A critical analysis and evaluation of my teaching and supervision experience in Central United Methodist Church, in Ben Hill United Methodist Church and in Trinity United Methodist Church from September 1971 to May 1973

Helen Brown
Interdenominational Theological Center

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A PROJECT ESSAY

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF MY TEACHING AND
SUPERVISION EXPERIENCE IN CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH,
IN BEN HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
AND
IN TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
From September 1971 to May 1973

Submitted in Partial Requirement for the
Master of Religious Education Degree

By

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April 19, 1973

Interdenominational Theological Center
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Date: April 26, 1973
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Part I

INTRODUCTION
THE TEACHING FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH

"The existence of Christian Education as a distinct area of study and action in the Church rests upon the assumption that the Church of Jesus Christ has, of necessity, a teaching function. The Church must teach, just as it must preach, or it will not be the Church. Teaching belongs to the essence of the Church and the Church that neglects this function of teaching has lost something that is indispensable to its nature as a Church."

It is strange that this foundation principle of Christian Education remains largely unrecognized today and, strangest of all, unrecognized often by those who are devoting their lives to the work of teaching in the Church. This failure is due to the misconception of the ministry. Ministers think that their job is only to preach and to administer the sacraments; for them the educational function is not essential to their ministry, it is considered to be the job of the Director of Education. On the other hand, the educator, himself, is uncertain about where he belongs, both in relationship to the Church and its relationship to the theological curriculum.

As we have seen above that Christian Education is one of the main functions of the Church, which means the whole church and all the people in it. Further, we will see the place of Christian Education and its aims which will lead us to an understanding where we would be able to see how important the Church's teaching function is and the responsibility of teaching rests upon the whole church, though only certain people undertake specific teaching assignments.

1Smart, D. James, The Teaching Ministry of the Church, p. 11.
THE PLACE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE CHURCH

The Church has different ministries; one of them is teaching. Religious education is the most important part of the church's spiritual growth. Thus, Christian Education is the responsibility of the whole people of God who are called to ministry. It is imperative that all of the people understand who they are and what their human situation means in the community of faith and in the scattered life in the world. This is the mission of the church and proclamation of God's love is the central theme of all the ministries of the church—worship, teaching, learning, preaching, witnessing and serving.

Before we go any further, I would like to have a bird's-eye view on the history of the Christian Education in the Church. By history, I intend to prove that Christian Education is not the invention of the Twentieth Century; but, it has its roots in the long past from the Old Testament times. The synagogues were the local center of worship and instruction where the Jewish community learned the law. Parents who were trained in the synagogue nurtured their children at home. Later on, Rabbi opened the schools where they taught the Hebrew language and their written scriptures. In the Patristic Period we come across the Catechetical schools, where scholars like Clement and Origen taught. In the Period of Reformation and in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries we find traces of new schools and better religious education, but it was not until the 1800's when the United States developed its characteristic system of schools. Among these was the Sunday School Movement—born in the charity school movement. In England by 1824 the movement was big enough to have
a Sunday School Union. After that and now we have several different Christian Education programs besides Sunday School, such as Y.M.C.A. Summer Programs, Camp Activity, Programs for Adults and Older People, and all kinds of educational and entertaining programs for all age groups.

By tracing from the beginning, I did intend to give the history of Christian Education on one hand, and on the other hand, to show how important it has been for the growth of spiritual life of every community since ages past. This is the period of change and transition. We take it more seriously now. Thus, Cox is right when he remarks:

"These are the exciting days of Christian Education, days of synthesis, understanding, and a new seriousness about its task in the church and its mission in the world."2

I would stop here to share some of the ideas of different authors regarding Christian Education, who more or less are saying the same thing.

"Christian Education is that ministry of the church which provides the educational undergirding for the church's entire ministry of worship, witness and work. In this design, Christian Education is construed as related to all opportunities offered to persons primarily for the purpose of education in the Christian faith and for the church's mission."

"Christian Education is one of the ministries by which she seeks to fulfill her nature and perform the mission. It involves the efforts of the Christian community to guide young and adult persons towards an ever richer possession of the Christian heritage and a fuller participation in the life and work of the church."3

In a nut-shell, we may say that Christian Education involves the whole church in the nurture of its own faith.

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3Ibid., p. 40.
In the church's ministry there are two words which often confuse people to the extent that they do not find any difference in them. Those words are Preaching and Teaching. Why must there be preaching and teaching? Why is not one sufficient? The content of preaching and teaching is the same and they are together in being both the service of the word of God.

Preaching essentially is the proclamation of Gospel to the man in his unbelief. It is a call to the sinner to repent and receive the good news by the power of his words and spirit. Preaching is to all the Christians because no matter how firm they might be in their faith, there is always a root of sin.

What is teaching then? Teaching takes place after preaching has shown its effects. Teaching addresses itself to the men who have repented and turned to God and Christian Education serves as a food to feed the spiritual hunger.

In the end, I would like to discuss some of the ideas of Campbell Wyekoff regarding Christian Education.

"Fundamentally, Christian Education takes place where the community of persons in Christ worship, witnesses and works. This community has a life, a message, a mission, and a heritage brought into being, sustained and directed by God. It continues its reconciling love work in Jesus Christ. The Gospel is its message, the Holy Spirit is its power, love is its mood. Christ service and social action, and all the ways in which the ecumenical spirit is brought to reality. Christian Education in this context is nurture in the fellowship of love." 4

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

"The objective of Christian Education is that all persons be aware of God through His self-disclosure, especially His redeeming love as revealed in Jesus Christ, and that they respond in Christian faith and love....to the end that they may know who they are and what their human situation means, grow as sons of God rooted in every relationship, fulfill their common discipleship in the world and abide in the Christian hope."  

Further, we find the elaboration of the same objective in the Cooperative Curriculum Project:

"This statement of objective is basic in that it indicates that the church's teaching ministry is addressed to man's fundamental and universal question: Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? Who is God? Who is my neighbor? This is the import of the phrase, 'who they are and what their human situation means'. The basic quality of the objective is shown also by the fact that it indicates the distinguishing mark of education in the Christian Church (as differentiated from general education), that is, that people and their particular human situations are seen first and always in relation to God--awareness of the redeeming love of God. This awareness is the initial step in becoming disciples, in becoming 'new creatures in Christ', or in 'being born again'.

Thus, the church, in its educational ministry and in all other ministries seeks the redemption of man in all his relationships, personal as well as social.


6Ibid.
INTERPRETATION OF THE OBJECTIVE FOR THE JUNIORS

The Church has recognized the value of Christian Education especially to the children. In the junior years, the child's understanding of God should grow and expand. He should be helped to realize more fully that God has a purpose and a plan for the world and for the person in it. He should be able to recognize a warm and personal relationship to God as Father. The junior's understanding of God should grow in harmony with Jesus' revelation of the Father.

During the junior years, they should be able to assume a greater responsibility for their own conduct, and develop more self control and self direction in making right choices. As a junior's Christian convictions become more clear and his faith firmly established, his sense of security and emotional stability increases. At this stage he should understand his relationship to Jesus, the importance of Bible in his life and his relationship to church and other people in the community.
Part II

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE JUNIOR DEPARTMENT
WHO IS A JUNIOR?

"Junior" stands for the boys and girls in our church who are nine, ten and eleven years of age and are in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades in school. They are midway between childhood and young adulthood.

**Junior's Physical and Emotional Needs:** Junior is likely to be ruggedly healthy and can handle personal hygiene. He grows rather steadily now. Physically, these girls and boys are healthy, active and strong. Junior girls are often physiologically a full year ahead of boys of the same age. During their eleventh year, girls show physiological and psychological signs of approaching to adolescence. At this age they are a bit confused and curious of their own bodily changes. Boys and girls differ in their interests and recreation. Boys like to play ball in the busy street, climbing buildings under construction, doing all sorts of things where they can use their energies. Girls at the same time leave their dolls and enjoy playing with the opposite sex, if they let them do so. If not, they enjoy watching their games.

Mentally they are at the stage when they enjoy imagination—curious to learn new things. This is the period of rapid learning and they enjoy asking all types of questions. This is the stage they love to imitate their elders. Now they extend their love and appreciation to an adult who becomes their ideal person.

**Junior and Church School:** Usually girls and boys are together in the Sunday School class, as they should be. Juniors bring to church with them more than skills and knowledge; they bring ways of working as well as
concepts of discipline. In Church School they, rather, prefer to do some creative work than to read or write. They love to learn the verses, read the Bible and learn about God. They love to show off at this stage to get everyone's attention.

**Junior and God:** The right concept of God is very important to juniors. "God our Father"—what does the term mean to our juniors? It usually depends on the image of the earthly father, which is not good to all the children. Thus, teachers should have some special emphasis on the God our Father in Heaven. In some of the Old Testament stories, the image of God is not very good, which is confusing to the child and he starts hating God. For example, a girl hated God because she heard the story of Abraham killing Isaac on the altar because God asked him to do so. Difference between God and Jesus and their relationship to each other is also very confusing to the juniors at this time.

**Junior and Bible:** In the Junior Department, children are of the age to read the Bible and they enjoy doing so. Most of the children learn how to use the Bible by this age and they know how it is divided in two parts—the Old and New Testaments. They know that it is the word of God. The teacher should be extra careful while selecting the passages from the Old Testament. Many theologians believe that the Juniors should not be introduced to Old Testament until they are able to understand it and if they do so, it should be carefully selected.

**Junior and Christian Living:** Bible verses can be a vital help in Christian living. Juniors learn to live as Christians by solving her; and now their problems in Christian living. Whatever they learn should be practiced at home and everywhere they are,
**Junior Department:** The Junior Department is one of the organized united within the complete organization known as the Sunday or Church School. As we have discussed before the Junior Department consists of children of the fourth, fifth and sixth grades of public school.

**Room and Equipment:** The Sunday School environment should be suggestive of the best things, should inspire to effort, should present an ideal befitting to those who are in it, and at the same time be such as to create an atmosphere of beauty and restfulness.

**Classroom:** The rooms may be built or connected by the corridor. It should never have an appearance of being crowded, for lack of space does not allow freedom or expression and it has a bad physical effect upon both teacher and pupil. The classroom should be sufficiently large clean and there should be proper heating, lighting and ventilation. The windows should be plain glass to admit light and opening outside of the building. The temperature should not be less than 60 nor more than 68 degrees.

**The Equipment:** The classroom for juniors needs to be well-equipped. The following needs to be supplied: Chairs and Tables — A plain wooden chair with a lavel seat and a straight back is the best chair for the junior's room, which should be in three sizes, 15, 16 and 17 inches. The tables should be light-weight folding, and the size should be according to the chairs. There should be enough place between them and the chairs so the children could move freely from one place to another without disturbing or hurting others.

**Books and Class Boxes** — Each child should be provided with his own Bible—a copy of the American Revised Bible. Each child should have
the Sunday School Book, whatever series used by the church. They should be provided some song books and some other books of general knowledge. To prevent the appearance of disorderliness, there should be a box for class supplies, such as pencils, pens, colors, paints and other working tools.

Chalkboards, Bulletin Board and Flannel Graph — A successful teacher who loves to make her class interesting and meaningful, would surely love to make use of these equipments. Every Sunday before the class starts, the teacher can write the title and main points of the topic of class lesson on the chalkboard. She can use the bulletin board or flannel graph for additional help; for example, she can put some pictures on flannel graph connected with the lesson.

Maps, Globes and Pictures — Recently the use of globes and maps has become very common in our Sunday School classes because now we are realizing that our children should be aware of the missionary work all over the world. Especially in the Black church where children are in the search of their identity, and are eager to learn more and more about Africa they should be given the opportunity to locate the places they learn about.

The Picture File — There should be a picture file in the Junior Department. A box set on wheels would be good for this purpose. This will give an opportunity to the children to be more creative. They would be asked to prepare a folder with the names of various subject matter of pictures they will use. Every child would be asked to bring one picture to the class connected with the lesson they did the previous Sunday; then, they would be given a few minutes to place those pictures in the box under the subject matter they thinks it fits in.
Slides, Film-strips, Motion Pictures, Projector, Screen, Records, Record Player — These audio-visual aids can be great helps for the teacher in making the lesson interesting, easy, real and meaningful to the children. These things can be stored in the Junior Department Library to be accessible to all.

Musical Instruments — Music has always been the best way of showing our appreciation to God, and for developing the spiritual life. Especially it has played a great role in Black people's history in the past. Thus, we should give our children the opportunity to develop their talent to praise God. For this reason, every classroom should have a piano.

Library — The Junior Department must have a small library which should include atlases, biblical dictionaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, Bibles, maps, prayer books, and other suitable magazines for this age group.

Art Supplies — To save the class from being dull and boring, the teacher has to use some creative methods to keep the children motivated. Usually children are found to be fond of art work, and the teacher should encourage their creative thinking. Scissors, crayons, paints, construction papers, clay and other supplies are the tools which every class must have.

Here we end up with a difficulty. Usually children are found to be more interested in creative work than in class lesson. It is really the teacher's responsibility to see that the right material is used for the right person at the right time, because equipment is only a means to achieve an end not an end itself.
Activities of Fellowship or Sharing: Plenty of opportunity should be provided for group fellowship and working together. They should learn to appreciate each other's point of view, talents, wishes and other activities of their associates, fun and fellowship will help them appreciate the brotherhood.

Appreciation: Skillful guidance is needed to help them develop a sense of appreciation for objects and humans. They should be encouraged to talk about their interests to each other. Freedom and friendliness should be encouraged.

Play: Junior children especially like guessing games and the games that provide lots of physical activities. Which includes all kinds of indoor, outdoor games. The teacher will help them develop those attitudes which make for a wholesome, optimistic and friendly outlook on life and work.

Worship Activities: Worship is directly related to the Christian education and, thus, it has an important place in our Church School curriculum. Persons learn through guidance in worshipping reverently as a form of commitment. Therefore, in Church School children should be trained in meaningful worship and in loyalty to the church and its services. Children should be given the opportunity to attend the church services so they learn how to worship God. They should be encouraged to worship God by reading the Bible, by praying, by singing and other ways.
THE CURRICULUM

Why new Curriculum for the Black children (church)? Our Christian educators are realizing the fact that the present curriculum is not relevant and meaningful for the Black child today. The curriculum material which we have now was planned for the middle class white children. Since curriculum is an effort to arrange educational experiences, all curricula will have an objective. Willard A. Williams, in his Resource Booklet Educational Ministry in the Black Community, provides us with an objective:

"The more I have consulted with Black and White churches, the more I am convinced of the need for ministry in the Black community. Ministry to the Black community is not to emphasize differences, but simply to recognize and respond to differences in background and lifestyles.

Whites, as well as Blacks, need help in this ministry. Both races need to unlearn much that was taught in the past; and to re-educate themselves in ways which will precipitate change in attitudes and behavior. Blacks need to affirm their sense of dignity and worth; Whites need to support Blacks in their endeavor."

The Goal for the Relevant Curriculum in the Black Church. According to W. A. Williams an effective curriculum of Christian Education in the Black Church accomplishes the following:

1. Builds a new sense of Self-Identity
2. Creates a fresh will of self-determination
3. Supports new life styles for controlling destiny
4. Helps in the appropriation of Christ as a liberator

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There are some suggestions of criteria for evaluating curriculum resources in Williard A. Williams resource booklet:

"A. Do curriculum resources reflect the family as experienced by Blacks?

B. Are the experiences of Blacks, in history and in the present, reflected in the on-going mainline curriculum resources?

C. Are we preparing adequate resources for the Black Church reflecting the Black Experience?

D. Are the biographies of Black persons included appropriately in curriculum resources?

E. Are the social settings of Black living acknowledged and affirmed in curriculum resources?

F. Have we been accurate and clear in the use of such words as integration, revolution, black power, liberation, etc.?

G. Have the resources helped people to see Blacks as persons who need not be superhuman to be appreciated?

H. Is the music, art and literature growing out of the Black heritage and experience used and affirmed?

I. Do the curriculum resources indicate the contributions of Blacks in the building of our nation and our church?

J. Do the curriculum resources deal with the role of Blacks during and after the period of slavery?"

Keeping the following suggestions in mind, there are certain activities which could be included in the curriculum to make it more meaningful:

1. **Study activities and Investigations:** The main attention will be given on the lessons in various denominational courses of study. The teacher will help the children to discover the meaning and understand it by consulting the Bible, books, or through pictures or other teaching

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8*Thid.*, p. 132.
aids.

2. **Constructive activities:** Children should be given opportunity to express themselves through their constructive works, which could give an opportunity to the teacher to understand the mind of the child better. Children should be allowed to make whatever they would like to; they should be encouraged to make cards, or prayers for those who are sick and could not come out.

**Teacher and the Teaching Techniques for Juniors:** There are three main parts of any kind of teaching—student, teacher and material. An effective teacher is the most important part of successful educational ministry of the Church. The teacher serves as an agent between God and child. The task of the teacher is to reach the child mentally, physically, and spiritually. According to Dr. J. A. Benjamin, the ultimate aim of the teacher is "to help the individuals in their continuous reconstruction and re-adjustments of their own experiences increasingly to understand, appreciate and participate in the Christian way of living fruitfully in this world."9

For the purpose of carrying out his aim, the careful selection of the teacher is very important. Teachers should be appointed with a definite understanding that at the end of the year their term of service expires unless re-appointed and if her work is not satisfactory, she can be replaced at any time.

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Price B. Gwynn's basic qualifications of a teacher are as follows:

"1. a deep and abiding Christian experience
2. a persistent longing to share that experience with others
3. a sure knowledge of what the Bible teaches
4. a fair understanding of how personality develops
5. training in the best educational practice afforded by the example and experimentation of those most successful in the field."

As relates to the sex of the teacher for the classes of the junior grades, H. F. Cope says:

"Women may well, indeed, for many reasons, best teach all up to the beginning of the period of adolescence—say up to thirteen or fourteen. The nature of the child is best met by that of the feminine and maternal being."

Besides the religious experience and training, there are other qualities which are of the same importance. The teacher is the key to the whole situation in any department. "As does the teacher, so does the pupil" is correctly stated for the teachers. The teacher must understand the discipline problem and to solve it. Different methods could be used in different cases because every child behaves differently.

After all, the teacher is the power that guides the thinking, creates the motives and leads the pupils to proper decisions and actions. That is the part of being a good leader, but she should never dictate.

The teacher must have some knowledge of child psychology in order to understand their behavior. The teacher should observe the children

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carefully and if they need special attention, parents should be contacted. The teacher, even if she is trained, needs to attend leadership classes, seminars so she can be familiar with new methods of teaching. There are some guidelines for a teacher as follows:

1. preparation of the lesson thoughtfully

2. early arrival at the Church on Sunday to arrange the class setting

3. every child should feel welcome to the class; there should be a warm relationship between the teacher and the child

4. besides the lesson material and books, the teacher must use other additional help

In many churches team-teaching has been introduced, which has shown some effective results. Two teachers plan the whole lesson together. In this way the responsibilities are divided and children get more attention. Team-teaching has been proven very useful, especially if one teacher is absent the other can take the responsibility. Children don't feel bored. Sunday School teaching becomes interesting, convenient and enjoyable.

The Teaching Techniques for Juniors: Effective teaching does not depend that much on the personality of the teacher than on the teaching techniques she uses. Creative teaching is an art, an intelligent teacher needs to get acquainted with the maximum of these techniques in order to make her teaching meaningful and effective.

Story-telling: This is a creative art. The teacher projects through words her feelings, ideas, her realistic expectations, in a manner that inspires and enriches the listener. Juniors have a vivid imagination and love to hear the stories. Simple language should be used and to make
it more real, other additional aids should be used.

**Dramatization:** Often the lessons in the children's books are written in drama form. They should be given the opportunity to play the parts. Dramatization has a tremendous potential for teaching and is now widely used in many church schools where the emphasis is on self-discovery through self-expression. Shy children should be given opportunity to act, this is one of the ways teachers can observe the real nature of the child.

**Role-Playing:** The stories for role-playing comes from real life inter-personal crises and conflicts. The story merely states the situation. Then they can play it. The purpose of role-playing is not primarily individual or group therapy, but as discussion moves on it becomes therapeutic.

**Creative Writing:** Children should be given many opportunities to express themselves through writings, poems, etc. They can write about their experiences which may be a trip to a fair, a visit to a farm, a birthday party, etc. This type of activity helps the child to develop his imagination power.

**Dialogue and Debates:** It is a good technique to help the child to develop a sense of self-confidence. They should be provided the opportunity for open discussion and debates on different topics.

**Memorization:** Juniors love to memorize Bible verses, hymns and other literary materials. Oral tests could be taken every month to improve their power of memorizing.
Drawing and Painting: Children at this age level love to draw the pictures, color the maps, cut the pictures, etc. Enough motivation of this sort should be provided to the children.

Arts and Craft: This type of creative activity is very important for juniors. They like to make things like clay modeling, paper flowers, dolls, and other decorations.

Field Trips and Excursions, as well as camping: The Teacher should plan to take children to visit a zoo, museum, art gallery, hospital, etc. once in a month or once in two months. It adds to the knowledge of the children and breaks the monotony of work. Day camps can be arranged in summers or in other vacation periods.

Music: Juniors are especially interested in music, they like to sing and listen to the records. A junior choir can be arranged. They should be given the opportunity to sing in the church services.

Parties and Games: Informal gatherings for the sake of fun are very important for the children at this age level. Recreational activities should be planned by Juniors themselves.

Planning and Conducting a Worship Service: Besides the Church School Class children should be given the opportunity to meet at least once a month for some kind of worship service where they can worship together by singing, praying and Bible reading.

SAMPLES OF THE LESSON PLAN

TOPIC: "Why Doesn't God Make Me Do Right?"
CLASS: III and IV
TEACHER: Helen Brown
GENERAL AIMS:

1. To help the children grow fully mentally, physically and spiritually in the knowledge of God.
2. To help them realize the importance of Christian faith in everyday life.
3. To help them relate Bible, God and Christ to their human situation so they might know who they are and what their human situation means.

SPECIFIC AIM:

To help them realize that man has the freedom of choice and God lets us do whatever we want to do.

BIBLICAL REFERENCES: Joshua 24: 15b; Job 34:4a

LESSON IN SHORT:

There is a story in the student's book which deals with a decision which Jerome had to make and he made the wrong choice. The lesson can be dramatized. Jerome's mother had to go out. She asked him not to bother the strawberry plants in their backyard because she was saving them to make the strawberry Shortcake. In the meantime, Jerome's friend came and he wanted to eat the strawberries. Jerome did not want to hurt his friend's feelings and he let him eat the strawberries. Soon his mother came back, and he hid himself in his bedroom. What happened next...(Children have to finish the story).

MATERIAL USED:

1. Bible
2. Student Books "Methodist Student III and IV"
3. Teacher's Book "Methodist Teacher III and IV"

TEACHING TECHNIQUES: Dramatization
PROCEDURE:

1. Teacher will greet the children and the class will start with a small prayer of thanks to God.

2. Teacher will ask the children to select their part to play in the drama. Mother, Jerome and Ben are three characters. Children will dramatize and others will watch.

3. After the drama, teacher will explain why man has the freedom of choice which makes him different from the animals.

4. Teacher will ask the children to think of some event when they made a wrong choice and what happened as a result.

5. There are some fill-in the blanks at the end of the lesson. Teacher will ask them to do that. It will help them to finish the story as well as revise the lesson.

6. They will find out the references from the Bible.

7. Offering will be taken.

8. They will sing a song.

9. A short closing prayer by the teacher:

   O God our Father, we thank you very much for giving us the freedom of choice so we could live the way we want to. But sometimes it is hard to make the right choice, so please help us to make the right choice so we could serve you and make you happy. Amen.

EVALUATIVE REPORT:

It is usually the Field Work requirement to present an evaluative report of every class session to the Field Instructor. Here is the sample of the former lesson plan:

   General Appearance of the Class: The class was neat and clean and everything was in order. The children came on time. The teacher greeted them and started the lesson with the prayer.
**Results:** Children were excited to play the roles. They liked the story because it was very real, which happens everyday in life. Children loved to complete the story by realizing that Jerome made a wrong choice. Children loved to share their own experiences when they made the wrong choice.

Exercises at the end of the lesson helped them a lot to revise the lesson and to understand how important it is to make the right choice and how lucky we are to have this choice.

**Problems:** In the beginning it was hard to get the volunteers for playing the drama. The children were a little shy. The children who were watching the drama created the discipline problems. While doing the exercises they tried to take each others help. Some of the children did not know how to use the Bible which created a little confusion.

**Accomplishments:**

1. The children realized that Jerome made a wrong choice.
2. They realized that man has a freedom of choice which makes him different from all the creatures on earth.
3. They realized it is not easy to make the right choice.
4. We hurt God, our parents and ourselves by making the wrong choices.
5. We can ask God to help us to make the right choice.
Part III

THE AUTHOR'S EXPERIENCES IN TEACHING

AT CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
THE SETTING: CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Mitchell Street S. W., Atlanta, Georgia

The author was given the opportunity to serve this church for one semester. Here the author worked in the Junior Department as an Assistant Teacher to third and fourth grade children. This was my first experience working in the Black Church.

A Brief Historical Sketch

The Central United Methodist Church, located on Mitchell Street, is a predominantly Black church which was first known as Clark Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church and was originally established in the downtown area on Fraser Street in Summerhill in 1866. This chapel was named for Bishop Clark, the founder of Clark University. Reverend J. W. Lee was the first minister. The church was usually called 'the little red church' because it was painted red. During those days Black and White worshipped together in this church. In 1876 the congregation moved to this present location.

The Present Program of Christian Education

At present Reverend Joseph Lowery is the minister, who is a seminary graduate. The membership of this church is approximately one thousand. In the Christian Education Department there is not a fulltime Christian Education Director. For the sake of convenience each department (children, youth and adult) has one Assistant Director. Miss Helen Mitchell was the Assistant Director of the Children's Division at the
time of my field work.

Besides the regular Sunday School classes, this church has a well-planned program for youth and adults (men and women).

The Present Divisions in Christian Education Program

There are three broad divisions, according to the chronological age of the individuals as follows:

1. Children's Division:

   Nursery: Infancy through age 3  
   Kindergarten: Ages 4-5  
   Elementary: Ages 5-6 Grade 1  
   Primary: Ages 6-7 Grade 2  
   Lower Junior: Ages 8-9 Grades 3-4  
   Junior: Ages 10-11 Grades 5-6

2. Youth Division:

   Junior High: Ages 11-12 Grades 7-9  
   Senior High: Ages 13-14 Grades 10-11  
   Young People: Ages Past High Grades 11-12

3. Adult Division:

   Young Adults: Ages 18-25  
   Middle Adults: Ages 25-35  
   Older Adults: Ages above 35  
   Elective Study Groups: For older men and women

The Junior Department at Central United Methodist Church

There is not a separate building for the Juniors. Two of the classrooms on the first floor are provided for junior boys and girls. These classes are very small in size. I had an opportunity to teach the third and fourth grades with Mrs. Thornton as their main teacher. There were about 20 children enrolled in the class. The Sunday School classes met in the morning from 9:30 to 10:45. Attendance was not too bad, but the
children were usually late arriving, thus they missed half of the lesson.

The General Appearance of the Class

The classrooms are rather small. There is a long table in the middle of the room with chairs around it. This does not leave much space for the children to move freely in the class. There is a small rack to keep the class supplies, but unfortunately there are no pencils, colors, crayons, scissors, paints, or construction paper there. Children did have the use of Bibles and student books. There was a very small chalk board in the class which was hardly used. There are no pictures on the wall to make it attractive. The classroom looked dull.

The Christian Education Program

At Central United Methodist Church the programs for juniors are not well-planned at all. The children are divided into two groups—ages 8 to 10 and 11 to 12. Besides Sunday School there are very few opportunities when juniors can get involved in other activities. The program suffers due to the lack of effective leadership. There are no opportunities given to the children for creative thinking. Except on few occasions like Thanksgiving, Halloween and Christmas, there are very few interesting and meaningful activities for the juniors.

The Curriculum

The curriculum for juniors at Central Church is well-planned—which is prepared by the Board of Christian Education of Nashville, Tennessee. All of the students and teachers were provided with the books. This
Curriculum material is published quarterly. It is based on the four areas of Christian Education—study, worship, fellowship and service.

My Experience with III and IV Grades

I am thankful to the minister for sharing this wonderful experience with me. I taught at Central for one semester. This was my first semester of Field Work. Mrs. Thornton was the main teacher of the class. She and I planned to teach the class together. Both of us prepared the lesson turn by turn. The Sunday that I taught the class, she would help them to do the exercises given in their students books and other creative activities. Mrs. Thornton worked fulltime elsewhere and did not have much time to prepare the lesson.

In the beginning I had some problems such as the children could not follow me. My accent and dress was different from theirs. Sometimes they could not follow what I said and they would ask each other what I said. So, for some time, we had a problem in communicating. Another problem was that they were more interested in knowing about my dress, country and other things than in their lesson. Thus, it took some time for the class to get back to the normal situation.

I noticed that we did not have much of a discipline problem. The children were usually from middle class Black families. That does not mean that they were interested in the lesson. They preferred to do other creative work than to read the lesson. I always tried to arrive early and place materials and pictures on the wall which were connected with their lesson. I would do the lesson plan in advance which was approved by our instructor and after the class I wrote the evaluative report on
class session.

The children loved to sing and read from the Bible and if they had a drama in their lesson, they enjoyed playing it. Some of the children were shy and did not like to read or act in front of the class. I enjoyed teaching at Central, but was not satisfied with the results. More effective leadership opportunities and encouragement is required from teachers, the minister and parents to get the better results.

**Teaching Techniques Used by the Teacher**

While teaching at Central I tried to use different techniques with the children. Some of the commonly used activities were dramatization, story-telling, scripture reading, questions and answers and discussions. They liked to color and draw. I usually prepared exercises for them to do and zeroxed the maps for them to color. They liked to dramatize the Biblical stories and they made charts with the help of the teachers. They were asked to recite psalms and verses from the Bible. They enjoyed group singing.

Other techniques were not used because the church did not have the equipment. Outdoor activities were impossible because church does not have a playground. Field trips were occasionally arranged, but not very often because of the transportation problem.

The Superintendent and teachers met once a month to discuss the problems of the classes, but the results of these meetings were not very encouraging because of the poor attendance, lack of cooperation and ineffective leadership.
We seldom had an opportunity to meet the parents. Most of them did not take any interest in the Christian education programs. This is one of the main reasons why Christian educators fail to do their job effectively because the parents are the main source of the child's religious growth and when they do not cooperate it becomes very hard to do something in one hour which the parent cannot do in all the time they have with their children.

**Recommendations for Junior Department**

There are many things which need to be improved at Central United Methodist Church. During the period of one semester of teaching, I faced many problems which could be solved if everyone cooperates.

One of the biggest problems is class attendance and arriving late in the class. Teachers and pupils should be encouraged to come regularly and punctually. Sometimes attendance is so poor that the teacher loses her interest in teaching. Quite often children come to the class when half of the lesson has been finished and as a result they do not follow anything and are unable to do the exercises at the end of their lesson. This tends to create confusion and discipline in the class.

Since the classrooms are so small, children do not have the freedom of movement. Church must think of some other possibility. The Church provides the proper teaching aids and audio-visual aids, and other supply materials.

The teachers should be asked to be well-prepared for teaching the classes. The teacher should be given the opportunity to meet the parents often at other times than on Sundays after church. Most of the parents
send their children to the church and Sunday School but they, themselves, do not come to church or take any part in church activities. This is one of the biggest needs of every church today. Parents think this is the duty of the church or church school to make their children better Christians, while they forget mainly that it is their responsibility to give them a Christian atmosphere where they can grow naturally.
Part IV

MY TEACHING EXPERIENCE AT BEN HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
The Setting and Brief Historical Sketch: Ben Hill United Methodist Church is located on Fairburn Road in Southwest Atlanta, Georgia. Ben Hill United Methodist Church, originally called Wesley Chapel Church, was begun in a log cabin on Niskey Lake Road in 1853. It was moved to its present location in 1875. The first Sunday School was organized in 1880 with an enrollment of 35 members. In 1922 another church building was erected—providing facilities for Sunday School classes. In 1928 the name was changed to Ben Hill Methodist Church. By 1953 the Church School had grown to such extent that it became necessary to provide much larger quarters, and a church educational building was erected and adequately furnished. On March 1, 1964 classes were held for the first time in the new educational wing. In addition to the classrooms there is a well-furnished church office, pastor's study, choir room, quilted room and library.

The Present Program of Christian Education: At present Reverend Paul F. Wohlgemuth is the Minister. This church was predominantly White and had good membership. Since becoming integrated, the membership is decreasing and Blacks are moving in and Whites are dropping out. Right now it has a small congregation with increasing Black membership.

In the Christian Education Department they have a fulltime Director, Miss Thelma Heith, who is a retired Social Worker. She has Assistant Directors to help her. The church has a beautiful educational program for children, adults and older people, but they do not have any program for young people because they do not have many youth attending the church.
The Junior Department at Ben Hill: Ben Hill has a separate and very well-furnished building for the Church School classes, which is known as the Educational Wing. The classrooms are large enough big center table and chairs around them which leaves enough space for the children to move around freely. In the center of the table are students books, Bibles and supplies boxes which the children use every Sunday. Each class is equipped with piano, book shelf, and big blackboard.

The Children's Department:

Nursery I
Nursery II
Kindergarten
Elementary
Primary
Lower Junior
Junior

Infancy
Ages 2-3
Ages 455
Ages 5-6 Grade 1
Ages 7-8 Grade 2
Ages 8-9 Grades 3-4
Ages 10-11 Grades 5-6

Those children who come to this church are usually from the middle class Black and White families. Each grade has two teachers. Team-teaching is encouraged at Ben Hill Church. The program and the setting of the Junior Department looks well-organized. The classes are from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. Children and teachers arrive on time and the children are regular in attendance. The majority of the children are Black. The set-up is proper and well-planned.

The Christian Education Program: At Ben Hill Church the program for Juniors is well-planned. Besides the Sunday School classes, there are some other activities for Juniors such as choir, field trips, and on occasions like Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Halloween, special recreational programs are planned for Juniors. For example, on Easter they go for "Easter Egg Hunts"; at Christmas they have parties and Christmas dramas.
The Physical Environment: As I have discussed before, the building for educational ministry is new and well-equipped. The classes are large enough and each room has windows and a proper lighting system. There is a place for children to hang their coats and sweaters, etc. The sanitary facilities are very good. On the whole, the classes look neat and clean.

My Teaching Experience with III Grade: I was given the opportunity to be a team-teacher with Mrs. Bruce Jordy, who was their main teacher. I taught at Ben Hill for one semester. Mrs. Jordy and I planned the lessons together. She used to teach one half of the lesson and I taught the other half. We did not have a discipline problem. The children were usually interested in the lesson and we gave them plenty of opportunities to use their imagination and do creative work. The children were asked to bring materials from home such as shoe boxes, sand, small stones, etc. to make different things. We usually followed the suggestion given in the teachers book for creative activities. The children were allowed to take home whatever they made. Once Mrs. Jordy and I asked the children to leave their things in the class and when different items were completed we invited their parents and other church members to see the arts and crafts exhibition.

At Christmas time Mrs. Jordy and I brought the small Christmas tree and all the children were asked to bring the decorations for it and they made some of the decorations themselves. They were given the opportunity to participate in the church service from time to time by reading the Bible or by singing the songs.
These children attended the church service and the Pastor gave special sermons for the children for five or ten minutes.

Recommendations: Ben Hill Church was the ideal situation where I worked for one semester. Teachers, members of the church and the children are very cooperative. The church officials are trying to make the Christian Education Program a meaningful experience for everyone so they can relate it to their everyday situation. That does not mean that Ben Hill does not have any problem which needs attention. Like any other church, Ben Hill suffers from the lack of proper leadership. They need professional help to teach the teachers and leaders how to make their ministry meaningful.

One of the biggest needs at Ben Hill is the reconciliation in Blacks and Whites. The membership is going down because Whites are moving out. When I was doing my Field Work they had a majority of White people in the church and Blacks were moving in slowly. Recently I had a chance to visit the church again and I was sorry to see that most of the White families have moved out and very few are left.

The Junior Department seems to run smoothly. The teachers prepare their lessons and help each other. The teachers and officials meet once a month to discuss the problems and other things.

The children should be given more opportunities to go on field trips to the parks, zoo, museum, art gallery, hospitals, orphanages, etc. Then they should be asked to write an article on their trip and the best article could be published in the church's children's paper. Black and White children should be encouraged to live in harmony with each other. They should be taught to respect each other's feeling.
Part V

AUTHOR'S EXPERIENCE IN SUPERVISION AND ADMINISTRATION
I was given the opportunity to serve as an Assistant Supervisor during my last semester of Field Work in Trinity United Methodist Church. I requested Rev. Ken Jones, the Pastor; and the Supervisor to give me an opportunity to work as an Assistant Supervisor. The church is integrated and is situated near the Capitol Homes area. Black children who come to the church are from the low class Black families. Keeping their background, environment and status in mind, we can easily understand what type of problems Church School staffs might be having in handling these children. Before I discuss my role as a Supervisor, I would like to discuss, first, the responsibilities and duties of the Superintendent or Supervisor.

The Superintendent of the Junior Department: The Junior Department needs a separate Superintendent and an Assistant to arrange and supervise the activities of the children, as well as the cooperation of the staff. The individual selected for this position should be one who has a general perspective of the place of the department as a part of a program that continues through life. She must see its possibilities in the lives of the pupil and comprehend the workings of an efficient organization to carry out that part of the program, as well as being able to enlist the interests of and inspire all pupils, teachers, and officers; and to cooperate harmoniously with all the other Departments and General Officers of the Church School.

The Superintendent is responsible to help nominate the officers and the teachers, and supervise the teaching. She should have a strong and good understanding of the teachers. She should be open to
suggestions and criticisms. She should not be the dominating leader, but a democrat, so all the members of the department could feel important and needed. She should arrange the seminars for leadership development to help teachers to be better leaders and to understand their duties better.

The Superintendent secures the proper working materials and the proper working conditions for the department. In cooperation with others, she plans the programs for the Sunday sessions and usually is in charge of them. She helps solve unusual problems of discipline. She looks into the cause of absences and suggests ways of bringing about home cooperation. She should plan a session or a social gathering where parents and teachers can get together to discuss the problems and to secure more cooperation.

The Supervisor is also responsible for holding the meetings of the teachers and other officers to discuss the problems, to get the suggestions, and to get the teachers' weekly report.

The Author's Involvement as an Assistant Supervisor: Trinity United Methodist Church has recently moved its Junior Department to a different location. Now the classes are held in a big house in the neighborhood where the children come from. They attend half of the church service and then they gather in a classroom in the church building for the singing session until the church service is over. After the church service the teachers of the Junior Department and the children go to the other church school building by church bus where classes are held from 11:30 to 12:30. At the end of the session they are served refreshments.
The Supervisor is usually busy arranging the refreshments so she asks me to supervise the classes and help the teachers to do their jobs effectively. Like every other church school, this school is also having problems. One thing which I deeply appreciated was the fact that the Pastor, Superintendent, and the other officers are trying their best to make it more meaningful and helpful for the children.

Some of the Crucial Problems: After every session I discussed with the Superintendent the main problems and difficulties which I thought needed attention. Those problems are discussed below.

The Church School Building: Though they have moved to this present building recently, it is still not a very healthy situation. The building is a house, not built with a purpose of classes. The rooms are very small and children do not have much space to move around. The heating system is very dangerous. There are electric heaters kept in every class.

Discipline: As we have discussed before, these children come from low class neighborhoods. They are by nature more difficult to handle. They lack courtesies and manners, they like to play, they refuse to read the lesson if they want, and there is no way teachers could relate to them. The majority of the time they play and ignore what the teacher wants them to do. This way, in most of the sessions, they learn nothing.

Lack of Proper Leadership: The success of the lesson depends not only on the children. The leader is partly responsible. What makes it meaningful is the proper leadership. Trinity's Junior Department lacks proper leadership. Teachers need to be more serious in preparing their lesson and using the teaching aids. The Junior Department has the
majority of Black children and the teachers are all White—which enables them to handle and relate to these children.

Lack of Parents Cooperation: Not only this church, but all the churches I worked with had the problem of parents in cooperation. At Trinity many Black children attend the Church School, but in the church services hardly their parents take part. They do not even come to church. These were some of the problems which I found needed attention at Trinity. I had the opportunity to discuss these with the supervisor.

Suggestions and Recommendations: These are some of the suggestions which I discussed with the supervisor time to time.

To solve the problem of indiscipline, the teacher must know the background of each child. The teacher must be aware of child psychology and other methods of problem-solving. The teachers should have sessions in which they could discuss each others problems and give suggestions.

To have effective leadership, teachers should be given the opportunity to attend the seminars on leadership development where they could learn how to prepare a lesson and how to use the material aids. Here they can use some professional help, who can train these teachers to be effective leaders.

Trinity Church has a very effective community development program. They also have a visitation program in which workers of the church visit the homes of the church school children. In spite of every effort, it is very obvious that parents are not cooperative. They think that the spiritual growth of their children is the church's responsibility
and they cannot do anything to make it work. The church needs to change this attitude by involving them in its activity. The church should arrange to get together parties where parents can participate or the children should be encouraged to have some cultural programs in which parents could be invited to see what their children are doing, etc.

The Trinity Junior Department does not use the Curriculum Series. The supervisor and teachers develop their own curriculum programs because they think that present curriculum plan is not relevant for the Black children. I completely agree with this approach, but I do not believe that every teacher could be qualified to develop a curriculum program. Here again they need the professional help of the Black educators who understand the nature and needs of the Black children.

Trinity Church has a team-teaching program. It would be better if they would have a Black teacher and a White teacher. I think having a Black teacher in every class will help to solve the discipline problem and other problems as well.

CONCLUSION

Usually students do their Field Work in one church. As I have indicated before, I had the opportunity to do my Field Work in 3 different United Methodist Churches. The reason for selecting different situations was that I wanted to experience the attitudes of Black children in predominantly Black churches and in integrated churches as well as their differences. After working in both the situations discussed above, I did find the differences which, in my opinion, might affect the
personalities of both Black and White children.

There was a time when everyone thought "integration" was the answer to all the problems between Blacks and Whites, but now we are realizing that it is not working. From all the churches, Whites are moving out and Ben Hill is the perfect example of such a situation. Eventually the supposedly integrated churches are becoming predominantly Black. Even if Blacks and Whites are attending the churches together, they still differentiate between them—which shows a kind of division in the church. Black children feel left out if the majority of children are White, which creates in them the feeling of rejection, lack of confidence, and they feel lost. The same is true in the situation where Blacks are in the majority.

Being in this situation long enough I can say, without any shadow of doubt, that "integration" is doing more damage than good. There are only two suggestions for it:

1. Either Whites should completely change their attitudes (mental attitudes) It is no use being together and still being separated in mind and heart.

2. The other way is that Blacks should have their own churches since they have learned to be proud of their identity. They should teach their children what Black Power and Black Awareness means and what their human situation means—which is not possible in the integrated situation.

I did enjoy my Field Work teaching and I am thankful for the acceptance and cooperation I received from everyone. Through my theory, real knowledge and practical experience, I learned a lot and I sincerely hope that in my ministry, when I go back home, I would be able to make my experiences meaningful with my people.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


