

Chapter III. Closely Related Pastorates

Frank Herron Smith, Foreign Pastor, 1912 – to about 1941
Edwin F. Price, Student Pastor, 1920 – [1959]
George H. Woestemyer, Visitation Pastor, 1947 –

In these years now under consideration, from 1931 to 1954, not only the three regular pastors already introduced, Drs. Hunt, Allison, and Bramble, served this church; but also three other ministers under special assignment for longer or shorter periods. Let us speak first of the one whose connection with the church goes farthest back in time.

Frank Herron Smith

The old History of the church relates something of the remarkable missionary career of Frank Herron and Gertrude Bamford Smith. Having gone to Japan in 1905, they came back to Lawrence for their first furlough in 1912 and were closely associated with Lawrence First Church. When after some months they returned to Japan, Dr. Smith was our “foreign pastor,” the church having assumed a considerable part of his salary. From that time on his name appeared on the Bulletin Sunday after Sunday. After a few years they were transferred to Korea where Dr. Smith was head of the work for Japanese in that country. In 1926 Dr. Smith was sent back to the United States to take charge of the Pacific Mission covering a territory amounting to about half of the United States, and they settled in Berkeley, California. This change from the foreign to the home field temporarily ended the official connection with this church. But some years later the Board of Home Missions changed its policy and permitted local churches to contribute all or part of the salary of individual missionaries. From about 1930 to about 1941 his name appeared again on our Bulletin and so for a time did that of their oldest daughter, Eloise, who was adopted by the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society. She and Pauline had both lived in Lawrence and been active in the church during their four years at the University. This and occasional visits of Dr. Smith and Mrs. Smith to Lawrence, on furlough before 1926 and after that on business trips for their mission, kept up the close connection of many years. In 1935 Dr. and Mrs. Smith went back to Japan, as he was fraternal delegate to the Japanese General Conference. During the ‘30’s the contribution of this church to their support varied in amount; but much of the time, though several churches cooperated, the biggest part came from “Old Faithful Lawrence, Kansas,” to use Dr. Smith’s phrase.

Even after his name ceased to be published in our Bulletin, the Smiths had and still have close associations with this church; and it is fitting to include in this little history a brief account of his labors during World War II. He was in a peculiarly strategic and difficult position. It was strategic because of his wide knowledge of and association with Japanese both in Japan and in America. It was difficult because of unfriendly attitudes. The sympathy of Americans after the earthquake had made for good feeling and facilitated missionary work. Then in 1924 came the exclusion act with all the bitterness that it aroused. In spite of this the work progressed. In 1938 there were forty-six workers

in the field and the Mission seemed well on the way to a new status, Mission Conference. But war brought deep distress. Dr. Smith spoke and wrote against military leadership in Japan and its decision to join the Axis [Germany, Italy, and Japan]. He tried to promote understanding on both sides but prejudice grew. Early in 1942 aliens were required to procure identification cards and Japanese could no longer get market licenses. Already there was fear that Japanese living near forts might be displaced. A little later the blow fell and Dr. Smith had the heartrending duty of ministering in scores of ways to the unhappy people, and the killing burden of managing church property. It was necessary to rent parsonages, store goods, and assume great responsibility for funds and other possessions of the Japanese churches. He visited many internment camps in his vast area and in them preached to people, visited the sick, and did everything possible for the comfort of displaced church members. He gave broadcasts in an effort to stop mass hysteria. He acted as interpreter for parole boards. He and other protestant ministers offered their help in sifting the loyal from the disloyal. They helped in the Tolan Congressional Commission.

He held Conferences where possible, notably one at the Santa Anita Racetrack, where most of the Japanese of the Los Angeles area were interned. At this Conference E. Stanley Jones was one of the speakers. Dr. Smith together with eighty Japanese ministers and a group of evacuated missionaries from Japan, worked constantly for the well being of the relocated people. They held vacation Bible schools, sewing classes, art courses, classes in American History and Government. They furnished chapels at camps with dozens of organs and pianos, provided books for the internees, held Christmas celebrations for the children. They labored with legislators connected with proposed anti-Japanese acts. These Methodists also co-operated with the Protestant Commission for Japanese Service, an agent of the Federal Council of Churches made up of representatives from about twenty religious organizations. For a time Dr. Smith was chairman of this group.

In 1943 20,000 of the displaced Japanese were permitted to leave the camps to take employment; and more than 2000 students were admitted into eastern colleges and universities. Thus, Dr. Smith's field of activity, which had covered about half the United States, came to extend from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Some time later hysterical Americans in some areas resorted to terrorism in their blind opposition to all Japanese. All this added travel and the anxiety and exertion connected with the new violence, on top of his enormous activity before, brought on a break of health. After about a year of rest Dr. Smith resumed some activity but could no longer carry the heavy responsibility of the superintendency. In the summer of 1946 his successor was appointed.

The Smiths continued to live in Berkeley until 1953 when they moved to Glendale to be near some of their children. On December 24 of that year they celebrated their golden [50 years] wedding anniversary. In the same year the Berkeley Methodist United Church started a fund raising campaign for the purpose of erecting a Frank Herron Smith Memorial Chapel. Some members of our church are much interested in this enterprise.¹³

[In a booklet titled, Heritage Moments – Bicentennial of American Methodism, created by members of First Church in 1984, church member, Phoebe Godwin, wrote the following about Frank Herron Smith]

As a young K.U. student, Frank Herron Smith described himself as a red head with a large nose, a leg weakened by polio, and not fought over by the girls. His description of the young lady he would pursue and eventually marry was, in his words “comely and graceful,” “attractive and had many beaux.” Frank Smith and Gertrude Bamford met at K.U. They were married in 1903 while Dr. Smith was a graduate student in the Theological School of Northwestern University and pastor of the Brighton Park Methodist Church in Chicago. Two years later, in 1905, these two young people sailed for the far distant shores of Japan where they served as missionaries for nine years. In 1914 they transferred to Korea where Dr. Smith served as superintendent of mission work among the Japanese in Korea and Manchuria. Our church played an important role as a contributing church to the Smiths. Records show that this church financially assisted from 1905 to 1935.

Meanwhile, here in the United States in 1924, the U.S. Congress passed the Exclusion Act as a reactionary measure towards the 140,000 Japanese already in this country. The Act would restrict all Orientals from coming into the United States despite the fact that 150,000 immigrants from other countries were allowed to come in annually.

In 1926 the Smiths returned to the United States due to poor health. Their new assignment was all the Methodist mission work among the Japanese west of the Mississippi. Their most significant work was now to begin. Dr. Smith, Gertrude, and their six children made their home in Berkeley, California where their lives were dedicated to the Japanese, bringing the message of God’s love to them, training them, and building churches.

Dr. Smith was troubled by the great discrimination towards the Orientals. He worked with them, helping them be more acceptable to society. Through Dr. Smith’s influence, the Exclusion Act was amended in 1931 to allow 150 Japanese and 75 Chinese into the United States. In 1938 Japan began its aggression in the Far East, striving for domination. Their actions only increased the hostility towards the Japanese here in the United States. Dr. Smith had a personal relationship with the royalty of Japan, also their ambassador. He warned them that their continued aggression in China would cause even more problems for these Japanese.

Of course we know that the tragic event of December 7, 1941, caused the arrest of thousands of innocent United States Japanese, the springing up of internment camps for these arrested people, and the mass program of relocation. The Smiths tried to assist their friends in many ways. They helped close their churches, rent or sell their homes (usually at a loss), handled their finances, provided them with necessities during the years of internment, preached, taught, and provided books for learning. One of the most important duties was the relocation of students into universities of the Midwest or on the East Coast. These were mostly denominational schools.

After the war, Dr. Smith again assisted with relocation. Many Japanese couldn’t go back home for their homes had been sold and no one would sell to them again. There were no jobs, they were rioted against and sabotaged. We have copies of letters written by Dr. Smith to President Truman, Governor Warren,

the FBI, and Attorney General Francis Biddle requesting protection for these people struggling to rebuild their lives.

Frank and Gertrude were having problems of their own. Frank had had several heart attacks and Gertrude had high blood pressure. After 20 years of mission service in the United States, they were forced to retire. Mamma-San, as Frank called his loving, dedicated wife, died in 1957. Our last correspondence from Dr. Smith was his Christmas letter of 1958. He described making church visits to shut-ins hobbling with two canes.

These two dedicated Christians followed Jesus' commandment "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel." Christ was their life to the end. Let us rejoice in such a heritage.

-- Phoebe Godwin

In 1941 Frank Herron Smith, University of Kansas class of 1902, was given the Distinguished Service Citation by the Alumni Association. In April 1955 the chapel, referenced by Mary Clarke, was dedicated in his name at the Berkeley Methodist United Church in California.

The following is from: http://gothic.calpoly.edu/spec_coll/internment/smithbio.html

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FRANK HERRON SMITH (1879 - 1965)

- 1879 Born March 6 at Viola, Illinois; his father was Eugene Smith, MD; his mother a school teacher.
- 1897 Graduated from Pawnee County Academy, Pawnee City, Nebraska.
- 1898 Eugene Smith family moved to Lawrence, Kansas, site of Kansas University (KU). Dr. Smith combined private medical practice with supervising the KU student infirmary; later became professor of anatomy.
- 1902 Graduated from KU; Phi Beta Kappa.
- 1905 Completed theological course of study at Northwestern University; commencement orator.
- 1905-1914 Methodist Missionary in Japan; Nagoya (1905 -1909); Nagasaki (1909 -1914). Commencing in 1910 (date of the Japanese annexation of Korea) established Japanese Methodist churches in several Korean and Manchurian cities, including Seoul, Korea.
- 1914-1926 Resided in Seoul; superintendent of Japanese Methodist churches in Korea and Manchuria.
- 1920 Received Doctor of Divinity (honorary) degree from Northwestern University.
- 1926 Received Fourth Order of the Rising Sun decoration from the Emperor of Japan.
- 1926-1946 Resided in Berkeley, California; superintendent of Pacific Japanese (Methodist) Mission; in 1926 the PJM was comprised of 22 Japanese American churches located in California, Colorado, Oregon, and Washington. By December, 1941, it included 31 churches; its membership had increased from approximately 2,000 to 6,000 members, and its property value from \$22,000 to over \$900,000.
- 1942 Relocation of Japanese Americans from Pacific coast took place. (About 67% were American citizens).
(Spring)
- 1942 He was exceedingly busy maintaining Mission churches and other property. He visited and conducted services in all of the ten internment camps, each at least twice. At Christmas time, he made a special point of providing candy for the children, missing one Christmas Day at home. He assisted internees with such problems as preservation of their homes, farms, and ranches. As the relocation years ended, he oversaw the reopening of the Mission churches and appointed pastors for each.
(Summer - 1945)
- During the war years he assisted the Office of War Information (OWI) both in preparing script and making radio broadcasts to Japan.
- 1945 Suffered serious heart attack, confined to bed two months.
(January)
- 1946 Against his wishes placed on the retirement list.
- 1954 Frank Herron Smith Memorial Chapel erected at Berkeley, California.
- 1965 Died August 6 at Palo Alto, California. He was preceded in death by his wife of 54 years, Gertrude B. Smith, who passed away on August 18, 1957.

Although he had contracted infantile paralysis in his early boyhood and could not support his weight on his right leg, he was a good swimmer and excellent tennis player, one year winning the All Korea men's doubles. He taught his five daughters and one son to swim and to play tennis. His greatest recreational joy was to camp in Yosemite National Park. He studied the Japanese language for many years, could preach in Japanese, read Japanese newspapers, and write to his Issei (natives of Japan) pastors in Japanese. He sang exceedingly well and with considerable vigor; He was known as having **shishi no koe** (the voice of a lion).

Edwin F. Price

The second of the three ministers holding a special relation to the church in this period is Rev. Edwin F. Price who was born and brought up in Wellington, received his early education there and in 1920 married Miss Lena Rogers of the same city. He received his A.B. degree from the University of Kansas in 1919, his M.A. from Northwestern in 1923, his B.D. [Bachelor of Divinity] from Garrett Biblical Institute in 1926, his D.D. [Doctor of Divinity] in 1938. He has been a full member of the Kansas Conference since 1926. In the same year he began teaching in the Kansas School of Religion and he was dean of that school from 1934 to 1946.

In order to get a full understanding of Dr. Price's work in our midst it is necessary to go back some years. The church has been more or less aware of a "student problem" almost from the opening of the University. But as long as students were few those that belonged to Methodism could be easily affiliated with the local church. It was perhaps not till the beginning of the present century that very serious attention was given to this expanding field of activity. All the older members of the church can remember the annual reception for students about the end of the week of registration, and other devices to keep in touch with the students. It has been related in the old History that Dr. Wolfe induced the Conference to grant to this church its own educational collection to finance work here. Several young men helped in the early steps of this development. In 1914 arrangements were made to have a student pastor; and the first minister appointed to hold this position was Rev. Gordon B. Thompson, who continued here till 1918. The work during those four years was in an experimental stage; but one feature of it was an executive committee made up of students, and part of the time the chairman of that committee was a student named Edwin F. Price. Another feature was the so-called Henderson Committee, made up of a number of people concerned in one way or another with the student work, and growing out of an inspirational message from Bishop Henderson.

One important development in this early period was the founding in 1916 of Kappa Phi, a club for Methodist girls in state institutions. Mrs. Thompson [wife of Rev. Gordon Thompson] originated it and the first chapter was here but it is now national in scope with many chapters throughout the country. The society has a beautiful ritual and offers social religious advantages to young women students. Its motto is "Every Methodist college woman today, a leader in the church tomorrow."

We have already seen that for a short time after Dr. Thompson left Lawrence the student work was carried on by Rev. G.E. Brown, who soon resigned to become a chaplain. We have also seen that for a few months Mr. McKinley Warren, followed by Mr. E.F. Price combined some student work with certain secretarial duties as assistant to the minister. Afterwards, in 1925 and 1926, while Mr. Price was on leave for study, Mr. Warren again had charge of the work while on furlough from a mission station in South America.

Wesley Fellowship co-operates with the Kansas School of Religion, which was founded in 1916 and in 1921 was recognized by the University of Kansas as an institution whose courses of instruction would receive credit towards graduation in some schools of the University. Since that date it has received increasingly greater recognition from different schools of the University. We have seen that Dr. Price was dean of this school for twelve years. Also, for a time he was president of the National Wesley Foundation Fellowship.

The Price home, wherever it might be located, has been headquarters for that purpose, located at 1209 Ohio. In 1951 a movement was started to amass a building fund to supplement a bequest made some years earlier by Mrs. Luella Stewart of Wellington for a student building. The serious flood of that year postponed the fulfillment of this plan. But it was taken up later and now in the summer of 1954 Dr. and Mrs. Price are about to move into a beautiful building on the Hill, east of Myers Hall. But the close association with First Church will go on. In all these years the student minister has been an associate minister in the church, has participated in the Sunday services, has introduced many of his students into associate membership, and has conducted evening meetings consisting of supper, recreation, and devotional and inspirational services in the social rooms of the church. At various times there have been closer ties of students with members of the church through such arrangements as "church" parents and "church homes."

The staff of the Wesley Foundation has never been sufficiently augmented. For a time in the mid-'40's Miss Arlie Sugieke, a Japanese student who was secretary for the church, gave part of her time for clerical work in the Foundation. Also for a short time Rev. J. R. Wonder was an assistant. From 1947 to 1954 the associate director of the Wesley Foundation was Miss Helener Kane Currier.

But what in all these years have the Director of Student Work and his assistants done? An adequate answer is impossible in small space, but some conception of this work can be given by a brief summary. First, he is a minister to the students, calling on them in sickness, giving counsel, sympathy, and encouragement in their problems. He conducts the Sunday evening worship services, already referred to, as well as other devotional meetings. Secondly, he is a teacher. We have already seen that he teaches in the School of Religion, but he also has conducted many classes outside that organization. Some of these are Sunday School classes held at the church or elsewhere. Some are weekday classes in various subjects; one favorite throughout the years has been "Looking Toward Christian Marriage." In the third place, parties, banquets, and other gatherings have contributed to the social life of Methodist students, and with regard to the girls; these general social activities have been augmented by the fellowship in Kappa Phi. Closely associated with all these things but perhaps not exactly like any of them is something that is sometimes called "constructive churchmanship." Students take part in such world movements as the Crusade for Christ; membership on the student cabinet is an important preparation for Official Board Responsibilities as Kappa Phi work is also for future participation in women's work of the church. An running through all of this and connected with every phase of it is the fact that many young people decided to go

into special religious work as minister, missionaries, Y.W. and Y.M. [Young Women and Young Men] secretaries, deaconesses, and teachers in religious education. Dr. Price has compiled a list of these persons, and at present the number stands at 121. Some of these went out from the Lawrence church long before the organization of student work. But the whole list is impressive; and First Church is happy to bask in the glory of the many workers who have gone from the Wesley Foundation. The picture is not quite complete without reference to the enormous correspondence made necessary by these widely diverse activities. Letters to prospective freshmen, correspondence with parents, and endless contacts with ministers all over the state prepare the way for later connection of students with the Wesley Foundation.¹⁴

George Herman Woestemeyer

The third of the special ministers in the First Church is Dr. George Herman Woestemeyer. He was born in Napol eon, Lafayette County, Missouri and received his early education in that community. At the age of fourteen he experienced a strong desire to go into the ministry, but circumstances postponed his preparation. For some years he operated a farm. In 1898 he wa s married to Miss Christine Oehlschlager who had been brought up in his home community. In 1910 they moved to Warrenton, Missouri where Mr. Woestemeyer was graduated first from the Central Wesleyan Academy, and later from the college of the same name, with which the Academy was connected. As this college was later merged with Baker University he is technically a graduate of Baker. He did some preaching and founded a new church at Stover, Missouri before his college experience, and much preaching after that. For years he was a member of the West German Conference and served several German churches, including the German Methodist Church of Lawrence, which came to an end in 1918. These German churches were in three states, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska. He lat er was a member of the Kansas Conference, serving for a short time in Centenary Church in Lawrence, the Missouri Conference, and the St. Louis Conference of which he is still a member. He retired in 1946 and he and Mrs. Woestemeyer bought a home in Lawrenc e and took up their residence here near their son. For about seven years now he has been employed as Visitation Pastor by the First Church. He makes many calls on members of the church, with special emphasis on the aged and ill. He is in constant touch wit h the local hospital, makes many calls there as well as in the homes of the sick and the shut -in, and carries the communion to those who can not partake of it in the church. This is a beautiful ministry which is greatly appreciated, and which could not be adequately portrayed by figures.