

El Halcon, Panama

**The Board of Christian Education, 1947**

Mrs. W. Townsend, Mr. Wilson Purvis, Miss Anita Harris, Mr. Lee Adkins, Miss Kathleen Donaldson, Mr. John Matthews, Miss Dorothy Knowles, C. M. Lessenden, Mrs. Rolofson, Sr., Dr. R. H. Rolofson, Mr. George Lee, Mrs. Irma Jefferies, Mr. Wilhite, Mrs. George Lee, Mr. Frank Hohmann, Miss Isabel Zemer, Mrs. Frank Hohmann, Mrs. I. Taylor, Mrs. Hinkle.



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**Junior High Fellowship, 1947**

Front Row: Louis Hasemann, ? , Earl Boland, Kenneth Darling, Jacque Hutchings, Larry Tracy, Jack Clement, ? .  
 Second Row: Helen Hasemann, Janice Rankin, Elaine Clark, Jennie Stephens, Gertrude Foreman, Edna Hart, Mrs. Albritton, John Ryan, Nathaniel Weatherby, Everett Stacey.  
 Third Row: Pat Howard, Leona Hart, George Burns, Miss Dorothy Knowles, Mrs. R. H. Rolofson.



### Junior Intermediate Department

### Young People's Department

El Halcon, Panama

Bottom Row: Shirley Weltz, Joyce Masters, Katherine Joustra, Jean Saarinen, Bobby McCloskey, Barbara Boyer.

First Row: John Toone, Marion Schjeveland, Valli Lavinghouse, Mary Ellen Stacy, Martha Irvin, Barbara Baron, Dot Taylor, Loretta Smith, Lois Baumbach, Mr. Lessenden.

Second Row: Bob Albritton, Dick Colston, Wally Oelhoeft, Donald Boland, Norbert Jones, Emil Weltz, Charles Lord, Roy Hohman, Clifford Meyers.

Third Row: ? , Bobby Farr, ? , John Schmidt, ? , Alma Johnston, Robin Harrison, Sally Briver, Margaret Teawinkle, Kay Frangioni, Sharon Lee Schira, Gail Oakes, Anita ? , Jane Meyers, Mr. McNair, Carol Harris, Carroll Adams.

Fourth Row: ? , Sammy Beckley, Bruce Carpenter, Kenneth Darling, ? , Sue Curdts, Miss Matthews, ? , Barbara Carpenter, Donna Wilhite, Barbara ? , Betty Flatau, Helen Thomas, Shirley Mills, Judith May, Grace Joustra.

Fifth Row: ? , Larry Tracey, Edna Hart, Gertrude Foreman, Helen Hasemann, Mavis Daniels, Peggy Clement, Carpenter, Mrs. Harris, Kathleen Vinton, Patsy Howard, Jacque Hutchings.

Sixth Row: ? , ? , Mr. John Matthews, Nat Weatherby, ? , Danny Klotz, David Albritton, Richard Darling, Leland Brooks, Mr. Lee Adkins, Charles Walsh, Rudolph Flatau.

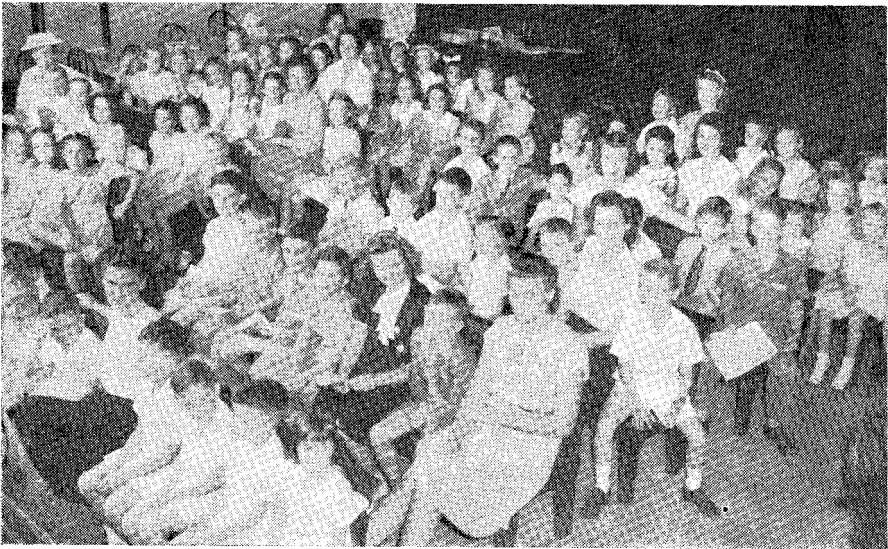


El Halcon, Panama

### The Post High Fellowship

Bottom Row: Charlotte Dye, Wilson Purvis, Mrs. Ralph Cole, Mr. Ralph Cole, Jack Greer, Lea Adkins, Connie Bell, ? , Olive Bell, Bob Wine, Mr. Lessenden.

Second Row: Andy Kopp ? , Priscilla Hannara Nelms, Lt. Bob Birkton, Vernon Nelms, Dr. R. H. Rolofson, John Matthews, Miss Dorothy Knowles, ? , ? , ? , ? , Kathleen Donaldson, ? , Ellen McClain, ? , ? , Bill Parmalee, Keith Wilkinson, Harold Dean.



### The Primary Department

El Halcon, Panama

First Row: Left Corner, Betsy Allen, Ted Webb, ? , Buddy Curdts, Ruth Smith, Teacher; Bobby Priest, Frank Townsend, ? .  
 Second Row: Pat Daniels, Teacher; Ben Thomas, Phyllis Albritton, Teacher; Buddy Galloway, Lawson Beckley, Ed. Cunningham, Chris. Hearon, June Barlow, Melinda Marshall, Gayle Oakes, ? .  
 Third Row: Lewis Darling, Mrs. Winkloskey, Charles Levis, Jack Winkloskey, Ernest Stahler, Michael Crook, ? Mehl, Evelyn Mehl, Mamie Jones, J. Townsend, Barbara Elich, B. Kling, Mrs. Keenen, Teacher.  
 Fourth Row: Ronny Tschudy, ? , ? , Gertrude Joustra, Teacher; ? Mills, David Foreman, Jimmy Des Loudes, Ruth Lavinghouse, Ruth Schjeveland, Teacher; Louise Tate, ? , Gayle Hasemann, Peggy Detamore, ? , ? .  
 Fifth Row: Wayne Johnson, Audrey Johnson, ? , ? , Kling, Jean Bickerstaff, Teacher; Earline Love, Edith Ann Eckhoff, ? , Helen Tilley, ? , Lyn McCaskey, Mrs. George Lee, Teacher; Shirley Harned, ? , Shirley Neville, Peggy Folles.  
 Sixth Row: Linda Pearl, Patricia Ashcroft, Audrey Johnson, Charlotte Herr, Mrs. Lord, Teacher; Prentice Duell, Mara Jon Wilhite, Joan Giblin, Maria Bryan, Caroline Zirkman, Helen Adams, ? , Florence Scott, Teacher.

and Hospitality Chmn., Maxwell Miller. The combined age limit of eighty years per couple proved undesirable and was abolished four years later. The group holds twelve meetings per year. Most of these are held on Sunday evenings and are for the social, spiritual and intellectual growth of the members. The Club continues its policy of sponsoring, for the benefit of the public, a discussion of certain important public problems. Prominent in this emphasis was the presentation of Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway, discussing the United Nations, with which organization he had been officially con-

nected. The Community's first Tri-Faith dinner originated in, and was greatly aided by, the Couple Club. Some 300 Catholics, Jews and Protestants were present for a highly profitable evening in which their differences were appropriately minimized and the common ideal of brotherhood was given full sway. Mr. James Harned, Couple Club President, was chairman of ticket sales; Mr. Harvey McConaughy was toastmaster and Dr. Rolofson was general chairman of the entire project. The Club has sponsored plays, worship services and other evenings of significance, including the presentation of Dr. Paul R. Hanna of Stanford University. Memorable social programs include the annual Christmas party for children; a dinner with all Pacific Side younger adults as guests; trips to Taboga Island; overnights at El Valle; picnics at Fort San Lorenzo and dinners of Panamanian food, with both roast wild pig and venison. The latter program featured "Miss Carmon Quesada," a famous Castillian soloist enroute to her home in Barcelona, from a concert tour in New Zealand and Australia. Sans build-up and Spanish costume, she proved to be entirely a hoax.

### **Worship Techniques and Services**

If worship be considered literally—"Worth-ship," then most of what we classify as Christian Education roots in worship. In recent decades Protestantism has given increasing recognition to the value of techniques designed to induce and direct worship. Obviously that is the reason sanctuaries, like Balboa's, accent Christ's cross in floor and ceiling. It is to foster a spirit of worship that, at the focal center of every assembly room of the building there is an altar, bearing a Latin cross, symbol of the victorious risen Christ; always it is on a base of three steps representing, in descending order, faith, hope and charity. On either side are the candles heralding the Light of His Truth.

Likewise, in the Christmas out-of-doors ornamentation there is a fortunate, if belated, trend away from gaudy lights which, while reminiscent of the Coney Island area of life, have not even a remote relationship to the anniversary of Christ's birth. From this pointless extravagance, the emphasis is swinging toward the Christian art motif, seeking thereby to emphasize



#### Post High Fellowship in bi-annual retreat at El Valle

Kneeling: Esther Miller, Eleanor Farstveit (Chairman Young People's Work, General Council), Bina Kate Rolofson and her grandfather, Dr. Rolofson, John Matthews, Frank Hohmann, Jean Saarinen, Donald Page, Susan Hutchings, Fred Amundrud. Standing: Mrs. George Chevalier, Dorothy Knowles, Hazel Matthews, Mrs. Robert H. Rolofson, Sr., Chester M. Lessenden, Ted Munch, Christy —, Jean Christianson, William Wilson, Leola Matthews, Ed Gould, Jo Ann Childress.

Twice annually, high in the mountains of Panama's interior, the Post Hi Fellowship week-ends for closer fellowship, a deepening of spiritual insights and to install officers. This group, January 1950, is typical save that it is approximately half the usual number. A sunrise service is held on the mountain partially shown in the upper right corner.

Other youth groups of the church over-night at this enchanting spot for similar purposes.

the New Testament's narrative of the nativity. The Christmas season of 1948 brought a beautiful array of such on the Balboa Union Church lawn. For three weeks, it was of sufficient popular interest nightly to snarl traffic on Balboa Road, the Zone's busiest thoroughfare. Central in the scene was the Holy Family in its rough-hewn stable, the goal of approaching camel-borne Wise Men, the shepherds and their sheep. All were life-size, hand painted in natural colors in exquisite taste, and artistically illuminated at night. This Nacimiento, or, if preferred, "nativity tableau," said memorable things about our Lord's birthday. It said them to the passing thousands, many of whom seldom hear a spiritual message. The project was initiated by the pastor in the Board of Education. The committee appointed by that Board was Messrs. F. W. Hohmann, John Everson, Edward McGinnis, Howard Osborn, S. H. Palmer,

Frank Sulc, Nelson Weller and Wesley Townsend. These figures will herald the Christmas Season year after year.

For sheer beauty the now traditional midnight service on Christmas Eve excels. It was first directed in 1944 by the Rev. Scott Porter, local Red Cross director, using his own compilation of Christmas gems, aided by the choir. The sanctuary is always filled. Amid the blaze of hundreds of candles, there is a simple adaptation of the Bethlehem story vehicled in song and tableaux by the choir, the angels, the shepherds, the Wise Men and the rest. Outside, as the audience arrives, all this is preluded in a manner that defies adequate description. Across the vast expanse of the terraced church lawn, candles glow in the midnight darkness; bride's candles, first used at weddings throughout the closing year. The illumined nativity figures add a note both of graphic realism and the poetic. Above and just beyond the Holy Family's rustic stable, at the church's portals, young voices sing the glad tidings. Filtering through open windows into the mellow, tropical night, come the organ's backgrounding notes. Towering majestically above all is the huge white building, itself a sermon in stone, pointing mutely to the sky, lest the guiding star be forgotten. It is an indescribably lovely scene.

The World Day of Prayer, observed with increasing power around the globe, was initiated as a project of the Pacific side churches in 1945, under the leadership of Mrs. Rolofson. This significant service now sponsored by the Woman's Auxiliary, aided by other Pacific side churches, gives wide welcome to all.

Annually there is a "Community" Thanksgiving service participated in by the Balboa Union Church, the Balboa Heights Baptist Church and the Cathedral of St. Luke. It is well attended and the spirit of cooperation is good. When this custom began the records do not reveal. Reference is made to it in 1933.

In the Autumn of 1948 the Board of Elders voted to abandon the regular evening service when but a negligible number of persons signed the following proposal published in *The Bulletin* and mailed to every member-family:

“THE BOARD OF ELDERS”—

If you provide an evening service at the Balboa Union Church  
I definitely purpose, and agree, to attend regularly and continuously.

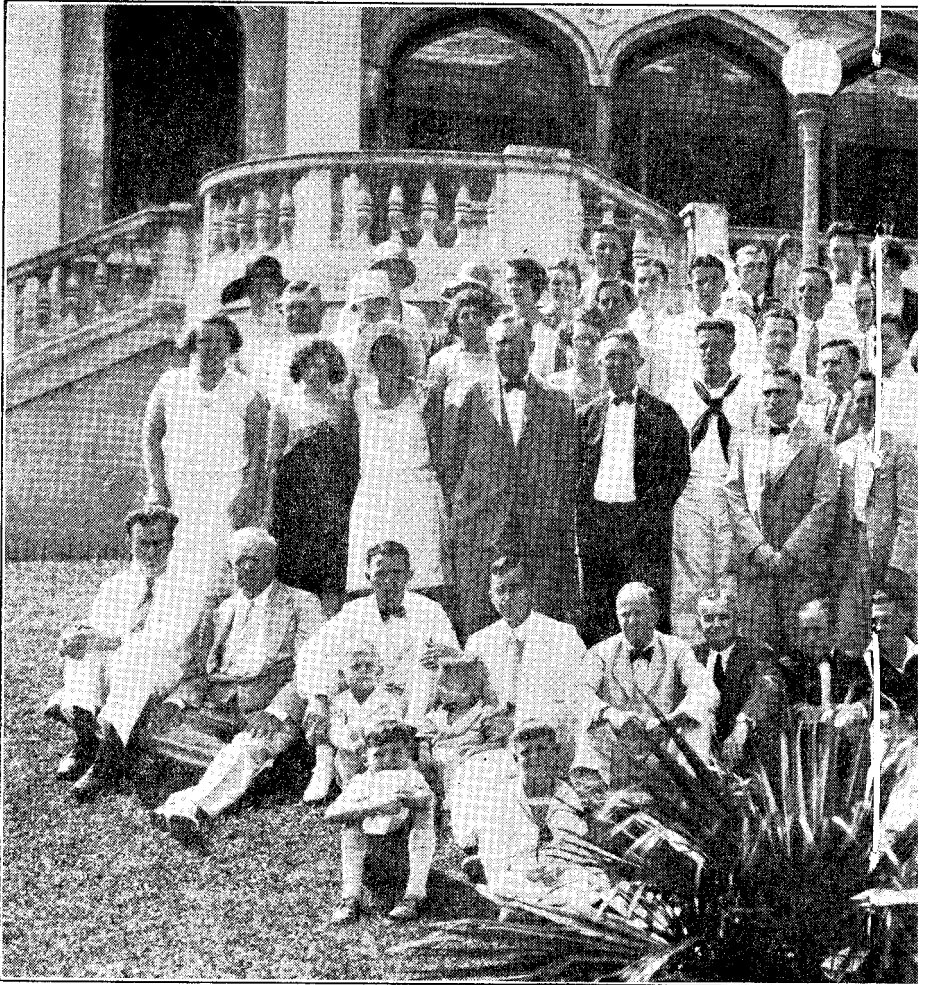
Signed .....

Preceding this there had been an attendance decline throughout a quarter of a century—even as in most Stateside churches. In 1937 the June issue of *The Bulletin* carried a full page appeal published by the Board of Elders. Its essence was . . . “due to a lack of attendance . . . and in anticipation of further de-



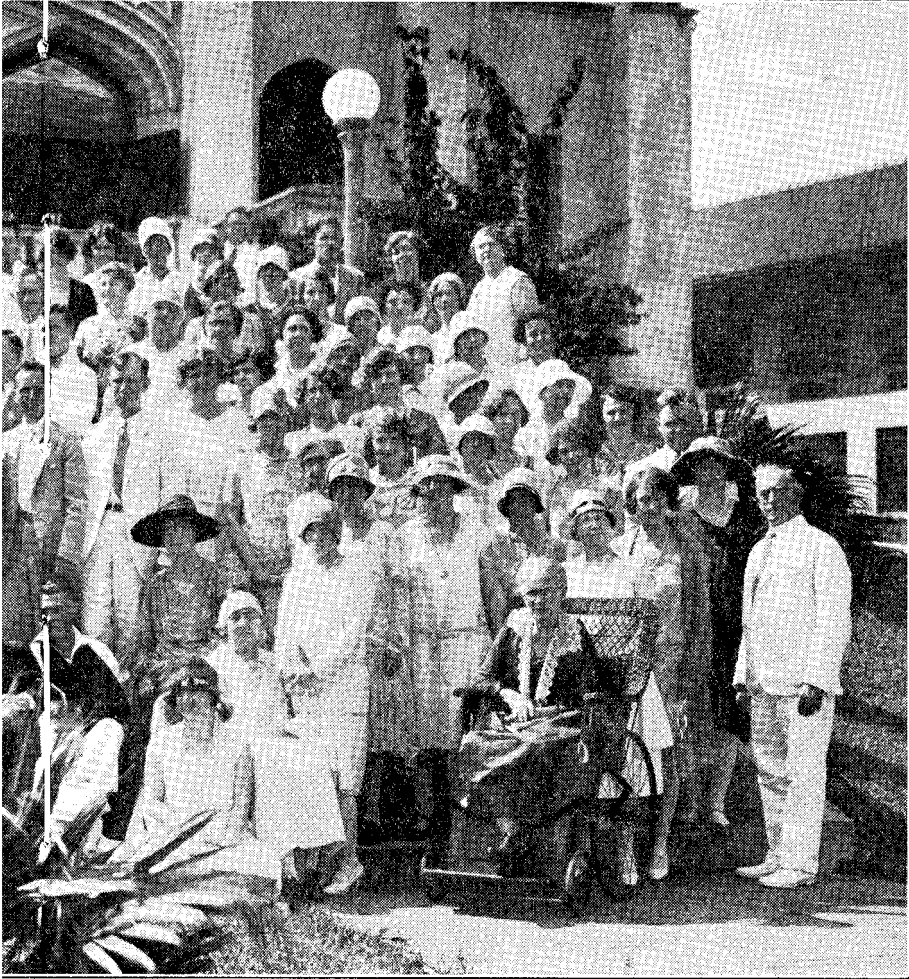
**A Christian Endeavor Group—late thirties**

- Bottom Row: John Toone, Margaret Travis, Helen Murray, Adelaide Howard, Ira Hamilton, Barbara Gunn, David Howard, Betty Jane Bassett, Bobby Shelton, Allan Murray, Jr., Edith Hardy, Jimmy Shelton, Lora Lockwood, Edna Loring, Louise Warwick, E. W. Hatchett, Virginia Myer.
- Second Row: Jeffrey Hennesy, Helen Rae Sauder, Ruth Shjeveland, Margaret Murray, Valley Lavinghouse, Marion Shjeveland, Betty Lockwood, Sammy Myer, Robert Murray, Robert Shelton, Jerry Shelton, Charles McGlade, Jean Kieswetter, Ruth Ann Chevalier, Betsy Bigelow, Doris Libby.
- Third Row: John McGinnis, Paul Feddo, George Feddo, Bobby Irwin, Jimmy Murray, Beverly Freeman, Frank Bassett.
- Fourth Row: Donald Howard, Robert Keenan, Roland Jones, Billie Hutchings, George Chevalier, Sonny Howell, Virginia Freeman, Janie Stevens, Hilda Heinz, Opal Irl Lundy, Shirley Mattis, Elizabeth Lundy, Billie Hunter, Robert Orr, Helen Fuller.
- Fifth Row: Robert Hutchings, Florence Mae Farr, Maryland Sandburn, George Howard, Jr., Elsie Lawyer, Maude Bruce, Barbara Miller, Adrian Muller, Constance Trowbridge, Nancy Norton, Helen Ramey, Eloise Ramey, Mrs. R. W. Hutchings, Dr. Loofbounow, Mrs. Helen Fuller, Joan Ellis, Mrs. E. W. McGinnis, Mrs. George F. Miller.
- Sixth Row: Mrs. R. T. Toone, Mrs. Russell Klotz, Esther Lucille Miller, Helen Moore, Mrs. George Howard, Barbara Lavinghouse, Mrs. A. C. Ellis, Mrs. Walter Feddo.



**The Baraca-Philathea Bible Class. 1**





Class. Probably in late twenties

Seated, Front Row: Mr. Lundy, Mr. Barnum, Mr. Lee, Mr. Feddo, Mr. Toone, Mr. Fenton, Mrs. Toone (in front), Mrs. Larimer (white dress) ? , Mrs. Walters (wheel chair).

Second Row: Standing: Mrs. Walston, Mrs. Wright, ? , Mr. Orr (5th from left), sailor)?, ? , Mr. Booth (9th from left), Mrs. Nurwin, Mrs. Cameron, (seated) ? , (standing next to her) ? ? Mrs. Fenton (6th from rt. 2nd row), Mrs. Poole, (behind wheel chair) ? , ? , Mrs. Warner, John Warner.

Third Row: (dark hat) ? . Mr. Parker, Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Van Sicien, Mrs. Comins, Mr. Keenen, Jr., Mr. Hohmann, Mr. Baltozer, ? , Mrs. Madison (10th from left), ? , Mrs. Baltozer (forward), Mrs. Stapleson (back of Baltozer), ? , ? , ? , ? , ? , Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Pierce, Mrs. Fedde, Mrs. Ellis, Mr. Pierce.

Fourth Row: ? . (hat)?, Mrs. Zemer, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Ryan, (front of Ryan)?, (?) Mr. Simka, Mr. Williams, Mr. Davis, Mr. Keenan, Sr., (man) ? , (man) ? , Mrs. Shedlock, Mrs. Bartlett, (dark hair) ? , (white hat) ? , Mrs. Gravelle, (man) ? , ? , ? , (woman)?, Mr. Comins, (woman in front of Comins) ? , Mrs. Young, Mrs. Wilson (front of Young), (hat) ? , Mr. Smith, Mrs. Lee in front of Smith).

creases . . . we appeal to the members and friends of the church . . . If a sufficient number attend the Sunday evening services they will not be discontinued."

### Stewardship

In 1930, nearly a score of years ago, with the depression at its depth, the following budget was adopted by Balboa's Local Council:

Pastor's Salary .....	\$3,300
Pulpit Supply .....	60
Vacation Reserve Fund .....	385
Phone, Light, Water .....	272
Music (Organists, soloists) .....	645
General Repairs, sundries .....	380
Janitor \$630 with SS paying \$180	450
Printing Bulletin and Messenger	488
David Mission .....	1,080
	<hr/>
Total .....	\$7,060

The following amounts were reported to the General Council for the year 1948:

	The Church	The Woman's Auxiliary	The Youth Groups	Totals
Balance Jan. 1, 1948 .....	\$2,486.68	\$ 393.88	\$ 90.53	\$2,971.09
Receipts .....	19,744.17	2,279.38	319.37	22,342.92
Disbursements .....	21,393.51	2,208.70	349.60	23,951.81
Bal. Dec. 31, 1948 .....	837.34	464.56	60.30	1,362.20

A fair comparison will include a net increase in membership during the intervening eighteen years, together with inflations in the salaries of givers. No data is at hand concerning the important matter of proportionate giving. It is doubtful, however,

if there is a closer approach to the Scriptural ideal of tithing, reflected in the sizable increases recorded above.

The church currently carries the following special reserves:

Pastor's Vacation and Pulpit Supply .....	\$1,530.00
Organ Repair Reserve .....	1,500.00
Maintenance and Repair Reserve .....	1,500.00
New Parsonage Fund—Cash and Bonds .....	18,350.65
Janitor's Pension Fund—Cash and Bonds .....	1,790.00
	\$24,670.65

It was in 1941 that the Local Council, after the most careful consideration, approved the unification of the Church and the Church School budgets. The only restriction was that the Church School expense should not essentially exceed the amount it contributed to the budget. With the offering envelope plan operating in the Church School this requirement is more than met. For convenience in banking, and accuracy in accounting, the church treasurer also handles the funds of the youth groups.

#### **The Good Neighbor Policy Personalized**

Inoffensive neighbors are more frequent with several thousand miles of distance intervening than when the neighbor is figuratively under one's chin! That is especially true when inherently the performance of one's normal functions is an annoyance. In July, 1942, the Board of Elders began wrestling with a certain neighbor's objections to the annoyance caused him by pipe organ practice, choir rehearsal and other "noises"! It is verbally alleged that this gentle neighbor had complete confidence in the efficacy of fighting noise with noise, and that the favorite time for this type of battle was during the Sunday morning worship. Where is there a pipe organ, a choir, or even a preacher capable of competing with a medley of radio jazz, turned to the highest possible volume in living quarters, and a screeching buzz saw in the basement, with a sledge hammer obligato? In consequence the Board of Elders established a seven-point policy designed to eliminate as many of the sources of annoyance as possible. This gesture sufficed at least until the neighbor moved to a quieter area.

The U. S. Army's insistence that the busy Albrook Air

Field must remain in the arms of a vast civilian residential section long has been an endless source of annoyance and a constant threat of tragedy to the entire Pacific community. It is inconceivable that even the most careful pilots can indefinitely fly scores of planes daily around the clock, barely missing apartment buildings, St. Mary's Catholic Church and the Balboa Union Church, and occupied school buildings, and avoid, soon or late, a crash of desperate consequences. Yet the community is perpetually subjected to that hazard. In 1940, the local Council officially requested Army authorities to route planes from flying directly over the church during the Sunday morning worship hour. The minutes record the Commanding General as having agreed to comply with the request—"as much as possible." There was an appendage to the effect that the General's orders were being executed. Obviously, during the intervening nine years, something happened to these orders, for it is an established routine that at frequent intervals the morning worship is completely frozen (save for fervent prayers breathed on behalf of physical safety) by planes that swish the dust off the church roof! Fortunately the close of the war brought relief. The annoyance was further reduced when the commercial airlines moved to Panama's new airport.

Another noisy neighbor is a mamma cat whose home address remains locked in mystery. This feline is well trained, well enough that her not too modest assortment of ardent and garrulous admirers are entertained in unused spaces beneath the parsonage. This, despite brickbats, not all of which are verbal. Evidence of the critter's religious propensities, together with a total absence of denominational prejudice, is found in an insistence upon using the Union Church choir robe closet as a nursery for her felidae cherubs, until they get past the shut-eye stage.

### **The Employed Staff**

Plans for the first expansion of the church staff, beyond the employment of a minister and caretaker and part-time musicians, appear in the record during March, 1939, as follows:

"Plans instituted for acquiring a Youth Director from the U. S. to initiate a program of recreation and religious education among the youth and adults of the Balboa Union Church, the duties to



El Halcon, Panama  
**Mrs. George Thibodeau**

be fourfold—secretarial for the parish and pastor, to take care of details and release the pastor for the more important duties of parish and pulpit, to initiate and expand a program of wholesome and moral recreation, using the church plant and the church as its background, with such publicity as would inform the community of the value to be gained through such endeavor; to integrate with the recreational program, educational activities designed to teach morality, honesty and spiritual courage—in short, to assist in forming characters that will uphold the finest traditions of the Christian world; and lastly, as a natural summation of the foregoing, to lead those who join in the activities into the full religious life of the church.

“In the selection of the Youth Director the church to have the aid of Dr. Guild—the committee believing that he is so well acquainted with the conditions on the Isthmus that the selection could be left wholly to him provided that the sex is determined by our own church council.”

On the following October at a special meeting of the Church Council it was voted to employ Miss Julia Applegate, of Plainsboro, New Jersey, as director of Music and Youth Activities. Precisely a month later, November 8, Miss Applegate arrived. Subsequently, as Mrs. George Thibodeau, she resigned as director of Youth Activities, retaining the position of Minister of Music. Beginning April, 1942, Mrs. Thibodeau gave full time to her young son, resuming her duties as Minister of Music in July, 1945. During the interim the position was held by Mr. Paul Reddy and Mr. J. Frederick Muller. As a student in the world famous Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey, Julia Applegate received a variety of preparatory training, centered in choir directing, some pipe organ and vocal methods for teaching choir members. During student days she directed choirs and, upon being graduated, in 1937, gave a year as director of Music and Christian Education in the First Methodist Church of Jamestown, New York.

The position of Office Secretary and Pastor's Assistant has been held (according to limited data provided) by Mrs. Jack Kromer, 1941—part time, Elizabeth W. Forbes and Mrs. Richard F. Conley, 1943.

In January, 1945, Miss Bina Kate Jones of Slater, Missouri, came as Office Secretary and Pastor's Assistant. *The Bulletin* notice introducing her, said in part:

"Miss Jones is well fitted for the work assigned her. She is sympathetic, tactful, industrious, well poised and dependable beyond her years. Up to the end of December she was employed by the Commerce Trust Company, Kansas City, Missouri, as a Department supervisor."

During the summer of 1946, as Mrs. Robert H. Rolofson, Jr., she resigned to devote all her time to home building.

The position thereby opened was filled in September following, by Mrs. Marion Lucas, who came with a background rich in attainments and experience.

"In North Dakota, where her family were prominent pioneers, she grew to womanhood, taught school for six years, and married a Civil Engineer. Upon her husband's death, fifteen years ago, Mrs. Lucas took the leadership in the Steele County Welfare Board where her long service was sufficiently prominent to warrant her choice as president of the North Dakota Executive Secretary's Association. She was trained in the Valley City Normal School, The North Dakota Business College, and the University of North Dakota. Her time is divided equally between office routine and the making of new contacts in homes."



Lucas and Mullins  
**Mrs. Marion Lucas**

The oldest member in the current staff, in terms of local service, is Mr. William Mullins. Thirty-three years ago, when the church was learning to walk, he became its caretaker.



Lucas and Mullins  
**William Mullins**

"Caretaker" is correct, for "William" is not holding down a job, he is answering a call to religious service in his care of the Lord's house. Few churches ever had a more devoted, a more patient, or a more dependable helper in this area of its needs.

For fifteen years Mrs. Vivian Stutzman

"has presided at the organ console with an artistic efficiency and a Christian spirited cooperativeness seldom equalled.



Photographia Charles, Panama  
**Mrs. Vivian Stutzman**

Later she took graduate studies at Chicago Theological Seminary, University of Chicago. During student days she served as summer and part-time staff in the music and Younger Girls program of



Photographia Charles, Panama

**Miss Dorothy M. Knowles**

sions of the Congregational Christian Church, New York, assisting Dr. John Scotford, editor of the **Advance**.

Her local service began in September, 1947.

The Rev. Robert Hayes Rolofson, D.D., became pastor in September, 1944. From Missouri Valley College, in the heart of his native Missouri, he was graduated with a Bachelor of

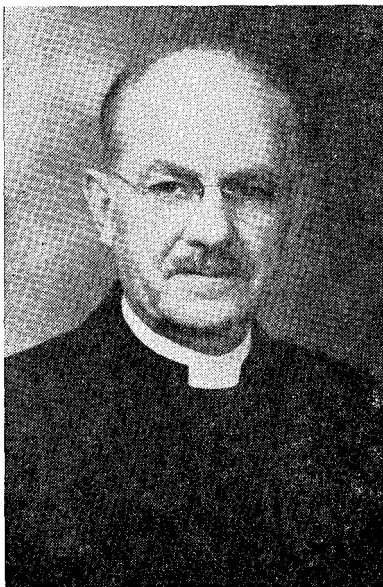
Her technical training was taken in the Harrisburg Conservatory of Music."

The most recent addition to the staff is the Minister of Education, Miss Dorothy Knowles, a native of Youngstown, Ohio. She matured in Cleveland, which is still her home.

"There she attended South High School, and received her B. A. degree from Fenn College, and a B. S. from Schauffler College of Religious and Social work.

Following a year with the Ohio Council of Churches as associate director of the famous Scioto Marsh Community Project, she spent five years with the Home Missions Council of North America, as secretary, community worker, and state supervisor among the agricultural migrants in the Mississippi Valley from Minnesota through Texas. She was Minister of Education in her home church, Miles Avenue Christian, Cleveland, and served also under the Board of Home Mis-

Arts, and later was granted the degree of Doctor of Divinity. His Theological training was taken in McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago. At McCormick and in Chicago Theological Seminary, University of Chicago, several summer courses have subsequently been taken. Prior to beginning his work here, Dr. Rolofson served a church in a suburban area of Kansas City and one in Detroit, and two churches in the "Old First," down-town category. One of these was in Vinton, Iowa, born about the time Iowa became a state. The other was the historic pioneering First Presbyterian of Ashtabula, Ohio, in which services began the year Ohio gained statehood. For some years he was executive head of America's oldest and



Photographia Charles, Panama  
**Robert H. Rolofson, D.D.**

largest national student civic organization. From its office, in Washington, D. C., he managed a staff of a half dozen field secretaries and a large office force, directed the raising of some \$60,000 annually, published a magazine with a nation-wide circulation, addressed the students of half of America's 600 colleges and served as counselor in most of the Student Y. M. C. A. Summer Conferences. Aside from repeatedly criss-crossing 47 states, his travels have taken him to 28 foreign countries, including a directed study tour of Bible Lands. He has contributed articles to religious journals. His *Through Succeeding Years*, a 200 page book, offers a splendid record of the history of the Ashtabula Church.

According to an editorial in the *Ashtabula Daily Star-beacon*, written on the occasion of his departure, after nearly 14 years of service:



"There is scarcely a church, civic or community activity in Ashtabula, in which he has not played an important part . . . A scholarly, sincere minister, his work has reached into thousands of lives and homes. Dr. Rolofson's denomination has seen fit to recognize him in a number of ways. He was chosen Moderator of the Presbytery of Cleveland, and led that body in three campaigns, each for \$10,000. He has rendered yeoman service on the Presbytery's Council, its Church Extension Board and Foreign Missions Committee. During most of his Ohio residence the Presbyterian Synod of that State kept him on its Program and the United Promotion Committees, and as chairman on Foreign Missions. For a decade he was a member of the Assembly Council of the Ohio Council of Churches, with over 2,000 ministers in membership; meanwhile he was chairman of one of its principal committees. Locally he helped to initiate, organize and direct the Goodwill Industries, the Inter-Church Council, the World's Friendship Forums and the Committee of 100, a better citizenship and anti-vice group for which he was frequently spokesman before the City Council. The latter body appointed him on a Commission for the prevention of Juvenile delinquency. Always his church has been a mecca for young people. Its youth program has given a full page feature by the **Cleveland Plain Dealer**. His church's Youth Congregations were pictured, and featured, in **Church Management**, a nationally known clergyman's magazine. For the past seven years his sermons have reached a vast unseen congregation, as a steady flow of radio fan-mail testifies. Mrs. Rolofson, fully trained as a Minister of Education, in the Presbyterian College of Christian Education, Chicago, has added much to her husband's service in Ashtabula. In addition to her domestic duties, the care of her sons, Robert and William, plus a full schedule in the church life, she has been prominent in many activities of a religious, civic and cultural nature."

## THE COCOLI AND MARGARITA CHURCHES

### Introductory

The towns of Cocoli and Margarita grew simultaneously. Both were created in 1941 as Maintenance centers for the Third Locks Construction enterprise. Both now have rapidly growing Union Churches which, in their exceedingly brief "High Chair" days, were under the guardianship of nearby Union Churches. Both matured with remarkable rapidity under a consecrated and buoyant lay leadership which, in enthusiasm

and determination, recalls stories of the courageous pioneers, in early North America and the Canal Zone. Moreover, the youthfulness of these modern pioneers is a reminder that those in the vanguard, always and everywhere, have been young folk. These two Church Schools, and work among the women, started in the two towns about the same time. Almost simultaneously these aspiring and sturdy "youngster Churches" petitioned the General Council of the Union Churches of the Canal Zone for formal organization. Both started with services in a Canal Zone Clubhouse. They were officially constituted within three weeks of each other. Their first pastors were sought concomitantly, through the ever helpful Federal Council and came from the same area and the same denomination. They arrived and were installed within the same month.

It is, therefore, appropriate that the biographies of these late additions to the Union Church family be paired in the same section of our story.

## II. THE COCOLI UNION CHURCH

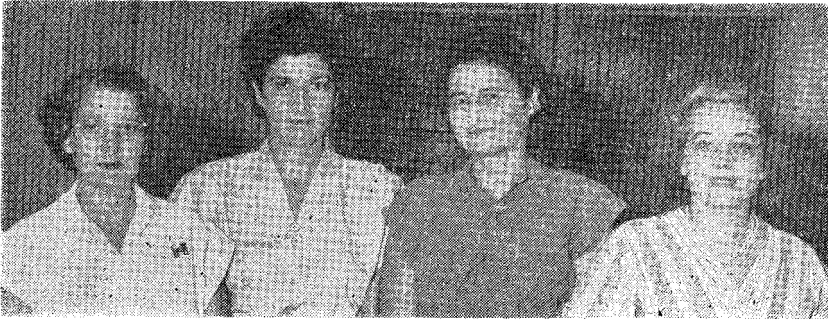
### **The Cocoli Community**

The village of Cocoli gained its name from a nearby river. Its population of some 1,200 is more transient in character than other Zone communities. Many new families are temporarily assigned there until permanently quartered elsewhere. Moreover, many of the civilian employees in Forts Clayton and Kobbe, Howard Field and the Submarine base live in Cocoli. Such employees are subject to frequent transfer to other areas. The more permanent residents operate the Miraflores Locks and Bridge. The completion of the latter relieved the Thatcher Ferry, at Balboa, of much of the Westbank and the Panama Interior highway traffic. It was also the occasion for the abandonment of the small ferry operated near the Miraflores Locks formerly used, and verbally abused, by Cocolians. A portion of the Cocoli townsite is on a "fill," with swamps nearby. Hence, during the wet season, the almost invisible but amazingly energetic and hard-biting sand flea is very annoying. The

community is, therefore, an apt place to observe the efficiency of the Canal's anti-bug spraying trucks and planes.

### Spadework with Enthusiasm

Led by the Rt. Rev. Harry Beal, Bishop of the Missionary District (Episcopal) of the Panama Canal Zone, in cooperation with the Union Church leaders, there was initiated, early in Cocoli's history, a Community Church in which folk participated without regard to denomination. In accord and with an agreement with Union Church leaders, the clergyman in



**Officers Woman's Auxiliary, Cocoli Union Church**

Mrs. S. I. Field, President; Mrs. C. W. Dodge, Treasurer; Mrs. G. H. Davis, Secretary; Mrs. Ira Leslie, Vice President.

charge was to be appointed by the Bishop. This was a mutually happy relationship. Subsequently, after the lamented passing of Bishop Beal, changes in policy made this movement strictly a denominational enterprise. In the opinion of most of the non-Episcopal adherents, there was no alternative for them save the inclusiveness and autonomy offered by a *Union Church*.

These leaders initiated conferences with Dr. Rolofson and Mrs. Harvey McConaughey, President of the Woman's Auxiliary, and with other leaders in the Balboa Union Church. Out of these conferences came the creation of the Cocoli Circle of the Balboa Woman's Auxiliary. The initial meeting followed a breakfast, in June, 1946, at the home of Mrs. Ralph Dickerson. Mrs. G. H. Davis was chosen Chairman; Mrs. Frank Dorsch, Vice Chairman and Mrs. Ralph Dickerson, Secretary-Treasurer. This group grew rapidly, and with solidarity.

The Church School was originally a ward of the Board of Education of the Balboa Union Church. At a meeting of this Board, on July 10, 1946, with Mrs. Ralph Dickerson, Mrs. F. A. Dorsch and Mrs. Milton Wallio, representing Cocoli, it was planned for the new group to operate as a branch of the Mother Church's Board of Education. Balboa agreed to provide a trained leader for the beginning period. The person chosen was Mr. Howard W. Osborn, who, with Mrs. Osborn, gave wise direction and able personal supervision for the initial six months.

The definite decision to proceed with the Church School plans was made at a meeting in the Cocoli Clubhouse on July 31, 1946. The following epitomizations, and excerpts from the minutes of this meeting are revealing:

"Members of the Balboa Union Church who came to help us get started were: Dr. Robert R. Rolofson, Pastor; Mr. Chester M. Lessenden, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Christian Education; Mr. Maxwell T. Smith, Secretary of the Local Council; Mr. George Cockle, Mr. Howard W. Osborn, Mr. Robert C. Worsley and Mr. Russell Klotz.

"Mr. Lessenden acted as chairman of the meeting, with Mrs. G. H. Davis as Secretary.

"It was reported that a survey had been made, revealing about fifty adults and thirty children were represented on a signed petition, which read as follows: 'I am interested in establishing a Cocoli Union Church, in which all Protestant denominations may be represented. It was stated that the survey was by no means completed and would be finished by the Survey Committee, including Mrs. G. H. Davis, Mrs. C. W. Dodge, Mrs. Frank Dorsch, Mrs. Ralph Dickerson, Mrs. Sam Field, Mrs. Walter Gorman, Mrs. W. R. Graham, Mrs. Frank La Rue, Mrs. Milton Wallio and Mrs. H. B. Yard.

"On Motion it was unanimously decided at once to organize a Cocoli Union Church School to operate temporarily under the sponsorship of the Board of Christian Education of the Balboa Union Church. Those volunteering as teachers, upon invitation from the chairman, were: Miss Alberta Boyd, Mr. Leonard Marr, Jr., Mrs. Frank Dorsch, Mrs. Sam Field, Mrs. G. H. Davis, Mrs. M. A. Wallio, Mrs. W. R. Graham and Mrs. Walter Gorman."

Four days later, at a meeting in the Clubhouse, Mr. Osborn was requested temporarily to assume the Superintendency; Mr. Leonard Marr was chosen as Assistant-Superintendent and Mrs. Walter Gorman became Secretary-Treasurer. The





and the unknown future of a community which might undergo radical changes in the event of a sea-level Canal, forbade—or at least postponed—the erection of a church edifice. There was, however, some discussion of the installation of a Quonsette Hut.

Meanwhile Church School sessions were held in the Cocoli Clubhouse, an arrangement in which mutual dissatisfaction inhered. Preceding each session, chairs, tables and other necessary equipment was moved from places of concealment and arranged to accommodate the various classes. All this, at the close of each session, must again be concealed, lest it interfere with the normal Clubhouse programs. The presence of the Church School's piano, and some of the other unconcealable implements was a constant course of annoyance to the Clubhouse management. If there was to be a special service, or even a community meeting, there must be an advance clearance for availability of space. Involved in this red-tape was the execution of six printed form sheets. Those, after local approval, were sent to the General Executive of the Clubhouse in Ancon for examination, signature and return. Moreover, there were entirely too many nickels, of which juveniles were temporarily the stewards, that found their way to the ice cream counter rather than to the offering plate. Added to all this was difficulty of creating an atmosphere of study and worship. A major contribution to this problem was a



Photo by Carl Duke

### The Local Council, Cocoli

Front Row, Left to Right: Mr. Elmer Griffin, Mrs. Elmer Griffin, Mrs. G. R. Barnes, Mrs. S. I. Field, Rev. Raymond A. Gray.  
Back Row: Mr. Gordon Henderson, Mrs. Gordon Henderson, Mr. S. I. Field, Mr. Chester Luhr, Mr. Ira Leslie.

screaming juke box. Perhaps the increasing popularity of this noise-maker, generator of emotional confusion and despoiler of a sense of what is good in music, officers reliable evidence of mankind's cultural decline!

Again and again the housing problem was the center of discussion. On one occasion a Balboa committee, composed of Messrs. Harvey McConaughey, Terrill Toone, and Dr. Rolofson visited the field and sought to secure the use of a centrally lo-



Photo by Carl Duke

**Temporary quarters, Union Church, Cocoli**

cated building. Finally, Mr. Russell Klotz, President of the General Council, and an ever helpful mentor to churches with problems, gained permission of the Special Engineering Department to make use of one floor of its former field office



**Worship Center, in temporary quarters**



building. It is located on the edge of Cocoli nearest the Miraflores Bridge. The space is quite adequate, but the location requires the Church School to provide extra transportation for about forty-four persons, for whom private transportation is not available. The occupancy of these quarters began on April 21, 1948.

### **The Seventh Union Church Unit Is Born**

It was in this building, on April 29, 1948, that the Cocoli Union Church was officially constituted. As President of the General Council, Mr. Russell Klotz presided. The following members were elected to the local Council: Chairman, Mr. Sam Field; Vice Chairman, Mr. C. W. Dodge; Secretary, Mrs. Sam Field; Financial Secretary, Mr. Milton Wallio; Treasurer, Mr. E. B. Griffin; Chairman Religious Education Committee, Mrs. E. B. Griffin; Chairman Youth Activities Committee, Mrs. Milton Wallio; Chairman Stewardship and Missions Committee, Mrs. G. H. Davis; Chairman of Finance, Mrs. Milton Wallio; Elders, Mrs. Ira Leslie, Chairman, Mrs. Dorsch and Mrs. Clink; Deacons and Deaconesses, Mr. Frank Dorsch, Chairman; Mrs. Botzenmayer, Mr. Barnes, Mrs. Clink, Mrs. Walker and Mrs. Dodge; Trustees, Mr. Clink and Mr. Leslie.

### **Encouraging Growth**

A three-way consultation among leaders each of the General Council of the Union Church of the Canal Zone and the Cocoli and Gamboa Union Churches resulted in the calling of one minister to serve both parishes. The financial subsidy involved \$1,000 from each of the churches concerned, with like amounts raised by each the General Council and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The Rev. Raymond A. Gray was the minister called. Further word concerning him is in the Gamboa chapter. With his family, he arrived in time to conduct a service on Sunday, October 31, 1948. Quarters were available in Gamboa, but not in Cocoli. It has been necessary for Mr. Gray to commute for his Cocoli parish activities. On December 5, 1948, 35 charter members were welcomed. In an impressive ceremony, these pioneers signed the church's charter, reproduced here:

"Convinced that God leads in the affairs of men to the extent they seek that leading; and yielding to the evident need in our community for a Christian Church of the free-church tradition which will minister to the religious needs of people irrespective of denominational dogma;

"WE AGREE to establish and maintain an organization to be known as the Cocoli Union Church. We further agree to seek to embody in the Cocoli Union Church the ideals of Christian unity as they are set forth by the Union Churches of the Canal Zone; and especially do we ascribe to the Covenant:

"Thankful for God's abundant goodness, and for His great gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, our Lord, we hereby covenant to seek to know and to do His will, and to promote, as far as we can, the interests of Christ's Kingdom.

"Accepting Jesus Christ and His teaching as our supreme standard of faith, and the Bible as containing God's progressive revelation of Himself to man, and heartily believing in the province of private judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures, we seek fellowship with all who devoutly love the Lord Jesus Christ and accept His standard of teaching and conduct as set forth in the New Testament.

"Realizing that the success of the Church depends upon the consecration of the individual membership, we covenant to attend its services, to contribute to its support, to maintain its peace and harmony, and, as far as possible, in every way to promote its temporal and spiritual welfare."

The service was climaxed with an observance of the Lord's Supper. Serving the elements in the Communion service and extending symbolic welcome into the Union Church family were the following: Mr. R. T. Toone, Balboa; Mr. B. A. Herring, Gamboa; the Rev. R. R. Gregory, Gatun; and Mr. Horace Jones, Pedro Miguel. It was a memorable day in the life of the Cocoli Union Church.

A revealing sidelight on the excellent progress made by this group of Christian folk, under their new leader, is found in a story narrated in both *The Panama American* and *The Federal Council Bulletin*. It centered in a happy solution of the problem of a proper atmosphere in worship services. Whatever virtues, by way of shelter and adequate space, there may be in the building occupied, its barnlike "matter-of-factness" was not designed to induce a spirit of worship. All were agreed that there must be a worship center. U. S. Navy Chaplain