

REPORT OF PASTOR TO UNITED EVANGELICAL CHURCH

FOR THE YEAR 1952

"When they awoke, they saw the glory of the Lord"

We quote this word from Luke 9:32, in which chapter we find the story of the Transfiguration of Christ, to illustrate that one must be fully awake and aware to understand and to "see" the Lord Jesus Christ. Possibly that is why we do not have a deep enough experience of Him for we may not be fully awake spiritually. We need to be aware of the power and the sufficiency of our Lord, after whom we are named.

There is so much danger in a larger Church, like ours, to pay too much stress on facts and figures and not enough on spirit. Outwardly we have had a fairly good year. We paid our expenses with an income of over \$13,000.00 and a balance of over \$2300.00. Our income for benevolences and missions has again been pitifully small amounting to only somewhat over \$1200.00. This shows a lack of responsibility toward the larger work of the Church. We took in over \$11,000.00 for our Building Fund and now have at hand somewhat over \$90,000.00. Our work went on in the various organizations and we thank one and all of the officers, the care-taker, the Church secretary, the helpers with the mailings and the Choirs with the minister of music and the organist. But we dare not feel satisfied, for as soon as we feel that we have done all we could - which isn't really true - then we go to sleep.

I would like to put the pastor's official figures on a different plane this year. He could baptize 133 children, but how many of the families remain in vital connection with the Church? Our Cradle Roll has been doing a fine follow-up job. The Sunday School attendance has been up to about an average of 70 per cent of enrollment. But still as a congregation, we do not take our work in Christian Education seriously enough. Through confirmation and confession of faith we were able to receive fifty-two new members into the Church, but we do not have enough help to follow up those we take in and we lose so many, which is tragic. We lost about forty members through death. The pastor had about thirty weddings of people connected with the Church. 2415 people communed this past year, a decided drop in attendance that is a definite cause for concern. Are we not interested in this fellowship with the Lord? Regular services were conducted and church attendance was fair, but we still do not measure up to the standard of a Church-going congregation. The Pastor made about 2000 calls in the various homes of the congregation and had about 400 come to the Parsonage for consultation; but we need a Church whose members are interested in vital fellowship and visitation.

Here are a few suggestions that might help us to be more vitally aware of our responsibility and not only our privilege in calling upon the Church for its various ministrations.

1. We need to have a Bible study and prayer group, to seriously face the will of God and to ask strength to carry it out.
2. We need worship with reverence and regular Church attendance.
3. We need to feel our responsibility as a Church toward our community. Our attendance at Lenten Services is not up to par. A visitation would be helpful. We drop people too easily from our envelope and membership list, instead of trying to see them. The pastor cannot do it all. We need to make arrangements for our 80th Anniversary in the fall of 1953. Christ must come first in all of our planning.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. T. Lehman