

Conversations with our past



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The Presbyterian Church in Canada

The Church Grows

An Introduction

Life for The Presbyterian Church in Canada in the twentieth century has never been dull, despite rumours to the contrary. We have moved from crisis to crisis, both in the Church and within our global village. The psychic shock of World War I, the painful separation involved in the Church Union movement among Presbyterians, the suffering brought on by the Depression, and the depths of inhumanity witnessed in World War II all led Christians around the world to return to the roots of their faith and receive the nourishment of God's grace that led to growth in faith, understanding and service. This section of Heritage Resources examines the growth Presbyterians in Canada experienced as they faced the crises of the twentieth century in two areas of the Church's life--theology and missions.

Common themes emerged as we traced the history of our Church's growth since 1925. Smooth sailing is not one of them. The continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada after 1925 was based on a common loyalty to Presbyterianism and a common opposition to organic union as proposed by the supporters of the United Church of Canada. But there was great diversity within the Church as to the nature of the Presbyterian heritage and the proper means of expressing the acknowledged unity of the Church of Christ. Each crisis brought these differences to the fore and forced the Presbyterian Church in Canada to struggle openly and honestly with its understanding of the Word of God for this time and this place. As we confronted the growing crisis in Western civilization, one question surfaced again and again--"What is the Church of Christ?" The conversations with our past that comprise this unit reflect our efforts to answer this question in theory and in practice.

Three themes are worth noting in this introduction. First, we have consistently affirmed that Presbyterianism is a catholic, not a sectarian, tradition. We see ourselves as a branch of the Church Catholic. Those who join a Presbyterian congregation are admitted to membership in the church of Christ, a fellowship that extends around the world and through the ages.

In the second place, Presbyterianism in Canada has found its focus in the life of the local congregation. It is the community within which the Word is preached, the Sacraments administered and the love of God in Jesus Christ shared. This emphasis should not blind us to the connectional nature of Presbyterianism, by which we are part of the larger church of Christ through Presbytery, Synod, General Assembly and ecumenical councils. But it does affirm that the foundations of our life in Christ are laid in the love we have for one another at the local level.

Finally, we have taken theology--the attempt to articulate some account of the hope that is within us--seriously enough to argue about it. The Holy Spirit has sown among us varied understandings of what it means to be evangelical, Biblical and confessional, but we have also been graced with ecclesiastical structures that allow us to debate these issues with integrity and candor.

There is little indication that the rest of the twentieth century will be any less hectic, confusing and challenging than the past eighty years. Presbyterians in Canada face their global future with a rich and vital heritage, but it is up to us, individually and as a communion of saints, to appropriate these resources and walk humbly with our God in the paths of wisdom, justice and peace.

Suggestions for Study

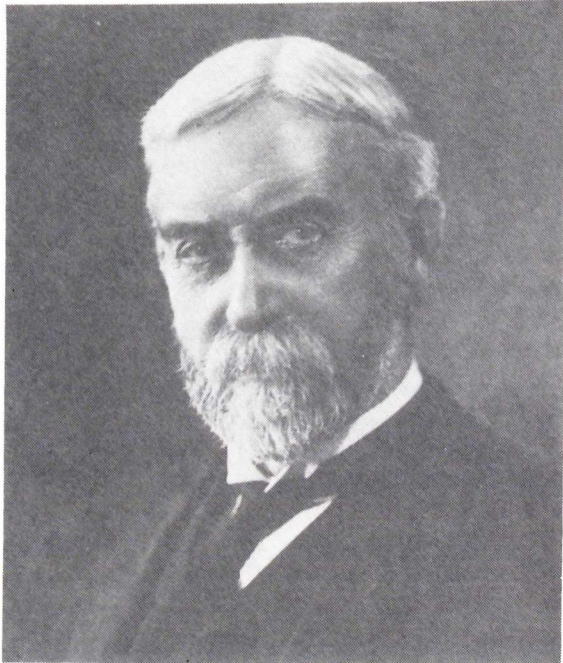
Suggestions for individuals, adult groups or church planning committees are provided in Chapter Seven, pages 73 to 82.

As first steps in planning for group study, order a study for each participant and arrange for a period of six to eight weeks to complete the study.

In addition to this book, adults may make use of the sound-filmstrip "Frontiers" contained in the kit of Heritage Resources, Unit IV: "The Church Grows." It provides a brief survey of the story of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Plan to preview it and have the equipment available when needed.

Contents

Chapter		Page
1	Survival 1925: Diversity of Attitudes	7
2	Survival 1925-1940: Vitality Regained	15
3	Renewal	27
4	Consolidation 1940-1955	35
5	Reformation	45
6	New Ventures	59
7	Suggestions for Study	73
	Sources	83
	Authors	86



Ephriam Scott was born in Nova Scotia in 1845. He attended Dalhousie University, Presbyterian College, Halifax, United Presbyterian College and Free Church College in Edinburgh. He served pastorates in Milford and New Glasgow, N.S., before coming to Montreal to edit the *Presbyterian Record* in 1891. He maintained a lifelong passion for the mission work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, serving frequently on the Home Mission and Foreign Mission Committees. He died in 1931.



Robert W. Dickie was born in Hyde Park, Ontario in 1873. Educated at the University of Toronto, Edinburgh University, and Knox College, he was ordained in 1898 and served pastorates in Orangeville, Brandon and Montreal. In 1912 he received a D.D. from Presbyterian College, Montreal and chaired the Montreal Board of Protestant Schools from 1917 until 1927. He was active in the opposition to Church Union and wrote a defence of the continuing minority after 1925 entitled, *Presbyterianism: Its Origin and Principles*. He died in 1927.

Chapter One

Survival 1925:

Diversity of Attitudes

Purpose: To explore two perspectives on the unique heritage of Presbyterianism that motivated many leaders and people of The Presbyterian Church in Canada who opposed Church Union and chose to remain Presbyterian.

The setting is a radio studio. Burgess Barnet, host of "Conversations with our Past," welcomes two guests, Robert W. Dickie, minister of Knox-Crescent Presbyterian Church in Montreal, and Ephraim Scott, also of Montreal, who edited the *Presbyterian Record*.

BARNET Dr. Scott, your election as Moderator of the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1925 signified the respect and gratitude held for you by those Presbyterians who remained out of the United Church of Canada. What was it that led you to resist the Church Union movement with such vehemence?

SCOTT Interestingly enough, many of us began with a considerable degree of sympathy for the idea of a greater expression of unity among Canada's churches. The idea had been widely discussed in the late nineteenth century and gained the endorsement of prominent Presbyterians such as Principal William Caven of Knox College and Principal George Munro Grant of Queen's University. But it became increasingly clear, as the plan for organic union took shape between 1904 and 1910, that too much Presbyterianism would be sacrificed in the proposed United Church. The principles upon which we took our stand were Truth and Freedom. The former was embodied in our system of doctrine, set forth in the Westminster Standards to which our office bearers were bound in their vows of ordination. The Westminster Confession of Faith, together with the Larger and Shorter catechisms, expounded the system of Divine Truth revealed in the Word of God in the Scriptures.

The principle of freedom found expression in the polity of Presbyterianism. We have a system of church government that allows for the greatest possible freedom within the fellowship of the church and that insists on the independence of the church from any interference from the civil authorities. In the interests of Truth and Freedom, then, we had to resist the Union movement.

BARNET How did the United Church of Canada deny these principles, in your view?

SCOTT The Basis of Union adopted by the uniting denominations--Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational--contained a brief summary of the essentials of the Christian faith that lacked clarity and comprehensiveness. It was totally inadequate as a

systematic statement of Divine Revelation. Further, no formal pledge of allegiance to the standards of the church was required of office bearers. As to polity, the United Church of Canada gave up any claim to independence from the civil authorities by making its creation dependent on charters from the Provincial governments and an Act of the Federal Parliament. It was a corporation created by the government.

BARNET Let me pursue what you felt you were defending by maintaining a Presbyterian Church in Canada. What, in your view, is the gospel?

SCOTT The gospel is the system of religious truth set forth in the Word of God. It is the power of God to save a fallen humanity. The Word of God is the only rule of faith and life, and all that claims to be moral and spiritual truth must be tested by the Word. This divine revelation contained in the Word of God is set forth in systematic form in the Westminster Confession of Faith and summarized for teaching purposes in the Larger and Shorter catechisms. There, in a manner compelling to human reason, the heights and depths of the infinite Truth are displayed. It was because of our conviction that the standards of Presbyterianism portray the gospel with such fullness and in accordance with the Word of God that we insisted that our office bearers pledge their allegiance to the Westminster Standards.

BARNET The Westminster Standards include the Form of Church Government. Could you elaborate on the nature of the Presbyterian Church revealed in those documents?

SCOTT The Presbyterian Church, in whatever locale it may exist, is a voluntary association of men and women who accept and profess the great Scriptural truths and principles, the system of doctrine or religious belief and of polity or church government, which Presbyterians believe to be founded upon and agreeable to the Word of God. Those who approved of these Scriptural truths were welcome to join the Presbyterian Church. The great Scriptural ideal upon which our polity is based is individual responsibility to God. No human being or group of

people could coerce us into doing what we believed God would not have us do. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and matters of conscience must be decided by the individual involved.

BARNET What is the mission of this voluntary association of men and women gathered around Presbyterian standards?

SCOTT The mission of the Church is to take the gospel to the heathen--in foreign lands and in our own country. The church is a missionary organization and the whole world is its parish.

The Christian gospel is the motive power behind all true social progress. It is the force that elevates human beings in the social, civil and moral scale.

BARNET Does that imply that the church should become involved in political issues in the exercise of its social responsibility?

SCOTT Not at all. The church is a purely spiritual organization, with spiritual powers and functions only. It should seek to influence men and women by spiritual means alone, by the appeal of the truth it teaches and the life it lives. The state alone is empowered to exercise civil authority. The work and warfare of the church is in the spiritual realm, not in the socio-political sphere. Its task is to preach and preserve the gospel delivered in the Scriptures. Application of these truths and moral principles to life are the sole responsibility of the individuals who sit in the pews. The church as such must remain independent and separate from any political involvement.

BARNET Mr. Dickie, your little book, *Presbyterianism: Its Origins and Principles* was published by the Presbyterian Association in Montreal and enjoyed a wide circulation among continuing Presbyterians. I gather it represents a slightly different point of view than that of your colleague and friend, Ephriam Scott. What led you to write that book?

DICKIE My primary concern was that those of us who remained out of Union should not be thought of as sectarian or schismatic. Just because we resisted a particular model or plan of Christian unity did not imply that we were narrow or closed to co-operative efforts in the spread of Christianity. Our task after 1925 was to be true to the genius of Presbyterianism, and the first element in that genius was the maintenance of a catholic or universal view of the Church. Our task was to propagate Christianity, not Presbyterianism.

BARNET I gather this was a frequent charge against the continuing Presbyterians--sectarianism.

DICKIE That's right. There was some cause for such a charge. A vocal minority within the resistance based opposition to the United Church on an exclusive and dogmatic brand of Presbyterianism. Dr. Scott was a leading spokesman for this wing of the continuing Presbyterians. But many of us, including some of the leading lay leaders, felt that such dogmatism harmed the cause of the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada. While we were unwilling to give up the goodly heritage of Presbyterianism, we did not see that heritage in the narrow and defensive terms expressed by Dr. Scott.

BARNET You spoke of the genius of Presbyterianism. What were the elements of that genius?

DICKIE As I mentioned a moment ago, the first element was the catholicity or universality of the church. Presbyterians have never considered themselves to be *the* church. We have always regarded ourselves as but a branch of the church of Christ and have recognized others also to be such where the Word of God is faithfully preached and the sacraments duly administered. While we were opposed to organic union, we are duty bound to maintain an open attitude to co-operative efforts with other Christian bodies, including the United Church of Canada.

The second element is our resistance to ecclesiasticism, either in the form of an autocratic

hierarchy as seen in the Roman Catholic Church or in the form of the bureaucratic machinery we saw dominating the new United Church. It was the democratic genius of our church that insisted on the priesthood of all believers. The church is a democratic fraternity of believers and they should all have an interest and voice in the policy of the church. The courts--presbytery, synod and General Assembly--should serve the fellowship of believers, not lord it over them.

The third element concerned the Presbyterian focus on the essentials of Christianity. The welfare of the church was not promoted by publicity campaigns, whirlwind drives, newspaper propaganda, sensational services or political influence. The one hope for our church is that we may be able, with God's blessing, to develop and maintain in our congregations--and the church is nothing apart from its congregations--a life that is Christian in devotion, faith and charity. This task will be achieved by sober and reverent worship, regular church attendance, strong religious instruction and the faithful exercise of good works.

BARNET What, then, do you see as the essential nature of the church?

DICKIE The Presbyterian doctrine of the church is drawn neither from the thinking of the church itself, nor from any individual believer's conception of it. The sanctity of the church is derived solely from the gifts that God has entrusted to it--the Word, the Sacraments and the Holy Spirit. Guiding our stewardship of these mysteries is the only Head of the church, Jesus Christ. Instead of being a centre of furious work for the improvement of the world in general, the church should be first of all a place of prayer where the soul finds a spiritual presence among the two or three gathered in his name. The Christian church exists to nourish and express the Christian religion and our branch of the church of Christ will be tested by the kind of religion that dwells among our people.

BARNET You seem skeptical about the Church becoming involved in politics?

13

DICKIE I am. In the economy of God, the state has been established to deal with civil and political matters, while the church has been charged with the care of souls. They are separate spheres, under the care of separate institutions, both under God's rule. It is the business of all good citizens, Christian and others, to work in the state to overthrow evil and to establish righteousness in its place. The church, on the other hand, is a place where men and women come to hear God's Word, realize his presence and experience the power of his Spirit. It is a place of rest to souls, weary of the burden and mystery of life, seeking that peace which the world cannot give, a place of refreshing because the living bread and the living water are dispensed there and a place of hope where, despite their frailty and unworthiness, people learn to lift up their heads and trust in the God of their salvation revealed in Jesus who came to save his people from their sins.

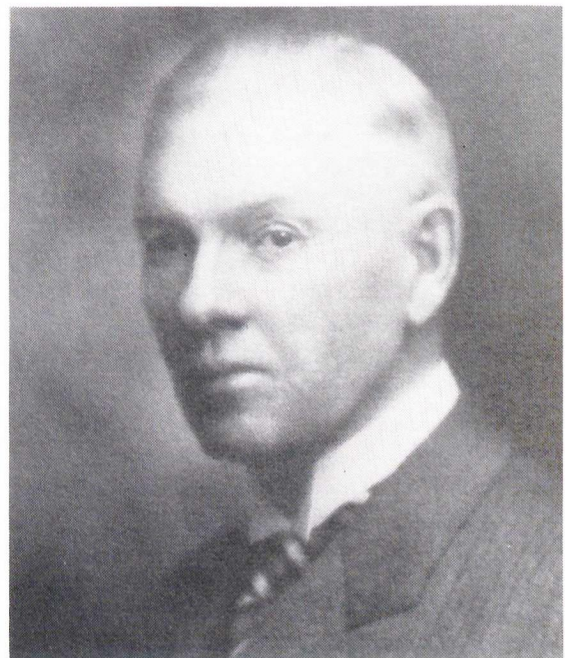
BARNET Gentlemen, thank you very much. Now let us see how our listening audience responds to the reasons you have given for remaining Presbyterian.

(See Reflection Scale 1, page 77.)



Helen Mackenzie Thompson Strachan was the daughter of a Presbyterian minister, the granddaughter of Alexander Mackenzie, Prime Minister of Canada from 1874-1878. She married Rev. Daniel Strachan and served with him in Belleville and Toronto. Mrs. Strachan held many offices, both before and after the amalgamation that formed the Women's Missionary Society (W.D.) in 1914. She was one of the group of women who reorganized the Women's Missionary Society after 1925 and was President from 1928-1932. She was a member of a fact finding team which visited overseas fields after 1925 to assess the work which the Canadian Presbyterian Church should do. She had a flair for finance and was Treasurer of the W.M.S. (W.D.) for thirteen years. She died in 1951.

Alexander S. Grant was born in Huntingdon County, Quebec in 1859. He graduated in Arts and Medicine from McGill University and did post graduate studies in theology in Edinburgh. After an initial pastorate in Almonte, Ontario, he was appointed to the Yukon in 1897 during the gold rush and built a church and a hospital in Dawson. While in the north, he used his skills in medicine as well as his theological training. Returning to Toronto he was appointed General Superintendent of Home Missions in 1911. He initiated the first pre-Assembly Congress, 1913. In 1925 he was appointed Secretary of the General Board of Missions where he served until his death in 1935.



Chapter Two

Survival 1925—1940:

Vitality Regained

Purpose: To identify some of the ways in which the people of a small and largely disorganized church found vitality and purpose in the years after 1925.

The setting is a radio studio. Burgess Barnet, host of "Conversations with our Past" will talk to five people who represent those involved in mission work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Helen Strachan, Laura K. Pelton, Andrew S. Grant, John Brent and Louise Reith.

BARNET Several questions arise concerning The Presbyterian Church in Canada's role in mission in the years after Church Union, before World War II.

After Church Union, The Presbyterian Church was about one third of its former size and had lost many of its leaders, professors, and church buildings. How did it survive?

In addition, the world entered a period of severe economic depression, the prairies suffered ten years of drought and crop failure, followed by World War II. How did the Presbyterian Church face these events?

Mrs. Strachan, as a lay woman giving much leadership in the Presbyterian Church, can you tell us of those times after Church Union in 1925?

STRACHAN Many of our thoughts and feelings about that time can never be described. Only God knows what went on in our minds. I made my choice to remain in the Presbyterian Church out of conviction. I am a practical person. I had held offices in the Missionary Societies. I had to be in a position to help keep mission work going where we could.

I shall never forget those meetings in 1924-25 when we were attempting to see the way ahead. We had celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of the Women's Missionary Society (W.D.) in the spring of '24; the Union bill was passed in the summer of that year. Five of us met in September '24. We felt the work initiated by the Presbyterian Society must continue. We spent most of that meeting in prayer and as Mrs. Wardlaw Taylor has reported: 'from our knees we rose to work.' There was no turning back despite the heartache of separation from women with whom we had worked for years and despite the misunderstanding of our motives. Soon we had a group of eighteen women who formed a national executive. Following the Pre-Assembly Congress in June 1925, Knox Church, Toronto was filled with women from across Canada, ready to give themselves and their money to re-organize the Society and the church.

Then we had an offer from a young woman, Laura Pelton, and her father. Laura volunteered to help reorganize the Women's Missionary Society (W.D.) and her father offered to support her. She went across the country encouraging groups and individuals to carry on their support of the Presbyterian Church and its mission. Everything happened in an orderly fashion. There was no doubt in our minds that we were being obedient to God in our attempt to continue to proclaim his Son's message as Presbyterians.

BARNET Miss Pelton, tell us about those first years of reorganization as you travelled across Canada.

PELTON They were brave and exciting times. The people, having made up their minds about their church, set out to rebuild. Many were without church buildings; many did not have an ordained minister. Already there were signs of drought in western Canada. A double demand was made on people as they attempted to survive the change in their Church and in their economy. The people had an enormous will to survive as Presbyterians.

BARNET Dr. Grant, you were appointed Secretary of the General Board of Missions in 1925, a position you held for ten years. You too must have been occupied with rebuilding the structures of the Church.

GRANT Indeed, I was. There were ten years of strenuous activity before the legal and practical problems that followed Church Union were sorted out. But there were hopeful signs too.

For the first several years after Union, the Presbyterian Church grew in numbers and financial support. There was a remarkable surge of vitality at the congregational level. But ministers were scarce. There were not enough personnel and financial resources to meet all the requests for ordained missionaries from congregations that were trying to re-organize and often, to build new church buildings. Raising finances and recruiting ministers from Scotland and the United States became an urgent part of my task. For many years, we were involved in the

courts of the land with legal disputes over name and property.

In addition, it was necessary to make a settlement with the United Church concerning mission fields overseas. On June 10, 1925 all the mission fields overseas passed to the United Church and missionaries were informed that, if they wished to continue work, they must cease to correspond with the Presbyterian Church. The commission to settle property claims was already overburdened so they commissioned the mission secretaries of the United and Presbyterian churches-- A. E. Armstrong and myself--to work out an arrangement. When all was settled, the Presbyterian Church retained responsibility for work at Gwalior, in India, British Guiana, Formosa and the Bhil field in India. Two new fields were opened when Rev. Luther Young, who had worked in Korea, was transferred to Japan to work among the Koreans there. Dr. Jonathan Goforth, who had worked in Honan, China, moved north to begin new work in Manchuria.

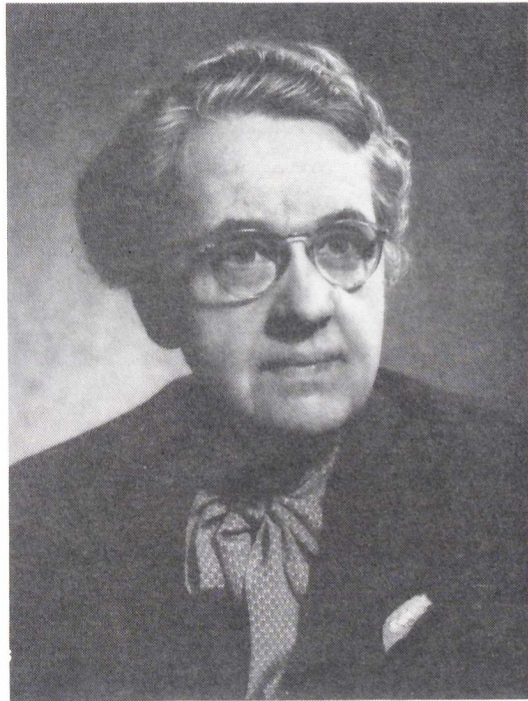
As you can see, the first years after Union were for me, a period of negotiation, legal disputes in the courts, financial drives and constant recruitment of ministers to fill pulpits. I gained the reputation of being a relentless organizer and uncompromising in my determination to re-establish the Presbyterian Church. It is probably true. But difficult times demanded resolute action. We owed much to the laymen and laywomen in those years.

BARNET What do you mean?

GRANT I can offer only a few examples. Catechists and lay students of the Bible helped to fill pulpits. Financiers who supported the Presbyterian Church, persuaded banks of our financial integrity. Some individuals made large contributions from personal resources. Lawyers and accountants volunteered years of free service.

The women, organized in the W.M.S., were able to be flexible at a crucial time. Deaconesses were

Laura K. Pelton was educated in Ottawa and Boston in drama; taught in Ottawa Ladies College; raised funds for the French School, Pointe Aux Trembles, and worked in the Y.W.C.A., Regina. In 1925, her father, a layman, sponsored her for a year of travel to reorganize the Women's Missionary Society (W.D.). Laura Pelton continued with the W.M.S.(W.D.) as Executive Secretary and later became Executive Director of Overseas Missions. She was in the forefront of creative leaders who recognized changing needs in a changing world. She attended the International Missionary Conference in Madras, India, in 1938 and in Willingden, Germany in 1952. She helped to organize the Canadian Council of Churches and was the first Chairperson of its Department of Overseas Missions. After retiring in 1958, she worked in the National Office of The Student Christian Movement. She died in Toronto in 1977.



John Brent was born in Warwick, Ontario, attended high school in Watford, trained in business and attended Moody Bible Institute. He taught in a business college in Ontario. In 1910 he and his wife, Amy, moved to a homestead near Kerrobert, Saskatchewan. Six years later they moved to Coleville where Brent was secretary-treasurer of the municipality. He helped establish a Union congregation in Coleville. After 1925, he helped organize Scott Presbyterian Church. In 1933, he gave up his secular work to serve full-time as a catechist. The Presbytery of Saskatoon obtained special permission from the General Assembly to ordain him to the ministry in 1937. From 1947 to 1957, he was Superintendent of the Presbyterian Lay Training School in Medicine Hat. In 1953, Knox College conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. He died in 1963.



appointed to help re-organize congregations and work with children and youth.

The W.M.S. was able to initiate some work also. A school home was opened at New Liskeard; they supported the work that Dr. Caroline MacDonald was doing in prisons in Japan; Miss Agnes Dickson could not continue in South China so she was appointed to work with Chinese women in Toronto.

BARNET Speaking of lay leadership, it is time we heard from John Brent, who is one of the many laymen who served the church in exceptional ways. Will you tell us your story?

BRENT Amy and I moved to Saskatchewan in 1910 to homestead. We moved into Coleville during World War I when I became Municipal Secretary. We had had a Bible class in the country so we carried on with study groups and started a Sunday School in Coleville. A union congregation developed out of that with people of several denominations worshipping and studying together. The Board of Missions sent summer supply.

BARNET What happened in 1925?

BRENT About ten families wanted to remain in the Presbyterian Church. We organized a congregation, called it Scott Presbyterian Church in honour of Dr. Ephraim Scott, the first Presbyterian Moderator after Union. We converted a room over the hardware store into a chapel. The owner of the store was a good friend. He had been a Roman Catholic but we had studied the Bible together and he became a Protestant. He taught in the Sunday School, loaned his property and helped to keep things running. James Allan Munro was the Principal of Coleville School and he taught in the Sunday School. Shortly after 1925 he left Coleville to study for the ministry. The Farris family were active in the congregation also and Allan, a small boy in 1925, grew up in our congregation.

BARNET Were you the leader of the congregation?

BRENT I was asked to serve Scott Church as a catechist which I did for more than ten years. In 1933 I resigned as Municipal Clerk in order to give full time to church work. On Sundays, roads and weather permitting, I would drive about eighty-six miles to take services in small communities near Coleville. Then the Presbytery and Synod asked for and received permission from the General Assembly to ordain me on the basis of my 'gifts' and 'experience.' I was ordained as a minister in 1937.

BARNET According to reports, your work with young people extended well beyond the church to the whole community.

BRENT I loved baseball and hockey so it was no big deal to do a few things for the community. Much credit must go to Amy, my wife. Working together in the Church and community was an outlet for our love of music, of sports, of people, of the Lord and for each other.

PELTON John, people like James Allan Munro and myself have met Presbyterians all over the world--ministers, missionaries, professors, deaconesses, teachers, business people who speak of your influence on their lives through the Saskatoon Summer School. How did all that come about?

BRENT Yes, the Saskatoon Summer School has been an important place for our Church. Many young people who are leaders now in the Presbyterian Church found an insight into the Christian faith and the meaning of the church at that Summer School. Some responded to a call for full-time service.

It was Dr. R. G. MacKay of Prince Albert who had the idea of bringing together student ministers, deaconesses and the young people of Saskatchewan for a week of lectures, fun and fellowship. This was about 1932. When you think of those times Laura, W. G. Brown of Saskatoon, R. G. MacKay of Prince Albert, Sam Farley of Regina, W. A. Cameron of Weyburn and H.R. Horne, Synodical Superintendent were among the few ordained ministers in Saskatchewan. They

baptized, conducted Holy Communion and examined new members throughout the whole province. The rest of us--catechists, student ministers, deaconesses and lay people provided for the regular services of the Church in many rural areas and smaller centres until ordained ministers were available. We welcomed the training and friendship that a week together in Saskatoon could provide. Young Presbyterians in Saskatchewan, many from small churches, came to know one another and to discuss the vitality of Presbyterianism in that school.

BARNET Dr. Brent, the years you are talking about were years of economic difficulties as well as years of re-structuring after 1925.

BRENT They were years of struggle. We felt we had to have the Presbyterian Church in our community. The Church was the centre of our lives. The Church's message undergirded us. In that fellowship the economic difficulties were bearable because we knew how to share.

PELTON Sharing was a key word in the vocabulary of all Christians in the thirties. By that time I was Executive Secretary for the W.M.S.(W.D.) and I saw this sharing right across the country. In days of depression and drought, serving the church meant meeting the needs of people in practical ways. Miss Louise Reith, at the beginning of her career in the W.M.S. and the church, was asked to make a survey of the situation in Saskatchewan in the late thirties. Her experiences give insight into the life of the church in those days.

BARNET Miss Reith, how would you describe the church as you found it?

REITH For those who remember the thirties, it was a time of worldwide depression. For the western farmers, there was also drought. Crop failure persisted for ten years. It was a time of windstorms, duststorms, grasshoppers--seemingly hopeless days. Young men "rode the rails" looking for work.



Louise A. Reith, a daughter of the manse, graduated from the University of Toronto with an M.A. in English, the Ontario College of Education and the Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training School. Most of her career was spent in the service of the Women's Missionary Society (W.D.) where she was involved in mission education as Literature Secretary, as Director of Organization and as the Executive Secretary for the Society, the position she held at the time of her retirement. Miss Reith died in Toronto in July, 1983.

BELOW: A prairie dust storm in the '30's.



The Presbyterian Church established a distribution centre in Regina. The names of those needing assistance were obtained, parcels were sent. From east and west came carloads of fruit and vegetables as well as bales of used clothing.

The W.M.S.(W.D.) had been deeply involved in organizing relief supplies. What more could they do? They asked me to go to Southern Saskatchewan and to visit isolated families, many of whom had been deprived of church services. I have many memories of the summer of '39.

I was met in Regina by Mrs. G. D. Ralston, the President of Saskatchewan Provincial W.M.S., and the Rev. Samuel Farley, minister of First Presbyterian Church. I was supposed to drive an old car. It was old! Mrs. Ralston took one look at it and declared that I could not drive around in that. She then offered her own car and drove with me much of the time. I remember that I found a surprising amount of courage and hope in a land supposed to be depressed. "Next year will be better," they would invariably say.

They were kind, hospitable people, happy to welcome someone who had come to see them from their Church. I remember Saturday evening in homes where the Sunday School lesson was discussed and planned for the next day. Week after week faith was kept alive among family and neighbours.

I remember a lonely farmhouse set in the midst of desolate fields. When we arrived the mother called in the father and children who got out a variety of musical instruments and gave a lively, cheerful concert.

For many, contact with the Presbyterian Church was through radio broadcasts. The names of W. G. Brown of Saskatoon and Samuel Farley of Regina were household words to the people. Mr. Farley asked me to find out if there were parents who wished to have their children baptized. I gathered up about twenty. One Roman Catholic woman wanted her grandchild baptized.

Her daughter was married to a Presbyterian. I asked if the parents might not prefer a Roman Catholic baptism. "The Presbyterian Church has supplied us with Church School material and has been the only one to give us any help--the child will be baptized by Mr. Farley," was the reply. The baptism took place on the first Sunday of September. World War II had been declared the night before.

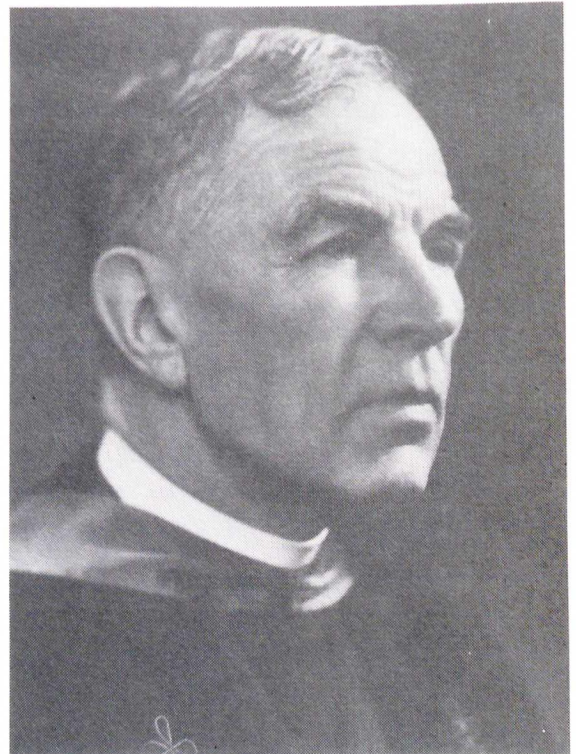
On my return to Ontario I received a letter from one whom I had visited. In it was a poem entitled "The church That Remembered." It was not great poetry but it made me realize that I did represent a caring Church. As that representative, I found hope in the midst of disaster, commitment to the church and faith in its Head, Jesus Christ.

BARNET Mrs. Strachan, Laura Pelton, Andrew Grant, John Brent, Louise Reith--in telling your stories you have described a church that remained vibrant and alive through difficult times because of the faith and commitment of many men and women in congregations both small and large. We thank you.



Walter Bryden was born in Galt, Ontario, in 1883. He studied philosophy and psychology at the University of Toronto and theology at Knox College, graduating in 1909. Post-graduate theological studies were pursued at Free Church College in Glasgow and in Strassbourg. He served on mission fields in the West and as minister of Woodville Presbyterian Church before being called to Knox College in 1927 to the chair of History and Philosophy of Religions. In 1945, Bryden became Principal of the college and served in that capacity until his death in 1952.

F. Scott Mackenzie was born in Lucknow, Ontario, in 1884. He attended McGill University and Presbyterian College in Montreal and pursued graduate studies at Harvard where he earned the Th.D. He was a parish minister in Montreal, Sydney Mines, and Paris, Ontario. In 1927 he was appointed Professor of Systematic Theology at Presbyterian College, Montreal, and was Principal from 1929 to 1943. He was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1950. He died in 1970.



Chapter Three

Renewal

Purpose: To explore some of the sources of renewal in the church as identified by two of its leading theologians from 1926-1955.

The setting is a radio studio. Burgess Barnet, host of "Conversations with our Past," welcomes two guests, Principal Walter W. Bryden of Knox College, Toronto, and Principal F. Scott Mackenzie of Presbyterian College, Montreal.

BARNET Dr. Bryden, your impact as a creative and inspiring teacher has been noted by a large number of Canadian Presbyterians. They make special reference to your return to the personalities and confessions of the Reformation. Why did this period have such a significant place in your teaching?

BRYDEN The Reformation was a time of renewal, one of the few periods in the history of the church when a new vision of the living God was apprehended and articulated. The most profound claim of the Reformation lies in the discovery that the God who had unmistakably spoken to the prophets and the apostles, making them his mouthpiece in the past, just as unmistakably speaks through the leaders of the Reformation to the hearts of the men and women of their day. We too needed to recover that sense of personal immediacy in our dealings with God. Our knowledge of God arises from a deeply personal encounter with Jesus Christ, who is the living Word of God, and with the Holy Spirit, who is the essential Self-hood and utter uniqueness of God, acting personally and immediately upon the soul. In such an encounter, we are known by God and, therefore, know ourselves. We are simultaneously judged and saved, convicted of our absolute need, convinced of God's infinite goodness, and constrained by God's love for all people. It was such a vision of the living God that breathed through the Reformation.

BARNET There are some within The Presbyterian Church in Canada who look back to the Reformation as a repository of dogmatic truths to be preserved and propagated. You seem to approach the period from a different angle?

BRYDEN Indeed, I do. The true theologian is not just a passive systematizer of divine truth or morality. Instead, he or she is one who has been compelled to wrestle with God's unchangeable Truth as revealed in the Scriptures in order to give it adequate expression in the immediate circumstances. John Calvin was such a theologian. For him, Scripture was not just a repository of moral, religious or

doctrinal principles. Rather, it was the one place where God's Word could be savingly heard and known through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Christian faith is not an impersonal dependence upon the church, either on its dogmas or its ideals, but rather an everyday personal reliance upon Jesus Christ and the infinite work he has done and is doing for humankind.

BARNET What are the implications of this dynamic view of the Christian for the life of the Church?

BRYDEN It means that the Reformed Church must always be a reforming church, ever passing judgment upon itself, ever wrestling with God's living Truth and the judging-saving challenge it presents to men and women. The church is a spiritual community born from above, established and sustained by the Spirit of God alone, not by human plans or devices. It is something creatively new and renewing, the result of the inexplicable influences and purposes of God's grace.

BARNET You speak of personal encounter and reliance, of constant change and of mysterious influences. Does that not suggest that doctrine is of little importance in the life of the church?

BRYDEN On the contrary, it re-establishes the central importance of doctrine and theological reflection for the vitality of the Christian fellowship. To the degree that the formulation and reformulation of doctrine within the church reflects a genuine encounter with and transformation by the Word of God, it is the very life blood of the Christian community. No confession is pure. All are tainted by the blindness and distortions of their age. But the best, and this includes the Westminster Confession of Faith as well as the Scots Confession, are rooted in the sublime consciousness of God as *sovereign*; because God is unique and *creative*; because God alone is free and *transcendent*; because God is above all the particular claims of people and interests of nations. The great weakness of the Westminster Confession is that it is more a rational explanation of Reformed

theology than a true confession of a living faith. The challenging humility of the early Reformers with their dependence on God alone is lost in a futile attempt to find confident security in an infallible Book, much as the Roman Catholics had found their confidence in an infallible Church. The difficulties in the Westminster Confession arise from the difficulties in applying reason and logic to the paradoxical and contradictory nature of the New Testament revelation and the faith which it has engendered.

BARNET Your emphasis on a living and personal faith suggests that faith is a solemn and private responsibility. Does that not imply that Christian faith is an individual affair and that we have liberty of conscience in our expression of the faith?

BRYDEN Absolutely not. Presbyterianism has set its face like steel against anything and everything which moderns might call the right of private judgment or liberty of conscience. This stand is seen in our unrelenting opposition to Anabaptism, to all inner lights, to mystic visions, and even to the light of nature as it pertains to salvation. None of these are capable of giving a saving knowledge of God. Such knowledge comes from an encounter with God mediated by the church. The Reformers saw the Christian as a member of the body of Christ, and therefore bound in two ways. He or she was taught by the Holy Spirit in accord with the given precepts of Scripture. The arbiter of controversy was the Holy Spirit, speaking to and through the church. Nothing, in my mind, reveals the apostacy of modern Protestantism more than the ease with which people equate the Protestant evaluation of human privileges and responsibilities with those supposed to underlie political democracy or employed in ordinary civil and cultural life, such as liberty of conscience or private judgment.

BARNET You described the church as a spiritual community created and sustained by the living Word of God. That view suggests a radical separation between the church and its culture. Isn't the logical extension of that view the refusal of the church to

have anything to do with society?

31

BRYDEN Logical, perhaps. But within the paradox of the gospel it doesn't work that way. While the source of the church's life lies in the transcendent power of God's grace, the area of its life is in the world. It is in, but not of, the world. God's power is comprehensive and has the most intensely practical application in all spheres of life. Tied to no particular culture or age, the true church is free to serve humanity in all times and places. In the hearts of believing men and women, it is supreme over all patriotisms and loyalties. An outstanding example of such spiritual independence that led to concrete social and political action was the resistance of the Confessing Church in Germany to the advance of Nazism. Because the members of that community knew the radical and revolutionary power of God and experienced it within their souls, they stood against the totalitarian claims and schemes of Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich. All totalitarianisms, all superiorities, all usurpations of power and wealth without regard to human necessities, must break their teeth against a confessing church, wherever it has arisen by the grace of God.

BARNET Your comments imply that political totalitarianism is not the only appropriation of legitimate power that is to be resisted?

BRYDEN I believe there is a much more subtle form of totalitarianism in our midst. The sober fact is that nothing has ever appeared among men that has been more cynically indifferent to any ethic worth the name than the ruthless, competitive economic system known as Capitalism. Under monopolistic capitalism, human beings are made impersonal means to an impersonal end. The real tragedy of our economic totalitarianism lies in the fact that the church is so captive to this mammonism that it seems powerless to exercise its critical prerogative in testing times. The church cannot busy itself creating social and political programs that will pass away but nevertheless, it must be, in faithfulness to the living Word, the judge of all which adversely affects the life of humanity.

BARNET Dr. Mackenzie, you have expressed some strong opinions on the nature of the church that differed from those held by the fathers of 1925. Could you explain your position?

MACKENZIE As did Dr. Bryden, I return to the Reformers of the sixteenth century. There is nothing in their thought of the church as a voluntary association. Their goal was to reform, rebuild and restore the one and only church--the church of the living God, and to re-establish it solidly upon its New Testament foundations. This idea of the church, one and undivided, the foundation of which is Jesus Christ the Lord, who dwells continually within its walls by his Spirit, is a long way removed from the all-too-prevalent notion that there could be any number of churches, each one of which is simply a voluntary association of individual believers, who, somehow having found Christ for themselves and by themselves, are grouped together with those of a similar persuasion on points of doctrine, church polity, and the like, and who can stay together only so long as these conditions continue. Denominations are regiments in one army and, while unification of the forces is neither desirable or possible, we must never lose sight of the fact that we are all part of the one, universal church of Christ.

BARNET The catholicity of true Presbyterianism was the cause of considerable debate at the 1947 General Assembly, was it not?

MACKENZIE Indeed, it was. The Presbytery of Montreal sent up an overture calling for a clear declaration of the position of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in its relation to other Christian communions and to the various forms of co-operative efforts being undertaken to meet the demands of that day. The recent creation of the Church of Christ in China, in which our missionaries had been invited to work and which we endorsed, was one of the reasons for asking for this clarification, but the issue had plagued us in various forms since the Union of 1925.

By an almost unanimous vote, the Assembly of 1947 went on record as interpreting the ancient and historic standards of the Presbyterian Church "as not only encouraging but enjoining as a duty the fullest possible co-operation with all other Christian bodies, for the glory . . . of God and the triumph of His purposes among men." By this action, The Presbyterian Church in Canada repudiated utterly the designation of a mere isolated sect and declared in the most emphatic terms that it is a constituent part of the holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ in the world. This affirmation is essential to our faithfulness to the Reformed heritage and to the task of reforming that heritage so ably outlined by Dr. Bryden. By remaining with the mainstream of Presbyterianism around the world, we continued on the path of renewal and avoided the backwaters of sectarian controversy and divisiveness.

BARNET Gentlemen, thank you for guiding us to the sources of renewal within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

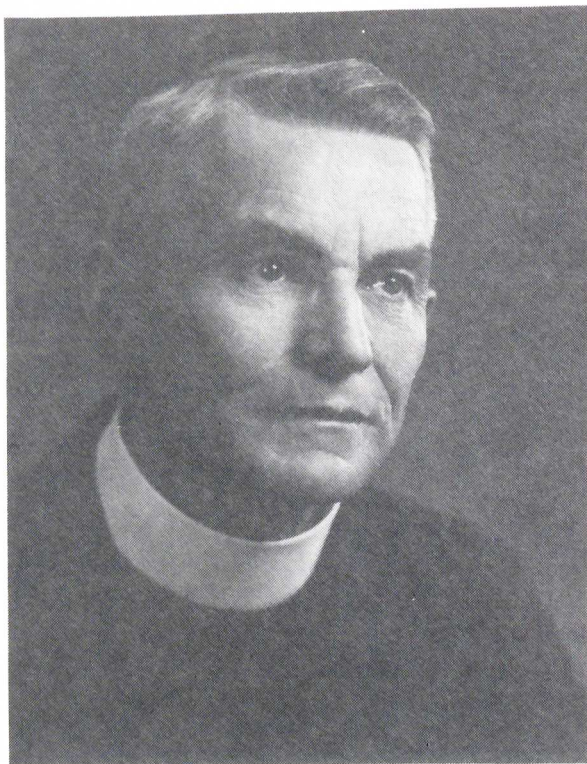
(See Reflection Scale 3, page 79.)

Chapter Four

Consolidation 1940—1955

Purpose: To explore significant changes of attitude and action that occurred in The Presbyterian Church in Canada during World War II and the dramatic changes that came in its aftermath.

We continue the radio series with Burgess Barnet. Laura Pelton has returned with Dr. W. A. Cameron and Rev. Malcolm Ransom to discuss Presbyterian Mission work during and immediately after World War II.



William A. Cameron was born in 1879 on a farm near Woodville, Ontario. After teaching school for a few years, he graduated from the University of Toronto in Arts and from Knox College (1911). He was honoured by Knox College with the degree, Doctor of Divinity and by University College with an honorary LL.D. W. A. Cameron served in Saskatchewan in Scott, Battleford and Melfort. In 1921, he was appointed Mission Superintendent in Northern Saskatchewan. In 1925 he was appointed Superintendent of Missions for all Saskatchewan but soon returned to pastorates, first in Weyburn, and then in Central Church, Vancouver. In 1939, Cameron was appointed Secretary of the General Board of Missions. He resigned in 1953 and was elected Moderator of the General Assembly the same year. He died in Toronto, 1959.

R. Malcolm Ransom was born in Westmount, Quebec. He graduated in Arts from McGill and studied theology at Presbyterian College and Princeton Seminary. While he was an ordained missionary in Rosetown, Mac and Gerry were married. In 1942, the Ransoms were appointed to work with the Church of Christ in China. Delayed by war, they arrived in China in 1946 but political changes required all missionaries to leave in 1950. On his return, Mac Ransom served as minister in Fort Erie and in 1958 was appointed as Assistant for Overseas Missions with responsibility for mission education and later became Secretary for Mission Education. He retired from the Board of World Mission in 1978. Mr. and Mrs. Ransom live in Toronto.



BARNET As the thirties came to an end and depression years had taken their toll in human energy and emotion, World War II exploded upon the world. Canada changed radically in the fifteen years of participating in warfare and adapting to changes it caused, both at home and abroad. The work of the Presbyterian Church in mission must have changed too, Dr. Cameron.

CAMERON Yes, and quite quickly. We never had enough people to do all that could have been done. The war started and suddenly, there was no unemployment. Many enlisted. Women and men went to work in factories for war supplies. The attention of the whole country was on the war.

Many ordained ministers went into chaplaincy--so the extreme shortage of congregational ministers continued. But the W.M.S. continued to employ women missionaries and to establish new programs.

PELTON With the war, population centres changed. People moved to places where there were factories. The church had a ministry to factory workers, many of them women. Their children needed to be cared for. The W.M.S. (W.D.) set up centres such as the Community House and Nursery Schools in West Vancouver. Presbyterian staff in Japan, Taiwan, and Manchuria had to be evacuated. They transferred to work either in Canada or British Guiana.

CAMERON When Japan entered the war the Chinese people in Canada felt it keenly. Many had family in China living under the Japanese. We tried to understand their needs in this conflict. The whole Pacific Coast became a war zone with the fears caused by that atmosphere. I confess we were not as successful in expressing concern for Canadians of Japanese origin who suffered much injustice during the war.

BARNET You said that missionaries were evacuated from East Asia and were absorbed into work in Canada or British Guiana. What happened in the other overseas fields?

CAMERON The only other field at that time was India. Travel to and from the field was seriously disrupted so those who were on furlough took temporary appointment. Those in India stayed.

It was during the war that a significant step was taken. The United Church of Northern India came into existence. It drew together churches formed mainly by Reformed missions from Canada, the U.S.A., Britain and Australia. For Indian Christians, it was the beginning of an indigenous identity greatly needed. People with a common heritage as Christians but with diverse backgrounds in culture and language came together to form a church that could give leadership to their own people in India.

PELTON The War cut us off temporarily from church partners in Asia but German churches were completely separated from their mission work in other countries. The International Mission Council organized help for these orphaned missions. This formed a significant part of our overseas budgets for a number of years.

CAMERON Supporting orphaned missions led us to the realization that sharing resources with mission boards of other denominations and recognizing the leadership resources of the young churches was the way to build Christ's church in the future. But the development of the Church of Christ in China best indicates how young churches were thinking and developing. Rev. Malcolm Ransom was in the midst of this development in China during the turbulent war years and can speak to it.

RANSOM It is more than thirty years since the Communists took over the Chinese government and all foreign missionaries were required to leave. I was one of them. At that time, many people predicted that the church could not survive. But today we have good news.

"The church is alive in China today--very much alive--and it is a Chinese church." These words were in a letter I received early in 1983 from the Rev. T. K. Chiu, an ordained minister of the Church of Christ

in China. We had been colleagues serving under the Yunnan Mission Committee of the Church of Christ in China (CCC), back in 1946-48. He came to Canada in 1948 and is now retired and living in the United States. In 1982, he and his wife took a trip back to China and re-visited the city of Kunming in Yunnan province where we had served together.

It is good to read this word from a trusted colleague about the results of work which constituted a real turning point in our church's overseas policy and a step forward in our ecumenical involvement.

BARNET Why was this a turning point?

RANSOM The Church of Christ in China came into being in 1927 by a union of missions of several denominations: British Congregationalists (who were Calvinistic in doctrine), Reformed Church of America, English Baptists, Presbyterians (from Australia, Ireland, Canada and the U.S.A.) and the United Church of Canada. It formed the largest Protestant Church in China. This was one of the first attempts to eliminate overlapping of missionary efforts and to set up a church in China that was free of its parent groups. It still needed financial assistance from the world Christian community and leadership in specialized fields of service but it had the leader and experience to be a self-governing and self-propagating Chinese church. The first General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, 1948 was attended by ten Chinese Christian leaders and Dr. T. C. Chao of The Church of Christ in China was elected one of the six Presidents of the Council. The formation of the CCC was an important step which gave many Chinese Christians a stronger base on which to face the turbulent and trying years that they have been through for many decades.

It is to our church's credit that our leaders in Canada saw the significance of the movement developing in China at that time and whole-heartedly guided our church into it. When a request for help came from The Church of Christ in China early in the 1940's financial grants were provided and personnel sent as soon as possible.

BARNET Presbyterians in Canada were very supportive of this radical shift, were they not?

RANSOM Yes and no. The plan was approved by the General Assembly of 1943. But, understandably, there was opposition within The Presbyterian Church in Canada to becoming allied with the Church of Christ in China. It was described as 'going into Church Union by the back door.' But Dr. Cameron was convinced that it was the way we should go in China; Ted Johnson, who had been in China, believed that the Chinese church had a sound foundation in the Christian gospel; Scott Mackenzie felt it was the way to be true to our Presbyterian heritage; Laura Pelton hailed it as the wave of the future. The battle was fought in Presbyteries and settled in the Calgary Assembly in 1947 when several of us were already hard at work in Yunnan.

BARNET How did The Presbyterian Church in Canada get into The Church of Christ in China?

RANSOM We were invited by the Chinese church to participate in a new 'home mission' venture that was started during the war years in China. This is important: we did not take the initiative to send missionaries, we were invited as a Church to help out in a needy area during a very difficult time. We were invited by the Chinese themselves to take part in the work of the Yunnan Mission in South West China--one of the new mission areas set up by The Church of Christ in China. The Yunnan Mission was set up: (1) to follow church members who had fled to the interior from the eastern and northern areas in the face of the invading Japanese, and (2) to minister to the 'Han' or Chinese people already there.

When the General Assembly agreed to the proposal in 1943, the W.M.S.(W.D.) was the first to respond, sending personnel and funds. Mrs. Mildred Gehman, a nurse who had served in Manchuria, was one of the first to be sent. Then the General Board of Missions assisted with funds and sent me and my wife, Gerry Ransom for evangelistic work. We arrived in 1946. Eldon and Caroline Andrews were sent for educational

work. We had to be approved both by our own Board and by the Yunnan Mission Committee. When we arrived we found that our colleagues were from Australia, Ireland, the U.S.A., the World Y.M. & Y.W.C.A., and the London Missionary Society. Together we established a Christian hospital, participated in a Christian Middle (High) School, established several new congregations and laid the ground work for a junior grade school.

BARNET That was the period of time when the Nationalist Chinese Government and the Chinese Communists were struggling for power. The Communists gained control in 1949. How long were you able to continue your work?

RANSOM Not long. Gerry and the children were sent home immediately, getting passage on the steamship out of Hong Kong. I stayed on but made a hasty and precarious departure by way of the Burma Road a few months later. But in spite of the danger of the times, I remember an incident in 1950 as one of the most gratifying experiences of our China venture.

Our Chinese pastor and I called on the head of the local Communist government. We went to wish the official well in his new office and to assure him of our commitment to serve God and 'serve the people.' It was a lengthy interview in which the *hsien-chang* questioned us closely. As we left he said to me, 'I am glad you came. You changed my understanding of what a missionary is. I always thought you were sent by your government to spy out the land and to build up a foreign organization in China. Now I see that you were invited by Chinese to come and that you are working under Chinese direction and as equals with your Chinese colleagues, trying to serve some of China's needs.'

BARNET You were in China for only four years and risked your life and that of your wife and children as well. Was anything accomplished of lasting value?

RANSOM Yes! Without a doubt in the world. The whole Church of Christ in China experiment represented a

'triumph of grace' for them and for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It established our connection with the Chinese church in such a way that it has endured through and beyond the Chinese Revolution. Although communication was interrupted, the Chinese Christians knew they were a part of a worldwide fellowship within the church of Jesus Christ. In this they found strength, hope and endurance during the rough days of the cultural revolution.

Also, the China experiment was the first step taken by The Presbyterian Church in Canada toward a policy of dealing with overseas churches in such a way as to help them stand on their own feet as partners in mission. Furthermore, that decision made in 1943 by General Assembly and confirmed, after much debate, in 1947, marked an important turning point in the life of Canadian Presbyterianism. Instead of becoming a narrow sectarian group, the Canadian Presbyterian Church launched out as an active partner in ecumenical activity.

BARNET It is clear that mission work abroad was changing; that there was increasing willingness of parent churches to co-operate with young churches as they took responsibility to develop their own identity and their own mission. Miss Pelton you were a leader in Canada in ecumenical activities. How was this changing attitude apparent in your work?

PELTON The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is one example. It was in the stage of moving from mission control to Nigerian Church control. The Church of Scotland had been its support but the war had taken its toll of money and personnel. Besides, it was felt that sharing support with other mission boards would bring new ideas, to The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. Council Executive of the W.M.S. (W.D.) agreed to explore the idea. Two young women, graduates of Ewart College, were keen to embark on work in Nigeria. The General Board of Missions recommended and the General Assembly approved establishing work with The Presbyterian Church in Nigeria in cooperation with

the Church of Scotland. Agnes Gollan and Joan Rochemont went to Nigeria in 1954 and became involved in Christian Education work. Dr. Ted Johnson negotiated with the Church of Scotland and the Nigerian Church to evolve new patterns of relationships and responsibilities. Earle and Dorothy Roberts went to Nigeria in 1957. They, with Agnes Gollan and later Dorothy Bulmer were the original team working out those new relationships.

BARNET Dr. Cameron, were changes in mission work as dramatic in Canada after the War?

CAMERON Yes they were. We were too busy to realize the drama of those days. Canada was changing and with it the work of its churches. First, there was a period of rehabilitation for veterans of the armed forces and for industries.

The most dramatic change was in the growth of population in the decade following the war. This was caused by immigration and by increased birth rate. The larger population required more schools and more housing. Manufacturing and industry replaced agriculture as the main source of income. Mining, lumbering and the development of energy resources caused a change in population centres. The larger cities mushroomed with suburban satellite communities. New cities were created. Church extension was imperative. We were in a frenzy, putting up church buildings and Christian education halls and finding suitable leaders for them. Fortunately, with the end of the war, chaplains returned to their congregations and student ministers, whose education had been interrupted, returned to college. The increased number of ministers was a great relief.

Canada became a refuge for many who were uprooted by war and political conditions. The influx of immigrants created a need to help them get settled, housed and established in work and in church life. There was so much going on that we did not sense the excitement of it or assess the change that resulted in our lives.

But now we can see that at the same time the Presbyterian Church was changing its attitude and style of operation overseas--at the same time that we learned to work with young churches as partners and to co-operate in world alliances such as the World Council of Churches--the world was coming to Canada. Air travel and electronic communication had opened up a new sense of our place in a rapidly shrinking world. Canada had changed. By 1955 we were just beginning to guess the extent of that dramatic development.

BARNET Thank you Dr. Cameron, Miss Pelton, and Mr. Ransom, for these insights into how the church translated new policies and national crises into concrete action.

(See *Reflection Scale 4*, page 80.)

Chapter Five

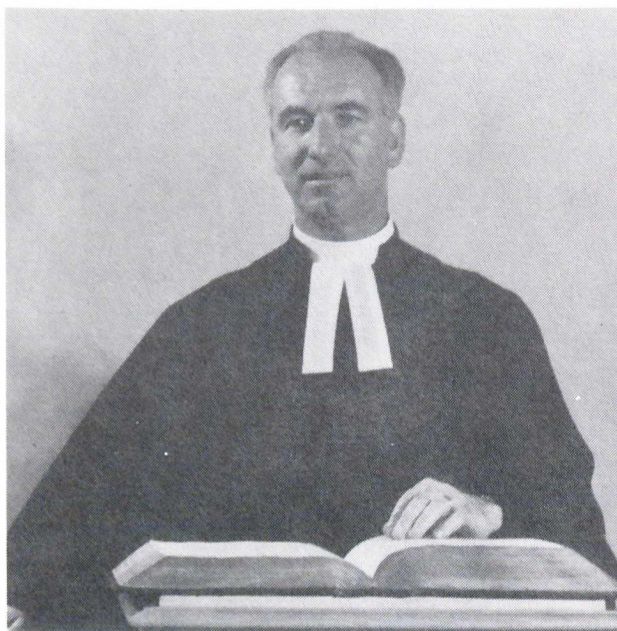
Reformation

Purpose: To explore some ways by which The Presbyterian Church in Canada has grown in its understanding of the gospel, has attempted to reformulate its statement of faith and to give expression to its faith within the structures of the church.

The setting is a radio studio. Burgess Barnet, host of "Conversations with our Past," welcomes four guests, C. L. Cowan, of the Board of Evangelism and Social Action; Gordon A. Peddie, for many years Convenor of the Board of Evangelism and Social Action; Allan L. Farris, Principal of Knox College; and E. H. (Ted) Johnson, Secretary for Research and Planning of the Board of World Mission.



Charles L. Cowan was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, 1885. He came to the Canadian West in response to appeals for missionaries in the early twentieth century. He was educated at the University of Manitoba and Manitoba College, graduating in 1912. Following mission work in lumber camps of British Columbia, he held pastorates at Rainy River and Fort Francis and at Picton. In 1925 he was called to St. Andrew's, Hamilton, where he was minister until his retirement. He wrote several books and contributed to numerous periodicals under the pen name of "Roman Collar." For many years he served as convenor or secretary for the Board of Evangelism and Social Action before there was a staff person to carry the work. He died in 1968.



Gordon A. Peddie was born in Toronto in 1907. He was educated at McMaster University, Hamilton, and Knox College, Toronto. His first parish was Fort St. John in the Peace River. Following this, he served in Clinton, Norwich, Walkerton, London, Banff and Winnipeg. He gave many years of faithful service to the work of evangelism and social action within the Church, serving as both secretary and convenor of the Board. His death came in 1963.

BARNET Dr. Cowan, the years following the Second World War were characterized by considerable change in the structures and standards of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. What led to these changes?

COWAN In general, Mr. Barnet, the War and the events leading up to it posed a crisis in the life of the church, as well as Western civilization. The war years drove us back to the foundations of our faith in the Scriptures and brought forth a substantial critique of the inadequacies of the church's witness in the world. For those of us within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, it was a time of re-assessment and reformation. There was a concerted effort to recover the fullness of the Reformed heritage to which teachers like Dr. Bryden and Dr. Mackenzie pointed. The result was a series of changes in the activities, structures and standards of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

BARNET You were the Convenor of the Assembly's Board of Evangelism and Social Action at the time when the name for the Board was changed from "Evangelism and Church Life and Work" to "Evangelism and Social Action." What was the thinking behind the change?

COWAN In part, it was the result of a growing realization among Canadian Presbyterians that the gospel and the Holy Spirit had not been given for ecclesiastical survival, or even the triumph of the church, but for the redemption of the world. In addition, it was a response to conditions in the world. The massive social dislocations of the Depression were followed by the unimaginable horror of the Second World War. As Dr. Bryden wrote, this had to be seen as the judgment of God calling the church to repentance and reformation. The tragedy we confronted was a judgment on our indifference or hostility to Christ. Further, it was so extensive that it transcended any explanation based upon individual responsibility or guilt. The undeniable social dimension to the crises of our age led to a recovery of the social dimension of the Christian faith among Canadian Presbyterians.

BARNET Are you suggesting that this aspect of the Gospel had been lost in 1925?

COWAN With some notable exceptions, such as W. G. Brown in Saskatoon, yes. In its overture asking for the name change, the Presbytery of Toronto claimed that the social aspects of the gospel had been overlooked in the structures of our Church, leading many of our members to ignore our social responsibility as a church. They claimed that the new name, "Evangelism and Social Action," would liberate the spirit of The Presbyterian Church as a corporate body. It would bear witness to the fact that the gospel message delivered by Christ not only called the individual to repentance but also looked toward the regeneration of society. The approval of the overture gave the Board a wider field of activity and called more pointedly on all Presbyterians to practice the principles of their faith in all of life's relationships.

BARNET What happened to Evangelism in this shift?

COWAN It remained of first importance. But that work was seen in a different, broader context. Some evangelists saw the purpose of all evangelistic work to bring souls into a state of reconciliation with God. But this definition was inadequate if we were to be true to the great Presbyterian tradition. Within that perspective, an additional purpose was added. Evangelism was the presentation of Christ and his whole gospel in such a way as to bring men and women into reconciliation with God *and* with each other. Its task was to deliver the world not only from perdition in the future but also from the present hell in which so many people live. The two-fold aim of evangelism was to invite repentance of the dishonour shown to God and the wrong done fellow human beings, so that God and humanity would be reconciled and so that and human people would be reconciled to other people. Proclamation and social action were seen to be the two sides of the same coin--evangelism. Any effort to separate them would be a denial of the gospel given by Jesus Christ.

BARNET Mr. Peddie, your small book, *The King of Kings*, issued in 1942, raised the question of the church's social responsibility in relationship to our doctrinal standards. What was the problem in this area?

49

PEDDIE The problem was that The Presbyterian Church in Canada was confessionless on the issue of the church's relationship to the civil state. There was no mandate in our standards for the kind of work Dr. Cowan and his Board proposed to undertake. Not only did we not have a confession to make on any issue of national importance, including the War, but, according to our standards, the Church as a corporate body was prohibited from issuing any social statements, no matter how implicitly Presbyterians believed Jesus Christ to be Lord over all life.

BARNET How had such a situation come about?

PEDDIE The culprit was the idea of liberty of conscience introduced into the Basis of Union between the Synod of the (Free) Presbyterian Church of Canada and the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1861, when these two bodies joined to form the Canada Presbyterian Church. The major doctrinal issue dividing these two Presbyterian bodies was the question of Christ's headship over the church and the nation--the Free Church tradition affirming both and the Secessionist tradition only the former. The solution was to give Presbyterians full liberty of conscience in relationship to the teachings of the Westminster Confession of Faith and the catechisms regarding the power and the duty of the civil magistrate. In the Union of 1875, which created the Presbyterian Church in Canada, no reference is made to the headship of Christ over the state and the liberty of conscience clause is again included. The practical result of this action is that the Presbyterian Church in Canada, as a corporate body, was forbidden to speak on the most urgent and perplexing issues of our age.

BARNET Why do you refer to the idea of liberty of conscience as a culprit on this issue?

PEDDIE It must be recognized that the use of the idea of liberty of conscience in relationship to the church's standards to undermine the authority of specific sections of the Confession or decisions the Church has reached was completely novel and foreign to the intention of the Westminster Divines. Such a principle was the creature of secular liberalism. Not only did it leave the church confessionless on a matter of paramount importance, but it also introduced alongside the authority of the Word of God a second authority, that of reason, of the private judgment or conscience of the individual. As the Presbytery of Toronto noted in the overture discussed by Dr. Cowan, this position led to the most thorough-going individualism within the church and led to general confusion among our people.

BARNET You claim that the idea of liberty of conscience is novel and foreign to the Presbyterian tradition, but does not the Confession itself have a section on liberty of conscience?

PEDDIE Indeed, it does. But in the Westminster Confession (XX:2), liberty of conscience is the freedom of the Christian to believe and to obey nothing else save the Word of God alone, and is specifically related to attempts by the state to impose belief. The Christian, however, is not free to believe nor obey his own conscience.

BARNET Your book was written in support of an overture from the Presbytery of Paris asking the Church to clarify its standards in relationship to Christ's lordship over the nations and their rulers. What were the results of the request?

PEDDIE The result was an addition to the standards of our Church in *The Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation*, finally approved in 1955. The long process of study, formulation and reformulation was done by a joint committee of the Board of Evangelism and Social Action and the Committee on the Articles of Faith.

BARNET What were the central affirmations of this addition to our confession?

51

PEDDIE The most important confession is that Jesus Christ is Lord of both the church and the civil state, though these two institutions are seen to have different functions and relationships to him. The functions of the church are to proclaim the Word, administer the Sacraments and to lead the life of faith that works by love. The state is charged with the administration of Christ's justice and benevolence through its laws and policies. The Declaration insists that the righteousness of God is the sole foundation of national justice, development and destiny and that every organ of power--cultural, political and economic--is a stewardship from Christ. Every abuse of power constitutes a breach of that trust, is destructive to the abuser and injurious to the glory of God among his creatures. The church, therefore, has the duty to denounce and resist every form of tyranny, be it ecclesiastical, economic or political. The true and intimate relationship of the church and the state derives from the subordination of each to Jesus Christ. The church must not merge or confuse the gospel with any political, economic, cultural or nationalistic creed, but, at the same time, it cannot hold aloof from the affairs of the nation because its ministry is from Jesus Christ who became one with humanity for the redemption of all people.

BARNET The Declaration is accompanied by extensive Scriptural references. Is this just an old Presbyterian habit or does it point to something more significant?

PEDDIE Most old Presbyterian habits have considerable significance and this one is no exception. It is an indication that the crisis we faced in the wake of World War II drove us back to the Bible with a new sense of urgency and a new willingness to allow ourselves, individually and corporately, to be judged by God's saving Word. In many ways, the Declaration was the fruit of the renewal of Biblical and Reformation theology among Canadian Presbyterians.

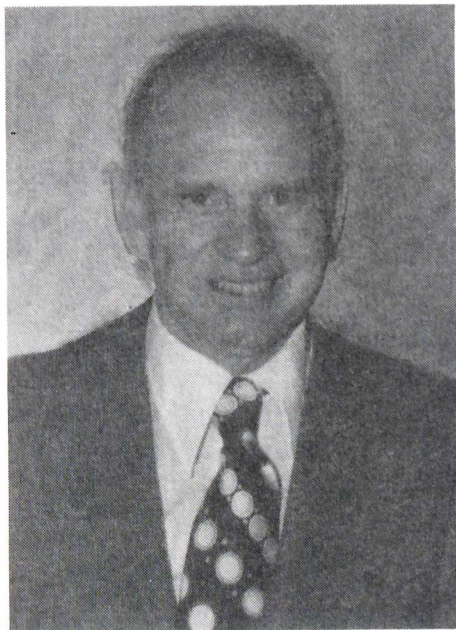
BARNET Principal Farris, the formulation of the Declaration raised broader issues concerning the Church's relationship to its standards. What was done to address this wider question?

FARRIS In 1955 the General Assembly directed the Committee on Articles of Faith to take up this question of the relationship of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to its standards. While the precise focus of our work for the next fourteen years was a revision of the ordination vows and their preamble, the ideas upon which our work was based were those articulated by Principal Bryden, Professor Mackenzie and mentioned by Dr. Cowan and Mr. Peddie--the recovery of the Reformation heritage and the renewal of Biblical theology. The Committee on Articles of Faith was set up to maintain a constant review of doctrine and to help the church determine and declare its confession--its witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ and its implications for the redemption of humanity. We realized that our theology was not a finished product, but an ongoing process to be worked at labouriously and faithfully as the church sought to speak an authentic Word of God to its own time and place.

BARNET Could you explain more fully the necessity for ongoing theological reformulation?

FARRIS There are three major reasons for constantly reviewing and reformulating our confession of Jesus as Lord. First, as St. Paul recognized in his letter to the Corinthians, we know only in part. Our knowledge, and especially our knowledge of God, is incomplete, partial and fragmentary. Reformed theology has traditionally denied the possibility of attaining perfection, either in relationship to the living of the Christian life or in the formulation of Christian doctrine. There is always room for deeper and broader insight into the mysteries of God.

Secondly, the Church's task is to proclaim the eternal Gospel to each new age and in its concrete context. Divine truth as revealed in Jesus Christ is unchangeable, but it must be reinterpreted and newly



Allan L. Farris was a native of Coleville, Saskatchewan. He studied at the University of Saskatchewan, Knox College, Toronto, and the Universities of Edinburgh, Geneva and Chicago. Following pastorates in Trail, B.C., and Bolton and Nashville, Ontario, he was called to the Chair of Church History in Knox College in 1952. In 1976 he became Principal of Knox. His teaching emphasized the theological content and significance of the history of the church of Christ. He served a wide range of committees within the Canadian and the worldwide church. He died in 1977.

E. H. (Ted) Johnson was born in Montreal and attended McGill University. Theological studies were pursued at Princeton, Berlin and Edinburgh. Following a pastorate in Long Branch, Ontario, Ted went to Manchuria from 1935 until 1941. Driven out by the Japanese, he returned to Toronto to become Secretary for Mission Education. In 1947 he went to the United States as General Secretary of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, returning in 1954 to take up the executive position of Secretary for Overseas Mission and later, Secretary for Research and Planning with the Board of World Missions. His death came in 1981.



appropriated in new situations. The church cannot remain deaf to the new problems and questions posed to its witness in an age of nuclear armaments, racial conflict, urbanization and secularization, protest and violence, and the weakening of traditional faiths. In addressing such issues, we must avoid a lazy parroting of traditional doctrines and proof-texts as much as we avoid a thoughtless parroting of the latest fad.

Finally, we acknowledge that we are prone to false teaching, error and wrong emphasis in our theological thinking. We must constantly correct our way of speaking about God by the standard of the Holy Spirit, bringing us the living Word. This duty is well-expressed in the Reformed motto, "The church reformed and ever reforming."

BARNET What were the results of the lengthy revision process used to revise the ordination vows?

FARRIS We clarified the structure of authority within the ministry of the Church. The new ordination vows set out a hierarchy of bindings for those in the teaching ministry.

First and foremost is the authority of Jesus Christ, the living Word of God, present to us and with us in the Holy Spirit.

The second level of authority is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God, testifying to Christ the living Word and being the canon of all doctrine by which he rules our faith and life.

Finally, we acknowledge our continuity with the holy catholic church and its doctrinal heritage in the ecumenical creeds and the confessions of the Reformation. The Westminster standards have a special place within Presbyterianism, but not to the exclusion of the broader heritage of the church of Christ. The dynamics of authority within the new ordination vows are important. The church's primary allegiance is not to a book or a confession but to a Person who

by the work of his Spirit continues to speak to us through the Holy Scriptures, to which confessions are churchly commentaries, aids and helps. By this pattern of authority, The Presbyterian Church in Canada is evangelical, being centred on the living Christ, as well as Biblical and confessional.

BARNET Dr. Johnson, you mentioned in your book, *For a Time Like This*, that the renewal of Biblical theology had a profound impact on the mission thinking of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Could you elaborate on that comment?

JOHNSON In the Biblical witness, mission appears in two forms. The first is through the life and witness of God's people. Israel in the Old Testament was to be a witness to the nations. By its very existence and life-style it was to reflect God's mercy and glory, and thus to illumine the Gentiles. This was mission through being, through living in the grace and peace and freedom and joy of the Lord.

The second is the outgoing mission. It was present in the servant concept of Isaiah: "My servant, whom I uphold ... will bring forth justice to the nations. ... He will not fail or be discouraged till he has established justice in the nations." (*Isaiah 42:1-4a*) It was strengthened by the New Testament imperative, "Go forth therefore and make all nations my disciples." (*Matthew 28:19a*)

BARNET Are you equating mission with the spread of justice?

JOHNSON In many ways, yes. But let me explain more fully what I understand the Bible to mean by justice. This is a lesson that we within Western Christianity had to learn anew from our partners in the Third World churches. And it was difficult to learn. When our brothers and sisters in the churches we had planted read the Bible for themselves, bringing to it their own circumstances and experiences, they found that one of the most consistent themes in Biblical history was that of liberation--liberation from oppression and liberation into rightful participation

with the rest of humanity in the life of the world. This Word of God led them to analyze and challenge not only the social and political structures within which they lived, but also the ecclesiastical systems through which money and personnel were sent to them, while control and decision making remained in the hands of white missionaries or Western mission boards. Breaking the old patterns of paternalism was difficult but necessary to let the Spirit really move among Third World churches. The result has been not only indigenization, but also phenomenal growth especially in Africa and East Asia.

BARNET Why do you think the transition from the old style of mission to partnership with others was so problematic?

JOHNSON Much of it has to do with our desire to control things. It is second nature to us in North America, because it was our means of survival in a hostile environment. But those on the receiving end of this power and control saw it as degrading and dehumanizing, giving them little participation in decisions that affected their well-being. The irony is that we spent several years and some blood fighting for exactly the same kind of participation in the decisions that shaped our lives in North America, as we established responsible democratic government in the nineteenth century. But another factor that must be noted is the structure of most of our congregations. Lesslie Newbigin, world famous leader in mission, has noted that the fundamental forms of the church were established in a period when it was struggling for survival, on the defensive. Our buildings, our liturgies, and our governments are designed primarily for internal care, for the maintenance of the institutions, not for external witness, for reaching out into the world to which God has sent us. Most congregations are built on the assumption of people coming to them, not people going out from them. But the point of any community of God's people is not to keep congregating but to disperse on a multitude of missions. The church belongs to its Head, Jesus Christ, not to us. This humbling fact should lead us to the realization that the church exists not in its own strength, but

in the strength of the Lord; not by its own merit, but by the grace of Jesus Christ; not for its own purposes, but for the mission of him who sent his Son into the world that men and women should not perish but have life in all its fullness. Such humility is the prerequisite of true partnership in mission and that is the key shift that has taken place in our mission thinking.

BARNET Gentlemen, thank you for explaining some of the ways in which The Presbyterian Church in Canada grew in its theological understanding and its expression of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(See Reflection Scale 5, page 81.)

Chapter Six

New Ventures

Purpose: To identify how the mission of the church has changed and is changing to meet challenges of the second half of the twentieth century such as migration, pluralism, poverty, inflation, and the drive toward freedom and human dignity.

Burgess Barnet again hosts the series "Conversations with our Past." Three people join him to share their knowledge of the church and its outreach in the years from 1955 to the present. Dr. James Allan Munro, Dr. E. H. Johnson and Dr. Earle Roberts were secretaries of The Board of World Mission during these years.



James Allan Munro was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1898. He graduated from Saskatchewan Teachers' College and the University of Saskatchewan before teaching school in Coleville, Saskatchewan. From there he was called to the ministry and graduated from Knox College in 1931. He served as minister in Rosetown, and Chilliwack. During World War II, he was an army chaplain, was awarded the Military Cross for service in Italy, and was promoted to Deputy Senior Protestant Chaplain of the Canadian Armed Forces. After the war he was appointed Superintendent of Western Missions. In 1949 he was appointed Secretary for Home Missions. In 1955, he was honoured by Knox College with a Doctor of Divinity degree. He retired in 1965 and was elected Moderator of the General Assembly later that year. He died in 1972.

Earle F. Roberts, was appointed in 1982 as Secretary of the Administrative Council and First Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly. Before then, he had served The Board of World Mission in several capacities. From 1957-1965, Earle and Dorothy Roberts were among the first Canadian missionaries in Nigeria. Earle returned as Social Action Secretary of the Christian Council of Nigeria from 1968-1970 to head up a relief program during the Nigerian Civil War. From 1970-1981, Mr. Roberts was on the staff of The Board of World Mission as Secretary of Overseas Relations. In 1982, Presbyterian College conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.



BARNET Welcome back to our program "Conversations with the Past" as we explore how the mission of the church has changed since 1955 and how it continues to change. Dr. Munro, you were appointed Secretary for Home Missions in 1949. What comment do you have on the mission of the Presbyterian Church in Canada at that time and in the years that followed.

MUNRO We must remember that in the 50's and 60's, Canadian society changed radically. Immigration continued. People representing every nation, race and religion of the world poured into Canada to make a new life here. We were affluent. Standards of living and expectations for the future were high. Costs of land and living escalated. A high degree of mobility was demanded of most working people. Multi-national corporations became economic giants of the world, wielding enormous power. As Canadians, we began to recognize ourselves as a nation with power and influence among the nations of the world. But as society became more secularized, church attendance dropped. Christian values and morality were no longer taken for granted. All these factors influenced the church and its attitude to mission.

BARNET Can you give us some specific examples?

MUNRO Take immigration and its consequences. As a new wave of immigration moved into Canadian society, we slowly began to realize that the worldwide mission of the church was on our doorstep. Many people who came were not Christian. They were Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Muslims. The world with its ancient cultures and religions was seeking new opportunity in this land.

But many people who came were Christian. The message that was taken to other lands a century ago or more had taken root and it was returning to us in persons from the Caribbean, Asia, Africa and South America who were full of zeal for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

BARNET How has this affected the life of the church?

MUNRO The response of the church has to be different in each community so there is no simple answer to that question, but let me give one example.

Gateway Community Church, in Flemingdon Park, Toronto, is one dramatic example of the church in action. It is a congregation to which members have come from all continents and a dozen cultures to work and worship with Canadians whose ancestors have been here for generations. In many ways, Gateway symbolizes Canada as we hope it will be--with the church at the centre of a community of people who come from all parts of the world and who learn to share with one another their faith, their lives and their concern for others.

I lived long enough to see the congregation, with Rodger Talbot as minister, plan a building in co-operation with the Roman Catholics.

BARNET I see what you mean. The church is venturing into new ministries. How did that one happen?

MUNRO It took vision and some lively negotiation. Flemingdon Park was developed in the 50's and 60's as high rise rental apartments with a small shopping plaza and schools. The residents were middle and low income. Some were retired seniors. Many were newcomers to Toronto and Canada. The population was highly mobile. There was no visible church and almost no recreational facilities. Delinquency became a serious problem.

Church representatives were concerned. The Anglican, United and Presbyterian Churches studied the situation together. The Anglicans agreed to build and operate a day care centre--St. George's. The Presbyterians agreed to establish a worship centre and rented space for worship and meetings below the Dominion Store in the plaza. Rev. C. G. Kirk became the first ordained missionary while Calvin Elder, Superintendent of Missions, looked for a suitable church site. The Roman Catholics had the largest number of members in the Park and they used St.

Mr. Kirk, with help from Presbyterian lay people living in or near the Park, carried out an intensive visitation campaign, conducted worship, and addressed the social problems that had emerged. Mr. Elder negotiated with the developer, the City of North York, the Ontario Government, and the other churches in the area. To make a long story short, the Anglicans withdrew, selling St. George's to the Presbyterians. The Presbyterians agreed to develop a community church that would minister to Anglicans and Protestants. The Presbyterians and Roman Catholics formed an association and agreed to co-operate in finding a site and in building a centre. In the final agreement, the city of North York provided an acre of parkland, leased at \$1.00 per year for ninety-nine years for a church site; Ontario Housing agreed to build a park and recreation centre in the area for North York; the developer built some condominium apartments which would add more stability to the community. After a lot of hard bargaining, everyone benefited from the deal.

BARNET This sounds like a creative use of mission resources as well as careful planning. Since 1975, Gateway Community Church (Presbyterian) and John XXIII Roman Catholic Church share a building that is used seven days a week for worship and community meetings. The building is managed by a Board that represents both congregations. Each congregation presents the gospel and worships God in its own way. Together, they represent the church to the community.

Dr. Munro, is Gateway a model for all new church developments?

MUNRO Yes and no. Yes, many Presbyterian congregations now share the cost and space of new buildings, co-operating with United or Anglican congregations. The racial and cultural mixtures are evident in most communities. No, but each community is unique with different needs. Some are in new developments where

population grows rapidly, is affluent, stable, and the congregation quickly becomes self-supporting. Others are in communities where mobility is high, incomes are low, and the new church may need financial assistance and energetic leadership for a long time as it ministers to and within a community that is largely indifferent to the church. Effective planning for church growth is as varied and complex as the communities across Canada.

Presbyterians, as a part of a connectional church, have always been generous in helping one another. Now we have many new opportunities to demonstrate our belief in the universality of the church as we work with other churches in practical ways to conserve resources and bring the gospel to new communities. These are challenging and exciting days.

BARNET Thank you Dr. Munro. We will return to the Canadian scene later. But now I want to call on Dr. E. H. Johnson who has seen the Canadian Presbyterian Church from a global perspective. Dr. Johnson, what are the new movements and directions that you see in the church around the world and how do Canadian Presbyterians relate to these changes?

JOHNSON That is a big question, so let us consider first some of the changes I have seen in the churches around the world. Of course, the fact that telecommunications and air travel have reduced the world to a global village is assumed. We can no longer ignore the poverty, hunger, oppression or violence suffered by our neighbours in Africa or South America. Within this context I point out two factors that are important to us as Christians.

- (1) The young churches are eager to become self-reliant.
- (2) The ecumenical era has come of age and with it, a new sense of the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to liberate humanity.

First, let us review how quickly the peoples of the world have claimed independence. By the end of the nineteenth century, most of the world was under the political and economic domination of white European and North American countries. Much of the wealth and power of Western nations had been built on the control and exploitation of India, Ceylon, Indonesia, south-east Asia, China and Japan--while these countries continued in poverty. The new world had been developed by appropriating the lands of native people and by using the cheap labour of slaves from Africa who were sold like animals and subjected to indescribable misery. The story is an ugly one. The white people did in effect establish a world community--under Western rule. But it could not last.

Since 1949, the surge for independence has been remarkable. During the past thirty-five years, more than three quarters of the human population have moved from political domination into political freedom. India and Pakistan became independent in 1947; Indonesia in 1948; the Peoples Republic of China in 1949. When the Republic of Ghana was formed in 1956, it was only the fifth independent state in Africa. Most of the countries of Africa have gained independence within the last twenty years. The movement continues. But political independence does not ensure economic or social freedom. The struggle for human survival and dignity continues.

It is within this context of the emerging drive for independence, freedom, and human dignity, that the church must continue to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

BARNET Can you give us some examples of how the church in Canada has aided people to claim their independence and become self-reliant?

JOHNSON One useful method has been in scholarships and advanced education. Margaret Kennedy, who spent many years in India, tells about a layman in the Church of North India who gives outstanding leadership. Wilson Herbert grew up in a small, two-roomed house with mud

packed floors where he was the second of six children. Because of his learning ability and Christian character, he was given a scholarship for high school and later as a lab technician. While serving as chief lab technician in Jobat Hospital, he worked for his college degree and then was sent for a course in administration. Today he is Administrator of Jobat Hospital. His wife is Superintendent of Nurses and they live in a comfortable suite in the old Presbyterian missionary house that was remodelled for apartments, just two minutes walk away from the small house he had lived in as a child.

For many years, Wilson Herbert has been an elder in the church and sometimes its treasurer. Now Wilson serves on the Council of the Bhopal Diocese of the Church of North India and takes his turn on the medical board.

Wilson Herbert has become a powerful Christian witness among his people. He has the confidence and trust of others who see him functioning well in positions once held by missionaries. For Wilson, the church is not just in the Jobat area where Presbyterian missionaries once came. For him, the church is a wide fellowship of those who believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour, the one who has saved them from the debilitating fear of spirits and witch doctors.

Scholarships have provided training for others as well. In Ha Lee of the Korean Christian Church in Japan was one of the first to come under our leadership development program. He came to Canada in the 1950's for theological training at Knox College. A Korean pastor, serving a Korean congregation in Japan, he knew well the struggles of a minority group, seeking justice in a foreign land. But his leadership was recognized. He has been General Secretary of the Korean Christian Church in Japan and has worked for the World Council of Churches. Today, Dr. In Ha Lee is recognized throughout the Christian world as a theologian and as one who seeks justice and liberty for his people in Japan and for all minority groups everywhere.

Others have come and continue to come to Canada for specialized training. They have been pastors, teachers, a doctor, a nurse, Christian Education teachers, and a farmer. All but a very few returned to leadership positions in their own country and churches.

BARNET You have mentioned the emergence of new and independent nations but most of the world still suffers from hunger, disease, injustice, and all the problems that cause human conflict. What is the church doing in relation to these issues?

JOHNSON That question brings us again to my point that the ecumenical movement has come of age. It is a mistake to think of "ecumenical" as inter-denominational activities or even a world council of churches as they have developed in recent years. If we go back to the Greek, *oikoumene* means "the whole inhabited earth." In *Matthew 24*, it is said that the gospel must be preached to the *oikoumene*, the whole inhabited earth. As Bishop Bhandare, of North India reminded us, "The mission in which Christians all over the world are called to participate is God's mission. It is an ecumenical mission. It is an ecumenical era.... It is a mission of the people of God throughout the world."

The ecumenical movement refers to the need for Christians, not only to help each other, but to help the world to discover how to live within the unity of the human family. There are many examples we could give but I can mention only one or two.

There is now a worldwide fellowship of Christians. The church exists in almost every nation. The World Council of Churches brings together members from newly independent churches in new nations of Africa and South East Asia as well as the older Christian traditions of the West. The fellowship is visible. Here, all member churches, regardless of race or culture or economic status, are equals. The model has given hope to many peoples who are still oppressed and impoverished.

BARNET In an address given in Toronto, Roy Neehall, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Trinidad, claimed that the programs of the World Council of Churches on behalf of the oppressed and the poor have restored the credibility of the church in many places of the Caribbean.

JOHNSON Yes. Dr. Roy Neehall is a man whom we should hear and heed. As first General Secretary of the Caribbean Council of Churches, he knows well the hardship, poverty and anger that can overtake our Christian brothers and sisters--many of them Presbyterians--who live in countries where elections are contrived, and where the gap increases between the powerful rich few and the poor masses. Roy Neehall is also in touch with the hopes and strivings of what we call The Third World. South America, which has been largely a Roman Catholic area, is crying out on behalf of all Third World countries. Out of their anguish, they are reading the gospel and finding that God's compassion in Jesus Christ was directed toward the poor and the oppressed. After Vatican II, when Pope John XXIII required that the Bible be translated into the language of the masses, many people in South America read the gospel for the first time. Through the eyes of the poor, priests and nuns were given a fresh vision of their task. Some nuns closed the schools that catered to the children of the rich and opened schools in the villages of the poor. The theologians read again the story of God's works of liberation in the Bible and they have been filled with a passion for social justice. We will hear more from these prophets of liberation who speak to us from the Third World. The theology of liberation speaks to the rich as well as the poor; the oppressor as well as the oppressed.

BARNET At Congress '83, we heard Roy Neehall say "The Bible in the hands of the oppressed is the beginning of the end of tyranny." He said that in South America the churches are growing among the poor and that the centre of mission activity is moving from the North to the South. "Some of the poorest and most oppressed are sending messages of hope to those of us enjoying affluence and freedom. They have achieved depths of

spirituality which we do not know." Would you agree?

69

JOHNSON Yes. We are slow to believe or understand but we are realizing that we in the North and the West have more to learn from the Third World churches about the reality and power of the gospel for today than we have to teach.

BARNET Thank you Dr. Johnson. Now I introduce Dr. Earle Roberts. Earle and Dorothy Roberts were in Nigeria at a time when patterns of partnership were being established with the newly formed Presbyterian Church in Nigeria. When they returned to Canada, Earle was Secretary for Overseas Missions for about ten years. Dr. Roberts, tell us how our involvement in mission has changed since those days of new beginnings in the 1950's.

ROBERTS Let me speak about Nigeria first since I know it best and its problems are similar to those of many new countries in Africa and elsewhere.

First, as the church became autonomous, taking responsibilities that had been carried by missionaries, it suffered a lack of leadership. We helped by providing advanced education both in Nigeria and by bringing men and women to study in Canada at Knox College and Ewart. Everyone had much to learn. Missionaries had to learn to let go of control. Nigerians had to learn to pick it up.

Then as Nigeria became industrialized, rural people moved to the cities. Missionaries from the West were able to help the Presbyterian Nigerians make that transition.

When Nigeria became independent in 1960, many of the government leaders were Presbyterians who had been educated in mission schools and in Scotland. But civil war broke out in 1966--a disaster from which the country has not yet recovered. The family or clan system had broken down. The people saw death, destruction, greed, disregard for life or property. In this climate, the role of Christians, whether Nigerian or foreign missionary must show Jesus Christ

as the Way of Life. Of course, we still send missionaries with special skills to work within the Nigerian Church as they are needed. And of course we sent relief to aid those who suffered from the disaster of war. But in it all, we must show the love of Christ for all people.

BARNET What other changes in operation would you consider significant?

ROBERTS We now have more flexibility in using money and personnel. Although the value of dollars spent has decreased since 1970, our responsibility for mission has increased and diversified. No longer responsible for maintaining churches, hospitals and schools, we are free to respond more quickly to a request for help, moving resources of money and personnel to places they will do the most good. Because of this flexibility, Canadians are working with many more churches around the world than would have been possible under the old system. Let me give a few examples:

Dr. Bernard Embree, has been on special assignment to teach for a few years in a theological college in Singapore.

Clara E. Henderson, musician and artist, is recording the indigenous music of Malawi and has been assigned to encourage the development of hymnody that uses the native style of music.

In the Cameroons, John Bertholet helps to evaluate and re-organize four agricultural projects initiated by L'Eglise Presbyterienne Camerounaise.

In Mauritius, the Crosbys serve under a joint appointment of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Besides serving as a pastor, Brian Crosby is to provide administrative assistance as the church sets up its first central office.

In Nepal, Dr. Rick Allen provides health services in a rural community health project.

Linda Kreklewetz has been teaching mathematics in an isolated high school in the mountains of Lesotho.

Margaret Stewart, a nurse, has been seconded by The Presbyterian Church in Canada to the Leprosy Mission and is working in Papua, New Guinea, for the National Health Programme as a T.B. and Leprosy Control Officer.

Eber Kelly, retiring from his company in Vancouver, volunteered for a two-year term in Malawi to assist the Synod of Blantyre, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, with their financial affairs and to train staff in accounting and bookkeeping.

These are just a few examples of the widespread and diverse opportunities open for Presbyterians in Canada to participate in mission with our partners in Christ around the world.

BARNET So far, you have described what Presbyterian Canadians are doing in other parts of the world. Are there signs that Presbyterians are alive and well and growing in Canada?

ROBERTS Yes indeed! And what is more, I believe that we are more aware of the fellowship of the worldwide family of Christians and more sensitive to our responsibility, as Christians, to serve the whole world. A few examples will illustrate.

- There are now thirteen language-culture groups worshipping in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Arabic and Haitian were added in 1982.
- Korean congregations have recently joined the Presbyterian Church in Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary.
- The General Assembly (1982-1983) adopted statements concerning the use of nuclear energy in peace and defense.
- The Church Doctrine Committee issued a new Statement of Faith which is being studied in the Church. It is the first time that Presbyterians in Canada have attempted to make such a statement.

- At the World Alliance of Reformed Churches held in Ottawa, 1982, membership of the Dutch Reformed Churches of South Africa (white) was suspended until such time as they took a stand against apartheid in their country. We stand with other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in this action.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is growing. It is growing in maturity as it states its faith in Jesus Christ and finds a multiplicity of ways to act out its faith in society as well as in worship.

We still have much to learn from those churches which have taken a stand against the evils of injustice and inhumanity in their own countries. If we are faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we will continue to mature and grow as we bring good news to the world in which we live.

BARNET Thank you Dr. Roberts, Dr. Johnson and Dr. Munro. I know you have just touched the surface of your concern for the church and the world. But you have indicated directions we can explore in the future as we follow Christ's command to preach good news in the whole inhabited earth.

(See Reflection Scales 6, page 82.)

Chapter Seven

Suggestions for Study

Purpose: To suggest ways in which the theme, "The Church Grows" may be explored by adults and older youth in the congregation in a series of six to eight weeks. Suggestions are provided for both individual and group reaction.

Time Schedule

A series of eight sessions would provide opportunity for an introduction, discussion of each of the six chapters in the study guide, and a concluding period to plan for follow-up study and action.

- a) In introducing the theme, the leader may summarize the points made in the Introduction of this guide. Note the emphasis on theology and mission and the three major themes that will recur in the study. Writing the points on a large sheet of newsprint would be helpful.
- b) Let group share historical points of interest about your congregation, its origins, its theology, its sense of mission and social concern.
- c) Show the sound-filmstrip "Frontiers" contained in the kit of Heritage Resources, Unit IV. It provides a brief summary of the story of Presbyterianism in Canada and raises questions about the future.

Plan to stop the tape and filmstrip at the question, "Where must we go?", frame 70. Allow the group to list some of the issues and questions they believe to be important for Christians in our day. Then continue with the second half of the filmstrip. The group may want to discuss the questions raised or add some new questions to their list.

Other suggestions for using the filmstrip are included with the printed script.

- d) Distribute a copy of this guide to each member of the group. All members of the group should be encouraged to read the chapter for the following week and reflect on the Reflection Scales that follow on pages 77 to 82.

Explain the interview form of Chapters One to Six. Appoint readers for each chapter. One or two may be asked to do research on the thinking and actions of your congregation from 1925 to the present.

Readers may choose to condense the readings or elaborate on some parts or select highlights in their presentation. If all members of the group read the material first, a condensed presentation can be a review and a starting place for discussion.

Plan to study one chapter each session. Although an attempt was made to alternate between theology and mission, you will recognize that they are inter-related in the actual life of the church as well as in this book. The following procedure is suggested:

- a) Introduce Barnet and the other characters. Make sure all have seen the photos and biographical sketches.
- b) Present the interview. After listening to the interview or a summary of it, ask the group to list four or five main points on newsprint or chalkboard. Discuss, "What relationship do these points have to theology and mission today?"
- c) Allow time for individuals to complete the Reflection Scales if necessary.
- d) Compare opinions and attitudes by adding up the check marks made by all members of the group on the left side, "My Congregation". One purpose of this activity is to help adults relate and compare the decisions and actions and theologies of the church to their own congregation. Showing the checks related to individual reactions under "My Attitude" etc. should not be required. Some individuals may want to change their minds during the course of the study.

It should not be assumed that all ten of the statements in the scales are desirable.

- e) Discuss. If opinions and judgements about the congregation vary widely, explore the reasons for such different perspectives. Are the different perceptions helpful or do they indicate lack of communication in areas that need attention?

If there is unanimous agreement on some, individuals may want to question or discuss the validity of the statement and should feel free to do so.

If there are subjects that some people want to explore further, the list of Sources, pages 83 to 85, may be a useful beginning place.

THE CONCLUDING SESSION

It is to be hoped that more questions, issues and ideas have been generated by this study than can be satisfied in seven sessions. A concluding session could focus on four questions. As a lively bunch of Christians:

- a) What did we learn that was helpful to the life of our congregation? Make a list of issues in two columns under theology and mission. Refer back to lists made in previous sessions and to the Reflection Scales.
- b) What questions or issues do we need or want to explore next? At a future time?
- c) What shall we do within this congregation for ourselves or others?
- d) How shall we proceed from here?

If the members of the group would like to view again the filmstrip, "Frontiers," it could be used as a part of (b) above, or as a conclusion for the meeting. This time, it could be shown without a break.

REFLECTION SCALES 1

The scales that follow will help you compare your reasons for being a Presbyterian with some of those given by church leaders in 1925. First place a check (✓) in the left column beside each statement that you think is important for many or most members of your congregation. On the right, place a check in the spaces that are important to you. Rank yours in order of importance from 1-5.

MY

CONGREGATION

MY

EXPERIENCE

- | | | |
|-------|--|-------|
| _____ | 1. <i>The Westminster Confession of Faith</i> continues to be an important influence in our thinking and decision making. | _____ |
| _____ | 2. Preaching and teaching is based on the Word of God as found in the Scriptures. | _____ |
| _____ | 3. Bible study is an important activity for most adults in the congregation. | _____ |
| _____ | 4. The Presbyterian system of church government is founded on and agreeable to the Word of God. | _____ |
| _____ | 5. Because the church is a missionary organization and the whole world is its parish, members of the congregation are deeply involved in mission. | _____ |
| _____ | 6. The church is a purely spiritual organization and remains separate from any social or political involvement. | _____ |
| _____ | 7. Because our task is to propagate Christianity, not Presbyterianism, we maintain and express a catholic or universal view of the church. | _____ |
| _____ | 8. A strong democratic form of church government encourages all believers to have a voice in the policy making of the church. | _____ |
| _____ | 9. Jesus Christ is the only head of the church and the church is primarily a steward of God's gifts of Word and Sacraments, through which God's people are nurtured. | _____ |
| _____ | 10. The lively congregation is marked by sober and reverent worship, regular church attendance, strong religious instruction, and the faithful exercise of good works. | _____ |

REFLECTION SCALES 2

The scales that follow will help you compare the leadership of ministers and lay people in the Presbyterian Church today with those who helped to rebuild after 1925.

On the left column, check all those items that you think are signs of vitality in your congregation. In the right column, check the items that are most important to you and which demand your active participation. Rank yours in order of importance from 1-5.

MY
CONGREGATION

MY
ATTITUDE

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| <p>_____ 1. Commitment to the Presbyterian Church is more important than the decision of the majority or of friends and relations.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 2. Critical decisions are made in the context of earnest prayer and discussion.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 3. Members are willing to give sacrificially of time and money in order to maintain Presbyterianism.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 4. The vitality of the Presbyterian Church is measured by the vitality of worship and mission in its congregations.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 5. There are capable lay men and women who are sufficiently committed and informed to maintain the congregation for several years, if necessary, without the regular services of an ordained minister.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 6. Hospitality, friendship and a helping attitude are common attributes in the congregation and the homes of its members.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 7. Young people are encouraged and assisted to participate in events beyond the congregation that deepen their faith and give them a broader perspective of the church.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 8. Regular and systematic study of the Bible for adults and children is important in the life of the congregation and in the homes related to it.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 9. Through the use of mass media in all forms, members of the Presbyterian Church are challenged to keep well informed about the relevance of the gospel to central issues of the day.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____ 10. Members of the Presbyterian Church, especially the isolated and newcomers, are quickly made aware that they belong to a caring fellowship.</p> | <p>_____</p> |

REFLECTION SCALES 3

The scales below will help you test your attitude to some theological concepts concerning the meaning of Christian faith. On the left, check all items that you think would be supported by many or most people in your congregation. On the right, check those items with which you agree. Rank yours in order of importance from 1-5.

MY
CONGREGATION

MY
BELIEF

- | | | |
|-------|---|-------|
| _____ | 1. The worship, prayers and practice of the congregation reflect a belief in the immediate and personal presence of God. | _____ |
| _____ | 2. The congregation is most alive when its members and theologians have had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, are wrestling with the judging-saving challenge of the living Word, and are open to the direction of the Holy Spirit within the community of believers. | _____ |
| _____ | 3. The church is sustained by the Spirit of God alone and is slowly but constantly being renewed and reformed. | _____ |
| _____ | 4. Theological discussion is essential for Christians who reflect a genuine encounter with and transformation by the living Word of God. | _____ |
| _____ | 5. Because no confession or creed is totally adequate, the task of confessing the faith in terms that are relevant to changing times is a continuing task of the church. | _____ |
| _____ | 6. Christian faith is an individual affair and the church has no right to challenge or direct it. | _____ |
| _____ | 7. A confessing church is ready and able to challenge all totalitarianism, whether political or economic, that threatens to usurp the authority of Jesus Christ and to destroy the human dignity of any group of people. | _____ |
| _____ | 8. Because Presbyterians believe in a connectional church, we support generously the budget of the General Assembly. | _____ |
| _____ | 9. Because the church is a community rather than an association of individuals, the baptism of each new member (infant or adult) is an occasion for thanksgiving, celebration and a sense of new responsibility for the whole community. | _____ |
| _____ | 10. It is the duty of Presbyterians to co-operate with other Christian groups when this can be done to the glory of God and the triumph of God's purposes for the world. | _____ |

On the left column, place a check beside those items that you think would be supported by many or most people in your congregation. On the right, check those items which you can support. Rank yours in order of importance from 1-5.

MY ATTITUDE

1. In lands where the Christian church is new, the native Christians should be encouraged to take responsibility for leadership as soon as possible.
2. Presbyterians are slow to change because we debate important issues so long in Presbyteries and General Assemblies.
3. Day care centres for children of working mothers is a valuable service provided by the church during wartime but should not be supported by the church in times of peace.
4. An attitude of partnership with new and developing churches is to be preferred to the older system where the sending churches kept all the control of missionaries and money.
5. Missionaries (and ministers) should be willing and able to work with church leaders from many cultures and denominational traditions.
6. Presbyterians in Canada should not send money to Christian groups overseas unless they can guarantee how the money will be used.
7. The Presbyterian Church in Canada often threatens to become a sectarian group because it protects its own self-interests and is fearful of becoming involved in ecumenical activities.
8. It is a strength of the Presbyterian system of church government that theological and practical issues can be debated in the courts of the church until a firm decision is made.
9. Presbyterians should meet the request of the General Assembly budget for the mission of the church before giving to other charitable organizations.
10. Each Presbyterian congregation should make an intentional effort to meet, understand and appreciate the cultural differences of other Presbyterians who have come from different racial and cultural backgrounds.

REFLECTION SCALES 5

The following scales will help you examine and reflect on some attitudes and actions of the Presbyterian Church, your congregation and yourself.

On the left, check those items that you think would be accepted by many or most members of your congregation. On the right, check those items that you believe to be important.

MY
CONGREGATION

MY
BELIEF

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|
| <p>_____</p> | <p>1. God's plan for redemption includes nations and societies as well as individuals.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>2. The congregation is a place where social, political and economic issues facing the larger community are openly discussed in the light of the gospel.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>3. The Presbyterian Church in Canada needs to maintain the staff and leadership that permits continuing research, reflection and action on national and global issues.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>4. The gospel of Jesus Christ calls for salvation from the injustice of this world as well as a promise of life in the future world.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>5. Doing theology is an ongoing process to be worked out laboriously and faithfully in congregations, Presbyteries, General Assemblies, and ecumenical councils as the church seeks to speak an authentic Word of God to its own time and place.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>6. We must constantly correct our way of speaking about God by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, bringing us the living Word. This correction applies directly to our worship, prayer and conversation.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>7. The church's primary allegiance is not to a book or a confession but to Jesus Christ, who, by the work of the Holy Spirit, continues to speak to us.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>8. It is important for all ordained ministers and officers to submit to the authority of the church as a precaution against the pride of power and the error of unexamined teaching.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>9. A major sin of individuals and churches is the desire to control others and impose "our way" on them instead of helping them achieve true freedom in Christ.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>_____</p> | <p>10. The lively congregation is always in mission as its members live out the Christian life in homes, professions and the market place.</p> | <p>_____</p> |

REFLECTION SCALES 6

The scales which follow will help you reflect on the present and future opportunities that are open to you and your congregation. Check each item which you consider to be valuable as in previous exercises or write in a YES or NO.

MY
CONGREGATION

MY
REACTION

- | | | |
|-------|--|-------|
| _____ | 1. Christian congregations should find ways of co-operating in social action and in proclaiming the gospel in order to demonstrate to the secular community that we follow "One Lord." | _____ |
| _____ | 2. Many congregations could use their space more constructively during the week by serving community needs. | _____ |
| _____ | 3. At least once a year, it would be good to worship with Christians who have a different racial, national or cultural heritage. | _____ |
| _____ | 4. It would be good for our congregation to welcome and support as a member of staff, a minister or student from the Third World whom we could assist and from whom we could learn. | _____ |
| _____ | 5. Elders and office bearers in the congregation should be provided with intensive and regular training on how to lead the congregation into new forms of mission in our community. | _____ |
| _____ | 6. It is not possible to separate the true worship of God from the task of mission, evangelism, nurture and social outreach. | _____ |
| _____ | 7. Our congregation keeps the challenge of Christian discipleship before its members by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encouraging candidates for full-time ministries • enlisting volunteers for church and community work. • providing for adult study on theological, Biblical and social subjects. • worshipping in a manner that expresses a joyful thanksgiving to God and a faith that risks the future. | _____ |
| _____ | 8. Our budget is evaluated annually in order to remain responsive to the needs of others as well as our own. | _____ |
| _____ | 9. Concern for the good of all people as well as the conservation of the world, are high priorities of our prayers, stewardship and action. | _____ |
| _____ | 10. There are visible signs that our congregation has grown in Christian wisdom and maturity over the past ten years. | _____ |

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