

March 9, 1960

Bishop W. Angie Smith
6619 Hillcrest
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Bishop Smith:

Word has come to me that several professorial chairs for the teaching of Methodist theology and polity are being instituted in several seminaries in Iowa. The purpose of these positions would be to give Methodist students in various seminaries, such as Debuque and Drake, Methodist oriented training which would enable them to fulfill their requirements for ordination and conference membership.

Bishop Ensley is in charge of the establishment of these positions and doubtless will be responsible for the appointment of persons to teach in them. I am somewhat interested in being considered for one of these teaching posts, and I wonder if you would consider writing Bishop Ensley a brief note introducing me to him.

I rather imagine that the man they need will be one with doctoral training who is thoroughly familiar with the Methodist Discipline and Methodist polity, church history, and Methodist theology, one who has had some seminary teaching experience, one who could represent Methodism in ecumenical discussions, and one who has had some pastoral experience.

As you may know, my doctoral work has been done under the direction of H. Richard Niebuhr at Yale. I am deeply interested in Methodist polity, church history, and theology and in ecumenical conversations involving these. I assume that the experience I have had teaching at Yale and the work I have done at Perkins takes me out of the fledging class. My teaching assignment has been primarily in the fields of theology, ethics, homiletics and Christian worship. I have been a member of the Oklahoma Conference for five years and have served four years in pastoral work as a student.

My writing career has begun this year. My first two published articles appeared in print this winter. They are: "The Gospel Knows No Iron Curtain" in The Christian Advocate, December 24, 1959; and "The Christology of T.S. Eliot" in Encounter, Vol. 21, Winter, 1960.

A complete dossier of my academic history is on file either with the National Council on Religion in Higher Education or with the Yale Hall of Graduate Studies.

1917
1918
1919

1920

The first year of the war was a year of great activity for the United States. The government had to raise money to fight the war, and it did so by borrowing money from the public. It also had to control the economy to make sure that the war effort was not hindered by inflation or shortages of goods.

The second year of the war was a year of continued activity. The government had to raise more money to fight the war, and it did so by borrowing money from the public. It also had to control the economy to make sure that the war effort was not hindered by inflation or shortages of goods.

The third year of the war was a year of continued activity. The government had to raise more money to fight the war, and it did so by borrowing money from the public. It also had to control the economy to make sure that the war effort was not hindered by inflation or shortages of goods.

The fourth year of the war was a year of continued activity. The government had to raise more money to fight the war, and it did so by borrowing money from the public. It also had to control the economy to make sure that the war effort was not hindered by inflation or shortages of goods.

The fifth year of the war was a year of continued activity. The government had to raise more money to fight the war, and it did so by borrowing money from the public. It also had to control the economy to make sure that the war effort was not hindered by inflation or shortages of goods.

The sixth year of the war was a year of continued activity. The government had to raise more money to fight the war, and it did so by borrowing money from the public. It also had to control the economy to make sure that the war effort was not hindered by inflation or shortages of goods.

I would hate to leave the Oklahoma-Texas area, but I would also be pleased to be a representative of the Oklahoma Conference within Iowa Methodism, helping them in an important work there. (Incidentally, if I could stay in Oklahoma and teach, for example at OCU, I would give it very serious consideration. I have made my services available to President Wilkes, but it seems that they are not yet ready or able to move in that situation, so I doubt that there is any place for me to serve in Oklahoma as a college or seminary teacher of religion, unfortunately.) But there is an important service to be performed in Iowa. Doubtless there are numerous other candidates under consideration, and I am not entirely sure that these positions have not already been filled. But I would hope that the action you may initiate will be favorable in any event, and I would be very grateful to you for it.

Very cordially yours,

Thomas C. Oden

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