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THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

(Being also the 108th year of the organization of the Blue Ridge-Atlantic Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the 96th year of the organization of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the 158th year of the organization of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, the 125th year of the organization of the North Carolina Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the 21st year of the organization of the North Carolina-Virginia Annual Conference of the Central Jurisdiction, and the 18th session of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.)

VOLUME I
(Proceedings)

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JOHN HENRY BRENDALL, JR.

July 28, 1898 — December 19, 1984

Joseph Henry Brendall, Jr., was born in Morganton, North Carolina, on August 28, 1898, the son of Reverend Joseph H. Brendall, Sr., and his wife, Sarah Tritt Brendall. Having been reared in Methodist parsonages, where the faith and influence of Christian parents set before him the path of love and obedience to Christ and His church, he was destined to become an effective minister of Christ.

Although he tried to follow another vocation, Joe discovered he could not escape the inner necessity laid upon him by the call of God to preach the gospel. So, he yielded to this high calling and for more than forty years proclaimed the "unsearchable riches of God which are in Christ Jesus." He possessed a brilliant mind, and he was a profound scholar and thinker. His sermons lifted, inspired, and challenged his congregations to know the joy of fellowship and the abundance of the Lord.

Ability to proclaim the gospel, Joe Brendall was a good pastor and shepherd, caring for his people. He wept with them in their joys, and gave himself unselfishly to the total task of ministry, counselor, church builder, teacher, prophet, and priest. Furthermore, in every community where he served until all people stood on

the same level from Trinity College (Duke University) and his B.D. degree admitted on trial into the Western North Carolina Conference in connection and ordained deacon in 1926. He was ordained elder in

1926. He preceded him in death on February 15, 1947. He was succeeded by Carolyn Nolen, who survives. She, like Joe, gave herself to the churches he served and achieved true greatness, as every ministering it possible for her husband to fulfill God's plan and purpose. He truly great person as that one "who maintains the condition

He served the following appointments: 1924-26, Liberty Circuit; 1926-30, Boone; 1934-38, Brevard; 1938-42, Winston-Salem: Ardmore; 1942-48, Franklin; 1948-52, Kings Mountain: Central; 1952-56, Watauga: First; 1958-62, Elkin: First; and 1962-64, Canton: Central.

He served First Church in Franklin, where Joe and Carolyn had retired. "I was a church and an active, vital part of my ministry. He was like a father who reported me with encouragement and friendship. He died on December 19, 1984. Memorial services were held in Franklin, on January 13, 1985, by J. Hurley Thomas, III, Asheville District Superintendent.

As well he fell asleep,
A proud river, widening toward the sea;
Gently, grandly, silently and deep,
He has joined eternity.

John K. Miller

JOHN ROBERT CHURCH

July 22, 1899 — November 9, 1984



"The outreach of few men in the history of the American pulpit is comparable with that of John R. Church." So stated Dr. J. C. McPheeters in 1969 when Dr. Church celebrated his fiftieth year in the Christian ministry. Large numbers of people throughout the nation who came under the influence of his ministry would concur in that statement.

John R. Church was born on July 22, 1899, in Salem (now merged with Winston as Winston-Salem), North Carolina, to William A. and Addie York Church. At that time there was no Methodist church in Salem, and the family attended Christ Moravian Church, where John received baptism as an infant. In 1902 Salem Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was organized a block from the Churches' home, and the family immediately moved their church affiliation to it. A pew near the front of the church soon was known as the

"Church pew," since it was regularly occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Church and their family. It was there that John was converted at the age of nine in an old-fashioned Methodist revival and was received into full membership. Looking back on that experience, he commented: "A lot of people say children don't know what they are doing, but there's one little nine-year-old boy who knew that he met Christ, that his sins were forgiven, and that he was born again."

A boy, John attended Granville Elementary School and then went on to Cherry Street High School, now replaced by Reynolds High School. Green Street Methodist Church was built in 1921 to replace Salem, and the Church family moved their memberships there.

At the age of fifteen, John felt the call to the Christian ministry, but he also felt the temptation to go into business and make money. He resisted the call to the ministry at that time and went to work in the old City Market in Winston-Salem.

On December 25, 1917, John was married to Lola Helen Burton, and to them three children were born: John Robert, Jr., on January 6, 1919; Addie Helen, who died at birth in December, 1920; and Billy Hyde, on February 11, 1922.

Following his marriage to Lola and due in large part to her godly influence and prayers, John turned back from the way of the world to answer God's call to the Christian ministry. He and his young family moved to Rutherford College, where he enrolled as a student. To support his family, he cut wood, painted, and worked at other jobs as opportunity presented. It was while he was at Rutherford College that he was brought to an awareness of the scriptural and Wesleyan doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Searching the scriptures, he found that the New Testament did indeed teach clearly that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a work of grace to be sought and received by Christians following their conversion experiences. He became convinced that if the disciples of Jesus in the long ago needed their Pentecost, he, too, needed such an experience. As a result, he sought and, after a period of five months of seeking and praying, testified that the Lord did grant him an infilling of the Holy Spirit that flooded his soul with such a peace, such a rest, such a joy, and such a love that he felt he could take the whole world into his arms and love all who were in it to Calvary. Across the years, he testified that if he had had any success in the ministry, if God had been able to use him, it was because he had sought and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Following his studies at Rutherford College, John completed the four-year Conference Course of Study through the Duke University summer school program. In 1920 he was appointed as supply pastor of the Shoal Creek-Echota Charge, a mountain circuit of five churches, two of which were made up of Cherokee Indians. He was admitted on trial into the Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1922, was admitted into full connection and ordained deacon in 1924, and was ordained elder in 1926.

His effectiveness as an evangelist was evident from the beginning of his ministry. During his three years on the Shoal Creek-Echota Charge, he received over eighty people into church membership, most of them on profession of their faith in Christ.

In 1923 he was appointed to the Trinity Charge in Thomasville, where he received 128 people into church membership during a two-year pastorate. Toward the close of his second year there, his presiding elder, W.A. Newell, asked him what his desire was concerning the next year's appointment. John asked to be moved, saying that he had become so caught up in the community activities in Thomasville that his studies and sermon preparation were being neglected. He told Brother Newell that he would gladly take a \$500 cut in salary to be sent back to the mountains. He

was appointed to Andrews, where he kept his mornings reserved for study and his afternoons for visiting and, as he put it, "laid the foundation for his ministry." During his three-year pastorate there, eighty members were added to the church.

In 1928 he was appointed to Kings Mountain, where 203 members were received into the church during his four-year pastorate. In 1932 he was appointed to the Davidson Charge in Davidson County. Again his effectiveness as a pastor and evangelist was reflected in the addition of ninety members to the churches within a two-year period.

During the fourteen years John had now been in the ministry, he had received almost 600 members into the churches which he had served, and his reputation as an outstanding revival preacher was widespread. More invitations to conduct revival services for other pastors were being received than he felt he could honor and still continue as an effective pastor of local churches. God's plan for his life seemed to be leading clearly into the work of a full-time evangelist. Thus, at the 1934 Annual Conference, he requested and received an appointment as Conference Evangelist, stepping out on faith as did Abraham of old. In 1936 he was elected by the Board of Missions to become a General Evangelist of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

John moved to a house in Winston-Salem in 1934, and later, in 1937, he moved into the house he had built on a tract of land he had acquired on Ardmore Road near Winston-Salem. Miss Ruth Phelps came into the Church home in 1934 to help take care of Billy, who had been stricken with a brain tumor which would result in his death in 1938. She remained as a part of the Church household across the years, helping to take care of John, Jr., and thus enabling Lola to go with her husband on many of his preaching engagements across the country.

From 1934 until failing health curtailed his travels in the 1970's, John Church crisscrossed the nation, preaching the Gospel of Christ and seeking to spread scriptural holiness across the land. His ministry carried him into forty-two states, taking him into some of the largest and most influential churches of the land, as well as into hundreds of other churches and communities. He never lost the common touch in his ministry and responded as readily to invitations to conduct revivals in the smaller churches as he did to those from large churches. He was noted as one of the outstanding campmeeting preachers of the nation, preaching on the campmeeting platforms with such pulpit giants as H.C. Morrison, E. Stanley Jones, Bud Robinson, and Bishop Arthur J. Moore. He preached in thirty-one colleges and universities, including Duke University, Emory University, Asbury College, and Asbury Theological Seminary. Also included in his preaching schedule were seven Methodist annual conferences and two general conferences of other denominations. In 1942 he was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree by Asbury College.

For many years John Church was on the board of trustees of Asbury College, and he was chairman of the board of trustees of John Wesley College, now located in High Point, North Carolina, for thirty years. He was instrumental in helping to organize and establish the John Wesley Camp Meeting in High Point and continued across the years as one of its most faithful supporters and one of its most appreciated platform preachers.

It has been estimated that throughout his ministry, Dr. Church traveled more than a million miles, conducted around 1,000 evangelistic crusades or series of revival services, had tens of thousands of people respond to his altar calls to accept Christ or seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and saw over 800 people answer the call of God to the Christian ministry under his preaching. Twenty-one of his books have been published. All of them are still in print and may be obtained from Oakley's Bookstore in Lexington, North Carolina. It is estimated that over two million copies of them have been sold, their circulation extending almost literally around the world.

Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., described John R. Church as one of the great itinerant preachers of the twentieth century and said, "I have found Dr. Church to be one of the most practical Biblical preachers I have had the privilege of hearing. . . . The trail of blessing which he has left across the earth is a wide and holy way."

Those of us who knew John R. Church personally knew him as one who tried to live in his personal life the great truths of the Gospel which he proclaimed. To him the essence of scriptural holiness was a Christlike character. He preached with deep conviction the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a work of grace subsequent to conversion because of the blessings it had brought to his own life and ministry, as well as because of its Biblical foundation. He set forth his personal ambition in the words of the Apostle Paul:

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by

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any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. (Philippians 3:7-11)
Though he took the retired relationship with the Western North Carolina Annual Conference in 1962, Dr. Church continued his evangelistic ministry until the late 1970's, when declining health limited his activities. His dear companion of sixty-five years, Lola, went home to be with the Lord on August 1, 1982. Following her departure, as John's physical health declined more and more, he began to cast his gaze ever more longingly toward the Celestial City. He often expressed his desire to go to sleep one night and to awaken in heaven the next morning. God granted him his desire the night of November 8-9, 1984. When Ruth Phelps took his breakfast tray to him the morning of November 9, she found that he had quietly slipped away to his Father's house.

Memorial services were conducted in the downtown chapel of Vogler's Funeral Home in Winston-Salem on Sunday afternoon, November 11, by James T. Ingram, pastor of Green Street United Methodist Church, and the writer. Burial was in the Mount Olivet United Methodist Church cemetery in Davidson County. Survivors include a son, John R. Church, Jr.; two sisters, Mrs. Mamie Masten and Mrs. Hazel Levin; and one brother, The Reverend Forrest E. Church.

Upon our journey here below,
We meet with pain and loss;
Sometimes there is a crown of thorns,
Sometimes a heavy cross;
The dreary road to Calvary,
The bitter goad and sting,
But what's inside those gates of pearl
Will be worth everything.

When we're inside those gates of pearl,
We'll learn a lot of things;
We'll have a harp that's made of gold,
Perhaps a thousand strings;
We'll sing and shout without a doubt;
The Lamb will dry our tears;
We'll have a grand homecoming week
The first ten thousand years.

To God be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Donald K. Funderburk

ANDREW JAMES CLEMMER

June 24, 1909 — August 18, 1984



Andrew James Clemmer died on Saturday, August 18, 1984, in Blairsville, Georgia, after having been attacked on the preceding Thursday, August 16, by a swarm of honey bees, the same bees he loved to nurture as a hobby in order to reap prized sourwood honey from their labors. The severe stings caused a cardiac arrest. One of his daughters remarked, "He was in the place he loved best in the world, doing what he liked best. . . . That is the way he died."

James Clemmer was born on June 24, 1909, to Andrew Jackson and Cora Herman Clemmer in Hahira, Georgia. When he was one year old, his family moved to Rockingham, North Carolina, where he grew up and attended and graduated from the city school system. He graduated from Weaver College, 1929-30; from Emory University with a Bachelor of Science degree in philosophy in 1938; and from Candler School of Theology, Emory University, in 1939 with the Bachelor of Divinity degree (changed to a Master of Divinity in 1972).

Brother James entered the Methodist ministry through the Western North Carolina Conference on trial in 1939, was admitted to full connection and ordained deacon in 1941, and was ordained elder in 1943. During his years of active ministry he served Valdese, 1939-40; Hayesville, 1940-43;