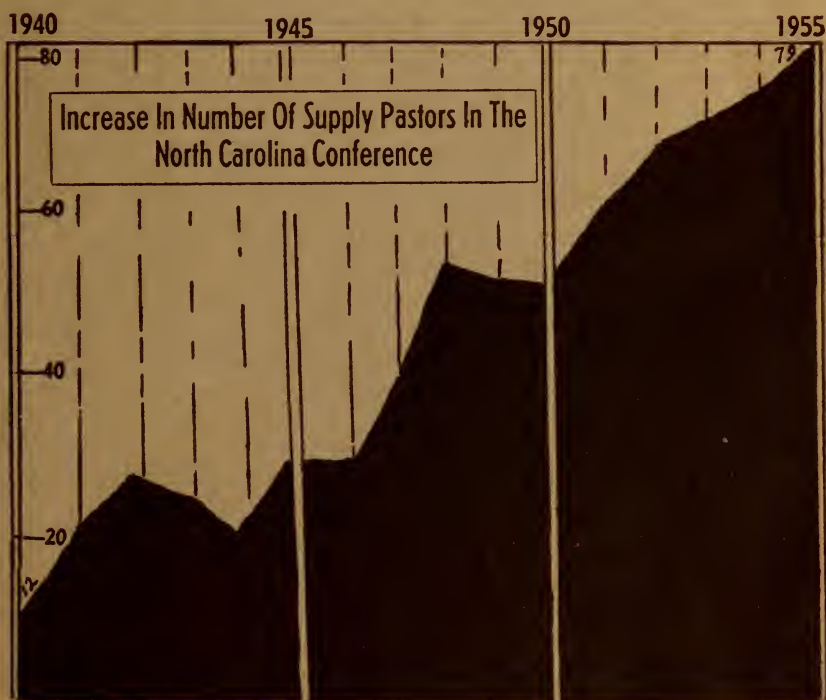


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The SUPPLY PASTOR

In The North Carolina Conference (Se.J.)



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A Study Authorized by

COMMISSION ON TOWN AND COUNTRY WORK

NORTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE
SOUTHEASTERN JURISDICTION
THE METHODIST CHURCH

by

E. C. CRAWFORD



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FOREWORD

This study was made by the authorization of the Commission on Town and Country Work of the North Carolina Conference.

The purpose of this study is: (1) to discover the actual status of the supply pastor in the North Carolina Conference, both as to privileges and problems, and (2) to recommend ways of improving his status.

Key W. Taylor and C. Wade Goldston, members of the Commission on Town and Country Work of the North Carolina Conference, gave valuable assistance in outlining, directing, and editing the work. While the study was delayed and often interrupted by the urgent duties of a heavy pastorate, the writer feels that it is accurate enough and complete enough to give the real picture of the supply pastor problem. And while the study was authorized by the Commission on Town and Country Work, the author accepts responsibility for the factual material and editorial opinions presented in the study. The author has rapidly reviewed the provisions of the 1956 **Discipline** relating to supply pastors and finds that they do not materially change the thesis and conclusions of this study.

The main source materials used in the study were the Disciplines and the General Minutes of The Methodist Church and the Journals of the North Carolina Annual Conference.

E. C. CRAWFORD,
Pastor of East Rockingham Charge,
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June 20, 1956

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PART ONE

THE SUPPLY PASTOR IN
EARLY METHODISM

I

Lay Preaching in Methodism

The Methodist movement in America for the first twenty-five years was almost entirely a lay movement. Many of the preachers were unlicensed laymen; others were local preachers, corresponding almost exactly to what we today call supply pastors. Among these early Methodist preachers were Robert Strawbridge, Philip Embury, William Watters, Freeborn Garrettson, and Captain Thomas Webb. Francis Asbury also served twelve years in America as a local preacher before his ordination by Thomas Coke in 1784.

Many people today are glad that Methodism is again making extensive use of a class of preachers that may be considered as much lay as clerical. These people point out the significant part that lay preaching played not only in the rise of Methodism in England but also the part it had in the rapid growth of early Methodism in America. The Methodist Church is beginning again to make good use of the lay worker. Along with the supply pastor, the certified lay speaker, the deaconess, and the director of Christian education are all going out to give new life and leadership to the local church. And while the supply pastor today may be used to fill the last and the least of the appointments in the Annual Conference, for a long time he marched at the forefront of Methodism. And of all the Methodist ministers of today, the unordained supply pastor remains the nearest counterpart of the early circuit rider that made Methodism great and established her firmly in America. He has a rich heritage in Methodism.

II

From Local Preacher to Supply Pastor

Upon the arrival of Thomas Rankin and Francis Asbury, the Methodist movement in America began its transition from a religious society to a church. Asbury required the traveling preachers to have a permit or license signed by him before preaching in the congregation. The conference minutes of 1780 "enjoined all our local preachers and exhorters that no one presume to speak in public without taking a note every quarter (if required) and be examined by the assistants with respect to his life, his qualifications, and his reception."¹ This simple license gave to the preacher all the rights and privileges of the traveling preacher in charge of a circuit or a station.

Shortly after 1784 preachers began to divide into two classes, local preacher and traveling preacher.² For almost one hundred and twenty years the service of the local preacher was confined to the charge in which he held his church membership; on that charge he was the assistant of his pastor and under the supervision of his pastor, who was the "preacher in charge." In no sense was he a supply pastor; neither could he be called supply preacher, except for the fact that he occasionally supplied the pulpit on his own charge in the absence of his pastor. The traveling preacher was the preacher in charge; he was usually an ordained preacher, whereas the local preacher, so designated because he served locally, was usually an unordained preacher.

About 1910 a third class of Methodist preacher began to assume considerable prominence—namely, the supply pastor, who was a local preacher elevated suddenly to the ranks of a new sort of "traveling preacher," and moved outside of his local charge to become "preacher in charge" on a circuit or station within the Annual Conference. These supply pastors, as a rule, were selected from the most capable of the local preachers and were often going forward in the course of study required of local preachers for deacon's and elder's orders;

¹ *Minutes of Methodist Conference*, 1780.

² *Discipline of The Methodist Church*, 1952, p. 670 (hereinafter referred to as *Discipline*).

however, many local preachers, with no preparation beyond that required for local preacher's license, were appointed as supply pastors.

Especially noteworthy is the fact that The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and The Methodist Episcopal Church handled the supply situation quite differently. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, never did regard the supply pastors as Methodist preachers; it considered them local preachers, temporarily serving charges. They were never called "supply pastors," but "supplies." The term "supply pastor" never did find its way into the **Discipline of The Methodist Episcopal Church, South**. In that branch of Methodism no effort was made to train a special group of supply pastors; it looked forward to replacing the supplies as soon as possible with well trained, ordained preachers. It never thought of the supplies as natural and special candidates for the ordained ministry. They were simply the best men available to fill a vacancy in a temporary emergency. Whether the local preacher served one year or ten years as a supply pastor, he was considered as more lay preacher than as a bona fide Methodist preacher, and certainly as more local preacher than traveling preacher.

In The Methodist Episcopal Church, however, the emphasis was quite different; it sought to train a special, permanent group of preachers to be known as supply pastors. It not only sought to make the supply program a natural step in the preparation for the ordained ministry, but it also made provisions by which men could give a life-time ministry to the Church as supply pastors. The term "supply pastor" appeared in the **Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church** in 1916, and by 1920 the Church was making such use of supply pastors that a special four years' course of study was written into the **Discipline** to be required of local preachers serving as supplies. In 1932 the term "accepted supply" came into use along with the requirement of the **Discipline** that the accepted supplies who were giving full time to pastoral work were to take the conference course of study, including the course for admission on trial.

PART TWO

FACING THE PROBLEM

III

The Quest for More Preachers

The present shortage of ordained pastors is making the supply pastor situation a major problem in The Methodist Church.

Shall the Church lower its standards of ministerial qualifications so as to take the supply pastor into full connection with all the rights and privileges of the Methodist minister or shall the Church develop a permanent separate, sub-standard class of preachers to be known as approved supply pastors?

Should the Church be satisfied to use more and more supply pastors or should the Church turn more and more to the use of lay preachers under the supervision of an ordained pastor of a larger parish, somewhat after the plan of the Methodists in England? If the Church continues to use supplies, what are to be their rights and privileges? What shall The Methodist Church expect or demand of these pastors who are something more than laymen but something less than Methodist preachers?

Shall The Methodist Church continue year after year to go down the list of supply pastors until every charge receives some sort of preacher or shall the Church demand that men be dropped permanently from the list as soon as they begin to lag behind year after year in the preparation that leads to ordination and full connection? This is a growing problem, and it is time The Methodist Church was discovering where she is and where she intends to go with reference to the supply pastor.

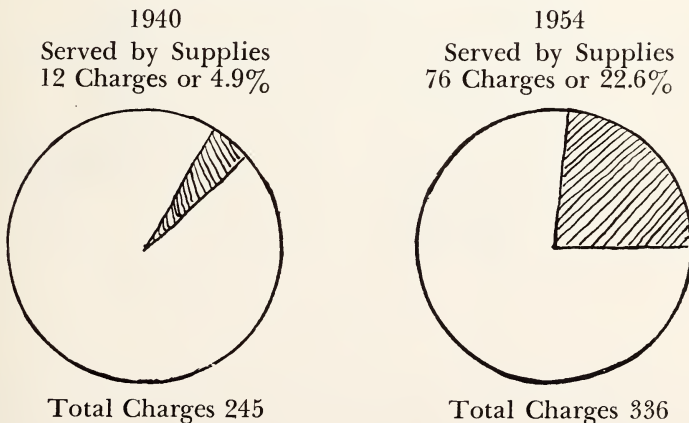
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The Increase in Supply Pastors

This supply problem has already reached proportions and complexities never dreamed of at the time of Methodist union¹ in 1939. In that year only a few supplies were used and the Church looked upon these as temporary supplies, soon to be replaced by ordained men of college and seminary training. In 1940 only 4.9 per cent of the charges in the North Carolina Conference were served by supplies, or 12 of the 245 charges; and in the United States that same year only 16.5 per cent of the charges were served by supplies, or 3,607 of the 21,879 charges. But in 1954, 22.6 per cent of the charges of the North Carolina Conference were served by supply pastors, while in the United States in 1953, 33.9 per cent of charges were served by supply pastors.

Since Methodist union, supply pastors have multiplied in kind and number. The proportions of this problem as presented to the Church now are in some measure indicated by the figures 1 and 2 below showing the number and kind of supplies used in the North Carolina Conference in 1954 and in the United States in 1953.

Figure 1
PER CENT OF CHARGES SERVED BY SUPPLY PASTORS
In the North Carolina Conference



¹ The Methodist Episcopal Church, The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and The Methodist Protestant Church united in 1939 to become The Methodist Church.

Figure 2

PER CENT OF CHARGES SERVED BY SUPPLY PASTORS

In the United States

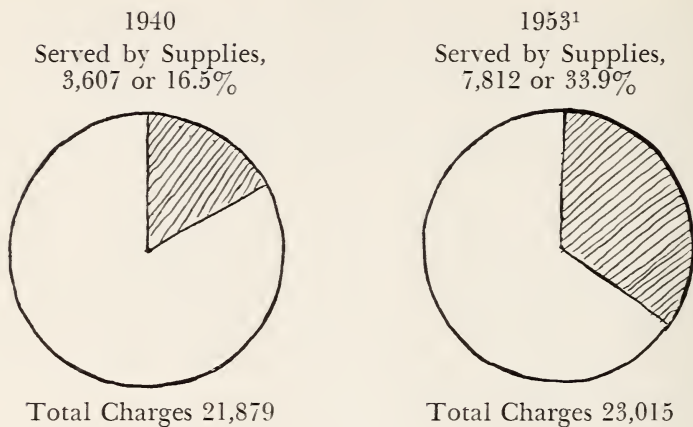
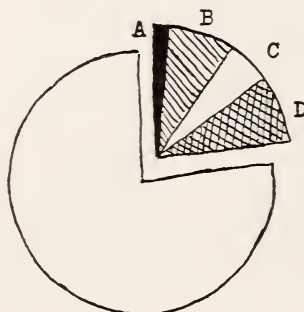


Figure 3

PER CENT AND KIND OF SUPPLIES USED IN 1953

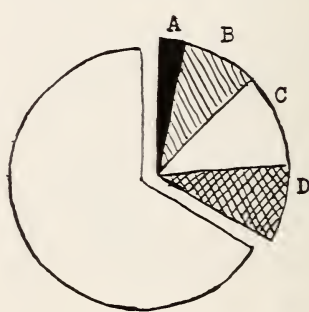
In the North Carolina Conference

Served by Supplies
72 Charges or 22.5%



In the United States

Served by Supplies
7,812 Charges or
33.9%



¹The figures for the United States are for 1953 rather than for 1954 because at the time the research for this study was being done the figures for 1954 were not available.

Table 1
TYPES OF SUPPLIES USED IN 1953¹
 (As Illustrated in Figure 3)

| In the North Carolina Conference | | In the United States |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 3 or 4.2% | A—Superannuated Preachers | 560 or 7.2% |
| 26 or 36.1% | B—Approved Student Supplies..... | 2,238 or 28.6% |
| 18 or 25.0% | C—Other Approved Supplies | 2,799 or 35.8% |
| 25 or 34.7% | D—Others Used As Supplies | 2,215 or 28.4% |
| 72 or 22.5% | Filled By All Supplies | 7,812 or 33.9% |

Figure 4
NUMBER OF MEN USED AS SUPPLY PASTORS
 In the North Carolina Conference 1940 to 1953 Inclusive

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Number of Men Used as Supply Pastors | 225 |
| Men on the Approved List Always When Used | A-83 |
| Local Preachers Always When Used | B-100 ² |
| Back and Forth from One List to the Other | C-42 |

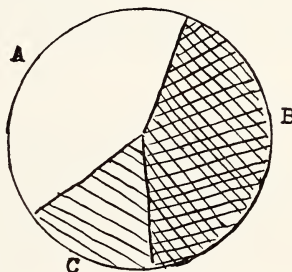
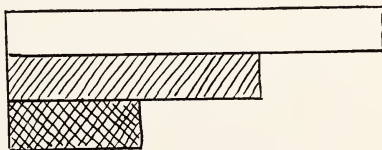


Figure 5
TOTAL NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS FILLED BY SUPPLY PASTORS
 In the North Carolina Conference from 1940 to 1953 inclusive.

| | |
|---|-----|
| Filled by Supply Pastors..... | 636 |
| Filled by Approved Supplies | 424 |
| Filled by Local Preachers and Others | 212 |



¹ This classification is only approximately correct. Figures for North Carolina Conference estimated from Conference Journal and report of Conference Board of Missions. Those for the United States estimated by General Board of Ministerial Education.

² Included in this number are 11 conference members, four of which were retired men serving as supply pastors.

In the North Carolina Conference, from 1940 to 1954, an average of 42 charges have been filled annually by supplies. Of these, 15 have been filled by local preachers and 27 by approved supplies. Also included among the local preachers were two or three members of the North Carolina Conference serving as supply pastors. The average years of service for the approved supplies was slightly over four years; for the local preachers, approximately two years.

Although reference is often made to various groups of so-called supply pastors, strictly speaking The Methodist Church has only one class of supply pastor—namely, approved supply pastor; all others primarily belong to some other group and are temporarily assuming the role of the actual, regular approved supply pastor. Hereinafter, therefore, all reference to supply pastor, unless otherwise indicated, will be to approved supply pastor.

V

Discovering the Approved Supply Pastor

Who is the supply pastor? He is a local preacher who has been recommended by the Annual Conference Board of Ministerial Training and Qualifications and has been accepted by vote of the Annual Conference as eligible for appointment during the ensuing year as a supply pastor of a charge. If he passes his course of study, he is not likely to be dropped back to the ranks of a local preacher. By passing further academic requirements he may become an ordained member of the Annual Conference. He is a candidate for the Methodist ministry "on trial," so to speak, for regular admission on trial into the Annual Conference. Some say he is an academically retarded candidate for the ministry; others say he is a man called of God to preach despite his inability to meet the educational requirements of The Methodist Church. Some think they see in him the spirit of John Wesley returning to spread a little more scriptural holiness throughout the land; others see in him Asbury riding again the long trail and showing the city preachers the way back to the country. **At any rate, had the academic requirements for conference membership not been made a college degree in The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1934, and in The Methodist Episcopal Church in**

1938, the present-day supply pastor would be a fully ordained member of the Annual Conference. Noteworthy is the fact that a large number of the preachers of the Southern Baptist Convention with gifts, grace, and training not above that of the average supply pastor, are doing good work for the masses of the people in both town and country, and enjoying all the rights and privileges of the ministry of their Church. On the other hand, the supply pastor in The Methodist Church is handicapped in his ministry because he has been given a subjugated relation on the basis of his academic deficiency.

But what of the character and training of the typical supply pastor today? A survey of all facts as reported to the North Carolina Board of Ministerial Training and Qualifications in October 1953 by 49 regular supplies serving as pastors (36 approved supplies and 13 local preachers or others used as supplies) presents the following picture of the typical supply pastor:

He is 41 years of age;

Has a wife and three children;

Is not ordained (only 2 deacons and 2 elders in the 49);

Was converted at age 16;

Felt definite call to preach at age 34;

Was licensed to preach at age 35;

Has served as supply pastor 5 years and 10 months;

Was senior in high school, but did not graduate;

Is in first year of course of study (finished 20 of 84 books);

Attended supply school 2 days (7 of the 49 attended);

Attended pastors' school 1 day (4 of the 49 attended);

Averaged three books read in connection with training;

Served a charge of $3\frac{1}{4}$ churches and 360 members;

Received from his charge salary of \$1,949;

Made a record on finances equal to that of average preacher;

His World Service 14% of salary; Conference average 18.8%;

His record of members received on profession of faith is about 40% beyond that received by all other preachers of the Conference in 1953, or 5.3 persons per one hundred mem-

bership as against 3.2 persons per one hundred membership for the rest of the Conference.

The men who are used as supply pastors have been active laymen in their local churches as teachers, church school superintendents, and church officials; they are men who have often been urged by district superintendents to try the work of the supply pastor.

VI

Academic Standards

Why is The Methodist Church using more and more supply pastors? Church membership in The Methodist Church increased in the United States 1,295,458 from 1940 through 1953, or 16.3 per cent. And for the same period the increase in the North Carolina Conference was 27,836, or 19.4 per cent. Yet in 1953 the Church in the United States had 3,016 fewer effective¹ ministers and the North Carolina Conference had only 13 more effective ministers in the pastorate than in 1940. During that time the number of supply pastors used in the North Carolina Conference, counting all types, increased from 12 in 1940 to 72 in 1953; and in the United States the increase was from 3,607 to 7,812. Why is The Methodist Church faced with this continuing increase in supply pastors? A major reason, it appears from Table 2 and Figure 6, is the raising of the academic requirements for the ministry.

Table 2
NUMBER OF SUPPLY PASTORS COMPARED WITH NUMBER OF OTHER PASTORS²

In the North Carolina Conference

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Pastoral Charges</i> | <i>Ordained Elders</i> | <i>Ordained Deacons</i> | <i>Men on Trial</i> | <i>Supplies (All Types)</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1940 | 243 | 208 | 10 | 13 | 12 |
| 1945 | 258 | 211 | 5 | 13 | 29 |
| 1950 | 284 | 202 | 2 | 31 | 49 |
| 1953 | 336 | 220 | 11 | 33 | 72 |
| 1954 | 363 | 234 | 14 | 39 | 76 |

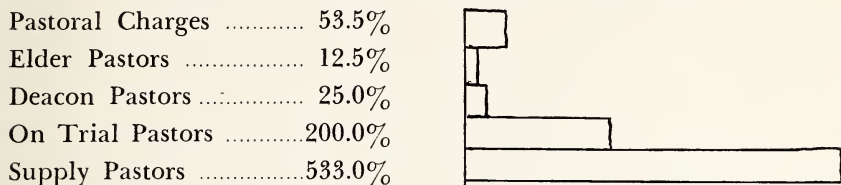
¹Effective minister is a minister in full connection in an Annual Conference and serving under the appointment of a bishop.

²The pastors named are for the appointments listed for the succeeding year and not for the appointments reporting at the close of the conference year.

Figure 6

A COMPARISON OF THE INCREASES IN PERCENTAGES OF ITEMS IN
TABLE 2

In the North Carolina Conference from 1940 to 1954



Actually there were no compulsory educational requirements for admission into the ministry of The Methodist Episcopal Church prior to 1912 other than the passing of the conference courses of study. As early as 1892, however, The Methodist Episcopal Church began to "earnestly advise" all candidates for the ministry to attend, if possible, one or more of the literary or theological institutions of The Methodist Episcopal Church before applying for admission on trial. By 1900 The Methodist Episcopal Church was recommending to the Annual Conferences that they require as a minimum for admission on trial a standard of scholarship equivalent to that prescribed by the University Senate¹ for admission to college. That same year the conference course of study on the "common branches of an English education"—required since 1864—was defined by the **Discipline** to include such studies as were usually required to secure a "common school Teacher's Certificate or admission to high school or academies." Then in 1912 the following compulsory requirement was written into the **Discipline**. "No candidate shall be admitted to Annual Conference on trial until he shall have completed a course of study equivalent to the University Senate requirement for admission to college." The General Conference of 1932 stated that beginning with the fall conferences of 1934 the requirement was to be one full year of college work, and beginning with the fall conferences of 1936 the requirement was to be two full years of college work. The **Discipline** of 1936 stated that beginning with the fall Annual Conferences

¹ The University Senate is the accrediting and standardizing agency for all the educational institutions in the United States related to The Methodist Church. It is composed of 21 persons, educators; 11 are elected quadrennially by the General Board of Education and 10 appointed by the Council of Bishops. (*Discipline*, 1952, Par. 1382.)

of 1938 the requirement was to be graduation from an approved college. **Immediately, the number of candidates being admitted on trial into the Annual Conferences began to decline.** The number of effective ministers in The Methodist Episcopal Church dropped from 14,161 in 1933 to 12,504 in 1939, and the charges to be filled by supplies increased from 2,809 in 1933 to 3,501 in 1939.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was only a few years behind The Methodist Episcopal Church in raising its educational standards, and actually was four years ahead of The Methodist Episcopal Church in making four years of college work a compulsory requirement for admission on trial. By 1914 the educational requirements for admission on trial were the same as those required by the Educational Commission for admission into a standard college. In 1918 the requirement was made the equivalent of that set by the Educational Commission for admission into the freshman class of a standard college. **The Discipline** of 1926 made the requirement at least two years of work in a standard college, or its equivalent. In 1934 the requirement became at least four years of work satisfactorily completed in a standard college. With the setting up of this compulsory academic standard there came a decrease in the number of men seeking admission into the ministry. Effective ministers dropped from 6,712 in 1930 to 6,397 in 1939.

Beginning in 1939, The Methodist Church set up academic requirements which were more exacting and complicated. Many committees, boards, and commissions began to screen closely men applying for admission on trial. The General Conference of 1944 made the requirement "a Bachelor of Arts degree, based on four academic years, or an equivalent or higher degree in liberal education from an accredited college or from a college approved by the University Senate for qualifying candidates for admission to an Annual Conference." The requirements made by the General Conference of 1948 were virtually the same.

Along with the setting up of these academic standards have come three exceptions to the standards:¹ (1) The Annual Conference may by a three-fourths vote admit a candidate

¹ *Discipline*, 1952, Par. 323.

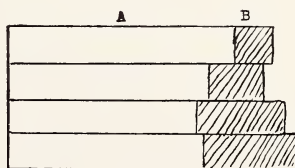
who has received a degree from a nonaccredited four-year college, and who has satisfactorily completed one full year of work in an approved theological school; (2) "under conditions clearly recognized as unusual," the Annual Conference may by a three-fourths vote admit a candidate who has satisfactorily completed two years work in a four-year college or has graduated from a junior college approved by the University Senate; And, (3) that an approved supply pastor over thirty-five years of age who has completed at least thirty semester hours of college credit, has completed the conference course of study, and has served as a full-time approved supply in an Annual Conference for six consecutive years, may be admitted (after written statements of recommendation of the Cabinet and Board of Ministerial Training and Qualifications have been read to the conference) by a three-fourths vote of the Annual Conference. Although the General Conference of 1952 slightly lowered the bars for supplies, it raised the goal for the regular candidates for the ministry by stating that "any conference may designate a Bachelor of Divinity degree, or its equivalent, from a school of theology accredited by the University Senate, as the minimum educational requirement for admission into that conference."¹ And the decline in the number of effective conference members serving in the pastorate is revealed in Figure 7 shown below.

Figure 7

CHARGES FILLED BY SUPPLIES AND EFFECTIVE CONFERENCE MEMBERS

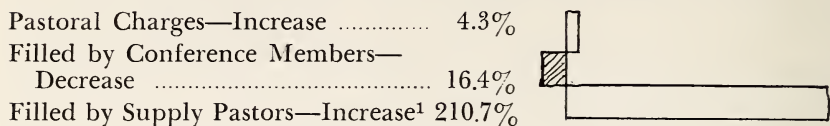
In the United States

| Year | Pastoral Charges | Conference Members-A | Supplies All Types-B |
|------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1940 | 21,879 | 18,378 | 3,607 |
| 1945 | 21,270 | 15,001 | 6,269 |
| 1950 | 22,210 | 14,661 | 7,549 |
| 1953 | 22,834 | 15,362 | 7,812 |



¹ *Discipline*, 1952, Par. 322.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE OR DECREASE FROM 1940 TO 1953



Following the lifting of academic standards the number of men seeking admission on trial decreased so rapidly that The Methodist Church set about at once to develop an elevated class of local preachers to serve as supply pastors. Even as early as 1880 The Methodist Episcopal Church was seeking to develop better local preachers to be supplied by making the annual renewal of their license to preach conditional upon the passing, year by year, of the four years conference course of study required for local preachers; and the renewal of their license the fourth year was conditional upon a satisfactory review of the first three years of the course of study. And, as has already been stated, by 1920 the Church had set up a four years course of study for local preachers serving as supplies.

The per cent of charges served by supplies continued to rise from 1900 to 1936. The requirements for supplies in the **Discipline** of The Methodist Episcopal Church in 1936 are virtually the same as those adopted by The Methodist Church in 1940. Although the section in the **Discipline** concerning supplies has become longer and more complicated with succeeding General Conferences, the section in the 1952 **Discipline** is practically the same as that of 1940, except that a few more privileges have been extended to the supplies and the academic requirements for those over thirty-five years of age have been lowered to thirty semester hours of college credit.

The major provisions concerning supplies in the 1952 **Discipline** may be set forth as follows:²

1. The list of supplies is made up annually by the Annual Conference Board of Ministerial Training and Qualifications and divided into these classes: (a) student supplies; (b) part-time supplies other than students; (c) full-time supplies who

¹ Approved supply pastors increased from 2,434 in 1950 to 5,597 in 1953. Approximately 2,000 local preachers and others were used as supply pastors in 1953.

² *Discipline* 1952, Pars. 315-320.

are elders or are taking the course of study in preparation for ordination.

2. A local preacher desiring to become a supply pastor must have his character, fitness, training, and effectiveness passed by a three-fourths majority vote of the District Committee on Ministerial Training and Qualifications and by the Annual Conference. The unapproved supply can serve only in filling a vacancy that occurs between the sessions of the Annual Conference.

3. The list of supply pastors is made up annually, with approval for only one year at a time. And this approval does not guarantee the supply an appointment. In fact, he may be relieved of his charge at any time during the conference year by a majority vote of the district superintendents.

4. The supply cannot vote in the Annual Conference, and consequently seldom undertakes to speak from the floor, though privileged to do so.¹

5. The roll of supplies is listed and called in the Annual Conference apart from the regular roll of conference members.

6. Supplies giving full time to pastoral work are required to take the conference course of study, including the course for admission on trial. Any supply who fails to complete two years in four and the entire course in eight years, cannot be employed by a district superintendent.

7. The supply, while serving a pastorate, may be authorized to administer the sacraments and to perform the marriage ceremony, within the bounds of his pastoral charge, provided: (a) he has passed the course of study for admission on trial, and (b) each year thereafter he passes one full year of the course of study looking to full ordination. Failure to meet these requirements causes suspension of this privilege.

8. A supply pastor who has rendered not less than ten years of full-time approved service as pastor of a charge is

¹ The North Carolina Conference in 1955 memorialized the General Conference of 1956 to grant the voting privilege to approved supply pastors provided they had as much as two years of service in the pastorate and had passed the first two years of the conference course of study for approved supply pastors. *Journal*, North Carolina Annual Conference (Se. J), 1955, p. 192 (hereinafter referred to as *Journal*).

entitled upon retirement to make an annuity claim for each year of approved service, the equivalent of one per cent of the average salary (including house rent at a valuation equivalent to fifteen per cent of the cash salary) of the approved supply pastors of the conference as computed by the Annual Conference Board of Conference Claimants. However, any Annual Conference may apply the same annuity rates to claims of supplies as to the claims of conference members.¹ And in 1954 the North Carolina Conference voted to do that.

Only two retired supplies have qualified for retirement benefits in the North Carolina Conference.²

The supply, upon his discontinuance as pastor of a charge, drops back again to the status of local preacher.

VII

Discriminations

Of the 225 men who have served as some type of supply pastor for one or more years in the North Carolina Conference from 1940 to 1953, only 52 had gone on to ordination and conference membership in any Annual Conference by the close of 1953. Why had only 23.1 per cent of the men who had sampled the Methodist ministry as supply pastors gone on to full connection?

The 43 approved supplies serving in the North Carolina Conference in 1952 gave the following answers through a questionnaire:

2—lack of a clear, divine call.

4—high educational standards.

6—reason not known.

7—no answer given.

24—or 55.8 per cent, said the reason was the failure of the supply pastor to receive the ministerial rights and privileges granted other preachers.

What are the discriminations practiced against the supply pastor?

¹ *Discipline*, 1952, Par. 1631.

² *Journal*, 1955, p. 121.

1. In the first place, there is discrimination as to voting privilege. Fundamental to the preservation of justice and freedom is the right to have a part in shaping the conditions under which one is to live and work. Democracy assumes that all people of a certain age are good enough and wise enough to be trusted in shaping the policies of the government under which they live. Moreover, it assumes that a fair and workable solution of all problems can be arrived at better by following the majority opinion of all the people than by following the minority opinion of any group, even though it be the opinion of the so-called wise and gifted group. Many schemes have been worked out by the Church and State through the centuries to deprive a large per cent of the people of their suffrage, but always for the same purpose; namely, that the treasury be not taxed with the responsibility of extending to all the people the rights and privileges granted the ruling minority.

In 1953 one of every five pastors in the North Carolina Conference, and one out of every three pastors in The Methodist Church of the United States, was a supply pastor of some kind. No state in the United States disfranchises so large a per cent of its white citizens. All states, save 16, have abolished all literacy restrictions from the suffrage privilege of the people, and these 16 only require the ability to read and write; but in The Methodist Church in 1953, 32 per cent of all pastors—serving 40 per cent of individual churches—were denied the right to vote on the policies of the Annual Conference in which they served and to which they were responsible. **And actually, they are being denied this right primarily on the ground of illiteracy; that is to say, they cannot vote because they are not members of the Annual Conference, and they are not members because they have not passed the literacy or academic test for conference membership.**

The Methodist Church regards the supply pastor less qualified to vote than his lay brother. The lay delegate has the right to vote in the Annual, Jurisdictional, and General Conferences, yet this same layman is stripped of that right if he steps into the pulpit as a supply pastor. In other words, when God exalts a lay delegate by calling him to preach, The Methodist Church immediately abases him by robbing him

of his privilege to vote in the Annual, Jurisdictional, and General Conferences.

2. The supply pastor's subjugated status is further reflected in the type of appointment he gets and the low salary he receives. The 49 charges served by supply pastors in the North Carolina Conference in 1951 paid those supplies an average salary of only \$1764, while the average paid by all other charges of the Conference was \$3374. The average paid the 69 supplies by their charges in 1953 was \$1927; the average for all other charges was \$3764. In each case the average paid other pastors was almost twice that paid supply pastors. Supplements from the Minimum Salary Fund and the Duke Endowment Fund, of course, brought the average salary of the supply to about \$2400 in 1951 and \$2600 in 1953. The North Carolina Conference, contrary to many conferences, pays the same minimum salary to full time supplies as to conference members.

3. The supply pastor is also met with disfavor in regard to expense allowance. In 1953 only 12 of the 69 supplies received any expense allowance from their charges. The average for the 12 charges was \$396 per charge. But there were 25 pastors of stations who received from their churches an average expense allowance of \$427, and six of these, with an average of \$409, were receiving an average salary of \$5328.¹

4. Down at the bottom also is the supply as to the type of charge served. For the most part supplies serve small scattered churches in sparsely populated rural areas. The average charge served by the supply in the North Carolina Conference today has about 3.2 churches and about 118 members per church.

5. As to retirement benefits, the supply suffers a shortage as compared to other preachers. The law of the Church makes it difficult for the supply to qualify for these benefits, and the few that do qualify receive much less than conference members. Only two supplies in the North Carolina Conference have qualified, and although the **Discipline** permits an Annual Conference to apply the same annuity rate to supply claimants as to regular conference claimants, only a few An-

¹ *Journal*, 1953.

nual Conferences (including the North Carolina Conference) do employ the same rates for supplies as for conference members.

6. The supply pastor also faces a disadvantage in qualifying as beneficiary of the special North Carolina Conference Retirement Fund set up in 1937. By serving as much as ten years the supply pastor may become a participating member on the same basis as conference members, but the supply pastor is not guaranteed that he will be employed even for as long as one year. And if he drops out with less than ten years of service, he receives considerably less than half the amount received by a conference member with the same years of service. Of the 69 supplies serving in 1953 only 4 had as much as ten years of service, and only 4 paid into the Minister's Retirement Fund. Evidently, the average supply thinks he has only a slight chance of qualifying for full benefits from this Fund. Noteworthy, however, is the fact that 65 of the 69 supplies in 1953 collected and paid to this Fund the amounts assessed their charges. Thus, through the years to come, supplies, by their services on hard charges and at low salaries, will be building up dividends in this Fund for conference members.

Add to these discriminations the fact that the supply pastor is deprived of the high honor and privilege of representing his Church on boards and committees in the Annual, General, and Jurisdictional Conferences, and the fact that his administration of the sacraments is limited, and one gets some idea as to why the supplies are dropping out of the ministry or turning to the ministry of other denominations.

VIII

The Hand of Secularism

Many college and non-college young men who have felt the urge to preach the gospel are beginning to wonder if they cannot please and serve God and humanity just as well in some other calling as in preaching.

Secularism has done a good job in convincing the Church, as well as society, that a good man in business, in medicine, in teaching, or in law can serve God just as well as a good man

in the ministry. It comes to our ears today from the platform, the press, and sometimes from the pulpit that God is present and at work on the athletic field, the class room, in agriculture, and in industry in the same degree that He is at the altar of the sanctuary in the midst of penitent souls. Young men looking on the secular world see certain signs that indicate to them that God is at work there as well as in the Church. They discover that salaries in many of these professions are considerably higher than that paid the average Methodist preacher, that social security and retirement benefits are fairer and higher than those provided by The Methodist Church, and that advancement is more orderly and certain than in the Methodist ministry. And having been told by both their country and their Church that God needs them there, there they go to work.

The Methodist Church before getting its own ministry very well regulated by Christian standards has moved into society in an effort to Christianize the secular vocations. Much of the Methodist literature on ministerial training and Christian vocations has more to say about the kind of man that is needed in secular life than about the kind of man that is needed in the pulpit. Many boards and committees of the Church are saying more about training Methodists for law, medicine, teaching, business administration, and secretarial work than about training men for the ministry. And, indeed, they are having better success in recruiting these. In some of the literature sent out by general boards expected salaries in these secular callings—like medicine, social work, education, secretarial work—are quoted in figures so much above the average salary for supplies and rural preachers in The Methodist Church as to make it seem ridiculous for a capable man to enter the ministry, provided he feels that he can please God just as well in these other vocations. The leveling hand of secularism seems to be pulling the Church down about as fast as the Church is pulling society up.

IX

Low Salary

One real test of a man's call to the ministry is what he is willing to sacrifice and give up in order to preach the gospel.

Certainly no preacher is enduring more privation for the sake of his calling than the supply pastor. He is usually assigned to the left-over charges at "the bottom" after the better salaried charges have gone to others. As to salary, he is in "the bottom bracket," and in the North Carolina Conference 90 per cent of supplies serve on the weaker rural charges.

From the questionnaire sent supplies in the North Carolina Conference in 1952, 43 answers revealed that 25 of these supplies could not support their families on their income; 24 stated that they were already in debt—mainly for the upkeep of automobiles; 3 indicated that they had been forced to sell their homes and had spent their little savings in an effort to stay in the ministry; 27 stated that if retired, they had no home to which they could return. The average salary paid by charges to supplies runs as follows:

Table 3
AVERAGE SALARY PAID BY CHARGES TO SUPPLY PASTORS

| In the North Carolina Conference | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Year</i> | <i>All Supplies</i> | <i>Approved Supplies</i> | <i>Other Supplies</i> |
| 1951 | \$1764 | \$1852 | \$1613 |
| 1952 | 2032 | 1920 | 2214 |
| 1953 | 1927 | 2028 | 1650 |

However, the salary paid by the charges to the supply pastors was supplemented by the Annual Conference according to the following minimum salary schedule:¹

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Married</i> | <i>Married with Dependent Child</i> |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|---|
| 1951 | \$2200 | \$2400 | \$2600 |
| 1952 | 2400 | 2600 | 2800 |
| 1953 | 2600 | 2800 | 3000 |

¹ The North Carolina Conference in 1953 set the schedule for student pastors at \$1800 single, \$2000 married, and \$100 additional for each child up to two, and \$100 more for every 25 miles distance the charge was from school, not to exceed \$500.

The North Carolina Conference in 1954 made it possible for qualifying student pastors during their first two years in college to receive the regular minimum salary.

In 1955 the minimum salary became \$3000 for single minister, \$3300 for married ministers, and \$3600 for the married minister with dependents.

In 1953, where do we find these 43 supplies who answered the questionnaire in the spring of 1952? **The Journal of the North Carolina Conference** of 1953 shows that 3 had become members of the North Carolina Conference, 2 had become members of other conferences, 3 were on trial in the North Carolina Conference, and 12 were still serving as supplies. But 23, within less than two years, had dropped out of the ministry, and only 4 names of the 23 appeared in the list of men having a preacher's license in 1953. Why, within two years, had 53.5 per cent of these supplies dropped out of the ministry? **Many indicated that it was because they could not support their families from their supply work.**

PART THREE

LOOKING TOWARD A SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

X

More Flexible Educational Standards

How can The Methodist Church improve the supply situation in fairness to both the Church and the supply pastor? How can the Church give to the people the number of preachers needed and at the same time preserve the essential qualities of the ministry?

The problem can perhaps best be solved by shortening the process by which the supply pastor comes into full connection and by giving the supply pastor a more satisfactory and equitable status within the membership of the Annual Conference after he has been received into full connection. This would call for considerable adjustment along the four lines already indicated, namely: (1) more flexible educational standards, (2) further elimination of discriminations, (3) a fresh emphasis on spiritual qualities in the ministry, and (4) more adequate salary.

Look at what our present educational standards are doing for The Methodist Church. First, they are not giving the Church the number of preachers needed. The charges served by supplies in the North Carolina Conference went from 4.9% in 1940 to 22.5% in 1953, and in the United States the increase was from 16.5% in 1940 to 33.9% in 1953. Regardless of what becomes of the student supply, the number of supplies used year after year is constantly increasing, beginning simultaneously with the lifting of academic standards. Figure 8 shows the extent of that increase.

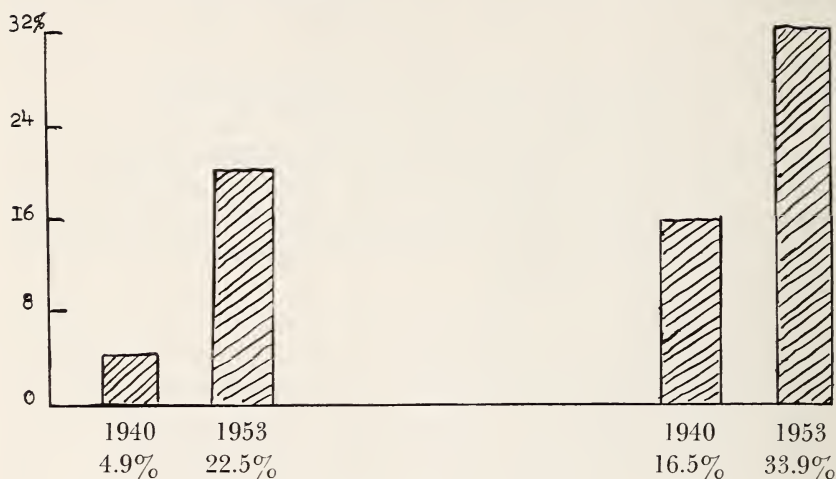
Furthermore, the present academic standards are not producing the kind of preachers needed. In The Methodist Church we need men who are prepared and willing to serve where they are needed. For more than 20 years the great need has been for longer pastorates in the rural church by well trained men. But seminary men, as a rule, do not seem

Figure 8

THE PERCENTAGE INCREASE OF SUPPLY PASTORS IN THE METHODIST CHURCH

In the North Carolina Conference

In the United States



disposed to tarry long in the country church. Is it their training that makes them dissatisfied with the country? According to the appointments listed in the **Journals of the North Carolina Conference 1942-1951** the average pastoral tenure for all circuit charges was only 2.47 years.¹

In 1936 The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, sought through its Rural Work Commission to recruit well trained men for life service in the rural church, but met with only sub-meager success. In 1945 the Church sought to work out a new strategy for the rural church under the direction of the Home Division of the Board of Missions and Church Extension. This time the Church set out to develop a sort of rural missionary, who was to be a real "dirt farmer" and preacher, trained in agriculture as well as in theology, and dedicated to life service in the country. The preacher was to be furnished a mule and a farm and guaranteed a base annual salary of \$1200 from his money crop, plus home, food, fiber and all other home and family necessities that could be produced by him on the farm. This plan really never got afoot.²

¹ *Look at the Roots*, 1955, p. 7, Key W. Taylor.

² *World Outlook*, June, 1945.

The General Conference of 1948, despairing of meeting the opportunities in the rural field, in the foreseeable future, wrote a pathetic foot-note into the **Discipline**. The statement reads: "In recognition of the problem involved in obtaining at this present time a sufficient number of men with the highest academic skills who are ready to devote themselves to a rural ministry, we recommend"¹—and the recommendation that follows is that the Department of Town and Country Work proceed to develop from high school graduates, and from other men with less than the standard academic training, supply pastors to serve the rural church. **Thus, the old problem of the rural church comes back again in the form of the supply pastor problem.** And the failure of The Methodist Church through the years to secure enough college men for the rural work is due to a great extent to the fact that educated men do not want to become the forgotten, subjugated men, with little influence and low salary, like 90 per cent of the supplies who are being appointed today to the rural circuits.

If it be argued that educated men be given the "better" places—else what is education for?—or that educated men achieve better results for the Church by serving in the cultured sections of society, then, by the same token, the man below the academic standards can achieve better results among the masses; and certainly in the brotherhood of the Methodist ministry he should not be denied the rights and privileges of the ministry so long as he consents to serve where his Church thinks he can serve best. As a matter of fact, the so-called "big" church in our most cultured, urban centers has been built up and is sustained by new life and growth flowing in from the masses of the countryside. In other words, having failed to make available enough college men, or the right kind of college men, to fill all the pulpits, shall the Church deny, upon purely academic grounds, certain ministerial rights to those called in to supply that need?

Moreover, the General Conference has recognized the fact that its high academic standards cannot be adhered to in practice. As a consequence, the 1952 **Discipline** includes two exceptions whereby men with less than a Bachelor of Arts degree may be accepted on trial and become members of

¹ *Discipline*, 1948, p. 98.

the Annual Conference.¹ These two exceptions should be maintained and, at some points, liberalized.

What can be done about this by an Annual Conference? The Annual Conference can give a more liberal and flexible interpretation to the "under conditions clearly recognized as unusual" clause.² It is to be hoped that The Methodist Church has not so magnified intellectual powers as to think the "unusual" applied only to men of "unusual" intellectual ability. For a hundred years in America, Methodism was searching for preachers who had "grace" and other "gifts" as well as academic training. This word "unusual" could be interpreted to apply to men of unusual dedication, men with unusual passion for the ministry, and men who have endured unusual hardness for the sake of the gospel. More flexible interpretation at this point would give the Church many capable men.

Then, too, committees, district superintendents, and teachers in colleges, pastors' schools, supply schools, and correspondence schools should all combine their efforts in aiding the supplies in meeting the educational requirements necessary to ordination and conference membership. And when necessary, the Church should provide financial assistance for approved supplies seeking to meet the academic standards of the Church. The Church related college can be of great help in assisting the older supplies in securing the required thirty semester hours of college credit³, as Louisburg College within the North Carolina Conference is doing. Here a special three consecutive day schedule has been arranged whereby the student can take a limited load of academic work while still serving a charge. On this schedule the two years' course toward a Bachelor of Arts degree may be completed in three academic years or less. On this plan supply pastors spend three days of each week at college and four days on their charges. The cost for the three years is approximately the same as it would be for a regular student for the two year course.

The men who wrote into the **Discipline** the requirement of a Bachelor of Arts degree for admission on trial into the

¹ *Discipline*, 1952, Par. 323.

² *Discipline*, 1952, Par. 322, sec. 2.

³ The 1956 *Discipline* calls for sixty hours rather than thirty.

Annual Conference either believed that The Methodist Church could recruit from college men all the preachers that would be needed, or they believed that it was a mistake for The Methodist Church to send men out to preach with less than a college education. The practice of The Methodist Church today is in contradiction to both of these opinions. For the Church is not getting from the colleges the ministerial candidates needed; the Church is sending into about 40 per cent of its pulpits men who have less—some far less—than a college degree. While higher educational standards may have encouraged some men to seek more academic training, they have apparently also turned some men away from the Methodist ministry altogether. **A major need of The Methodist Church now is the expansion and the improvement of the program of training for supply pastors.**

XI



More Rights and Fewer Discriminations

The Methodist Church needs to close considerably the salary differential between supplies and ordained ministers. The difference now is such as to constitute a discrimination. And the question is not mainly one of amounts, but of proportions. The average preacher will be dissatisfied with any salary, whether it be \$4,500 or \$2,000, so long as some preachers with about the same years of service and working about the same number of hours per day for the same Church receive from the same collection plates of The Methodist Church salaries twice or four times his own. The various methods of setting and collecting salaries for different types of ministers, the building up by a percentage levy a surplus that protects some ministers against the vicissitudes that threaten most all pastors of low salaries, the prolonged pastorate in some large churches, and the wide difference in operating expenses on circuits and in stations; these work a real hardship upon the supply pastors.¹

¹ Pastors receiving minimum salary supplements in the North Carolina Conference are not allowed to receive traveling allowance from the people of their charge; that is, "in considering the salary for a charge . . . the Board of Missions must count both salary, travel and expenses as salary in making appropriations to charges." *Journal*, 1954, p. 143.

In the matter of traveling expense there is further discrimination. The **Journal** of 1953 shows that 60 charges in the North Carolina Conference contributed \$21,609 to the traveling expenses of their pastors; 25 of these were stations and 35 were circuits. But the stations averaged \$427, while the circuits averaged \$312. Seven of the stations, receiving an average salary of \$5,328, received an average of \$409 on traveling expense, not including office expense. Figure 9 below reveals the proportions of this discrimination.

Figure 9
TRAVELING EXPENSES FOR PASTORS
In the North Carolina Conference, 1953

| | Average Salary | Average Traveling Expense | Churches Per Charge |
|-------------|-------------------|---|------------------------|
| 35 Circuits | \$2,702 | \$312  | 3.4 |
| 25 Stations | \$2,875 | \$427  | 1 |

Furthermore, in the unfair and haphazard manner in which expense allowance is handled in the North Carolina Conference the supply pastor suffers another disadvantage. While well paid connexional men are receiving expense allowance, some student pastors receiving a mileage allowance on travel, many station preachers receiving an expense allowance, and with district superintendents on a salary of \$7,200 each also allowed an additional \$600 on expenses from the district treasury,¹ **the majority of the supply pastors on large circuits of low salary are left without traveling allowance.** Perhaps the whole matter of ministerial support could best be solved by the adoption of the "basic salary plan" for all active, itinerant pastors, as is permitted already by the **Discipline.**²

¹ *Journal*, 1955, p. 159.

² *Discipline*, 1952, Par. 827.

Many supply pastors also feel embarrassed by the restrictions that the Church has placed upon their ministerial rights and privileges. The full-time approved supply should be given the right to vote in the Annual Conference along with the lay delegate from his charge. This was a major recommendation of the first National Methodist Town and Country Conference which met July, 1947, at Lincoln, Nebraska. **Methodists today need to keep in mind that the Methodist Protestant Church had its beginning not primarily in the demand of the laymen for lay representation, but in the demand of the laymen and local preachers for a "voting" representation in the Annual Conference by local preachers.** At that time local preachers were more numerous than itinerant preachers, and on some charges the laymen knew that the local preacher did as much work as the pastor. By 1820 laymen and local preachers in many sections were rebelling against "the exclusive legislative and authoritative control" of the Church by the ordained preachers. "It was among the local ministry (particularly in the South) that the principles of the policy of The Methodist Church were at this time severely questioned; . . . and finding themselves without voice or representation in the rule-making department of the Church, and at the same time the itinerant ministry vested with the making as well as the execution of these laws, they very naturally concluded that a disparity existed unwarranted by the word of God or the nature and obligation of the ministerial office."¹

But the situation is much more undemocratic today. The Methodist Church is now taking more than 7,000 local preachers out of their homes and using them as traveling preachers in the regular work of the ministry while denying them the right to vote.

This practice also discriminates against the churches served by supplies. A small station with an ordained pastor has two votes in the Annual Conference, while a circuit with perhaps five churches and a membership much larger than

¹*History of Methodist Protestant Church*, 1849, p. 16, John Paris (Sherwood & Co.).

the station has only the one vote of its lay delegate if the pastor is a supply. In reality, the voting strength of about 40% of the rural churches or about 34% of all charges in the United States is cut by 50% in the Annual Conferences by this disfranchising of the supply pastor. This practice involves not only the objectional features of the "poll tax," but it also has in it the tyrannical elements of "taxation without representation," since many of the apportionments made for the support of the Church in general, and passed down to churches served by supplies, were set by legislative bodies in which the supply pastor had no vote—even though many assessments made on his charge were based on his salary which was set and paid by his charge. Here is something in church government peculiar to The Methodist Church.

The General Conference of 1956 should grant the voting privilege to every approved supply pastor who has as much as two years of service and has passed the first two years of the conference course of study.

It is well to recall here that 55.8% of the supply pastors serving in the North Carolina Conference in 1952 thought that discriminations were the main reason why many supplies did not go on to ordination and full connection. Facts seem to support their belief; for of the 201 men who served as some type of supply pastor during the 13 years from 1941 to 1953, inclusive, only 39, or 19.4% had become members of the Annual Conference by the end of 1953. Ninety-nine of the 201, or 49.2% had dropped completely out of the Methodist ministry, save 6 who still retained a local preacher's license. Of the 201 men who served as supplies, only 4 served as many as ten years; 97, or almost half of them, served only one year.¹

What had happened to these 201 men by the end of 1953? Four were deceased (d); 4 retired (r); 40 were serving as supply pastors (s); 15 were on trial (t); 39 were members of an Annual Conference (m).²

The other 99, 49.2%, of the 201 had dropped out of the Methodist ministry, except 6 who were still listed

¹ Of the 97 who had served only one year, 28 were men who were serving their first year as supply pastor in 1953. But based upon the average for the 13 years, not more than 6 of these will become members of the Annual Conference. The other 22 will drop out of the ministry or continue as supply pastors.

² See Figure No. 10.

XII

The Called Ministry

Methodism in the United States in its program of ministerial training needs to give greater stress to the divinely called ministry and the spiritually prepared and the spiritually guided ministry. It was a divine revelation that gave birth to Christianity and that gave power and growth to the New Testament Church. The Spirit that calls a person into the ministry can be relied upon to provide him through the same medium much of his essential training for the ministry. In recent years the emphasis has shifted from a divinely called and a divinely directed ministry to that of a church-recruited and intellectually trained ministry. In the early days of Methodism the essential was a certain experience and dedication of soul; today the essential seems to be a certain academic degree. Both are important, but the chief qualification is of the spirit, a matter of heart rather than of head.

The great preachers of the New Testament were not men who were passing from mind to mind the best ideas of their day about God; neither were they men giving good advice on how to be happy. They were men who were witnessing to the world concerning what God had done for them and declaring to the world what God could do to others through them in the redemption of the world. And some men who have been called of God to be evangelists for Him may not have the time or the inclination to meet all the academic requirements for full ministerial rights in The Methodist Church. "The ultimate question for the preacher," as Dr. D. G. Miller says, "is not, 'Has my sermon **said** something?' but, 'Has it **done** anything?' Wesley may not have been so far wide of the mark when he raised the question with his preachers whether their preaching had converted anybody or angered anybody. At least he knew that preaching was intended to **do something!**"¹

The section on THE MINISTRY of the 1952 Discipline does retain this spiritual emphasis. The section on the call to preach deals with the movement of the "Holy Spirit," the knowledge of a "pardoning God," and the matter of having

¹ *Fire in Thy Mouth*, 1954, p. 24, Donald G. Miller, Abington Press.

been "truly convinced of sin and converted to God." And where is the emphasis placed in these historic 19 questions asked of every Methodist preacher from the beginning? These say nothing about academic standards. They deal with "faith in Christ," "going on to perfection," being made "perfect in love," and devoting oneself "wholly to God." **The shift of the emphasis from the spiritual to the academic qualifications in ministerial training becomes obvious when one discovers that the historic questions formulated by John Wesley are today submerged in the 1952 Discipline in a section over seven pages long dealing almost entirely with academic requirements.**

XIII

More Adequate Salary

"For better or worse, the whole problem of an adequate ministry for rural areas," as Bishop W. C. Martin states, "revolves about the mundane matter of an adequate salary."¹ This is evident from the fact that in the list of appointments "to be supplied" there appear no station churches, districts, or good paying connectional jobs. Few ministers are leaving the city pulpit, the office of district superintendency or connectional jobs for the teaching profession or the chaplaincy. There is reason to believe that a much larger number of the charges of the North Carolina Conference would be filled with seminary men now had the average pastor's salary been kept fairly in line with that paid connectional men. Enough money was paid to ministerial support in the North Carolina Conference in 1953 to have given all effective ministers a salary of \$4000, but the average for the pastors—counting all supplements—was only \$3590. For the 201 circuit pastors it was only \$3290, and for 65 supply pastors approximately \$2800, while for connectional men it was over \$6000.

Better paying jobs for preachers outside of the pulpit is one of the main reasons so many ordained men are dropping out of the pastorate for other church jobs. Nothing like an adequate salary for all the preachers can be provided except

¹ *The Church and the Rural Community*, 1948, p. 66, published by the Board of Mission and Church Extension of The Methodist Church.

by the adoption of something like the basic salary plan already set forth in the **Discipline** of 1952.

The extent of this increase in men and money in the connectional work of The Methodist Church since 1940 is revealed in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4

INCREASE IN THE USE OF CONNECTIONAL MEN IN THE METHODIST CHURCH

In the United States

| | 1941 | 1946 | 1951 | 1953 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Number of Charges | 21,227 | 21,463 | 22,471 | 22,834 |
| Charges filled by Epis. Appt. | 16,498 | 15,025 | 15,035 | 15,362 |
| Charges to be supplied | 4,729 | 6,455 | 7,436 | 7,812 |
| Special Appointments | 1,378 | 1,825 | 1,942 | 2,126 |
| Appointed to school or left without appointment | 545 | 741 | 1,137 | 1,135 |

Table 5

A COMPARISON OF PASTORS' SALARY WITH CONNECTIONAL FUND¹

In the United States for 1940 and 1954

| Year | Pastors' Salary | Connectional Fund | Per Cent of Total Budget | | Per Cent Increase | |
|------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------|-------------------|---------|
| | | | Salary | C. Fund | Sal. | C. Fund |
| 1940 | \$31,114,170 | 73,413 | 41.15 | .09 | | |
| 1954 | \$71,177,332 | 2,489,065 | 20.61 | .72 | 129% | 343% |

The Methodist Church cannot expect to have an adequately trained ministry in the pulpit so long as the Church, as well as the state and business, continues to provide better salaries for men outside of the pulpit than the average pastor receives. In 1953 the average income for all of America's 40 million families was \$3700, the average for city families was \$4100, the average for college men (age 45-54, their peak income) was \$5549, and the average income per family for Charlotte, North Carolina, was \$3346,² but the average salary

¹ *Christian Advocate*, January 13, 1955, p. 10.

² United States Census, 1950, *Look Magazine*, Oct. 20, 1953, p. 89.

the same year for 63 per cent of all the preachers of the North Carolina Conference was only \$3290, counting all supplements.

Dean James Cannon, of the Divinity School of Duke University, gives a good summary of the general situation: "The report of the Department of Commerce, based upon 1950 census, shows that in 1929 the income for religious workers was 14% above the national average, but in 1950 it was 25% below the national average, a drop of 39%. No other occupational group in America has suffered to such an extent. In 1950 the average income for full time employees in churches and church institutions was \$2276 per year. The average for all occupational groups was \$3024. The only skilled occupational group with an average of pay lower than that of ministers, directors of religious education, church secretaries, etc., is the nursing profession with an annual average of \$2107."¹

The Methodist Church has raised her academic standards without providing for a corresponding, compensating raise in salary; now she must, among other things, raise her salaries or face a growing shortage of trained, ordained preachers.

Apparently no Church is going to maintain a well trained ministry on a salary level below \$4000.

¹ *North Carolina Christian Advocate*, July 31, 1952.

PART FOUR

THE CONTINUING NEED FOR SUPPLY PASTORS

XIV

Pastoral Leadership and Church Growth

What does The Methodist Church want? Shall her major emphasis in the future be on quantity or quality? Shall Methodism keep her church building program in line with the number of colleges and seminary men available, somewhat like the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States are doing, or shall The Methodist Church move out as she once did, and as some denominations are doing today, and start some type of church wherever possible, recruiting in some sort of way enough men of some kind to fill all the pulpits? It is evident that the chief factor in church growth is pastoral leadership, a full-time pastor in every church of reasonable size.

Until about 1860 there were as many Methodists in the United States as there were Baptists and Presbyterians combined but since 1926 the growth of Methodists has been leveling off below that of several major denominational groups. As to percentage growth from 1926 to 1950, 35 denominations rate above The Methodist Church, 33 above The Episcopal Church, 27 above The Presbyterian Church in the United States, and 20 above The Southern Baptist Church.¹ Tables 6, 7, and 8, and Figure 11 show the comparative growth of these major denominations.

A study of the growth of the various denominations in North Carolina seems to support the claim that the major factor in the numerical growth of churches is pastoral leadership, one full-time pastor to one church. For example, it is only reasonable to expect that the pastor with a membership of 290 in one church will be able to achieve a better production per member than the pastor with a membership of 290

¹ *Year Book of American Churches*, 1951, National Council of Churches in the United States of America.

Table 6

A DENOMINATIONAL COMPARISON OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

In the State of North Carolina

| | 1902 | 1952 | Per Cent Gain |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------------|
| Baptist ¹ | 166,098 | 737,211 | 343 |
| Episcopal | 10,397 | 42,190 | 305 |
| Presbyterian ² | 34,638 | 119,243 | 247 |
| Freewill Baptist ³ | 20,095 | 48,872 | 143 |
| Methodist ⁴ | 157,421 | 410,008 | 160 |

Table 7

A DENOMINATIONAL COMPARISON OF ORDAINED PASTORS WITH MEMBERSHIP, CHARGES, AND CHURCHES IN NORTH CAROLINA FOR THE YEAR 1952

(Methodists in this Table for North Carolina Conference)

| | Ordained Pastors | Membership Per Pastor | Membership Per Church | Churches Per Charges or Parish |
|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Episcopal | 136 | 310 | 162 | 1.8 |
| Presbyterian ² | 302 | 394 | 195 | 1.9 |
| Methodist | 200 | 848 | 212 | 2.6 |
| Baptist ¹ | 2,500 | 295 | 241 | 1.2 |

Table 8

COMPARATIVE GROWTH OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES⁵

| | 1900 | 1952 | Per Cent Gain |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|---------------|
| Lutheran | 1,575,778 | 6,313,892 | 400 |
| Baptist | 4,443,628 | 17,470,111 | 395 |
| Episcopal | 709,375 | 2,478,813 | 360 |
| Presbyterian | 1,560,847 | 3,571,578 | 130 |
| Methodist | 5,809,516 | 11,664,978 | 101 |

divided into two churches. Of course, other factors also enter into church growth. The Episcopal Church has had splendid growth in North Carolina because it has worked chiefly in the urban centers, where there has been rapid growth in population; the Presbyterian Church, U. S., shows good growth because it has labored mostly in the rapidly growing towns and cities and has specialized in moving into new rapidly growing suburban areas. The Southern Baptist Church in North

¹ North Carolina Baptist State Convention (Missionary Baptist).

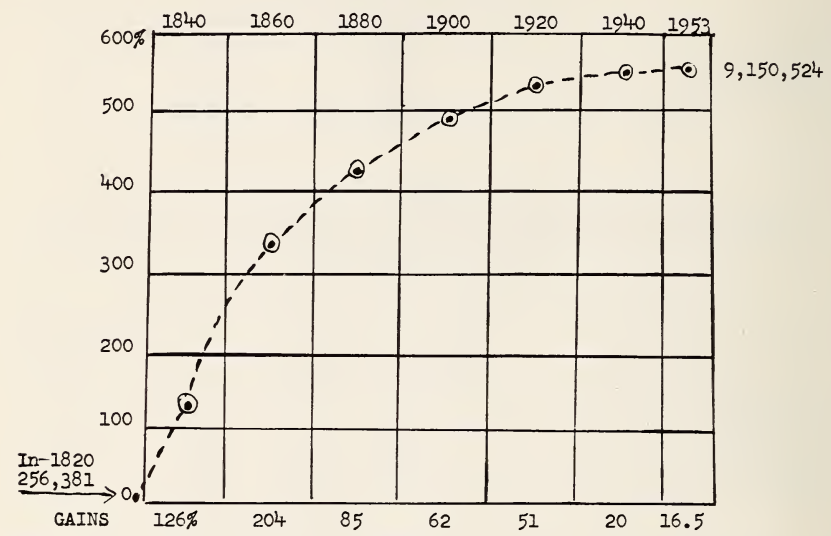
² Synod of North Carolina, Presbyterian Church in United States.

³ Original Freewill Baptist.

⁴ Figures for M. E. Church, M. E. Church, South, and including The Methodist Protestant Church after 1940.

⁵ *North Carolina Christian Advocate*, Dec. 16, 1954, Edwin L. Jones. These figures are for the combined bodies of the denominations listed.

Figure 11
PERCENTAGE GROWTH OF THE METHODIST CHURCH BY 20 YEAR PERIODS¹
 In the United States



Carolina has had outstanding growth because it has been pushing ahead in both city and country. For thirty years it has been majoring in the rural field and now as the population is moving rapidly to the urban area, the Church there is reaping a good harvest from labors of a generation ago. On the other hand, The Methodist Church has fallen behind these other major denominations in recent years, a major reason being a shortage of preachers. The North Carolina Conference closed 69 churches from 1930 to 1953.² Moreover, charges of 4, 5, and 6 churches have been given to one pastor, and the local church, "the goose that lays the golden eggs," became very unproductive in many places.

Today, however, through the use of more and more supply pastors and a well organized program of church extension, the North Carolina Conference is again on the way to new life and growth. Many new churches are being organized

¹ Figures for M. E. Church, M. E. Church, South, and including The Methodist Protestant Church after 1940.

² The number 69 was arrived at by a study of the N. C. Journals. It is recognized, of course, that a few of these closed churches resulted from the union of the three branches of Methodism in 1939.

and many large circuits divided. That has resulted in 81 new charges from 1950 to 1955. This increase would not have been possible had there not been an increase in the use of supply pastors—49 to 76—during the same period. And if The Methodist Church is to keep pace with the other rapidly growing denominations, she must continue to use supply pastors for many, many years; and, in the meantime, if she is to give the fullest ministry possible to all the churches, she must adjust her academic standards and adjust her requirements for ministerial orders so as to give to all the churches fully ordained men, with all the rights and privileges of other ministers.

XV

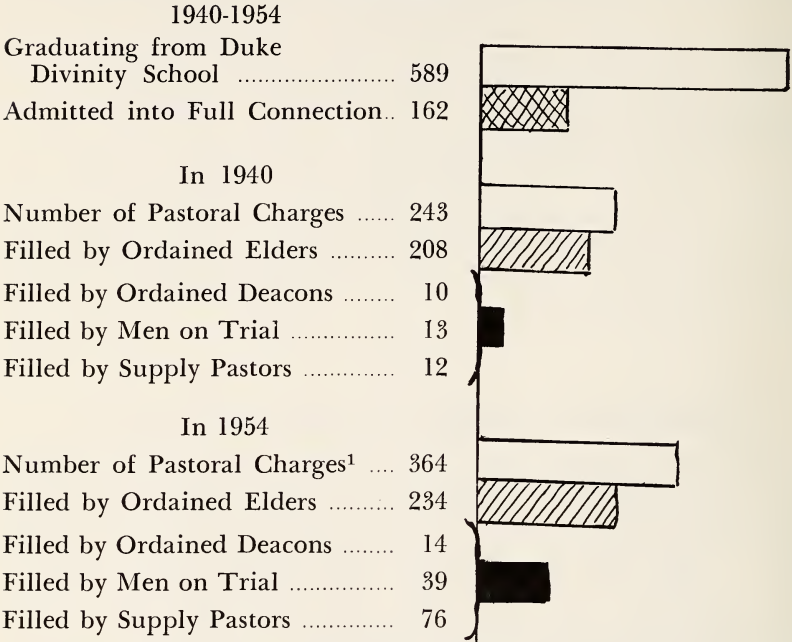
Prospects for an Adequate Number of Ministers

What are the prospects of replacing our supply pastors with fully ordained men under our present system of ministerial orders and academic standards? From trends of the past 15 years the outlook is not promising. From 1940 to 1954, inclusive, 589 men were graduated from the Duke Divinity School, within the bounds of the North Carolina Conference. But during that time only 162 men were received into full connection into the North Carolina Conference, and the number of elders serving as pastors increased only 26, going from 208 in 1940 to 234 in 1954. Therefore, the increase of 119 new charges during that period had to be supplied mainly by the use of supply pastors and men on trial.

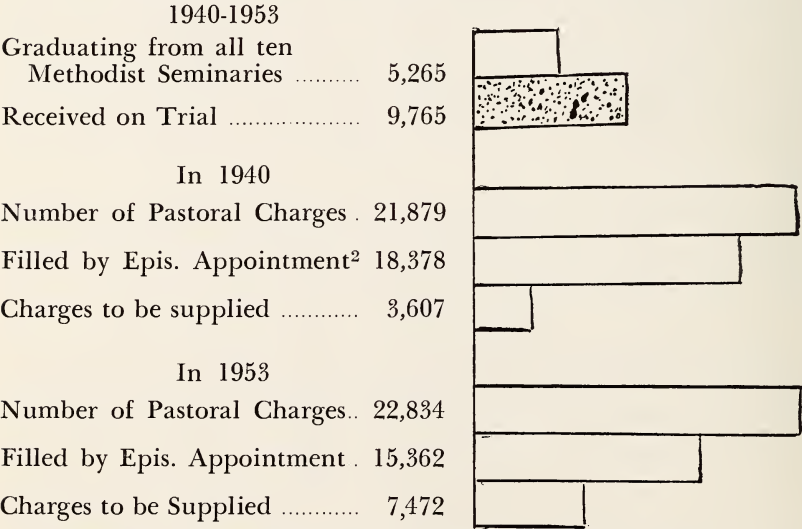
According to Figure 12, in 1953, 33.9% of the pastoral charges in the United States were served by supply pastors. This means that approximately one-half of the Methodist Churches were served by supply pastors that year.

The Methodist Church, both in the United States and the North Carolina Conference, shows greater increase since 1950 with respect to men received on trial and into full connection, but so far as meeting the needs of men for the pastorate is concerned, much of these gains were wiped out by the increase of Methodist ministers in connectional work and detached service; so that 1953 shows the Church in the United States with an increase of only 4.7% in effective con-

Figure 12
SHORTAGE OF EFFECTIVE PASTORS IN THE NORTH CAROLINA
CONFERENCE



SHORTAGE OF EFFECTIVE PASTORS IN THE UNITED STATES



¹ Including new appointments made at Annual Conference of 1954.

² For some reason charges filled by episcopal appointment and charges to be supplied do not always equal total charges.

ference members over that of 1950, and in the North Carolina Conference an increase of only 13.2% in number of effective conference members serving as pastors.¹ Apparently there is a growing dissatisfaction among Methodist preachers with the itinerant system so far as it relates to the pastorate. Many seem to think they can serve the Church better outside of the pastorate.

How great is the need for supply pastors in the North Carolina Conference? The term "shortage of preachers" is a very relative term. As indicated in Table 7, upon the basis of ratio of pastor to church membership, The Methodist Church in the North Carolina Conference is short of the Episcopal Church of the State by 347 ordained men, short of the Southern Baptist Church of the State by 375, and short of the Presbyterian Church of the State by 230. Moreover, to match the Baptist Church ratio of pastors to churches, the Methodists of the North Carolina Conference need 465 more ordained pastors; to match the Episcopal Church, they need 243 more; and to match the Presbyterian Church, they need 220 more.² And the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, as well as some of the newer denominations of phenomenal growth, is proving that all churches not only do better with a full-time pastor, but that if the church has about 200 active members, the people will also pay their pastor a living wage. A full-time pastor to every church of reasonable size is one of the greatest assets any denomination can have.

But apart from what other denominations are doing, the North Carolina Conference needs 176 more pastors now. There are 87 churches on circuits with a membership larger than the average membership of 44 smaller stations. Add to these the 89 or more new churches that the North Carolina Conference Church Extension Survey Committee recently estimated are needed, and that gives 176 more charges than the Conference had in 1954, or a total of 512 charges. And to replace the supply pastors and fill all 512 charges with ordained pastors would require 270 more ordained pastors than the Conference had in the pastorate in 1954. **This clearly indicates that the North Carolina Conference will be**

¹Journals and General Minutes of The Methodist Church.

²Journals of the denominations named.

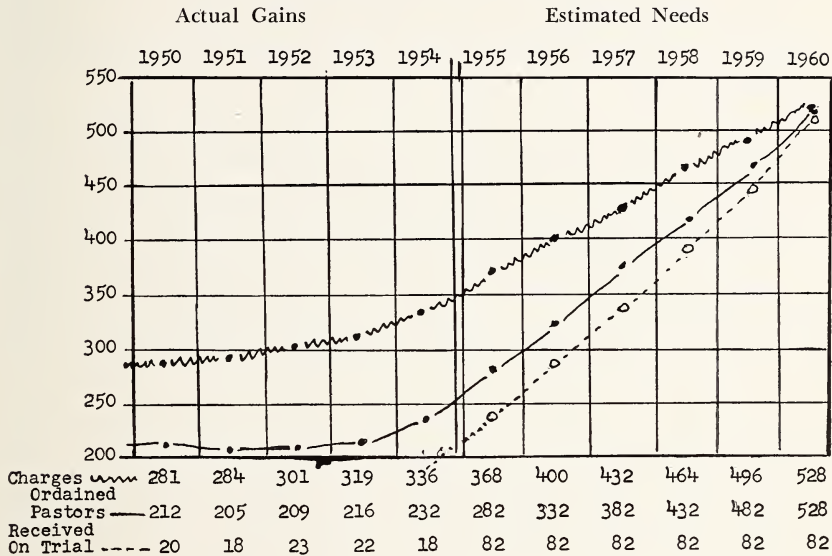
forced to continue the use of a large number of supply pastors for a long time. Nothing less than a revolutionary change in the policy of our ministerial orders and training program can give to the North Carolina Conference the ordained pastors needed.

Estimated upon the trends of the past five years, what must be the number of men received on trial if the North Carolina Conference is to have the ordained men needed by 1960? The admission of 101 men on trial, 1951 to 1954, inclusive, resulted in a net gain of 20 ordained men (deacons and elders) in the pastorate, or a net gain of 4 ordained pastors per year from an average of 20 men received on trial per year. On the basis of that percentage, the North Carolina Conference would need to receive on trial 86 men per year for the next six years to have by 1960 the number of ordained pastors needed by that time. **That is more than four times as many per year as have been received per year during the last five years.**

Figure 13 represents an estimate of recruitment of preachers into the ranks of the North Carolina Conference that is necessary if needs arising during the next five years are to be met.

To replace the supply pastors with ordained men and to form the new charges by 1960 that the cabinet of the North Carolina Conference in January 1955 estimated would be needed by 1960, it appears, as Figure 13 points out, that the North Carolina Conference will need to receive on trial as many as 82 men per year from 1955 to 1960, or 492 for the 6 years. From a study of the past it seems that at least 32 men per year will be lost to functions other than the pastorate: 60 to connexional jobs, or 10 per year; 60 by retirement, or 10 per year; 18 active men by death, or 3 per year; 24 men to special appointments or detached service, or 4 per year; and 30 more, or 5 per year, lost to other professions. This is a loss of 192 men, leaving 300 men, or 50 per year to replace the supply pastors and meet the needs of new charges. These trends have been presented in an effort to show that the North Carolina Conference will not only be using a large number of supply pastors for the next six years, but also for many more years, unless the action of the General Conference of 1956 completely changes the qualifications for ordination.

Figure 13
CHARTING FUTURE NEEDS FOR ORDAINED PASTORS
In the North Carolina Conference



The actual increases in charges in 1955 and 1956 were 30 and 32, only 2 short of the 32 annual increase estimated needed. But there were received on trial in 1955 only 17 men instead of 82; and the increases in ordained men in the pastorate in 1955 and 1956 were 16 and 17 instead of 50 and 50, the annual increase estimated needed to meet needs by 1960.

What further help can the ten Methodist seminaries and the 124 Church related colleges and schools give in this matter? It seems strange that a growing Church with so many seminaries, universities and colleges should be suffering from a shortage of ordained preachers.

Here are two disturbing observations: First, the location of a seminary within the bounds of an Annual Conference seems to have little relation to the increase or decrease of ordained preachers in the pastorate of the Conference. For example, the combined area of the Southeastern and the Northeastern Jurisdictions is slightly smaller than that of the Western Jurisdiction, yet these two eastern Jurisdictions have 855% more of the Methodist related educational institutions than the Western Jurisdiction. The two eastern Jurisdictions contain 6 seminaries, 5 universities, 31 senior colleges, 19

junior colleges, and 17 other secondary schools, 78 in all; against 9 in the Western Jurisdiction—2 seminaries, 2 universities, and 5 senior colleges. And from 1940 to 1953 the 6 seminaries in the eastern Jurisdictions turned out 2959 graduates as against 337 by the 2 seminaries in the Western Jurisdiction.

But what about the increase in church membership and supply pastors in these sections from 1940 to 1953? Church membership in the two eastern Jurisdictions increased 18.6%; in the Western Jurisdiction the increase was 35.7%. In 1953, 32.7% of the charges in the eastern Jurisdictions were served by supplies, and 31.7% in the Western Jurisdiction. From 1949 to 1953, there was a gain of 8.7% in charges and a loss of 233 churches in the eastern Jurisdictions, and a gain of 4.1% in charges with a loss of 19 churches in the Western Jurisdiction. Of course, these educational institutions greatly improved the quality of the people, but it does seem that 78 institutions in the eastern Jurisdictions against 9 in the Western Jurisdiction would have made a greater difference in church growth and the supply pastor situation during 14 years.¹

Now to the second observation. Only about 80% of the students enrolled in the average Methodist seminary are actually preparing for the ministry in The Methodist Church. The list of graduates given out by the seminaries often includes many graduates other than Bachelor of Divinity graduates, and of the Bachelor of Divinity graduates only about 70% are actually entering the **pastorate** of The Methodist Church. Here is a place for some heart-searching for Methodist preachers and teachers. Why, with all the training in Christian vocation and the many summer assemblies, are so few young men being stirred to enter the pastorate? And why do so many ministerial students who go through the Methodist related colleges and seminaries have so little interest in the pastoral ministry? Why should the Church that has had splendid growth for the past 15 years in church membership, finances, and educational institutions be faced with a great shortage of ordained preachers? At any rate, it is evident that the need for supply pastors will continue for many years.

¹ *Church and Campus*, November-December 1954, Map and Chart.

A large per cent of our seminary men are being used by the Church as editors, teachers, and executive secretaries of the many church boards and other connectional services, while many of our pastors have been coming into conference membership by the provision made by the General Conference of 1948 for the ordination of men with less than a college degree.

Can the colleges and the seminaries supply the need for ordained pastors? If not, what is The Methodist Church going to do about the shortage of preachers? To supply all Methodist Churches with seminary graduates by 1970, the Methodist seminaries would have to turn out at least 50,000 graduates within the next 14 years instead of the 5,000 that they turned out from 1940 to 1953, inclusive.

Table 9

GRADUATING FROM METHODIST SEMINARIES 1940-1953¹

| | <i>For the First Seven Years</i> | <i>For the Second Seven Years</i> | <i>Total For 14 Years</i> | <i>Enrollment in 1954</i> |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Boston | 302 | 289 | 591 | 469 |
| Candler | 309 | 490 | 799 | 385 |
| Duke | 205 | 313 | 518 | 209 |
| Drew | 314 | 290 | 604 | 404 |
| Gammon | 84 | 89 | 173 | 52 |
| Garrett | 452 | 586 | 1038 | 398 |
| Iliff | 108 | 180 | 288 | 125 |
| Perkins | 219 | 494 | 713 | 458 |
| S. Calif. | 21 | 28 | 49 | 170 |
| Westminster | 122 | 152 | 274 | 138 |
| Totals | 2136 | 2911 | 5047 | 2808 |

¹ Figures from the office of the Dean of each seminary.

CONCLUSION

This study shows clearly that The Methodist Church cannot in the foreseeable future get along without the supply pastor. Indeed, the need for supply pastors is increasing rather than decreasing.

In the North Carolina Conference only 4.9% of the charges were served by supply pastors in 1940, whereas 22.6% of the charges were served by supply pastors in 1954. In The Methodist Church throughout the United States 16.5% of the charges were served by supply pastors in 1940, while in 1953 the percentage was 33.9%.

Moreover, this study shows that in order to supply all Methodist Churches in the United States with seminary graduates by 1970 the Methodist seminaries would have to turn out approximately 50,000 graduates during the next 14 years instead of the 5,000 they turned out during the 14-year period from 1940 though 1953. Evidently, the supply pastor is here to stay for a long time.

Inasmuch as the supply pastor will continue to be needed, it is only the part of wisdom that The Methodist Church aid him in rendering the most effective service possible. Toward this end the North Carolina Conference has already, in recent time, taken a number of forward-looking steps. In even a partial listing of these steps the following would need to be noted: (1) The Conference pays the same minimum salary to the full-time supply pastor that is paid to the full-time Conference member. (2) The same retirement rate per service year is paid the supply pastor that is paid the Conference member. (3) Although the Board of Missions and Church Extension of the Conference administers¹ a minimum salary for student pastors which is lower than the regular minimum for full-time pastors, special provision has been made whereby older supply pastors may, upon qualification, receive the regular minimum salary for the first two years of college work. (4) In 1955, the Conference voted to memorialize the General Conference of 1956 to grant the supply pastor the privilege of voting as well as speaking in the Annual Conference.

¹The 1956 *Discipline* puts the administration of the minimum salary in the hands of the Commission on Minimum Salaries, par. 826.

(5) The Conference Board of Ministerial Training and Qualifications has sought to be liberal in its interpretation of the Disciplinary provision whereby supply pastors thirty-five years of age and older may become Conference members. (6) In the reading of appointments and the published lists of those appointments no distinction is made between supply pastors and Conference ministerial members. (7) Scholarship funds have been made available to aid and encourage supply pastors to attend the summer Supply Pastors' Schools at Duke University. All these features represent significant contributions to the ministry of the supply pastor. However, there are other improvements which need to be made and which this study strongly recommends.

1. The Methodist Church should abolish the laws and policies that have led to unfair discriminations within its ministerial ranks. It is contrary to the Methodist tradition to perpetuate a class ministry. For example, the approved supply pastor's privilege of administering the sacraments while serving a charge should not be limited to his own charge; and he should be accorded greater security as to tenure of pastoral appointment. The supply pastor after serving a pastorate two years as "preacher in charge" should be allowed to vote in his Annual Conference and to serve on boards and committees of his Annual Conference. Furthermore, the salary and the appointment that he receives should not be based upon the assumption that his being a supply pastor necessitates his acceptance of a low paying charge. His appointment should be based on the record of his pastoral achievement rather than on his status as a supply pastor.

2. Although the basic salary plan as set forth by the 1952 **Discipline** is worthy of careful consideration as a Christian concept and practice in ministerial brotherhood, probably the most realistic and feasible approach to an adequate salary for the supply pastor in the North Carolina Conference is to increase the minimum salary until it reaches an adequate amount. **The approved supply pastor should continue to share in minimum salary on the same basis as other Methodist pastors.** Moreover, the Annual Conference should permit and encourage charges receiving minimum salary aid to provide their pastors reasonable travel and expense allowances.

3. The Bachelor of Arts degree or its equivalent should be maintained as the general maximum educational requirement for those seeking admission into the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church. **Under no circumstances should the educational requirement for older supply pastors exceed two years of college credit.** Assuredly, the supply pastor who proves that he has "gifts, grace, and usefulness" which make him acceptable in the Methodist ministry should be admitted into the membership of the Annual Conference. Furthermore, the Disciplinary provision whereby an approved supply pastor must serve under appointment in an Annual Conference for **six consecutive years** before being eligible for admission on trial should be amended so as to allow the approved supply pastor to be admitted on trial after **four years of service** under appointment in an Annual Conference. This still would involve a probationary period of **six years** before admission into Conference membership. In addition, the approved supply pastor should be admitted on trial and into Conference membership by a majority vote of the Board of Ministerial Training and Qualifications and of the Annual Conference. It is an unbrotherly discrimination to require the supply pastor to receive a three-fourths vote while other pastors are accepted by majority vote.¹

4. There is urgent need for an expanded program of academic training which will meet the special needs of the supply pastor and at the same time enable him to become a Conference member. In the North Carolina Conference a beginning in such a program has been made at Louisburg College. But this is only a beginning. The type of program that is under way there should be greatly enriched and expanded. Surely, if The Methodist Church is to insist on a standard of college education for its supply pastors, it must assist them in measuring up to that standard. This means not only that a program of training must be made available but also that in many cases supply pastors must be assisted financially so as to be able to take advantage of that training. This financial assistance should be provided by establishing a Conference-financed scholarship fund for supply pastors who are pursuing college work in Methodist colleges in preparation for Conference membership. Moreover, it is import-

¹See *Discipline*, 1952, par. 323, sec. 3 and *Discipline*, 1956, par. 325, sec. 3.

ant that this training be provided in Methodist colleges because most of the older supply men will never be able to attend a Methodist seminary and also because many of them come from denominational backgrounds other than the Methodist.

5. The Methodist Church needs to place more emphasis on the divinely called and the divinely directed ministry and come back to that broader and deeper understanding of education that Wesley and the early Methodists had. The Church must begin to act upon the basis that education involves something much broader and deeper than that which makes up formal education today.

Susannah Wesley faced her son John in the right direction by drilling him in the theory that "the true end of preaching is to mend men's lives and not to stuff their heads with unprofitable speculations." And Wesley agreed with his mother when she said to him, concerning Thomas Maxfield, the lay preacher, "John, . . . take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as truly called of God to preach as you are."¹

John Wesley was a scholarly young man when he began his ministry at the age of 23, but he never forgot what a failure he was until his "heart-warming" experience at Aldersgate at age 35. In seeking to become a successful minister Wesley added to his knowledge, works, social service, mysticism, missionary labors; yet all these left him frustrated and with the feeling that he was an unfruitful servant of Christ. And from this experience he warned against trusting more to knowledge than to the Spirit. He often intimated to his preachers that there was danger that man's faith in knowledge might hinder or delay him in his search after the more excellent gifts of the Spirit. He, like Paul and Luther, discovered that the Spirit could use uneducated men, and that uneducated men through the Spirit could do far more in the Kingdom of God than educated men without the Spirit. Wesley's evaluation of knowledge and the Spirit is well indicated in what he wrote to members of his society in 1775 when he was 72 years old. "I am less careful about your in-

¹ *Out of Aldersgate*, 1937, p. 37, W. T. Watkins, Board of Missions Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

crease in knowledge, any farther than it tends to love. There is danger of your laying more stress on this than sound reason requires. Otherwise you would reap much profit from sermons which do not improve your knowledge, which do not apply to the understanding so directly as to the heart. I feel more want of heat than light; I value light; but it is nothing compared to love." Again in 1776 Wesley said: "I have found some of the uneducated poor who have exquisite taste and sentiment; . . . and they have (many of them) faith, and the love of God, in larger measure than any persons I know. . . . Do not confine your conversation to genteel and elegant people. I should like this as well as you do; but I cannot discover a precedent for it in the life of our Lord, or any of his apostles. My dear friend, let you and I walk as He walked."¹

For a long time in Methodism the term "on trial" referred primarily to the testing of the moral character and the preaching ability of the ministerial candidate. Today the term "on trial" relates primarily to the testing of the administrative qualifications and academic achievements of the candidate. The candidate should be placed on trial concerning both, but the chief testing should be of the soul. Methodism should reclaim this emphasis. And if it does, the supply pastor who is willing to pay the price can become a member of the Annual Conference and can render a fruitful ministry within The Methodist Church.

¹*Letters of John Wesley*, 1952, pp. 23 and 31, J. Manning Potts, The Upper Room.

