

## **Origin and Legacy of the Common Global Ministries Board: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in World Mission**

I want to express appreciation to Dr. Forrest H. Kirkpatrick, former dean of Bethany College and founder of this lecture series. I dedicate this study to another personality of Bethany, the Rev. Irvin Taylor Green, who taught from 1921 until 1953, thirty-two years. I am persuaded that Prof. Green (1882-1954) coached more preachers for the Disciples of Christ than any other person in our colleges and seminaries ever did. He was from Horse Cave, Kentucky, and did his graduate study at the University of Chicago Divinity School. He convinced his students of the importance of a cooperative brotherhood, as our church was called then, a loving and reasoning approach to the Bible, and unqualified loyalty to the United Christian Missionary Society. He often spoke with pride of Bethany graduate and former president of Bethany, Archibald McLean, who for thirty-nine years was at the head of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society and was a principle architect of UCMS at his death in 1920. He referred to him as “the immortal McLean” in the commencement exercises of 1938. Prof. Green often mentioned Bethanians who became executives of UCMS, including Cyrus M. Yokum, A. Dale Fiers, and Mae Yoho Ward. It is fitting that a lecture which centers on “the United Society” call Prof. Green to our collective memory and remind us of the theology of mission and dedication that shape this history as much as anything else.

### I. DHM/DOM (CGMB)

This study will attempt to be a theological reflection as well as an historical memoir on the still-existing missionary societies of our common movement from their beginnings in 1849 to the present. We must remember that the Christian Association of Washington in 1809 is referred to in the foreword of the *Declaration and Address* as a “society,” with twice yearly meetings, a standing committee of twenty-one members, financial subscription and support, provision for correspondence, and a stated mission of “promoting simple, evangelical Christianity free from all mixture of human opinions and inventions of men.” From that we can detect an ethos of the times, researched recently by the late Hiram Lester.<sup>1</sup> In retrospect, W.K. Pendleton in the *Millennial Harbinger* of 1866<sup>2</sup> even calls it “a missionary society.” But our study includes first the American Christian Missionary Society of which Alexander Campbell was president for many years, the Christian Woman's Board of Missions organized in 1874, the Foreign Christian Missionary Society dating from 1875, the merging of these three societies into the United Christian Missionary Society in 1920, the creation of the Division of Overseas Ministries and the Division of Homeland Ministries in 1973, and the Common Global Ministries Board in cooperation with the United Church of Christ in 1996. I hope to show that the characteristics of faith, leadership and temperament which resulted in the organized missionary work were precisely the determining factors which led to the restructure of the Disciples of Christ as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada.

This was in large part the transformation of the United Christian Missionary Society into what it had always been implicitly, namely that part of the general church which served as the means of national and international mission, Christian education, social action, and much ecumenical engagement. While the creation of a General Assembly and General Board was possible only with the cooperation of all the state missionary societies and boards like the Pension Fund, Higher Education, National Benevolent

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<sup>1</sup> Hiram J. Lester, “Form and Function of the Declaration and Address,” in *The Quest for Christian Unity, Peace, and Purity in Thomas Campbell's Declaration and Address: Text and Studies*, ed. by Thomas H. Olbricht and Hans Rollin, ALA Monograph Series, (Lanham, Maryland and London: Scarecrow Press, 2000), pages 173-192.

<sup>2</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, (Bethany, W. Va.: Printed and Published by WK. Pendleton, 1866) , p. 503.

Association, Church Extension, etc., it was the sharing of leadership from all these bodies and from local congregations in and through UCMS up to that time which most clearly expressed the sense of the one church which was to come. Our title "Origin and Legacy of the Common Global Ministries Board" shows my intention of keeping before us the present reality of the 19th century missionary societies, because it would be totally out of character to speak of this mission history as relevant to the past rather than reaching into the future of the 21st century. But it must be noted at the beginning that the United Christian Missionary Society stands out in a special way.

So while the missionary societies of this lecture are in the plural, it is the United Society that gathers their spirit and commitment most notably, and which deserves to be recognized for its generous self-effacement in the interests of the church it served and helped create after a brief existence of only fifty years. The United Society, like the Pension Fund, the Historical Society, the Council On Christian Unity, etc., embodied a form of the cooperative church from the beginning, but no board was challenged to give up its corporate life for the sake of the whole as UCMS did. For this reason, A. Dale Fiers went from being president of UCMS in 1964 to executive for the International Convention and then General Minister and President of the newly structured church. By the same token in 1973, to everyone's surprise, the official nominee T.J. Liggett had been defeated on the seventh ballot in favor of Kenneth Teegarden, because of the determined effort of some to avoid the imprint of the United Christian Missionary Society on the new shape of the church, to which the vision of the United Society had contributed in large part.

This is not to say that the new body did not fare well with a General Minister and President who was not selected from the ranks of the missionary tradition we are commemorating, but rather that the assumption in the years of planning had been that he or she would represent this historic relationship between "missionary society" and "church." When Dr. Fiers installed Dr. Liggett as president of UCMS in 1968, T.J. was asked to pledge that he would continue faithfully in leading the process towards restructure.<sup>3</sup> We shall see that in the creation of missionary societies in the mid-nineteenth century, there was never any doubt theologically about the fact that the task of mission at home and abroad is the task of the whole church and is of the very nature of the church, willed by God and revealed in the New Testament.

The place we begin is both before and after 1849. To know where the modern missionary movement came from, which includes our own, we shall recall the creation of societies which date from the late 18th century and the expansion in exploration, trade and conquest of mainly Protestant nations with which our ancestors felt a cultural and religious affinity. They copied patterns which they found about them and admired, which is one of the reasons there was such controversy. To know what we are dealing with concretely, however, we must begin with the present on the threshold of the 21st century, following a span of two centuries which, for our purposes, may be called "the American missionary centuries." We begin with today and the mission imperative of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada approved by the General Assembly meeting in Pittsburgh in 1995: "We believe God's mission for the church is to be and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, witnessing and serving from our doorsteps "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).<sup>4</sup> The intention embracing the year 2000 and beyond is stated by General Minister and President Richard L. Hamm as "engaging in outreach ministries of reconciliation, compassion, unity, and justice."

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<sup>3</sup> Gena R. Sheller, "The Life and Ministry of Thomas Jackson Liggett," in the *Lexington Theological Quarterly*, Spring 2004, page 24.

<sup>4</sup> *Yearbook and Directory 1996*, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), p. 306.

The missionary societies have resulted in two units of this church, namely the Division of Overseas Ministries (DOM) and the Division of Homeland Ministries (DHM).<sup>5</sup> These two units are the immediate heirs of the United Society, already in existence twenty-five years, and including much of the continuing work of the earlier societies. The American Christian Missionary Society is present in DOM mission personnel sent to the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands, and in DHM's support of the Inman Christian Center in San Antonio, Texas. The Christian Woman's Board of Missions still exists in relations of DOM with the Church of North India in Bilaspur and Jabalpur and in DHM through the Kentucky Appalachian Ministry. The Foreign Christian Missionary Society will be remembered in 1999 in the centennial of the Disciples Community of the Church of Christ in the Congo, formerly Zaire, and in DOM's relations with the United Church of Christ in Japan (the Kyodan) both places later joined by CWBM.

The affairs of the nineteenth century societies and the UCMS are everyday concerns of DHM and DOM, not only in ancient legal ties or long-standing mission administration and fellowship, but extended into many new partner church relationships, ecumenical councils, support of evangelism and pastoral care, ministries of health and education, justice for women and children, and care for the environment. The collective financial legacies still are managed by a small board of trustees in the name of UCMS, and every year the three predecessor bodies are called into session, a board and officers elected, minutes recorded, and any business undertaken if necessary at the request of DOM and Homeland Ministries.

With regard to one of these units, the mission statement drawn up by the board of directors of the Division of Homeland Ministries and president Ann Updegraff Spleth in November, 1997, states: "God calls Homeland Ministries to serve the church and the society one congregation at a time, one person at a time, through Faith and Leadership Development, Evangelism, Ministries of Justice and Compassion." DHM includes the Office of Disciples Women which traces its past to 1874 and well before that, as seen in the long-overdue tribute of the Chalice Press book by Debra Beery Hull *Christian Church Women: Shapers of a Movement* (1994). This Office is responsible for relations with Disciples women clergy. It describes its task as helping women with leadership, service/action, resources for Christian Women's Fellowship study and worship, organizational helps, and outreach giving. The International CWF gives over three million dollars annually to the mission funding program of the total church.

Concerning the other unit, the important new development pointing to the next century is the Common Global Ministries Board which brings together the programs and activities of the Division of Overseas Ministries and the United Church Board for World Ministries into one mission operation. D.T. Niles, at an assembly of the East Asia Conference of Churches (now the Christian Conference of Asia) in Kuala Lumpur, challenged the two boards to unite their world mission endeavors. Since 1967, thanks to the response of Alford Carleton and Virgil Sly, then T. J. Liggett and Robert A. Thomas, there have been joint offices serving both boards, such as Southern Asia under Telfer Mook and then Eric Gass, or Latin America and the Caribbean first from 1968 to 1971 by myself and now since 1989 with David Vargas. Since January 1, 1994, all area executive secretaries are shared, as well as the personnel officer, recruitment, deputation, etc. The motivation was the emphasis of the 1960's on Joint Action for Mission and the strong ecumenical commitment of the two churches, related to the same partners in many places and wishing to put into practice signs of Christian unity in world mission.

The background and preparation are described in detail in a document I presented to the Council of Ministers of our church meeting December 8, 1991, in Lexington, Kentucky, which I shall append to this address for the record. Economic considerations did not enter in until the late 1980's when reduction of executive staff became advantageous to the two boards. In fact, there often were additional costs involved.

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<sup>5</sup> DHM began service as Disciples Home Missions in August 2002.

Christian unity truly was “the polar star.” It is worth noting that mission executives always cooperated to the fullest extent through the area committees of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA and that Luz Bacerra was executive secretary for Southeast Asia for DOM and the Presbyterians for five years from 1989. Scott S. Libbey, UCBWM executive vice-president 1985 to 1994, and Daniel F. Romero, General Secretary for Mission, 1987 through 1997, deserve much of the credit in creating the new united mission entity. This thirty years of serving and growing together was culminated by Patricia Tucker Spier and David Y. Hirano who succeeded me and Dr. Libbey upon our retirements January 1, 1994.<sup>6</sup>

The Common Board was inaugurated for the two churches in April, 1996, with twenty members named by DOM, twenty by UCBWM, and six from partner churches around the world, a total of forty-six. They have voice and vote and full responsibility for the sending of approximately two hundred missionaries, global mission interns, and short-term volunteers to ninety different countries. Partner churches range from traditionally Disciples of Christ or UCC denominational ties, like the Evangelical and Reformed Church in Honduras or the Disciples of Argentina, to the Reformed Church of France and the Christian Apostolic Holy Spirit Church in Zion of Swaziland. A consultation was held last October in Indianapolis sponsored by the Global Ministries office for Latin America and the Caribbean and five Pentecostal churches in Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Chile and Puerto Rico. Lists of these relationships are available.

Moreso than previous mission units, Global Ministries has become also an intermediary or broker for congregational and regional participation in overseas relationships, even assisting with the globalization of theological education among seminaries. Reflecting the times, much more emphasis is given to work camps, study trips, short-term volunteers, two-way missionary exchanges and the hosting of visitors at the local level.

## II. ACMS

Kenneth Scott Latourette's seven volume history of the expansion of Christianity dedicates three to the 19th century alone, calling it "The Great Century." Volume III covers 1500 to 1800 and says on page 48: "The closing years of the 17th and the opening years of the 18th century witnessed the emergence of several Protestant missionary societies. He speaks of them as “new instruments for propagating the Christian faith... without precedent in the expansion of Christianity, or, indeed, in the spread of any religious faith." Their support came primarily from lay Christians at the same time that egalitarianism began to be expressed broadly in Western society. Space does not permit the listing of the great number of societies that grew up in Europe in the following century and the names of leaders who became known internationally, but in the United States missionary societies multiplied rapidly early in the century.

I regret that we cannot give attention to the contradictions of the “American missionary centuries,” but we must seek explanations someday of the ironic relation to the murder and displacement of Native Americans, wars humiliating Mexico and Spain or defending slavery to the death, and the effect of European colonialism resulting in two modern wars worldwide. I think this remains an unsolved mystery but one that impinges on the moral and cultural base of missionary spirituality, hopefully as conscious resistance rather than as unconscious justification. What is the theological and sociological correlation?

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was organized in 1810 by Congregationalist clergy in Massachusetts after the memorable inspiration of students of Williams College, when, as legend has it, they took refuge under a haystack during a rainstorm on an afternoon's outing. The direct structural

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<sup>6</sup> Dr. David A. Vargas became president of DOM and co-executive for Global Ministries April 2, 2003. UCBWM became Wider Church Ministries of the UCC July 1, 2000, for which Dr. Dale L. Bishop became executive minister and co-executive of Global Ministries until September, 2003, when he was succeeded by Dr. Olivia Masih White.

lineage of this board is to be found in the United Church of Christ's Board for World Ministries, and its work continues as part of the Common Global Ministries Board with the Disciples of Christ.

In 1814, the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions was organized in Philadelphia. In 1819, the Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America was formed. The Episcopal Church began its Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in 1821. The Synod of Pittsburgh of the Old School Presbyterians formed the Western Foreign Missionary Society in 1831, with a name change to Presbyterian Foreign Missionary Society in 1837. In 1832, the American Baptist Home Mission Society was organized. In 1837 the Foreign Missionary Society of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States was formed. The Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians split between North and South in the 1840's, and new missionary societies were born of each one. The list of other missionary societies organized on a sectarian basis or on a local and state level, according to Latourette "even a bare catalog," would extend to many hundreds of pages!

To this enumeration must be added the proliferation of magazines, journals and heroic missionary accounts that filled the imagination and stirred the faith of people on the frontier. Mention must be made of names which became well-known both within and outside of the churches, like Henry Martyn, William Carey, Robert Morrison, Adoniram Judson, Alexander Duff, and martyrs like John Williams.

However, in reading this history, we are already being selective in our memory, because there was also a deep-seated opposition to missionaries, from ridicule by the East India Company and debate among statesmen to arguments in the assemblies of the churches. A. McLean said in his lectures to college students late in the century: "When the present era of missions began, the people of God were hostile or indifferent for the most part."<sup>7</sup>

In his first address of *Where The Book Speaks* in 1907, a hermeneutical interpretation called "The New Testament A Missionary Volume," he writes: "While this should be our attitude it is a well-known fact that many in our fellowship are opposed to missions. There are others who say this cause makes no appeal to them...They are interested in the local work, but in nothing else."<sup>8</sup>

All of this is to show the inevitability of a growing awareness of the need for home and foreign missions among some members of the Campbell-Stone movement and sooner or later the need to organize in order to accomplish them. They were always an energetic minority! Missions became part of the social air they breathed, and lent themselves to the polemical spirit of the times. The discord became particularly acute with the increase of prosperity in the North and Middle West after the Civil War.

At the same time, this listing of associations helps us understand Alexander Campbell's criticism of missionary societies in *The Christian Baptist* in two respects: first, the denominationalism, confusion and pretension they represented in his view; secondly, the way they distracted people from the church and appeared to remove the missionary task from the church, itself. We know that he modified his views on this subject, but also I found that I had to modify my understanding of his early view in order to understand how a Disciples of Christ missionary society became acceptable to him, even to the point of serving as president for seventeen years. Mr. Campbell's opposition to missionary societies must be explained by his reliance on the Bible and his ecclesiology derived from it, not because missionary societies are missing from its pages, but because the church is the divinely instituted means of proclaiming the Gospel and nothing should take its place. It is a matter of the revealed grace and will of God embodied in the church.

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<sup>7</sup> Archibald McLean, *Missionary Addresses*, (St. Louis, Mo.: The Christian Publishing Company, 1895), pp. 6, 46, 209.

<sup>8</sup> Archibald McLean, *Where the Book Speaks: Or Mission Studies in the Bible*, (St. Louis, Mo.: The Christian Publishing Co., 1907), p. 20.

In other words, it is not a case of literal interpretation but of theological interpretation. In *The Christian Baptist*, he wrote of the church that he lamented "to see its glory transferred to a human corporation" or that it be "robbed of its character by any institution, merely human, that would ape its excellence and substitute itself in its place."<sup>9</sup>

He wrote in the *Millennial Harbinger* of 1850 that from the first volume of the *Christian Baptist* he had insisted that the church is the only missionary society.<sup>10</sup> I believe that, in the last analysis, this opinion has been consistently maintained among Disciples of Christ ever since. This is why my article is entitled "Mission as Ecclesiology" in *The Vision of Christian Unity*.<sup>11</sup> I can testify that those presidents of UCMS whom I have known - A. Dale Fiers, Virgil Sly, T.J. Liggett, and Robert A. Thomas as well as the women who were UCMS vice-presidents - never saw the missionary society as anything other than a function of the church.<sup>12</sup> Just as Campbell often said: "Every Christian is a missionary, either personally or through someone better fitted, but every member of Christ's Church."<sup>13</sup> Joseph M. Smith, both in his *Strategy of World Mission* dissertation, which is indispensable to a reading of our history, and in a study document of UCMS, related mission to the catholicity of the church: "The outreaching mission of the Disciples of Christ has been the channel through which they have expressed the catholic nature of the church in both the local and universal sense." He sees it as the practice of a catholic congregationalism.<sup>14</sup>

Robert Richardson shows the change of attitude in the movement and the relativizing of opinions when he writes that it was his criticism of abuses by the clergy "that led Mr. Campbell to condemn Sunday-schools, missionary, education and even Bible societies, as THEN (sic!) conducted, because he thought them perverted to sectarian purposes."<sup>15</sup> The implication is inescapable that the times had changed by the late 1840's, and the clarifying word "then" appears twice more in the paragraph! To consider the missionary society as an "instrumentality" of the church, for which the church is represented in general convention by elected "messengers," was a different story from *the Christian Baptist* days. It is not an independent body, but is a means "employed by the Church at large for the accomplishment of important ends demanding mutual assistance, counsel and cooperation."<sup>16</sup> The missionary society became a form of the church's presence and outreach, both practically and theologically. It fulfilled this ecclesiological role implicitly for Disciples of Christ until restructure made it explicit a century later.

Campbell, himself, had written in 1842 that his mind had changed and that "we ought rather to act under the conviction that we may be wiser today than yesterday, and that whatever is true can suffer no hazard from a careful and candid consideration."<sup>17</sup> Mr. Richardson points out that "the rapid increase of the churches

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<sup>9</sup> Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. II (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1897), p. 97.

<sup>10</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, (Bethany, W.Va.: Published by A. Campbell, 1850), p. 207.

<sup>11</sup> William J. Nottingham, "Mission As Ecclesiology: Christian Identity and the Burden of Denominationalism," in *The Vision of Christian Unity: Essays in Honor of Paul A. Crow, Jr.*, ed. by Thomas F. Best and Theodore J. Nottingham, (Indianapolis: Oikoumene Publications, 1997), pp. 133-147.

<sup>12</sup> This explains why the Board of Directors of DOM was initially elected by the General Assembly in Cincinnati October 27, 1973. They met for the first time November 20, 1973, to represent in a new way the whole church in mission.

<sup>13</sup> e.g. *Millennial Harbinger*, 1857, p.619.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph M. Smith and Vern Rossman, *Called To Mission And Unity*, (Indianapolis: United Christian Missionary Society, 1965), pp. 28-9; see footnote 118.

<sup>15</sup> *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 601.

<sup>17</sup> Cited in *Memoirs, op. cit.*, pp. 493-4.

generally, but especially in Kentucky, where the membership was already estimated at forty thousand, impressed Mr. Campbell more and more with the responsibilities of his position, and with the vast importance of a clear understanding on the part of the churches in regard to the whole subject of organization and cooperation."<sup>18</sup>

On October 23, 1849, 156 delegates from eleven states gathered in Cincinnati to create the American Christian Missionary Society. Tucker and McAllister in *Journey in Faith* show some suspicion when they say that Alexander Campbell, "either because of poor health or for strategic reasons, was not present but was represented by W.K. Pendleton."<sup>19</sup> The December edition of the *Millennial Harbinger* contains Mr. Campbell's regrets at having been denied the pleasure due to "an unusually severe indisposition" and his hearty endorsement, being "peculiarly gratified." Robert Richardson says nothing about the organizing of the first convention in Cincinnati and the creation of the ACMS, but he mentions that a year later, on starting a forty-day trip West with his daughter Virginia, Mr. Campbell stopped in Cincinnati to attend "the anniversary of the Missionary Society, and then visited Madison and many other points in Indiana to which appointments had been forwarded."<sup>20</sup> The author gives more attention to Campbell's visit to Bloomington than to the convention where he was president and which is noted for the first time in the biography! He attends again in 1851, with Dr. J.T. and Julia Barclay then missionaries in Jerusalem. This time, Richardson says he "found an increasing interest on the subject of missions amongst the brethren, and an improvement in liberality which he labored earnestly to promote."<sup>21</sup> In 1853, Campbell "delivered an address to the Christian Missionary Society, of which he was still president, in which he dwelt earnestly upon the importance of missions both at home and abroad, and urged a general cooperation on the part of the brotherhood for the conversion of the world."<sup>22</sup> The *Millennial Harbinger* of 1854 includes this central conviction: "We shall, therefore, regard it as a fixed fact - that the Church of Jesus Christ is, in her nature, spirit and position, necessarily and essentially a missionary institution."(underlined in the original!)<sup>23</sup> \_

Richardson writes that through the decade until 1863<sup>24</sup> "he manifested his usual interest in the great subject of missions" and "was accustomed to meet with the ACMS as its president regularly every year, delivering addresses and urging increased liberality."<sup>25</sup> W.K. Pendleton wrote in 1866: "We feel that it is due to the great name of Alexander Campbell to vindicate his memory from the charge that he was ever opposed to true missionary work or true and scripturally conducted missions."<sup>26</sup>

Tucker and McAllister have a section in *Journey in Faith* called "Toward a National Organization," which tells of the decade-long progress toward the calling of a General Convention in Cincinnati in 1849 and the creation of the American Christian Missionary Society.<sup>27</sup> Campbell, himself, not only saw the need to give a kind of church structure to the growing movement of preachers and congregations in order to coordinate

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<sup>18</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> William E. Tucker and Lester G. McAllister, *Journey in Faith: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* (Saint Louis: The Bethany Press, 1975), p. 175.

<sup>20</sup> *Memoirs*, op. cit., p. 589.

<sup>21</sup> *Memoirs*, op. cit., p. 593.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 600-1.

<sup>23</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, 1854, p. 547.

<sup>24</sup> *Memoirs*, op. cit., p. 647.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 607.

<sup>26</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, 1866, p. 497.

<sup>27</sup> Tucker and McAllister, op. cit., pp. 170-80.

and authorize through open critical discussion the spreading of their understanding of the Christian faith for their times, but he led by a series of essays in the *Millennial Harbinger* 1842-1848 on cooperation and consensual agreement. A number of meetings were held, and David S. Burnet took the lead. He was twenty-years younger than Mr. Campbell and had been involved already in the organization of a Bible Society, largely supported by Ohio Disciples. He became one of the many persons who pushed for discussion and decisiveness in the steps which led to the Convention that gave birth to the ACMS. John T. Johnson of Kentucky made the resolution to start a society for world evangelization. It is to be noted that Mr. Campbell had urged a delegate assembly to be representative of congregations and of the whole body, not just individuals. This was not fully realized until the provisional General Assembly held in St. Louis in 1967 leading to the restructured church.

My point here is that the first missionary society was the product of a long and intense process which generated considerable soul-searching. There were shared biblical principles and at the same time fundamental differences in theological opinion. Disagreement grew concerning congregational ecclesiology, commonality in mission with other Christians, and also perhaps communion of the Holy Spirit. This tension would eventuate in separate bodies and institutions of the 20th and 21st centuries. A full appreciation is probably hidden from us in the distance from ante-bellum times. But the nature of the Bible's authority, the relatively new idea of the autonomy of the local congregation, and the centrality of millennialist eschatology for these men and women, with men doing most of the writing which is left to us, seem to me to be mysteries that can only be observed from different angles and rarely entered into existentially by later generations like our own. This is evidenced in the decisions concerning missionaries growing out of this fervor leading up to the Cincinnati convention: Dr. and Mrs. James T. Barclay were the first. It was in their parlor in Washington, D.C., 1843, that the congregation had been organized which became the Vermont Avenue Church and in 1930 the National City Christian Church. They went to Jerusalem, not because of Acts 1: 8 "beginning with Jerusalem" as a popular Disciples legend has it, but because it was taken for granted by Alexander Campbell and his followers that the Jews were to be converted before the return of Christ. The title of Campbell's journal proclaimed clearly the eschatology of the pre-Civil War spirituality, so neglected in our denominational memory by scholars and theologians since then. In the *Millennial Harbinger* of 1841, we read in what is called The Protestant Theory: "The Millennium, so far as the triumphs of Christianity is concerned, will be a state of greatly enlarged and continuous prosperity, in which the Lord will be exalted and his divine spirit enjoyed in an unprecedented measure. All the conditions of society will be vastly improved; wars shall cease, and peace and good will among men will generally abound. The Jews will be converted, and the fullness of the Gentiles will be brought into the kingdom of the Messiah."<sup>28</sup> The Brook Farm *Harbinger*, published weekly from June 1845 to June 1847 by New England transcendentalists, could not have been more utopian, and it is not a coincidence that they both are called "harbingers" of a better world.

The founding of the American Christian Missionary Society cannot be separated from the millennialist eschatology of the period nor from the pragmatism which required a foreign dimension to keep pace with other denominations or to outgrow them! D.S. Burnet's book *The Jerusalem Mission* and Dr. Barclay's book *The City of the Great King* make this clear, along with speeches and articles by various leaders like Isaac Errett. Barclay wrote in a journal *The Christian Age*: "The ACMS...resolved...to make the first offer of salvation to Israel...for the salvation of the Jews...for upon the conversion and resumption of Israel is unquestionably suspended the destruction of Antichrist and the salvation of the world."<sup>29</sup> The same

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<sup>28</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, 1841, p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Cited in D.S. Burnet, *The Jerusalem Mission*, according to George F. Miller, Bethany; cf. Paul M. Blowers, "Living in a Land of Prophets: James T. Barclay and an Early Disciples of Christ Mission to Jews in the Holy Land," *Church History*, Vol. 62 #4, 1993.

assumption had been indicated in the Appendix of the *Declaration and Address* of Thomas Campbell in 1809. But the conversion of the Jews is not what makes the missionary effort eschatological; rather it points to the fact that the whole of this prewar missionary conviction can be understood only in light of the eschatological theology of the times. This was thought to be biblical, with Rev. 14:6-7 regularly on the cover of the *Millennial Harbinger*, but deeply influenced by contemporary moral philosophy and Anglo-Saxon utopian belief in progress. Each succeeding generation had its own implicit theological definition of missionary endeavors, never unanimous probably, but in which the common theme, nevertheless, is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the church as the bearer of Good News for this world and the next.

Others sent out by ACMS were J.O. Beardslee to Jamaica in 1858, where he had already been a Congregationalist missionary and proposed himself, and Alexander Cross, a freedman who arrived in Liberia in 1854, only eight years after its founding. Both of these efforts were short-lived, because Mr. Cross became ill and died, and funds ran out for Mr. Beardslee's support at the time of the Civil War. The Christian Woman's Board of Missions picked up the work later in each place. In 1919, their missionaries in Liberia were transferred to the Belgian Congo mission of the Foreign Society, already in existence and destined to become one of the largest Disciples of Christ communities in the world. In December, 1993, the Disciples of Christ of Jamaica joined with the United Church that had resulted earlier from union of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, thereby bringing together the branches which Mr. Beardslee had served.

In later years, the ACMS served mainly as a home missions agency helping to start congregations, becoming a founding member of the United Society after the first World War. Opposition actually led to the change of the name in 1869 to General Christian Missionary Convention and back again in 1895!<sup>30</sup> Archibald McLean's *Missionary Addresses* tells of the "Society's" work among the Cherokees, "Negro evangelization and education," aid to churches in Philadelphia, Buffalo and Chicago, workers supported in Maine, Canada, and sixty-one cities "helped," as well as organizational work in ten states for an expenditure from 1849 to 1894 of over one million dollars. Its Church Extension Fund by 1895 had helped build 230 churches in thirty-four States and Territories

### III. CWBM

In 1858, Alexander Campbell wrote: "Every Christian woman is either a commissioned or a noncommissioned Missionary of the Lord Jesus Christ. To the eternal honor of the sex be it spoken and written and published from the rising to the setting sun that women stood by the cross and nearest to the dying Lord."<sup>31</sup> The *Memoirs* contains letters to his second wife Selina showing devoted affection but nothing related to organizational matters.<sup>32</sup> This was to await a post-Civil War generation of Disciples of Christ women. Nevertheless, women were not absent in the church and were making their contribution from the beginning in ways not adequately recorded. A. McLean wrote that Selina "read and criticized Mr. Campbell's addresses and essays before their publication."<sup>33</sup> We can be sure of women's place in leadership and support from Julia A. Barclay's letters from Jerusalem in the *Millennial Harbinger* in 1853 or in 1856 about Mary Williams' work there. We assume it in Nancy Bush's role at Bethany College,

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<sup>30</sup> Archibald McLean, *History of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1919), p. 26.

<sup>31</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, 1858, p. 605.

<sup>32</sup> *Memoirs*, op. cit., p. 259.

<sup>33</sup> A. McLean, *Thomas and Alexander Campbell* (Cincinnati:FCMS, 1910), p. 60.

when her husband's sermon in favor of abolition in 1855 caused a sensation,<sup>34</sup> and in her graduation with him as two of the first three graduates of Butler University in Indianapolis. There are many signs of a ready response of women throughout the church by the 1870's.<sup>35</sup>

Tucker and McAllister explain the new phenomenon: "Developing first in the well-established denominations, the desire of women to be active in the work of the church soon expressed itself. From 1869 to 1874 women's societies came into existence in the Baptist, Congregational, Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches."<sup>36</sup> A Committee on the Cooperation of Women in the Missionary Work reported to the 1870 ACMS Convention in Indianapolis. Allusion was made to the fact that women were already missionaries at home and abroad and that other denominations were setting the example for Disciples by women's support through offerings and prayers.

Things were at a standstill as far as overseas mission was concerned. To overcome the inaction and lack of any missions overseas of the ACMS, run exclusively by men for over twenty years, Caroline Neville Pearre, whose husband was pastor in Iowa City, Iowa, took the initiative. She corresponded with the secretary of the ACMS (or the General Convention) Thomas Munnell and wrote to prominent women of the Disciples of Christ in Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio and Pennsylvania urging the creation of local missionary circles. Full credit belongs to the women, but it must be noted that Munnell, James Challen, J.H. Garrison, Isaac Errett and other men encouraged their movement.<sup>37</sup> *The Christian Monitor*, a woman's magazine edited by Marcia Goodwin, should be studied to see what role it played in these developments including education about Christian mission.

At the 1874 General Convention in Cincinnati, women from nine states met with Jane Sloan of Ohio presiding and appointed a committee to draft a constitution with Mrs. Pearre as chairperson. Following the pattern of the Congregationalist women's society, they proposed that they undertake both home and foreign mission activities and that the new organization would be completely under the control of women. On October 22, the resolution was adopted by the Convention in a unanimous standing vote.<sup>38</sup> The first officers were elected, headquarters would be in Indianapolis, by-laws were written as well as a sample constitution for use in every congregation, where it was hoped a state and national network would be rooted. In 1876, the Williams family was sent to reopen the work in Jamaica from which constant calls had never ceased to come, work was started in 1881 in Jackson, Mississippi, among African-Americans, and other home mission was undertaken in Montana. The most far-reaching step was the sending of four young women to India in 1882, along with two couples sent by the Foreign Society which had been organized in 1875.

Lorraine Lollis in *The Shape of Adam's Rib*, 1970, wrote: "...our women were more original than they realized at the time. They became the first woman's board to do both home and foreign work, to employ both men and women, to manage their own business, to choose their fields of service, to own property, and to raise and administer their own funds."<sup>39</sup> We will note below that they were pioneers in starting the first Bible chairs in state universities and organized the first graduate school for the training of missionaries.

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<sup>34</sup> *Millennial Harbinger*, 1856, pp. 55 ff.

<sup>35</sup> Lorraine Lollis, *The Shape of Adam's Rib* (Saint Louis: Bethany Press, 1970), pp. 50-1; *Millennial Harbinger*, 1856, pp. 55ff.

<sup>36</sup> Tucker and McAllister, op. cit., p. 259.

<sup>37</sup> Tucker and McAllister, op. cit., pp. 259-63.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 262; Anna R. Atwater, *Historical Sketch of the CWBM*, (1911). p. 8.

<sup>39</sup> *Lollis, op. cit.*, p. 42.

[ed.: Fran Craddock, Nancy Heimer, and Martha Faw trace this important history in *In the Fullness of Time*.<sup>40</sup>]

The names which serve to show a glimpse of the dynamism of Disciples women's participation both in church and society include Maria Butler Jameson, elected president of CWBM annually with one year's exception from 1874 to 1890, Nannie L. Burgess president for thirteen years, Nancy Bush Atkinson serving in leadership every year of the forty-five years of CWBM existence, Ida Withers Harrison of Mississippi, first woman to receive an honorary doctorate from Transylvania University, vice-president for twelve years, Helen E. Moses of Kansas, on the staff in Indianapolis from 1899 to her death as president in 1908. To show that the time was ripe for such a movement, we have only to remember that Caroline Neville Pearre, recognized as the founder of CWBM, served as its corresponding secretary for only the first year!<sup>41</sup> State organizers were indefatigable: Elmira Dickinson, Eureka College graduate in 1869 and faculty member who organized the Illinois Woman's Missionary Society three months before the 1874 Cincinnati Convention, Persis L. Christian of Arkansas organizing women's groups in twenty-nine states, Rosetta Butler Hastings and Reba B. Smith of Kansas were prominent leaders. Susie Sublette of Kentucky and then Colorado, Sarah Lue Bostick and Rosa Brown Bracy were among African American organizers of the women of the Disciples of Christ.<sup>42</sup>

*The Survey of Service* published in 1928 by the Christian Board of Publication tells about Bible chairs initiated by CWBM at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1893 and soon after at the Universities of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Kansas, and Texas, as well as cooperation in student ministries elsewhere. The CWBM joined the mission of FCMS in Japan after the death of Josephine Wood Smith in Akita in 1885, started work in Mexico in December, 1895, in Cuba from 1899 until 1919, in Puerto Rico in 1899, in Argentina in 1906. After the interdenominational Congress of Christian Work in Latin America held in 1916 in Panama, organized by CWBM missionary Samuel Guy Inman, mission was taken over from the Methodists in Paraguay in 1918-19.

As early as 1900, the CWBM journal was using the word *ecumenical*,<sup>43</sup> but in the first meeting of the Executive Committee January 4, 1875, the president suggested that they look to their "religious neighbors" for new directions. They voted to subscribe to Presbyterian and Baptist missionary publications "in order to keep in touch with women's work in other churches."<sup>44</sup> The Foreign Missions Conference of New York in 1900 included CWBM representatives among 412 women registrants, whose Woman's Day was held at Carnegie Hall, reported with excitement in *Missionary Tidings* that June. It came as a surprise to the women a decade later that men outnumbered women at the historic Edinburgh Conference!<sup>45</sup>

Canadian women started Disciples missionary circles, and CWBM became an international organization in 1913. The preparation and realization of the United Christian Missionary Society owed much to the ecumenical spirit of the women, because their concern for cooperation was part of the generosity and love of their faith. Their experience of having been denied the right to vote and of joining in the struggle for woman's suffrage surely contributed to their liberality. Ida Harrison wrote that the College of Missions

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<sup>40</sup> Fran Craddock, Nancy Heimer, and Martha Faw, *In the Fullness of Time: A History of Women in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1999.)

<sup>41</sup> *Lollis, op.cit.*, pp. 41-52;199-200.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 52-63.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, p. 85.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, p. 42.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, p. 91.

“regards itself as at the service of the church universal.”<sup>46</sup> Students in the first decade were from eight different denominations. The women brought fifty-three percent of the assets into the new organization.<sup>47</sup> It was the same year as the suffrage amendment to the U.S. Constitution! Where there were strong local CWBM groups, congregations gave support to UCMS, in spite of attacks by the *Christian Standard* and Independent theological positions like that of the Cincinnati Bible College.

After the organization of the International Christian Women’s Fellowship (ICWF) in 1953 and its World counterpart soon after, the hiatus of an international women’s movement for the USA and Canada was overcome. This represented a network of CWF’s in local congregations and produced the Quadrennial Assemblies beginning in 1957 at Purdue University, under the leadership of former missionary to Japan Jessie Trout. The eleventh will be held in the summer of this year, 1998. These periodic gatherings of thousands of Disciples of Christ women are times of spiritual renewal and growth in faith, through worship and living together, Bible study and preaching, workshops and the arts. But above all, they are occasions when mission in North America and in the whole world is given undivided attention. Missionaries are present and participate in the programs, including an appointment service for those going overseas. Women come from around the world, with time spent visiting congregations, as well. The Woman to Woman Worldwide travel program visits the overseas area of the annual interdenominational mission study. The Quadrennial is the major place in the life of the general church where there is continuation of the CWBM tradition of stewardship, mission education and enthusiasm.

Quadrennial speakers include foremost ecumenical leaders, often including the general secretaries or staff of the World Council of Churches and the great regional ecumenical bodies. The National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA has been prominent in providing inspiring leadership, with the added interest that its top executives have at times been women, including Joan Brown Campbell. The fact that Lorraine Lollis’s history of the Disciples women’s movement, prepared in advance of the CWBM centennial, contains a chapter called “Early Steps Toward Unity” and another called “Everywhere Ecumenism” shows the nature of women’s involvement as Christian mission inseparable from Christian unity. The number s that have served in interchurch organizations from local and state levels to national leadership of Church Women United and other ecumenical bodies is out of proportion to the size of the Disciples communion. Their theological contribution to the UCMS and the restructured church has never been adequately assessed, but it was significant through worship, study, stewardship, service and prayer.

#### IV. FCMS

The Foreign Christian Missionary Society was conceived at the same General Convention as the Christian Woman’s Board of Missions in Cincinnati in 1874, by the appointment of a committee to prepare definite organizational plans for the following year, because as A. McLean wrote in 1904, no satisfactory conclusions were reached “owing to the lack of time.”<sup>48</sup> W.T. Moore, pastor of Central Christian Church there, but not the host pastor, is credited in all the history books as the one who convened a group of men to discuss how the Disciples of Christ as a “brotherhood” of individuals and congregations could become active in foreign missions again. Tucker and McAllister say “as a whole.”<sup>49</sup> In other words, It was not meant to be a men’s movement but a movement of the whole church in the manner of the ACMS. Men would take a role of leadership and support because of their denominational authority and religious influence. Archibald McLean has a paragraph called “Women and the Society” in his *History of the FCMS*, saying “the sex line was never drawn by the Society,” and he pays tribute to eleven women by name

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>48</sup> John T. Brown, *Churches of Christ: A Historical, Biographical, and Pictorial History*, (Louisville, Ky.: John P. Morton & Co., 1904), p. 186.

<sup>49</sup> Tucker and McAllister, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

who were “all friends of the CWBM, but their hearts were large enough to take in both.”<sup>50</sup> This has ecclesiological implications which become apparent under the leadership of A. McLean and Isaac Errett. With the commitment to the church and to world mission practiced by the women’s organization, the FCMS theology of mission would lead to the formation of the United Christian Missionary Society. It explains why the Christian Women’s Fellowship grew out of the world outreach concern and the Christian Men’s Fellowship did not. The women’s network had an historical precedent which the men lacked, so the CMF never organized around mission study and support.

The committee met in Indianapolis that summer and drafted a tentative constitution specifically for foreign missions, recognizing that the ACMS would continue its work in the United States and Canada, mostly starting congregations, later bringing about early forms of the Board of Church Extension and, indirectly, the Pension Fund. During the General Convention at Louisville on October 22, 1875, the plans were adopted after a moving address by Isaac Errett, who was elected president. A. McLean said: “There was a sense of the Divine presence, a conviction that what was being done was in harmony with the purpose of God in the ages.”<sup>51</sup> This new focus of enthusiasm made future conventions to consist of interested individuals and no longer delegates of congregations, representing district and state networks, as the Louisville Plan of 1869 had recommended as a more “true and scriptural basis.” The lines were drawn for those who refused to accept any organization beyond the local congregation, resulting in a major division thirty years later. McLean adds: “The men...were determined to use all their time and energy in prosecuting the work and none at all in controversy about plans...They were weary of vain jangling...”<sup>52</sup>

The *History* gives five reasons for the new organization: 1. the desire to obey the will of God, 2. that it might help the work at home, 3. the American Society was not in a position to undertake any work in the foreign field, 4. that the Disciples might preserve their self-respect, (qualified as not among the strongest reasons but “not without considerable weight,”) 5. that intelligent Christians wished to enjoy the culture that can come from the missionary propaganda and from no other source.<sup>53</sup> These reasons represent the hindsight of Mr. McLean more than forty years later and show the modern factors making their way into the self-understanding of the church in the last quarter of the 19th century and as it became a 20th century denomination. It reveals the relation between Gospel and Culture which is basic to the missionary enterprise of every age, and it shows the way cooperative Disciples had come to read the history and purpose of the common movement.

Christian mission becomes proclamation of the Gospel of eternal salvation through spiritual, intellectual and social transformation, with Christian unity as the distinctive trait of the Disciples of Christ tradition and the central meaning of its practice in worship and witness. Because this was rooted in an ambiguous theological emphasis on the authority of the Bible, the catholicity of the Church, and the spirituality of freedom and reason, controversy was inevitable. Since the Reformation and the Enlightenment, tension rather than correlation had developed between Scripture and Tradition in Western Christianity, inherited by Disciples and reflected in their American experience of the frontier. But cooperation shows the determination to move forward and to find equilibrium in Scripture and ecclesiastical tradition despite the lack of dogmatic agreement on creed-like terminology. The 20th century would be defined not so much by stringent opposition but by the growing ecumenical spirit.

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<sup>50</sup> *History of the FCMS, op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>51</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

<sup>52</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>53</sup> *History of the FCMS, op. cit.*, pp. 42-50.

A. McLean wrote in the Forward of his address “Forty Years of Service for the King,” delivered in Los Angeles, California, July 20, 1915, that the Foreign Society was organized because the American Society “was not prepared to renew its work abroad,” as if this needed constant explanation. Tucker and McAllister point out that through 1879 the first missionaries were not sent to so-called non-Christian lands but to England, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France and to Orthodox Constantinople and Anatolia. All of these endeavors were promoted by people who had been there before as members of some other denomination. Only in Britain has there been continuing relations with Disciples of Christ from these first efforts, although it must not be assumed that some of these ventures of faith simply ceased and did not continue in other communities, like twenty-two congregations once reported in Scandinavia or people touched by these ministries whose lives affected others well into the 20th century.

Invitations were received in some cases to spread the distinctive Disciples witness. But for many Christians there was much concern after the Paris Commune about loss of faith in Europe among the working class, as there had been in Alexander Campbell’s time with the “infidelity” of the upper class exemplified by Robert Owen. To his everlasting credit, in my opinion, Mr. Campbell did not object to Robert Owen’s socialism, calling it “a mere plagiarism from Christian enterprise.”<sup>54</sup> But people were afraid of Marxism as well as the threat to spiritual life in late 19th century bourgeois *libre pensée*. So there was both the desire to preach the Gospel where it was needed and denominational *hybris* alongside other churches, reflecting theological ambiguity which would surface in confrontations later on.

W.R. Warren, organizing secretary for the Centennial Convention and editor of *World Call* with Effie Cunningham from 1919 to 1929, seems to be apologetic in his 1923 biography of Archibald McLean. He says that “while seeking someone to send to a non-Christian land, the society was irresistibly led to do its first work in England.”<sup>55</sup> He says that their only candidate “refused to go to any other field.” He writes that “the year 1882 witnessed the actual beginning of the work for which the Foreign Christian Missionary Society had been created seven years before. All that time no one had been found willing and qualified to undertake work in a non-Christian land.”<sup>56</sup> This is almost a direct quote from *A Concise History of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society by the Missionaries* published by the FCMS in 1910. A. McLean had written that the president took the candidate aside “and begged him to volunteer for some one of the great heathen fields.”<sup>57</sup> Obviously, by Mr. Warren’s time, ecumenical conferences like Edinburgh, with German and Anglo-Catholic protests against even considering Latin America a “mission field,” had made mission to Europe an offense to Christian unity, even though Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott explicitly included Europe as a field for mission in their day!<sup>58</sup>

The United Christian Missionary Society was not to send commissioned missionaries to Europe even after World War II. However, UCMS did send a new type of short-term mission personnel called “fraternal workers” to work with European churches through the Department of Social Welfare, later called Christian Action and Community Service. This became the responsibility of DOM in 1970, and such persons are now called “global mission interns.” About 110 have served in Europe in this half-century.<sup>59</sup> The Council on Christian Unity made ecumenical assignments of this kind in France and with the World Council of Churches in Geneva. All of this came about through Reconstruction funds later called the Week of Compassion Offering, not through regular mission funding. Fraternal workers were a preview of

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<sup>54</sup> *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. 276.

<sup>55</sup> W.R. Warren, *Archibald McLean* (Saint Louis: The Bethany Press, 1923), p. 96.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93; cf. *History of the FCMS, op. cit.*, pp. 51 ff.

<sup>57</sup> Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>58</sup> *Missionary Addresses, op. cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>59</sup> William J. Nottingham, *The History of Fraternal Workers*, DOM unpublished, 1988.

changes which were in store for the work of traditional missionaries in more recent years: for example, serving with autonomous churches rather than a mission run by North Americans, being responsible to national church authorities, being invited by partner churches to share in Christ's mission as they see it, and having appointments for given periods rather than expecting lifetime service to a missionary organization.

The ministry of the European Evangelistic Society in Tübingen, Germany, since 1946 has had support from some Disciples and has reported to the International Convention and now the General Assembly. This in spite of the refusal of recognition by UCMS, the criticism of the Council on Christian Unity, and exclusion from financial support by the denominational stewardship program except for specifically designated offerings.

The description of the European Evangelistic Society in Tucker and McAllister,<sup>60</sup> while true since the 1960's and in practice largely ecumenical today, ignores the fact that the theological motivation was to establish congregations in the immersionist tradition. This still features prominently in the Society's newsletter. The October 16, 1997, report of the president Bruce E. Shields says that "it has always been frustrating not being able to point to impressive numbers of baptisms or even growing attendance at services of worship." Personally, despite theological differences, as one who served the church for ten years in France, I have deep admiration for the presence of the Stuckenbrucks in Germany immediately after the devastation and suffering of World War II, and the value of the mission style they practiced is what is called in Latin America *acompañamiento*. The French ecumenical service organization CIMADE, whose early mission was helping Jews escape the Nazis, calls it *vivre avec*. James Crouch, Burton Thurston, Fred Norris, Scott Bartchy, and Thomas Best were among those who gave the work a scholarly dimension.

Just a month before Archibald McLean took up his duties in March 1882, thereby becoming the most important figure in this whole narrative, the Foreign Society voted to send two couples to India "as soon as sufficient funds were in hand."<sup>61</sup> On September 16, 1882, the Whartons, the Nortons and four young women appointed by CWBM left the United States for the first permanent church planting of the new era. Mr. Warren shows his theological understanding of the church, when he writes: "It was a great day not only for these two societies but for the whole body of people that they represented..."

Albert Norton, formerly a Methodist missionary to India, resigned in a short time, when the board elected to pay fixed salaries to missionaries, a policy to which he was opposed.

W.T. Moore, called "founder" of the Society by W.R. Warren, had resigned his pulpit in Cincinnati and had gone in 1878 to serve in England, where he practiced "open membership, to which Thomas Munnell, ACMS secretary, also subscribed."<sup>62</sup> It is not surprising to find Tucker & McAllister describing Moore's earlier journal the *Christian Quarterly* as "scholarly and progressive...Far beyond the understanding of most preachers, not to mention the rank and file of laypersons."<sup>63</sup> They say he took credit for helping to keep Kentucky on the side of the Union when he was pastor in Frankfort, probably an abolitionist.<sup>64</sup> These two vignettes of history show the difference in temperament and theology of Norton and Moore which would typify the conflict of religious cultures in the future.

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<sup>60</sup> Tucker and McAllister, *op. cit.*, p. 400.

<sup>61</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>62</sup> Tucker and McAllister, *op. cit.*, p. 377.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>64</sup> Tucker and McAllister, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

The first missionaries went to Japan in 1883, the Garsts and the Smiths. They were joined the following year by a medical doctor W.E. Macklin of Ontario, Canada, who determined that Japanese physicians made his work there unnecessary, so he went on to China in 1885. That same year, there were conversations with Henry M. Stanley and others in Britain about beginning work in Africa, which proved to be a false start.<sup>65</sup> The number of missionaries on the “field” was 108 in 1899, the year the “station” at Bolenge in the Belgian Congo was purchased from the American Baptists to begin what is today the Disciples of Christ Community of *l’Eglise du Christ au Congo*, until last year *Zaire*. Ellsworth Faris, later professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, and Dr. and Mrs. Royal J. Dye brought fame and enthusiasm among Disciples for the work in Africa. Among personnel moved by CWBM to the Congo in 1919 from Liberia, were Myrta and Emory Ross, who initiated the Council of Churches which became the Church of Christ in Zaire (*ECZ*) uniting sixty-two Protestant missions and denominations in 1970. It is consistent with the missionaries’ endeavors for Christian unity that a Disciple gave leadership to the united Protestant body. Dr. Itofo Jean Bokeleale, their first student to receive education in Europe, was general secretary and bishop of the *ECZ* for nearly thirty years.

Two things must be noted further from these beginnings: Laura and Dorothy Delany of a Detroit pastor’s family, granddaughters of pioneer evangelist Jonas Hartzell, became the first Disciples missionaries in the historically important missions of Japan and China, along with their husbands Garst and Macklin. I have never seen that Disciples family recognized as it should have been for their selfless contribution to the work and witness of the church. It is no small thing to read in one of A. McLean’s mission studies that as a rule “those who go out have to go in spite of the protests and tears of their parents.”<sup>66</sup> Secondly, the mention of Archibald McLean and William Macklin is a reminder of the contribution of Canada to organized Disciples missionary work. At the Fortieth Anniversary, Mr. McLean pointed out that three other Canadians had been serving, and many came later, such as C.T. Paul, Jessie Trout, the Staintons and Alice Porter. For this reason, the name of the church today is the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada and would be much the less without it. The FCMS was an international organization from the start, with support and personnel coming not only from Canada but from England and Australia.<sup>67</sup>

From this point forward, the momentum is assured largely by one man: Archibald McLean. Twenty-five years after his death at age 70, as a pre-ministerial student, I heard of him repeatedly at Bethany College, where he had been a student 1870-74 and president 1889-91. He was pastor at Mt. Healthy Church in Cincinnati, when called to be part-time and then full-time secretary of the FCMS. Many prominent leaders of the time, both men and women, were responsible for the Disciples of Christ growth in missionary education and outreach. Names like Isaac Errett, C.L. Loos, Robert Moffett, F.M. Rains, S.J. Corey, A.E. Cory, Bert Wilson, C.M. Yokum must be mentioned. But no one identified so fully with the enterprise as he or represented more exactly what it would become in the 20th century. Time prevents naming the abundance of journals produced by the three societies and by private parties, but his publications include *Missionary Addresses* in 1895, *A Circuit of the Globe* in 1896, a *Hand Book of Missions* in 1897, *Where the Book Speaks* in 1907, two books on the Campbells in 1910, *Epoch Makers of Modern Missions* in 1912, *The History of the Foreign Christian Missionary Society* in 1919, and *The Primacy of the Missionary and Other Addresses* in 1920. He wrote in the preface to *Missionary Addresses*: “No claim for originality is made. Other men [we must add women, too] labored and I entered into their labors.” This showed his recognition of a common heritage.

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<sup>65</sup> *Survey of Service*, (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1928), p. 495; Herbert Smith, *Fifty Years in Congo*, (Indianapolis: UCMS, 1949), pp. 3-8.

<sup>66</sup> *Where the Book Speaks*, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>67</sup> Brown, op. cit., p. 193.

He attended the first ecumenical conference on foreign missions in London June 9 to 19, 1888, rejoicing in “the unity and cooperation among the many missionary societies and the many churches represented,”<sup>68</sup> attending another in New York in 1900. He was head of a delegation of twenty-three Disciples at the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference June 14 to 24, 1910, where 160 missionary organizations met together. A twentieth century spirit of unity began the process which would lead directly to the founding of the World Council of Churches less than forty years later, in spite of two World Wars. He wrote in his magazine *The Missionary Intelligencer* that year: “The hope that in future conferences the Catholic and Greek churches would participate was expressed by some of the speakers. Only then could a conference call itself ‘ecumenical’.”<sup>69</sup> He refers to Lord Balfour’s regret that there are so many missionary organizations in existence and to John R. Mott’s call for unity “in heart and soul” as a means of doubling the effectiveness of the missionary enterprise itself.

The influence of A. McLean can be seen to follow what is called today a paradigm shift, but it is not just that. It is the prolongation of a kind of theology and spirit that had always been active and disputed in the restoration movement. There is still talk of heathens and a cultural revulsion towards other religions and societies typical of those imperialistic times. Personal salvation is a consuming preoccupation. But now there are some new defining features. On one hand, there is an unmistakable option for unity of spirit with other missionary bodies and the churches they represent and therefore ecumenical cooperation. On the other, there is an absence of the millennialism of the early movement. In *Where the Book Speaks* he writes, trying to refute the emphasis on localism: “The use often made of the passages relating to the priority of the Jew in point of gospel privilege finds no warrant in Holy Writ...No part of the world has any primacy or priority now, unless it be that part whose need is greatest.”<sup>70</sup>

In the last chapter of his last book, published the year he died, he returns to the theme of the conversion of the Jews, because he speaks about “Paul’s Joy Over The Redemption of the World,” emphasizing the *whole* world. As with ethnic cultural biases, represented by middle class attitudes towards work, clothing, hygiene, and sexuality, for example, he had also the religious anti-Semitism common to the Anglo-Saxon mentality of his time and still with us in unguarded use of the New Testament. But he says there was a faithful remnant in the first Christian converts, missionaries, and martyrs. Rejection of the Jews was not “absolute and complete.” He then cites Jewish excellence in European history from Spinoza to Bergson, saying that there are ninety-seven Jewish professors and lecturers in the University of Berlin, alone, and that more than half the medical doctors in Vienna are Jewish. He clearly expects this to be an asset to Christianity someday! It is not Jews he deplores but Judaism.

He does not fail to note, however, that “there are few things in human history less creditable than the treatment of the Jews by those who wore the Christian name.”<sup>71</sup> Seven pages cite the persecution and pogroms of the Jews throughout European history. He writes: “It is no wonder that the Jews have been slow to accept Christianity.” But accept it they will, according to his understanding of Pauline theology.

No mention is made of the book of *Revelation*. There is a “richer and diviner content” in store for Christianity and for the world according to the purpose of God. His emphasis is on the moral transformation of this world, in league with the works of progress, showing Christ entering into His glory

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<sup>68</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 182.

<sup>70</sup> *Where the Book Speaks, op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>71</sup> Archibald McLean, *The Primacy of the Missionary And Other Addresses* (St. Louis, Mo.: Christian Board of Publication, 1920), p. 371.

through the founding of missionary societies as well as “all political and social reforms...seeking to improve the conditions of the working classes and the depressed classes in the cities.”<sup>72</sup> He exegetes Luke 24:26 saying that Christ enters into His glory “in all that is being done to create a civilization in which every man shall be a child of God and a brother to every other man, and in which the Golden Rule shall be universally observed.”<sup>73</sup> His concession to millennialism is only in saying: “Our Lord taught that this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached to all nations, and then shall the end come.”<sup>74</sup> Every mission station and every soul won to Christ “helps to hasten the coming of the time when the glorious vision shall become a more glorious reality.”<sup>75</sup> But mission history demonstrates the value of the promise, not the other way around. Methods employed by FCMS had included “evangelistic, educational, medical, literary, industrial, orphanage, and leper relief “according to the *Concise History by the Missionaries* of 1910 and the glowing report for the fortieth anniversary of 1915.

Eschatology still consisted of the “interests of the Kingdom” and justified the number added to the elect, but with an absence of millennialist ethos and a high degree of social betterment on an international and cosmopolitan scale. Christian triumphalism can be seen as a part of the globalization which was occurring after World War I in his book *The Primacy of the Missionary*: “Commerce goes wherever human beings are found. Merchants and manufacturers demand that all doors be kept open for their wares...Democracy is sweeping over the earth as resistlessly as the dawn.”<sup>76</sup> A chapter is called “Americanizing and Christianizing the world,” but these are not the same thing; the former should be example and facilitator to the latter which is of the essence of the Church. He had written before the turn of the century: “The gospel is the great civilizer.”<sup>77</sup> He was convinced that he could see the evidence in 1920: “Science joins revelation in discouraging inconsiderate pride of race, of sex, of birth, of nation, of class, of religion, and in encouraging education, cooperation, strenuousness combined with modesty, and equal rights and opportunities for all men and women.”<sup>78</sup>

Tucker and McAllister suggest a completely new vision by observing: “Much of the credit for the success of the program of the FCMS is due to a remarkable man, Archibald McLean.”<sup>79</sup> They go on to support this by saying: “The name A. McLean literally became a household word while his leadership in the development of a missionary consciousness among the Disciples and in the developing structure of the brotherhood was a contribution of great importance.”<sup>80</sup> He stands out because of his exceptional learning and ability and the consuming passion permitted a *célibataire*, but also because he was truly a man of the Nineties, enthusiastic about the new cosmopolitan century just ahead. He wrote in 1919 of “the revolution that has taken place in the thought of Christian people in recent times,” referring to interest in the missionary movement.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> McLean, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 346.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 378.

<sup>75</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>76</sup> McLean, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

<sup>77</sup> Archibald McLean, *Hand-Book of Missions*, (St. Louis, Mo.: Christian Publishing Company, 1897), p. 18.

<sup>78</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

<sup>79</sup> *Journey in Faith, op. cit.*, p. 267.

<sup>80</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>81</sup> *History of the FCMS, op. cit.*, p. 401.

It was he who rode this sociological and intellectual wave first and best. His speeches refer to Harnack, Westcott, Lightfoot, Broadbent. He was acquainted with Friedrich Max Müller's anthropological studies and essays in the science of religion, Frédéric Godet's critical commentaries on the New Testament, Edward A. Freeman's historical studies at Oxford, Henry George's socialist program, as well as the writings of numerous international mission leaders like Gustav Warneck, Eugene Stock, and Henry Venn. His correspondence features ecumenical leaders like Robert Speer and John R. Mott. At the founding of the UCMS, because of his broad horizons, he favored New York City as the new headquarters.<sup>82</sup>

A clue to changes in the spirit and theology of mission for many, or better said, the definition of the differences which would determine the future, is found in Mr. Warren's remark in 1923 that mission had changed since the Civil War as much as the way of making war had.<sup>83</sup> Warren quotes the Edinburgh slogan: "the whole church must give the whole gospel to the whole world," which reappears as the theology of mission for the 21st century in such conferences as that of Unit II of the World Council of Churches meeting in Salvador, Brazil, in October, 1996. This was formerly the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, successor to the International Missionary Council formed after Edinburgh. The nature of today's ecumenical commitment through the World Council of Churches was forecast by the way Archibald McLean defines mission in the fourteen chapters and in the non-denominational character of the "Select bibliography" of 176 books in his *Missionary Addresses* in 1895. It is the spirit in which he wrote the *Hand-Book of Missions* concerning "the great triumphs...of modern missions among all religious bodies" in 1897.<sup>84</sup>

After McLean's trip around the world in 1895, the restoration of the New Testament church as a missiological *raison d'être* is almost totally absent in his collected addresses and other writings. The *History* has an early quote of J.W. McGarvey about planting "churches of the primitive order."<sup>85</sup> His chapter "Christian Unity and World-Wide Evangelism" in *Where the Book Speaks* exegetes Jesus' prayer saying: "Unity was not as an end itself, but a means to an end."<sup>86</sup> He makes this claim unequivocally for the Campbells.<sup>87</sup> There is a summary paragraph in *The Primacy of the Missionary* saying: "As a religious people our aim is to restore the apostolic church, in principle and in practice. We have done that in part already. We have discovered the meaning and the place of the ordinances."<sup>88</sup> He goes on to say, "We have discovered the Seventeenth Chapter of John," and he mentions in passing the Campbells' plea "for the union of all the people of God who are scattered abroad."<sup>89</sup> But unity for him is in the task of mission, itself, made practical in the ecumenical consultations and joint projects like Nanjing University and eventually made concrete in the International Missionary Council. The emphasis was always on the Gospel and human need, and the theological controversy was always waged with the widespread opposition to missionaries as such.<sup>90</sup> He never ceased lamenting the scarcity of funds for such a cause in such a prosperous nation and what he considered to be the narrowness of vision in the church.

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<sup>82</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 316.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 300.

<sup>84</sup> *Handbook of Missions, op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>85</sup> *History of the FCMS, op. cit.*, p. 399.

<sup>86</sup> *Where the Book Speaks, op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>87</sup> *Thomas and Alexander Campbell, op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>88</sup> *The Primacy of the Missionary, op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 345.

<sup>90</sup> *Missionary Addresses, op. cit.*, pp. 14, 34, 46; cf. *Primacy, op. cit.*, pp. 175-6.

It was not just that A. McLean did not make Restoration the basis for mission. It was evident that he was dissatisfied with Restorationism as the chief focus of the majority of the congregations. It is an allusion to the five-finger exercise when he wrote that “a stranger coming into one of our assemblies might conclude that we regarded the thirty-eighth verse of the second chapter [of *Acts*] as the heart of the book,” rightly important but missing the meaning of *Acts* as a record of missionary activity.<sup>91</sup> Referring to the earnest contention for the “faith once for all delivered to the saints,” preaching in harmony with the Word of God, and the proper ordinances, he nevertheless says that in Scripture there are ten texts on missions for every one on baptism and fifty for everyone on the Lord’s Supper. Because missions had not been emphasized “as some other matters have been...no more than one-third of the churches and no more than one-fourth of the members give anything at all for this work!” It was not merely a call for necessary financing or even responsible stewardship. It was a question of what he thought it meant to be a faithful church. And he is equally critical of churches trying to compete for the mainline, with their heavy debt, their pipe organ and expensive singers, their costly carpets, etc.! He speaks of a better day coming when “churches will recognize the ownership and Lordship of Christ as they do not now.”<sup>92</sup>

For these very reasons, the divisions of theological positions hardened. Mr. Warren points out that in 1875 leaders had pressed forward in spite of the fact that some of the ablest and most respected preachers and editors of “the brotherhood” were opposed to the Foreign Society.<sup>93</sup> There was the question of money that was always an aggravation, bitterly described by A. McLean in his *History*.<sup>94</sup> But Warren really touches a nerve when he says that “the missionary call runs squarely against race prejudice and fixed habits.” He continues: “On these and other accounts, the preacher who spoke out for missions among the Disciples of Christ fifty years ago took his ministerial life in his hands, while the most specious argument against missions could win applause from our very human fathers.”<sup>95</sup> To account for the radical change in this situation, he can only give the credit to Providence as well as to A. McLean, but he fails to point out that only division made this type of missionary society possible in the Campbell-Stone tradition.

## V. UCMS

No sooner had the Foreign Christian Missionary Society been formed in 1875 than the desire for a united structure made its appearance. A. McLean’s *History* says: “The year after the Foreign Society was organized the Convention adopted with unanimity this resolution, ‘That we most cordially invite these organizations to a close alliance with the American Christian Missionary Society in every practical way; and still we look forward hopefully to the time when such a general cooperation of our churches shall be secured as may enable us to resolve these organizations into one, efficient for domestic and foreign work.’”<sup>96</sup> A constitution for a united society was drafted by FCMS in 1893, which came to naught.<sup>97</sup> A committee was appointed in the FCMS convention of 1899 “to consider unification of the missionary, benevolent and educational interests” which never reported back.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *Where the Book Speaks, op. cit.*, p. 14; cf. for direct reference to Walter Scott and *Acts* 2:38, *Thomas and Alexander Campbell, op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>93</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-5.

<sup>94</sup> *History, op. cit.*, pp. 381-5.

<sup>95</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

<sup>96</sup> *History, op. cit.*, pp. 40-1.

<sup>97</sup> Garrison and DeGroot, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

<sup>98</sup> *Loc. cit.*

Mr. Warren tells how a FCMS missionary dinner at the 1902 Omaha convention grew to include officers and missionaries of CWBM and the development of a joint missionary conference in 1904.<sup>99</sup> After the creation of the College of Missions, these conferences became joint board meetings! The preparation of the Centennial Convention of 1909 also brought the leadership of every General Convention-related body closer together. At the laying of the cornerstone for the new building of the CWBM College of Missions and for its inauguration in 1910, A. McLean was the speaker and a member of the board of trustees.<sup>100</sup> Mrs. Anna Atwater wrote that in September, 1910, Mr. McLean was conversing in her office about relationships. "He remarked that our societies ought to be one," she records, adding that she considered it impossible because the women's organization must remain self-determining. He said that it should be possible with equal representation of men and women, and he predicted that in spite of legal obstacles it would come about someday. She wrote him on October 7, 1912, that she had come to believe that sometime "the work of extending the kingdom will be a joint work for all the forces of our people."<sup>101</sup>

Articles creating unification were ready for and presented to the St. Louis Convention of 1918, but all public meetings were canceled because of the influenza epidemic. Stormy sessions occurred at the Cincinnati Convention a year later, with each of the boards facing opposition within and without, but a new organization was voted and officers elected.<sup>102</sup> Tucker and McAllister tell about the formal organization of the United Christian Missionary Society on June 22, 1920, by six boards: ACMS, CWBM, FCMS, Church Extension, NBA, and Ministerial Relief or Pension Fund, three of which later separated from the United Society.<sup>103</sup> A commanding feature was to coordinate and combine offerings through a churchwide calendar. There had been insistent pressure from local congregations and state levels for a new structure both on practical and religious grounds, not just institutional merger. The call came from the grassroots.

In Cincinnati, the president of ACMS became president, with the presidents of CWBM and FCMS named vice-presidents. A Board of Managers of 120 persons and a Board of Trustees of 22 were appointed, equally men and women, in the manner of most other corporate mission boards. Offices were centralized in St. Louis, and moved to Indianapolis in 1928 to the College of Missions property. The enabling resolution for a joint committee which was passed at the Kansas City convention of 1917 is in Warren's biography of A. McLean, where it predicts that this move "will thrill our churches, bring new life to our missionaries, reduce the number of our problems at home and abroad, increase our receipts and add to our efficiency."<sup>104</sup>

*The Survey of Service* by W.R. Warren, 1928, gives a full picture of the UCMS at that time. But it is the *Strategy of World Mission* adopted by UCMS in 1959 and the *General Principles and Policies* adopted by the General Assembly of the restructured church in 1981 that show both the continuity and discontinuity with the past in practice and theory. A. Dale Fiers, UCMS president 1951 to 1964, wrote in *This Is Missions* about the need for a new strategy in world mission "which conserves all the values of the past, based on the solid foundations of the Great Commission...designed to meet the forces amid which the church labors today...I realize anew that it should be a strategy which enables us to give our distinctive

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<sup>99</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-2.

<sup>100</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 207-8.

<sup>102</sup> *50th Anniversary Celebration*, UCMS, 1971, p. 7.

<sup>103</sup> Tucker and McAllister, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-351.

<sup>104</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-13.

Disciples witness for the unity of the church within the framework of the ecumenical movement - the great new fact of our time.”<sup>105</sup>

A major turning point was the 1952 Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council. Virgil A. Sly, who served UCMS for forty-two years, including president from 1964 to 1968, said: “I recall coming back to my own church and stating it was useless to go to such ecumenical meetings unless we were to take their findings seriously. Out of the meetings of the 40’s and 50’s, the total strategy of the Disciples of Christ changed and moved into a completely new dimension of Christian concern.”<sup>106</sup> He added: “There was no honest way to turn back.” Ira Paternoster told me that Dr. Sly called him into his office at Missions Building and gave him a document to study in secret. “Don’t show it to a soul, close the door and read it alone, come back and tell me what you think.” Paternoster told him it would split the church!

The new *Strategy of World Mission* was approved by the board of trustees of UCMS at the Miami International Convention in October, 1954, and adopted in January, 1955. Implementation began in October, 1958, changing relations forever from missions to autonomous churches, participation in uniting churches around the world, and ministry in places of rapid social change. It was followed over twenty years later by the *General Principles and Policies* approved at the Anaheim Assembly in 1981, under the leadership of Robert A. Thomas, affirming the mission theology and practice inherited from UCMS and addressing new conditions of the world.<sup>107</sup>

A theological discussion of the characteristic Disciples of Christ view of mission and unity is to be found in my “Mission as Ecclesiology” in *The Vision of Christian Unity* cited earlier. These are constant and recurring components of a tendency in which a largely unreflective theology, called by Joseph M. Smith “contradictory and ambivalent” assumes the missionary society to be the church in mission-practice, from cooperation to ecumenical engagement and finally ecclesiological structuring. Mark Toulouse has a critical study of this process in *Joined in Discipleship* (1992) and in Newell Williams’ *A Case Study of Mainstream Protestantism* (1991).

After fifty years of service, the UCMS consented to cease as a program body, when the Board of Managers was dissolved in April, 1970. It had been through the heyday of missionary recruitment in the 1920’s, the momentous crisis of the depression when missionary staff had to be cut from 339 to 199 by Cy Yokum, World War II affecting Asia, Africa and the South Pacific as well as Europe, the end of colonialism worldwide, the coming into being and uniting of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council with all the changes in mission strategy and relationships that evoked. It gave over its work at home and abroad to become homeland and world units of the restructured church. Dr. Smith had asked in the materials prepared for ten area consultations on Christian unity in 1958: “Is the present structure of the United Christian Missionary Society and its relationship to the brotherhood through the International Convention an adequate organizational expression of the principle that both mission and unity characterize a church?”<sup>108</sup> Restructure was also forecast in the changes occurring at the state level, both for theological reasons and constraints growing out of the Crusade for a Christian World from 1950 onward.<sup>109</sup> Prospects of organic union and COCU also helped!

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<sup>105</sup> A. Dale Fiers, *This Is Missions*, (St. Louis, Mo.: The Bethany Press, 1953), p. 255.

<sup>106</sup> Virgil A. Sly, *To The Ends Of The Earth*, (Lincoln: The Nebraska School of Religion, 1970), pp. 57-58.

<sup>107</sup> Nottingham, “Mission as Ecclesiology,” op. cit., pp. 141 ff.

<sup>108</sup> Joseph M. Smith, in *Issues in Unity*, (Indianapolis: Council On Christian Unity, 1958), p. 95.

<sup>109</sup> Loren E. Lair, *The Christian Churches and their Work*, (St. Louis, Mo.: The Bethany Press, 1963), pp. 160, 254; conversation with Spencer P. Austin, Indianapolis, 1997.

It is not within the scope of this study to give the details of efforts to prevent the creation of the UCMS, to disrupt its proceedings, and to vilify A. McLean, the women leaders, and all who were accused of succumbing to “German rationalism.”<sup>110</sup> This story is touched on in Tucker and McAllister in reporting the “Restoration Congress” in 1919 at Cincinnati to compete with the Convention and to confuse the public<sup>111</sup> and Warren tells of the same in A. McLean’s last convention, St. Louis in 1920.<sup>112</sup> *Fifty Years of Attack and Controversy* by Stephen J. Corey in 1953 provides further details. Garrison and DeGroot tell more about the conflicts headed up by the *Christian Standard* and the Cincinnati Bible College and other institutions and leaders,<sup>113</sup> leading to the North American Christian Convention which first met in 1927. In their book *Disciples of Christ: A History*, they could still write in 1948 about the Independent Missions and Benevolences of the “brotherhood”.<sup>114</sup>

A. McLean died on December 20, the year UCMS was incorporated. *The Indianapolis News* of June 9, 1920, tells about the graduation of twenty-eight men and women on the tenth anniversary of the College of Missions. F.W. Burnham is referred to as president of UCMS, but Anna Atwater and A. McLean are still called presidents of their respective societies. The following year at the largest graduation ever with a class of forty-six, no further mention is made of FCMS and CWBM. Stephen J. Corey, A. Dale Fiers, Virgil Sly, Joseph M. Smith and Robert A. Thomas give the principle theological direction in the following decades through their writings, with hundreds of missionaries, co-workers in Missions Building, ministers, women’s missionary circles, and state or regional staff committed to the process which culminated in the mission work and heritage of the United Society, and subsequently in cooperation with other theologians and administrators resulted in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of today. The 50th Anniversary Celebration brochure sums up this history:

By serving as the nerve-center of the brotherhood for many years, adopting policies which pointed to the future, relating the ongoing programmatic life of the Christian Church to the wider ecumenical witness and supporting the development of the restructured Christian Church, the United Society has fulfilled a worthy ministry for and on behalf of the Church.<sup>115</sup>

In the future, researchers will find invaluable help in *A Guide To Materials Related To The United Christian Missionary Society* supervised and edited by Joseph M. Smith after his retirement in 1977, published by the UCMS trustees and the Historical Society in 1987 as a catalog of materials in its possession.

The UCMS continues with a board of trustees consisting of eight men and women, nominated by the Division of Overseas Ministries and the Division of Homeland Ministries, elected by the General Board and confirmed by the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the US and Canada. The presidents of the two units alternate as UCMS president every four years. The endowment funds amount to about \$40,000,000 in 1998, and the Christian Church Foundation, another unit of the church, has been contracted for treasury services since 1993.

This is one part of the origin and legacy of what is now the Common Global Ministries Board of the Disciples and the United Church of Christ. Guidelines of the work reflect what is received from the past and what leads into the future with partner churches, many of which have grown from the mission history

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<sup>110</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, pp. 274 ff.

<sup>111</sup> Tucker and McAllister, *op. cit.*, pp. 379-386.

<sup>112</sup> Warren, *op. cit.*, p. 275-77.

<sup>113</sup> Garrison and DeGroot, *op. cit.*, pp. 524-28.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 508-14.

<sup>115</sup> *50th Anniversary Celebration, op. cit.*, p. 23.

we have described, and with ecumenical commitment made concrete in the Church World Service and Witness unit of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, pioneered by our predecessors.

Present guidelines are: 1. sharing life in Christ; 2. sharing persons in mission; 3. telling the Gospel story; 4. healing God's continuing creation; 5. inter-faith dialogue and cooperation. Origin and legacy are believed by the churches to reflect the grace of God and the attempt to be a more faithful community of Christ through the Holy Spirit on the verge of the twenty-first century.

Not everything in the past can be accepted for today. Errors of judgment and cultural prejudices were sometimes hidden under good intentions. The liberating influence of the Gospel of God's love and righteousness was sometimes narrowly and often ludicrously conceived. One notes a progression of emphases leading to the present which would not qualify as paradigm shifts so much as a changing religious culture in North American Protestantism:

1. 1849-1888 The millennialist period became the denominational period after the Civil War, with a strong conviction of Disciples of Christ identity and opportunity.
2. 1888-1920 Then the generous influence of the Social Gospel appears with the elan of the Student Volunteer Movement and the growing experience of the ecumenical vision.
3. 1920-1945 Gradually, the theology of mission was influenced by the new field of Christian Education and nurturing, during hard times in the 'thirties when there were "attacks and misrepresentations on every hand."<sup>116</sup>
4. 1945-1968 A new momentum and highly structured expansion after World War II, with fear of Communism, the impact of the World Council of Churches and far-reaching changes in mission policy, bringing an end to the language and practice of "foreign missions."<sup>117</sup>
5. 1968-1989 The period stemming from the late 1960's focusing on the political and economic crises of the so-called Third World, partial moratorium on missionaries, human rights advocacy and broadened cooperation with autonomous churches.
6. 1989-the present The 1990's with economic problems of churches and ecumenical bodies worldwide, awareness of environmental degradation and solidarity with the mass of poor people excluded by capitalist globalization.

The age of denominational "missions" grew into the age of *God's mission*, in which autonomous churches sought to engage together in integral evangelism and the search for peace, justice and mutuality in a pluralistic world. There are no longer "missions" in the Disciples of Christ tradition, the last having been relinquished to the national church in the 1960's, and there are units of the church rather than "missionary societies," but there is perseverance in Christian mission and enduring gratitude for those who went before. We honor the love of Christ which was in their hearts by the grace of God and which alone can account for this history.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> cf. Stephen J. Corey, *Beyond Statistics*, (St. Louis, Mo.: Bethany Press, 1937); *Missions Matching the Hour*, (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1931), p. 14.

<sup>117</sup> Joseph M. Smith, *A Strategy of World Mission: The Theory and Practice of Mission as Seen in the Present World Mission Enterprise of the Disciples of Christ*, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Microfilms, Inc., 1961), 471 pages.

<sup>118</sup> cf. *Missions Matching The Hour*, *op. cit.*, pp. 109, 113.