

NORTH TEXAS CONFERENCE

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The Journal of the

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH SESSION

of

# THE NORTH TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

of

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Held in Wichita Falls, Texas

at

FIRST

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

AND

THE ACTIVITY CENTER

OF THE

CITY OF WICHITA FALLS

May 29-June 1, 1983

BISHOP JOHN W. RUSSELL,

President

EDITED BY

MICHAEL LOY NICHOLS,

Conference Secretary

and

VICTORIA DAVIDSON,

Assistant Conference Secretary

WILLIAM F. UPCHURCH

Assistant Conference Secretary

HENRY WILKINS,

Assistant Conference Secretary

### WILLIAM ARTHUR COX

Born to a Methodist family on October 15, 1904, in Nolanville, Texas, Reverend Arthur Cox experienced a great deal of encouragement to become a Methodist minister. Before it was over, out of a family of nine brothers and sisters, five of the brothers would have entered the Methodist clergy and one sister would have been married to a Methodist preacher.

Arthur Cox attended Southwestern University in Georgetown, receiving his Bachelor's degree in 1928. After graduation, he was appointed to Maysfield, Texas to fill a vacancy created by a death. From there, he attended Southern Methodist University School of Theology, where he graduated in 1930. In an age of short tenures of service, Reverend Arthur Cox served many pastorates: Bardwell, Crane, Tatum, Loving, Garden City, Vernon, Gruver, Lytle, Peary Place in Corpus Christi, Ketchikan in Alaska, Falfurrias, Texas, Hondo, Shettle Memorial in Austin, Gonzales, Richardson First, Grant Oak Haven in Irving, Mary King/Maple Lawn, and Mansfield. After retirement, he served Bryson and then, when health demanded, he retired in Irving.

On December 27, 1933, Arthur married Mardilla, and they worked together in ministry over many years. Reverend Cox died on September 28, 1982, and leaves a rich heritage not only in faithful ministry but in the persons of: his wife Mardilla Cox, of Irving; Ainslee Cox, symphonic conductor in New York; Sara Mahaffy, organist in St. Joseph, Mo.; Dottie Dunnam, mother and housewife in Dallas; Vick Cox, engineer for Electronic Communications System in Dallas, who resides in Irving; and six grandchildren.



David Shawver

### TIMOTHY BERTRAM ECHOLS

Timothy Bertram Echols wrote in the introduction to his book, *Pioneers in Religious Education*, published in 1964: "My invisible twin is 'adventure.' He has been my daily companion, he has never left me alone." On the night of February 18, 1983, he embarked upon a voyage with death, declared by James Elroy Flecker to be the "great adventure still".

"T.B.," as he was called by many friends, was indeed an optimistic traveler on the road of life. He was one of twins, destined for success by a mother who vowed that her sons would have every available opportunity, and an unshakeable faith in God.

Timothy Echols, like the title of his book, was himself a pioneer in religious education. His life was dedicated to the betterment of mankind. His work as a pioneer opened many doors that had not been previously opened to black people. He was Executive Secretary of Christian Education for twenty-five years in the Texas and West Texas Conferences, and had been a field representative for another sixteen years on the Board of Pensions when he retired in 1964. As part of his work in religious education, his most rewarding project was the Central Jurisdictional Leadership Training School. At the beginning of this project in 1944, there were only three full-time executive secretaries in nineteen conferences of the Jurisdiction. During the four years he was Dean of Leadership School and Chairman of its Board of Managers, the number increased to twelve full-time secretaries in fourteen conferences, with the other five being served by part-time or volunteer workers.

T.B. Echols was a man of strong convictions. He was a man who had the profound capacity to stimulate an awareness of the working of God's spirit in the lives of young men and women. There are quite a number of great Christian warriors who entered the Christian ministry because of Rev. Echols' ability to recognize and develop a sensitivity in them to understand and recognize the call of God upon their lives.

He had a sense of comfort about who he was, and was able to make people feel good about themselves and who they were. He had occasion to work with people from all walks of life. There was no one too successful or too lowly, too old or too young, to be encompassed in the warm glow of his friendship.



He was a sharing person. In spite of the fact that with a wife and young child he accepted an appointment without salary and existed on offerings and donations for a year, he still gave donations to support children in Liberia. One of these, Arthur F. Kulah, matured and came to this country, earned a degree in theology and returned to his country. Later, he returned to America to earn his Ph.D., and be appointed a bishop of the Methodist Church in his country.

In 1964, Rev. Echols asked his bishop to appoint him as pastor of St. Luke Church, a church with five adult members and heavy indebtedness. The alternative was to sell the site and have the five members go to other churches. Dr. Echols influenced the decision to maintain the church; and when he again retired in 1974, the church had over 100 adult members, a substantial savings account, and additional church property. Many beneficial programs for children and adults were implemented and established during his tenure.

Rev. Echols is survived by his wife, Frances, two daughters, Renette and Jo, a brother and a granddaughter.

Zan Holmes, Jr.

### HARGROVE GROUNDS

Hargrove Grounds was born March 5, 1893, in Collin County, Texas. After answering the call to the ministry he was admitted to the North Texas Conference in 1918. He delivered his first sermon at the Methodist Church in Sadler, Texas. Fifty years later he returned there to preach the same message again. There were several friends present who had been there fifty years before. On April 23, 1917, he married Ombra Boswell Grounds in Tioga, Texas.

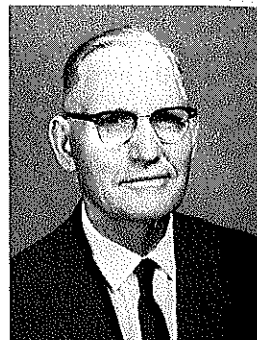
During his forty-three years in the service of our Lord, he served churches at Petrolia, Antelope, Wizzard Wells, Perrin, Alvord, Nevada, Valley View, Holliday, Celeste, Wichita Falls, Cochran Chapel, Wilson, Richardson, Henrietta, Trinity and Harless in Denison, Grace, Brandon Avenue, Clarksville, Key Memorial Sherman and Owenwood in Dallas.

He was a great and a good man. Greatness is not measured by power, prestige, wealth or education. Yet he possessed all these, evidenced by the power of God in his life, the host of friends whose lives he touched during his years of ministry, and those he helped as he pressed forward toward the high calling of his ministry in the Methodist Church. Greatness is measured by what a man leaves that his fellow man wants to possess or cultivate in his own life. Hargrove left many such qualities, some given by St. Paul in his writings: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report think on these things." Hargrove left us such a list.

For a portrait of this man of God we turn to Psalms 1: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in this law doeth he meditate day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

Hargrove and Ombra were parents of two daughters: Marion Grounds Park, who survives, and Mary Helen Grounds Coleman, who preceded her parents in death. After ending his active ministry at Owenwood, Dallas, Ombra and Hargrove retired to their East Texas farm near Atlanta, Texas, where they shared many happy hours with their children and grandchildren. Ombra preceded Hargrove in death in November, 1979. Hargrove departed this life January 5, 1983. Memorial services were held at Atlanta, Texas, January 7, 1983.

A. D. Campbell



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