

# United Evangelical Church

(UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

EAST AVENUE & DILLON STREET  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21224

PAUL A. RASCHE  
PASTOR

TITUS LEHMANN, D.D.  
EMERITUS

RALPH E. WEISSER, D.D.  
PASTOR OF VISITATION

CHURCH OFFICE  
BROADWAY 6-0393

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## ANNUAL REPORT OF PASTOR OF VISITATION FOR YEAR 1968

My presence here tonight is the result of a desire on the part of United Evangelical Church and Pastor Rasche to expand and amplify the ministry of this congregation. A year has now passed since we came to Baltimore. It has been an enjoyable time, and I trust that it has also been fruitful in the direction that was intended.

In the broadest sense, I, like all of the rest of you, should be fulfilling a ministry as a Christian in all of my relationships. And it is true that, while I do carry out specific duties that have been outlined by the terms of our agreement, I am also trying to minister to the congregation and in the community in a broader sense than in those specific duties alone.

A major part of the time devoted to the Church has been given to home visitation. Approximately 450 names were given to me by the Membership Committee of the Church Council and Pastor Rasche, as persons who should be called upon. A large percentage (about four-fifths) of these have now been visited. This included a high percentage of persons who still think of themselves as related to this Church, but have manifested few signs of activity in recent years. The intent of such calls is to let these people know that the congregation and Pastor Rasche and myself are interested in their total welfare as persons, to remind them of obligations that Church membership involves, to encourage them to begin anew in the fullest participation which their situation permits. We do want them especially to know that the Church and the Pastors care about them. We also, in many cases derive valuable information about a family, its situation and its needs. When it is apparent that persons are no longer interested in our particular congregation or when practical considerations indicate it, I sometimes advise people to become active participants elsewhere. I have also called on several prospective members, some new members and newly-wed couples. Be it noted that a few calls have been made on active members because I happened to be in their neighborhood, and not because of any delinquency status. This has its own value, of course. Reports on calls have been made to the Membership Committee and Pastor Rasche. Various actions have been taken with reference to people's status. I believe that we can honestly say that several people have been brought into more active relationship again, in Church attendance, at least. I also believe that considerable good-will has been generated by the visits. In practically every instance I have been received in a most cordial manner. This is a compliment to the Church.

It will perhaps be understood that, in order to make a visit intelligently, considerable background information is needed about the family, or the individual. This is searched out by me in the splendid Church files that we have, recorded on calling sheets, and referred to at the proper time. This, added to considerable map-scanning, is a time-consuming task, but is absolutely necessary

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and valuable.

There have been time and thought expended in conjunction with Pastor Rasche toward the building of a more effective adult program in the Church and this will receive more stress in 1969. The Retreat at New Windsor and its follow-up were moves in this direction. I have had the pleasure of participating in the conducting of the Church services from time to time, and have assumed the pastoral responsibilities in their entirety during Pastor Rasche's vacation. I have also had the privilege of sitting in the pew. There has been participation in community life, mainly through the Canton Christian Council.

I wish at this time to express special appreciation to the other members of the Church staff for their help and friendship, to the Church Council and all others who have been co-laborers and counselors. Mrs. Weisser and I are deeply grateful for the warm manner in which we have been received by the members, as well as by Pastor and Mrs. Rasche. We look forward to the continuing associations as we go forward in the Lord's work. May his grace and mercy attend us.

Respectfully submitted,

*Ralph E. Weisser*