

PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION  
UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH  
BALTIMORE, MD  
JAN. 25, 1963  
for  
the year 1962

By the grace of Almighty God another year has been added to the rich history of United Evangelical Church. It was a year which saw the beginning of a new pastorate and which brought forth the many experiences which such a change always produces in a congregation. It was a year in which a good beginning was accomplished in the working of a people and a pastor together, a year in which there was much learning of each other and of the inauguration and first outworkings of a plan of pastorate which the new pastor brought with him, and which was adapted to fit the situation in the local congregation. The purpose of this report will be to look at this past year, to give statistics of our church life, to critically examine the way we have trod together these months, to make note of worthwhile advances made and to also note the places wherein there is much yet to be done.

As we begin we desire to express our grateful thanks unto Almighty God, who has brought us on our way, for it was through His grace and blessings we have been privileged to spend the year together and to register the history which we have written. To His honor and glory be now this report, and our deliberations this night.

Since the chief and foremost reason for the existence of the church is the worship of God; since the apex of all our life here must be in the services of worship, it is with these statistics that we begin this report.

Services were conducted very regularly during this past year, on each Sunday and upon special occasions. 127 services were conducted on Sundays and special occasions, including Advent and Lenten services. The averages for attendance at the Sunday services throughout the year is as follows: Jan - 451; Feb. 495; March 514; April (which included Palm Sunday, Easter) 714; May 417; June 429; July 261; Aug 275; Sept 419; Oct 459; Nov. 455; Dec 454. The year's average Sunday attendance was thus 445, and the average at the Sundays, excluding the months of July and August, was 481. These averages do not include any other but Sunday morning services.

While these above figures may seem satisfactory, while the 481 mark represents approximately a 46% of our 1962 membership, still I am much perturbed at the large number of our folk who are very irregular in their attendance at worship services. We need to continue to expound the basic premise that the first reason we are a church is to gather in services of worship, even before we attend Sunday Church School classes or engage in any of the organizational life of the church. Your membership with United Evangelical demands that you be active in your attendance at the services of worship in the sanctuary.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion was celebrated at 18 services during the year. The total attending was 3317, and the average attendance at the Communion, excluding the special services at Easter and Lent, was between 150 and 200 per Sunday, which is a very low figure out of 1000 people who should be communing more regularly. When one realizes that although the 3317 total divided among our 1000 members figures out at an average of 3 communions per member, it must be remembered that many of these communions represent the faithful coming the majority of the times the Sacrament was offered, and others coming not at all or only once or twice all year. This is an insufficient attendance at the Sacrament to maintain a strong membership status.

Other statistics are: Weddings, 72; Baptisms, 65; Funerals, 56. The compilation of the membership as of 1/1/63 is as follows: Membership a yr. ago - 1029. Additions during the year: by Junior Confirmation and by re-statement of faith or first statement of faith by adults - 65; additions by transfer of membership from another church, 13, making total of 78

This gives us a gross membership figure of 1107. From this we deduct the following : Members who died, 21; members transferring out to another church 14; members deleted from rolls, 24, making total of 59. This gives us a net membership for 1963 of 1048

Another facet of our church life upon which judgement and opinions may be made is the matter of our stewardship, our participation through our offerings. A study of the whole level of our giving has been requested of our Finance Committee, which study will show the status of our stewardship in a very graphic manner when completed. Another measuring rod of stewardship is the results achieved in benevolent giving across a year, and it is at this point I should like to make some observations. Your Council and Finance officers have worked very hard this year in seeking to complete the challenges which are given us each year from our denomination in the benevolent field, or in those monies which are not used for our own needs but are sent through denominational offices for the larger work of Christ's church. May I speak on these various challenges:

The Apportionment - this is a challenge which is the support we give to our denomination as regards the work of missions, denominational agencies, and the like. Our minimum asking for 1962 (and all these askings are upon the basis of the 1029 members we reported) was at the figure of \$8166.00 The very best we could do to meet this amount was \$6000.00, a higher figure than reached before, percentage-wise, but not a 100% figure.

World Service- Here we are requested to contribute, again on basis of membership, a sum of \$965.00, which we seek to secure through 2 special "One Hour of Sharing" offerings. In 1962 these two offerings totaled \$760.00, \$200.00 less than our asking.

Seminary Fund - This request has been hanging fire for some years. Originally placed in our hands about 1959 or 60, this request was pegged at the rate of \$2.00 per member across a number of years. Nothing much was done on this matter until this year, when we sought to come as close to meeting it as possible. We have now reached the figure of \$2063.00 and will continue in 1963 to finish this challenge. The Seminaries of our church are very important facets of church life and we need to undergird this special financial drive they have had under way.

I know each member of United Evangelical Church has a great deal of pride about his church and this is the way it ought to be. I too have that pride, that in all things this church should be in there and doing along with the other churches. According to the records in my files, our church is the only one of the larger and more substantial of our churches in Baltimore which has not met in full the askings for World Service and United Seminary Appeal. As I have said, we will desire to complete the Seminary challenge soon, but it remains that each of us will have to be more conscious of the need for World Service in 1963, that we have no trouble meeting this figure. Also, our giving overall should be stepped up so that we can likewise meet the Apportionment asking for 1963, which is at the minimum figure of \$8199.00

Generally speaking, the life of United Evangelical Church has moved along in a very gratifying manner in 1962. Committees have worked hard, organizations have been very active, the choirs have done splendidly, the members of the Church Council have been very faithful in the discharge of their duties, the staff has worked smoothly together. It has been a good year, and we should be praising God for His blessings upon us. Thanks to everyone.

This year 1963 is our 90th Anniversary year and with this meeting tonite we should be beginning to think seriously of how we want to celebrate this auspicious event. I will have more in specific to say about this in just a moment or two.

Recommendations for the year 1963

1. Communion - I should like to recommend that we observe the Sacrament at both

services each 1st Sunday of the month. This will be an incentive to our folk to come to the Lord's Table more frequently. Statistically, the figures bear this out. A year ago in December, when we had two communions the attendance was 355. This past Dec. it was 158. In January the figure was at 268. This year the figure was at 176.

2. I should like to recommend that we set up a Membership Drive in behalf of our organizations and groups for the period from Lent to Pentecost. There are many folk in our congregation, of all age levels and varieties, who play absolutely no part in any of the organizational life of the congregation. This 90th year would be a splendid time for some intensive campaign for increased membership in the groups to be put forth. Such a campaign was highly successful in other congregations, and it can be of help here.

3. Our 90th Anniversary. We should at this meeting vote to celebrate our 90th Anniversary in the month of September of 1963. Then an Anniversary Committee should be authorized, which committee will have full charge of plans and procedures for this celebration. This committee could be composed of 15 members: 6 from the organizations (Lad. Aid, Women's G., Men's, Girl's G., Youth, Sun. Sch.) 4 from the Council and 5 from the congregation at large. Then this Committee could divide itself into subdivisions - one on Program, one on Speakers, one on Projects, one on Finance, one on Decoration, etc. Definitely some projects should be accomplished for this anniversary, for which an Anniversary Fund could be set up to meet the expenses. Projects could be proposed through this Committee to a special congregational meeting within several months, at which time also the outline of the Anniversary celebration could be presented.

4. That we keep in mind in our congregation some needed additions in our church plant, that could be chosen to be given as memorials to the memory of loved ones of our families.

We still need both the red and black sets of altar hangings, the red to be used for Anniversaries, Pentecost and perhaps for Christmas. ~~the black for church funerals and in Holy Week~~ Additional stops for our organ are still desirable, the three suggested stops with prices being - Obed at about \$800.00; vox Humana at \$750 and vox Celeste at \$775

Another great need or two, and which might become part of the Anniversary projects:

A set of drapes, on traverse rods, for over the large window at the rear of the church. If draperies are not placed at that window soon, we will be needing to refinish some of the pews and the woodwork at the altar. The light through the window is so bright it has even faded the hymnals in the balcony.

A system of dimmers for the lights of the sanctuary, whereby we can bring the lights down slowly for the sermon, and for other occasions in the church life.

5. My final recommendation is that this report and the finance reports for the year 1962 be printed and placed in the hands of our people.

Respectfully submitted,

*Paul A. Rasche*

*add note for 1963 expenditures  
stating United Church Home -*