



1957

Church-home relationships in church schools of the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference of the Methodist Church

Virginia Florence Curtis
University of the Pacific

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/uop_etds



Part of the [Education Commons](#), [Religion Commons](#), and the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Curtis, Virginia Florence. (1957). *Church-home relationships in church schools of the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference of the Methodist Church*. University of the Pacific, Thesis.
https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/uop_etds/1339

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of the Pacific Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact mgibney@pacific.edu.

COLLEGE OF THE PACIFIC
STOCKTON, CALIF.

CHURCH-HOME RELATIONSHIPS IN CHURCH SCHOOLS OF THE
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF THE CALIFORNIA-NEVADA
CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Religious Education
College of the Pacific

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Virginia Florence Curtis
June 1957

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of the Study	1
Past trends	1
Recent trends	4
Justification of the Thesis	7
Conclusion	14
II. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY	16
Statement of the Problem, Objectives, and	
Procedure	16
Objectives	16
Procedures, methods, and techniques	17
Definition of Terms	19
Scope of the Study	20
III. THE ROLE THAT THE HOME PLAYS IN CHRISTIAN	
EDUCATION	23
The Goal of Christian Education	23
The Importance of the Home	25
The home as environment in which learning	
takes place.	25
The home as a family unit	29
Specific Attempts Toward Church-home	
Cooperation	31

	111
CHAPTER	PAGE
Curriculum of the Character Research Project . .	31
The curriculum of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.	34
The curriculum of the Episcopal Church	36
Conclusion	39
IV. PRESENT SUGGESTIONS FOR CHURCH-HOME RELATIONSHIPS	
IN THE METHODIST MATERIALS	41
Suggestions in <u>Teacher's Textbook</u>	42
<u>In Wisdom and in Stature--Course IV,</u>	
Part I	42
Course IV, Part 2	47
Suggestions in <u>Child Guidance in Christian Living.</u>	50
"Home and the Church Work Together"	50
"Enrichment Articles" in <u>Child Guidance in</u>	
<u>Christian Living.</u>	53
"Superintendents and Teachers: Try These Ideas"	54
Suggestions in <u>Christian Home Magazine</u>	56
"Teaching Together in Home and Church"	56
"Devotions for the Family"	56
"Study Guide for Parents"	57
"The Department of the Christian Family"	57
"Parent's Problem"	59
Methodist Pamphlets on Church-home Relationships .	59
"The Church and Families"	60
The Home and Church Cooperation Plan	61

CHAPTER

iv

PAGE

Summary 63

V. CHURCH-HOME RELATIONSHIPS IN THE METHODIST CHURCH

SCHOOLS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT WHICH USE

CLOSELY-GRADED MATERIALS IN THE FOURTH GRADE . . 67

Procedures for Gathering Data 68

Churches using closely-graded materials . . . 68

Sample selection of churches 69

Questionnaires to parents and teachers . . . 71

Teachers' Evaluation and Application of Pro-
cedures for Church-home Relationships . . . 72

Communications with the home 73

Parental participation in the church-
school class 74

Use of Methodist materials 75

Use of the Bible in the home 76

Family worship at home 76

Other procedures for church-home cooperation 77

Attitude of teachers from the sample
selection of churches 77

Application and Evaluation by Parents Regarding
Procedures Used in Church-home Relationships . 79

Communications from the church school . . . 80

Participation in activities of the church
school 81

Methodist materials 82

CHAPTER

PAGE

Use of the Bible in the home 83

Family worship in the home 83

Other suggestions for church-home cooperation 84

Attitude of parents in the sampling
selection of churches 85

Additional Procedures for Church-Home Cooperation 86

A Report on Suggestions for Strengthening
Home and Church Relationships 87

Conclusions 88

VI. A STUDY IN CHURCH-HOME COOPERATION AT CENTRAL

METHODIST CHURCH OF STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA 92

Church-school conditions in September 92

The pupils and their classroom 93

Description of home-types 93

Co-teachers 94

The Commission on Education 94

Questionnaires 95

A Review of the Methods for Church-Home

Cooperation Used in the Study 100

Communications with the home 101

Parents in the church-school class 103

Methodist material 104

Use of the Bible in the home 105

	vi
CHAPTER	PAGE
Family worship in the home	105
Other methods for church-home cooperation.	106
Church-school in February	107
Class session	107
The Commission on Education	109
Attitude of co-teachers	111
Case-Studies in Individual Growth	114
Case No. 1	115
Case No. 2	118
Case No. 3	120
Case No. 4	121
Case No. 5	123
Other cases	125
Conclusions	126
VII. ANALYSIS, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . .	131
Analysis of Procedures	132
Review and evaluation of pertinent literature	132
Specific curricular suggestions	133
Selection of ten Methodist churches . . .	133
The study at Central Methodist Church . .	135
Summary of the Findings	135
Recommendations	142
BIBLIOGRAPHY	142
APPENDIX	146

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

There is a growing awareness among leaders in religious education that the church must find a workable and cooperative relationship with the home if Christian education is to make a present and lasting impression on children.

Past trends. Our present-day concern for church-home cooperation has its roots in the past. The Old Testament reveals that the center for religious training was the family. Deuteronomy 6:4-10 clearly emphasizes the parental responsibility for bringing up children in the knowledge of the Law and the fear of the Lord:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.¹

¹The quotation is from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

This passage, often referred to as The Shema, includes instructions to the Hebrew parent for guiding children in religious growth. In Old Testament days children were considered by the Hebrews to be divine gifts of God. Parents felt a great responsibility to their children. To pass on to the children the Hebrew heritage with its history, faith, and customs was the most important duty of the father.

The early Christian Church relied upon the home to emphasize the teaching of religion. The Church made no formal provision for the training of children. In The Rise of Christian Education, Lewis Sherrill translates Ephesians 6:4 as follows: "Nurture them in education and admonition of the Lord."² Such a translation suggests that in the early Christian Church religious education of children was accomplished primarily in the home. It is probable that, under the influence of Jewish parent-child relationships, Christian homes assumed the responsibility of teaching scriptures to the children and of guiding the moral conduct of the children.

As a result of the Reformation, with the Protestant emphasis on the sole authority of the Bible, read by the people in their own language, the Christian family was encouraged to give home instruction with small catechisms

²Lewis J. Sherrill, The Rise of Christian Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944), p. 158.

prepared for children. With the rise of the Sunday schools in the eighteenth century the responsibility for religious instruction was also shared with the home through the use of catechisms. The early schools were conducted throughout the day on Sunday. Instruction in reading and writing were combined with the use of catechism and the Bible. In the early days of the Sunday school, children were regarded as sinners who could not hope for redemption until they were old enough to confess faith in Christ. In the nineteenth century, Horace Bushnell, often referred to as the father of Christian education, objected strongly to this kind of teaching. Although he seemed a radical to his own age, Bushnell

has served as the guiding light of all modern religious education. His major thesis led to the emphasis on the needs of the child, to the insight that a child should be reached at his "growing edge," to the idea of the growth of the total personality as an integrated whole, to the concept of evangelism as a decision within the community of church and home, and to the place of the home as basic to Christian nurture.³

Horace Bushnell preferred to use the term "Christian nurture" instead of "Christian education" because he believed that a child should grow up as a Christian, never knowing himself to be otherwise.⁴

³Randolph C. Miller, Education for Christian Living (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1956), p. 30.

⁴Horace Bushnell, Christian Nurture (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), p. 10.

Recent trends. Increased industrialization, widespread employment of women outside their own homes, greater availability of rapid means of transportation, and growing claims of community organizations upon individuals have all contributed to the decentralization of the home in the twentieth century. Wesner Fallaw, Professor of Religious Education at Andover Newton Theological School, asserts that

for every family that lives together, learns together, works and worships together, there are a dozen which use the home as a pivot point for activities which split the family as many ways as there are individuals in it.⁵

In addition to the decentralization of the home, our present complex society has imposed on the home standards of living which conflict with the objectives of Christian education. Regina Wescott has pointed out in her book, The Family Lives Its Religion, that there are four ruling concerns of modern life. She states that the four concerns are: (1) to keep up with the Joneses; (2) to be popular; (3) to obtain financial sufficiency; and (4) to cling to an ideal grown over-dominant so that it blinds us to higher possibilities of good.⁶

⁵Wesner Fallaw, The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), p. 27.

⁶Regina Wescott, The Family Lives Its Religion (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 17.

As a result of these standards as well as of the decentralization of the home, responsibility for religious training has been shifted from the home to the church school. Parents who themselves grew up in homes affected by decentralization and by excessively materialistic standards received little understanding of the true meaning of their Christian heritage. Consequently, they have felt inadequate to pass on their concepts to their children. As a result they have said, in essence, to the leaders of the church schools: "You do the job! You are trained for it!"

The rise of the study of child psychology has influenced Christian education, showing the significant role which the home plays in Christian nurture. Whenever religious education has utilized psychological concepts regarding the growth of children, the spiritual growth of the child has become the central goal of its program. Such a goal can not be achieved without the cooperation of the home. Randolph C. Miller, professor at Yale Divinity School, states: "Experiments in recent years have re-established Horace Bushnell's thesis of the significance of the Christian home."⁷ For example, the research of Ernest M. Ligon, Director of the Character Research Project in

⁷Randolph C. Miller, Education for Christian Living (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1956), p. 38.

Schneectady, New York, indicates a high degree of correlation between planned parental guidance and growth in Christian character. Recognition of the significant role of the Christian home by authorities such as Randolph C. Miller and Ernest M. Ligon, and by religious educators in general, has resulted in a report by the International Council of Religious Education. The report states that

perhaps if we had spent as much time and money in helping parents to do their job as Christian educators and in training pastors and key workers in the local church as we have spent upon the production of new types of curriculum and the production of various schemes for raising the church by its bootstraps, we should now be less alarmed.⁸

Noteworthy contributions in the field of church-home cooperation in religious education are seen in the church school curriculum of the Character Research Project at Union College, Schneectady, New York, of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and of the Episcopal Church. These contributions to the field of church-home relationships are described and analyzed in Chapter III.

This thesis is not concerned with the evaluation of the work being done by these groups; it is concerned with what is being done in the area of church-home relationships within the Methodist Church. Specifically stated, the purpose of the thesis is (1) to determine whether or not the suggestions for church-home cooperation as made

⁸Ibid.

in the Methodist closely-graded materials for the fourth-grade are meeting the need (1) for cooperation between church and home in the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference; and (2) to show what can happen in a fourth-grade group that attempts to use the suggestions for church-home cooperation found in the Methodist closely-graded materials.

II. JUSTIFICATION OF THE THESIS

In general, leaders in religious education agree that a program which includes church-home cooperation is important in Christian education. How such a program might be effectively developed can be a challenge to Christian education today. Many studies are being made in the general area of church-home relationships. A survey of literature from the following sources was made to determine what specific theses or dissertations or reports of experimental studies had been written in the field of church-home cooperation: The Education Index, The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Master's Theses in Education, Doctoral Dissertations Accepted by American Universities, University of Southern California Abstracts of Dissertations, and Religious Education. Specific findings in each source were included as follows:

The Education Index from June, 1950, through February, 1957, reported only one specific study in this field: a thesis written by D. M. Endebrook in 1955, entitled "Parental Obligation to Care for Religious Education of Children within the Home."⁹

The only specific study identified in the publications indexed in The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature from 1950, through 1957, was a report on the Presbyterian Curriculum, U.S.A., made by R. N. Mould.¹⁰

A survey of the magazine entitled Journal of Religion revealed no study made in the field of church-home cooperation from 1950, through 1956.

The Bureau of Research of Iowa State Teachers' College annually publishes Master's Theses in Education. This publication gives abstracts of theses submitted by cooperating institutions throughout the United States. Theses submitted for the master's degree of education from 1951, through 1956, totaled 15,882. These theses were submitted by cooperating institutions ranging in number from 182 in 1951-2, to 407 in 1955-6. Among the

⁹Thesis has been published by the Catholic University of American Press.

¹⁰R. N. Mould, "Parents Teach Religion: Presbyterian Parents Cooperate with Church-School Teachers," The Christian Century, 67:111-113, January 25, 1950.

theses pertaining to religious education, there were none that made a specific study of church-home cooperation.

The annual publication, Doctoral Dissertations Accepted by American Universities is compiled for the Association of Research Libraries and is edited by A. H. Trotter and M. Harmon. The publications from 1950, through 1955, included the abstracts or title headings of 41,554 dissertations received from graduate institutions ranging in number from 106 in 1950, to 129 in 1954. No dissertations which are related to the field of church-home relationships were listed.

The University of Southern California Press publishes University of Southern California Abstracts of Dissertations. The issues of 1951 and 1953 do not refer to any dissertations written in the field of church-home cooperation. The 1955 publication lists a thesis prepared for the degree of Master of Religious Education by Keith Henry Orr entitled "A Program for Family Education in the First Presbyterian Church, Azusa, California."

Religious Education is a magazine published by the Religious Education Association of Oberlin, Ohio. In most issues there is a section entitled "Psychological Abstracts" prepared by Ernest Ligon and William Koppe. These abstracts are designed to keep religious educators abreast of the relevant and significant research in the general field of

psychology. The only study relevant to the field under consideration included in the issues from January-February, 1950, through January-February, 1957, was an abstract of a study entitled "Pediatrics and the Church." This study is concerned with the importance of the first six years in the character growth of the individual.

"Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations" is an annual feature in Religious Education. The abstracts are assembled by Helen Spaulding, Director of Christian Educational Research of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, through the cooperation of professors and students within the United States. Issues of this publication were reviewed from the year 1950, through 1956. The number of dissertations included ranged in number from thirty-three in 1950, to forty in 1956. The number of cooperating institutions varied from sixteen in 1950, to twenty-six in 1956. Those dissertations which were related to the area of church-home cooperation were listed and described as follows:

1. Denton R. Coker, "A Critique of Character Education in the Church Schools." Th. D., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. 1950.

Problem:

To determine basic principles to effective Christian character education. It was necessary in the investigation to seek an answer to the following questions: What is the true meaning of character? What goes into the process of character development? How has character education been attempted in the church school?

What can be done to improve the programs now being used in the church-schools in order to develop Christian members who are mature in Christian living.¹¹

2. Margaret Richards Owen, "A Philosophy for Christian Family Life." Ph.D., Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York, 1952.

Problem:

To arrive at guiding principles in a Protestant philosophy for Christian family life to indicate their implications for mission policy and practice.

Conclusions:

.....

The Christian Church and the Christian family are interdependent for passing upon and passing on the Christian heritage, tradition, and culture. The Christian home is the church's major resource and agent in the development of Christian character where Christian attitudes are caught as well as taught; an example of faith in action, the best place for the process of integrating conflicting values and standards. The church must give counseling and guidance.¹²

3. Oscar Rodriguez. "A Proposal for a Church Program of Education for Family Living in Puerto Rico." Ed. D. Columbia University, New York, New York, 1952.

Problem:

This project seeks to analyze the needs confronted by the Puerto Rican family and how the Evangelical Churches of the Island may assist in formulating a workable solution. It brings to focus the sociological climate in which the family in Puerto Rico ventures to subsist in the face of characteristic elements that permeate the culture.¹³

¹¹Religious Education, 1950-1, p. 167.

¹²Religious Education, 1952-3, p. 185.

¹³Ibid., p. 187.

4. Erceell Vernon Lynn, "Parents as Religious Educators: An Approach to Family-Centered Christian Education." Ed.D. Columbia University, New York, New York, 1953.

Problem and Procedure:

To prepare guidance for Christian leaders in developing parent interest and participation in religious education. This material has been prepared primarily for the orientation of the leaders of parents' groups in a philosophy of family-centered Christian education. It should be of interest to those parents who have a reading acquaintance with religious, educational, and psychological literature.¹⁴

5. Burt E. Goody, "A Curriculum for Pre-school Children." Th.D., The Iliff School of Theology, Denver, Colorado, 1953.

Problem and Limits:

How may curriculum builders, teachers, and parents be guided in their quest for a better understanding of the pre-school child and how may he be guided in the development of a Christian personality? The problem may be stated in the form of the following questions: What are the physical, mental, and emotional, and social needs, the developmental patterns, and other factors which enter into the shaping of the personality of the pre-school child? What may one discover which will help in the guidance of the child from the perspectives of the psychological and religious points of view? How may these insights be brought together in the actual construction of a curriculum so that the groundwork may be laid for a high quality of religious response by pre-school children.¹⁵

6. A. E. Kannwescher, "Protestant Christian Education in Light of Empirical Findings of Personality Growth in Children." Ph.D., New York University, New York, New York, 1954.

Problem:

To test the empirical validity of the theory of personality formation in children underlying The Study of

¹⁴Ibid., p. 188.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 179.

Christian Education, a composite work of sixty representative Protestant scholars, and to formulate a theory of personality growth in children based upon empirically validated evidence.

.....

The most significant conclusion concerning personality development is that it involves the three inter-related dynamic processes of maturation, acculturation, and empirical security--the results of the investigation are applicable to the family and the church in general. They are particularly relevant for formal and informal training in religious attitudes of children in family and in the church.¹⁶

In addition to the survey of literature noted in the preceding paragraphs, a letter was written to the Executive Secretary of the Character Research Project for the purpose of securing reports of additional theses. The response revealed that only one study dealing with church-home relationships has been published by the Union College Character Research Project. This study written by Mervyn M. Morse included two sections: I. The Effectiveness of Individual Classroom Adaptation in Bringing About Attitude Growth in Class Groups, and II. Some Factors Which Relate to the Three Categories of Attitude Growth: Significant Growth, Ordinary Growth, and No Growth. In the summary of the conclusions of the study it is stated:

When the thirteen factors in the total experimental situation were considered, a positive relationship was found between the number of factors present and the

¹⁶Religious Education, 1954-5, p. 191.

amount of attitude growth. The largest number of factors were present in cases of ordinary growth. The smallest number of factors were present in cases of no growth. When the thirteen factors were grouped into four major factors, presence in class and individual classroom adaptation appeared with approximately equal frequency in cases of significant growth, ordinary growth, and no growth. Home use of lesson and home adaptation appeared with much greater frequency in cases of greater attitude growth. The cases showing ordinary growth reported a high frequency of home use of lesson. The cases showing significant growth reported a still higher frequency of home use of lesson and also showed a high frequency of home adaptation.¹⁷

III. CONCLUSION

This thesis is concerned with the church-home relationships in Methodist church schools in the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference. The study is limited to those church schools using closely-graded materials in the fourth grade over a specified six-months period. The purpose is: (1) to determine whether or not the need for cooperation between the church and the home is met through use of specific methods for church-home relationships made in the Methodist closely-graded materials; and (2) to show what can happen in a fourth-grade group that attempts to use the suggestions for church-home

¹⁷Mervyn M. Morse, I. The Effectiveness of Individual Classroom Adaptation in Bringing About Attitude Growth in Class Groups. II. Some Factors Which Relate to the Three Categories of Attitude Growth: Significant Growth, Ordinary Growth, and No Growth (Schenectady: Union College Research Project, 1953), p. 14.

cooperation found in the Methodist closely-graded materials. Though other studies have been made in the general field of home-church relationships, none have been concerned with the specific problem undertaken in this thesis.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES, AND PROCEDURES

A study of the church-home relationships in the Methodist church schools of the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference has been made in an attempt to resolve the following problem: to investigate the attempts that Methodist church schools in the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference are making in the fourth grade to meet the need for cooperation between church and home through the use of the specific methods suggested in the Methodist closely-graded materials.

Objectives. The problem stated above involved three objectives.

The first objective was to indicate the role that the home should play in Christian education.

The second objective was to determine to what extent the Methodist church school in the Central District which are using closely-graded materials in the fourth grade are seeking to meet the need for church-home relationships by use of specific projects suggested in lesson materials.

The third objective was to make a study of church-

home relationships which develop in a fourth-grade church-school class at the Central Methodist Church of Stockton, California, when specifically suggested methods to develop cooperation between the church and the home are used over a six-months period of time.

Procedures, methods, and techniques. The first step taken toward achieving the objectives of the thesis consisted in compiling a bibliography for the purpose of reading and evaluating the literature which pertains to the role the home plays in Christian education. Chapter III is an outgrowth of the findings within the literature.

Methodist materials were read in order to make a listing of specific curricular suggestions made over a six-months period for meeting the need for church-home relationships in the fourth grades using the closely-graded materials. Chapter IV contains these specific curricular suggestions.

Ten Methodist churches using closely-graded materials in the fourth grade were selected to give a special emphasis to the study. The ministers of these selected churches were requested to cooperate in one of three plans for giving a questionnaire to the parents and teachers of the fourth-grade pupils.¹⁸ A description of this procedure

¹⁸See Appendix, pp. 147-148.

with its results is found in Chapters V and VI.

A questionnaire was sent to all the teachers of the Methodist church schools in the Central District which are using closely-graded materials in the fourth grade. This questionnaire made it possible to report what church-home procedures recommended in the Methodist materials had actually been utilized and what other methods were employed to promote church-home relationships. A description of this procedure with its results are found in Chapters V and VI.

A questionnaire was sent to all parents of fourth-grade pupils whose names were obtained through the cooperation of the fourth-grade teachers in those Methodist churches in the Central District which are using closely-graded materials in the fourth grade. The questionnaire made it possible to report the parental evaluation of the results of methods used over a period of six months to promote church-home relationships. The questionnaire also made it possible for parents to report other possible suggestions for church-home cooperation. A description of this procedure with its results are found in Chapters V and VI.

A study was conducted at the Central Methodist Church of Stockton, California, to show what can happen when various methods for church-home relationships are used

in a fourth-grade class using closely-graded materials. A detailed description of the steps included in this procedure is discussed in Chapter VII.

An analysis and conclusion of the problem was then made. The summary, described in Chapter VII, includes an analysis of the procedures used in the study. Conclusions to the findings of the study and recommendations for achieving effective church-home relationships are also included in the final chapter of the thesis.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definitions of specific terms used in the thesis have been made in order to insure complete understanding.

Curriculum. Curriculum is usually thought of as being not merely the printed materials but rather as including all resources used which help the individual to grow to his spiritual potentiality. This concept includes such intangible factors as the preparation of the room (orderliness, beauty, and cleanliness), the teacher's personality and religious enthusiasm, as well as the more tangible elements of the unit presented in the lesson materials. In this particular study, however, the word "curriculum" is used in a limited sense. The problem of the thesis centers around the specific suggestions for

church-home relationships made in such printed Methodist curriculum as the Teacher-manuals of the Methodist church-school materials, The Christian Home and Child Guidance in Christian Living magazines, and various pamphlets.

Closely-graded. The Methodist Board of Education publishes several types of literature to meet the needs of churches of different sizes. Literature is published for the small church with three or four classes, for the church school with departmental groupings, and for the closely-graded church school. In the closely-graded church-school materials, the curriculum is written for each age group, and the material is taught at that particular age every year. This plan is in contrast to the group-graded material which is on the basis of a three-year cycle. For example, in this material the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades study the same material during the same year, and the material is not repeated until the beginning of a new three-year cycle.

III. SCOPE OF STUDY

The area of investigation for this study was confined to those churches within the Central District which are using the closely-graded materials in the fourth grade. The California-Nevada Conference of the Methodist Church is divided into seven districts, one of which is the

Central District. The Central District includes fifty Methodist churches. Through cooperation with the Methodist Publishing House in San Francisco and through personal correspondence with the churches concerned, it was found that twenty-five of the fifty churches are using closely-graded materials with the fourth-grade class. These churches are:

1. Atwater Methodist
2. Chowchilla Methodist
3. Dos Palos Methodist
4. Farmington Methodist
5. First Methodist of Lodi
6. Los Banos Methodist
7. Sonora Methodist
8. Grace Methodist of Stockton
9. Central Methodist of Stockton
10. St. Mark's Methodist of Stockton
11. St. Paul's Methodist of Stockton
12. Riverbank Methodist
13. Wesley Methodist of Modesto
14. Modesto Centenary
15. First Methodist of Modesto
16. First Methodist of Merced
17. First Methodist of Turlock
18. First Methodist of Ceres

19. Hughson Methodist
20. Antioch Methodist
21. Byron Methodist
22. Pittsburg Methodist
23. Mariposa Methodist
24. First Methodist of Tracy
25. Oakdale Methodist

The study has been limited to a six-months period of time. The units includes are:

Course IV. Part 1

- I. Learning to Use and Enjoy the Bible (8 sessions).
- II. The Songs of Christmas (5 sessions).

Part 2

- III. The Bible Around the World (6 sessions).
- IV. Exploring and Using the Bible (5 sessions).

Part 1 and Part 2 consist of a total of twenty-four sessions. Because some teachers take extra time on special sessions, all teachers did not complete the four sections included in Parts 1 and 2 within twenty-four weeks. The questionnaires are based upon the material covering the first two parts of Course IV.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE THAT THE HOME PLAYS IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

I. THE GOAL OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The goal of Christian education is the development of Christian personality. Personality is defined in theological terms by D. Campbell Wyckoff in The Task of Christian Education as

the characteristic of individuals as they respond with freedom to the opportunities and demands of nature, man, and God. What it (personality) may become is the restored image of God, taking on in each case the distinctive form that is fitting to the individual's experience.¹⁹

The development of Christian personality is dependent upon the gaining of rich and profound Christian experience, upon the refinement of experience with the use of Christian standards, and upon the organization of experience for the realization of the fullness of life in Christ.

Dr. Ernest Ligon, Director of the Character Research Project of Union College, Schenectady, New York, has referred to the development of Christian personality in psychological terms. The potential personality of a man

¹⁹D. Campbell Wyckoff, The Task of Christian Education (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955), p. 102.

may be limited by his inherited physical characteristics, but it is the interplay between the functions of the inherited mechanisms of the individual and his environment which constitute the stimulus-response of behavior.

Dr. Ligon has stated in Psychology of Christian Personality:

Very early in his life the child discovers that his innate modes of behavior have to be modified if they are to find satisfaction for his appetites in his environment. All behavior is fundamentally an effort to discover satisfaction for one's appetites and urges, and expression for his abilities. He will adopt those forms of behavior which furnish such satisfactions.
 . . . The sum total of all these emotional reactions to his environment is his real philosophy of life.
 . . . The emotional attitude is the functional unit of personality. The type of personality, the kind of character, the health of mind of the individual will depend upon the emotional attitudes developed.²⁰

When there is harmony of healthy emotional attitudes so that all of one's energies are united into one common purpose, then the individual is said to be an integrated personality. It is through the healthy attitudes which develop from acceptance and application of Jesus' teachings that integration of personality can best occur.

Randolph C. Miller, author of Education for Christian Living, has also expressed the goal of Christian education in terms of development in Christian personality, dependent upon experience:

²⁰ Ernest M. Ligon, Psychology of Christian Personality (New York: Macmillan Company, 1950), pp. 12-13.

The desired goal is increased integration of the total personality as it is centered on the living God as revealed in Christ through the experiences provided by life in the family, church, and other religious groupings, and through the interpretation of experiences that do not lead in this direction.²¹

This statement emphasizes that Christian education is not concerned merely with the transmission of doctrines; Christian education is education for Christian living.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HOME

Christian education is concerned with the experiences of life. A program for Christian education cannot be limited to brief church-school sessions on Sunday morning. Effective character education is a seven-day-a-week undertaking which involves cooperation of all the major influences affecting the individual. It is to the home that Dr. Ligon gives the major role of influence when he says: "Without active home cooperation, the church school and character building agencies are helpless."²²

The home as environment in which learning takes place. As the basic theory of learning is acknowledged, the role of the home in religious education becomes

²¹ Randolph C. Miller, Education for Christian Living, p. 55.

²² Ernest M. Ligon, Dimensions of Character (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 91.

significant. This is the place where true religion is taught. Randolph C. Miller states that it "is a way of living meaningfully that is learned within the community of believers."²³

Every human being is born into this world with undifferentiated responses and undeveloped spiritual potentialities. The direction in which his possibilities for development are realized is dependent upon what the individual learns. Therefore, learning, rather than teaching, is the main element in education.

Learning is the process by which there is change in personality. Each person responds differently to a given situation; no two persons respond the same way to the same situation. Through his work at the Character Research Project, Dr. Ernest Ligon has recognized that an individual does not see a situation objectively but rather interprets the meanings of things as he sees them. Dr. Ligon states: "Our perceptions are the meanings attached to external objects by our own emotional impulses."²⁴ The individual responds to a perceived situation in order

²³Miller, op. cit., p. 46.

²⁴Ernest M. Ligon, Psychology of Christian Personality (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 237.

to reduce tensions within himself. Thus, a lasting positive result is obtained upon the individual's personality only if and to the extent that the teacher or parent can find for him improved methods for securing achievement, social acceptance, and satisfaction for his appetites. Christian character education consists primarily in the formation of healthy motives.²⁵

The learning process involves exposure to an experience, repetition, understanding, conviction, and application of that experience. The process has as its goal the change in personality which occurs whenever learning occurs. It is worth noting that the experiments which have been made through the Character Research Project have shown that a change in personality occurred in the individuals studied when there was a change in their evaluative attitudes. Dr. Ligon states: "Effective character education consists in attitude formation."²⁶ Parents have the responsibility for carrying out the character-building which is essential to the development of Christian personality. The home is important in Christian education because it provides the environment in which many positive Christian attitudes grow.

²⁵Ibid., et passim, pp. 11-14.

²⁶Ernest M. Ligon, A Greater Generation (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), p. 45.

The home is of significance in Christian education because it furnishes the emotional environment upon which growth in personality depends. Dr. Sherrill, in The Struggle of the Soul, has emphasized this point. It is the thesis of his book that at every stage throughout life man is confronted in some manner by the living God in the common crises of ordinary life, at which time the human soul is challenged to growth and further maturity. He states:

Faith can begin at an early age: if a child encounters warm and genuine parental love; if the parental view of life does not seriously distort the claims of God on human life; if the religious teaching presents Jesus Christ so as to awaken the response of love and trust. But, the dynamic self may hold a child back from the out-going response of religious teachings or church. The dynamic self has the capacity to distort and select the materials which one encounters in the religious confrontation in childhood. For example, a child who is emotionally deprived may, when he enters church school, withdraw, present behavior problems, etc. He is handicapped at the outset in participating in Christian fellowship. Because of the nature of his dynamic self, even in infancy, the child may resist or misunderstand the Holy Spirit. For example, if a child's relationship with his parents is deeply disturbed, the development of a wholesome conscience is prevented, and a lack of conscience, or an oversensitive conscience, or a rigid conscience may begin to be the result. In any such event any Christian teaching regarding sin, conduct, and forgiveness, seems to be especially liable to distortion, or misunderstanding, or superficiality from childhood on.²⁷

²⁷ Lewis J. Sherrill, The Struggle of the Soul (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 47.

In the light of Dr. Sherrill's statement, it can be concluded that emotions are important to our learning. The individual's emotional environment affects his acceptance of or his distortion of the Christian experiences which he encounters.

The home as a family unit. The family unit, not merely the individual child, must be incorporated in any satisfactory program of religious education. Dr. Wesner Fallaw has expressed this philosophy in his book, The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church. He feels that the present methods for church-home cooperation, which include Bible classes, parents' classes, and parent-teacher meetings, are based upon a unified church-program idea. He states that these methods "seem to involve reaching the individual through the church, hoping that he and his family will come together in the home in a unified manner productive of Christian living in society."²⁸ The vision for church-family education makes the home the focal point for religious education. The family must be reached as a whole so that the individual might have the support of church and home for practicing the Christian faith. Dr. Fallaw feels that the church has the right to expect parents to commit themselves to certain obligations before

²⁸Wesner Fallaw, The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), p. 15.

enrolling children in the church school. He calls this the "Principle of Church-intensive." Church-home relationships begin when parents realize their obligations in the Christian education of their child. If the Church-intensive Principle were followed, admittance to church school would depend upon parental cooperation in checking, from a list provided on registration day, suggestions for assuming parental responsibility in the church school.²⁹ Throughout the year the church school would help parents to carry through their intentions with respect to items checked on the list by sending reminders to the home, by having conferences to clarify the purposes of the program and to evaluate the program, by presenting psychological theory in non-technical terms, and by outlining steps which church-workers and parents could both see. Specific suggestions made by Dr. Fallaw for interaction between the church and the family can be listed as follows:

1. Conferences (monthly to discuss general theological approaches as well as grade-level characteristics.
2. Visitation to the home.
3. Handbook or reference book to take home.
4. Personal talks with parents (telephone).
5. Letters to the home.

²⁹For sample of form used at Winnetka Congregational Church, see appendix, p. 149.

6. Assignment cards to assure study of grade-level curriculum until family-curriculum can be used.
7. Report forms such as a Pupil's Progress Sheet.

III. SPECIFIC ATTEMPTS TOWARD CHURCH-HOME COOPERATION

The general concern among religious educators in regard to the need for cooperation between the church and the home in their programs has found expression in curricula for church-schools. Especially outstanding are the programs outlined by the Character Research Project, the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and the Episcopalian Church. A brief review of each program is included in this thesis.

Curriculum of the Character Research Project. The Character Research Project at Union College, Schenectady, New York, bases its work with the home upon the assumption that parents need both a challenge to work and effective tools with which to carry out their tasks. Parents prefer difficult tasks rather than easy ones. Curriculum writers have provided the Home Guide in the lesson plan as the central tool for parents in teaching the lesson at home. Because the Character Research Project regards each family as unique, with special characteristics and needs, it attempts to allow for individual differences in family group-

ings and suggests practical situations in which attitudes can be applied. (It has already been stated that the Character Research Project holds that character education is primarily a matter of positive attitude formation on the part of each child for himself.) Dr. Ernest Ligon has stated that the procedure of adapting the materials of the lesson to the individual child as a member of an integrated home is proving to be one of the important factors for the success of the use of Character Research Project research curriculum.³⁰ Weekly Parents' Reports, attitude scales, and Parent-teacher Conference Worksheets have brought about the greatest contribution to the successful teachings in the home, for, as a result of these methods, the homes have set positive goals and have made evaluations of the methods of procedures which, in turn, were evaluated and later used in church-school teaching.³¹ In the adaptation procedure subject matter is presented simultaneously to parents and children at their respective degrees of maturity. There are four main sections to the weekly lesson plan:³²

³⁰Ligon, Dimensions of Character, p. 91.

³¹Ibid., p. 110.

³²Additional materials are prepared for use of adolescents.

1. A statement of the attitude which it is the purpose of the lesson to teach, followed by a brief description of the psychological and educational principles which are involved in teaching this attitude to the particular individual.
2. The church-school lesson.
3. The church-school project.
4. A guide for parents which provides directions for parents to follow at home to teach the attitude.

All four sections are important as contributing factors to the goal of the lesson. This means of helping parents to grow with their children is considered by Dr. Ligon to be one of the major contributions of the Character Research Project.

Another method used by the Character Research Project to challenge and inform parents is the plan of having weekly parents' classes. In a personal interview with the investigator the Director of the Character Research Project program in the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles stated that in her experience, the parents' classes (which in this church take place while the children are in church-school) have made the Character Research

Project program successful in a local church. The classes have provided the parents with the opportunity to tell what they have been doing at home as a family unit and as members of each age-level. The Character Research Project urges parental participation, acknowledging that without cooperation from parents very little positive growth occurs.

The curriculum of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

The curriculum of the Presbyterian Church sets forth a program relating church and home in creative cooperation. The basic principle underlying the curriculum is that all parents shall assume and discharge specific weekly responsibility in the Christian teaching of their children. Convinced that any Christian education of boys and girls that is to have a transforming power requires parental participating, the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., publishes the following types of curricula:

1. Instructional materials for parents to use at home.
2. A sixty-four page quarterly magazine for each department, departmentally graded.
3. A series of graded reading and reference books which pupils may take into their homes and add to a cumulative home library of Christian source materials.

The magazines provided for parents contain general background and enrichment articles. Specific home-teaching plans with "do this" suggestions are made for each week. The major objective of the home-activities is not the "doing" of certain things, but rather the encouragement of thinking and acting in consciously Christian terms in all phases of family living. The home suggestions are closely related to the class session as a follow-through of the class session rather than as a preparation for a new session.

The books that are brought into the home are well-written, durably bound, profusely illustrated, and attractive. They are departmentally graded, unfolding a three-year cycle of annual themes on the life of Christ, the story of the Bible, and the history of the Church. Through experience the curriculum writers have learned that home-reading books should be more than general background covering the subject-area for the quarter's work in class. There needs to be a close week-by-week correlation of class session to weekly home-reading assignments.

In order for each church to provide these three sections of the "new" curriculum for every child, it was necessary for it to triple the annual per-pupil cost of the "old" curriculum. Yet, in the first year eighty-three

per cent of the churches ordered it, and the following years have shown increase in percentage of orders.

It is acknowledged that improved materials are not sufficient in themselves; they have to be personally interpreted. Suggestions are made that this be done as each magazine is delivered to the parents in each home.

Leadership training of church-school workers has been an outgrowth of the publication of the "new" curriculum. A "curriculum-servicing program" was set up to explain to leaders the use of the curriculum. These leaders in turn interpreted the use of the new curriculum to teachers and parents at quarterly "previews" of each unit. General parent meetings became of secondary importance. Experience of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., has shown that if these previews are conducted in private homes by representative parents selected for each department or class, the meetings are more successful than general parent-teacher meetings. It should be noted that the size of the church does not determine the success in parent participation.³³

The curriculum of the Episcopal Church. This material is published by the Seabury Press for the Depart-

³³Ralph M. Mould, "These Parents Teach Religion," Christian Century, 67:111-113, January 25, 1950.

ment of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches in the United States of America. William Sydnor, Executive Secretary of the Division of Curriculum, has written³⁴ that there are certain conditions in the life of the congregation which must exist if the teacher is to do his job well. He refers to four necessary conditions and two favorable conditions which make Christian teaching more effective:

First Condition: The teacher must know what it is to be a part of the Holy Fellowship before he can help his children to discover their place in it.

Second Condition: There should be weekly family worship in the Church. Families need to participate in a corporate service in which parents and children sit and worship together each week.

Third Condition: The third condition for the effective use of the materials is a weekly class for parents. Weekly classes are planned so that parents and godparents may face the same basic concerns in their own lives that their children are facing in the church-school class.

Fourth Condition: There should be a regular systematic program of teacher-training. Regular helps

³⁴William Sydnor, Preface to "Why Should I," Teacher's Manual: Grade Seven.

and counseling on a weekly basis should be provided in addition to occasional meetings which help teachers develop insights, techniques, and confidence.

First Favorable Condition: The first condition referred to by Dr. Sydner for effective teaching is to have a fifty-minute church-school class period.

Second Favorable Condition: Another favorable condition which would enrich the possibilities for effective teaching is to have a classroom observer, or a teacher's assistant, for the purpose of knowing the pupils better.

The Seabury Press publishes graded pupil's books to be used at home. It also provides a manual for a teacher's class, designed to unite the children and the parents in a truly religious fellowship. The parent's manual, Families in the Church, is the only one prepared thus far. It is designed primarily for classes of parents and godparents of children in Grades 1, 4, and 7. The member of each parents' class is given a manual which is to be studied by the group, not delivered in the home where it is easily forgotten. The manual is divided into four sections:

1. Techniques of the meeting (discussions, methods, and resources).

2. The fundamental religious situation of man and the divine answer to man's basic need.
3. What is happening in the church-school classes?
4. A section devoted to means of grace for family life, sacraments, daily offices, and family worship.

The teacher's class gives the parents the opportunity to develop their own philosophy of life. This needs to be done before parents can relate themselves effectively to the religious nurture and development of their own children. It is the basic philosophy of the Episcopal curriculum that a family must face its common need together.

IV. CONCLUSION

The role that the home plays in Christian education is of great significance when one recognizes that the spiritual growth of the child is the central factor in religious education. The true home is a community of members who are learning to live meaningfully. The home provides the environment in which positive and Christian learning can take place. It furnishes the emotional environment upon which growth in personality depends.

Many leaders in various denominations are concerned with the role that the home is playing in Christian education today. Some of their contributions to this problem

have been reviewed. This thesis is concerned with the attempts that the Methodist church-schools in the Central District of the Northern California-Nevada Conference are making in the fourth grade to meet the need for cooperation between church and home through the use of Methodist closely-graded materials. Chapter IV is concerned with the actual suggestions for church-home relationships present in the Methodist materials.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENT SUGGESTIONS OF CHURCH-HOME RELATIONSHIPS IN THE METHODIST MATERIALS

In order to determine what specific suggestions are made for meeting the need for church-home relationships over a six-months period in the fourth grade of the junior departments using the closely-graded materials, the following literature was studied:

- I. The Teacher's Textbook of the Methodist church-school materials: closely-graded, Course IV, Parts 1 and 2.
- II. Child Guidance in Christian Living magazine: issues from September, 1956, through February, 1957.
- III. The Christian Home magazine: issues from September, 1956, through February, 1957.
- IV. Methodist pamphlets on church-home relationships published by the Methodist Board of Education.

From each of the above sources, listings were made of the specific suggestions for church-home activities. The lists are tedious but are included in the thesis so that the reader may see whence came the summary of suggestions for church-home cooperation included at the close of this

chapter. After the suggestions appearing in more than one source were condensed, twenty-seven separate recommendations for church-home cooperation remained. The questionnaires sent to parents and teachers to determine the status of church-home cooperation in the Central District are based upon these twenty-seven summarized suggestions. To show that the questionnaires have their source in the many suggestions included in the Methodist literature was a difficult task but essential to the study.

Below are the listings of specific suggestions for church-home cooperation as made in each available source.

I. SUGGESTIONS IN TEACHER'S TEXTBOOK

The following suggestions were pertinent to meeting the need for church-home cooperation:

Teacher's Textbook: In Wisdom and in Stature
(closely-graded). Course IV, Part I.

1. "Learning to Use and Enjoy the Bible" unit
(eight sessions).

a) A meeting with the parents in September.

b) Calls in the home at least once a year for the purpose of explaining the year's work, the values to be obtained through regular attendance, and the purpose of ongoing activities.

- c) Telephone messages.
- d) Friendly letters sent to the home; for example, one letter might introduce the pupil's study book.
- e) Sending the pupil's book home so that assignments might be prepared by the pupil at home with his parents.
 - (1) Use the quiz, "Finding Your Way Around in the Bible (page 6) at home with the family.
 - (2) Illustrate at home an idea in the riddle, "What Am I?"
 - (3) Memorize stanzas in hymn, "Book of Books."
 - (4) Keep at home a card to mark the times that the pupil brings his Bible to church-school.
 - (5) Read with the family the story, "A New Testament Story about Jesus," (page 9).
 - (6) Practice "Finding Treasures in the New Testament" (page 10).
 - (7) Read "Versions of the Bible" (page 12) and look up references at home in other versions.

(8) Read the story of Joseph in the pupil's book,

(a) "Joseph and His Brothers" (page 16).

(b) "Joseph in Egypt" (page 18).

(c) "The Brothers Go to Egypt" (page 22).

(d) "A Second Journey to Egypt"

(page 26).

(e) "The Brothers Before Joseph"

(page 29).

(f) "Making Egypt their Home" (page 31).

(9) Encourage a worship service in the home during Thanksgiving, using Psalms 23 and 100 and one of the two hymns in the pupil's book.

(10) Read the poem at home "A Modern Song of Thanksgiving" (page 39).

(11) Enjoy the hymn at home, "Father, Hear the Prayer We Offer."

2. "The Song of Christmas" unit (5 sessions).

a) Plan for a Christmas worship service in the family.

b) Invite parents to a meeting to consider together the plans for Christmas.

c) Write a letter to the parents indicating the kind of experiences the church-school is

attempting to provide for nine-year-olds during the Christmas season.

- d) Telephone the parents to discuss plans for Christmas.
- e) Encourage the memorization of the passage found in Luke 2:8-20.
- f) Let each family have a container at home in which to put money during this unit for a Christmas offering.
- g) Provide a resource-list of Christmas books, records, and carols to be used in the home.
- h) Use the talents of the parents to help teach Christmas carols in the church-school.
- i) Let the family enjoy together in the home some of the lovely Christmas stories and carols and pictures found in the pupil's book.
 - (1) "The Story in Carols" (page 42).
 - (2) "May Gift" (poem, page 58).
 - (3) "If I Had Been a Shepherd Lad" (poem, page 65).
 - (4) "When Carols Were New" (story, page 46).
 - (5) "Mary's Lullaby" (carol, page 49).
 - (6) "'Twas in the Moon of Winter Time" (carol, page 54).

- (7) "The Shepherd's Story" (carol,
page 63).
 - (8) "Everywhere, Everywhere Christmas
Tonight" (poem, page 52).
 - (9) "Christmas Carols from Many Lands"
(page 48).
 - (10) "Prayer for Christmas" (page 53).
 - (11) Pictures (pages 56, 61, 64, 76).
 - (12) "Christmas Is of the Heart" (story,
page 69).
 - (13) "The Story of Zacchaeus" (Luke 19:1-9,
page 9).
 - (14) "Christmas Worship" (story, page 78).
 - (15) "The Christ Child and His Mother"
(story, page 76).
 - (16) "O Come All Ye Faithful to Bethlehem"
(story, page 66).
 - (17) "His Way" (poem, page 79).
- j) Use the following Biblical material for
worship in the home:
- (1) Luke 2:8-20.
 - (2) Matthew 2:1-12.
 - (3) Matthew 22:37-39.
 - (4) Matthew 25:34-50.
 - (5) Isaiah 9:6-7.

Course IV. Part 2.

1. "The Bible Around the World" unit (6 sessions).

a) Make available to the home the pupil's book.

b) Acquaint the parents with the purpose of the teaching of the units in Part 2 through the following methods:

- (1) Parent's meetings.
- (2) Teacher's visitation in the home.
- (3) Letters to the home.
- (4) Telephone calls.
- (5) Brief conferences at church before or following the regular church-school session.

c) Use the pupil's book with the family at home.

- (1) "A Book to Enjoy" (story, page 3).
- (2) "The Sunday-school Man" (story, page 4).
- (3) "Wings for the Bible" (story, page 14).
- (4) "Reading the Bible at Home" (story, page 22).
- (5) "Men Who Helped Send the Bible Around the World" (story, page 26).
- (6) "The Bible in a Thousand Tongues" (story, page 23).
- (7) "The Dugout Cancee" (story, page 29).
- (8) "Bearers of Good News in Japan" (story, page 33).

(9) "Get Me That Book" (story, page 36).

(10) "The Work Goes On" (story, page 42).

d) Write a note to each member of the class, making a home assignment.

e) Have the children bring from home souvenirs from Alaska, Africa, or South America.

f) Share final session with visitors (parents).

2. "Exploring and Using the Bible" unit (5 sessions).

a) Write a letter to the parents of the children to enlist their cooperation in the study of the unit.

b) At the close of the unit, have the class share with their parents through an exhibit or program some of the things they have learned.

c) Encourage use of the pupil's book in the home at family worship time: specific suggestions.

(1) "To read in your Bible" (page 47).

(2) "The Word of God" (poem, page 47).

(3) "Laws for Living: In the New Testament" (page 48).

(4) "The New Testament or Covenant" (page 52).

(5) "A Prayer for Family Worship" (page 53).

- (6) "To Read at Home" (page 59).
- (7) "Calls to Worship from the Psalms"
(page 47).
- (8) "Benedictions" (page 65).
- (9) "To Read with Your Family" (page 64).
- (10) "The Buried Bible" (page 66).
- (11) "A Bible in the Sand" (page 68).
- (12) "Russian Bibles" (page 67).
- (13) "For Your Own Worship" (page 69).
- d) Send postcards to pupils to ask them to
bring Bibles to church-school.
- e) Suggest to pupils ways in which the Bible
might be used at home.
 - (1) Bible readings at family prayer time.
 - (2) Looking up Bible references with par-
ents after mealtime or at a special
time.
- f) Suggest that pupils ask parents for old
Bibles which might be brought from home
for exhibition in church-school.
- g) Encourage memorisation of Psalms and other
Biblical verses pertaining to this unit
such as:
 - (1) Psalms 23:1 (3) Psalms 56:3
 - (2) Deuteronomy 31:6 (4) Micah 6:8

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| (5) Matthew 7:12 | (9) Matthew 5:44 |
| (6) I John 3:18 | (10) James 1:22a |
| (7) I John 4:7 | (11) Jeremiah 29:13 |
| (8) Matthew 6:12 | (12) Psalms 126:3 |

h) Let the pupils plan with their family a worship service based upon the life and teachings of Paul.

II. SUGGESTIONS IN CHILD GUIDANCE IN CHRISTIAN LIVING

Child Guidance in Christian Living is a monthly magazine for teachers of children in the church-school.

Home and the Church Work Together. This section is included in each monthly edition. The basic philosophy of the Methodist church-school program is briefly expressed: for example,

It is important for the spiritual life of the family to make daily use of the church-school literature in the home.³⁵

The church-school literature provides many of the essentials needed for spiritual growth. It is a resource that teachers and parents should use together.³⁶

Children learn more by what we do than by what we say. We are teaching the Christian way by how we live before our children.³⁷

³⁵Child Guidance, October issue, 1956, p. 17.

³⁶Ibid., November issue, 1956, p. 17.

³⁷Ibid., October issue, 1956, p. 17.

It is important for teachers and parents to work in cooperation for the Christian nurture of children at home and church. One cannot carry responsibility without the other. It is a partnership so that Christian faith may be strengthened.³⁸

Learning on Sunday is only half the process, for these learnings must be carried forward in the home if children are really going to grow in Christian faith. Hearing is not enough, it is the doing that is important. This is where the home enters the picture in a vital way.³⁹

In each issue of this magazine suggestions are made for the children in Nursery, Kindergarten, Primary, and Junior departments. However, this thesis is concerned only with those pertaining to the Junior groups using closely-graded materials in the fourth grade. These are suggestions for teachers to use with parents; but, it is left to each teacher to discover for himself the best way to gain parental cooperation. The same ideas expressed below are included in The Christian Home, the magazine for parents.

September issue.⁴⁰

See that Juniors have experiences with varied times for worship, such as grace at mealtime, informal worship on a family hike or picnic, worship in the church sanctuary on Sunday morning, and an experience of worship as guest of a Jewish family on Sabbath eve.

³⁸Child Guidance, January issue, 1957, p. 17.

³⁹Ibid., February issue, 1957, p. 17.

⁴⁰Ibid., September issue, 1956, p. 18.

October issue.⁴¹

First Week: Let the fourth grader try out on his family the quiz in his pupil's book, page 6. Use the hymn, "Book of Books," page 5 at home.

Second Week: Read with your child the references found at the bottom of page 9 and under the heading "Treasures in the New Testament," page 10.

Third Week: Explore the various versions of the Bible using as your guide page 12 of the pupil's book. Two stories of Joseph beginning on page 16 and page 18 may be shared at home.

November issue.⁴²

This month use the pages from 22 to 41 in the pupil's book. Continue to read and enjoy the story of Joseph. There are suggestions for Thanksgiving worship on pages 36 to 39 that the Junior child could use in part for family Thanksgiving week observances.

December issue.⁴³

Fourth graders will use at home the section of their pupil's book, Course IV, Part 1, from pages 42 to 80. On the first week, let your fourth grader read aloud "The Story in Carols" and let the whole family join with him in singing the carols in the story. Help your Junior find pictures to illustrate carols and the Christmas customs of many lands that are truly religious. Learn to sing the new carols on pages 49, 54, and 63 of the pupil's book. The poem "If I Had Been a Shepherd Lad" (page 65) is a lovely one to learn as you consider your Christmas plans to meet the need of others.

January issue.⁴⁴

In the pupil's book the story "A Book to Enjoy" has a suggestion for family enjoyment of the Bible which parents might like to try. It is suggested that

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid., p. 16.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 32.

parents read with their Junior from week to week the stories that he is reading in the pupil's book about how the Bible has been and still is being carried to people of many lands. It is also suggested that the parents allow time for the Junior to do what is listed at the bottom of page 32.

February issue.⁴⁵

First Week: Juniors in the fourth grade will want their parents to read with them the Scripture references on pages 47-48 in the pupil's book.

Second Week: The laws on pages 48, 49, and 52, and the prayer for family worship on page 53 should have a special connection with a personality like Abraham Lincoln whose birthday is honored the second week in February.

Third Week: Read with your Junior the paragraphs on page 59 and page 60, "To Read at Home," and practice with finding "Calls to Worship" at the bottom of page 47 and the Benedictions on page 65 under the title "To Read with Your Family."

Enrichment Articles in Child Guidance in Christian Living. Suggestions to teachers as to means of developing cooperation between church and home are found in separate articles in the Child Guidance magazine. Samples of such articles are:

1. "The Importance of Home Visitation," September issue, page 11.
2. "A Spaghetti Supper Serves a Purpose" suggests that Parent's Meetings are for planning, sharing ideas, and family fun (September issue, page 11).

⁴⁵Ibid., page 18.

3. "Parent-teacher Relationships Are Important"⁴⁶

includes the suggestions for inviting the parents to visit a church-school session and for including them in Christmas, Thanksgiving, or Easter parties.

Superintendents and Teachers: Try These Ideas.

Some of the ideas included in this monthly section are specific suggestions for church-home cooperation. The suggestions listed below are those which apply the use of the closely-graded material, Course IV, Parts 1 and 2.

1. Parent's Meeting: An opportunity for enjoyment of teacher, parents, and children at a supper meeting, followed by discussion with parents on such topics as when is an experience spiritual and the present method of looking up Bible references.⁴⁷
2. Family Christmas Worship: Suggestions for making worship selections from the many beautiful things in the pupil's book and for keeping at home a receptacle for the church-school Christmas offering.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Ibid., November issue, p. 18.

⁴⁷Ibid., October issue, p. 48.

⁴⁸Ibid., December issue, p. 46.

3. Joint Session of Parents and Pupils (January 6th).⁴⁹
4. Dramatization of the Story: Preparation by an interested family of a dramatization based upon the story, "A Book to Enjoy."⁵⁰
5. A Family-time with the Bible: Plans to enjoy as a family the many Bible passages included in the pupil's book.⁵¹
6. Enjoyment of Pupil's Book at Home: Suggestion for reading material at home in order to leave more time in class sessions for working out interesting activities.⁵²
7. Learning of Hymn: Proposal for learning the hymn, "Let the Song Go Round the Earth."⁵³
8. Parent's Assistance in Class Session: To invite a mother and/or father to assist in class for the unit.⁵⁴

⁴⁹Ibid., January issue, p. 48.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid., February issue, p. 48.

III. SUGGESTIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN HOME MAGAZINE⁵⁵

Teaching Together in Home and Church. Suggestions for using the church-school literature as a part of the life of the family are found in this monthly section. It is written with the intent to tell parents just what they can do with the church-school literature in their role as co-teacher of their children. Because the ideas are exactly the same as those listed in the Child Guidance magazine in the section, "The Home and the Church Work Together," they will not be repeated here.

Devotions for the Family. A monthly plan for daily devotions is set forth in the monthly article, "Devotions for the Family." The devotional material is built around specific monthly themes and attempts are made to "grade" the meditations to various age-levels. An example of the ideas included for family use can be seen in this excerpt from the September issue: "The devotions for this month are designed to help you appreciate the Bible as a book with an exciting story, and to use it with anticipation and enjoyment."⁵⁶

⁵⁵The Christian Home, issues from September, 1956, through February, 1957.

⁵⁶Ibid., September issue, 1956, p. 52.

Suggestions for help in obtaining the most value from the written meditations include the idea that the best way to learn how to enjoy using the Bible is to use it: Juniors enjoy looking up things for themselves. Five Bible books are listed for children from seven to ten years of age. Because its vocabulary and phraseology are more familiar than those of older versions the Revised Standard Version of the Bible is more meaningful to children. Therefore, that version has been used in selecting passages for family reading.

Study Guide for Parents. Each month The Christian Home has an article, "Study Guide for Parents," which outlines the procedures, resources, and suggested projects which center around the monthly theme of the magazine. It serves as a tool for the parents to use to grasp with understanding the material of the magazine.

The Department of The Christian Family. This section of the magazine is concerned with special discussions of such issues as "Report Cards for the Church-school" (January), "Encouraging Discussion through Drama" (November), and "A Sunday Parent's Meeting" (October). The October issue includes the family life program of the year. Because this serves as an outlined program for family-life activities which are concerned with cooperation between church and home as recommended by the General Board of the Methodist Church, it will be included in the thesis:

October issue.

Parent-teacher Meetings. At the beginning of the church-school year is a good time for parents and teachers to get together and discuss the objectives for the lessons of the quarter. Ask parents to suggest ways of undergirding the teaching in the home.

Family Nights. Plan for a series of six family nights in the fall and another series in the spring. Include fun, fellowship, and study.

A Church Library for Parents. Begin with a few books. Have them reviewed in adult classes and in the church bulletin. A good librarian interests people in reading.

November issue.

Distribute the folder, "Thanksgiving Worship in the Home," to all families in your church.

Plan a meeting for grandparents to help them understand their role in the home and the church.

December issue.

Plan a Christmas Hobby Night. Provide an opportunity to share ideas for Christmas gifts, wrappings, cards, decorations, and so forth. Some churches made this a workshop night with material on hand to make gifts and decorations.

January issue.

Ask each member of the committee to read "The Church and Families."

Encourage family reading by distributing the leaflet, "Try Family Reading," by Charles Laughton.

Series of Family Nights. A spring and fall series of family activities is usually more effective than a family night once a month throughout the year. Plan as many activities for the whole family together as possible.

Quarterly Parent-teacher Meeting.

February issue.

Start planning for National Family Week in May.

Start planning for a Family Camp.⁵⁷

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 50.

Parent's Problem. This section of the Christian Home magazine provides opportunity for question-answer discussion of problems which parents write in to the department for consideration. It is a monthly feature which attempts to meet the needs of parents as they are working at their task of the Christian nurture of their children. Individual articles include suggestions for church-home relationships. For example:

1. "Meet the Teacher" contains the basis for effective church-home relationships: understanding of the role that both home and church play in Christian education.⁵⁸

2. "One Home--Three Viewpoints" contains the philosophy that

it is up to us as parents to guide our children along lines of cooperation and self-discipline, upon which the effectiveness of Christian principles depends, and to help the oldsters in the family understand our goals.⁵⁹

IV. METHODIST PAMPHLETS ON CHURCH-HOME RELATIONSHIPS

The pamphlets reviewed for this thesis in the area of church-home relationships as published by the Methodist

⁵⁸Ibid., September issue, p. 27.

⁵⁹Ibid., November issue, p. 27.

Board of Education included The Church and Families by Edward D. Staples, Director of the Department of the Christian Family of the Methodist Church, Some Good Books for Parents, The Church Plans for Family Camp, and A Plan for Home and Church Cooperation. These pamphlets do not make suggestions exclusively for any one age group, but are concerned with meeting the needs of the family-unit through the local church program.

The Church and Families. In The Church and Families Dr. Staples enumerates eight ways in which the church might do the best possible job of helping parents teach religion in the home. The suggestions include:

1. Enriching the religious experience of parents through providing books and other resources for enrichment of parents, making it possible for parents to attend church through providing a nursery, and enlisting parental participating in the various tasks of the church.
2. Providing classes or groups for parents, including discussion groups, forums, or schools to help parents grow.
3. Visiting in the home as a minister or a "home-visitor" to discover the spiritual needs of the family.

4. Helping parents understand the religious needs of children.
5. Visiting the home as a church-school teacher to become acquainted with the individual pupil and to provide the opportunity for parents to become acquainted with the objectives, purposes, and outline of units of study.
6. Making strong church-home relationships through baptism of the child.
7. Setting up a church-wide conference on religion in the home.
8. Providing resources for parents to use in family worship.

Family nights, Sunday evening fellowships, family worship in church, family-life preparations for such special seasons of the year as Christmas, the observation of a counseling service for church members, family camps, reading programs, and leadership training enterprises are the suggested means by which the local church might meet the need for church-home cooperation.

The Home and Church Cooperation Plan. This plan is an attempt to bring about a closer spirit of cooperation between what happens in the church and the teaching which goes on within the home. The plan began as an experimental

project in the Michigan, Detroit, and North-East Ohio Conferences of the Methodist Church, but after the initial two years of experimental work, thirty-eight more churches of the Genessee, Erie, Southern California, and Wisconsin Conferences were added.

Success of the Home and Church Cooperation Plan is dependent upon how wholeheartedly teachers, leaders, and parents participate in all phases of the plan. A Methodist church desiring to participate in the plan is requested to make application to the executive secretary of the board of education of its annual conference. In this application the church agrees to purchase the necessary materials and to make an effort to cooperate in every part of the plan. Help in launching the plan is received from the executive secretary.

There are ten main points which can serve as a summary of the Home and Church Cooperation Plan:

1. Annual evaluation of the church-school program.
2. Regular worker's conferences.
3. Annual visitation to the home to interpret the program and curriculum of the church-school as well as to inform parents ways in which they can cooperate.
4. Parents' annual written agreement to cooperate with the plan.

5. Annual pulpit presentation by the minister.
6. A program of parent education.
7. Use of the Christian Home in the home.
8. Parent-teacher interviews or reports.
9. Use of materials sent home with pupils to encourage home and church cooperation.
10. Strength through fellowship.

These ideas expressed in the above plan are not new; they can be found elsewhere in the Methodist curriculum. But the plan is an attempt to achieve a more effective way to have local churches actually put into practice the methods for church and home cooperation.

V. SUMMARY

A summary of the specific suggestions for meeting the need for church-home relationships in the fourth grade as set forth in The Teacher's Textbook, The Christian Home magazine, Child Guidance in Christian Living magazine, and related Methodist pamphlets for the specified period of time may be stated in the following points:

1. Call in the home at least once a year.

2. Plan Parents' Meetings:

To discuss plans for the new unit.

To have fellowship of family and teacher.

3. Make telephone calls to the home to discuss plans of the new unit.
4. Write friendly letters to the home for the purpose of enlisting parental cooperation in the unit.
5. Send pupil's book home so that family can share the book.
6. Write a note to each member of the class making a home assignment.
7. Invite the parents to a church-school session.
8. Include the parents in Christmas and Thanksgiving parties.
9. Plan for family worship services at home (informal and formal services).
10. Send postcards to ask the pupils to remember to bring Bibles to church-school.
11. Request pupils to bring from home items relevant to the unit of study.
12. Make literature available to parents:
 - Christian Home magazine.
 - Christmas worship services.
 - Thanksgiving worship services.
 - Some Good Books for Parents.
13. Encourage memorization at home of Biblical verses and hymns.

14. Have the class share with parents at the close of each unit some of the things learned.
15. Have brief conferences at church before or following the regular church-school session.
16. Have the parents keep at home a card to mark the times that the pupil brings his Bible to church-school.
17. Plan for worship services at Thanksgiving and Christmas in the home.
18. Let each family have a container at home in which to plan for a special offering.
19. Provide a resource list of Christmas records, books, and carols.
20. Use the talents of the parents in the church-school session.
21. Have joint session for parents and children.
22. Plan for a dramatization of the story, "A Book to Enjoy," to be put on by the parents in a church-school session.
23. Encourage a family-time with the Bible to be planned by the family each week during January.
24. Plan for a series of six family nights in the fall. Include fun, fellowship, and study.

25. Start (or build) a church library for parents.

Have the new books reviewed in adult classes
and/or in the church bulletin.

26. Plan a meeting for grandparents to help them
understand their role in the home and church.

27. Plan a Christmas Hobby Night: provide an oppor-
tunity to share ideas for Christmas gifts,
wrappings, cards, and decorations. Some
churches made this a workshop night with
material on hand to make gifts and decorations.

CHAPTER V

CHURCH-HOME RELATIONSHIPS IN THE METHODIST
CHURCH SCHOOLS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT
WHICH USE CLOSELY-GRADED MATERIALS
IN THE FOURTH GRADE

Methodist materials contain a number of specific suggestions for church-home cooperation. The objective of this part of the study was to determine to what extent Methodist church schools in the Central District are using these procedures in seeking to meet the needs for church-home cooperation in their own churches.

This chapter includes: (1) a discussion of the procedures used to obtain information relating to the objectives of the study; (2) a summary of questionnaire-returns received from the teachers reporting the application and evaluation of procedures suggested in the closely-graded Methodist materials for church-home cooperation; (3) a summary of questionnaire-returns received from parents concerning the application and evaluation of procedures suggested in the closely-graded Methodist materials; (4) a summary of additional procedures for church-home cooperation reported by teachers and parents who participated in this study; (5) a report of the suggestions made by parents and teachers for increasing the cooperation

between the church and the home; and (6) a summary of the church-home relationships in the churches of the Central District which use closely-graded materials in the fourth grade.

I. PROCEDURES FOR GATHERING DATA

The following steps were taken to obtain information concerning the status of church-home relationships from September, 1956, through February, 1957, in the churches of the Central District which use closely-graded materials in the fourth grade.

Churches using closely-graded materials. It was necessary to determine which churches within the Central District used closely-graded materials in the fourth grade during the designated period. The following procedure was employed to obtain this information:

Information from the Methodist Publishing House in San Francisco revealed that eleven Methodist church schools had ordered closely-graded materials for the fourth grade for October, 1956, and that seventeen churches had ordered group-graded material for the same date.⁶⁰ The Publishing House was uncertain whether or not the other twenty-two

⁶⁰See Appendix, pp. 150-152.

Methodist churches within the Central District used closely-graded or group-graded materials.

Return post cards were sent to the ministers of thirty-three churches requesting them to indicate the type of material used in the fourth grade. A second post card was sent to ministers from whom no response had been received. After a reasonable period of time had passed, telephone calls were made to ministers from whom no reply to the second card had been received. From this method it was established that twenty-five churches in the Central District use closely-graded materials in the fourth grade.⁶¹

Sample selection of churches. Ten churches which used closely-graded materials in the fourth grade during the designated period were selected for a special emphasis in this study. The best method of obtaining information from parents and teachers of fourth graders would have been through joint sessions in each church. In such sessions the purpose of the study could have been explained and the relevant data obtained. However, since all ten churches might not be able to arrange such meetings, additional methods were proposed.

⁶¹Supra., p. 19.

Ministers of the ten selected churches were requested to cooperate in one of the three following plans for using the questionnaires with the parents and teachers of the fourth-grade pupils:

One plan was that the minister might call a meeting of the teachers and parents of the fourth grade at which the investigator would explain the study as well as the questionnaire. The questionnaires would be filled out at that time.

Another plan was that the minister might call a meeting of the teachers and parents of the fourth grade at which time the minister would explain the purpose of the study and questionnaires. He would request the parents and teachers to fill out the questionnaires at the meeting.

The third possibility was that the minister could furnish a list of the names and addresses of parents and teachers of the fourth grade so that questionnaires could be mailed directly to them.

Six ministers replied that they preferred to provide a list of names and addresses and have the questionnaires sent directly to the parents. One other minister requested a personal interview so that he could confer with teachers and parents. Three churches called special

parent-teacher meetings in accordance with the first plan. The parents filled in the questionnaires at that time.

The results of the questionnaires from the ten selected churches are included with the total results from other churches used in this study. Special information obtained from the personal meeting with teachers and parents of the three cooperative churches is included with the discussions concerning the application and evaluation of church-home cooperation by teachers and parents.

Questionnaires to parents and teachers.⁶² Two questionnaires were prepared to obtain data concerning the status of church-home relationships in the churches of the Central District using closely-graded materials in the fourth grade. The questionnaires were based upon the twenty-seven points which summarized the specific suggestions for church-home relationships made for a six-months period in The Teacher's Textbook, The Christian Home magazine, Child Guidance in Christian Living, and related Methodist pamphlets.⁶³

Each fourth-grade teacher in the Central District using closely-graded materials from September, 1956, through February, 1957, received a questionnaire.

⁶²See Appendix, pp. 153-160.

⁶³Supra., pp. 64-66.

Thirty-four questionnaires were received by teachers representing twenty-four churches. Because the fourth-grade class at Central Methodist Church was used in a special study for this thesis, the returns from the questionnaires sent to the parents and teachers of Central Methodist Church were not included in the final tabulation. Stamped envelopes were enclosed with the questionnaires to teachers and parents to facilitate the return. Teachers were requested to enclose names and addresses of the parents of children in their classes. The number of questionnaires sent to parents was determined by the cooperation on the part of teachers.

Questionnaires seeking information about church-home cooperation were sent to the parents of two hundred and fifty-five pupils representing thirteen churches.

II. TEACHERS' EVALUATION AND APPLICATION OF PROCEDURES FOR CHURCH-HOME RELATIONSHIPS

Thirty-four teachers were questioned either by mail or in meetings in their own churches for the purpose of learning the extent of the application and evaluation of procedures used in church-home relationships. Twenty-one teachers answered the questionnaire. Five teachers stated that nothing had been done in the area of church-home cooperation in their churches and failed to answer any

questions on the questionnaire. The sixteen other teachers responded to the questionnaire by checking the points which applied to them, commenting as to their effectiveness in the program of Christian education.

The summary of the answers of the questionnaire sent to the teachers follows the outline of the questionnaire itself. In general, the teachers responded freely in their indications of methods used, but there was a paucity of comments concerning evaluation of these methods.

Communications with the home. Nine teachers indicated that telephone calls to the home were used more frequently than any other means of communications.

Six teachers held brief conferences with parents at church before or after the regular church-school session.

Five teachers used the method of parent-teacher meetings and friendly letters to enlist parental cooperation.

Four teachers visited parents in the home.

Three teachers used the method of sending a note to each member of the class to make a home assignment in the pupil's book.

It is important to note that only one method was used regularly by any one church. The exception was a parent-teacher meeting which was held monthly in one of the churches in the Central District. All other reported

communications were made irregularly and infrequently.

Many efforts to communicate with the home were made without adequate planning. For example, one teacher reported that notes containing home assignments were written for each member of the class. These were sent home via the child. She expressed the undesirability of such a method because the notes were lost. Another teacher reported that home-visitation plans were unsuccessful because, as she stated, "No one was ever home." These teachers had not informed the parents in advance so that they were aware of the teacher's plans and objectives.

Parental participation in the church-school class.

Returns from the questionnaire indicate that there were three principal ways in which the parents shared in the activities of their children's church-school classes: (1) seven teachers answered that parents participated in Christmas and Thanksgiving parties; (2) six teachers replied that parents assisted pupils in securing and bringing from home items which were relevant to the unit; (3) five teachers responded that the use of individual talents of the parents at special points in the unit of study had been helpful. The only other method used was that of a joint church-school session of parents and

pupils. Only one teacher followed this procedure.

The specific results of the activities in which parents shared in class activities included regularity in children's attendance, an improvement in the children's use of the Bible, and an increased interest in the units of study on the part of the children. Five teachers reported the four above specific results. This could imply that these methods were not employed frequently enough for the teachers to comment on an appreciable Christian growth on the part of the children.

Use of Methodist materials. Four teachers reported that they sent home the pupil's book, In Wisdom and in Stature. The books were sent home on a loan basis. No extra copies were purchased for the children to keep at home.

Two teachers furnished parents with the pamphlets, "Christmas Worship in the Home," and "Thanksgiving Worship in the Home."

One teacher stated that the Methodist magazine, Together, was sent by the church school to all of the parents. No other Methodist materials were sent to the home.

Only three responses to the question concerning the results of using Methodist materials in the home were made. These teachers replied that use in the home of the pupil's

book and the worship services encouraged daily family worship, family use of the Bible, and memorization of Biblical material by the children.

Use of the Bible in the home. Memorization of Bible verses at home was the method used by the greatest number of teachers (eight) to encourage parental cooperation in the use of the Bible.

Five teachers sought parental cooperation by making assignments in the pupil's books relating to use of the Bible. These assignments were not made regularly.

Four teachers sent post cards in the beginning of the year to remind pupils to bring their Bibles to church school.

No other methods were used to encourage the use of the Bible at home.

Three teachers indicated that there were specific results of parental cooperation in the use of the Bible at home. One teacher stated that, as a result, daily Bible reading became a habit with some of her families. Another teacher indicated that use of the Bible by her families was increased. A third teacher stated this method resulted in a greater amount of memorization by the children.

Family worship at home. Informal or formal family

worship was encouraged by four teachers by asking each family to have a container at home in which to place an offering for a special project. Three teachers indicated that as a direct result of this method projects undertaken for others became vital and meaningful to the children.

Two teachers planned worship services for Thanksgiving and Christmas. They reported a direct relationship of this method with the realization on the part of the children of the real meaning of Christmas and Thanksgiving.

No other methods for encouraging family worship at home were used by the teachers.

Other procedures for church-home cooperation. Six teachers indicated that regular church-wide family nights were a part of the church program. As a result, families were brought closer together.

Four teachers indicated that church libraries were available to parents. One reference was made to the improved reading habits of some of the children which were an outgrowth of the encouragement of use of library books.

No other methods for church-home cooperation as suggested in the Methodist materials were used by the teachers who filled out the questionnaires.

Attitude of teachers from the sample selection of churches. It has already been noted that ten churches

were selected as a special emphasis to this study. Three of these ten churches held special Parents' Nights.

Teachers from all three of the churches revealed a sincere desire to make a noteworthy contribution to Christian education through their teaching. The parent-teacher meetings in the individual churches served to stimulate a self-evaluation as to whether or not each teacher was utilizing the best methods in her program for achieving the development of a Christian personality in each child in her group.

Personal conversations with the teachers of two of the three churches revealed that the emphasis on church-home cooperation was new to them. They expressed a desire for teacher-training sessions to prepare them for an active home and church plan.

To illustrate the reaction of the teachers, the following episode is described: At one of the churches where co-teachers worked together in the same fourth-grade class, a frank discussion developed among the teacher and the parents and the investigator concerning values and methods for church-home cooperation. Ideas were freely exchanged and viewpoints were frankly expressed so that a real learning experience developed. One teacher turned to the other and said, "This is the sort of thing I need to help me with my teaching." The other teacher replied, "I had hoped that the teacher-training session I attended

would include it, but no help was given to us in this area."

Through the special meetings in the three churches, teachers received a vision for better teaching. One teacher said, "Thank you for coming. I have felt something lacking in my teaching. Your accounts of what happened in your fourth-grade class when you made regular assignments or called in the homes have inspired me to make my own teaching more meaningful." Teachers need motivation before they are willing to take the extra time needed to use the methods for church-home cooperation suggested in this study.

III. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION BY PARENTS REGARDING PROCEDURES USED IN CHURCH- HOME RELATIONSHIPS

Questionnaires were sent to 255 parents in thirteen churches. Seventy-three questionnaires were returned. It was from the responses of these seventy-three families that conclusions were made in regard to the application and evaluation of procedures for church-home relationships used in the fourth grade. The number of returns from parents represents the same number of families. The discussion of responses made in the questionnaire by the parents follows the outline of the questionnaire itself.

Eight questionnaires were returned by parents in

eight different churches, stating that nothing had been done in their churches in the field of church-home cooperation. These parents attributed the lack of interest of their children towards the church school to the absence of church-home relationships.

Communications from the church school. Thirty parents indicated that telephone messages were the principal means of communication between church and home. This method, used by teachers to make assignments or solicit help for special projects, was appreciated by seven parents because of the results which it netted: the parents realized that the teachers were genuinely concerned with their children, and children were encouraged to prepare assignments at home.

Sixteen parents had brief conferences with the teachers at church school before or following the regular church-school session. Parents stated that these conferences brought about a greater understanding between parent and teacher.

Fourteen parents valued Parents' Nights as being important. These parents stated that the meetings gave them an understanding of the program and also provided the opportunity to become acquainted with the teacher.

Nineteen parents indicated that the teachers had sent home friendly letters to enlist cooperation. Six

of these parents stated that the value of this method was in encouragement for better attendance at the church school and participation of parents as well as children in special projects.

Ten parents were visited at home by the teachers for the purpose of explaining the objectives for the year. Four parents indicated that a greater understanding of the church-school program was the result of such a visit.

Four parents indicated that notes had been written to teach members of the class to make home assignments. The sole comment on this procedure was made by a parent who stated that her child had been requested to write his own note. The parent thought this approach was effective.

It should be noted that home visitations were not made consistently.

Participation in the activities of the church school.

Christmas and/or Thanksgiving parties were enjoyed by thirty-eight parents of children in the fourth grade. Three parents stated that the parties contributed to feelings of family unity.

Ten parents sent items of interest from the home to the church-school class which were relevant to the study. Five parents indicated that this method stimulated interest and better understanding of the unit by the parent.

Eight parents attended a joint session of parents and pupils. No evaluation of this method was made.

Methodist materials. Methodist materials received by parents included the pupil's study book, The Christian Home magazine, and pamphlets for Christmas and Thanksgiving worship.

Although sixteen parents referred to the fact that the pupil's book was sent home, it should be noted that in no case was it sent home for permanent keeping. The eight parents who stated that teachers permitted it to go home at the close of the unit of study expressed a desire that it be made available for home use during the unit of study so that parents and children might work together on it. Six parents noted that availability of the pupil's book resulted in a shared family experience in study.

Twelve parents responded that they used The Christian Home magazine, but the magazine was not received from the church school. Two parents ordered it individually, seven received it through participation in a young adult class in one of the churches, and three parents were given the magazine in their role as teachers. Three parents commented that articles within this magazine helped them to understand their child better.

The "Christmas Worship in the Home" pamphlet was received by six parents while only two received the pamphlet for Thanksgiving worship. Two families appreciated the opportunity for shared family worship which resulted.

Use of the Bible in the home. Twenty-seven parents stated that use of the Bible was encouraged at home by requests for children to memorize Bible verses at home. Nine parents approved of this method, stating that it stimulated interest in the Bible on the part of the whole family.

Six parents stated that post cards had been sent to the child to remind him to bring his Bible to church school. No results relating to this method were noted on the questionnaires.

Six parents stated that the teacher had made assignments for Bible study in the pupil's book. The only comment on this method referred to the fact that the whole family used the Bible more frequently as a result.

It should be noted that the methods by which the church-school teacher tried to encourage use of the Bible at home were used inconsistently by all but one teacher who tried to be regular in asking children to study their Bibles at home through specific assignments.

Family worship in the home. Eighteen parents,

representing eighteen families, reported that family worship was encouraged by a request that each family have a receptacle at home in which to place an offering for a special project. Six parents noted that such a method greatly increased the interest of the children and made the project more meaningful to the individual. For example, one boy became so interested in the Casa Materna Home as a result of family planning for the project that he wrote a personal letter to the home.

Thirteen families received definite suggestions from the church-school teacher for worship services. Four parents stated that such a method strengthened family devotional life.

A resource list of Christmas records, books, and carols was made available to three families in the study. No results were given.

Other suggestions for church-home cooperation.

Replies from thirty-nine families revealed that family nights for fun, fellowship, and study were the principal means by which churches using closely-graded materials in the Central District encourage home cooperation. Nine parents emphasized that this method was enjoyed by both parents and children. It provided the opportunity for enlarging the circle of acquaintances and friends and deepened family relationships.

Twenty-seven parents stated that the churches provided libraries for family use. Three responses indicated that parents appreciate when good literature is made available to families, but two responded that they did not use the library. No other answers were made relating to use of church libraries.

Attitude of parents in the sampling selection of churches. The personal meetings with the parents at the Parents' Nights provided an opportunity for parents to express to the investigator their concerns for cooperation between church and home. For example, one individual said: "Regular home assignments for our children would be so helpful! Ever since my son received his Bible, he has been so proud of it. If the teachers would make assignments for using the Bible perhaps he would maintain interest in church school!"

Another parent expressed the reactions of several others by saying, "Our child's book is sent home at the end of the unit of study. If it could be sent home during the unit, the whole family could work on it."

A third comment was, "I feel that teachers should make regular home-assignments. We are missing a great opportunity to teach our children."

Another parent said, "A visit to the home? What a

wonderful way for me to learn what is happening in my daughter's class!"

In general, the parents who were present at the three meetings hoped that there would be more cooperation between the church and the home.

IV. ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES FOR CHURCH-HOME COOPERATION

Returns from the questionnaires indicated that seven other successful methods for church-home cooperation were used. These methods included; (1) observation of Mother's Day and Father's Day; (2) informal meetings with parents at church activities such as choir rehearsal; (3) an Open House for the whole church school; (4) departmental parties at which parents are requested to serve refreshments; (5) participation of parents in special projects such as sewing choir gowns for the children or buying hymn books; (6) extra class sessions on missionary units; and (7) a social hour with the parents and children after the church-school Christmas program.

Parents referred to several additional methods used to promote church-home relationships: (1) a request for parents to observe the class of their child; (2) sending Christmas cards to the child by the teacher; (3) use of parents as substitute-teachers for the class when needed; (4) a children's choir to encourage regular family attendance

in church; (5) a young adult class to open new areas of thinking; and (6) awards for good attendance of the children.

A six-weeks missionary study class for fun, fellowship, and study was given at one of the churches. Ten of the sixteen parents from this church who responded to the questionnaire stated that the School of Missions had strengthened family and church relationships and had deepened understanding of the Christian faith.

V. A REPORT ON SUGGESTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING HOME AND CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS

Parents and teachers were requested to make suggestions for strengthening the relationship between the church and the home.

Three teachers and seven parents expressed the desire that the pupil's book be sent home with the children.

Four teachers and three parents recognized the need for a home-visitation program to acquaint the parents with the objectives and methods of the church school and to foster better understanding between teacher and parent.

Six parents requested that the method of weekly home-assignments be used in order to keep up the child's interest during the week.

Other responses to the questionnaire indicated that

teachers and parents believe that: (1) more literature should be sent to the home; (2) more Parents' Nights are necessary in order to share with the parents the work of the previous unit and to plan for the new unit; (3) parents need to be given specific tasks to enlist their cooperation; (4) parents and children need to work together in missionary study projects.

One parent suggested that the monthly or weekly church newspaper be used to assign topics of study for the various age-groups.

Two other parents suggested that a practical home-study plan be set up so that parents might teach their children. Such a program could be made highly educational and entertaining, including activities such as crossword puzzles, quiz games, ideas for hobbies.

Two other parents expressed a desire to have at home an outlined plan for Bible study. The plan would include weekly objectives in Bible reading for the year.

VI. CONCLUSION

Questionnaires received from the teachers and parents revealed that very little was accomplished in the area of church-home cooperation from September, 1956, through February, 1957, in those churches of the Central District which used closely-graded materials in the fourth

grade. Responses from the questionnaire indicated that use of the suggested methods for church-home cooperation provided an increased opportunity for growth in Christian personality.

Teachers acknowledged in the questionnaires that the lack of church-home cooperation limited the effectiveness of the Christian education program. Parents related the lack of interest expressed by their children to the absence of church-home cooperation.

Telephoning absentee pupils was the method of communication most frequently offered to the home by the church school. This method was used by only three-eighths of the teachers who filled out the questionnaires.

Church-wide family nights were the principal means of cooperation between the church and the home. However, only three churches had family nights on a regular monthly basis. The other four churches which responded to this question indicated that this method was used only once a year.

There was little parental participation in the activities of the church school as such. Christmas and/or Thanksgiving parties were the chief means used to include the parents.

Returns from the questionnaire clearly show that the church schools which participated in this study did

not make the Methodist materials available to the parents. Those parents who received any of the materials found them helpful as aids in guiding children in Christian growth.

Attempts to encourage the use of the Bible in the home were inconsistent. Where attempts were made, positive Bible reading habits resulted in the lives of parents and children.

Special projects of the church school were more meaningful to the child when his parents had received the information which enabled them to cooperate with the child on the project.

Family worship was enriched when special Christmas and Thanksgiving worship services were provided.

The questionnaire served as a stimulant for teachers to include church-home planning in their teaching. The following note was included with one of the questionnaires:

Having read your paper I have many new ideas I would like to try. And I will! I always wished we had more literature for parents to use in the home. Maybe we can work on this. I am still hoping for a good system of personal visitation. People are so afraid they will be asked to do something! Specific joint sessions of parents and pupils are in the plans too.

I am entering a personal plea with our Father for a thirty-hour day!

Another teacher wrote:

I am sorry I have not contacted the home, but through this study I have learned that the parents will be more interested in the church school activities than I had thought.

Such responses indicate that teachers need guidance in the area of church-home relationships. They need to be made aware of the potentiality for Christian development of all concerned with a plan for church-home cooperation. They need to be shown the best means for developing methods for such a plan. However, suggestions in the Methodist materials are not enough to motivate a teacher to do her job in this area. Specific instructions for implementation of these suggestions are also needed.

CHAPTER VI

A STUDY IN CHURCH-HOME COOPERATION AT CENTRAL METHODIST CHURCH OF STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

The purpose of this chapter is to show what happened over a six-months period in the 9:30 A.M. session of the fourth-grade class at Central Methodist Church of Stockton, California, when an attempt was made to use some of the suggestions for church-home cooperation as found in the closely-graded Methodist materials. The study was analyzed through (1) a description of the church-school condition at Central Methodist Church at the beginning of the year, (2) a review of the methods for church-home cooperation used from September, 1956, through February, 1957, (3) a description of the conditions in the church school at Central Methodist Church at the end of the six-months period, (4) a case-study of the observed growth in those individuals who participated in the study, and (5) conclusions to the study.

I. CHURCH-SCHOOL CONDITIONS IN SEPTEMBER

The study made in church-home cooperation at Central Methodist Church was limited to a six-months period of time extending from September, 1956, through February, 1957. In

order to determine what occurred during the six months, it is necessary to describe the circumstances at Central Methodist Church as they existed in September, 1956.

The pupils and their classroom. At Central Methodist Church there are two different hours for church school, one at 9:30 A.M. and one at 11:00 A.M. The study on which this thesis is based was limited to the 9:30 A.M. session. The fourth-grade group met as a departmental class, having only occasional worship services with the third-grade group. Worship, study, fellowship, and creative activities were carried on within a large room which afforded ample room for the activities of the sixteen fourth-grade pupils who comprised the class.

Description of home-types. The homes from which the children came represented a variety of circumstances. All families were of an "average" economic status, even though this grouping ranged from "low-average" to "high-average." There were two children who lived with divorced mothers. There were ten working mothers, eight housewives, and one mother who went to college on a full-time schedule. Thirteen children had one or more brothers or sisters; each of the other three was the only child in his family. Thirteen of the families represented in the group were active members of the Central Methodist Church of Stockton.

Two families had no church affiliation. One family had its church membership elsewhere.

Co-teachers. In order to provide adequate leadership for the group of sixteen fourth-graders, two teachers were used each session. The teacher who was the "lead" teacher of the fourth grade last year agreed to work with the investigator on a co-teacher basis. Because of her previous teaching experience, she was well acquainted with the closely-graded materials. Her contribution to this study was invaluable. Her concern for the need of church-home cooperation in Christian education led to her willing acceptance of shared responsibility in the methods used within this study. Both teachers worked in close harmony of spirit and effort. The class sessions were planned weekly by both teachers.

The Commission on Education. Before starting the study at Central Methodist Church, written approval was obtained from the ministers of the church, the Church-school Superintendent, the Superintendent of the Children's Division, and the Chairman of the Commission on Education.⁶⁴ In a letter to these officials, the investigator explained the objectives and methods of procedure to all concerned with this exploratory study.

⁶⁴See Appendix, p. 161.

The attitude of the Commission on Education was one of cooperation and interest. It voted a specified amount of money to be used to help defray the cost of weekly letters sent to the home of each child. Some members of the Commission who also served as teachers gave verbal consent to the plan. Nevertheless, their reactions reflected a fear that their own teaching would be criticized and judged in comparison. It was necessary to proceed with caution so as to be accepted in the role of one whose work would eventually serve the entire church school.

When this study began, the Commission on Education had allocated no funds for making the pupil's books available to children and parents in the home at any age-level. Books were furnished only for use in the church school. They were not made available to parents. The Christian Home was ordered only for teachers in the church school.

The Commission on Education was not antagonistic to church-home cooperation; it was merely unaware of the potentiality for Christian growth on the part of parents as well as children when a definite weekly plan of cooperation is followed.

Questionnaire. A questionnaire was prepared in order to determine the status of church-home relation-

ships in the fourth grade preceding the application of methods for church-home relationships suggested in Methodist materials.⁶⁵ The questionnaire was sent to the Superintendent of the Children's Division, the Chairman of the Commission on Education, the Superintendent of the church school, the former minister of Christian Education for the preceding year, three teachers who taught fourth grade during the preceding year, one adult secretary of the fourth-grade church-school class, and sixteen parents of the present fourth-grade class. The questionnaire was answered in terms of what had happened during the year preceding this study. Although the answers were based on the experiences in the third grade, they revealed to what extent parents were contributing to the growth of their child through planned cooperation between church and home. All responded to the questionnaire except one working mother whose cooperation was lacking in all phases of the study.

The results of the questionnaire revealed the following points:

1. No literature was made available through the church school to the parents of the pupils for use in the home. Teachers of the class and parents who were teachers in other departments were given The Christian Home and

⁶⁵See Appendix, pp. 162-164.

Child Guidance for Christian Living magazines. The pupil's study book was sent home intermittently by the teachers who requested that the books be returned to the church school. No extra copies were purchased by the Commission on Education for the purpose of allowing the child to keep the book at home for his own permanent use.

2. The primary methods of communication used during the preceding year to acquaint parents with the church-school lessons were letters and telephone calls to absentee pupils. Fourteen individuals confirmed this statement. Five persons gave no response concerning the methods used to acquaint parents with the church-school program, but two individuals referred to a Family-Night program and one person said that the teacher wrote occasional notes to the parents for special projects.

3. It was reported by fourteen individuals that cards and telephone calls were the primary methods used to help teachers become aware of individual needs and interests of pupils. Other responses to this part of the questionnaire included the following: two individuals referred to a teacher-training session, one referred to a departmental parent-teacher planning session, and five persons gave negative responses.

4. Answers from eighteen individuals concerning the question of frequency of parent-teacher sessions sponsored by the church school revealed that to their knowledge there

had been no parent-teacher sessions. Five responses indicated that one session had been held during the preceding year.

5. Response to the question of the frequency of home-visitation on the part of the teacher revealed that no home-visitation program was used last year. The church school superintendent visited some homes, but only for the purpose of recruitment of parents as teachers.

6. Answers to the question of frequency of communication with the home by means of card or telephone calls were in keeping with the church-school procedure of sending a leaflet to the pupil after he was absent one Sunday and of making a telephone call to the home after he was absent two Sundays. However, six individuals gave no answer to this question and two said that the above method was used irregularly.

7. The teachers and church-school leaders indicated that the attitude of the parents of pupils who attended class regularly was cooperative when parents were asked to work on special projects, but that the attitude of non-church members generally reflected a lack of interest.

8. Four parents did not answer the question relating to the attitude of parents toward the church school, but all other parents indicated that the church-school program was adequate in the church-school session, but

its effectiveness did not extend beyond Sunday morning.

9. Parents and teachers gave different emphases in their responses to the question concerning the most effective and helpful procedures in the program for church-home relationships. Parental responses referred to the notes and telephone calls made to absentee pupils as well as to the fact that the church-wide building fund project increased church-home interest.

In addition, church-school teachers and leaders mentioned the following methods: (1) parent-pupil meetings held at the close of a unit; (2) Christmas and Easter Family Worship services planned for home use; and (3) parental cooperation sought in sharing in the expense of the Bibles presented in church to the third graders.

Summary of the conditions. At the beginning of this study it was clear that planned cooperation between the home and the church was practically non-existent. Teachers and parents alike agreed that the only regular communications with the home were made through the church-school secretary who sent leaflets and made telephone calls to absentee pupils. No literature was sent to the home for permanent keeping. Irregular telephone calls or cards sent to the home by the teacher to meet specific needs of the teacher and/or the pupil were the primary

source of home-church relationships between the teacher and the parents. Most parents were unaware of any parent-teacher sessions. There were no home-visitations made by teachers for the purpose of planning for the church-school sessions. Most parents felt that the church-school session did well on Sunday morning but did not extend its work and influence into the home.

II. A REVIEW OF THE METHODS FOR CHURCH-HOME COOPERATION USED IN THE STUDY

In this study the investigator was aware that when little consistent work had previously been done in the field of church-home cooperation it was impossible to put into immediate use a fully-developed program requiring cooperation between the church and the home. Effective church-home relationships are dependent upon sincere and enthusiastic cooperation on the part of the church and the parents. The situation which existed last year in which parents expected little more from the church school than what was accomplished from 9:30 A.M. to 10:45 A.M. made it evident that parental education was required. The growth in understanding of the significance of the role of the parent in the Christian education of the child was a gradual process.

In this thesis the discussion of procedures for

church-home cooperation used in the study at Central Methodist Church follows the same divisions as those made within the questionnaire which was sent to all the fourth-grade teachers in the Methodist churches of the Central District which use closely-graded materials.⁶⁶

Communications with the home. Church-home relationships began in September with a visit by the teachers to the home of every pupil. Each teacher went to the homes of half of the class. The purpose of the visit was: (1) to become acquainted with the parents and to observe the home setting; (2) to give the parents the opportunity to become acquainted with the teacher; (3) to explain the purposes of the year's work; (4) to stress the value of regular church-school attendance; and, most important, (5) to obtain information from the parent concerning the individual needs and interests of the child at whose home the visit was made. In order to obtain such information, a general-information questionnaire was prepared to serve as a basis for the conference between teacher and parent.⁶⁷

At the initial visit, each parent was also given a

⁶⁶The check marks on the questionnaire found in the appendix make it possible for the reader to see what specific suggestions were actually used in this study.

⁶⁷See Appendix, pp. 165-166.

unit-study questionnaire to fill out and return to the teacher.⁶⁸ The purpose of this questionnaire was to determine how much previous study or family preparation had already been accomplished with the forthcoming unit of study to be undertaken in the church school. A second visit was made to each home in February for the purpose of evaluating the growth of each child.

Parent-teacher meetings were held at the beginning of each new unit for the purpose of acquainting the parents with (1) the new unit of study; (2) the basic psychological approaches to learning to be used in the unit; and (3) the evaluation and summary of the work accomplished by the children in the preceding unit. Refreshments were served at each meeting so that an atmosphere of fellowship and informality might undergird the parent-teacher meetings. At these meetings a number of teaching methods were demonstrated: (1) the use of such devices as tape recordings and slides; (2) the development of such projects as puppet shows and dramatizations; and (3) the reliance on personal contributions of resource leaders and of participants in group discussions. At one meeting the children themselves contributed by leading a worship service and by presenting a puppet show.

⁶⁸Ibid.

As each unit progressed, telephone calls were frequently made to ask pupils to participate in specific activities of the program and to enlist parental participation. Parents felt free to call either teacher to discuss their child and his church-school experience.

Every week a letter was written by the teachers and sent to each home. In it were explanations of the projects to be undertaken by the class, a description of the purposes of the weekly sessions, and frequent statements as to the characteristics of nine-year-olds. Weekly assignments were always included in these letters so that pupils and parents might work at home together. Assignments usually contained new material which served as a foundation for the forthcoming church-school session.⁶⁹

Conferences with the parents at church before or after the regular church-school session were very rare, although immediate problems were met on several occasions. Longer discussions on the telephone were preferred because of the freedom from interruptions.

Parents in the church-school class. On several occasions during the six-months study, parents were asked to participate in the class session. For example, one

⁶⁹See Appendix, p. 167.

couple was asked to sing and teach Christmas carols.

Parents were cooperative in sending appropriate items from home which could be used in the church-school class. One parent sent in a Greek translation of the Bible for the class to share together. Requests for cooperation of this type were made through the weekly letters to the parents.

There were no parties for the parents or pupils at Christmas or Thanksgiving.

Methodist materials. At the beginning of the year the pupil's book could not be sent home for parents and children to use together. In order to encourage home assignments, whole sections had to be copied into the weekly letters. After three months, the Commission on Education bought extra books so that the children could keep them at home.

Five of the parents were teachers in other departments and thus, as teachers, were given The Christian Home magazine. None of the other parents received this magazine until the last two months of this study when the Commission on Education decided to experiment in sending copies to all parents of one department for one month. This was done to stimulate interest in, use of, and familiarity with The Christian Home.

The worship pamphlets for Thanksgiving and Christmas were not purchased to send to the home because the Commission on Education encouraged each department to originate a worship service for home use. This was done with the fourth-grade group.

Use of the Bible in the home. Instead of asking parents to keep a card at home to mark the times that the pupil brought his Bible to church school (as was suggested in the Methodist materials), a book marker was made in church school by each pupil upon which a gold star was pasted to note the times the individual brought his Bible. This method was used because it was suggested by one of the pupils.

Memorization of specific Bible verses appropriate to the unit was encouraged at home through the weekly home assignments.

Many of the specific suggestions in the weekly letters encouraged the use of the Bible in the home. Families were specifically requested to plan for weekly Bible reading during the month of January.

Family worship. Specific suggestions for Thanksgiving worship were written in a friendly note to each parent.

In the church-school session the pupils prepared

a Christmas worship service. The children made a Christmas folder which contained material to be used in the home worship service. The folder was made to serve as a worship center as well.

In one of the weekly letters a resource list of Christmas records, books, and carols for use in the home at Christmastime was included.

Other methods for church-home cooperation. Another method used in this study was that of encouraging children to use and enjoy the church library. As a group the class visited the library. Books which were related to a specific unit of study were checked out of the library by the children for use in the class session. Those who wanted to take the books home were permitted to do so.

Special service projects offered opportunities for church-home cooperation. Children were given the opportunity to contribute money towards two specific projects undertaken by the fourth-grade class: two dresses were bought by the class for a lady in the County Hospital, who was 117 years of age, and at Halloween money was collected for the United Nations Children's Fund. Both of these projects were planned well in advance by asking each family to have a receptacle at home in which to place an offering for these projects. Parents were asked to

encourage the child to earn money for each project by polishing shoes, by drying dishes, or by performing other household tasks.

At Christmas the children went Christmas carolling at the San Joaquin County Hospital. Each child was asked to help bake Christmas cookies, decorate a coffee can as a Christmas gift, and take the cookies in the can to the County Hospital where they were given to one of the elderly ladies.

Parental cooperation was used in planning the transportation for two trips: one to the County Hospital for the purposes described above and one to the Temple Israel for observing worship.

III. THE CHURCH SCHOOL IN FEBRUARY

This study in church-home cooperation at Central Methodist Church was terminated at the end of February, 1957. A partial evaluation of the study is included in this part of the thesis through a description of the church-school class at the close of the study. The analysis of results is concerned with the class session, the attitude of the Commission on Education, and the attitudes of the co-teachers toward the study.

Class session. It was found that the attendance

of each member of the class was very regular. Attendance increased from sixteen to twenty-two. Each new person who came to the group remained as a member. Interest was high because the teachers tried to use the individual talents of the pupils during the sessions. Most of the information regarding individual interests and talents was obtained through the General-Information Questionnaire which served as the basis of inquiry at the time of the first home-visitation. The teachers felt that this tool was valuable as it helped them to become well-acquainted with each child. As each pupil was appealed to through his interest and need it was easier for him to grasp the meaning of the lesson at his own level of maturity.

As was previously mentioned, class sessions were enriched by parental participation. One family sang and taught Christmas carols to the group. Parents helped in providing transportation for class trips during the church-school sessions. One parent directed choral reading. On these occasions the children were extremely proud of their parents. Family units were strengthened by parental participation in the church-school sessions. Many examples could be cited, such as the boy who became so excited over the idea of making a worship center in the class that, unknown to the teachers, he asked his father for some wood. On the following Sunday he brought into

class a five-foot cross which he had made on his own initiative.

Over the period of six months, an excellent esprit de corps developed in the class. The children began to feel and act as a group. They recognized the individual talents which each member used to make the class enjoyable and successful.

The Commission on Education. The Commission on Education became more and more interested in the results of the study. As was mentioned previously, one outcome from the interest of the Commission was the purchase of extra books to be sent home with the children as permanent possessions. Another expression of the interest was evidenced in the experiment undertaken by the Commission for acquainting parents with The Christian Home. Copies were sent to all the parents of the children in one department for one month and to the parents of the children in another department for the next month. This process was continued until all departments had been included.

It is hoped that the exploratory study made at Central Methodist Church will stimulate the Commission on Education to continue its efforts to strengthen the family unit through church-home cooperation.

The attitude of the teachers who also served on the Commission was no longer skeptical. In fact, many began

to incorporate specific church-home procedures into their own programs where previously little had been done.

Most teachers are busy individuals who feel that they do not have the time to do anything more than prepare for the Sunday morning church-school session. But teachers do not accept the responsibilities of teaching if they do not feel that in some way they might contribute to the Christian development of the children within their group. They are all concerned, and as they see that one teacher is having a rich experience in teaching because of the use of such methods as Parents' Meetings, home-assignments, or parental participation in class, often they will want to try other methods too. Ideas are catching. One from Central Methodist said, "I must plan to have a parent-teacher meeting next month. I have been just too busy to have one so far, but I can see from what you and your co-teacher are doing that they really are helpful."⁷⁰ Another teacher said, "You mean that you have visited in the home of each child? Well, I could not do that, but I could make a telephone call to each family."⁷¹ And she did!

⁷⁰Statement by a fifth-grade teacher.

⁷¹Statement by a third-grade teacher.

The joy of Christian service is so great that one is swept into doing great thinking and forgetting small differences. This happened as a result of the study at Central Methodist Church.

Attitude of co-teachers. As a result of this study, the teachers were convinced that effective Christian education is dependent upon church-home cooperation. Both teachers wondered how they had ever previously taught without using the methods for church-home cooperation which were used in this study.

The personal visitation to the home of each pupil proved of greatest value to the teachers. The importance of such a method for church-home cooperation cannot be stressed enough. The method takes into consideration the element of human relationships which are so vital in the Christian education process. Both parents and children were noticeably more cooperative with and appreciative of the teachers after the visitation had been made.

The method which was regarded by the teachers to be second in importance was that of sending weekly letters containing home-assignments and relevant information to each home. These kept the parents abreast with happenings in the church school. The weekly assignments were enjoyed by many families. Evidence of this is seen in the next

section of this chapter, which includes case-study evaluations. However, from the point of view of the teachers, three important factors regarding home-letters were highlighted in this study.

First, it was discovered that the effectiveness and value of making a home-assignment for each child depends on an awareness of the parents. The home-assignment program used at Central Methodist Church was fairly successful because the assignments were written to the home each week where parents and child read the letter together. One teacher in the church school at Central Methodist Church, upon hearing of this method, tried to make home-assignments verbally in class. The children frequently forgot what she had said, and the parents of the children seldom knew what was expected of them or of their children. As a result the teacher was disappointed, saying that home-assignments did not work. This study has shown the importance of mailing written assignments to the home.

Secondly, an additional value from the written home-assignment is in the follow-through on Sunday morning. The study showed that when the teachers based part of the activities of the class session on information used in the previous home-assignment the children were stimulated to attempt the next assignment. When the teachers did not utilize the material assigned in the letters, it was very

unlikely that the children would work on the next assignment. The assignments usually contained new material which served as a foundation for the next church-school session. When parents and children used the assignments, the method was extremely effective. When home-assignments were not completed, the method was not satisfactory for it caused delay and repetition in the class session.

The third value of the weekly letter was emphasized by the parents. The letters provided an opportunity for parental education which was appreciated by many parents.

In this study the teachers learned from experience that the most effective parent-teacher meetings are those which include participation of children for part of the meeting. Five Parents' Meetings were held during the six-months period. At the first meeting there were only three families represented. The teachers soon learned that parents come primarily to see their own children participate in these meetings. Parents are then willing to attend and to discuss new plans for their children's growth.

Parent-teacher meetings also gave the opportunity for parents to grow intellectually. Discussions were a source for new ideas. Other methods served this purpose as well. An example of growth through leadership participation was found in the incident with Mrs. K. The teacher had asked Mrs. K., a parent of a pupil in the fourth-grade

class, to open the parent-teacher meeting with brief devotions. At first she hesitated. Then she agreed to prepare for such an undertaking. After the meeting was over, the teacher thanked Mrs. K., telling her how helpful her material had been. She smiled and said: "That is the first time I have ever led in a period of public worship. Thank you so much for asking me. It was so good for me! I have learned so much!"

Through this study the teachers became aware that parents sincerely want to help in the Christian education of their children when they are shown how they can do so. The teachers found that the methods of home-visitation, of written home-assignments, and of parent-teacher meetings were the most effective means to meet the needs of parents and children within this particular group. These methods served as the basis upon which success in trips, in parental participation in class sessions, in use of Methodist materials, and in use of Biblical material within the home depend.

Over the six-months period the teachers became aware that more important than the particular method for church-home cooperation was the attitude behind the method. It was as the pupils and parents accepted the attitudes of love, sincerity, and interest expressed to them by the teachers that they began to use the tools, or methods,

of church-home cooperation which lead to individual growth in personality. The teachers of this study concluded that without such an attitude the use of the methods for church-home cooperation would be ineffective.

IV. CASE-STUDIES IN INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

An important part of the study made at Central Methodist Church was the summary of the observed growth in the participants of the study when methods for church-home cooperation were used. Throughout the year the teachers kept written records, noting observations concerning individual children and recording comments made to the teachers by the parents. At the close of the six-months period the parents of the children in this study were asked to fill out the same questionnaire which was sent to all parents of fourth graders within churches in the Central District using closely-graded materials. On the bases of the teachers' observations of parental comments and of the returns of parental questionnaires, case-study evaluations were made. In order to give emphasis to the case-studies, the author has included some of the written comments made by the parents on the returned questionnaires. The names used are not the actual names of the children and every effort has been made to preserve their anonymity.

Case No. 1. Timmy has three younger brothers and sisters. His family, of the "low-average" socio-economic status, is one in which the mother is the unifying factor in the lives of the children.

Previous to the home-visitation made in this study, no family devotions were used. Timmy's father had not been reared in an environment where family worship occurred. When the teacher telephoned the mother to make an appointment for the initial visitation, the mother specifically asked the teacher to try to include her husband in the conference. When this was done, the husband frankly said that he could not be insincere before the children, entering into worship which was not meaningful to him. It was interesting to note that these same parents commented at the end of the six-months that regular family worship had become a part of the family routine. They considered their developing interest in family worship a result of Timmy's church-school experience.

Timmy is a very active boy. For the first month of this study the teachers were busy keeping up with his antics. However, it became evident by the end of September that the mother was working with her son on the home-assignments. He became eager to participate in church-school activities and became appreciative of the contributions of other children. When the teacher com-

mented to the mother on Timmy's response, she replied, "Those are the things which we learned as children. We should teach them to our children, but we get so busy. It helps to have you point them out to us." This mother made the teachers aware that with her they were accomplishing one of the main purposes of the study: to make it easier for parents to plan for Christian education in the home.

Timmy's parents stated that the home-visitation plan was more effective than the plan for sending literature into the home. The mother wrote on her questionnaire:

Your visit the other day caused quite a bit of excitement and brought the realization that the home and the church do work together. Imagine what a visit from other teachers would do!

It was the opinion of this mother that visitation in the home gave the child a feeling that his teacher was interested in him as an individual.

The home-assignment procedures were appreciated by this family because, as the mother also stated in the questionnaire:

It gave the whole family a chance to learn that parents are also working with the teachers in their religious education. May I say that since we have had to be quite diligent about Timmy's assignments, we felt we should also work with our other two children. Now we are also using material the others bring home.

The following incident illustrated the mother's attitude: one assignment included the first part of the story of Joseph. The teacher had copied the story from

the pupil's book and included it in the weekly letter. All of the children in Timmy's family became so interested in the story that they asked their mother to find the story in the Bible and read the rest of it to them.

When asked how the church could strengthen the cooperation between the church and the home, the parents requested that the parent-teacher meetings include participation by the children. This had been done only on the last Parents' Night. Timmy's mother wrote in the questionnaire:

Both teachers expect the best from each child. I suppose each child has sensed that, and it seems to me the whole class is cooperative. The children actually stumbled over each other wanting to help put on their program and serve refreshments! It makes me wonder. How can I improve my understanding of children?

Case No. 2. Jack's father teaches school during the week and his mother attends college full-time in order to prepare for her teaching credential. As the eldest of four children, Jack capably assumes responsibility in the home and church school. He is a well-adjusted, quiet child whose mind is alert and active. His mother warned us in the beginning of the year that Jack must be kept busy or he would lose interest.

Jack's mother felt that the methods used during this study to encourage the use of the Bible at home resulted in a change of Jack's attitude toward the Bible. She stated

"He has developed an interest and an understanding of the Bible. He no longer feels it is something to be used only on Sunday."

During the initial home-visitation the mother asked the teacher to mail the weekly-letters directly to Jack because he liked to receive mail. At the close of the study she made the following comment through the returned questionnaire:

At first Jack enjoyed receiving mail, then he began to anticipate the arrival of the letters, and then he became interested in what was in the letters. From this interest has come much satisfaction in answering his own questions.

The encouragement given to informal or formal worship within the home through definite suggestions made by the church school were carried out in Jack's family with the results described by the mother in the returned questionnaire: "Jack has taken more of an interest in developing the prayer-time and is more conscious of the fact that everyone prays differently."

In general, the parental attitude toward church-home cooperation contributed to Jack's feeling that he belongs to a family to which he can contribute in his own way. The attitude of parent and pupil toward the program of the church school was illustrated in the following episode: When the teacher telephoned to remind Jack to be at the church at 9:00 A.M. with his home-made cookies to

take on the Christmas carolling trip, his mother said,

Oh, he'll be there! The family had been planning to go to San Diego but delayed leaving until right after church school because Jack didn't want to miss the trip.

When the teacher replied that she hoped that family plans had not been greatly changed, the mother answered, "Oh, no, this (meaning the children's trip) is important!"

Case No. 3. The third case shows a situation in which there was no cooperation from the home. In only one family did the teacher fail to have any communication other than telephone calls. Letters were sent weekly but the mother did not respond. The boy, Don, was under the impression all year that he had never received a letter. One day in church school he said, "You send letters to the other children. Why don't you send them to me? How can I do the things the other children do if you don't send letters to me?" Although the teacher explained that letters were sent to him regularly, he still denied receiving them. The teacher telephoned the home again and discovered that the letters had been received but ignored due to lack of time. Within the year the mother had been divorced and then had started working full time. The home-visitation was never made to Don's home although the mother was called on the telephone four times to ask for an appointment. Sensing a growing annoyance on the part of the mother,

the teacher decided that it would be best to ask the parent to call her when she was free. She never called.

Don is an intelligent and capable child. His restless spirit caused disciplinary problems in class. The teachers tried to learn of his needs and interests through conversation with the boy. This helped but Don was never really a part of the group. He was aware that he was wanted and liked by his teachers and classmates. However, he was also aware that his mother did not work with him at home on the assignments. His attendance was irregular. Lack of home-cooperation seemed to make the difference.

Case No. 4. Gloria, an intelligent and gifted girl, has one older sister. Her parents are unusually talented. They are well-known vocal soloists. The entire family sings together, frequently putting on performances as a team. Although the mother works part-time, the family is closely-knit.

Gloria has performed as a singer before many people. However, she is very shy with children her own age. She needs and strives for the acceptance of others. At the initial home-visitation, the mother stressed the importance of helping Gloria feel that she is an important member of the group. The teacher attempted to help the child by asking her to sing a solo in the Junior worship

service, but she met with a negative response. The teacher talked with the mother concerning Gloria's attitude. An arrangement was made for the parents to come to the church-school session with Gloria so that the three could sing Christmas carols together. The parents were delighted that the situation presented the opportunity for Gloria to sing a solo for her peers.

As Gloria "blossomed" under personal attention, she became less retiring and participated more actively. It was because of the cooperation between the church and the home that Gloria was finally able to say that her present church-school class was the first in three years that she wanted to attend.

The parents appreciated the communications made with the home by the church-school teachers. The mother's comments on these communications were:

They helped me to realize that as a parent I should work closely with the church-school teachers to help my daughter get the most out of her church-school training. My interests increased along with my child's as contacts between teacher and parents were made.

In regard to the weekly letters sent to each home, the mother wrote in the questionnaire:

The planned letters sent home asking parents to use principles, suggestions, et cetera, for actually living Christianity were so helpful to me. My attempts to improve my attitudes and self-control and my attempts to understand my child and to grow with her spiritually resulted from those letters. They sharpened

my thinking about the responsibility we have as parents to set the right example at home and not just verbally help our children to find Christ. We must be able to live as Christians ourselves so that our children can catch Christ's way for us.

Gloria's mother was impressed with the positive results from the use of the Bible at home. She wrote on the questionnaire:

Since Gloria has been in your class her Bible has become very important. She seems to be hungry for God's word. She often reads her Bible by herself, turning to it when she is sad. Her prayers at the table are wonderful to hear. Last week when we visited my sick father, Gloria quietly went into his room and offered to read the Bible to my father.

Case No. 2. Stan is a quiet, capable, and sensitive boy. Both of his parents work. Stan and his older brother go to his grandmother's home after school.

It was noted in September during the home-visitation that Stan did not especially enjoy church school. He had previously attended a smaller church where his capabilities were recognized. In the larger group at Central Methodist Church he felt bewildered. The teachers realized from the home-visitation that here again it was necessary to recognize the individual's need and interests. Through information obtained from the parents, the teachers were able to help consider Stan's needs and interests. The change in the boy was gradual. When asked to do a specific task related to one of his interests, he responded very well; he gradually began to volunteer for tasks; at the close

of the six-months period he seemed to be happy and well-adjusted. Parental cooperation helped Stan to realize that church school is important and can be interesting. His perfect attendance and his attitude in class were evidences of his new interest.

The home-visitation was also important to Stan's mother. It seemed to help her realize that the teachers were genuinely concerned with the spiritual growth of her child. It also made her aware that growth in Christian personality is dependent upon parental cooperation. Several times she came to class, offering her help in a friendly way.

In regard to the parental cooperation of the group as a whole, Stan's mother made an interesting statement:

I am sorry to say that I do not think the teachers received the complete cooperation on the part of the parents that would have made this study a complete success, but it is understandable. This (home-church cooperation plan) is something new and different. Most church-school classes, in fact, all the classes my child has attended, were forgotten by 10:45 on Sunday morning! So it is not that the parents did not want to cooperate. It is a question of getting used to the idea that religious training occurs throughout the week under their influence. Now that the seeds have been planted, I see no reason that they won't grow and grow. I think my child received more religious guidance these past few months than he has before in any other class.

Parental comments made concerning the methods for the use of the Bible in the home were interesting. One mother stated in the questionnaire:

I think that the parents profited by the methods as much as the child. Many adults want to read the Bible daily but in our busy world allow something else to take our time. However, when your specific suggestions for Bible reading came in the letters, we realized how necessary Bible reading is in our lives. As a result we took time as a family for Bible reading.

Other cases. With the exception of the one which described a non-cooperative parent, the cases cited above were typical of the responses from children and parents. Incidents from other cases follow:

(1) At the initial home-visitation with the mother of Sylvia, the teacher observed that the concept of religion being basically taught in the home and being supplemented by the church school was entirely new to the mother. Through discussion the parent developed a new concept of the weekly assignments as a tool for the parent to use in the day by day program of Christian education.

(2) In October Janey received an assignment to retell part of the Joseph story in her own words. Her mother worked hard with her on the assignment, but preparation caused such an emotional struggle at home that the mother suggested on the following Sunday that the teacher not give a similar assignment to Janey. The surprise of the mother was great when she was told that her daughter had retold the story with great poise and self-possession. At the close of the six-months period the mother told the teacher that

Janey now looks forward to each weekly assignment. Preparation of assignments has become a definite part of family routine.

(3) The visitation to the home of Arthur made it possible for the teachers to learn of Arthur's ability to make dry floral arrangements. The following Sunday he brought a floral arrangement for the church-school worship center. This contribution was a direct outgrowth of the home-visitation program.

(4) Pete's case is similar to Arthur's. The home-visitation made it possible to learn that shy Pete has had a great love for flowers. He prunes rose bushes and starts new bushes from cuttings. For weeks the worship center in the church school was beautified by roses from Pete's garden because he felt that in this way he could contribute to his class. When Pete can thus be part of his group, he is happy. One morning the teacher met Pete's parents entering church. The conversation revealed that the family was going on a picnic after church school. They said, "The difference between this year and last is that last year when we wanted to go on a picnic, we went! Now we go to church school first. The boy says so!"

(5) Greg's mother learned through the weekly letters

that the class was studying different versions of the Bible. She asked Greg if he would like to show the class an old Bible which was a family possession. The whole group enjoyed seeing the old Bible.

(6) In October, Ann said: "What will I do? Mother won't help me with my letters that you send!" But at the end of the study the mother wrote that the letters stimulated family Bible reading and were valuable in keeping the parents informed of the class activities.

(7) Barbara began to offer a prayer at mealtime as a result of the suggestions made in the weekly letters.

(8) Jim suggested to his parents that the family have a worship service together on Christmas eve and wait until Christmas morning to open the presents.

(9) Parents of Stan, Janey, Pete, Arthur, and Greg made special comments in the questionnaire concerning the value in having the children give a gift to the elderly woman in the County Hospital. Each child earned his own money for the gift by doing jobs around the house. Parental cooperation was very necessary at this point.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion to the study at Central Methodist

Church is that the methods for church-home cooperation used in this study were effective in contributing to the growth and development of Christian personalities. The case-study evaluations showed that cooperation between the church and the home greatly increased the development in Christian growth of the parents as well as of the children concerned.

A program for church-home cooperation involves parental education. In the beginning of the study many parents were unaware of the importance of their role in the Christian education of their children. The study revealed that parents want and need specific suggestions which they can use as a basis for teaching attitudes to their children.

While the parent-teacher meetings were helpful to those who attended, the home-visitation and the weekly letters to the homes served as the two foundations upon which specific Christian education took place. The home-visitation supplied the opportunity for the teacher to become acquainted with the child and the parent, and for the parent to become acquainted with the teacher and with the objectives of the church-school class. The weekly letters provided the opportunity for parents to keep in touch with the activities of the church school and to develop a parental approach to Christian education. Par-

ents appreciated knowing what was going on in class so that they could build on the interest for the next Sunday through home preparation.

An outstanding result of the study was that families developed a new attitude toward the Bible and family devotions. Most of the children learned to use and enjoy the Bible as a very special book. This was one of the objectives of the unit studied. Every family stated that it had begun to read the Bible together as the result of the home assignments. Some families did this regularly, others occasionally.

No one method of church-home cooperation is complete in itself. For example, the success of written home-assignments was dependent upon a cooperative attitude of the parents. Parental cooperation, in turn, was dependent upon a successful home-visitation program.

Visits which are merely social calls are not sufficient. It was as the teachers attempted to discover the needs and interests of each child that the atmosphere where religion is caught and taught was formed. It is in such an environment that spiritual growth is realized.

Parental cooperation was not obtained quickly. For example, it was not until the fourth Parents' Night that one of the parents volunteered to bring refreshments for the next meeting. It takes time to build a lasting

relationship which is built upon sincerity of purpose, upon honesty of motive, and upon thoroughness of procedure.

Case-study evaluation has made it clear that motivation is the key to successful church-home relationships. In the group studied there was a three-way cycle of interaction of teacher, parent, and pupil: (1) the teachers were motivated by the concept that individual growth is dependent on church-home cooperation (as a result of this motivation the teachers made available to the parents certain methods for church-home cooperation); (2) parents were motivated both by the children who asked for parental help and by teachers who stimulated a parental desire to learn; (3) children were motivated by both parents and teachers. The cooperative interaction among parents, pupils, and teachers determines successful church-home relationships.

CHAPTER VII

ANALYSIS, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis has been concerned with the church-home relationships in the Methodist church schools in the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference using closely-graded lessons. The study was based upon a six-months period. The use of specific methods suggested for church-home cooperation in closely-graded Methodist materials was investigated.

There were three objectives of the thesis: (1) to indicate the role that the home should play in Christian education; (2) to determine to what extent the Methodist church schools within the selected area were seeking to meet the need for church-home cooperation through the use of specific suggestions found in Methodist materials in the six-months period; and (3) to show what could happen in a fourth-grade church-school class when suggested methods were used to develop church-home cooperation over the same six-months period.

Such methods as home-visitation, parent-teacher meetings, and weekly assignment used in this study were suggested in the Methodist materials. These methods have been used in the Character Research Project of Union College,

Schnectady, New York, since 1935 in a manner which has led to effective relationships between the church and home. Part of the concern of this study has been to determine to what extent these suggestions are also used in Methodist church schools in the Central District of the California-Nevada Conference.

I. ANALYSIS OF PROCEDURES

An analysis of the procedures followed in the investigation to achieve the objectives of the study are discussed in the following sections.

Review and evaluation of pertinent literature.

Literature which includes discussions of the role that the home should play in the process of Christian education was read and evaluated. The purpose was to show in general terms why the home is important in a program of Christian education. In order to illustrate the widespread concern among religious educators for the need of cooperation between the church and the home, specific church-home programs of the Character Research Project, the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and the Episcopal Church were reviewed. However, no detailed study of these programs was made as to the effectiveness of their application.

Further investigation in the area of church-home

cooperation might well include a more detailed study of the factors within specific church-home programs which have contributed to the successful relationships between the home and the church.

Specific curricular suggestions. The Teacher's Textbook, The Christian Home, Child Guidance in Christian Living, and Methodist pamphlets on church-home relationships were read in order to determine what specific suggestions for church-home cooperation were made over a six-months period. A complete listing of suggestions was made from the sources mentioned above. Although the listing is tedious, it is included in the thesis in order to show the extent of concrete suggestions from which a summary was made. The final summary of twenty-seven suggestions for church-home cooperation served as a basis for the questionnaires used in the study.

Selection of ten Methodist churches. Three of the ten churches selected for special emphasis in this study cooperated to the extent of calling special parent-teacher meetings. It appeared that the value of such personal meetings was not only in obtaining more complete questionnaire returns, but also in creating an opportunity for mutual parent-teacher education in the area of church-home cooperation. The result of this procedure was the

startling realization that many teachers and parents are not aware of the potentiality for Christian growth that lies within the area of church-home cooperation. Neither do they know how to achieve a working home and church relationship.

There were weaknesses in the questionnaire procedure for gathering data. Returns from the questionnaires indicated what methods had been used from September, 1956, through February, 1957, but failed to include adequate evaluation of the methods used.

The lack of cooperation from the teachers seemed to indicate that little or nothing was done in the area of church-home cooperation over the six-months period. However, this fact was not proved. Although two letters were sent to each teacher, fifty per cent of the teachers failed to respond to the questionnaire.

The number of questionnaires sent to the parents was dependent upon the cooperation of the teachers who gave the investigator the parents' names. The strength of this procedure was that the evaluation of the teachers and the parents was based upon the same methods. The weakness was that it did not provide an opportunity for parents to express themselves in the churches where cooperation from the teacher was not obtained.

The questionnaires were very valuable in the area

of parent-teacher relationships. Both parents and teachers were stimulated by suggestions within the questionnaire itself to utilize methods hitherto unknown to them. Both groups received an understanding of the role that each group plays in Christian education.

The study at Central Methodist Church. The study at Central Methodist Church was made to show what can happen in a fourth-grade class over a six-months period when suggested methods for church-home cooperation are used. The strength of this procedure was the opportunity to show that the results of effective church-home relationships are seen in terms of growth in Christian personality. Sample case-studies of the individual growth illustrated the results of the study.

The weakness of the procedure was in the small number of individuals involved in the study. Little more than generalized statements as to the relationship between church-home cooperation and development in Christian personality in children can be made. However, observable results in the families who participated in the study at the Central Methodist Church of Stockton, California, are indicative of the positive relationship between church-home cooperation and the growth of Christian personality.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The role that the home plays in the growth and development of Christian personality is of great significance. The home provides the environment in which learning can take place. Effective and positive character education consists of positive attitude formation. The home is important in Christian education because it provides the most important setting in which Christian attitudes are formed.

The study has shown that the Methodist materials include specific suggestions for strengthening the cooperation between the church and the home. Parents and teachers have both indicated that when these suggestions have been carried out, the results have indicated an increased growth in the Christian personalities of parents and children. It was also acknowledged that where the suggestions have not been carried out, the effectiveness of the Christian education program has been limited. The fact that the suggestions were not carried out by many of the teachers indicates that either the suggestions were not specific enough or that the teachers were not given help in interpretation and in understanding of the curriculum suggestions.

Questionnaires received from the parents and

teachers revealed that in general little was accomplished in the area of church-home cooperation from September, 1956, through February, 1957, in the churches of the Central District which use closely-graded materials in the fourth grade. Communications between the church and the home were infrequent and inconsistent. Church-wide family nights and telephone messages to absentee pupils were the principal means of communication between the church and the home. Church schools within this study did not make available to the parents the Methodist materials for use in the homes. There was little parental participation in the activities of the church school. Questionnaire returns indicated that regular weekly letters were not sent to the parents. Visits to the home for the purpose of explaining the program and becoming acquainted with the pupils and the parents were not consistently made.

Procedures for church-home cooperation are not ends in themselves, but are means by which the Christian growth in personality is promoted. They are the tools used to attain the objective. When the personality development of each child becomes the center of a program of Christian education, such methods as parent-teacher meetings, visitation to the home, and weekly assignments are used in

teaching planned to meet the needs and interests of each child.

Methods of church-home cooperation are most effective when carried on consistently. The personal relationship between parents and teachers is the heart of a church-home program. Visits to the home are very important to parents. Through these visits parents become aware that teachers have a vital concern for each child. Parents realize that there is a planned program for the Christian growth of each child. Regular weekly letters can play an important role in a program for Christian education when parents and children realize that these letters are a dependable source of guidance. The need for the guidance received through the regular correspondence was expressed by the parents. Teachers must realize that much of the effectiveness of a particular method depends upon the consistency with which it is used.

It should be noted that the effectiveness of the method also depends upon the advance preparation for its use on the part of the teacher and of the parent. Inadequate planning can result in little or no growth on the part of the parent, child, and teacher.

A program for church-home cooperation becomes basically a program in parent education. Parents want and need specific suggestions which they can use as a

basis for weekly teaching of Christian attitudes to their children.

Motivation of parents and teachers seems to be the key to effective church-home cooperation. This study has shown that parents and teachers are concerned with the Christian education of their children but often do not know how to go about it. They must be motivated. The questionnaires revealed that teachers recognize the need for church-home cooperation but have done little to meet the need. They must be motivated and inspired as well as instructed. The growth of the child's personality depends upon his motivation to learn. Herein lies the great challenge of Christian education.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results of this study, there are several recommendations which can be made to help resolve the problem of motivation in church-home cooperation.

First, the Methodist Church should include techniques for church-home relationships as an integral part of the teacher-training sessions which are set up on a conference, district, and local church level. Teachers must become aware of the potentiality for growth in Christian personality which can be realized by a working relationship between the church and the home. While Methodist literature stimulates thought in this area, vision and

inspiration to apply the specific methods for church-home cooperation comes through personal relationships. Good teacher-training sessions could provide the necessary stimulation.

Methodist literature provides good suggestions for church-home cooperation, but the literature often is not received by the individuals who need it. It is difficult, for example, for teachers to make assignments in the pupil's book if the books are not ordered in sufficient number to be sent to the home. The Education Commission of each church must help to make available the Methodist literature to parents and teachers.

Availability of Methodist literature does not insure its use. Findings of this study indicate the advisability of forming church-school classes for parents. Although the classes would not be limited to the parents of church-school pupils, the membership would include them. Methodist literature would be introduced, explained, and used as a basis for group discussion in the weekly church-school class.

Another recommendation is that the Christian Education Commission attempt to educate teachers to their role in a church-home program. Effective church-home relationships are dependent upon the personal relationships between teacher and parent. Teachers must be made aware of their responsibilities in the desired relationship.

Many of the mechanics for church-home cooperation can be cared for by the Commission on Education, thus relieving the teachers. For example, it would greatly help the teachers if weekly-assignment cards, written for each child by his teacher, could be addressed and mailed by a person who makes this project his contribution to the church program.

If the Commission on Education would offer to pay for any expense involved in this program of home-church cooperation, teachers might be encouraged to write their weekly letters. Teachers need to feel that the Commission on Education is really concerned with supporting an active relationship between the home and the church.

In conclusion, the responsibility for the growth of Christian personality begins and ends with the home. The role of the church is to assist and inspire as well as to educate. Teachers and parents need a vision of their task. The curriculum is a ready tool for their use in achieving their goals. The responsibility for a successful church-home program lies with those persons who guide teachers and parents.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

- Bushnell, Horace. Christian Nurture. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947.
- Carpenter, Dorothy (ed.). Education Index. Vols. 8, 9. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1950-1957.
- Cockerille, Clara E., Elizabeth L. Reed, and Ada W. Smith. Editor, Henry M. Bullock. In Wisdom and in Stature: Teacher's Textbook, Course IV, Part 2. Nashville: The Graded Press, 1953.
- Cockerille, Clara E., and Freddie Henry. Edited by C.A. Bowen. In Wisdom and in Stature: Teacher's Textbook Course IV, Part I. Nashville: The Graded Press, 1953.
- Conger, E. M. God's Family. Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1955.
- Fallow, Wisner. The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946.
- Families in the Church. Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1955.
- Hymes, James L. Effective Home-School Relations. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953.
- Lamke, T. A. and Herbert M. Silvery (ed.). Master's Theses in Education. Cedar Falls, Iowa: Iowa State Teacher's College Research Publications, 1951-1956.
- Ligon, Ernest M. Dimensions of Character. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956.
- _____. A Greater Generation. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948.
- _____. The Psychology of Christian Personality. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950.
- Maynard, Donald M. Your Home Can Be Christian. New York: Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952.

Miller, Randolph C. Education for Christian Living.
Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1956.

More Than Words: Junior High School Resource Book.
Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1955.

Robinson, Serita (ed.). The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature. January, 1950, February, 1951.

Sherrill, Lewis J. The Rise of Christian Education.
New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944.

_____. The Struggle of the Soul. New York: The
Macmillan Company, 1955.

Staples, Edward D. A Plan for Home and Church Cooperation.
Nashville: Abingdon Press, [n.d.]

Trotter, A. H., and M. Harmon (ed.). Doctoral Dissertations Accepted by American Universities. New York: The
H. W. Wilson Company, 1950, 1955.

University of Southern California Press. University of Southern California Abstracts of Dissertations. Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1951, 1953, 1955.

Vieth, Paul H. (ed.). The Church and Christian Education.
St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1947.

Wescott, Regina H. The Family Lives Its Religion. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954.

Wyckoff, D. Campbell. The Task of Christian Education.
Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955.

B. PERIODICALS

Andrews, Ruth. "Parent-teacher Relationships are Important,"
Child Guidance, 15:18, November, 1956.

Augustine, Louise, "A Spaghetti Supper Serves a Purpose,"
Child Guidance in Christian Living, 15:18, September, 1956.

- Bullock, H. M. (ed.). "The Home and the Church Work Together for Children," Child Guidance in Christian Living, 15-16, September, 1956-February, 1957.
- _____. "Teaching Together in Home and Church," The Christian Home, 15-16, September, 1956-February, 1957.
- _____. "Study Guide for Parents," The Christian Home, 15-16, September, 1956-February, 1957.
- Carlson, Jessie B. "The Importance of Home Visitation," Child Guidance in Christian Living, 15:20, September, 1956.
- Daniels, Edward and Ethel. "Devotions for the Family," The Christian Home, 15-16, September, 1956-February, 1957.
- Hill, Dorothy L. "Superintendents and Teachers--Try These Ideas," Child Guidance in Christian Living, 15-16, September, 1956-February, 1957.
- Ligon, Eugene and William Koppe. "Significant Religious Education," Journal of Religion, 45-52, January, 1950-February, 1957.
- Maynard, Donald. "Parents' Problems," The Christian Home, 15-16, September, 1956-February, 1957.
- Mould, R. W. "These Parents Teach Religion: Presbyterian Parents Cooperate with Church-school Teachers," Christian Century, 67:111-113, January 25, 1950.
- Scott, Louise B. "Understanding the Child," Child Guidance in Christian Living, 16:10, February, 1957.
- Spaulding, Helen (ed.). "Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations in Religious Education," Religious Education, 45-52, May-June, 1950-1957.
- Strang, Ruth. "How Children Learn and Grow," Child Guidance, 15:1

C. PAMPHLETS

- Methodist Board of Education. "The Church and Families." Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954.

Methodist Board of Education. "The Church Plans for Family Camp." Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956.

"Preview: Official Materials for Christian Education authorized by General Convention." Greenwich: Seabury Press, 1955.

APPENDIX

C O P Y

815 West Alpine
Stockton, Calif.
February 20, 1957

Rev. William Dalton
Box 186
Ceres, California

Dear Rev. Dalton:

I am writing this letter to you because I need your help. It is my hope, however, that in the long run, the product of our cooperative efforts will also be of help to you.

The thesis problem that I am working on at the College of Pacific, in the field of Religious Education, seeks to investigate present church-home relationships in the Methodist churches using closely-graded lessons. There seem to be ample suggestions in the lesson materials for church-home cooperation, but I am not certain that these suggestions are being used. In order to validate my hypothesis, I would like some specific information from the fourth grade teachers and the parents of the fourth grade pupils in the church-schools using closely-graded materials. There are three different methods which might be used to secure this information. This is the point at which I need your cooperation in relationship to your own church. The three methods are:

1. If you think it desirable, I would come to your church and explain to your teachers and parents the questionnaire, and they would fill it out at that time. Under this plan, the meeting would have to be called under your direction.
2. After having adequate explanation from me, you would call a meeting of the fourth grade parents and teachers, requesting them to fill out the questionnaire at the meeting. You would then return the questionnaires directly to me.
3. The third alternative is for me to send the questionnaire directly to those individuals included on a current list of parents of fourth-grade pupils. You would mail this list to me immediately. If we use this plan, it would also be helpful if you would request someone (perhaps the teacher of the fourth grade class) to contact the parents by telephone, asking them to return the questionnaire promptly.

Rev. William Dalton -2

February 20, 1957

I know you are swamped with requests. However, if this study turns out to be as helpful as we here at the College of Pacific think it will be, your educational program may profit greatly. I am teaching a class at Central Methodist Church in which I am carefully following suggestions in the lessons and I would be happy to share with your teachers my results.

Since this matter is so urgent, I must make my plans immediately. Please call me collect (person to person) and give me your advice on this matter, indicating which of the three methods I might use in your church. I would deeply appreciate your assistance.

Yours Most Sincerely,

Telephone Number:

This request is approved
by thesis committee:

Howard 2-3002

Miss Kathleen Shannon
Dr. George Colliver
Dr. Frank Lindhorst

C O P Y

C O P Y

FAMILY REGISTRATION FORM

149

FAMILY OF _____ DATE _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

(One or both parents will fill out this form)

Names of Children:

(1) _____ Grade _____ Age _____ Public School _____
 (2) _____ Grade _____ Age _____ Public School _____
 (3) _____ Grade _____ Age _____ Public School _____
 (4) _____ Grade _____ Age _____ Public School _____

(The suggestions below indicate some ways by which homes can guide the child's religious growth. Please select items on which you wish to act.)

Note: This plan is designed for children up to high school.
 Do you think it should include high school freshmen? _____

- (1) _____ Examine the curriculum outline for my child's grade level.
- (2) _____ Read lesson references for my own benefit.
- (3) _____ Study lesson during week with child.
- (4) _____ Use the church library and reference shelves.
- (5) _____ Take part in monthly study conferences.
- (6) _____ Arrange for personal interview with the ministers as the need may arise.
- (7) _____ Attend the adult class, Sunday morning at 10:15 o'clock.
- (8) _____ Attend church.
- (9) _____ Secure religious magazines for the home.
- (10) _____ Use devotional booklet with the family.
- (11) _____ Help church school teachers on Sunday mornings if called upon.
- (12) _____ Practice making decisions by measuring them by Christian principles as I understand them.

I, the Mother _____ and/or the
 Father _____ wish our family to take
 full advantage of the Church-Family curriculum.

I, (we) belong to _____ Church in _____

C O P Y

Mrs. Virginia Curtis
815 W. Alpine
Stockton, California

October 18, 1956

Dear Mrs. Curtis:

In checking through our file folders for the churches in the Central District for you, there are certain general classifications that naturally emerged. For my listing here, I will give these each a code letter and describe them, and then use the letter in listing each of the churches in the District, except in those cases where these classifications do not quite apply. In this way, you will at least have some word regarding each of the District churches.

- (a) Those church schools which ordered no Closely Graded fourth grade material for this current quarter (October-December) but have quite consistently ordered Closely Graded Junior material for the period between October, 1954 and the July-September quarter 1956. (I would think you could pretty well assume that this indicates that these churches are using Closely Graded, having it on stock in sufficient quantity for the current Part, as these churches did not order the Group Graded Junior material, either. This could possibly indicate that they have switched to non-Methodist material on this level, but this would be the exception, I'm sure.)
- (b) Those church schools in which the last orders for this material were during the period from October 1954-September 1955. (The above explanation would probably apply in most of these cases, also.)
- (c) Course IV material ordered for October 1956.
- (d) Junior Quarterly (Group Graded) ordered for October 1956.

- | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| 1. Antioch | - | - | A |
| 2. Atwater | - | - | C |
| 3. Bethel Island | | - | D |
| 4. Brentwood | | | D |
| 5. Byron | | | A |
| 6. Cathay Valley | | | D |
| 7. Ceres | | | A |
| 8. Chowchilla | - | - | C |
| 9. Coulterville | | - | D |

Mrs. Virginia Curtis - 2

October 18, 1956

10.	Courtland	-		(No Junior material ordered: last order was for Group Graded in April quarter 1955)
11.	Dairyland	-	-	D
12.	Dos Palos	-	-	C
13.	Escalon	-	-	(No Junior material ordered between Oct. 1954 and pre- sent quarter.)
14.	Farmington	-	-	C
15.	Galt	-	-	D
16.	Hughson	-	-	A
17.	Ione	-	-	D
18.	Isleton	-	-	D
19.	Jackson	-	-	D
20.	Jamestown	-	-	D
21.	Knights Ferry	-	-	(No children's material being ordered)
22.	LeGrand	-	-	D
23.	Linden	-	-	D
24.	Liveingston	-	-	(Ordered 48 Junior Quarterly, which would seem that use of Closely Graded should be considered)
25.	Lodi	-	-	C
26.	Los Banos	-	-	C
27.	Madera	-	-	D (60 Junior Quarterly-see #24
28.	Manteca	-	-	B
29.	Mariposa	-	-	A
30.	Merced	-	-	A
31.	Modesto- Centenary	-	-	A (Both Group and Closely Graded have been ordered for past several quarters)
32.	Modesto - First	-	-	A
33.	Modesto - Wesley	-	-	A
34.	Oakdale	-	-	B
35.	Patterson-	-	-	
36.	Pittsburg-	-	-	(Group Graded and Course IV in Closely Graded Junior ordered each quarter between Oct. 1954 to present)
37.	Riverbank-	-	-	A
38.	Sonora	-	-	C
39.	Soulsbyville	-	-	(No Junior material ordered (between October 1954 through present quarter)
40.	Stockton - Central	-	-	C
41.	" Grace	-	-	C
42.	" (La Trinidad)	-	-	D
43.	" St. Mark's	-	-	C

Mrs. Virginia Curtis - 3

October 18, 1956

44. Stockton	St. Paul's	C	(No order for literature received this quarter) (No Junior material ordered between October 1954 through present quarter)
45. "	St. Peter's		
46. Sutter Creek			
47. Tracy		B	
48. Tuolumne		D	
49. Turlock		A	
50. Valley Springs		D	

I do hope this will be of help to you in some measure.
Surely you will have access to a current. Conference Journal
to obtain the addresses of these churches and the ministers'
names. Good luck in your follow-up on this.

Sincerely,

C O P Y

Nancy Humphry

QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE TEACHERS OF THE FOURTH GRADE CLASSES IN CHURCH
SCHOOLS USING CLOSELY-GRADED METHODIST MATERIALS

153

NAME _____ SEX _____

SPECIFIC NAME OF CHURCH _____

NAME OF TOWN _____

(If more space is needed to answer any question, please use the back of
the sheet and designate the question by number)

1. Contacts with the Home:

A. Contacts with the home were established by the church-school
teacher through: (please check all statements which apply)

1. Parent-teacher meetings
2. Telephone messages, for example, to explain the new unit
3. Friendly letters to parents to enlist parental cooperation
4. Visitation in the home to explain the purposes of the
year's work, the value of regular attendance, and on-going
activities
5. Brief conferences with parents at church before or
following the regular church-school session
6. A note written to each member of the class to make a home
assignment in the pupil's book

B. Describe specific results which you attribute to at least one
of the above. (Indicate to which of the above you are referring
by using the same number.)

2. Parents in the Church-School Class:

A. How have the parents shared in the activities of the church-
school class?

1. A joint church-school session of parents and pupils
was planned.
2. Individual talents of the parents were used at special
points in the unit of study, such as leading Christmas
carol singing, dramatizing the story "A Book to Enjoy,"
etc.
3. At the close of each session the parents were given the
opportunity to see some of the things that the pupils
had learned.
4. Parents assisted pupils in securing and bringing from
home items which were relevant to the unit of study.
5. Parents participated in Christmas and Thanksgiving
Parties.

B. Give specific results of those activities in which parents
worked with the class.

3. Methodist Materials:

A. Which of the printed Methodist materials were sent to the home? (please check)

1. The pupil's book, In Wisdom and in Stature
2. "The Christian Home" magazine
3. "Christmas Worship in the Home" (pamphlet)
4. "Thanksgiving Worship in the Home" (pamphlet)
5. "Try Family Reading" (leaflet)
6. "Some Good Books for Parents" (pamphlet)

B. How were the materials used? Specify the results.

4. Use of the Bible in the Home:

A. Parental cooperation in the use of the Bible at home was encouraged by: (please check)

1. asking the parents to keep a card at home to mark the times that the pupil brought his Bible to church-school
2. sending post cards to remind the pupils to bring their Bibles to church-school
3. encouraging memorization of Bible verses at home
4. asking families to plan for a specific time for Bible reading each week during January
5. making assignments in pupil's books which are shared as a family

B. Give specific results of parental cooperation in the use of the Bible at home.

5. Family Worship at Home:

A. Informal or formal family worship at home was encouraged by:

1. planning worship services for Thanksgiving and/or Christmas in the home
2. providing a resource list of Christmas records, books, and carols for use in the home
3. asking each family to have a container at home in which to place an offering for a special project

B. Describe fully results from your encouragement of family worship at home.

6. Other Suggestions for Church-Home Cooperation:

A. Please check below those items which your church offered to the home:

1. a series of family nights in the Fall for fun, fellowship, and study
2. a church library
3. a meeting for grandparents to help them understand their role in the home and church
4. A Christmas Hobby Night to share ideas of Christmas gifts, wrappings, decorations, etc.

B. List specific results of activities checked above, using the same numbers.

7. Please list any other methods which you have used in your relationships with the home. Evaluate each as "Highly Successful," "Fairly Successful," or "Unsuccessful."

8. What suggestions do you have for strengthening the cooperation between your church and the homes of your pupils?

QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE PARENTS OF THE FOURTH GRADERS IN CHURCH
SCHOOLS USING CLOSELY-GRADED METHODIST MATERIALS

157

NAME _____ SEX _____
SPECIFIC NAME OF CHURCH _____
NAME OF TOWN _____

(If more space is needed to answer any question, please use the
back of the sheet and designate the question by number.)

1. Contacts from the church-school:

A. Contacts with the home were established by: (please check
all statements which apply)

1. Parent-teacher meetings
2. Telephone messages: for example, to explain the
new unit
3. Friendly letters from the teacher to enlist cooperation
4. Visitation in the home to explain the purposes of
the year's work and ongoing activities, and the
value in regular attendance
5. Brief conferences with the teacher at church before
or following the regular church-school session
6. A note written to each member of the class to make
a home assignment in the pupil's book

B. Describe specific results which you attribute to at
least one of the above contacts (Indicate to which
contact you are referring by using the same number)

2. Participation in the Activities of the Church-School Class:

A. How have you shared in the activities of the church-
school class? (please check all statements which apply)

1. I attended a joint session of parents and pupils.
2. I used my talents or abilities at special points
in the unit of study (such as leading Christmas
carols or participating in the dramatization of
the story "A Book to Enjoy.")
3. I had the opportunity at the close of each unit to
hear the pupil's report on some of the things they
had learned in the unit of study.
4. I sent from my home to the church-school class
items of interest which were relevant to the unit
of study.
5. I attended Christmas and/or Thanksgiving parties
of the church-school class.

B. What are the specific values which resulted from your
participation in the activities of the church-school class?
(Please indicate to which of the above activities you
are referring by using the same number.)

3. Methodist Materials:

A. Which of the printed Methodist materials did you receive from the church-school as a parent of a pupil in the fourth grade?

1. The pupil's book, In Wisdom and in Stature
2. "The Christian Home" magazine
3. "Christmas Worship in the Home" (pamphlet)
4. "Thanksgiving Worship in the Home" (pamphlet)
5. "Some Good Books for Parents" (pamphlet)
6. "Try Family Reading" (leaflet)

B. Give specific results from the use of these materials. (Indicate to which Methodist material you are referring by using the same numbers as above)

4. Use of the Bible in the Home:

A. The church-school teacher tried to encourage use of the Bible at home by:

1. asking me to keep at home a card to mark the times that my child took his Bible to church-school
2. sending postcards to my child to remind him to bring his Bible to church-school
3. encouraging memorization of Bible verses at home
4. asking families to plan a specific time for Bible reading each week during January
5. making assignments in the pupil's book for our family to share together (such as reading a certain story)

B. What has resulted in the life of you or your child which you attribute to these suggestions for Bible study?

5. Family Worship at Home:

A. Informal or formal worship at home was encouraged by:

1. definite suggestions from the church-school teacher for worship services at Thanksgiving and/or Christmas
2. a resource list of Christmas records, books, and carols provided by the church-school
3. a request that each family have a container at home in which to place an offering for a special project

B. What experiences resulted from family worship in your home? (Please be specific, referring to use of numbers above)

6. Other Suggestions for Church-Home Cooperation:

A. Please check activities which your church has offered you:

1. a series of family nights in the Fall for fun, fellowship, and study
2. a church library
3. a meeting for grandparents to help them understand their role in the home and church
4. a Christmas Hobby Night to share ideas of Christmas gifts, wrappings, decorations, etc.

B. List specific results of those checked above, using the same numbers.

7. Please list and evaluate the results of any other methods which were used by your church-school teacher to promote church-home relationships.

8. How do you think the church could strengthen its cooperation with you and your home?

Sent to:

161

Ministers of Central Methodists
Chairman of Commission on Education
Supt. of Children's Division
Supt. of Church School

September, 1956

The thesis upon which I am working for the Master of Arts degree at the College of Pacific is concerned with the importance of church-home relationships in the church school. Part of the data desired for this thesis will be obtained through working with the fourth-grade group (9:30 A.M.) at the Central Methodist Church of Stockton. In order to avoid any possible misunderstandings, I would like to here obtain the written approval by the chairman of the Education Commission, the Church-School Superintendent, the Departmental Superintendent, and the ministers of Central Methodist Church as to the procedures which I intend to follow:

- a) to serve as co-teacher with Mrs. Jean Norton in the fourth-grade session at the 9:30 hours.
- b) to visit with the parents of each of the pupils of the church-school session: to become acquainted with the needs and interests of the children and to have the parents become acquainted with the program of the church school at this age-level.
- c) to prepare weekly letters to be sent to the parents in the hope that the suggestions included therein will supplement Christian personality through the medium of better church-home relationships. These weekly letters will attempt to meet the needs and interests of individual children.
- d) At the beginning of the year, to send out a questionnaire to those concerned with the church-school program last year (teachers, associate minister, chairman of the education commission etc.)
- e) to put on a four week parent-teacher session.
- f) at the close of a seven month period to ask for written reports from the parents as to their reactions to the church-home program which occurred from September through March. This report will be concerned with the ways in which the program led to a greater understanding of the needs and interests of the child as well as an understanding of the ways whereby Christian traits and attitudes might be developed in their children.
- g) to request the Education Commission to make available to the parents of this group the material suggested by the Methodist Church (i.e. the Junior booklet: In Wisdom and in Stature and The Christian Home magazine.

Thank you very much for your cooperation. Your approval for this procedure may be expressed below through your signature.

OCTOBER 1956

QUESTIONNAIRE-INTERVIEW for the purpose of ascertaining the status of church-home relationships at the 4th grade level at the Central Methodist Church of Stockton preceding the application of the methods for church-home relationships as set forth in the thesis of Virginia Curtis.

Sent to:

Children's Departmental Superintendent: Mrs. E. Lyons
Chairman of the Education Commission: Mr. Arch Brown Jr.
Church-school Superintendent: Mrs. Mark Jantzen
Minister: Dr. Frank W. Kimper
Associate Minister (during the proceeding year)
Teachers in the church-school during the proceeding year at the fourth grade age-level.
Parents of the present fourth grade church-school session at the 9:30 a.m. hour. (To be answered in terms of what occurred last year.)

1. What literature was made available for use to the parents of the church-school pupils through the auspices of the church-school department of the Central Methodist Church of Stockton?
(Please check once if the materials were made available:
Please check twice if they were made available and used)
 - a) Christian Home magazine
 - b) a study book for the children to use at home
 - c) Child Guidance magazine
 - d) none
 - e) other
 - f) remarks

2. What methods were used last year to help the parents of the present fourth-grade children (9:30 session) to become acquainted with the church-school program? Please check those procedures used:
 - a) departmental parent-teacher planning sessions
 - b) visitations by the teacher to the homes of the church-school child where conferences have occurred which dealt with information concerning the church-school program
 - c) Cards or telephone calls made to absentee pupils
 - d) weekly communication (written or otherwise) by the teacher to the parents of the church-school pupils
 - e) family-night programs
 - f) Leadership-education course for the purpose of understanding this particular age-level or Christian family life.
 - g) other methods
 - h) remarks

3. What methods were used last year to help the teacher of the fourth-grade session to become aware of the individual needs and interests of the pupils? Please check those procedures used:
- a) departmental parent-teacher planning sessions
 - b) visitations by the teacher to the homes of the church-school child where conferences occurred which dealt with specific needs and interests of the child.
 - c) cards or telephone calls made to absentee pupils
 - d) use of "General Information Questionnaire" for the purpose of obtaining data to be used by the teacher of the individual child
 - e) other methods
 - f) remarks:
4. How often were there parent-teacher sessions sponsored by the church-school for the fourth-grade age-level? (Will the parents of this year's fourth grade church-school class (9:30 session) please answer this in terms of what occurred last year?)
- a) once a year
 - b) twice a year
 - c) none
 - d) other
 - e) Comments:
5. Home Visitation: (not to be answered by parents)
- a) How frequently did you visit the homes of the pupils in the fourth-grade church school session?
 - 1. the beginning of each new unit
 - 2. once a year
 - 3. twice a year
 - 4. none
 - 5. other
 - 6. remarks:
 - b) In what capacity did you visit them? Please underline the one that applies to you: Teacher, Minister of Education, Church School superintendent, Chairman of the Education Commission, Children's departmental superintendent, or Minister
 - c) What was the purpose of your visit to the home? Check:
 - 1. to impart information concerning the church-school program: its general objectives
 - 2. to obtain information which would aid the teacher in her attempt to adapt the lesson material to the needs of the child
 - 3. a friendly, social visit

- 4. to impart specific information concerning the unit of study in the church school
- 5. other
- 6. remarks:

5. How consistently were the cards and telephone calls made by the church school secretary, teacher, or minister?

(please indicate who made calls or sent cards)

- a) every time a child was absent
- b) when the child missed two Sundays in a row
- c) very rarely---irregular procedure
- d) other
- e) remarks:

6. (to be answered by teachers)

In general, did you find the parents

- a) cooperative
- b) non-interested
- c) passive
- d) interested but too busy to cooperate
- e) remarks

7. (to be answered by parents)

In general, did you find the church-school

- a) cooperative in finding ways to help you develop understanding of your child
- b) doing a good piece of work in the church-school session but not extending it beyond Sunday morning?
- c) remarks:

8. What has been the most effective and helpful procedure in the program for church-home relationships at Central Methodist Church of Stockton as it existed last year (Please answer this question in terms of those procedures which contributed most to the growth and development in Christian personality in the children concerned)

The purpose of this information is to help parents and teachers work more closely together in the process of Christian Education. This material will enable a teacher to adapt his lesson plan to your child. It is important to know not only what the pupil can and does do, but how he feels about his activities and relationships and activities.

Name of Child _____ Address _____

Age _____ Sex _____ Grade _____ Telephone Number _____

Church School Dept. _____ Teacher _____

Date of Interview _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Occupation of father _____ Occupation of mother _____
(previous and/or present)

Number of brothers _____ Their Ages _____

Number of sisters _____ Their Ages _____

Names and kinds of family or personal pets _____

Does anyone else live in the family home besides the immediate family? _____

Explain _____

What activities does your family often do together? _____

What definite responsibility does this child have in his home life? _____

Are there any health factors which his teacher should know about in planning for this child? _____

Are you, the parents, members of a church? _____ Where? _____

PERSONAL APTITUDES AND INTERESTS

Physical Activities:

1. What physical activities does your child enjoy most? _____
2. How proficient is he in various kinds of physical activities suitable to his age level and season of year? _____
3. Is he usually a spectator, leader, or follower in physical activities? _____

Intellectual and imaginative interests

1. Does he like to read stories? _____
2. What type of fiction does he prefer? (scientific, bibliography of heroes, dogs, cowboys, magazine, etc.) _____
3. Does he like to make up stories? _____
4. Does he like to participate in dramatics? _____
5. Does he enjoy speaking before a group? _____

6. What games does he like to play? (Monopoly, checkers, etc.) _____
7. Does he like you to read stories to him? _____
8. How many hours a day does he watch television? (generally) _____
9. What television programs does he enjoy? _____

Musical interests

1. Does he enjoy listening to music? _____ If so, what kind? _____
2. In what way could he assist with the music used in a church school program? (Play piano, sing, write words and compose music to a song, etc.) _____
3. Is he taking music lessons? _____ What instrument? _____

Mechanical Interests

1. Does he like to build or repair things? _____ Sew or cook? _____
2. What crafts does he enjoy? _____
3. Does he like to "experiment" in making things? _____

RELATIONSHIPS

Neighborhood associates:

1. Who are his closest friends? Names, Sex, Age? _____
2. Does this child have any particular "heroes"? (are these heroes within the neighborhood, or are they TV stars, teachers, athletes, etc.) _____
3. Whom does he greatly dislike? _____

School

1. How does he feel about his school, his teacher, his subjects, his classmates? _____
2. To what school, clubs, or organizations does he belong? _____
3. What is his role in these organizations: member or officer? _____ (please note what office he holds)

Church

1. Does he enjoy his activities connected with the church? _____
2. What suggestions do you have for increasing his interest and participation? _____
3. Are his theological concepts (meaning of God, Jesus, prayer, etc.) ever expressed and discussed at home? _____
4. How much responsibility does he feel for the succes of his church school class? _____

Clubs

1. What groups does he belong to outside of the school and church? _____
2. Is he an officer in any organization? _____

Community and world

1. What does he see as his future place in the community and in the world? _____
2. What aroused this particular interest? _____

Stockton, Calif.

November 11, 1956

Dear Parents,

Such activity last week! Bits of clay, scraps of gaily colored material, and oddly-bent pipe cleaners all played their part in the creation of the picture-box scenes which represent various episodes in the life of Joseph. Your children were as busy as bees---having fun, yet learning by doing. The scenes are finished and on display, so stop by to see them when you can!

This week we are continuing our study of the Psalms. In our attempt to guide the boys and girls in appreciation and enjoyment of selected psalms, we began, on Sunday, a choral reading program of two particular psalms. Perhaps you would enjoy using them in your Thanksgiving worship service at home. We plan to use them in our worship service next week. You could help familiarize your child to the readings by having various members of the family read different parts.

Psalms 67

(Divide into two groups---read the parts alternately.)

Group 1: May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us,

Group 2: that thy way may be known upon earth,
thy saving power among all nations.

ALL TOGETHER: Let the peoples praise thee, O God;
let all the peoples praise thee!

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,

Group 1: For thou dost judge the peoples with equity

Group 2: And guide the nations upon earth.

ALL TOGETHER: Let the peoples praise thee, O God;
Let all the peoples praise thee!

Group 1: The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.

Group 2: God has blessed us;
Let all the ends of the earth fear him!

From time to time we call on individual boys and girls in the group to prepare at home with his parents a special part of the worship service---such as reading a psalm or making up a prayer. If you have already helped us on this, we want to say "Thank you so very much!" If you haven't been called on as yet to help them, we hope to do so shortly for we feel that as each individual child can actively participate in our weekly session through those activities that he enjoys doing, so will he "grow in wisdom and in stature and in favor with his God."

Sincerely,