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JOURNAL AND YEARBOOK
of the
Northern New Jersey Annual Conference
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

129th SESSION
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MADISON, NEW JERSEY
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Methodist churches. One of his greatest achievements during his ministry occurred in Atlantic City at Asbury Methodist Church where he organized the building of a new parsonage and developed a program to pay for it within 5 years. His campaign was successful and he left the charge in 1969—"Debt Free".

He was active in the Civil Rights Movement during the 60's, and community affairs organizations as well. Using his talent as a fund-raiser, George administered summer programs providing educational support, cultural activities, breakfast and lunch, for the inner city's youth. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge in Wilmington, DE, Atlantic City, NJ and Newark. George was a Noble of the Mystic Shrine in Swakim Temple No 6032, and a Member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

After 40 years of dedicated service, George retired from St. Matthews United Methodist—Newark, in 1978. His ministry did not end there. He continued to minister and assist pastors in various churches throughout the City of Newark. His motto was, "Live One Day At A Time, Enjoy One Moment At A Time, and Accept Hardship as the Pathway to Peace."



EUGENE LEWIS SMITH
by Elaine Smith

Eugene Lewis Smith was born in Rockwell City, Iowa, on April 13, 1912, to the Reverend Roy Leslie and Lois Lewis Smith. His college degree was from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, his Seminary degree from Drew University and his Ph.D. from New York University.

After his ordination as an elder of The United Methodist Church in 1938, Gene began his ministry as pastor of Wesley Church in Roselle, New Jersey. It was during the years at Roselle that he married Idalene Gullege, a graduate school classmate at Drew, and also there that their two daughters, LuAnn and Rosemary were born. In 1944, the Smith family moved to Emory Church in Jersey City and in 1947 to St. Marks Church in Brooklyn. In 1948, Gene was appointed General Secretary, World Division, of the Board of Missions, the youngest person ever to head the largest Protestant missionary agency in the world. From that post he went to the Senior Staff of the World Council of Churches, serving for nine years as Executive Secretary of the New York office.

A close friend and colleague, Dr. Tracey K. Jones, Jr. has described Gene in those twenty-

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five years of church administration as a "Bridge-building missionary - theologian, ecumenical statesman and administrator." As a missionary-theologian the theme of his ministry was reflected in his books, lectures and sermons — a search for effective ways to find God and each other. In 1957, in a lecture series entitled **Changing Patterns of World Mission**, he developed the theme of the whole gospel for the whole person in the whole church to the whole world — the central theme of the Nairobi Assembly seventeen years later! His books **The Power Within Us** (1948) and **Mandate for Mission** (1968) are adventuresome statements in mission theology.

As an ecumenical statesman he built bridges between Protestants and Catholics, Liberals and Conservatives, Jews and Christians, blacks and whites. During the 1950's Gene had developed a personal friendship with the heads of almost all the Roman Catholic orders in the United States and Rome. In 1964 the Maryknoll Fathers published a symposium at which he had been invited to speak, together with the heads of major U.S. orders. When the documents of Vatican II were published in 1965 and signed by Pope Paul, Gene was invited to write the Protestant response to the Catholic statement of mission. In recognition of this "bridge-building", in 1968 Loyola University of Chicago conferred on him an honorary Doctor of Laws. Gene developed lines of communication between missionary societies and main-line church bodies through formal and informal consultations. In 1970, the opening editorial in the annual *Journal of Fuller*, a conservative theological seminary, was entitled "The Wholeness of the Church through the Wholeness of the Gospel". It was signed Eugene L. Smith. Still in the 1960's, he represented the World Council of Churches in negotiations with the Jews, an accomplishment for which he was recognized during a trip to Israel. In the civil rights struggles of the '60's, Gene marched with Martin Luther King; Wilberforce University awarded him an honorary Doctor of Divinity as confirmation of their respect.

As a bridge-building administrator during his sixteen years with the World Division, his style was characterized by openness and freedom. It made for excitement and high morale as he travelled and encouraged the 1160 missionaries around the world and the staff of the Board of Global Ministries to become a family, as he unified the Methodist Churches of Latin America, Europe, Asia and North America through Interfield Consultations, as he encouraged communication between the Board of Missions and the Annual Conferences.

During these same twenty-five years he had written four books, delivered eleven lectures series, presided over the Council of Secretaries, Methodist Church, served as vice-president of the National Council of Churches from 1954 to 1957, as a member of the executive committee of the World Methodist Council, on the Board of Directors of Union Theological Seminary, Drew University and Scarritt College, as well as attending eight General Conferences of The Methodist Church and the first four Assemblies of the World Council of Churches.

In 1973, he returned to his first love, the pastorate in Northern New Jersey; he and Idalene rented their house in Closter and took up residence for four years in the parsonage in Denville. To that small, eager congregation he brought an openness to people, an excitement about the gospel, an expertise in church organization and a commitment to pastoral care. The same preacher of world renown changed lives in Denville as he spoke intimately of the joy of the gospel and of the pain of the cross as a base for new life.

The Rev. Dean Lanning, paying tribute at the Eugene L. Smith Day in the Demarest Church, April 27, 1985, described Gene as an "authentic leader", one whose natural qualities pushed him in positions of leadership while allowing him to move effectively as an enthusiastic supporter and helper. Gene remained an inspired and inspiring witness to the gospel, encouraging growth and renewal in the conference. He was a wise counsellor to clergy and laity, a courageous Christian who took a stand, made a statement, performed a task because he loved his Lord.

As Gene enriched the life of this conference, his membership was a precious support in his life. On June 16, 1966, in a sermon to the ordinands at Saint Paul School of Theology, Methodist, in Kansas City, Missouri, Gene said "I wander around — it's a lonesome life in this kind of a job. I tell you there's nothing like the fellowship of a Methodist Conference. There's a deep lonesomeness about my job. I am a stranger; I preach to strangers all the time. I can't tell you what it means, but there's one place I belong — it's in my Annual Conference. This is spiritual-

ly where my roots are, and to this fellowship which I prize beyond the saying of it I welcome you and I congratulate you."

At his "retirement" at 65 Gene began his third career — he studied for and met the requirements for three licenses: as a family counsellor in the State of New Jersey, as a member of the American Association of Pastoral Counsellors and as a clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. He established and became the first Director of the Center for Human Development in Totowa, New Jersey, under the joint sponsorship of the Roman Catholic, Methodist and Episcopalian parishes of that town.

During these years also his care for Idalene, his partner of forty years increased; in early 1981 she entered a nearby nursing home where she died in 1983.

The Totowa practice reached out across socio-economic, cultural divisions; the youngest client was 7, and oldest 76. Gene's personal therapy style was one of "unconditional positive regard" for the person, a loving attention, a "being with" that lifted people out of their dilemmas and let them experience life more abundantly. The stuff of his therapy must have been rich and powerful; he provided each person with a safe place so that he or she could take the risk of becoming a real person. Over those seven years, in thousands of sessions in a small room in Totowa, men, women and children moved with Gene to new freedom, new love, new life.

In August 1984, Gene and Elaine Smith Cooke were married. They loved and worshipped, worked and played in an intensely joyful, mutually enriching relationship. There was time to visit with Rosemary and her husband, Al Zander in Englewood, with LuAnn and her husband, Bill Polk and two daughters, Malinda and Gillian, all at Groton School in Groton, Massachusetts. There was time to enjoy three step-children Andrea, Jeffrey and Leslie Cooke, for whom he had been "Uncle Gene" since Denville days. There were roses, golf, preaching at Mohonk Mountain House, dinners with friends, ballet, picnics, concerts, a reunion with California cousins, and always the supportive, loving fellowship of the Demarest church family.

These supports and joys were precious resources when doctors diagnosed Gene's lung cancer in November 1985. The love poured in and the prayers surrounded. Gene counted his two major achievements: that he had learned to love his God and that he had learned to love people. The family drew close. Eugene L. Smith died on February 20, 1986. His pastor, Dr. Douglas Miller officiated at a triumphant memorial service; Dr. Tracey K. Jones, Jr. paid a loving tribute. Gene's ashes are interred beside the Rockaway Valley United Methodist Church in Rockaway Valley, New Jersey.

"It is my prayer that your love may be more and more rich in knowledge and in all manner of insight, enabling you to have a sense of what is vital, so that you may be transparent and of no harm to anyone in view of the day of Christ, your life covered with that harvest of righteousness which Jesus Christ produces, to the glory and the praise of God."



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