

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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BISHOPS – MISSIONARIES

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186

**PEELE, BISHOP WILLIAM W.**

**Bishop Peele Dies;  
Had Led Richmond Area**



BISHOP PEELE

Bishop William Walter Peele, retired, of The Methodist Church died in his sleep July 1 at his home in Laurinburg, N. C. He was seventy-seven.

Funeral services were held in the Laurinburg Methodist Church with Bishop Paul N. Garber of Richmond, Va., and the Rev. Henry G. Runk, the pastor, sharing in the ritual.

Bishop Peele was revered for his gentle and gracious manner, and high-

ly regarded throughout his ministry as an educator, pastor and administrator. He is survived by his wife, the former Elizabeth Lytch of Laurinburg, and numerous kin in North and South Carolina.

Elected a bishop of the former Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1938, Bishop Peele presided over the Richmond Area for fourteen years before retiring in 1952. The Area comprises the Virginia and North Carolina Conferences.

Bishop Peele served one term, 1942-43, as president of the Council of Bishops, and nine years as chairman of the Methodist Commission on Chaplains. He also served as trustee of Duke and American universities.

Bishop Peele was a native of Gib-

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He entered the ministry in 1906 after serving as a professor and three years as president of Rutherford College, now Brevard (N. C.) College.

In 1911 he became headmaster of Trinity Park School in Durham, N. C., and in 1915 he was made Professor of Bible Literature at Trinity College. He returned to the pastorate in 1918, serving churches in Raleigh, Durham and Charlotte, and two years as superintendent of the Greensboro District prior to his election to the episcopacy.

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JUL 3 1959

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# Virginia Methodist Advocate

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GEO. S. REAMEY, Editor

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, JULY 9, 1959

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## Bishop Peele Dies in His Sleep

The funeral service of Bishop William Walter Peele of Laurinburg, N. C., was conducted on Friday morning of last week, by the Reverends H. G. Ruark of Laurinburg and Grady Kinley of Gibson, N. C. Bishop Peele had died in his sleep on Wednesday morning, July 1. The service was conducted at the First Methodist Church in Laurinburg.

From the time of his election to the episcopacy until his retirement, Bishop Peele served the Richmond Area. When he assumed charge of the (old) Virginia Conference with its 10 districts, the conference membership was 163,782. The next year with unification, the conference embraced 14 districts with a membership of approximately 230,000. At the annual conference in 1951—shortly after which the bishop was compelled to relinquish active work, the membership had grown to 289,168. Meanwhile, from unification until annual conference in 1951, the number of pastoral appointments increased for this conference approximately 80.

The bishop was an indefatigable worker and, especially during the days of World War II were his responsibilities heavy and pressing.

### Health Improved

Bishop Peele's health in recent years was generally good. He accepted occasional preaching invitations and, the evening before his death, he made a visit to the home of friends.

Bishop Peele, as Dr. Peele before his elevation to the episcopacy, held some of the larger pastorates in North Carolina Methodism; Edenton Street Church at Raleigh, Trinity at Durham and First Church at Charlotte.

Earlier he had served as president of Rutherford College, a church-related, junior college in Burk County, and he had taught at his alma mater, Trinity College, now Duke University.

The fourth of 10 children born to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew H. Peele on a farm near Scotland County town of Gibson the bishop never ceased to marvel at the ability of his parents to send eight of their children through college on the small income from a 60-acre farm. Four sons became ministers, one a lawyer, one a teacher, and a daughter became a missionary to China.



Bishop W. W. Peele

## Dr. Acey Leaves On World Evangelism Tour

Dr. A. E. Acey, pastor of Ghent Church, Norfolk, left New York on July 1 for a missions and evangelism tour around the world. He first visited Brussels, Paris, the Holy Land and then was scheduled to go to Singapore, Malaya and the Philippines, returning to Norfolk the first week in September via Japan, Hawaii and San Francisco.

Dr. Acey will spend three weeks in both Malaya and the Philippines, where he will tour mission stations and conduct evangelistic services. A total of 12 ministers are on the trip which is sponsored by the Methodist Board of Missions and the Board of Evangelism. Dr. Harry Denman is tour director and Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of The Upper Room, is also a member of the group.

While in the Philippines, Dr. Acey will see his son, Alfred E. Acey, who is with the armed forces there.

Dr. R. B. Proctor will preach at Ghent during Dr. Acey's absence.

## Shirkey Opens Luray Vesper Season

Dr. Albert P. Shirkey, pastor of Mount Vernon Place Methodist Church, Washington, D. C., was guest minister for the opening, on Sunday evening, June 28, of the famed Sunset Vespers at Luray (see picture of the Singing Tower on front cover).

For 19 years the Luray Ministerial Association has sponsored an annual series of 10 vesper services on the lawn of the Singing Tower. Preceding each such service, a program of carillon music is given by Charles T. Chapman of Luray, one of America's outstanding carillonneurs. Services begin at 6:45 p.m. (EST).

During the vesper season ministers of national reputation are often heard and there is special music by visiting choirs. The music, the messages and the rare beauty of the setting combine to produce a unique and elevating effect upon the worshippers.

Leadership for the establishment of these services came largely from the Luray Methodist Church, it is said. Present pastor at Luray is the Rev. E. J. Nottingham, III.

## Pledges Almost Doubled At Rocky Mount Church

Under the leadership of the Rev. Forrest H. Mead, pastor, the Rocky Mount Church, Danville District, secured a 92 per cent increase in pledges, as a result of a carefully planned every-member canvass.

During the past conference year 12 new church members were added, 21 on profession. Seventy-eight subscriptions to the Virginia Methodist Advocate were secured, one for every 6.7 members, and a week-day kindergarten was successfully operated.

The church added a secretary to its staff and there were organized a Methodist Men's Club and a Young Adult Fellowship.

The Rev. Mr. Mead was returned at conference for his second year.

# Making The Church Music Program Effective

By J. EDWARD MOYER,  
Professor of Church Music and Speech,  
Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D. C.

"For the common things of every day, God gave men speech in the common way;  
For the deeper things men think and feel, God gave the poet words to reveal;  
For the heights and depths no words can reach, God gave men music, the Soul's own speech."

(Editorial note: Professor Moyer gave the following address at annual conference and it was received with considerable interest and enthusiasm. At the request of several conference members who heard the address, the Advocate is glad to publish it—through the kindness of the professor in letting us have a copy. The first portion of the address is given herewith; the remainder will appear next week.)

If it is true, as the poet claims, that God gave men music to be the speech of the Soul, is it not important that, in the church—be it city, cathedral or wayside chapel—we should treat it with sincerity and discernment; we should treat it with the reverent stewardship that all of God's gifts demand? If we are honest, however, I'm afraid we must admit that in thousands of Methodist churches music is regarded as little more than a pleasant artistic and entertaining performance, with the choice of the hymn or anthem or **ORGAN SELECTION** determined by such crude standards as **FAVORITISM** (what we like) and **FAMILIARITY** (what we know), rather than **WORTH SHIP** (that is, whether it is worthy of being presented to God on the altar of our worship).

The worth in music that God deserves must be present both in the quality of the hymns and anthems themselves, and in the carefulness of workmanship with which they are performed. To use in a church service, music of no worth is bad enough; to sing such music without serious and conscientious rehearsal is doubling the offense.

## Unworthy Offerings

I would like to reproduce from the history of church music two examples of unworthy musical offerings. The first has to do with inadequacy of performance. On the back of a pew in Salem (Mass.) Church is carved this significant comment relative to the singing there:

"Could good King David but for once to Salem Church repair  
And hear his Psalms thus warbled out;  
Good Lord, how he would swear."

Or, in the matter of using hymns or anthems that musically and/or textually have no worth, consider this ditty, said to have been sung in religious services about a century ago:

"The bells of hell go ting-a-ling-a-ling  
For you but not for me.  
The blessed angels sing-a-ling-a-ling  
Through all eternity  
O death, where is thy sting-a-ling-a-ling  
O grave, thy victory  
No sting-a-ling-a-ling, no ting-a-ling-a-ling,  
But sing-a-ling-a-ling for me."

## Poor Selections With Us Still

I trust there is not a church in the Virginia Conference that would admit such a ditty. Nevertheless, you and I know that certain gospel songs, still claim the affection of many of us, on the basis of familiarity and favoritism, at the expense of finer hymns. So, in essence, the problem is still with us. It has always seemed odd to me that we Methodists should accept so completely the authority of the Bible and the authority of such liturgy as the communion ritual, but that we refuse to accept the authority of the hymnal. It is almost as if we were saying "when we read the Bible, when we experience the ritual, we must use just the right words; but when we sing—anything goes!"

Now, may I suddenly shift from the negative and critical to the positive and constructive? Is it not possible that, in the past, church music has failed to realize its potential in the church's program because its values have not been revealed, and ways to achieve them have not been discovered? In recent years, many of us—ministers and church musicians—have been dreaming, praying working that a means may be found for spreading abroad the values of an effective church music program and that ways may be developed of bringing such a program to reality in our local churches.

## Two Outcomes

Out of this dreaming, praying, working have issued two developments: first—a growing philosophy of church music, including ideals, standards, aims and suggested procedures; secondly—NAFOMM, the National Fellowship of Methodist Musicians and the extensive program of in-service training across the church which it makes possible.

It is to this matter of ideals and values of church music that I would direct our attention now. That singing has been important in the story of Methodism's

200 plus years is self-evident. Of Charles Wesley's hymns, John Wesley said: "They contain all the truths of our religion." And while the power of John's preaching is clearly stated in the record, one cleric of the Established Church complained that for "one person won over to Wesley by the preaching, nine were won by the singing." Yes, the traditional influence and power of music are clear. Now let us take a kaleidoscopic view at several contributions music can and should make to persons.

We will limit this brief consideration to three selected areas of usefulness: first, music as a vehicle through which we worship; secondly, hymns as a means whereby we learn Christian ideas and ideals; third, character building values in choir experiences. As we think of worship on one hand and Christian education on the other, we must avoid a sharp distinction. As we sing a hymn or listen to an anthem in the formal worship service, the process of Christian growth is at work within us. Yet the primary objective in the formal sanctuary service is expressing our praise and our prayer to God, with God—not ourselves—the main object of concern. Just as Christian education is a by-product of worship, so worship goes on in those church school experiences which primarily are intended to serve Christian growth. The difference is one of emphasis—in worship God being the object, in Christian growth the attention being turned to man.

## "Divine Amusement"

When is music a fit vehicle for worship expression? While in some Methodist services one senses that the greatest care has been given to the appropriateness of the music as an expression of the "worth-ship" of God, there are others in which it is little more than a "divine amusement"—a time when the congregation sits back and basks pleasantly in the refreshing glow of a sweet voice, a pretty tune, a luscious chord! Responding favorably to music only when it produces the effect of "prettiness" is tantamount to applying values of the material and the worldly to what should be the realm of the spiritual!

Our task at this point is to become sensitive to the effects of varying types of words and music, so that we may be able to distinguish between sincere wor-

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