

AN APPRECIATIVE STUDY OF A PROGRAM OF
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS EXPOSED TO
ADOLESCENT GIRLS & ITS EVALUATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of Requirements for *the*
Master Degree of ^{of} Religious Education
By

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TO
MY MOTHER
MRS. PEOLA COPELAND HUTSON

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. . . . M. E. H.

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AN APPRECIATIVE STUDY OF A PROGRAM OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS EXPOSED TO
ADOLESCENT GIRLS

In taking a cursory glance over the current pages of ideals and philosophies as set up by the leading religious educators of our day, we find that fundamentally, regardless to how diverse their philosophies may be there is one common element and that element is that if man is to exist in this world of ours, he must be taught or exposed to certain principles of "right" living which help him to develop into one who is considered an integral part of the society in which he lives. Whether these educators find themselves linked with those who think in the vein of Neo-Orthodoxy as does Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr and Edwin Lewis, or maybe one of the contemporary liberals as Harrison S. Elliot, Paul Vieth, Hugh Hartshorne, George Betts and others who, as religious educators, believe that the Christian religion must be taught to individuals if it is to have meaning for them, and it must be taught in light of some sound philosophy of which the individual must be able to comprehend. This is one basic element in seeking to train people religiously and must be carried out if Christianity is to survive and be effective. Unless men are educationally enlightened concerning those things which are of ultimate value, there can be no hope for society, for homes, for schools, for churches, for nations and for an ever-standing idea of God as father of all mankind and men brothers one and all.

Today religious or Christian education finds itself not a panacea for human ills but rather a way of wonderful living through which an individual

receives such principles and values as will aid to abundant living. Leaders who are guiding others to the Christian way of life should inject into their lives those same qualities as found in the life of Jesus so that through their experiences they are able to formulate a sound philosophy. For if leaders are to guide others they must have as a prerequisite to their success a clear conception of the Christian way of life and live thereby before they can properly lead others to living religiously. In dealing with adolescents this is especially true, for young people demand thorough guidance as well as knowledge, and, above all, they perceive more through the life of their leaders than through all of what is said. For this reason a leader must be so imbued, so engrossed with a knowledge of what he is doing that Christian growth will follow. The minds of young folks are very much alive; they are questioning all that is religious for it is difficult for them to see the relationship of religion and the other phases of life, especially when it is presented in the conventional way. Yet the adolescent can be easily trained religiously, for in his quest for something meaningful in life, he can be taught the beauty of nature, the beauty of religious art and literature, stories that never grow obsolete, and, lastly, that the source of this lovely world with all its natural surroundings is God and His Son who came that we might have life that is abundant. In seeking to find a method that would help to really understand what religious education is all about a general statement of religious education seems a logical place to begin.

SOME DEVELOPMENTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

In discussing the developments concerning religious education, the statement found in the American Encyclopedia seems well stated:

"The phrase 'religious education' began to take on a definite and technical meaning only in the 20th century. Up to that time, there is scarcely any trace of its use; to-day it has a recognized place in current educational coinage. Its primary significance is not so much that of instruction in a category of subjects or lessons on religion, but in general it describes that type of education which gives full recognition to the religious nature of the persons being educated, the religious moral forces, operative in their development and the religious, or spiritual, aim of all education. It is the distinctive phrase of the movement which seeks to complete the aims of general education by the inclusion of the elements commonly called religious; these include racial and world heritage of ideals, concepts, interpretations and values of life in terms of the spiritual training in habits and conduct and the development of motives and purposes in life. It includes and emphasizes instruction in the history and literature of religion as the means of securing the heritage of ideals, but insists still more on the wider aim of developing the person who will live a life essentially religious, governed by developing spiritual ideals. The concept of religious education has helped to give deeper meaning to education by calling attention to the spiritual needs of the person. It has given new significance to religious activities by suggesting their educational character and responsibilities. It has made men think of education in terms of the religious ideal and the religious aim and ideal as realized by educational process.

"Along with the new consciousness in education came new concepts in religion. It passed again into the realm of life. Quickening social responsibility brought religious thinking close to reality; it became concerned with people. It was seen that if its ideals were to be realized it must be through persons intelligently governed by those ideals. Seeking to save society the churches are coming to see a program of growing and ideal society by developing ideal persons and educational programs. The child has come to have a new importance because his life is at its determinative, developing period and because he may be trained to become an effective religious person. One can have religious persons only as such persons are trained; the time to train them is in the developmental period and the scientific methods of modern education are the truly religious methods of such training. Further the demand for religious education arose from a quickened public conscience. With a rapidly rising wave of juvenile delinquency it was evident that the young were not being adequately prepared for the elemental activities of living. The general curriculum was much richer than in former times, but it was poorer in that it failed to include the elements that make for strength and ideals in character. The disciplines that failed to include discipline in the art of living were inadequate for the demands of life. In

the realm of conduct something is required beyond knowledge; ideals must be developed, the motives, ideals of life and will to live is essentially the realm of religious training. In meeting the problems rising out of the recognition of the need for such training the schools have been compelled to look to the religious agencies for aid."¹

This statement as found in the Encyclopedia Americana is very informative in that it deals with religious education and its meaning and value for young people, however, Sherrill gives a few statements which further elaborates this point. He explains religious education by stating:

"To reach the deepest understanding of Christian education, whether in history or at the present, one must begin with Christianity itself and proceed thence to education. For Christian education did not come to being as a body of devices set up apart from a living church. Rather, Christian education flows forth out of something far greater than itself, that is out of a living religion. It is best understood in that context, related to the only organism which is able to give it vitality. This being so, the historical approach in studying Christian education is especially rewarding. By that approach it becomes evident that education is an inherent necessity in Christianity, so much so that Christianity cannot continue to exist without education. And on the other hand it is made equally plain that 'Christian' education apart from a living Christian faith is but sounding brass, or less impressive still, merely a tinkling cymbal. These two, Christian faith and Christian education, whom God has joined together and man has so often put asunder, are best seen in their intimate marriage, by means of history."²

In trying to put over effectively a program of religious education consideration must be given to the history of religious education. If a program is to survive, one must see that such a program is built around principles which make for the ongoing of life, a program which is meaningful, providing individuals with an education in light of their experiences and following the

1. American Encyclopedia, p. 350-352.

2. Sherrill, Lewis J., Rise of Christian Education, p. 1 ff.

pattern as found in the history of religious education. Such a history will then enable those who are guiding others toward abundant living to formulate for themselves some sound philosophy of religious education.

DEFINING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

To foster any activity in the name of religious education consideration should be given first to what Religious Education is and the types of experiences which foster growth. To the writer the use of the word is defined as follows: In the words of Coe, Christian Education is "the systematic, critical examination and reconstruction of relations between persons guided by Jesus' assumption that persons are of infinite worth, and by the hypothesis of the existence of God, the Great Valuer of Persons."³ However, to better explain this definition the following objectives as listed by Paul Veith in his Objectives of Religious Education are given. These objectives are:

1. To foster in growing persons a consciousness of God a reality in human experience, and a sense of personal relationship to him.

2. To lead growing persons into an understanding appreciation of the personality, life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

3. To foster in growing persons, progressive and continuous development of Christlike character.

4. To develop in growing persons, the ability and disposition to participate in and contribute constructively to the building of a social order embodying the ideal of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

5. To lead growing persons to build a life philosophy of the basis of a Christian interpretation of life and the universe.

6. To develop in growing persons an ability and disposition to participate in the organized society of Christians---the Church.

3. Coe, Geo. A., What is Christian Education, p. 296

7. To effect in growing persons the assimilation of the best religious experience of the race as effective guidance to present experience.⁴

Throughout the program these objectives were kept well in mind for unless the program in all of its phases were leading toward these objectives, which are inclusive of all that program of religious education should put forth. In summing up the results, these objectives shall be kept in mind for they not only help explain the definition of religious education, but elaborate upon its meaning. It is felt that these objectives are conducive to guiding individuals into Christlike personalities.

From October, 1945 through May, 1946, the writer has served as sponsor of two groups, one a group of teen-age girls at Bethlehem Center, the other at Hosely Temple C. M. E. Church. Both groups were very interesting to work with and it is through these groups this study has been made possible. Two groups were considered so as to study a program of religious education from the angle of both a social agency and that of church, and to discover the difference, if any, of the two organizations as to their approach and possibilities in the development of a Christian way of life.

GUIDING INDIVIDUAL GROWTH THROUGH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

In dealing with these respective groups; one at Hosely Temple Church, the other at the Bethlehem Community Center, careful attention was given to the selection of experiences so as to help these young people adjust themselves and function effectively in life situations. These young people as anxious as they were to belong to some sort of organization were not too sure that they wanted to follow any group in which they were to be forced into some sort of religious function. Therefore, to guide them into experiences that were religi-

ously meaningful, the program had to be organized to include all phases of life, particularly those phases which were normally a part of their experiences, for, being thoroughly exposed to challenging situations under proper guidance helps one to meet those experiences with more meaning and purpose. This period is one in which the adolescent is seeking for security and, contrary to popular belief, it is one in which religion can make a tremendous appeal if properly presented. To young minds with such thoughts to work long and assiduously in every effort trying to guide them into wholesome, meaningful channels should be nothing less than the procedure of one who is training young lives religiously. These delicate young lives need to be handled in understanding and love as well as in guidance for if we are to acquaint them with religion and its part in life we must be careful that our guidance is adequate enough to challenge youth to accept the Christian way of life.

THE WORLD OF TEEN-AGERS.

"It is hard for adults to understand adolescents for mentally and socially they are living in different worlds. Early adolescent girls and boys, of twelve to fourteen or fifteen years of age, are foreigners to the matter-of-fact world of maturity. In a sense, they live in a world of their own fancy. It is a beautiful world, full of illusions and unreality, perhaps, but furnished by imagination with alluring visions and dreams of the future. Sad indeed are the cases where imagination is crushed out in mere childhood by the hard realities of poverty and evil surroundings, and where premature responsibilities cheat the child beyond recall. Usually there is a wonderful zest for living, and overflowing vitality and abounding health, a hunger for friendship that finds satisfaction in a rapidly widening social circle as our eager boy or girl experiments delightfully in living. With sympathetic imagination, let us strive to find the secret of their happiness and boundless hopes and learn the various social contacts of their expanding world."⁴

This description of the world of teen-agers as Fiske has so vividly given is the same world of these adolescents, so full of dreams of reality that they need so very much to be given some element that is sound, durable, and real. This one element can be supplied through religious education for the Christian way of life is that element, and if they are properly directed, they cannot help bring into their world of fancies, dreams, illusions and all something to build a more steady world around. As a leader of young people, one should question himself as to whether or not he has the ability to guide them into a world of reality. To do this in a constructive way, a leader should first possess a Christ-like personality himself so as to guide others effectively in the development of Christ-like qualities.

In character development, it is rightfully felt that to guide young people into Christ-like personalities is to set them out to the right path of life for in all their fancies, dreams, and skepticisms they need some sound, basic philosophy of life. Blair says:

"When we think of an individual's personality we think of certain consistencies, purposes, attitudes, habits, skills, etc. We have no knowledge of these characteristics apart from their incarnation in persons. There is the individual's body with its glandular set-up, its nervous system, its hungers, drives, and satisfactions. There is the social environment of other persons and groups. There is the individual's past experience with its satisfactions and annoyances, its habits and attitudes. Individuals differ in the degree of the organization of all these elements. Some personalities are organized on a routine basis with everything regularized and nothing must be changed. Others are so organized that they always want someone to look after them, they turn their lives over to a director to tell them what to do. A strong personality in which all the elements are well organized around dominant purposes, values and interests. A weak personality is one in which all the elements are in conflict because no strong central organizing purposes have been developed. The growing personality keeps remaking the picture by putting some things first and others in the background. He has a scale of values and around these

he organized all the elements of his personality into a whole.

"The growth," Blair states further, "of the child takes place through meaningful experience, and 'for the experience to be meaningful the child must recognize its significance and meaning to him.' The attitude of the child is involved. As Paul Vieth says, 'a life situation has to do with the business of living. It is one which will readily compel the child's interest and attention, with little or no teacher compulsion.'"⁵

Meaningful experience, two words taken from Blair's idea of Christ-like personalities are the words which were foremost in the writer's mind in trying to help young people find their way in life. Efforts were made to meet all their problems with Christian understanding, love and sympathy. In each case the young people were given chance to solve their own problems under guidance.

In this experiment the writer was greatly helped by the position taken by A. J. Jones in which he states:

"Guidance of all kinds has a common purpose--to assist the individual to make wise choice, adjustments, and interpretations in connection with critical situations in his life. This is done in general, through (1) information that he is helped to secure; (2) habits, techniques, attitudes, ideals and interests that he is helped to develop; and (3) wise counsel, by which direct assistance is given him to make the choices, adjustments, and interpretations. The situation in the life of youth for which organized guidance in the school may be expected to give assistance are in connection with (1) school, (2) vocation, and (3) leisure time. The differences that exist between these various aspects of guidance are largely such differences in information, habits, techniques, attitudes, ideals, and many interests on the one hand, and in choices, adjustments, and interpretation on the other, as may be necessary to meet and solve intelligently the different types of problems that confront individuals. The counsel given is necessarily as varied as the nature of the problem and the need of the individual for help. The point of view is always the same, to give such assistance as each individual may need and to give it in such a way as to increase his ability to solve his problems without assistance. Every guidance worker would do well to follow the practice of one of our most successful counselors, who, when a student comes to her for counsel, closes her eyes and prays, 'O Lord, help me to treat this boy as an individual.'"⁶

5. Blair, W. Dyer, The New Vacation Church School, pp.14, 16.

6. Jones, A. J., Principles of Guidance, p. 80.

In trying to work with people it is best to always understand them. This could be called the primary step for success in working, guiding or just coming in contact with people. This is especially true in dealing with adolescent boys and girls for we must be able to know why their actions are as they are, what causes this reaction or that reaction, and know what causes this personality adjustment or maladjustment. To best acquaint one with the child's life is to look into the different agencies which have much to do with the shaping of his personality. These agencies would be the home and family of the child, the school, church and community. These agencies act upon the child in a very definite way, and each should be studied particularly the home in which some of the first and lasting impressions are made.

In this project the home of each child was visited in which parents were met and through a brief conversation information was gained. Concerning the child's habits and attitudes a careful notation was made. This enabled the writer to know the type of child with which she was working, and just what steps should be taken to guide the child in the desired directions. The homes were found to be those of mediocre standing, parents were interested in their daughters connecting themselves in some "worthwhile" organization and trying to develop in the right way. Some of these parents worked out in order to help with the finance of the family. Brief visitations were made in an effort to discover the relationship of the family one to another. In some families there was complete unity, love and interest for children and a desire to expose the children to the best environment. The group at Hosely Temple was from homes where parents were all active members of the church, which indicated that a measure of religious teachings or thoughts were a part of their household.

Fiske gives a statement concerning the part that the home plays in the developing of the child and the value of knowing something of the home life before trying to help boys and girls. He states:

"We can hardly understand and help boys and girls unless we know the kind of homes they come from. The home background makes a vast difference, for here are formed the early habits that lay the foundations of character. Our industrial age has radically changed the average home. Farm life has been wonderfully improved by agricultural machinery, the telephone, and the automobile; but the modern city, with its congested tenements and the suburban home, with its thousands of commuters, is often heavily handicapped.

"Even parents who have refused to abdicate their responsibility for the training of their children find the task no easy one. To be sure, the task grows simpler when rare skill and painstaking faithfulness have won the child's loyalty and are rewarded by the youth's devotion to his good home and its ideals. But as all grow older together, the youth cannot forget that his parents are of an older generation. This makes the task more difficult, especially if the parents lose the feelings of youth and their zest for life, thus putting themselves out of accord with eager children with boundless hope and abounding spirits. If parents have forgotten what it feels like to be young folks, the boys and girls are the first to sense it. They lose confidence in their parents and their grown-up ideas about youth. The parents, too, fail to understand the children, because their dormant imagination and poor memory fail to interpret the unexpected things the young folks do, and the mystery of it widens the breach between young and old. It is obvious that the home must pay the price of success or it will fail to win. Parents must face responsibility of parenthood and know there is no real substitute for a father or a mother. Adolescence is an invention of civilization; or, rather, it is what made possible civilization, this prolonging or parental care through the period of youth. Parents who lazily shirk their watch and care over boys and girls in early youth are reverting to the low standards of barbarism."⁷

One of the observations was that of watching the adolescents as they were being led into a spirit of worship. To some this experience was completely foreign, and to others quite familiar as their homes had provided them with

7. Fiske, Geo. W., Community Forces, p. 264.

such an experience. It has been said that "renewed emphasis is being placed upon the family as the fundamental religious group in which the child learns to be religious by sharing the common life. As modern social religion is seen to be quite as much concerned with personal relations as with instructional materials, it is evident that if the family is not religious, it is irreligious. There is no possibility of neutrality. The vital matter of religious education is worked out at home. The school and the church are therefore concerning themselves with the training of parents as the most effective way in which to train children. The problems of religious education are very intimately related to the changing conditions of modern family life."⁸ There were many good traits to see in the adolescents for some when judged from their home life were in a position to accept religious education, yet there were those who showed no real home life, no training in what real fellowship means or any thing of the sort. For all these were looked into, also the other agencies to see what contributions they were making toward religious development.

THE CHURCH.

With the group of young people at Hosely Temple Church, we tried to make for them a tie up of the teachings as carried on in the church school and purpose of this prepared program of religious education.

"The church has its own peculiar responsibility but must act as a correlation of the activity of all the agencies described. Its weakness today is the limitation of its educational efforts to the brief Sunday School hour. The Church is composed of families and therein lies its opportunity to make contact with the life of the children and to help in the unifying of their education."⁹

To the limitation due to brief hours that this church engage any sort of

8. Dictionary of Religion and Ethics, p. 372.

9. Ibid., p. 373.

religious training the program of religious education in its phases of worship, crafts, discussion groups and recreation, not only gave extended meaning to the regular church program, but also to the small group referred to in this study. In privilege of sharing a program that included more of the phases of one's life was stressed. This would enable a person to see the functional part of religion.

THE SCHOOL.

"Education is a unitary process. The elimination of religious instruction from the public school does not absolve that institution from its responsibility in the moral and religious development of its pupils. The whole trend of social education is in the direction of the achievement of the fundamental religious values. A monograph by Rugh, The Essential Place of Religion in Education, points out clearly and practically how a school in the very organization of its corporate life is teaching religion though it may never use the word. Much closer cooperation between the school and other agencies of religious education are closely possible."¹⁰

A very interesting as well as suited statement to inject here would be that of a survey being made by the class of Week-Day Church Schools in the Department of Religious Education, Gammon Theological Seminary. At this writing the survey has not been completed, but data has been secured from the different states concerning whether or not a state promotes Week-Day Church Schools in connection with the Public School System and methods used in this promotion. It is alarming to note the many states which foster no type of religious activity in connection with the public school, while there are others which only in a brief manner make some allowance for religious activities in their program. To face the situation realistically, there is very little being done in the name of religion by the public school to make a definite relationship between education, religious and secular.

10. Ibid., p. 374.

THE COMMUNITY.

The community itself apart from the special institutions already considered is an educational agency. Its streets, parks and playgrounds, or the lack of these, business life, commercialized amusement, bill boards, regulations of public health, and its police are all influences affecting young life, and perhaps very easily doing more to break down the socializing process than all other constructive efforts can build up. Education cannot be considered by itself, but must be considered as a part of the total social life in which the children grow up.¹¹ The community along with the other agencies play a vital part in guiding adolescents. The fact that a community offers some social center in no way affirms whether its program is meeting the needs of the young people nor does it necessarily give the impression that the program falls short of the desired outcome. The Bethlehem Center with its many and varied groups offers a very challenging opportunity for guidance to abundant life to its community. Through the religious impressions made upon young lives there can be developed a sensitiveness to higher values, and the developing of ability and disposition to take the responsibility for leadership in a Christian way in communities.

THE CHURCH.

The church as a social agency makes an ineffaceable impression upon a community. For the young people who are the constituents of religious and social institutions are in turn the constituency of the community. This being true it is all the more urgent that these institutions so build a program which will lead persons to reverence and respect personalities of other human beings through right conduct in our social order. The community reflects the work and success of both the Church and social agency as well as the home

11. Ibid., p. 375.

A PROPOSED PROGRAM OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AS EXPOSED TO ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Before going into the program it will be wise to say a word about the two groups. These groups were made up of girls between the ages of thirteen and sixteen years of age. They were of the so-called average calibre. For the most part they were talented as to music and speaking. The group at the Bethlehem Community Center was composed of fifteen girls, eight of whom were in regular attendance and who showed interest in group activities.

At Hosely Temple Church the group remained a small one of four girls. This was partly due to the limited number of girls in the church between the ages of thirteen and fifteen. However, the small group was indeed an interested one. Basically the needs and desires of the two groups were the same. Therefore, before planning a program of Religious Education aims were drawn up which would relate themselves to both groups.

Aims:

1. To guide young people into a full appreciation of life through wholesome group participation in which care is given to relate their lives to ideals that are Christian.
2. To prepare young people for future leadership in the Church, community, and the home, by letting them feel that they are an integral part of each.
3. To help young people find themselves through wholesome fellowship and creative ideas.
4. To encourage growth and development of each individual through meaningful experience.

PROGRAM CALENDAR

Meeting -

Each Wednesday Afternoon (Church)

Each Thursday Afternoon (Center)

October 3 - 8.

(First meeting of the year) Informal gathering in which the purpose of the group is stated; names of members recorded; and general discussion so as to find what girls may be interested in.

Theme considered for month - "Friendship"
Worship programs are to be centered around this theme.

October 10 - 24.

Home visitations to meet parents of the girls at Hosely Temple and to acquaint them with such an organization and its purpose.

October 31

Hallowe'en Party at church.

NOVEMBER

Four meetings for each group.

November 1 - 8

Theme of Thankfulness introduced.
Thought turned also to the season of giving; crafts started for gifts during the holiday season.

November 14 - 15

The plans for preparing a basket for some unfortunate person in the community for Thanksgiving Day.

November 21

A highly planned worship program of Thankfulness and the presentation of our gifts to the less fortunate in a body. This will be presented by the girls so that they can learn that they are the ones who shared in making Thanksgiving Day a day of Thanks in the life of some individual.
(Hosely Temple Girls)

November 22 Morning worship at the community church or a service of our own at the Center. Then placing our gifts on the altar and dedicating them to the service of those who are to receive them.

November 25 Recognition Day at Hosely Temple Church in form of a Candlelight Service.

November 28 - 29 Plans for Christmas Celebration.

December 5 - 6 Theme for "Giving and Sharing"
Worship program.
Definite work on crafts.
Recreation - Preparing for Christmas play.

December 12 - 13 Pre-Christmas tree celebration.
Paly presented. Gifts that were made presented to parents. Few moments of play, then a trip into the community to sing carols.

DECEMBER Two meetings for the month.

JANUARY Five meetings for the month.
Theme: Dedication.
Study and singing of music.
Hymns, community songs.
Songs Feast, Musical interpretation.
Study of the life of Bach, Chopin and others.
Current artists - Marion Anderson, Roland Hayes.
Movie trip if any concert artist is being featured.

FEBRUARY Four meetings.
Theme for month: Brotherhood.

February 1 - 15 Group discussion with some resource person or noted person present. Possibly invite someone in to speak who represents a different race.

Carefully planned worship program for each meeting.

February 16 - 28
(Last two weeks)

Lenten Season. Birthdays - Lincoln, Douglass,
Washington.

Begin the study of the meaning of Lenten .
Prepare for an Easter dramatization.

Valentine Party will be included for the month.

MARCH

Four Meetings. Theme: Sacrifice.

During the entire month speakers are called in
to talk with the group on Courtship, Marriage,
Religion and Personality Adjustments.

Out-of-door recreation is stressed.

April.

Easter Celebration.

Theme: The Beauty of Nature.

Saturday morning hike where we prepare breakfast
and then worship God through His beautiful trees,
flowers, birds and air. Sort of a retreat to the
hillside where we can be very near God.

Spring Festival of Music and games, using flowers
and twigs of green to decorate that we might catch
a glimpse of God's beautiful colors.

Holy Week Celebration. The week preceding Easter.
in which Christ's suffering and death are por-
trayed. Dramatization.

May

Theme: Finding God in Life Around Us.

Entire month devoted to greater spiritual guidance.
Trips through the wood to witness nature.
Finding God in our fellowman.
Closing Party in Banquet style.

THE CALENDAR IN ACTION.

This program has been of intrinsic value for to plan the steps to be taken in trying to carry on a program of religious education, gives one a definite plan of what is to be done and expected. As aims were given there was chance to check on results and at regular intervals this was done to see whether or not goals were being realized. The idea of having some definite goal was done merely to give meaning and value to what was being done, for success is measured in light of some list of values which show themselves through aims and objectives. This program was exposed to both a church and a social agency in sort of a comparable study which has proven interesting. While the results seem to be about the same the social agency with equipment and facilities much more plentiful as well as comfortable, might account for the better attendance of those who frequented the center. The meetings were much more regular and attendance on a whole was good, however, the same could be said of the group which met at the Church had the heating of the club room been installed earlier and if other necessary equipment and facilities had been available.

The program was proposed in calendar fashion with plans for each month. Results were recorded at the end of the month. Stress was given to development in the areas of worship, discussion, handicraft and recreation.

The worship program usually followed or began a period of genuine fellowship in which created a situation for worship. This was such an impressive moment that the young people very often asked to be in charge of the worship program. They were given the them for that month and used all available material they knew and built worship programs out of their own experiences. It was surprising to learn that they asked to be given opportunity to give prayer so as to have the experience of praying a prayer of their own words. This would

enable them to recognize the presence of God by being able to talk with him. This one development was one of highest value.

One can draw upon immeasurable resources in making worship services effective.

Music: Beautiful selections from Scripture whose meaning the children have already been helped to discover. Many helpful selections were found in the New Hymnal for American Youth, The Beacon Hymnal, and The Book of Worship of the Church School by Hugh Hartshorne.

Pictures and Slides:

Pictures and slides of famous paintings and of human experience in which children are interested and which helped to stimulate wholesome feelings and attitudes.

Prayer: Prayers whose concepts the children understand. It was found to be more effective to use the prayers which the children have had a share in writing. To enrich the prayer life of the child, however, it is important to draw on the prayers and liturgical materials.

Poetry: To this list of resources poetry was added for through poems worship can be enriched. Stories and interpretations of some of the great paintings were given

"Praying Hands" and the interpretation by Durer were found quite worshipful. There were many other songs, paintings, interpretations, stories and poetry which are listed in Cynthia Pearl Muas' book, Christ and the Fine Arts.

Discussions:

This phase of the program was carried on in the main by persons who were called in and who talked on some topic of interest to the young people. They listed topics in which they desired knowledge and discussions were led by persons of particular skill in special areas. These young people were interested in personality adjustments, therefore, most discussions were centered around personality development. They asked questions and took part in the discussions following the resource person's discourse. Very often the group had discussions among themselves. It was remarkable to note their growing understanding of problems.

Handicraft:

There is much to be learned from a group on some sort of garment, or article. Through this area personality traits can so easily creep out and can be guided into constructive channels. In stressing that we take the old, cast aside articles and make them into useful trinkets for some one very near. Especially was this done as Christmas gift, sometimes we found those who were a bit selfish and wanted to keep the articles for themselves. For those persons we tried to say something of a personality that is not selfish, that thoughtful of others and one who is constantly giving us all gifts and the value there is in patterning our lives like his, like Jesus Christ.

Recreation:

Isn't it wonderful that Christian principles can be carried into any activity we go into? Doesn't it add something to life itself to know that the Christian way of life includes all our activities whether serious moments

or the lighter play moments. There is the memory of a worship experience which climaxed a recreational period. We had engaged in games, and songs through which we had enjoyed some mementos of gaiety, yet as we ended our recreation, at the moment when everybody wanted to add something even more enriching, with a simple but meaningful prayer, "O God, our Father, in our songs, our games, and our mementos of gaiety we have remembered Thee. Help us to keep Thee ever in our thoughts and actions at home at school, at work at play that others may know and love Thee. Amen."

Play is motive to childhood. For the child play is a large phase of real living. In the vocation Church school, which seeks to provide life like situations and meaningful experiences in order that through these the child may be able to learn and grow, play is an indispensable part of its program. The fundamental philosophy of play is adjustment to life, whether it be the infant acquiring the muscle coordination of body, or the boy getting his first lesson in social cooperation through team games, or the tired business man finding relaxation in the swing of a golf club. It may be made a powerful character-building, personality developing instrumentality. It offers a teacher a means of intimate acquaintance with the disposition and characteristics of the child. Play is a spontaneous activity, and through it the child reveals himself without reserve. It affords a pleasurable experience within a religious school which tends to carry over into an attitude of pleasurable appreciation of the church program as a whole.¹² Since play is such a fundamental of all life we must think of using it in planning how the leisure time of both young and old should be used. In every program of religious education time should be allotted to good wholesome recreation.

12. Blair, W. D., The New Vacation Church School, p. 123.

MONTHLY SUMMARY OF PROGRAM:

Since program was planned under calendar system it is wise to record the results here after the same fashion.

October -

Here we established real fellowship which was realized in this informal meeting. Interest and ideas of what they expected were gathered from groups and was found to be in the most part included in our program.

It was indeed interesting to visit the homes to study personality traits, relationships in the home and many other things which aided in understanding the girls. A brief record was made of their names and addresses. In trying to discover interest in the girls, it was noticed that some of them were able to give their interest and would even express how they wanted their interests developed. Yet there were those who had no thought or no particular interest, therefore, we had to help the child bring out undiscovered interest and develop it. Through a brief period of counseling, guidance was given to help lead the child to know of find her interest. This took months in some cases for many projects were tried and the child through this method found her interest.

November -

Thankfulness for life's blessings was stressed during the entire month. Many members of group gave articles through their respective churches to make up a basket for deserving persons. Worship services were quite impressive for all had much to be thankful for.

It was during this month that the need for supervised play was more fully realized. At the Center the girls had a Thanksgiving party using leaves and other natural aids to decorate. They engaged in games, many quiet and many active, yet, none seemed to have reached the group. They were quiet until we gave them music and immediately they all got to the floor. The group was in need of being educated to the various organized forms of amusements. It was a long, steady, untiring job ahead.

Recognition Day was not encouraged at the Church as the group was small. It was felt that to wait until the group grew would be a better way in which to give impressions of the seriousness of the organization.

December -

Project on handicraft was finished so as to serve as Christmas gifts. For youngsters to know they are giving things, they made much. Some of the articles included gloves, bags, stocking boxes and many other useful articles. The Christmas services and program were planned. The meeting ended during the second week in December, yet the programs were carried on near Christmas time. The young people received and gave gifts and at the Center the Christmas program was given by all the members of Bethlehem Center. The Tee-Agers furnished carols on the program. Hosely Temple girls also engaged in a real Christmas celebration. The group being small wanted the other members of the church school to share in their Christmas program. Songs, readings along with the Story of Jesus' Nativity were used, which proved meaningful to those who participated. This month gave much growth to giving and sharing with others.

January -

The schedule was not followed during this month, as it was planned. After the holidays there was a laxity on the part of attendance. Each girl was contacted and encouraged to come back to the club. After two weeks the meetings at Hosely Temple were dismissed for the entire month due to the heating conditions.

A Valentine Party was planned. This was rather a slow month; interest had to be stimulated.

February -

This month was a very good one in which to instill some basic ideas of the Christian life. The first principle was that of love. The theme was Brotherhood, so in the worship programs was included love for all mankind. This was stressed in the brief discussions, our songs, and prayers. It was remembered that we are brothers one and all. There was no guest speakers invited for the girls wanted to discuss freely the noted artist, scientist and other renown persons regardless to their nationality, and appreciate their contributions to mankind.

At Hosely Temple we had a Theater Party in which we saw "Rhapsody in Blue". This was the life story of George Gershwin.

Our worship programs were quite interesting. The Valentine Party was a success.

March -

The group was very energetic so we did quite a bit of out-of-door forms of recreation. We invited Miss Harriet Strong in to talk informally with the girls on Personality Development in which

Charm was stressed. The girls worked steadily on their crafts.

For Easter celebration we are planning a short Easter presentation to be used in our meeting as a worship service. At Hose-ly Temple we are having two public services in which others are participating. We hope that these will prove meaningful.

April - May -

We hope to follow the calendar as we have planned.

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EVALUATING THE PROGRAM:

In evaluating this program of religious education the best way in which to measure the results of the project is to look back to the aims and see if in any way they have been reached. These aims allowed for growth as well as wholesome participation that was directed by Christian principles. The guidance which was given if continued will lead these young people into a leadership which is needed in the home, at church or the community. We feel happy over the results for the lessons of fellowship, love, sharing and respect for others were learned. These young people constantly reminded of what it means to share their time their time, talents, ideas and belongings with each other.

They were able to plan worship programs which were inspiring. They chose their songs, prayers, stories and other worship aids which bore out the general theme for the month. In recreation and all other phases of life they are able to include the principles of Christian living. It is my belief that such a program is of so much value that if all young people were exposed to a well organized program that the future homes, communities, churches, and

schools will be those of people who are well developed. There are great possibilities in guiding young people into Christian personalities.

WEAKNESS OF THE PROGRAM:

The program was too full for the short period of time allowed to carry it out. The time just wouldn't permit all that was planned. In preparing a program for another group, consideration should be given to the length of time allowed to be spent with the group. Thought should be given to the equipment also, for this program did not take into consideration the equipment which was very inadequate at the Church.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Since such a project is to be all inclusive of many phases of the individual's life, I feel that those engaged in such a study should be granted the following which are submitted in the form of recommendations. The recommendations should enable persons making similar study to devote more time, effort and have longer periods to watch closely the results, weaknesses, and strong points of the program. Thus, I recommend the following:

1. That students working out projects in similar manner, begin the project before the end of the first semester of her first year at Gammon Theological Seminary. At such time a tentative, if not a permanent program is proposed for evaluation. This will give ample time for evaluating her work and will provide more time for study of the project.
2. That academic credit be given for field work activities. This will make for more interest and seriousness about the work.
3. That written reports of project, which include success, possibilities, and weaknesses be written up and given to the Advisor of the Social Center or Church as the case may be.

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