

Church Of Christ Shares Beliefs With Others

By ROSE WEBER

Can you be a Christian without being Catholic or Protestant?

The Church of Christ, 22355 W. Eleven Mile Road, Southfield, answers yes.

The religious beliefs of Church of Christ members resemble in many ways those of Catholics, of Protestants and of Jewish people.

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THEY SHARE with the Jew his faith that the Old Testament is the inspired word of God.

They share with the Catholics the same God and apostles, the Old and New Testaments and the belief that the Bible is God's word.

The Church of Christ shares with the Protestants belief in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, but they part with the Protestants in the area of decrees of religious councils and in the creeds that men have written.

The Church of Christ believes that the only authoritative and dependable guide to heaven is the Bible.

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GERALD E. MONTGOMERY, minister for the Southfield Church of Christ, says that the New Testament is his sermon guide. "Anything I say is directly related to a statement in the Bible," he said.

Mr. Montgomery does not want to be called reverend. "Call me reverent but not reverend. Only God is called that in the Bible and I'm not equal to him. My title in the Bible is minister," he said.

There is no organized choir or instrumental music at the Church of Christ services because it is not mentioned in the Bible. It was not until after 1000 A.D. that a reference to instrumental music is recorded.

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MR. MONTGOMERY does not wear a robe because that custom is man-made and not mentioned in the Bible, he added.

The church nestled between Eleven Mile Road and I-696 is an active, growing church. Services for the 125 members are conducted in a temporary sanctuary. The room pleasantly furnished in light oak with dark green curtains, green rug and green cushioned pews is planned for future use as a recreation room.

Evidence of the intended use of the room are the light fixtures. They are standard gymnasium type with wire protected lights. When completed, the church's exterior will be in a shape of a cross. The new, larger sanctuary will be on one end with Sunday school rooms forming the arms of the cross on each side of the present corridor of rooms topped with the recreation hall.

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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST members began meeting in Brooks School on Lahser Road in 1956.

Three moves later they started the building on Eleven Mile Road. Dedication was on Dec. 6, 1964.

Mr. Montgomery is very proud of the generosity of his church members. Approximately one fifth of the church's yearly budget of more than \$30,000 is ear-marked for missionary and benevolence spending.

Michigan State Campus Advance Mission receives the largest sum. Other benevolences include helping a new church in Hancock to buy their own building, the Oak Hills Home for Unwed Mothers, the Home for the Aged in Romeo, the Schults-Lewis Orphanage, Valparaiso, Ind. and various missions in India.

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THE "HERALD of Truth" television program and the World Radio station in Lafayette, Ind. also receive support.

"We also collect food to donate locally. You wouldn't think there was much need but we manage to find people in need right here in Southfield," Mr. Montgomery said.

The members of the Church of Christ also support a two year junior college on Avon Road in Rochester. The school, located just west of the Leader Dog School for the Blind, is a liberal arts school which will probably receive accreditation next year. The Michigan Christian College has an enrollment of approximately 250 students and was founded in 1959.

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THE COLLEGE is funded through donations by the church members not, the church itself. Mr. Montgomery serves on the board of directors.

The Church of Christ is organized and run entirely by volunteer church members. There are three elders, each of whom is responsible for a separate area of the church program.

Elder E. Rush has the responsibility of the building and ground committee and the benevolence and mission committee. Elder R. Howard is in charge of finance, youth activities, program and zone committees.

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AS THE THIRD elder, Mr. Montgomery is responsible for the activities directly relating to the worship program of the church. "I also am in charge of the ladies' activities," he said with a chuckle.

Gerald Montgomery is an unusual minister for an unusual church. He has worked at two full time jobs for 30 years.

Although he is a full time minister for the Church of Christ he makes his living as the full time director of the Greater Detroit Safety Council.

RELIGIOUS NEWS



Eccentric Photos by Gerald Gazda

FUTURE CHURCH OF CHRIST BUILDING
Gerald Montgomery, minister, explains how the expanded church will look

"I RECEIVE an allowance for the operation of my car and the parsonage but I prefer not to receive a salary from the church," Mr. Montgomery said.

"I have always been able to earn my living at secular work. I was employed by the Detroit Fire Department for 26 years as director of public relations. I prefer that the church spend the money I would receive for a salary on missions," he continued.

When asked how his wife liked his busy life he

said, "I am probably the most loved man in the world."

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HE AND HIS wife, Ollie, have been married for 44 years and have four children. They are the proud grandparents of 12 grandchildren, three of whom are adopted, and they are expecting their first great-grandchild in March.

"When you add up my years of service, I have worked a total of 75 years. I'm going to try for an even 100 before I quit," he said.