

At the CHURCH DOOR

By JULIE CANDLER

There's no better place than Palestine to teach the history of our religion to young people. And that's where the senior high young people of Community Congregational church will go with their advisors, if all goes well.

Rev. Lorenzo A. Todd, associate minister at the church, says it will be three years before the proposed four to six-week trip will be taken.

The exciting plans are part of a new religious education program for senior high youth. Starting next fall, the teen agers will be studying in preparation for annual spring trips.

Plans are to take them to Chicago next Easter vacation, says Mr. Todd, who concentrates on Christian education and youth work.

THESE THEY'LL visit places like the Oriental Institute of archeology and the first cyclotron at the University of Chicago's Stag field.

The second year they hope to go to Washington, and Palestine would come the third year.

The young people will study for the upcoming trips in church school and in their youth groups as well.

"This program sets a goal for the teen agers to work toward," said Mr. Todd. "It keeps up their interest."

"WE'RE A LITTLE tired of getting young people up to about the seventh grade, and finding many of them lose interest in religion at about that age. They usually regain their interest at about college age, but with many there is sort of a religious vacuum during the interceding years," he explained.

"Religious principles and aims are worked into the trips. One of the important goals is that we hope to show them through their travels how important the Christian approach to life is," the minister said.

Idea for the young people's travel came from a report of a Hartford, Conn. group which made the Palestine trip successfully. The church supplied some of the necessary money.

The young people earned some of it, some was given by members of the church in the form of scholarships.

FOR SEVERAL years young people of the Congregational church of Birmingham have enjoyed spring vacation tours with the Rev. and Mrs. Robert D. Dewey and several other adult members of the church.

The Lathrup group plans to travel with a group from First Congregational church of Royal Oak. They'll probably go by bus, with two busloads of about 40 teens and chaperones each.

All of which makes us wonder if there isn't some technical loophole which would permit church editors to get in the senior high youth group.

We hasten to explain that when we published portions of the Rev. Carl Baird's very interesting statement of faith before an examination council at the Congregational church of Birmingham, lengthy portions of it had to be cut out.

Feeling that the general reader would be more interested



EGCENTRIC PHOTO

The Sun Begins to Shine

JUST BEFORE the kindergartners' worship service began at the first vacation church school at the Congregational church of Birmingham, the youngsters sang "The Farmer Sows His Wheat" with gestures. Here a few of them show how

"the sun begins to shine". From left are David Burnett, Betty Ann Sharrard, Lewiston Booth, and Judy Eastburn, one of the teachers, an unidentified youngster, and Freddy Edwards in foreground. The eight-day school closes today.

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In Mr. Baird's application of his faith to living, we left those portions and cut out most of the theological doctrine. But, says Mr. Baird, "In the omission of most of my statements about theological doctrine, the impression might easily be received that what you printed was the main body of my faith. Whereas, in fact, it represents more the conclusions I draw from my faith. To me, the two are inseparably connected."

Mr. Baird by no means asked that we publish what was left out, he just wanted to explain that what was left out was to him the most important essentials of his faith.

Which just goes to prove that quoting people out of context is tricky.

Congregational Ministers' Views Conflict

As the sealing of the merger between national bodies of Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational Christian churches was being celebrated in Cleveland last week, Birmingham area ministers voiced conflicting views on the move.

The Rev. Carl Baird and Rev. Robert D. Dewey both have stated publicly that they favor the merger. Members of their church, the Congregational church of Birmingham, voted the move at a later date when the new constitution is submitted for approval.

Opposition to the move among other churches in the nation, he said he believed would be only spotty.

Mr. Baird said he and Mr. Dewey both consider the desires of the congregation most important, and will abide by their wishes in the matter. At an earlier vote the members elected to take no stand for the time being, Mr. Baird said.

EMPHATICALLY differing from the favorable view was the Rev. Lorenzo A. Todd, associate pastor of Community Congregational church, Lathrup.

"We believe in this church that it will be impossible to join in the merger and still maintain our Congregationalism," he said.

Mr. Todd predicted that about 1000 of the nation's 5561 Congregational churches would not join in the merger. No Congregational

church, he emphasized, can be taken into the new United Church of Christ without the consent of its members.

"The merged church has already been declared a Presbyterian type, and we believe that as Congregationalists we like our system," Mr. Todd said.

IN THE EVANGELICAL and Reformed church, the individual church submits to the discipline and authority of a central body called a synod.

The Congregational Christian churches operate under a system whereby the individual congregation is supreme in the conduct of its own affairs.

Mr. Todd said that the Rev. John D. Rose, minister of Community Congregational church, had been appointed as a delegate to the Cleveland merger meet. Because of his conviction in the matter, Mr. Rose later wrote that it would be impossible for him to attend the meeting.

In another story on the church page is an area Congregational spokesman said North Congregational church in Southfield also was opposed to the merger.

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