

Director of Institute in Eugene Says

# Interest in Growth Rising

Rising interest in church growth on the part of the more than 200 boards of missions in the United States is reported by Donald McGavran, director of the Institute of Church Growth (ICG) in Eugene.

McGavran, himself a retired missionary in India, said this

week that "there is a rising interest in the growth of the church. I think we're beginning to see some effect."

For nearly four years, the ICG—affiliated with Northwest Christian College but nondenominational in work—has been conducting a program of academic study and research for missionaries, in order to improve their effectiveness in foreign mission work.

More than 55 students, who worked in 25 foreign countries with 19 missionary societies, have studied at the institute. This fall's class of 16 students includes missionaries of numerous denominational affiliations from various parts of the world.

But the institute's work extends beyond the classroom. Each ICG student prepares a report on church growth in the area of the world where he has served.

A number of these reports, some book-length, have been published. And this September, the institute published issue No. 1 of "Church Growth Bulletin," a bimonthly publication summarizing church growth trends and news.

McGavran, who's serving as editor of this, worked out arrangements for publication with Overseas Crusades, a missionary program with headquarters in Palo Alto, Calif. Subscriptions are \$1 per year.

Due to appear in February is McGavran's next book, "Church Growth and Christian Mission,"

which will be published by Harper and Row.

McGavran feels the publications are "reaching a leadership in practically all the Protestant missionary societies."

He feels that missionary programs today have problems.

"There are just so many good things to do," he noted. "Missionaries today . . . are not specialists in the growth of the church," which he feels should be the main emphasis of missionary programs.

McGavran believes that there are a number of specialties in the mission field—education, medicine, literacy—but that many of the missionaries are "not focused" on church extension, church growth.

In extension of religions throughout the world, Christianity is "falling behind in the race," McGavran believes.

If the church is going to "be objective," and "faithful to its Lord," it is going to have to emphasize church growth, which McGavran calls "a measure of faithfulness."

With this in mind, McGavran and his staff are working to develop and study church growth in the churches of the world, to find techniques and policies which have been successful.

At present, a study of church growth in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific is being conducted by the Rev. Alan

Tippett, professor of anthropology and church growth at the institute.

For this project, Tippett is "on loan" from the institute to the Division of Missionary Studies of the World Council of Churches, and will return to Eugene next September.

Originally from Australia, Tippett served as a Methodist missionary for 25 years in the South Pacific.

Response to the work of the young institute from denomination headquarters, mission societies and missionaries, and "a respect there wasn't three years ago," is surprising to McGavran.

"It's extraordinary," he said. "Here we are 'buried' on the West Coast. There is an acceptance."

And through the work of the institute, McGavran hopes to build this respect and acceptance of the ICG into a program to which denominations and mission boards turn for authoritative advice.

## Discussion Series Set On Campus

A series of four discussion programs on current religious topics will continue this week on the University of Oregon campus.

The programs, sponsored by the Religious Directors Assn., an organization of campus workers with student groups, are open to the public for a fee of \$1 per discussion series.

Slated for Tuesday nights are discussions on "The Christian-Jewish Dialogue," led by Rabbi Louis Neimand of Temple Beth Israel, at 6:30 p.m., and "Liturgy and Worship—History and Modern Setting," led by the Rev. Ken Weig of Luther House, at 8:15 p.m.

Thursdays, a session on "Religion and Social Action" led by the Rev. Robert Kingsbury of Wesley Foundation is slated for 6:30 p.m., and "Science and the Humanities" is scheduled for 8:15 p.m., with the Rev. Bruno Gibson of Newman Center as

December 27, 1960

Dr. John B. Snook, Editor  
Union Seminary Quarterly Review  
3041 Broadway  
New York 27, New York

Dear Dr. Snook:

The International Review of Missions has just given first place in its book review section to a review written by Canon M. A. C. Warren, General Secretary of the great Church Missionary Society of the Anglican Church. I presume both because of the place assigned and the eminent writer of the review that the International Review of Missions considers this book to be of first importance.

The author of the book reviewed is an alumnus of Union Theological Seminary, 1930-32. His doctorate is from Columbia University in collaboration with Union. He has also been awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree by Butler University and the Doctor of Letters by Phillips University. He is now Director of the Institute of Church Growth at Northwest Christian College, being loaned to us by The United Christian Missionary Society. The one to whom I refer is Donald A. McGavran.

The book which is receiving such favorable attention is How Churches Grow - The New Frontiers of Mission. It is not a book on evangelism but an arresting philosophy of mission. It is being read around the world by leaders of many denominations. It is published simultaneously in England and America.

When you have it reviewed in your esteemed Union Seminary Quarterly Review, it will be appreciated if you will assign the reviewing to someone who will read it for what it is - a thoughtful, searching criticism of some very widespread recent trends in mission and a constructive proposal to remedy adverse conditions. (Because one of Dr. McGavran's preceding books, The Bridges of God, so captured the attention of missionary thinkers that they are now apt to assume he is writing about tribal movements to Christ. How Churches Grow is not about "people movements." It is a trenchant criticism of missions as they are now being carried out.)

We shall also appreciate it if you will publish a news note about the beginning of The Institute of Church Growth here at Northwest Christian College. Your courtesies will be deeply appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Ross J. Griffeth  
President

ROSS J. GRIFFETH, B.D., Ph.D., President  
WILLIAM T. SIEFKE, B.D., M.A., Dean  
DONALD A. MCGAVRAN, B.D., Ph.D., Director  
The Institute of Church Growth

*"Put on the Whole Armor of God - Go Ye into All the World - Preach the Word"*

# NORTHWEST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

*The Institute Of Church Growth*

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EUGENE, OREGON

PHONE DI 3-1641



John B Snook,  
The Editor,  
Union Seminary Quarterly Review,  
3041 Broadway New York 27 N.Y.

Dec 21st 1960

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The book receiving such favorable attention is HOW CHURCHES GROW\*THE NEW FRONTIER OF MISSION. It is not a book on evangelism, but an arresting philosophy of mission. It is being read all over the world by leaders of many different denominations. It is published in England and America simultaneously.

When you have it reviewed in your esteemed Union Seminary Quarterly Review could you please assign it to someone who will read it for what it is - a thoughtful searching criticism of some very wide-spread recent trends in mission and a constructive proposal to remedy the situation? (One of Dr McGavran's preceding books - The Bridges of God - so captured the attention of missionary thinkers, that they assume he is writing about tribal movements to Christ. I can assure you that this is not about people movements. It is a trenchant criticism of missions as they are carried out today.

Will you also kindly carry a news note about the beginning of the Institute of Church Growth here at Northwest Christian College - possibly as news from alumni?

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

November 7th 1960

Canon M A C Warren,  
c/o Edinburgh House,  
2 Eaton Gate, London, S W 1  
England.

Dear Canon Warren:

I have just finished reading your thoughtful sensitive review of HOW CHURCHES GROW in the October issue of the IJM and write you in the first flush of my enjoyment and appreciation.

It is an understanding review. You have read the book carefully, which in a person of your enormous interests and burdens is in itself a tribute I appreciate.

Then you agree that the situation to which I write is one of great gravity. Mission must not be defined as "aid in perpetuity to stopped Churches". Did you notice that Din Dayal writes in the same issue of the IJM an article called "Defeatist Protestantism and Open Doors in India". He sees the same serious condition. I hope my little book may be one more voice calling attention to the fact that "pre-occupation with ploughing regularly by-passes opportunities to reap ripe harvests" - whether these be of ten men - or ten thousand. I see the phenomenon so vividly and often wonder whether I am unbalanced in regard to it. Your review reassures me - others also are seeing it.

Of course you disagree with some of my positions - but in such a fair and kindly way! To some extent I agree with your reservations. As I point out on page 13 I have consciously over emphasized church growth and, while hoping that this over emphasis will not be needed tomorrow, maintain that it is today.

As you so well say, after all disagreements the central question remains: "Are we in our missionary thinking geared to abiding action, or are we going out to those who do not know Christ and winning them for Him?" Yes, that question remains. My answers are the best I know. I write the truth as I see it. I earnestly hope that others, addressing themselves to the question, will give truer and better answers. Your review should stimulate some to make the attempt.

This is really the basic reason why we are starting the Institute of Church Growth and giving research fellowships to men of all denominations - so that we shall begin getting many different considered answers, each in the light of his own denominational background and his own particular population.

I keep hoping that the boards will make a joint effort of considerable magnitude (perhaps one per cent of total receipts) to search out the answers.

Thank you very much indeed for the review. After the privilege of hearing your Berkeley lectures and having you and Mrs Warren in our home, this review is specially appreciated. God bless and use you mightily.

Most cordially yours,

Donald McGavran

HOW CHURCHES GROW

"Boards of missions spend millions to plant churches abroad," says Dr. Donald McGavran, "but their efforts are often retarded by two erroneous assumptions: (a) that maintaining missionaries on the field is the best way to achieve that end; (b) that training in an American seminary plus special orientation in the revolutionary changes in missions today fits churchmen to achieve church growth." Dr. McGavran then points out as a result of a wide study of church growth that "little correlation exists between the number of missionaries and the multiplication of churches." He also declares that "the type of training mentioned in (b) almost never deals seriously and systematically with church growth on the field."

So Donald A. McGavran wrote another book. It is entitled How Churches Grow, is published by World Dominion Press, costs \$1.45, may be ordered from this office, and is of utmost importance to those engaged in evangelism and church planting. This book is divided into five parts. First there is an estimate of the present opportunity which confronts Christian missions in the world and an analysis of some of the reasons why the opportunity is not being recognized. Second comes a most valuable section on the need to distinguish, within any population, between those most likely to be immediately responsive to the gospel and those who for various reasons are unresponsive, concentrating on the former, without overlooking altogether the latter. Third comes that which the reviewer in the October, 1960, issue of "The International Review of Missions" calls the "most provocative" section of the book, containing such chapter titles as "Authentic Spiritual Fire," "The Prison of Patterns," and "Permanent Versus Pauline Involvement." Fourth come some altogether stimulating chapters, sparkling with case histories from around the world: "Methods which Multiply Churches," "The Creation and Support of Leadership," and "Checking Methods Against Actual Growth." He writes, "Estimation of results is a reasonable Christian procedure and must be made. It is also a delicate one. It involves spiritual values which cannot be counted, as well as Christians who can be. Simply counting heads, for example, is not sufficient; neither is simply not counting them. Paul's epistles have a value far beyond the numbers of Christians and churches he brought into existence; yet they would neither have been written or transmitted if his labors had not produced countable Christians and countable churches....Qualify and understand it as we may, to check our aims against our achievement is most necessary." (p. 147) Finally comes a valuable discussion of the place of administration and organization in church growth. On every level: the mission society, field conference, and even station administration, each is responsible for achieving church growth. "Can the quarter-back or captain advance the ball down the field? We answer, that is his principal function. He administers the team so that the ball advances, yards are gained, and points scored. Facing a given formation, he may send the play left, right, forward, or even backward, but the intent will be to gain yards. He knows that his success is not going to be measured by the skill with which he keeps the team moving, the precision of his plays, or the good-will of his players. It is going to be measured by touch-downs and field goals." (p. 181) The above reviewer acknowledges that readers will be thoroughly disturbed and even exasperated by statements and arguments in this book. Nevertheless Dr. McGavran is sure that an enterprise which spends hundreds of millions of dollars a year should face realistically how it is getting on with its central task: church growth.

Not contenting himself with writing a book, Dr. McGavran has opened a training center at Northwest Christian College, Eugene, Oregon, called "The Institute of Church Growth." Here careful study is made of the many types of church growth found, the complex processes by which churches grow and the many preventable causes of non-growth. Missionaries particularly concerned may get three months, six months, or nine months of specialized training in how churches grow in the particular population among which these persons work.

The book How Churches Grow and the Institute of Church Growth both exist to make missionaries more productive in winning men to Christ and persuading them to become His disciples and responsible members of His church. This is also our primary concern.

EDWIN E. JACQUES