

SUNDAY SERMON TOPICS

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17

First Baptist
"Song to the Night" has been selected for the sermon topic here. During the month the Rev. Emil Kontz, pastor, and the Rev. Donald Spears, assistant, will share preaching duties.

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Unity Center
Frank Glabach will speak on "The Lord's Prayer" at the service in the Unity reading room, Theater building, Woodward avenue.

Sunday Sermonette Courage Beyond Catastrophe

A Continuing Series by Local Religious Leaders

By THE REV. EMIL KONTZ,
Pastor, First Baptist Church

"I want to be a survivor!"
That was the pathetic response by a youth in Europe to the question: "What is your ambition for the future?"

Very likely, that is the natural reaction by one who has confronted great and frequent catastrophe. But what about us here in America who have not known the shock and loss which catastrophe brings? Do we have the deep-seated faith to strengthen and sustain us in a time of personal or national catastrophe? Do we have spiritual resources to enable us to not only meet and endure hardship but even surmount and master it? Christian faith is the answer to these questions.

Out of the distant past comes a dramatic illustration of how this can be done. Several young men emigrated from their native land, lived as Displaced Persons in a foreign country. They were expected to participate in the customs of the land, including the practice of idolatry. This they resolutely refused to do, even though they were threatened with a horrible death. Their firm refusal was phrased in these significant words:

"Our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us, but if not, that we will not worship."

"We will not worship."

Next, Christian courage is practical. It does not merely face catastrophe, it uses it. It does not simply resign to it but seeks to turn it to some good purpose.

Such was the case with Harold Russell in the story "The Best Years of Our Lives." He was not content to tolerate a physical handicap; he actually utilized that handicap for a socially constructive purpose.



REV. EMIL KONTZ

high places. He views his own age, but is able to see beyond its ills—decay and destruction—the promise of a better, brighter future. Here are Peter's own words: "Seeing then that all these things will be dissolved . . . and the elements shall melt with fervent heat . . . Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:12-14)

"COURAGE beyond catastrophe" . . . that is the need of our day. Christian courage has at least three important qualities.

First, Christian courage is realistic. It recognizes that catastrophe is possible. Scientists are quite plain and positive in their statements that man now has power to wreck and ruin our present civilization.

Unleashed atomic energy, they say, may also bring on catastrophe. In the face of these possibilities, others are heedlessly careless while some are needlessly anxious. Christian courage is ready to realize the immediate peril, and also to recognize the promise of ultimate progress beyond.

Next, Christian courage is practical. It does not merely face catastrophe, it uses it. It does not simply resign to it but seeks to turn it to some good purpose.

Such was the case with Harold Russell in the story "The Best Years of Our Lives." He was not content to tolerate a physical handicap; he actually utilized that handicap for a socially constructive purpose.

vision of setting up a permanent hospital. Under these strange circumstances they called the Mayo brothers, and thus started the world-famous Mayo Hospital in Rochester, Minn.

Finally, Christian courage is optimistic. It meets the immediate hardship and distress with fortitude and faith. But it also sees and believes something more and better beyond it. This is the enduring lesson of the Biblical text quoted above.

Peter was courageous enough to face the fact that the pagan order of his day was doomed to destruction. But he was optimistic enough to believe that out of the ruin God would bring about a better and more lasting order. History has vindicated his faith. He speaks of "new heavens"—new reality and clarity in the realm of the spiritual; also, he refers to "new earth"—brotherhood and peace in the area of social relations.

That alone is the faith that gives "Courage Beyond Catastrophe."

Baptist Pastor to Make Second TV Appearance

The Rev. Emil Kontz, pastor of the First Baptist church, will make his second appearance on the "Church of the Crossroads" at 9 a.m., Aug. 17. This religious program is televised each week over WWJ-TV.

His topic will be "The Still Small Voice—Still Speaks." The program is sponsored by the Detroit Council of Churches, with which Mr. Kontz has served as vice president of the Pastor's union and chairman of the youth department.

Embury Church Circle Plans Ice Cream Social

Mrs. James Keegan, representing Friendship Circle of the WSCS of Embury Methodist church, has been named general chairman of the Aug. 22 ice cream social. The affair will be held on the church grounds, 14 Mile and Croft, beginning at 1 p.m. and continuing until early evening.

Entertainment for the youngsters will include pony and kiddie rides and a color-movie depicting life on western cattle ranches. The film will be shown several times during the afternoon in the church recreation room.

News copy submitted early necessarily is given preference over late items. So the "Early Bird" usually gets the space.

Bible Class Meets At Childrens Home

The small white chapel on the grounds of the Baptist children's home, 13 Mile and Greenfield, has been selected for the Vacation Bible school headquarters, Aug. 18-22. Sessions will be held daily from 9:30 a.m. to noon.

Boys and girls from 4 to 12 years will take part in a program including Bible stories, music, games and handicrafts. The school is jointly sponsored by the First Baptist churches of Birmingham and Royal Oak and the Detroit Baptist missionary society. There is no enrollment fee.

Mrs. C. H. Johnson, superintendent of the Birmingham primary department, will direct the school.

Rev. William G. Ardrey, pastor of the Church of the Nazarene, left this week for a vacation period in the west. He will conduct a mission for his brother, the Rev. Alexander Ardrey, pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Peabody, Mass., later traveling through New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and other eastern states with his family.

D. C. Hatfield of Berkeley will occupy the Rev. Ardrey's pulpit during his absence.

with staff members selected from the cooperating groups. The Rev. Woodrow W. Clark of Royal Oak, with the Rev. Emil Kontz and the Rev. Donald Spears of Birmingham will also take part in the program.

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