then, focused inwardly upon the creation of a denominational culture. While turning away from interaction with the social culture, Free Methodism turned toward the religious culture seeking the legitimacy of a full-fledged denomination.

THE MANAGERIAL STAGE – Along with other churchly denominations, the Free Methodist Church continued to work on its internal structure into the first half of the twentieth century. As the church approached its General Conference in 1931, its leadership seemed to ask the question, "How can the denominational organization be the instrument to advance the mission of the church rather than becoming an end in itself?" Free Methodism, along with other denominations, answered this question with a

> managerial revolution – staffing agencies with professionals, encouraging specialization and relying upon expertise, increasing staff, resorting to systematic finance, appointing denominational boards to govern the agencies, elaborating procedures and structures for coordination and collaboration among the agencies and between agencies and local churches, prescribing an organizational grammar so that every level of the church ... structured itself with the same

bodies, with the same names, consequently centering the denomination nationally through bureaucracy.[6]

The goal of this restructuring was efficiency in denominational ministries. Some, of course, would argue that the Free Methodist Church succumbed to the "corporate model" of the business culture. Others would contend that reorganization left no space for the energetic enthusiasts and enterprising ventures that characterized the genius of Free Methodism in its beginnings. Nevertheless, the evidence is on the side of those who argued for transformation by restructuring the denomination. When the Free Methodist Church entered the post-World War II era, its coordinated denominational structure had already set free a new era of "missionary" outreach through the avenues of its commissions, committees and auxiliary organizations.

BASKING IN VICTORY

SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION – Post-World War II America, as defined by its social and religious culture, served as the launching pad for the Free Methodist Church into its second century. Again, it is a false notion to assume that the church continued toward denominational maturity independent of its social and religious environment. The reconstruction period from V-J Day in 1945 and through the 1950s profoundly influenced the church and its future. Socially, America entered the era with the exuberance of a conquering hero. All of the idealism attached to a democracy resurfaced with gloss and glow. With the election of Dwight David Eisenhower, personification of the conquering hero's image, optimism peaked and conservatism reigned. Only the chill of the Cold War with communism spoiled the warm glow of heady hope that characterized the decade.

Yet, until the launching of Sputnik in 1959, confidence in the superiority of the military-industrial complex and the advancements of new technology quieted the anxiety over nuclear war. Education in the era took on messianic proportions. Although the minds of students were as quiet as mice, the campuses became substitute sanctuaries

with professors as the high priests and existentialism the new theology.

GLOBAL REVOLUTION – Still, there were stirrings that could not be denied. From the younger and poorer peoples of the two-thirds world came the message announcing the opening of the "global village" and the introduction of multiculturalism, with implications for diversity at home and abroad. Close behind this revelation came the launching of "spaceship earth" – an ecology of the universe in which everything is connected with everything else. Adding to the forecasts of the future, secular prophets saw that world turned upside down by a communications revolution in which the "medium is the message." No one wanted to admit it, but underlying the post-war optimism lurked the uneasiness of the head that wore the crown. Prophets may have spoken, but no one listened.

RELIGIOUS OPTIMISM – Religion, whether liberal or conservative, mainline or evangelical, bought into the headiness of the post-war world. Denominations flourished as membership and attendance showed strong gains backed up by polls showing confidence in the church and the clergy. Moreover, according to similar polls, the moral consensus seemed firm with the acceptance of legitimate authority, the solidarity of primary institutions and the acceptance of traditional values. In the security of this climate, religious leaders envisioned the breakdown of denominational barriers, the leveling of theological differences and the emergence of an ecumenical spirit that would lead to organic unity.

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING – In the evangelical sector, and particularly among students in Christian colleges, the post-World War II period began with evidence of spiritual awakening. Asbury College and Wheaton College were scenes of prolonged chapel services with the Spirit of God moving students to confession, repentance and regeneration. Directly or indirectly, then, the enthusiasm of the young

found its outlet through parachurch organizations such as Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade, Young Life and Navigators. Out of that same era came the crusades, the inauguration of the immensely successful magazine *Christianity Today*, the development of Christian music and publishing houses, the advent of Christian radio and the National Religious Broadcasters, the organization of the National Association of Evangelicals and the ascendancy of the Calvinist and Reformation tradition in theological influence. Evangelicals, along with mainliners, shared the optimism for a new day of cooperative action in the religious culture and significant impact upon the secular culture.

STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD

POSITIONED TO PERFORM – The Free Methodist Church rode the same high tide of optimism into its second century. Although it did not become a nationally visible denomination in the pre-1960 period or rise to leadership in the evangelical subculture, it benefited from the momentum of the period to direct its energies outward once again. After the reorganization of the church on a corporate model in 1931, a transformation of efficiency and effectiveness was expected. Performance was the goal. Reorganization, however, always promises more than it delivers. With the structure and systems of a full-fledged denomination, Free Methodism was geared to grow and designed to govern a church with many times its membership. Yet the statistics of membership in North America show minimal growth to 45,380 full members and 1,234 churches in 1960, compared with 33,694 full members and 1,255 churches in 1931. Even with the launching of the Forward Movement in 1947, which inspired the church to spiritual development and evangelistic outreach, Marston notes,

> The rate of growth since the launching of the Forward Movement has appreciably exceeded the rate in the quadrennium which immediately preceded it, but the gains have been far from commensurate with the church's potential, and far below the church's outreach in the first genera-

tion.[7]

Most significantly, in the same period, 1931 to 1960, overseas membership increased from 7,770 to 40,854.

PROGRAMMED TO LEAD – The honesty of Bishop Marston's observation does not cancel out the evidence that Free Methodism responded to post-World War II changes in the social and religious cultures. Most significant among those moves were the following new or revitalized programs, which represented the Forward Movement as spiritual and evangelistic thrust:

- Inauguration of the Light and Life Hour radio broadcast in 1944 as Free Methodism's entry in the opening world of national and international media communication;
- Priority emphasis upon the conversion and conservation of the children and youth of the church through the concept of the Sunday school as an evangelistic as well as educational ministry, establishment of the Christian Youth Crusaders (1939) with department and director status for ministry to intermediate youth (1951), and broadening of the name and purpose of Free Methodist Youth (1955) to include home evangelism, international crusades and youth camps at conference, regional and national levels;
- Organization of the Light and Life Men's Fellowship (1951) for the purpose of personal witnessing, soul winning, fellowship, stewardship and service;
- Declaration of evangelism and church extension as the major program for the church (1955) under the mandate that "all agencies and departments of the church, and ... our entire membership plan its stewardship of finances, time and talent in line with this emphasis";[8]
- Formation of the John Wesley Seminary Foundation (1947) in cooperative alliance with Asbury Theological Seminary to provide seminary education for ministerial candidates as an

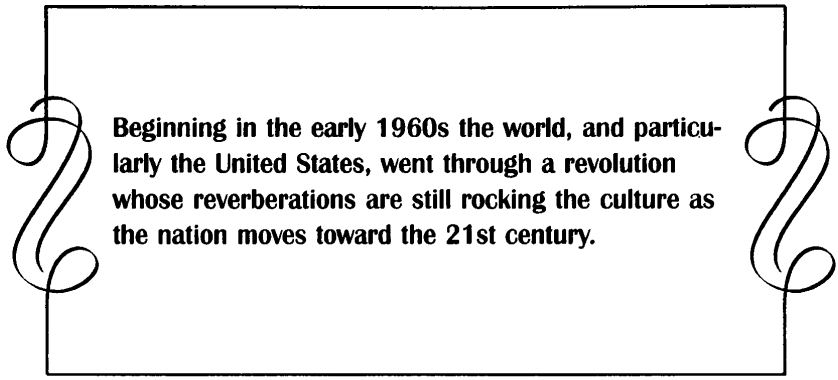
alternative to a denominational seminary;
- Reopening of merger talks with the Wesleyan Methodist Church (1943) and encouragement of conversation with other denominations or fellowships in the Wesleyan and Holiness heritage (1955);
- Membership and leadership in the newly organized National Association of Evangelicals (1943) and rejection on doctrinal grounds of membership in the National Council of Churches (1950); and
- Initial call for a World Planning Council (1958) in recognition of the fast-growing world church and the need to develop national conferences with indigenous leadership independent of the North American church and its department of missions.

APPROACHING ITS PRIME – In the life cycle of organizations, the Free Methodist Church seemed to be approaching its prime as it stood on the threshold of its second century. Reorganized for efficiency, strong in episcopal leadership, clear in doctrinal position, emotionally and functionally connected through the nexus of its Winona Lake headquarters, offering a full range of educational, social and communications services and confident enough to distinguish between principles and prudentials in worship and lifestyle, the church could escape its introversion of the past and focus outwardly upon the future. Certainly the new thrusts in evangelism, Christian education, merger exploration, cooperative evangelical action and, especially, planning for a world church gave promise for the future.

At the same time, the Free Methodist Church had to confront the realities of static membership in the midst of evangelical resurgence, small churches in rural locations in a time of mass urbanization, scarcity of finances for supporting a full-service denomination and severely limited impact upon the developing diversity of race, gender and ethnic origin in the changing culture. Even more important, the church had to heed Marston's warning regarding Christian holiness:

"If there is a doctrinal weakness, it is not [a] decline in acceptance of the doctrine so much as [a] lack of clarity in defining it and [a] lack of forcefulness in proclaiming it."[9]

With the promise of its strengths and the challenge of its weaknesses, then, the Free Methodist Church and its people stood poised on the threshold of a second century. Whether or not Free Methodism fulfilled the promise of its strengths and met the challenge of its weaknesses is the story of the church from 1960 to the present time.


Beginning in the early 1960s the world, and particularly the United States, went through a revolution whose reverberations are still rocking the culture as the nation moves toward the 21st century.

CHAPTER VI

Megashifts of Our Generation

1960-1995

With renewed optimism, the Free Methodist Church celebrated its one-hundredth anniversary in 1960. The social and religious setting of North American culture reinforced this optimism. John F. Kennedy set an idealistic tone for his presidency and captured the imagination of Americans when he held out the inaugural promise to put a man on the moon and wipe out hunger in the nation by the end of the decade. In parallel vision and spirit, Bishop Walter S. Kendall keynoted the Centennial General Conference with the vision for Free Methodism to "Double in a Decade." Neither President Kennedy nor Bishop Kendall could foresee the tumultuous days ahead that would test their vision and temper their optimism.

Beginning in the early 1960s the world, and particularly the United States, went through a revolution whose reverberations are still rocking the culture as the nation moves toward the twenty-first century. No one can either chronicle or critique the events of history from 1960 to 1995 in one volume. Yet, as noted earlier, the history of Free Methodism cannot be written independently of the social and religious culture of which it is a part. True, its biblical mandate and its spiritual mission transcend the culture. But this is not to deny the impact of cultural change upon the church. To understand the changing nature of the church during the era under study, the cataclysmic changes in the social and religious culture of the time must be noted.

THE SOBERING SIXTIES

The heady optimism with which the 1960s began died with the gunshot that killed John F. Kennedy. Americans who boasted, "It can't happen here," lost their case as the national ego suffered a puncture of immeasurable proportions. As if triggering a revolution, the ripple effect of the assassination unearthed issues that smoldered under the gloss of the 1950s. Like soldiers marching in single file, the tragedies and tensions of the decade originally dubbed as "The Soaring Sixties" can be remembered by the names of places:

DALLAS	1963	The assassination of President Kennedy
SELMA	1965	The beating of blacks marching for civil rights
DETROIT	1967	The race riot that charred a city
MEMPHIS	1968	The assassination of Martin Luther King
CHICAGO	1968	The violent disruption of the Democratic National Convention
LOS ANGELES	1968	The assassination of Robert Kennedy
BERKELEY	1969	Student takeover of the campus at the University of California
WOODSTOCK	1969	The glorification of illegal drugs, free sex, and uninhibited rock music
MY LAI	1969	The massacre of innocent Vietnamese villagers by U.S. troops[1]

With such tragic events on its record, the "Soaring Sixties" became better known as the "Sobering Sixties." Beginning with the highest of idealistic hopes, the dreamers were mugged by reality. Young people born and reared during the decade suffered the most and became identified with "Baby Boomers" who turned inward for self-protection and thus earned the added title in the 1970s of the "Me Generation." In his book *A Generation of Seekers*, Wade Clark Roof

astutely describes the 1960s as "a time when mountains were moving."[2] Baby Boomers grew up in the upheaval of moral values, the dilemmas of affluence, the issues of gender and racial equality, the offerings of entitlement, the rising expectations of higher education and the moral impact of the media. At the very least, the turmoil of the 1960s created a shell-shocked generation whose mission of spiritual search and discovery helps define the changing nature of religion throughout the remaining decades of the twentieth century.

MORAL REVOLUTION – More than tragic events stalked through society and more than social turmoil haunted the minds of Americans in the 1960s. Under the eruptions on the social landscape, deep moving shifts were taking place along a moral fault line. A sound society depends upon (a) a moral consensus among its people; (b) an acceptance of legitimate leadership and (c) effectiveness in the primary institutions of the home, the church and the school. In the 1960s, each of these foundational premises came under attack and either lost ground or succumbed to the onslaught. Woodstock symbolized the breakdown of the moral consensus, particularly regarding drugs, sexuality and music, but reaching deeper into the moral reservoir to reject absolute truth and traditional standards of right and wrong.

Close behind came the denial of legitimate authority. Leaders who had been heroes became traitors. Whether in government, education, business or religion, leaders received a vote of no confidence, found their credibility questioned and their competence denied. Completing the breakdown, the authority and legitimacy of the home, the church and the school as nurturing institutions came under fire.

With sexual freedom came a challenge to traditional marriage and family relationships. With the loss of authority came doubts about the validity and value of the teachings of the church. With the breakdown in moral consensus, schools had no core values upon which to build a curriculum. And business, most of all, represented a sellout to capitalistic greed and the evils of the military-industrial-educational complex. Yet, contradicting their own attacks, the rebels still nursed unrealistic

expectations for the moral standards, established leaders and primary institutions against which they revolted. Out of the 1960s came an attitude of entitlement – "You owe it to me" – which government fostered, education nursed and society embraced.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION – In this sobering climate, religion also took its lumps. Nero-like, most churches fiddled while Rome burned. Liberals tended to espouse the social and moral agenda of the radicals, and conservatives kept an arm's length from the conflict but enjoyed the abundant fodder for preaching and prophecy. Just as if nothing were happening, liberals charged full speed ahead on the ecumenical agenda for organic union, theological syncretism and religious pluralism. Conservative churches tended to pull within themselves, create their own counterculture and let parachurch groups do the evangelizing of rebels and youth. Meanwhile, symptomatic of a culture turning inward for self-protection, a host of new psychologies took over the role of the church and its clergy for confession, healing and growth. Evangelicals in particular bought into the new psychology and the "relational theology" that it introduced.

THE COLD WAR – Meanwhile, the Cold War raged between the superpowers of the USSR and the United States. Evil at home may have been dehorned, but on the international scene the Devil had a face. Except for "Better-Red-than-dead" activists, Americans had one rallying point: the "domino effect" of communism across the world and especially in the developing nations had to be stopped at all costs. Presumably, whoever won the two-thirds world won the whole world.

THE SURPRISING SEVENTIES

When the dawn broke upon the decade of the 1970s, campus revolt preoccupied the national agenda. Both sides were stalemated until troops of the National Guard gunned down student protesters at Kent State University. A numbed nation caught a glimpse of its soul

and saw evil at work. Whether by common sense or fatigue, a truce was drawn and preoccupation shifted to the resolution of the stalemate in Vietnam.

ONE DIVINE MOMENT – Hidden in our national history, however, is a defining moment whose impact upon culture, at home and abroad, radiates through the 1970s and on through the century.

Appropriately entitled "One Divine Moment,"[3] the Spirit of God moved upon the students of evangelical Christian colleges, notably beginning at Asbury College, but almost simultaneously at the Free Methodist schools, Greenville College, Seattle Pacific College, Roberts Wesleyan College and Spring Arbor College. Marathon chapels for orderly confession, repentance, regeneration and sanctification led to witness teams spreading across the nation and carrying the spirit of revival to students, not just in Christian colleges, but in public and private secular schools as well. Because genuine spiritual awakenings take at least one full generation to reveal their impact upon society, the results of revival are still coming to fruition in the mid-1990s.

Whether by cause and effect or by parallel developments, the spiritual awakening of 1970 determined the future for evangelical Christian colleges, including the Free Methodist schools. Students of American higher education had predicted either demise or mediocrity for these institutions during the 1970s as they were caught in the backwash of the burgeoning sector of public higher education. To the contrary, evangelical Christian colleges not only survived with strength, but became a significant sector in American higher education, oftentimes putting public higher education in the backwash of vitality and innovation.

NATIONAL REPENTANCE – Approaching the middle of the decade, the soul-searching that began with the Kent State killing became wrenching pain with the Watergate revelations. Whatever shreds of confidence remained in established leadership after the revolt of the 1960s were lost in Richard Nixon's betrayal of his presidential trust.

With his resignation and exile, he became a symbolic scapegoat for the sins of the nation. The only evidence of a call for national repentance is lost in the Congressional Record when Senator Mark Hatfield received a courtesy voice vote for his Proclamation for a National Day of Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer on April 30, 1974, following the same form used by Abraham Lincoln in the crisis of 1863 and based upon 2 Chronicles 7:14:

> If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

EVANGELICAL RESURGENCE – Without knowing the full impact of his proclamation upon history, Senator Hatfield must have sensed the national need for repentance. Just a year or so later, George Gallup discovered a phenomenon called "The Born Again Movement" in which 45 percent of Americans identified themselves as "born again, Bible-believing and witnessing Christians." *Time* magazine's recognition of 1976 as "The Year of the Evangelical" did not come by accident. Perhaps as a part of the soul-searching that also took people into psychological self-help, Eastern religions and exotic cults, the "Born Again Movement" became an undeniable spiritual and social force. If so, the attitude of repentance did not last long. When President Jimmy Carter dared to bare his soul by calling attention to a "national malaise," he learned that Americans still wanted leaders who tell them what they want to hear.

A MAJORITY MENTALITY – Regrettably, the "Born Again Movement" turned political. Led by such media personalities as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Jim Bakker, evangelical Christianity became identified with either Fundamentalism, Pentecostalism or arch-Republicanism in the minds of the public. With a touch of genius, Jerry Falwell organized the Moral Majority around a mingling of social and political issues that constituted a right-wing agenda. Many evangelicals did not

agree with the apparent contradiction between Falwell's rigid theology and his flexible politics, but none can deny his foresight in seeing the future of transdenominational networking around a single cause. Although Pat Robertson and Jim Bakker brought their own personal casting to the evangelical agenda, they proved the point that Pentecostals and charismatics took up the media where the Holiness people left off.

A CULTURAL CHASM – Morally, the stage was being set for a clash of subcultures. Daniel Yankelovich, in his studies of American character, found a major shift, especially among younger and better educated people, from what he called the "ethic of self-denial" to the "ethic of self-fulfillment."[4] Adopting the analogy of the earthquake, he too talked about "giant plates" of the culture moving against each other with pressure building for an eruption. The young and educated lived on the fault line. So while Gallup identified millions who were "born again" to the Christian ethic of self-denial, Yankelovich uncovered millions more whose interest centered in self-fulfillment and whose morality reversed the standards of consensus regarding such matters as marriage, family, work and sexuality that had prevailed in the minds of the general public in the 1950s. Turning inward, they began to ask the questions, "How can I find self-fulfillment?"; "What does personal success mean?"; "What kinds of commitments should I be making?"; "What is worth sacrificing for?"; and "How can I grow?"[5] Although these questions reflect radical self-interest, they foretell the opening of a spiritual search which Craig Dykstra identifies as none other than "... a search for God."[6]

While evangelicals categorically denounced the moral reversal and the radical self-interest of the rising generation, they too became victims of its pervasive cultural influence. At the same time that evangelicals attested absolute truth and unbending moral standards for themselves, they became more tolerant of diversity compelled by a changing culture. The changing attitude toward divorce and remarriage is a prime example.

THE ENIGMATIC EIGHTIES

Not by surprise, Ronald Reagan won election as President of the United States in 1980 on a conservative agenda that echoed the platform of the Moral Majority. With his election, evangelicals entered the center of political power and basked in the limelight of public visibility. Evangelical leaders enjoyed ready access to the Oval Office and vaulted to the top of religion television, book publishing and media attention. Politicians who had long ignored the evangelical sector now knew that they could not be re-elected without their support. In consequence, evangelicals skirted the dangerous edges of "civil religion" and eventually paid the price. When President Reagan used the platform of the National Association of Evangelicals to denounce the USSR as the "evil empire," it became clear that evangelicals had attached themselves to a political agenda at the risk of their redemptive mission.

What happened to the Born Again Movement? By and large, it succumbed to the wiles of conservative politics. Losing its prophetic stance, which would include an honest critique of the Reagan policy and program, those who professed to be born again fell victim to the intoxication of political power. Before the decade was out, however, evangelicals learned how fickle the winds of politics can be. After 80 percent of evangelical Christians voted George Bush into office, he pushed them from the center to the margins of power and did not realize what he had done until it was too late.

A WIDENING MORAL CHASM – The chasm between the subculture of the "new morality" and the subculture of "traditional values" widened during the decade of the 1980s. Studs Terkel, after interviewing scores of people across America, summed up his findings in the title of his book *The Great Divide.* He described the scene by the analogy of right and left wing forces confronting each other at a distance and lofting missives over a widening moral chasm, but missing the needs of the masses in the middle.[7] Yankelovich, in his continuing survey of public attitudes, discerned a shift among the Baby Boomers

away from the "ethic of self-fulfillment" and toward an "ethic of commitment."[8] Whereas their earlier interest focused almost exclusively on self-interest, the new ethic represented a "giving/getting contract"[9] for all of their relationships, professional or personal. In simplest form, the new generation was willing to give of themselves in self-commitment if they had the assurance of getting what they sought in self-fulfillment.

RELIGIOUS REVERSAL – Religiously, the 1980s brought shock to mainline denominations. Assuming a 1950s mentality for their members and espousing a bankrupt liberal agenda, the people marched with their feet, leaving those denominations in droves. Roman Catholics confronted the reality of a papal regime that was not in touch with the people on such crucial matters as birth control, abortion, marriage of priests and the role of nuns. To add to their dismay, Roman Catholic seminaries and convents emptied under stigma of sex scandals and a discredited priesthood or sisterhood. In one sense, only evangelicals prospered. Counteracting the trends of decline in most mainline denominations, evangelicals grew in number and influence, but not primarily in established denominations. Adopting the market strategies of the secular world to church growth, independent churches grew like topsy to attract those who were disillusioned with mainline denominations or turned off by traditional worship. Along with this movement, wave after wave of new religions appeared on the scene, products of a consumer's search for spirituality.

In this climate, one would expect churches specifically identified with the Holiness Movement to flourish. Instead, they continued to struggle as a beleaguered minority, even within the evangelical sector. A sad fact underscores the struggle of the Holiness Movement. In an unpublished study reported at the 1984 annual convention of the Christian Holiness Association, the survey results showed that a high percentage of people in holiness churches did not understand or experience entire sanctification, another high percentage of colleges in the holiness tradition did not teach the doctrine and a still higher percent-

age of the young did not understand, experience or accept the doctrine.

GLOBAL AWAKENING – Amidst the conflicting forces in North America, however, unmistakable signs of spiritual awakening appeared in the two-thirds world south of the equator and among young and poor but aspiring peoples. Walbert Buhlmann, in his book *The Coming of the Third Church,* predicted that spiritual awakening would come, in order, first to the Third Church in the two-thirds world, second to the First Church of Eastern Europe and third to the Second Church of North America.[10] His first prediction came true in the 1980s as spiritual awakening swept through the nations and tribes of Africa, South America, Asia, India and the islands of the South Seas. His second and third predictions awaited the advent of the 1990s.

THE NEGOTIABLE NINETIES

Each decade between 1960 and the 1990s has its turning point. In the 1960s one can point to the assassination of John Kennedy; in the 1970s to the resignation of Richard Nixon and in the 1980s to the election of Ronald Reagan. Although political in nature, each symbolized an era and set the social, moral and religious tone for the decade.

A TUMBLING WALL – In the 1990s the turning point came, not in North America, but in West Germany when the Berlin Wall came down. Students danced on top of the wall, chipped at its concrete and sang, "This Is the Day That the Lord Hath Made," celebrating not just the end of the Cold War and the opening of Eastern Europe, but the promise of spiritual awakening in what Buhlmann calls the First Church.[11] Evangelicals raced through that open door with all of the sophisticated evangelistic techniques of their Western culture only to encounter people of simple and sacrificial faith who put them to shame. Thus, the burden shifted to affluent America and evangelical Christians who had the

resources to underwrite the world revival for which they prayed, but whose cost they did not realize.

A CASE OF AFFLUENZA – Affluent Americans, however, seemed to be going in the opposite direction. With the close of the Cold War, the driving force of what President Eisenhower called, "The Military-Industrial Complex" began to lose its obsessive hold upon the economic priorities of the nation. Rather than redirecting the available resources to such domestic issues as poverty, crime and health care, another set of forces flowed into the vacuum created by the end of the Cold War. The new priority for the American dollar is "The Sports-Entertainment Complex" whose expenditures exceed the total budgets of most of the nations of the world. Just as the old "Military-Industrial Complex" kept a stranglehold on the American psyche during the Cold War years, the media and marketing power of The Sports-Entertainment Complex dominates the minds, sets the values and absorbs the dollars of the 1990s. If Buhlmann's prediction of spiritual awakening in the Second Church of Western culture and North America depends upon economic self-sacrifice, a radical turnaround must be made.

Spiritual awakening in the two-thirds world continued in the New Testament pattern of "adding to the church daily those who were being saved." Although the unprecedented pace of expansion introduced the new problems of discipling converts and training leaders for the masses, many of the young and poor churches demonstrated their maturity in parenting new congregations and sending missionaries to other nations, including the Western world.

A NEW PARADIGM – Global connectedness was further enhanced by humankind's entry into "The Information Age." With information becoming wealth and access to information the source of power, another revolution was in the making. As television impacted the values of the culture in the 1960s, computers, fax machines and modems upset all of the ways in which people think, communicate and behave. The buzzword for the decade represents the revolutionary nature of

The Information Age. The call is for a "new paradigm" or "... a set of rules and regulations (written or unwritten) that does two things: (1) it establishes and defines boundaries and (2) it tells you how to behave inside the boundaries in order to be successful."[12]

BEYOND DENOMINATIONALISM – In the United States, the church continued to undergo unprecedented change. Mainline denominations continued to suffer significant losses and move toward the margins of influence. The National and World Council of Churches, struggling with internal controversy, and liberal theology, faced the reality of fighting a rear-guard action to maintain a semblance of credibility. With issues of gender, race and sexuality leading the way, religion in America splintered into thousands of pieces – new religions, different alliances and independent churches. In a word, the old Protestant hegemony in American culture tottered on its feet of clay and tumbled to the ground. Moreover, in order to survive, traditional denominations had to make such radical adjustments that students of church organizations have chosen the term "Post-denominational Confessionalism" to describe the magnitude of the shift.[13]

Driving the forces of change is the fact that the old bonds that held denominations together became loose and frayed in the short span of three decades. Without these bonds, denominations lose social cohesion and members' loyalty. Hierarchies within the denominations show the strain first and fight vigorously to maintain their bureaucratic structure. Further threat comes from the special-purpose groups and trans-denominational networks that compete for members' loyalty and usually win because they respond to changing needs and offer a choice.

Of course, Post-denominational Confessionalism has its downside. Heavily geared to the market and methods adapted from other disciplines, theology becomes either the servant or the stepchild of the strategy. Mainline denominations lost the most, namely, their credible "adhesive and dynamic principles."[14] Evangelical denominations and organizations, however, gained the most as they inherited the

adhesive and dynamic principles of a moral and spiritual campaign to Christianize the nation.

Yet at its extreme, Post-denominational Confessionalism "emerges in the megachurches and family life centers, mall-like congregations offering both superstore and boutique religion."[15] The critical discernment of biblical exegesis and hermeneutics goes begging so that theology becomes a matter of individual interpretation based upon consumer preference. Watching this trend, Leith Anderson has warned that, unless the foundation of sound biblical theology is built under these new movements, we will see a "tidal wave of heterodoxy in the next generation."[16]

HUNGER FOR HOLINESS – A major theological shift is also evident in the opening years of the 1990s. Counteracting the fruitless years of organizational tinkering, ecumenical fantasies, therapeutic theology and copycat strategies, the hidden hunger for genuine spirituality, which most churches ignored or neglected, became a desperate search. Now it was clear that the church had forfeited the field to the mysticism of Eastern religions and the half-truths of the New Age Movement. As a quick corrective, seminaries put "Spiritual Formation" at the center of their curriculum, clergy and laity flocked to workshops on spiritual disciplines, classical devotionals regained popularity and publishing houses unabashedly advertised books on "holiness" and "spirituality."

Holiness churches might well have been first to respond to this newly awakened hunger for genuine spirituality and wholeness. Despite more than a century of preaching and teaching the doctrine, they were left on the sideline. Whether they carried the old stigma of "Christian perfection," insisted upon a narrow definition of sanctification, tripped over their own language or found themselves bypassed as non-consequential is not known.

Keith Drury, Director of Local Church Education for the Wesleyan Church, bearded the lion in his den at the 1994 Annual Convention of the Christian Holiness Association when he dared to take the title for

his luncheon address, "The Holiness Movement Is Dead."[17] Defining a movement by its momentum, Drury backed up his thesis with the question, "Why did we die?" Answering his own question, he said (1) we wanted to be respectable; (2) we have plunged into the evangelical mainstream; (3) we have failed to convince the younger generation; (4) we quit making holiness the main issue; (5) we lost the lay people; (6) we overreacted against the abuses of the past; (7) we adopted church-growth thinking without theological thinking and (8) we did not notice when the battle line moved. "But here is the irony," Drury says, "There has perhaps never been a time in history when the church more needs a holiness movement." Recognizing the search for holiness in the 1990s, Drury asks in conclusion, "Will the old holiness be *in* the new holiness movement?" He leaves the question open.

Whatever the reason, Holiness churches contributed little to the ongoing search for spirituality. But for their people, the doctrine of holiness took on the new language of the "Spirit-filled life" and the new experience of "Spiritual Formation" as a developmental process. Perhaps the lack of clarity in understanding and experiencing the doctrine of entire sanctification, which plagued the Holiness Movement in the 1980s, came full cycle to limit the contribution of the Movement just when holiness was once again a truth whose time had come.

THE ERA IN PERSPECTIVE

Although this overview is admittedly selective and sketchy, it forms a background for better understanding of the social, moral and spiritual context to which the Free Methodist Church and its people had to relate and respond during the era from 1960 to the present. The 1960s brought eruptions that radically changed the social landscape of the whole globe and shook the moral and spiritual foundations upon which the church stood. The 1970s dawned with the mixed signals of violent protest and spiritual awakening on the campus. Illustrating the scriptural axiom, "Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds," the

United States went from presidential betrayal, "national malaise" and moral conflict to the surprising signs of repentance, spiritual search and evangelical renewal. In the 1980s, a swing toward the right made strange bedfellows out of conservative Republicans and evangelical Christians and took the nation dangerously close to what Martin Marty called "The Public Church" and Mark Hatfield and others designated as "civil religion."

Earlier trends came to fruition in the 1990s when the breech between subcultures widened into cultural warfare over such issues as abortion, sexuality, media violence and prayer in the public schools. But the issues were only symptomatic. Truth was at stake in the warfare. On one side stood a coalition of Catholics, Protestants and Jews contending for the absolutes of revealed truth and on the other side stood the advocates in religion, education and entertainment who argued with equal fervor for individual freedom in moral decision making. The same freedom of individual choice prompted restructuring of the church. Post-denominationalism brought with it the social phenomena of the megachurch with its congregations of thousands, in combination with the metachurch, built upon small groups representing "a church within a church."

FREE METHODISM'S CHALLENGE

Gleanings from this overview of the period reveal ten specific trends that challenged the Free Methodist Church from 1960 to 1995. These trends are neither absolute nor complete. Their beginning may well precede 1960 and their ending may well be far in the future. As further caution, these trends should not be interpreted in "either or" categories. Historical trends must be read as a moving picture in content as well as time. For this reason, the trends are traced on the "from to" line of time and content.

I. FROM NATIONAL ISOLATION TO GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE – The "global village," predicted in the 1960s by Kenneth Boulding, is reality in 1995. What-

ever shreds of isolationist or protectionist attitudes remain in the minds of people in any corner of the world, they are short-lived. On earth as well as in the universe, "everything is connected to everything else." In the speeding era of 1960 to 1995, new connections in communications, economics and environmentalism linked the nations, rich or poor, post-industrial or primitive, Christian or pagan, in a network so interlocked that actions in any part of the world are like a pebble hitting a quiet pond. The ripple effect is felt to the farthest edges.

Now, as Buhlmann wrote so prophetically, the spiritual connections among the First, Second and Third Churches shift the old patriarchal and non-contextual patterns of world missions to a new interdependence in which all peoples are partners in the global body of Christ. World revival may well turn on the pivot of the church accepting this new relationship.

II. FROM CULTURAL HOMOGENEITY TO DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY – As a companion to global interdependence, demographic diversity is making every city and country a microcosm of the changing world. Most notable is the coloring of the United States. Along with the multiplying numbers of black and Hispanic peoples are the migrants of color from Asia, India, South America, Central America and Africa who will soon outnumber Caucasians in the national population.

With them come spiritual needs and expectations that cannot be met by the traditional patterns of the white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class, religious subculture. Further complicating the coloring of the culture is urban migration. With the development of world class cities, whose populations number in the millions, and the reality that a majority of persons live in or near

these cities, the structure and style of the small, rural church cannot be transferred to the new setting.

The changing role of women adds another ingredient to the salad bowl of diversity. Wade Clark Roof saw the status of women changing in the 1960s as a natural result of World War II when men went to war and women went to work. Three decades later, women have won recognition as persons, acceptance in careers at home or away, participation in governance and positions of leadership. As with ethnics, the goal of full and equal status for women may be still in the future, but the momentum for change cannot be denied.

III. FROM WRITTEN TEXT TO VISUAL IMAGE – Despite the protest of librarians, the written text is all but dead. In its place is the visual image of electronic communication with all of the power of "cool" media. As noted earlier, whoever controls the image has the wealth and power that was reserved for the economically rich just a generation ago. At the same time, communication by image releases new discretionary power into the hands of the people who have more information with which to make more choices. The validity of the information conveyed by the image, therefore, becomes all-important. Theology, in particular, is at stake. How will the Word of God be accurately translated as the image of God? How will the Good News of the gospel be communicated in pictures? Can Christianity compete with "The Sports-Entertainment Complex," a creation of the image industry? In 1995 these are the communication questions that Free Methodism cannot avoid.

IV. FROM ETHICAL CONSENSUS TO MORAL TOLERANCE The influence of the moral revolution is pervasive. Not even those who were repelled by the rejection of legitimate leadership, the breakdown of primary insti-

tutions and the undermining of moral concensus could escape its influence. Verbally, they may have condemned the changes, but in practice, tolerance took over. With the adoption of the term "lifestyle" to describe a person's moral as well as social behavior, sin lost its stigma. Also, "relative values" took the place of "moral standards," and "preferences" became the alternative for "convictions." No area of the old moral consensus went unaffected. Studies of the general population by Yankelovich tracing the changing attitudes from 1958 to 1978, and polls of the evangelical constituency by George Barna and James Davison Hunter mutually trace the path of tolerance.

Not only are evangelical Christians more tolerant of behavior contrary to what was euphemistically known as the "Five Fundy Sins" of drinking, smoking, card-playing, movie-going and dancing, but their tolerance extends to theological ambiguity in regeneration and sanctification, relational breakdown in marriage and divorce and spiritual stewardship in sports, entertainment and Sabbath observance. For such difficult moral judgments as the attitude toward premarital sex and homosexuality, evangelical Christians are impaled on the horns of a dilemma between the pronouncement of sin and the provision for grace. Even on the issue of abortion, the house is divided between the extremes of justice and mercy. Easy tolerance rather than costly grace is often the middle ground chosen between extremes.

V. FROM COMMUNAL RULES TO PERSONAL OPTIONS

Some social analysts of the era draw a dividing line between the limited choices for citizens in the pre-1960 society and the multiple options in the 1990s. The ad showing the availability of 31 flavors of ice cream today versus vanilla, chocolate and strawberry just a

generation ago illustrates the point that consumer options characterize the nature of a market-driven, affluent society. Nothing more needs to be written about the consumer mentality that has generalized from the secular to the sacred and from the marketplace to the local congregation. In the period from 1960 to 1995, the church continued to struggle with the clarity of its mission and message as it faced the competitive threat of a market mentality.

VI. FROM COLD WAR TO CULTURAL WARFARE – The chasm between the absolutes of revealed truth and the ambiguities of relative truth is not new. But the coalition of evangelicals, conservative Roman Catholics and Orthodox Jews is a complete turnaround in attitude within the period 1960-1995. In 1960 evangelicals strenuously opposed the election of a Roman Catholic president and had no communication with Jews. Now in the life and death struggle of cultural warfare, the "cobelligerents" are not only talking, but uniting under the single banner of revealed truth against such issues as abortion-on-demand and sexual permissiveness. With the precedent of the Moral Majority in the late 1970s and early 1980s, theological differences are put aside with one exception. A common commitment to absolute truth as revealed in the Word of God, whether Old or New Testament, makes partners of old enemies. The church must decide where the line is drawn.

VII. FROM CORPORATE ORGANIZATION TO POST-DENOMINATIONAL CONFESSIONALISM – As the Baby Boomers born or reared in the 1960s come to their mid-thirties and early forties, they are taking the lead in creating the spiritual climate within which the church must minister. If, as Wade Clark Roof writes, they are a generation of seekers and the church must be "seeker

sensitive," profound changes will have to take place in traditional denominations. The nature of this change has been described as "Post-denominational Confessionalism." In 1960, established denominations were identified with corporate denominationalism in structure and governance and policy and programs. But by the mid-1990s, the denominations were either stagnated or showing signs of the next stage of development. Whether or not established denominations can make the adjustment to the flex and flow of post-denominational confessionalism and still maintain their core values is a point upon which the future turns.

VIII. FROM SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY TO RELATIONAL THERAPY – Prior to World War II, faith and psychotherapy eyed each other either with suspicion or downright antagonism. But out of the war came the counseling and testing movement that made psychotherapy more acceptable. In the 1960s, when the symptoms of a dysfunctional society expressed themselves in individual behavior, pop psychology and counseling therapy became a multimillion-dollar industry. Evangelical Christians bought into the movement under the umbrella of "relational theology," defined as affirming in others what Christ affirms in us. Since then, evangelical Christianity has been profoundly influenced by the behavioral sciences of psychology as applied to personal relationships and sociology as applied to family systems and church growth. Particularly among the Baby Boomers and the younger generation, their theology is driven by the relational questions focused upon issues of self-fulfillment, personal growth, and interpersonal development. Even their understanding and acceptance of regeneration and sanctification is defined, not by the rational theology of the past, but the relational

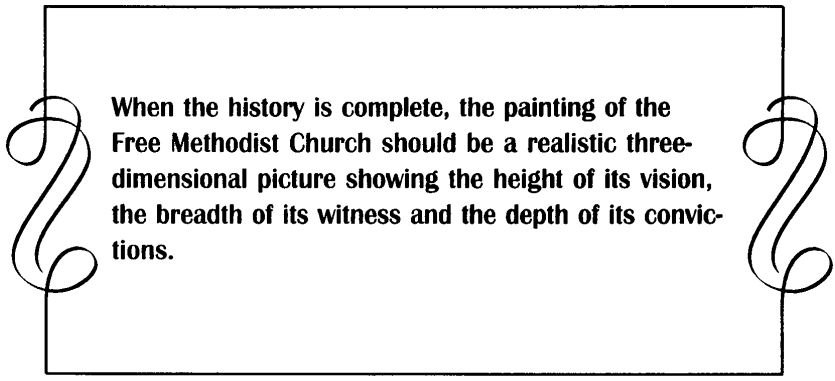
theology of the present.

Because relational theology tends toward individualism and subjectivity, churches must decide where to take the risk. A century ago, the church struggled with the integration of revelation and reason. At the end of the twentieth century, the struggle continues, but with Revealed Truth and Relational Theology as the key players in the contest.

IX. FROM PARACHURCH ORGANIZATIONS TO TRANSDENOMINATIONAL NETWORKS – As needs change and established institutions fail to meet those needs, God raises up new, need-responsive institutions. In the 1960s the parachurch movement swept over the religious landscape with visionary leadership, flexible organizations and free-flowing style in response to changing spiritual needs, especially among the young. In the 1970s and 1980s, when the phenomenon of single-purpose networking became a new force in society, transdenominational networking replaced parachurch organizations as the front edge of the evangelical movement. By the mid-1990s, such transdenominational networks as Marriage Encounter, Promise Keepers, Concerts of Prayer, Emmaus Walk, SonLife and the Flagpole movement among high schoolers enlisted the loyalty of hundreds of thousands of evangelical Christians and took over the function of established denominations of resourcing the ministry of the local church. Initially, at least, denominations are not viewing the new networks as competitive, but if the loyalty and financial support of its members continue to develop as a threat to the denomination, strained relationships can be predicted. Whether Free Methodism will try to duplicate these networks or recognize them as a complementary resource is an unanswered question.

X. FROM WESLEYAN HOLINESS TO EVANGELICAL SPIRITUALITY – With the social issues, slavery and free seats, upon which Free Methodism was founded, no longer defining the denomination, the burden of distinction falls upon the doctrine of entire sanctification. Reality, however, reminds us that internally the doctrine is neither proclaimed, experienced or practiced in its traditional context. Externally, the threat is increased by generic spirituality rising out of relational theology. Literally, a new paradigm is being created for holiness. The boundaries are broad, the principles are developmental and the rules are flexible. Language is a part of the problem, but not the whole issue. As an inclusive term, the "Spirit-filled life" can embrace Wesleyan or Reformed theology, provide for crisis or gradualism in experience, accept a Pentecostal or Holiness witness and permit the practice of faith working through sin or through perfect love. Among all of the challenges to Free Methodism during the period from 1960 to 1995, none is more fundamental to its future.

To say the least, Free Methodism in the first generation of its second century knew the meaning of Dickens' opening line in *The Tale of Two Cities*, "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." Both danger and opportunity walked through the era hand in hand. How did Free Methodism respond? The answers are in the history of the church and its people from 1960 to 1995.


When the history is complete, the painting of the Free Methodist Church should be a realistic three-dimensional picture showing the height of its vision, the breadth of its witness and the depth of its convictions.

CHAPTER VII

Defining Moments for Our Church

1960-1995

Most of the time, history plods along. Routine follows routine in a predictable manner. Occasionally, however, history comes to a turning point provoked by external pressure or internal policy. The decisions of these moments can set the direction and determine the destiny of institutions and individuals for years to come.

Turning points were evident in each stage of the life cycle of the Free Methodist Church throughout its first century. During the stage from 1860 to 1893, the opening of the door to world missions set Free Methodism on course toward becoming a global church. In the adolescent stage, from 1894 to 1930, the decision to pull back from aggressive evangelism turned the direction of the church inwardly throughout a full generation. As the church, then, closed out its first century in the stage of early adulthood, from 1931 to 1960, the initiation of the Forward Movement changed the direction of the church once again with its affirmative attitude and its evangelistic outreach.

What are the turning points in Free Methodist history from 1960 to 1995? As a part of background study for this period of history, a survey was conducted among 195 clergy and laity, past and present, who had served in leadership roles at national or international levels. They were asked questions regarding events, persons, policies and trends that they considered as most significant during the era. Fifty-three persons responded to the survey. Their answers were coded,

counted and compiled for each question in order to rank their responses according to the number of times the event, person, policy or trend was mentioned. The results helped focus the research into the history of the church from 1960 to 1995, and provide an insightful overview of the era.

TURNING POINTS FOR THE CHURCH 1960-1995

Clergy and lay leaders for the era from 1960 to 1995 were asked the question, "*What are the 'key events' or 'defining moments,' between 1960 and the present time, that have influenced the direction of the church, nationally and internationally?*" Their answers are in rank order according to the number of times the respondents mentioned the event.

1. RELOCATION IN 1989 OF WORLD HEADQUARTERS from Winona Lake, Indiana, to World Ministries Center in Indianapolis, Indiana;
2. CREATION OF THE FREE METHODIST WORLD FELLOWSHIP (Conference) in 1962, which provided the structure for a global church based upon the indigenous principle;
3. ADOPTION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GROWTH (1974) AND CHURCH PLANTING (1985) as the strategy for restoring the priority of aggressive evangelism to the ministry of the church;
4. ANNOUNCEMENT IN 1986 OF THE "NEW DAY" VISION with its spiritual and strategic goals for the church leading into the twenty-first century;
5. CELEBRATION OF GROWTH IN THE OVERSEAS CHURCHES whose membership surpassed the North American church in 1974 and more than triples the parent body in 1995;
6. ORGANIZATION OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

IN CANADA (1990) as a general conference with its own identity;

7. RECOGNITION OF SOCIAL, URBAN AND ETHNIC MINISTRIES as a division under the Department of Evangelism (1992) to reflect the growing edge of the church in a changing culture;
8. DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD MISSION FOR CHRIST BUDGET with unification of giving in 1964 and division between home and world missions in 1985;
9. NON-MERGER WITH THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH in 1974 after ten years of serious negotiations; and
10. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FREE METHODIST FOUNDATION for the purpose of developing and investing financial resources on a deferred and long-term basis for support of the ministries of the church (1988).

Notably, almost all of the turning points listed by clergy and lay leaders, in the period from 1960 to 1995, represent either organization or reorganization of the church. The content leans toward evangelism at home, overseas and in urban settings with ethnic people. Also, the turning points tend to be affirmative and forward-looking rather than defensive and backward-looking. The exploration of these turning points in later chapters will lend its own drama to the history of the church in the first generation of its second century.

PIVOTAL DECISIONS OF THE CHURCH 1960-1995

Turning points in the history of the Free Methodist Church from 1960 to 1995 did not happen by accident or take place in a vacuum. Policy decisions and executive actions are also key factors that trigger turning points in history. With this thought in mind, the clergy and lay leaders were asked the question, "*What are the key policy decisions of doctrine or practice, structure or governance, that shaped or reshaped*

the character of the Free Methodist Church since 1960?" Their responses, in order of the number of times the decisions were mentioned, are as follows:

1. INTRODUCTION OF THE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT (General Conference, 1974) with its ensuing implications for the General Conference in 1995;
2. CHANGES IN THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION ON ORIGINAL OR BIRTH SIN, (General Conference, 1974);
3. REVISION OF THE STATEMENT ON SCRIPTURE, e.g., authority and inspiration, (General Conference, 1989);
4. PROVISION FOR THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN AS ELDERS (General Conference, 1979);
5. ELECTION OF A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION as chairman in place of a bishop (General Conference, 1989);
6. SHIFT OF THE BISHOPS' ROLE TO PASTORAL LEADERSHIP and away from administrative responsibility, with the request that they reside in the area where they serve (General Conference, 1985);
7. BROADENING OF EMPHASIS ON THE COLLEGE TRACK for ministerial education in order to meet the projected pastoral demands of the New Day Vision, which dilutes emphasis on seminary education (1987);
8. MODIFICATION OF THE POSITION ON DIVORCE from narrow biblical grounds to the broader bases of reconciliation and recovery (General Conference, 1985 and 1989);
9. POSITION OF THE CHURCH AGAINST "GLOSSOLALIA" in public worship (General Conference, 1974); and
10. RECOGNITION OF LARGE AND GROWING CHURCHES as a symbol of church growth and church planting (1976).

A discernible direction can be detected in these policy decisions or executive actions. In almost every case, decentralization is evident as authority moves from clergy to laity, and function moves from

denomination to the local church and the needs of its congregation. This change in direction reflects changes in society at large, the evangelical church in general, and Free Methodism in particular. Some may see the church as losing its denominational distinctives; others may see the change as evidence that Free Methodism is responding to the needs of this generation without sacrificing the essence of its biblical convictions. History alone can judge the results.

SOCIAL PRESSURES ON THE CHURCH 1960-1995

External influences from the social environment, as well as internal decisions from within the denomination, affect the direction that the church will take. To determine the impact of these influences upon the church in the period from 1960 to 1995, clergy and lay leaders of the era were asked, "*What are the major cultural trends that have influenced the Free Methodist Church during this period in history, especially those trends that may affect our future?*" Their responses in rank order, according to the number of times the cultural trend is mentioned, are as follows:

1. ETHNIC DIVERSITY AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, which have required a shift in the composition and the location of churches;
2. CONTEMPORARY MUSIC, which has led to alternative worship styles;
3. AFFLUENCE, which has raised the socioeconomic level of the church into a middle-class institution;
4. CHARISMATIC INFLUENCE, which has broadened the experience and the expression of the Spirit-filled life;
5. POWER OF THE MEDIA, which has especially influenced the attitude and values related to entertainment;
6. CONSUMER MENTALITY IN RELIGION, which has created individualized and privatized Christianity;
7. LOSS OF LOYALTY TO DENOMINATIONS, which has

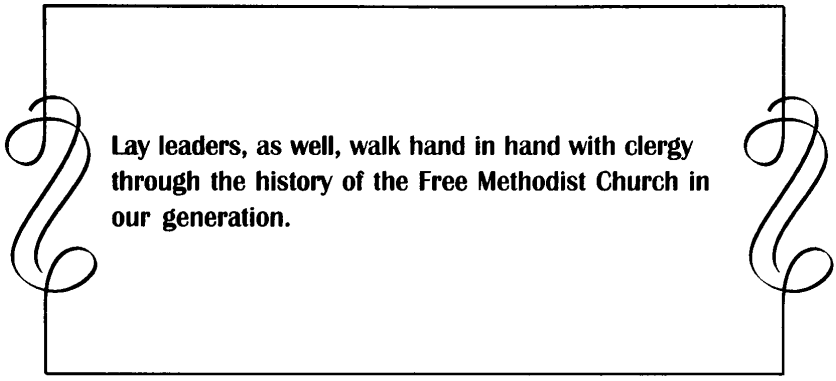
particularly threatened a connectional church;

8. EVANGELICAL ECUMENISM, which has blurred theological distinctives into a generic faith;
9. LOSS OF AUTHORITY, which has not only decentralized the church but also opened the Scriptures to subjective interpretation; and
10. BREAKDOWN OF SEXUAL MORALITY, which has led to pluralistic attitudes and a tolerance of sin.

These perceptions of the clergy and lay leaders confirm the social, moral and religious megashifts between 1960 and 1995 that caused a revolution in our society. Admittedly, these cultural trends are focused in Western culture and American society, but the ripple effect will be worldwide, particularly as communication media create a global viewing audience. If these perceptions are accurate, the greatest challenge to the integrity of the Free Methodist Church is yet ahead.

CONVERGING FORCES OF THE ERA 1960-1995

Taken together, the turning points, policy decisions and cultural trends form a background upon which the updated history of the Free Methodist Church from 1960 to 1995 can be written. Like converging colors on a canvas, they give the history a three-dimensional view and add the interest of form, line and color. Details such as doctrine, governance, worship, stewardship, evangelism, education and world missions, from the denominational perspective, can now be painted into the picture along with the accents of the local church and its congregation. When the history is complete, the painting of the Free Methodist Church should be a realistic three-dimensional picture showing the height of its vision, the breadth of its witness and the depth of its convictions.


Lay leaders, as well, walk hand in hand with clergy through the history of the Free Methodist Church in our generation.

CHAPTER VIII

Servant Leaders of Our Generation

1960-1995

History is biography. The story of the Free Methodist Church cannot be written without the recognition of clergy and laity who, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, are the servant leaders of the generation.

From its beginning, one of the affirming signals of God's anointing upon the church has been its clergy, who have inherited the leadership legacy of B.T. Roberts. Almost as one from bishops to local pastors, they have been faithful to model holy living, preach biblical truth, show compassion for the poor and serve sacrificially with humility and joy. Although this history can name only those who served in denominational leadership roles by the election of their peers, through them the ministry of conference and district superintendents, local church pastors and pastoral staffs is also honored. No one questions the fact that the front line of ministry for the Free Methodist Church is in the trenches of the local parish. This is also where greatness in the kingdom is being built. One historian asked, "Where are the great preachers of this generation?" The answer came back, "In the local parish where the biblical message speaks to needy people." So to all of the unnamed clergy who served faithfully during the era from 1960 to 1995, let the list of those whom they chose to lead be the tribute to their own servanthood.

Lay leaders, as well, walk hand in hand with clergy through the history of the Free Methodist Church in our generation. From the

earliest beginnings of the church, the equality of laity in leadership has been recognized as fundamental. B.T. Roberts, who suffered injustice at the hands of an all-clergy conference in the Methodist Episcopal Church, stood firm on the principle of lay equality in the governance of the new church.

Special meaning is also attached to the fact that the genesis of the church came out of Laymen's Conventions where men and women gathered, not just to protest the injustice against clergy and laity who were expelled from the parent church, but more affirmatively, to take their stand for personal and social holiness. Thus, out of the organizing conference for the church came this report: "The deep interest and close scrutiny of the intelligent laymen who were present as delegates, must have convinced anyone that that church is a great loser which excludes them from her councils."[1]

So, again, while the list of lay leaders in the Free Methodist Church from 1960 to 1995 must be limited to those elected to serve in denominational or institutional office, their names represent the honored role of laymen and laywomen, especially in the local church, who are the reason for the existence of the Free Methodist Church in the first place.

Nor can we pass lightly over the contribution of national and international leaders from across the world, especially young adult members of the church who represent a rising generation of clergy and lay leadership. A distinct shift can be detected in the names of those who are elected to denominational office from the 1960s to the 1990s. As Free Methodism in the 1860s recognized the value of lay leadership, the church in the 1990s is now recognizing the invaluable contribution of its worldwide family in the governance of a diversified and enriched global church.

With this introduction, we recognize the clergy and laity, men and women, nationals and internationals who were elected, employed or honored by the Free Methodist Church as servant leaders for our generation.

Among these honored persons, two stand out. They may not be

the best-known names; they may not have held the highest office; they may not be remembered for the most dramatic achievement. But they represent the spirit and life of Free Methodism that must be remembered. They are Ken Leech and Alan Ramm, respectively the clergy and lay leaders of the Free Methodist Church in the United Kingdom. On October 31, 1994, while returning home from the annual Board of Administration meetings at the World Ministries Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, they died tragically in the crash of American Eagle flight 4184. (The life story of Ken Leech is contained in *Dark Providence, Bright Promise*, published by Light and Life Press, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1995).

The life stories of Ken Leech and Alan Ramm will be told time and time again as part of the "community of memory" in the Free Methodist Church. To add to that memory bank, there is the recollection of the tape recorded interview that was held with Rev. Leech and Mr. Ramm in the week immediately preceding their death. The two-hour session is now an essential part of the background research for the writing of this history. For the final question of the interview, they were asked, "What is your vision for the future of the Free Methodist Church in the United Kingdom?" Ken and Alan were as one in the burning desire to see local congregations grow and new churches planted in England and Ireland through the equipping ministry of pastors and the personal evangelism of the people.

Later in the day, word came that Ken and Alan wanted to add a footnote to the interview. The fire in their eyes matched the urgency in their voices as they said, "You asked about the future of the Free Methodist Church in the U.K. We forgot the most important thing of all. PREACH HOLINESS. That is our future and our hope."

After the numbing news came about the death of Ken Leech and Alan Ramm, the tape of their interview was played again. As each of them told the story of his own spiritual journey and then recalled with deference the leaders of the Free Methodist Church in the United Kingdom who preceded them, a common thread came through. Ken, a member of the clergy and the newly elected superintendent of the

two annual conferences of the church in the United Kingdom, and Alan, a member of the laity and the longtime executive assistant to the superintendent, shared the experience of life as they shared the experience of death. Ken Leech and Alan Ramm were:

... *converted* to Christ through the witness of the church,
... *won* to Free Methodism through the spirituality of the church,
... *sanctified* by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the church,
... *discipled* in faith through the nurture of the church,
... *called* into ministry through the agency of the church,
... *prepared* for service through the avenues of the church,
... *chosen* for leadership by the people of the church,
... *labored* faithfully through the struggle of the church,
... *inflamed* with vision for the growth of the church,
... *convinced* that the message of holiness represented the future of the church, and
... *sacrificed* their lives while in the work of the church.

WHAT IS A FREE METHODIST? When the question is asked of our people today and tomorrow, one answer can be, "Let me tell you the story of Ken Leech and Alan Ramm." Their story is the story of our church.

Appendix A

Recognized Leaders

I. BISHOPS OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH – 1960-1995

North America General Conference:

Leslie R. Marston	1935-1964
Charles V. Fairbairn	1939-1961
J. Paul Taylor	1947-1964
Walter S. Kendall	1958-1969
Edward C. John	1961-1974
Myron F. Boyd	1964-1976
Paul N. Ellis	1964-1979
W. Dale Cryderman	1969-1984
Donald N. Bastian	1974-1990
Elmer E. Parsons	1974-1985
Clyde E. Van Valin	1976-1991
Robert F. Andrews	1979-1991
Gerald E. Bates	1985-
David M. Foster	1985-
Noah Nzeyimana	1985-
(Burundi Jurisdictional Conference)	
Bya'ene Akulu Ilangyi	1989-
(Zaire Provisional General Conference)	
Daniel Ward	1989-
(India Provisional General Conference)	
Richard D. Snyder	1991-

Luis Uanela Nhaphale 1993-
(Mozambique Provisional General Conference)
Jim Tuan 1994-
(Philippines Provisional General Conference)

Japan General Conference:

Kaneo Oda 1961-1962
Takesaburo Uzaki 1962-1982
Motoi Hatano 1982-1992
Hachiroemon Naiki 1992-

Egypt General Conference:

Ayad Girgis 1962-1966
Habeeb Buctor 1966-1970
Nathan Gindi 1970-

Rwanda General Conference:

Aaron Ruhumuriza 1985-

Canada General Conference:

Donald N. Bastian 1990-1993
Gary R. Walsh 1993-

II. BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION OFFICERS – 1960-1995

Presidents:

Bishop L.R. Marston 1947-1964
Bishop W.S. Kendall 1964-1969
Bishop Myron F. Boyd 1969-1976
Bishop Paul N. Ellis 1976-1979
Bishop W. Dale Cryderman 1979-1984
Bishop Clyde E. Van Valin 1985-1989

Chairs:

Rev. John E. Van Valin 1989-1990
Mr. Bernard Hansen 1990-

Vice-Presidents:

Bishop Paul N. Ellis 1975-1976
Bishop W. Dale Cryderman 1976-1979

Bishop Clyde E. Van Valin	1979-1985
Bishop Donald N. Bastian	1985-1989
Vice-Chairs:	
Mr. Bernard Hansen	1989-1990
Rev. Wayne Neeley	1990-
Secretaries:	
Dr. Claude A. Watson	1951-1964
Rev. Cleo T. Denbo	1964-1985
Mr. Melvin J. Spencer	1985-

III. BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION MEMBERS – 1960-1995

Ministers:

David V. Abbott	1974-1979
Donald J. Allgor	1974-1985
Merlin C. Baker	1989-
Donald N. Bastian	1964-1974 (elected bishop)
Donald E. Bateman	1964-1979
J. Wesley Bennett	1979-1985
Brian Bonney	1969-1989
G.H. Bonney	1974-1979, 1983-1990
Arthur Brown	1991-1994
Robert J. Buchanan	1985-1990
Earl S. Bull	1971-1979
Forest C. Bush	1969-1974
Ralph V. Cleveland	1979-1983
Herbert H. Coates	1979-1989
David G. Colgan	1989-
G.M. Cottrill	1964-1974
Robert A. Crandall	1985-1989
T.R. Crown	1979-1985
William L. Cryderman	1990-
E.A. Cutler	1964-1969
Elwyn E. Cutler	1969-1972
Jack Delamarter	1985-1992

C. Dorr Demaray	1964-1969
C.T. Denbo	1955-1985
Lloyd E. Ehmcke	1969-1971
Raymond Ellis	1985-1988
Jimmie Estrada	1979-1985, 1989-
David Foster	1979-1985 (elected bishop)
William Fox	1979-1986
Richard Gabriel	1974-1979
Dwight Gregory	1989-
Claude Griffith	1990-
Nelson Grimm	1994-
Glenn A. Hall	1951-1965
John Harrell	1989-
B.F. Hibbett	1955-1964
Darold L. Hill	1985-1989
Claude A. Horton	1969-1971
Dwight N. Horton	1969-1983
E.C. John	1960-1961 (elected bishop)
Roger Johnson	1979-1985
Theodore S. Johnson	1985-1989
W.D. Kinney	1979-1985
C.D. Kirkpatrick	1960-1964
Eustice Kirkpatrick	1974-1979
Kenneth Leech	1994
Paul Leitzke	1989-
Richard C. Leonard	1979-1989
Jack Logan	1974-1979
Robert J. Magee Sr.	1969-1974
Don Mank	1989-
Kevin Mannoia	1989-
James L. Mason	1974-1979
Richard Maurer	1992-
Wayne McCown	1985-1989
John M. Miyabe	1974-1979

R.G. Mumaw	1964-1969
Robert A. Neal	1985-1994
Wayne Neeley	1989-
Royal S. Nelson	1969-1974
C.F. Olson	1960-1969
H.D. Olver	1951-1964, 1969-1974
W.B. Orr	1966-1969
C.W. Oscarson Sr.	1974-1979
Ralph L. Page	1969-1985
W.J. Parmerter	1951-1964
Darrold Phillips	1988-1989
Virgil L. Raley	1969-1979
Carson Reber	1972-1974
L.A. Robart	1955-1974
J.A. Robb	1960-1964
Howard D. Rose	1964-1979
David A. Rupert	1989-
M. Orin Scandrett	1974-1979
Earl Schamehorn	1979-1985
David Shigekawa	1985-1989
Ward Sipes	1989-
H. Austin Smith	1955-1964
Richard Snyder	1979-1991 (elected bishop)
James D. States	1979-1985
Ronald Taylor	1989-1990 (honorary), 1990-1991
Samuel H. Tinsley	1994-
Frank Van Valin	1969-1979
John E. Van Valin	1983-1990
J.L. Walrath	1969-1974
J. Barrie Walton	1991-1994
Leslie H. Whitehead	1985-1991
Wesley R. Wilder	1964-1969
J.O. Wiles	1960-1964
Robert E. Williams	1986-1989

Erle Wirth	1991-
D.A. Woods	1964-1969, 1971-1989
Laypersons:	
Gerald Atkinson	1969-1985
K. Ray Barnes	1980-1985
Robert Battleson	1985-1989
Roland Bentley	1969-1974
Selwyn Belsher	1979-1985
Hank Bode	1979-
Wayne Bovee	1989-
Calvin Burge	1974-1979
Charles Canon III	1989-
Adele Cisneros	1985-1989
Merlin Coates	1964-1969
John Conaway	1989-
Lee Cromwell	1979-1989
Guy Delamarter	1969-
Paul Embree	1985-1989
Leslie A. Freeman	1969-1979
George Fuller	1951-1969
Richard Galbreath	1974-1979
Floyd Gallogly	1985-1989
Bernard Hansen	1985-
Robert Harnishfeger	1964-1969
Roy Harrington	1951-1969
Leon Hartzell	1989-
Forrest Hayden	1964-1974
James Heldreth	1969-1979
W.O. Hepker	1964-1974
E.A. Holtwick	1955-1964
Lawrence Houston	1985-
Eldon R. Johnson	1969-1980
Eugene Keffer	1974-1985
James Keys	1985-1989

Lowell Kline	1955-1964
Davis Kobayashi	1979-1985, 1989-
William Langer	1964-1969
Ronald Long	1979-1985
Norman McCracken	1979-1989
Elmer McDowell	1955-1969
Pearson Miller	1979-1985
Gene Mogg	1989-
Weldon Munson	1960-1969
B.L. Murray	1964-1979
John Orrantia	1974-1979
Raymond Picken	1969-1974
Alan Ramm	1989-1990 (honorary), 1990-1994
Ray Reed	1989-
John Rice	1969-1989
J.R. Roark	1969-1974
R. Roggenbaum	1960-1964
Doris Scofield	1979-1989
Wesley Skinner	1960-1979
Charles Smout	1974-1985
Keith A. Snyder	1985-
Leon Spangler	1979-1985
Melvin J. Spencer	1969-
Lyle Stone	1979-1985
Craig Tidball	1989-
Carlos Twichell	1979-1985
Ian Van Norman	1985-1990
Paul Van Note	1989-
Merlyn W. Voller	1960-1964, 1969-1979
J.E. Wade	1939-1964
Paul T. Walls	1969-1979
Glenn E. White	1985-
Hugh A. White	1947-1985
Mark Whitlock	1989-

Art Wilkinson	1989-
Wayne Winnett	1979-1989
W.L. Woods	1955-1969

Overseas Representatives:

1969-1974:

Felix Canete	Julio Oyama

1974-1979:

Aaron Ruhumuriza	Celio Rodriguez de Almeida

1979-1985: (Four to serve each year)

Wilton Mdubeki	Israel Brito
Andrew Ndebele	Sebastian Rivera Pena
Karuba Macinda	Ismael Andaya
Daniel Ward	Aaron Ruhumuriza

1985-1989:

Makoto Ono	Nelson Shinga
Bya'ene Akulu Ilangyi	Pablo Ventura
Terence Ndihokubwayo	Ismael Andaya
Derek Ho	Elesinah Chauke

1989-1995:

Charite Noel	Robert Nxumalo
Jim Tuan	Makoto Ono
Kubatu Mndeumo	Ismael Chay
Hung-fai Leung	Pedro Vanderlinder
Nzigo Onesiphore	

IV. DENOMINATIONAL EXECUTIVES – 1960-1995

General Church Secretary:

Cleo T. Denbo	1964-1967; part-time 1967-1985

General Headquarters Administrators:

Bishop W. Dale Cryderman	1981-1984 (interim)
Bishop Clyde E. Van Valin	1984-1985 (interim)
Earl R. Schamehorn	1985-1988
T. Dan Wollam	1988-1991

Treasurers, Directors of Finance:

Alfred S. Hill	1948-1967
William B. Bruce	1967-1972
Lloyd E. Ehmcke	1972-1978
Marvin Stevens (acting)	1978
M. Jack Crandell	1978-1983
Philip B. Nelson (acting)	1983
Philip B. Nelson	1984-1991

Comptroller:

Gary M. Kilgore	1991-1992

Director of Administration and Finance, and Treasurer:

Gary M. Kilgore	1992-

World Ministries Communication

Director:

Claude A. Horton	1971-1972

Information and Stewardship

Director:

George L. Ford	1973-1979

Communications

Director:

Donald E. Riggs	1979-1981

Christian Education

General Directors Free Methodist Youth:

C. Mervin Russell	1958-1964
Robert A. Crandall	1964-1967

General Director, Intermediate Youth:

Floyd M. Todd,	1953-1967

General Directors of Service Training:

C. Hoyt Watson	1962-1965
C.T. Denbo (acting)	1965-1966
A.D. Zahniser	1966-1967

General Sunday School Secretaries:

Royal S. Nelson	1955-1964
C.H. Barnett	1964-1967

General Directors of Christian Education:

Robert A. Crandall	1967-1981
Catherine Stonehouse	1981-1987
Daniel L. Riemenschneider	1987-

Higher Education and the Ministry

General Education Secretaries:

C. Hoyt Watson	1962-1965
C.T. Denbo (acting)	1965-66

General Secretaries of Higher Education:

A.D. Zahniser	1966-1973
L.R. Schoenhals (acting)	1973-1974
Timothy Beuthin	1995-

General Secretaries of Higher Education and the Ministry:

L.R. Schoenhals	1974-1981
Bruce L. Kline	1981-1994

John Wesley Seminary

Dean:

W. Curry Mavis	1947-1962

Director-Chaplain:

Clyde E. Van Valin	1962-1974

Directors:

Lawrence R. Schoenhals	1974-1981
Bruce L. Kline	1981-1994
Gerald E. Bates (interim)	1994-1995
Timothy Beuthin	1995-

Evangelism

General Secretary of Evangelism:

L.W. Northrup	1955-1967

General Directors of Evangelistic Outreach:

Dale A. Woods	1967-1970
Robert F. Andrews	1971-1978

Directors of Evangelism and Church Growth:

Forest C. Bush	1979-1988
Raymond W. Ellis	1988-

Light and Life Hour

Director-Speakers:

LeRoy M. Lowell	1944-1945
Myron F. Boyd	1945-1965
Robert F. Andrews	1965-1980

Missions

General Missionary Secretaries:

Byron S. Lamson	1944-1964
Charles D. Kirkpatrick	1964-1985

Directors of World Missions:

Elmore L. Clyde	1985-1990
M. Doane Bonney	1990-

Publishers

General Publisher:

Lloyd H. Knox	1954-1979
Donald E. Chilcote	1979-1982

Directors of Light and Life Press:

Wilmer Bartel	1982-1988
T. Dan Wollam (acting)	1988-1990

Publisher:

John E. Van Valin	1990-

Executive Editor, Sunday-School Literature

Donald M. Joy	1960-1972

The Free Methodist / Light and Life

Editors, *The Free Methodist*:

James F. Gregory	1955-1964
Byron S. Lamson	1964-1970

Editorial Board, *Light and Life*

Off-site Editors:

Robert M. Fine, Donald E. Demaray, U. Milo Kaufmann,
Frank Van Valin 1970-1975

Associate Editors:

Frank Van Valin, Donald Demaray, Forest C. Bush 1975

Frank Van Valin, Donald Demaray, Gary Walsh 1976
Donald Demaray, Forest C. Bush, Wayne McCown 1977

Managing Eitors:

Jay E. Benson 1970-1971
G. Roger Schoenhals 1971-1977

Editor:

G. Roger Schoenhals 1977-1981

Executive Editor and Managing Editor:

Donald N. Bastian, Exec. Editor 1982-1986
Lyn D. Cryderman, Managing Editor 1982-1986

Editor:

Robert B. Haslam 1986-

Free Methodist Foundation/Planned Giving

Directors of Planned Giving:

Stanley B. Thompson 1975-1982
David Samuelson 1982-1984
Brad C. Brail 1985-1987
David Samuelson (interim) 1987-1988

President, Free Methodist Foundation:

Stanley B. Thompson 1988-

V. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATION OFFICERS – 1960-1995

Women's Missionary Society
Women's Missionary Fellowship International
Women's Ministries International

Presidents:

Adine McDowell 1951-1964
Bessie R. Kresge 1964-1969
Viola L. Walton 1969-1974
Leona K. Fear 1974-1979
Evelyn L. Mottweiler 1979-1985
Elizabeth Cryderman 1985-1989
Carollyn Ellis 1989-

Editors, *The Missionary Tidings*

Bessie R. Kresge	1955-1964
Alice E. Fensome	1964-1975
Marian W. Groesbeck	1975-1990

Transferred 9-1-90 to Department of World Missions

Editor, Dan Runyon	1990-

Light and Life Men's Fellowship
Light and Life Men International

Presidents:

W. Milburn Wills	1967-1971
Wesley Skinner	1971-1979
Tom Black	1979-1985
U. Milo Kaufmann	1985-

Executive Secretaries/Directors:

Charles Kingsley	1956-1967
Robert Andrews	1967-1971
Charles Kingsley (acting)	1971-1975
Howard A. Snyder	1975-1980
Henry G. Church, Jr.	1980-1981
T. Joe Culumber	1982-1984
Lucien Behar	1986-

Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions:

Presidents:

C. Dorr Demaray	1960-1962
Ellwood A. Voller	1962-1965
Glenn A. Richardson	1965-1968
David L. McKenna	1968-1970
Bruce L. Kline	1970-1972
Lawrence R. Schoenhals	1972-1974
Orley R. Herron	1974-1975
Ellwood A. Voller	1975-1976
Paul L. Adams	1976-1977
David L. McKenna	1977-1979
W. Richard Stephens	1979-1982
Kenneth H. Coffman	1982-1985

Dorsey Brause	1985-1987
William C. Crothers	1987-1989
David C. LeShana	1989-1991
W. Richard Stephens	1991-1993
John A. Martin	1993-1994

Association of Social Service Agencies

Presidents:

Harry Livermore	1971-1977
Kenneth M. Walton	1977-1979
Harold Schwab	1979-1982
Robert Hartley	1982-1986
Donald Cutler	1986-1992
David Samuelson	1992-1993
John P. Ellis	1993-

Free Methodist Medical Fellowship (Founded 1960)

Presidents:

Paul W. Yardy	1971-1975
Bruce N. Davenport	1975-1983
Lionel Hurd	1983-1988
Bruce N. Davenport	1988-1992
Merlin Coulter	1992-1994

FMC Ministries, Inc. (International Friendship House)

Directors:

Stanley Long	1970-1972
Arden L. Reed	1972-1973
William A. Coates	1973-1974
Al Lawrence	1974-1975
Jack H. Mottweiler	1975-1976

Department of Special Ministries, Director:

Jack H. Mottweiler	1976-1981

International Friendship House, Managers:

Ivanelle Kirkpatrick	1981-1988
Linda Pyle	1988-1990

Free Methodist Chaplains Association

Presidents:

Randall R. Tucker	1983-1985
Daniel Hummer	1986-1988
Myron B. Henry	1988-1990
E. Dean Cook	1990-1992
Harold C. Cranston	1992-1994

VI. FREE METHODIST WORLD FELLOWSHIP LEADERS – 1960-1995

Officers:

Presidents:

L.R. Marston	1962-1964
W.S. Kendall	1964-1969
Paul N. Ellis	1969-1974
Myron F. Boyd	1974-1978
W. Dale Cryderman	1976-1979 (acting), 1979-1985
Clyde E. Van Valin	1985-1989
Gerald E. Bates	1989-1995

Vice-Presidents:

Kaneo Oda	1962-1964
Elijah Cele	1964-1969
Takesaburo Uzaki	1969-1974
Nathan Gindi	1974-1985
Motoi Hatano	1985-1989
Narendra John	1989-1995

Secretary-Treasurer:

Hugh A. White	1962-1985
Evelyn L. Mottweiler	1985-1989
Barbara Fox	1989-1995

Executive Secretary:

Harold Ryckman	1962-1965
V. James Mannoia	1971-1973

Executive Assistant:

Jack H. Mottweiler	1987-1989

Area Fellowships:

(Representatives on World Fellowship Board)

Asia:

Jesse Nathar	1962-1964
Felix Canete	1964-1969
Ching-Shen Chen	1969-1974
V.B. Samudre	1974-1979
Ismael Andaya	1979-1989

Central Africa:

Simoni Ndikumazambo (Ruanda-Urundi)	1962-1964
Stefano Rutuna (Rwanda-Burundi)	1964-1969
Jason Mzuri	1969-1974
Aluba Macinda Elyanga	1974-1979
Matayo Myiruko	1979-1989

Latin America:

Joao Mizuki	1962-1964
Teofilo Garcia	1964-1969
Rosario Moreno	1969-1970
Julio Oyama	1972-1974
Expedito Calixto	1974-1979
Yoshikazu Takiya	1979-1989

Southern Africa:

Isaac Shembe	1962-1964
Elijah Cele	1964-1974
Naison Chauke	1974-1979
Moses Phiri	1979-1982

North America:

Leslie R. Marston	1962-1964
Hugh A. White	1962-1985
George Fuller	1962-1969

Edward C. John	1962-1969
Walter S. Kendall	1962-1969
W.J. Stonehouse	1964-1974
Paul N. Ellis	1969-1979
Myron F. Boyd	1969-1978
Wesley Skinner	1969-1989
W. Dale Cryderman	1974-1985
Donald N. Bastian	1974-1989
Robert F. Andrews	1979-1989
Elmer E. Parsons	1979-1985
Clyde E. Van Valin	1979-1989
Selwyn Belsher	1979-1989
Richard Ewing	1979-1989
Evelyn Mottweiler	1985-1989
Gerald E. Bates	1985-1989
David M. Foster	1985-1989

North Atlantic:

Donald N. Bastian	1990-1993
Gary R. Walsh	1993-
Gerald Merrill	1990-
Keith Snyder	1990-
M. Doane Bonney	1990-

VII. LEADERS OF NEW FULL ANNUAL CONFERENCES FORMED 1960-1995

International:

India

Conference Superintendents:

Jesse S. Nathar	1961-1964
V.B. Samudre	1973-1978
M.L. Meshramkar	1981-1982
S.R. Bhonsle	1982-1986
Daniel T. Ward	1986-1987
John Tiple	1988-

District Superintendents:

Moses David	1964-1973
S.R. Bhonsle	1964-1966
S.D. Macasare	1964-1967
Gordon Bell	1964-1968
J.S. Nathar	1966-1967, 1968-1973
M.L. Meshramkar	1978-1981
J. Tiple	1978-1981, 1987-1988
William John	1987-1988
D.M. Mamidwar	1987-1988

India Provisional General Conference

President (Bishop):

Daniel T. Ward	1989-

Rwanda-Burundi (Ruanda-Urundi)

Co-Superintendents:

Yosefu Rudagaza	1961-1963
Gerald E. Bates	1961-1963
Epayineto Rwamunyana	1963-1964
James F. Johnson	1963-1964

Rwanda

District Superintendents:

Epayineto Rwamunyana	1965-1967, 1968-1976
Paul Orcutt	1965-1967, 1969-1971
A. Nihaba	1968-1969, 1970-1976
E. Kayonga	1971-1973, 1974-1976
S. Nigeni	1973-1974

Conference Superintendents:

Epayineto Rwamunyana	1967-1968, 1976-1982
Assiel Niyihaba	1982-1985

Rwanda General Conference

President (Bishop):

Aaron Ruhumuriza	1985-

Burundi

District Superintendents:

Gerald Bates	1964-1967, 1968-1969, 1982-1985
Rumoka M.	1964-1971
Yosefu Rudagaza	1964-1965, 1966-1974
Ronald Collett	1964-1965
Yoweli Masambiro	1965-1966
James F. Johnson	1965-1966
Virgil Kirkpatrick	1966-1968, 1969-1973, 1974-1977
Ntahomereye Daniel	1967-1985
Paul Orcutt	1968-1969
Myiruko M.	1969-1985
Emedi A.	1969-1985
Bamboneyeho T.	1970-1972
Ciza Joel	1972-1973
Ndibadibe E.	1973-1985
Nikondeha A.	1973-1975, 1978-1985
Warren Land	1976-1979
Sibomana Sophonie	1977-1985
Mweni Kalebu	1978-1985
Bitonde Marcel	1979-1983
Nzigo Onesiphore	1985

Burundi Jurisdictional Conference

President (Bishop):

Noah Nzeyimana	1985-

Philippine

Conference Superintendents:

Felix P. Canete	1963-1972, 1977-1980
Constancio Managbanag	1972-1977, 1982-1987
Jeremias Palero Sr.	1980-1981
Felipe Paniamogan	1981-1982

District Superintendents:

Enriquita Monencillo	1987-1990
Felipe Paniamogan	1987-1990
Felix P. Canete	1987-1990
Jeremias Palero Sr.	1987-1991
Samuel Lagaspi	1990-1991
Victor Amanderson	1990-1991
Rosendo Campos	1990-1991
Anselmo Bada	1990-1991

Eastern Mindanao (Philippines)

Conference Superintendent:

Rosendo Campus	1991-

Northern Mindanao (Philippines)

Conference Superintendent:

Victor T. Amandoron	1991-

Southern Mindanao (Philippines)

District Superintendents:

James Paniamogan	1991-1993
Ephraim Agupita	1991-
Jeremias Palero Sr.	1991-
Elsa Calimpusan	1993-

Northern Philippine

Conference Superintendent:

Fernando Frias	1991-

Philippine Provisional General Conference

President (Bishop):

Jim Tuan	1994-

Taiwan (Formosa)

Conference Superintendents:

Wang Yang-Wu	1963-1964
James H. Taylor, Sr.	1964-1965
Peter C.H. Fan	1965-1966, 1968-1977
James H. Taylor, Jr.	1966-1968
Tsang Teng-Yin	1977-1978, 1983-1984

Wang Chih-Pin	1979-1983, 1987-1991
Huang P'ei-Min	1984-1986
Chang Hui-Liang	1986-1987
P'an Liang-Mo	1991-

District Superintendents:

Huang P'ei-Min	1978-1979
Lo Cheng-Chi	1978-1979
Hsieh Chin-Yu	1978-1979

Mexican

District Superintendents:

Meliton Moncivaiz	1965-1968
Amado Alvarez	1965-1967, 1972-1975
David Alvarez	1965-1967
Leopoldo A. Padilla	1965-1967
Jose Gonzalez N.	1967-1968, 1972-1975
Ramon Quintanar	1972-1975
Antonio Alvarez	1972-1975

Conference Superintendents:

Jose Gonzalez N.	1968-1970
David Alvarez H.	1970-1972, 1975-1979
Roberto Castro H.	1979-1983
Rosario Castro G.	1983-1987
J. Rodrigo Lozano	1987-

Mozambique and Transvaal

District Superintendents:

T. Nhachowo	1965-1968
F. Ziuku	1965-1972
J. Gudwani	1965-1970
J.M. Dickinson	1965-1970, 1973-1980
M. Nyachengo	1965-1968
Clifford O. Guyer	1965-1971, 1974-1975
S. Nheve	1965-1970
Donald Crider	1966-1968

E.S. Clemens	1968-1969
Samuel Mutuque	1968-1987
Simao Chambale	1969-1973, 1974-1977
Pedro Sique	1970-1974
Simione Combane	1970-1974
Titosse Matsinhe	1970-1971, 1974-1975
Dean H. Smidderks	1970-1974
Lameque Nwalane	1971-1974
Fernando H. Marrumette	1971-1974
Mosi Langwane	1972-1974
Cabral Massizuane	1974-1977
Luis Uanela N.	1974-1992
Luis Cuna	1975-1980
Uiliamo Chauque	1977-1992
Simao Jeremias Malemane	1977-1982, 1987-1990
Alexandre Niquissi	1980-1982
Armando Jossias Cambule	1982-1992
Francisco J. Mahwaye	1987-1992
Tomas J. Malemane	1987-1990, 1991-1992
Franisse S. Muvile	1987-1990
Elias M. Matsinhe	1990-1992
L. Gwambe	1991-1992

Central Mozambique

District Superintendents:

Tomas J. Malemane	1992-
Elias M. Matsinhe	1992-
Francisco J. Mahwaye	1992-
Lucas G. Covane	1992-

Southern Mozambique-South Africa Mines

District Superintendents:

Franisse S. Muvile	1992-
Luis Q. Guambe	1992-
Aramando J. Cambule	1992-
Titos S. Mundlovu	1992-

Mozambique Provisional General Conference

President (Bishop):

Luis Uanela Nhaphale	1993

Transvaal

District Superintendents:

Wesley Crist	1984-1985, 1986-1990
Fillemon Chau	1984-1992
Trygvar M. Brauteseth	1985-1986
Benjamin Mlombo	1985-1992
Godfrey Dzimba	1989-1992
S. Mlombo	1990-1992

Conference Superintendent:

Trygvar M. Brauteseth	1986-1987,
Board of Administration	1992-

Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)

Conference Superintendents:

Tillman Houser	1965-1967
Jackson Chauke	1970-1971
Samuel Mlambo	1984-1987
P. Majoko	1991-

District Superintendents:

Joram Shumba	1967-1969, 1971-1973
	1974-1977, 1981-1982
	1987-1988, 1990-1991
Simon Dziva	1967-1969, 1977-1981
	1982-1984, 1988-1990
Simon Chauke	1967-1969, 1987-1988
Samson Maluleke	1967-1969
Jackson Chauke	1967-1969, 1971-1978
	1982-1984, 1987-1991
Eldon Sayre	1969-1970
Philip Capp	1969-1970
Naison G. Chauke	1973-1974
Phineas Majoko	1978-1982, 1987-1988

Nikkei

Conference Superintendents:

Seiiti Simizu	1966-1970
Kinzo Uchida	1970-1972
Hiroyuki Hayashi	1972-1978
Mitsuo Nagata	1978-1985
Makoto Ono	1985-1990
Kodo Nakahara	1990-

Brazilian (Paulista)

Conference Superintendents:

Clancy J. Thompson	1966-1970
Harold H. Ryckman	1970-1972
Expedito Calaxito	1972-1973
Syllas Antunes	1973-1974
Juracy Ribeiro de Souza	1974-1975
Yoshikazu Takiya	1975-1977
Douglas V. Smith	1977-1980, 1984-1985
Ozias Costa	1980-1984
C. Wesley King, Jr.	1985-1987
Manoel Roberto Olivio	1987-1992
Dorivaldo Puerta Masson	1992-

Zaire

President, Church Council:

Bya'ene Akulu Ilangyi	1975-1989

District Superintendents:

Luhangela Byam'nobe	1975-1985
Bitondo 'Yangya	1975-1984
Wacwamwilelo Mkane	1975-1976, 1977-1984
Mlondami Mwenebunde	1975-1982
Bisengeta Basengelele	1975-1977
Misabeo A'umba	1975-1978
Aoci Hobembele	1976-1977
Bitebetebe Ruzingizwa	1977-1985

Dunia Mlanda	1978-1985
Bilonjwa Lu'uca	1978-1984
Mwenebenga Lu'ochi Emedi	1980-1981
Yangya Icibangyela	1980-1985
W'elongo Luhe'ya	1981-1985
Ababele Ngini	1980-1985
Bicingini Elema	1981-1985
Byondo Ngendahayo	1981-1985
Bakwa Salumu	1982-1984
Efunga Mbelielo	1984-1985
Mmumbelwa Lumona	1984-1985
Mwicwa Asende	1984-1985
Mahota Nduwayo	1984-1985
Winlondia Mwenebulongo	1984-1985
Mahirwe Kaparasi	1984-1985

Zaire Northeast

District Superintendents:

Efunga Mbele'elo	1985-
'Yanga Icibangyela	1985-
Bichingini Elema	1985-
Mahota Nduwayo	1985-1987
Mwichwa Asende	1985-1987
Ngini Ababele	1985-
Emedi Luochi Mwenebenga	1985-1988
Mubake Kasindi	1987-
Sana Nyabuhuga	1987-
Kahenga Ntambwe	1987-
Miya Wilondja	1987-
W'elongo Luhe'ya	1988-
Abwe Mlenja	1988-

Zaire Southeast

District Superintendents:

Luhangela Byam'nobe	1985-
Mlanda Dunia	1985-

W'elongo Luhe'ya	1985-1987
M'mumbelwa Lumona	1985-
Bitebetebe Rusingizwa	1985-
Byondo Ngendahayo	1985-
Wilondja Mwenalongwe	1985-
Mahirwe Kaparasi	1985-
Mboko Mkongwa	1985-
Mlongeca Eca	1987-

Zaire Provisional General Conference

President (Bishop):

Bya'ene Akulu Ilangyi	1989-

Haiti Inland

District Superintendents:

Adrien Oscar	1979-1980, 1981-1983
Jacques Jean-Gilles	1979-1981
Clovis Momplaisir	1979-1989, 1991-
Louicius Joseph	1980-1981
Robert Augustin	1981-1982, 1988-1989
Charite Noel	1982-1983, 1985-1988, 1989-
Charleus Charles	1983-1985, 1986-1991
Jean-Monnier Jean-Francois	1983-1986
Pierre Yves Zamor	1989-1991
Delamy Bazilme	1991-

Hong Kong

Conference Superintendents:

Derek Ho	1986-1987
James Wong	1987-1990, 1991-
Loren Van Tassel	1990-1991

United Kingdom-Great Britain
United Kingdom-Northern Ireland

Conference Superintendents:

Victor Trinder	1982-1988
Ronald Taylor	1988-1991

J. Barrie Walton 1991-1994
Ken Leech 1994
J. Allan Ellershaw 1994-1995 (acting), 1995-

Canada Jurisdictional Conference:
(became General Conference, 1990)

President:
Bishop Donald N. Bastian 1974-1990

Executive Secretaries:
Claude A. Horton 1977-1985
Paul G. Johnston 1985-1990

United States:

Arizona

Conference Superintendent:
Gilbert C. Ablard 1991-

Centenary

Conference Superintendents:
Harold S. Schwab 1960-1963
W.L. Carey 1963-1968
Richard C. Leonard 1968-

Pacific Coast Japanese

Conference Superintendents:
John M. Miyabe 1964-1985
John Mizuki 1985-1988
Jon N. Honda 1988-

Pacific Coast Latin American

District Superintendents:
Sixto Tarin 1967-1977
Eleazar Padilla 1967-1970
Felipe Ojeda 1970-1977
Victor Alvarez 1977-1979
Victor Rodriguez 1977-1979

Conference Superintendents:
Victor Rodriguez 1979-1981
Jimmie J. Estrada 1981-1985

Jesse Aramburo	1985-1988
Jimmie J. Estrada	1988-1994
(merged with Southern California 1994)	

West Virginia

Conference Superintendent:

Roger L. Yeager, Sr.	1992-1995

VIII. PRESIDENTS OF FREE METHODIST COLLEGES (1960-1995)

Aldergate College/Moose Jaw Bible College

Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan

J. Wesley Stewart	1958-1967
Paul H. Buffam	1967-1969
George E. Leasor	1969-1979
J. Leon Winslow	1979-1982
David A. Scott	1983-1985
Gerald Merrill (acting)	1985-1986
Norman Swanson (interim)	1986-1987
Robert J. Shoaff	1987-1989
Joseph F. James	1989-1995 (closed 1995)

Central College

McPherson, Kansas

Elmer E. Parsons	1955-1964
Bruce L. Kline	1964-1981
Dorsey Brause	1981-1987
Harvey Ludwick	1987-1990
John A. Martin	1990-

Greenville College

Greenville, Illinois

H.J. Long	1936-1962
Glenn A. Richardson	1962-1970
Orley R. Herron, Jr.	1970-1977
W. Richard Stephens	1977-1993
Robert E. Smith	1993-

Lorne Park College/Foundation
Port Credit, Ontario

Byron Withenshaw	1959-1965
Claude A. Horton	1965-1967

(closed 1967, Foundation established)
Directors:

Claude A. Horton	1967-1971
David Gyertson	1971-1974
Gary Walsh	1974-1977
Claude A. Horton	1977-1985
Paul G. Johnston	1985-

Los Angeles Pacific College
Los Angeles, California

Robert J. Cox	1954-1965

(merged with Azusa Pacific College)

Roberts Wesleyan College
Rochester, New York

Ellwood A. Voller	1957-1968
Lawrence R. Schoenhals	1968-1974
Paul L. Adams	1974-1981
William C. Crothers	1981-

Seattle Pacific College/University
Seattle, Washington

C. Dorr Demaray	1959-1968
David L. McKenna	1968-1982
David C. LeShana	1982-1991
Curtis A. Martin	1992-1994
E. Arthur Self	1994-

Spring Arbor College
Spring Arbor, Michigan

Roderick J. Smith	1958-1961
David L. McKenna	1961-1968
Ellwood A. Voller	1968-1979

Kenneth H. Coffman	1979-1987
Dorsey Brause	1987-1991
Allen Carden	1991-

Wessington Springs College
Wessington Springs, South Dakota

Robert F. Andrews	1960-1965
Merle S. Olson	1965-1967
D. Robert Short	1967-1968

(Merged with Central College)

John Wesley Seminary Foundation
Directors:
(See page 132)

Cooperating Institutions

Azusa Pacific College/University
Azusa, California

Cornelius P. Haggard	1966-1976
Paul E. Sago	1976-1990
Richard Felix	1990-

Oakdale Christian High School
Jackson, Kentucky

Douglas Newton	1991-

X. RECIPIENTS OF DENOMINATIONAL AWARDS – 1960-1995

Earnest Christian Award
Presented by the Council on Social Action to recognize Free Methodists active in social ministry.

1992 David and Nellie Fenwick
1993 Olive Hodson
1994 Celeste Langer
1995 Rick Clyde

Layperson/Churchman of the Year
Presented at the annual Board of Administration meetings by the Board of Bishops.

1971 Hugh A. White
1972 Roy Harrington
1973 Leslie A. Freeman
1974 Burton L. Murray
1975 Ellwood Voller
1976 Paul T. Walls
1977 Gerald Atkinson
1978 Wesley R. Skinner
1980 Eldon R. Johnson (posthumously)
1981 Paul Lynch
1983 Lyle Stone
1984 Melvin J. Spencer
1985 Wendell Beckwith
1986 Alan Ramm
1987 Nicki Stansberry
1988 Dick Mack
1990 David L. McKenna
1992 Norman L. McCracken
1993 Philip and Sharon Cullison
1994 John W. Rice

Christian Education Hall of Fame
Presented by the Department of Christian Education at the General Conference for distinguished service in Free Methodist Christian education.

1979 Lloyd H. Knox
1979 Royal S. Nelson
1979 Ben H. Pearson
1979 Floyd M. Todd
1979 Pauline H. Todd
1985 Ernest L. Keasling
1985 Esther Roberts Lyon

1985 Mona McKeown
1989 Robert A. Crandall
1989 Jack H. Mottweiler

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Endnotes

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“Mining the past to inform the future”

Working in conjunction with Asbury Theological Seminary, the Marston Memorial Historical Center is making a selection of its holdings available digitally. The Marston Center and Free Methodist Archive, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, houses material documenting the history of the Free Methodist Church in North America and world wide. The mission of the Free Methodist Historical Society is to preserve the Free Methodist heritage and transmit it faithfully to each generation. These functions have a double task, 1) to increase awareness of the founding principles of the church and their importance in fulfilling its mission, and 2) to assist the global church by making available the resources documenting the origin and character of its parent body and its spread around the world.

The Free Methodist Church was founded in 1860 as a reform movement with roots in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Initial activity centered in upstate New York and in St. Louis, Missouri. Central issues were personal holiness, slavery, secret societies, free seats, and a concern for the poor. In the early editions of the Book of Discipline it is stated of Free Methodists “They believe their mission is twofold-to maintain the Bible standard of Christianity and to preach the gospel to the poor.” They also state: “The ‘glad tidings’ must be preached to every individual of the human race.” Within 25 years churches spread to the west coast of the US, to the south and over the central and northeastern regions. Very early, missions were established in China, India and South Africa. Worldwide the movement now numbers over 1 million members with a presence in 85 countries and regions of the world. The denomination’s commitment to higher education is reflected in its six related colleges and universities across the US and a seminary in Rochester NY.

Enjoy and learn who Free Methodists are and what makes them distinctive as a holiness denomination.