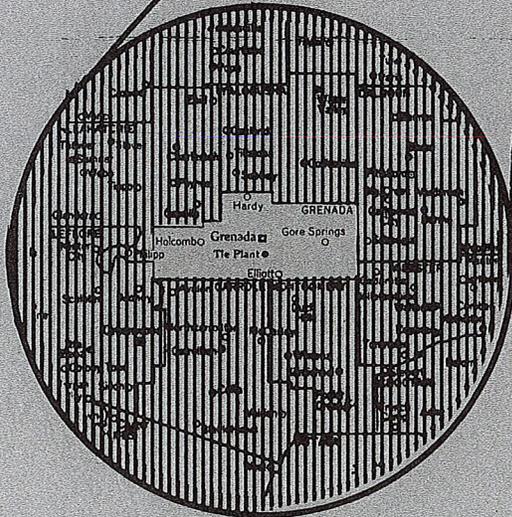
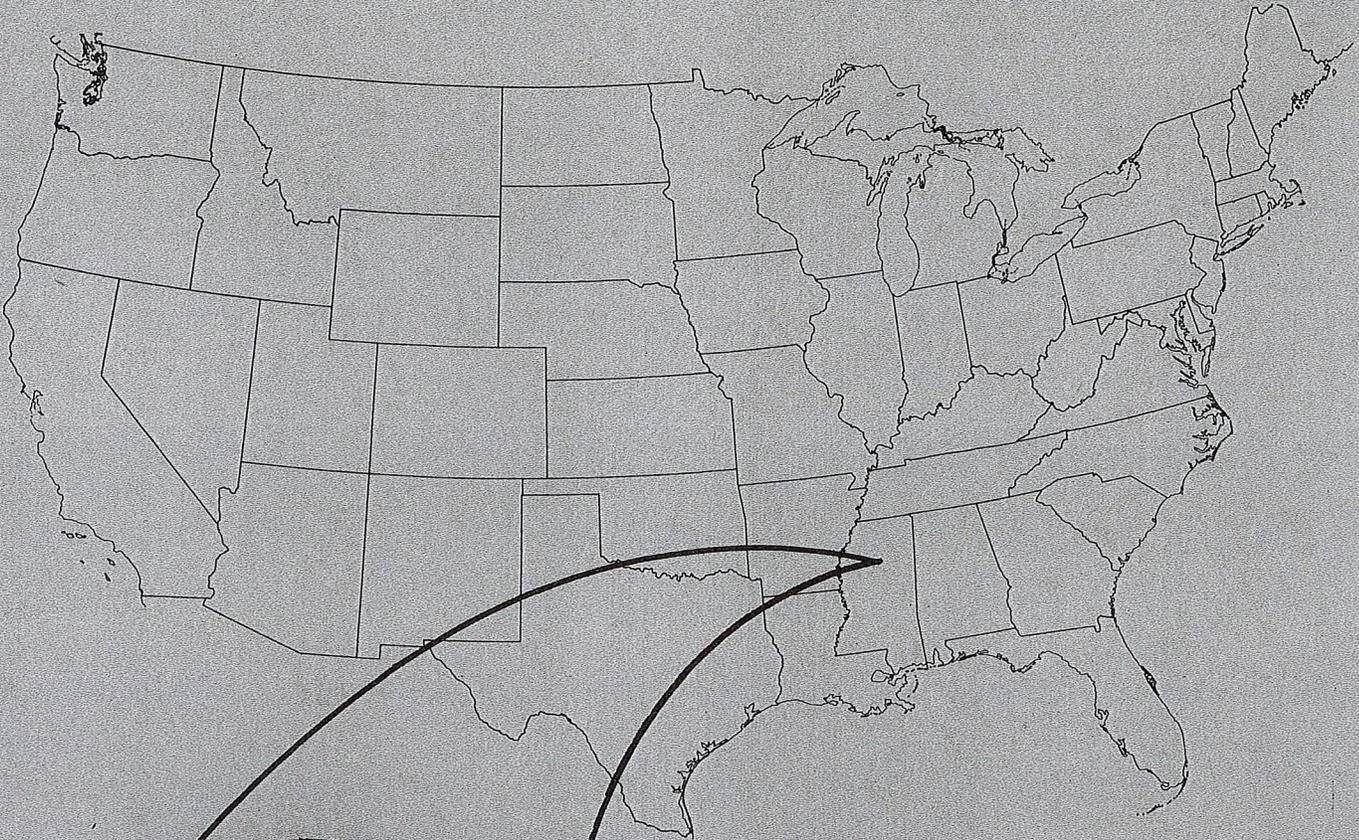


A SPECIAL STUDY OF

R JUN 1 1970
HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC



GRENADA COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, MISSISSIPPI



DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND SPECIAL STUDIES HOME MISSION BOARD S.B.C.

A SPECIAL STUDY OF THE GRENADA COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF
GRENADA, MISSISSIPPI

May, 1970

Jointly prepared by the
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The most significant field services were rendered by Rev. L. D. Wall, the Superintendent of Associational Missions in the GCBA.

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A SPECIAL STUDY OF
GRENADA COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The following report is an attempt to analyze the past trends in the population, economy, and GCBA churches and the possible conditions which will affect these churches during this decade. The purpose of this report is to provide a sourcebook for planning by the GCBA. Since the primary focus is on the Association, churches interested in long-range planning may receive indirect assistance by referring to the numerous professional sources quoted in this report and by copying the methods of analysis of church data. None of the projections regarding church outreach or organizations are presented as goals; they should be received only as mechanically produced extensions of present trends. Many factors can alter these trends in population growth or evangelistic outreach; however, these projections do indicate the direction in which the Association is headed if nothing occurs or is done to alter the trends.

THE PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC SETTING

Grenada is the seat of Grenada County. It is situated approximately 100 miles south of Memphis and 110 miles north of Jackson on Interstate 55. The City is nearly equidistant from both Arkansas and Alabama, being 99 miles from Columbus and 85 miles from Greenville. Figure 1 displays the strategic geographical factors which has caused the City to be regarded as the center of north Mississippi. Yet a word of caution is necessary because in 1960 the city of Grenada only ranked tenth among the principle cities of north Mississippi, note Table 1.

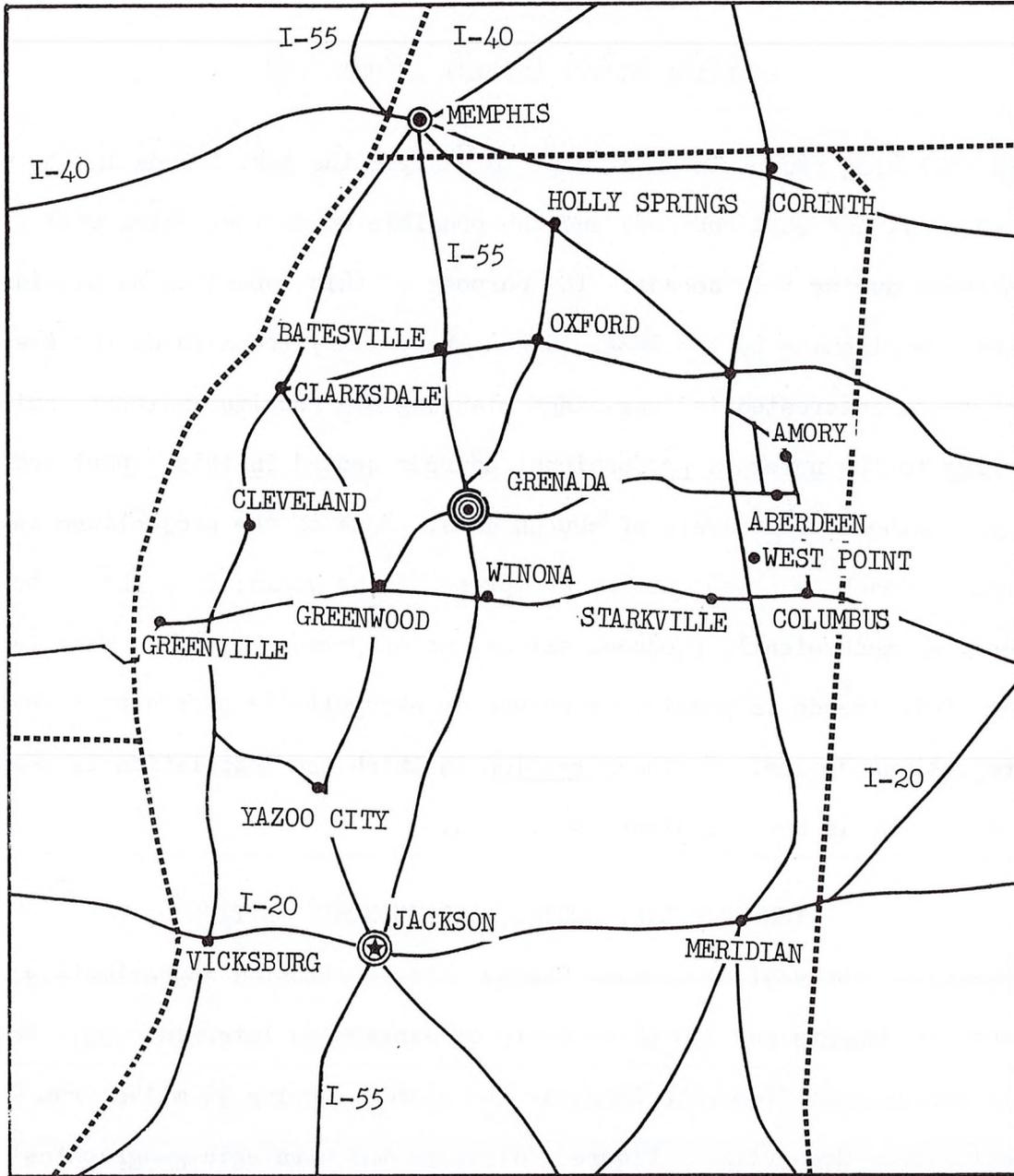


Fig. 1.--Geographical location of Grenada, Mississippi.

TABLE 1

POPULATION OF THE TEN LARGEST CITIES IN NORTH MISSISSIPPI
1960

Name	Population
Clarksdale	21,105
Cleveland	10,172
Columbus	24,771
Corinth	11,453
Greenville	41,502
Greenwood	20,436
Grenada	7,914
Starkville	9,041
Tupelo	17,221
West Point	8,550

Grenada County has an estimated land area of 433 square miles which makes it among the smaller counties of the State. The existing corporate limits of the city of Grenada covers approximately three square miles or less than one percent of the County's land area and yet houses 47% of the County's total population. There are approximately 3,500 persons per square mile within the corporate limits and in the other approximate 14 square miles which constitutes the urbanized planning area outside of the City, there are 286 persons per square mile. In the remaining 416 square miles of the County, the population density is only 19 per square mile.

The County lies in a hilly region just east of the fertile Mississippi Delta land. One of its main geographical features which has given the County region-wide renown is the Grenada Lake Reservoir which covers nearly 80 square miles in the northeastern quadrant of the County.

A second factor which has drawn the attention of the State has been the rapid growth in manufacturing employment from 1961 to 1968. During that period total employment increased by almost 1,600, with almost 1,300 of these new jobs in manufacturing. Manufacturing employment accounted for 29% of the total employment in 1961 and by 1968 it had reached 39%. During the same time, agri-

cultural employment in the County had dropped from 18% in 1961 to 10% in 1968. To illustrate the regional impact of the employment growth between 25 and 50% of the employees in the County commute from surrounding counties. The largest industry is the hosiery mill affiliated with the National Mills Division of U.S. Industries, Inc. Table 2 displays the phenomenal employment increases accounted for by the three largest industries in the County.

TABLE 2
PRINCIPAL PLANTS IN GRENADA COUNTY BY EMPLOYMENT^a
1962, 1969

Name	Year	
	1962	1969
McQuay, Inc.	350	825
North American Rockwell	200	600
U.S. Industries, Inc. (National Mills Division)	1,125	1,500

^aMississippi Research & Development Center, Mississippi Manufacturers Directory, 1962 and 1969.

Pioneer Boneless Beef, Inc. and Binswanger Mirror Company can also be classified as major employers because they account for 100 and 120 workers respectively. According to both the Mississippi Research and Development Center and City Manager J.E. McEachin, the prospects for further economic expansion are good for two reasons: first, because Grenada is the largest city on I-55 between Memphis and Jackson; and secondly, because of its close proximity to Greenwood, Mississippi, with a population almost twice that of Grenada, and growing with equal economic vigor.

POPULATION FORECAST

The data discussed in the section under economy prepares us to look for population increases. In 1960 the population of Grenada County was reported at

18,409 and in 1967 it was estimated to have increased to 21,230 according to Ellen Bryant of the Mississippi State University. Table 3 shows these data for the County by race.

TABLE 3
POPULATION OF GRENADA COUNTY, 1950-1967 BY RACE^a

Year	White	Non-White	Total
1950	9,038	9,792	18,830
1960	9,352	9,057	18,409
1965	11,021	10,160	21,181
1967	11,380	9,850	21,230

^aEllen Bryant, Mississippi State University, Mississippi County Population Estimates by Race and Age.

A careful evaluation of the data on Table 3 indicates a consistent growth in white population in the County over the past two decades with the most spectacular growth being recorded from 1960 to 1965. At the same time, the non-white population showed a drastic decrease during the 50's followed by a very rapid increase during the first half of the past decade with slight reversals through 1967. The percentage of population that was white increased from 48% in 1950 to 51% in 1960, 52% in 1965, and 54% in 1967.

According to the Editor and Publisher Market Guide, 1970, the County population is estimated to have been 22,698 on January 1, 1970. According to that publication, the population of the City rose from 7,914 in 1960 to 8,653 at the first of 1970.

According to recent estimates of the Mississippi Research and Development Center, the population increase in Grenada County will continue at least for several decades into the future. The principle growth will be in the city of Grenada and in the urbanized area which extends southward from the City. The two principle growth arteries to the south are U.S. 51 and Carrollton Road.

Some efforts are being made to develop land in the steep terrain west of the City but because of basic utilities, the steep grade of the terrain, and the nature of the soil ("sugarloaf" land) very little development is expected. Two factors are present to assist the development of the rural areas, beside the availability of new jobs in the City. These factors are the Farmer's Home Administrators Loans for rural area moderate income houses and the creation of water associations similar to Rural Electrification Associations of decades past. These two federally funded factors make possible for the maintenance of an increasing number of rural homes. Table 4 displays the anticipated change in population over the next several decades.

TABLE 4
POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR GRENADA COUNTY BY URBAN AND RURAL AREAS^a

Year	Grenada County		
	Urban	Rural	Total
1967	b	b	21,230
1969	13,050	9,450	22,500
1990	17,550	10,750	28,300

^aMississippi Research and Development Center.

^bNot Available.

The Southern Bell Telephone Company produces estimates concerning the number of households they can expect in their various exchanges so that they can plan for adequate equipment to offer the needed services of a changing clientele. Table 5 shows their projections for the Grenada exchange which basically covers Grenada County.

TABLE 5

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS FOR GRENADA TELEPHONE EXCHANGE^a
1966-1981

Year	Households
4/22/66	4,983
1/1/70	5,275
1/1/76	5,625
1/1/81	5,700

^aSouthern Bell Telephone Company, Commercial Wire Center Forecasts.

THE RELIGIOUS SETTING

In 1964 the white churches of Grenada County cooperated in a religious survey in which extensive data were gathered. The survey revealed there were about 3,300 Southern Baptists, 900 Methodists, 275 Presbyterians, 225 Church of Christ, and about 175 persons identifying with these five major religious bodies in the County. The survey included 5,378 persons out of an estimated 11,000 white population (note Table 3). These data do not justify the arbitrary projecting of these figures into the total population but do give an indication of the relative distribution of the various religious groups. Approximately 800 persons nine years of age and older were not members of any church while over 200 children under nine were not active (not attending at least once a month) in any church. The non-members represented about 16% of the "mature" population while the inactive children represented about 28% of the small children. These data indicate an average rate of church affiliation in the County when compared to the State rates.

The survey also revealed approximately 59% of the population attend church weekly, 13% monthly, and 28% seldom if ever attend any church.

For the present time the religious-mix of the County is dominated by Southern Baptists, followed by Methodists, Presbyterians, and Church of Christ.

The survey interviewers contacted only 116 persons with a Nazarene preference, 112 with Episcopalian preference, 97 with a Catholic preference and the other groups totaled less than 20 each. One-hundred eighty-five persons indicated no religious affiliation and no preference for any denomination.

THE ASSOCIATIONAL SETTING

In 1969 there were twelve churches in the GCBA, nine of these were in rural areas or villages and three were in the urban area of Grenada. Table 6 displays the change in church size over the last five years. Note the slight increase in rural membership which is more than the slight change in urban membership.

TABLE 6
AVERAGE RESIDENT MEMBERS PER CHURCH, 1965 THROUGH
1969 BY URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

Year	Areas	
	Urban	Rural
1965	652	117
1966	655	120
1967	652	120
1968	666	123
1969	659	124

These data somewhat confirm that which was said earlier concerning the population as there has been population increases in the rural areas as well as in the City.

Sunday School average weekly attendance is perhaps the best indicator of the general trend of participation of the constituency in the church. Table 7 displays the number of persons attending Sunday School per 100 resident members. This does not mean that there were 51% of the resident members attending Sunday School in the urban churches in 1965 but it does compare the trend in number of resident members. We would expect the rate (attenders per 100 members) to re-

main the same; that is, the total attendance should rise if the membership increases or the reverse, if there are declines. If all things are equal we could assume participation would be the same if the churches had the same attraction to the population; if the churches were more attractive there would be a higher rate shown over time while a lower rate would imply a lesser attraction. Table 7 indicates both rural and especially urban churches have a lowering participation rate.

TABLE 7
SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATE, 1965 THROUGH 1969
BY URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

Year	Areas	
	Urban	Rural
1965	51	48
1966	49	46
1967	48	47
1968	46	47
1969	43	45

Another measure of the "effectiveness" of the churches to reach out is the analysis of the components of membership change: additions by baptisms; transfer by church letter; and the net losses by outmigration, death or joining another church.

Rates per 100 resident members were computed to aid in comparing data from 1960 through 1969. These rates are calculated only for the total Association because the urban and rural data display highly erratic patterns. Table 8 aids us in noting the downward trend in letters while baptisms can neither be predicted upward nor downward. Note the erratic pattern of losses during the early part of the decade and the tendency to be more stable since 1965, though at a high rate of turnover. These data become the basis for preparing membership projections to be discussed in the next session of the report.

TABLE 8
 RATES^a OF COMPONENTS OF MEMBERSHIP CHANGE
 1960 THROUGH 1969

Year	Rates		
	Baptisms	Letters	Losses
1960	3.5	7.3	7.3
1961	4.2	7.8	7.2
1962	4.2	7.3	12.0
1963	4.2	8.7	2.1
1964	6.3	6.0	11.0
1965	5.5	4.7	6.8
1966	4.5	6.0	9.2
1967	3.9	5.0	9.3
1968	5.0	5.6	8.2
1969	4.5	4.4	9.4

The final trends we will observe in the analysis of church data are related to financial receipts and mission gifts. Table 9 shows the comparison of per capita church receipts and total mission gifts in 1965 through 1969. The accuracy of these data is questionable since an unusual fluxuation can be noted in both areas in 1968.

TABLE 9
 PER CAPITA TOTAL CHURCH RECEIPTS REPORTED BY THE CHURCHES
 1965 THROUGH 1969 FOR URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

Year	Areas		Total
	Urban	Rural	
1965	82.97	70.91	78.76
1966	89.89	77.25	85.39
1967	98.78	72.33	89.39
1968	112.90	87.17	103.72
1969	107.54	78.19	96.94

A more consistent and encouraging pattern of giving can be noted for the per capita gifts to all mission causes as displayed on Table 10. The per capita

income to the churches differ at a 7 to 10 basis; that is for each seven dollars the rural churches receive per member, the urban churches are taking in ten dollars. The comparison of mission dollars, however, is on a one to three basis with the rural member giving about one-third as much to mission causes as the urban member does through his church.

TABLE 10

PER CAPITA TOTAL GIFTS TO ALL MISSION CAUSES REPORTED BY THE CHURCHES 1965 THROUGH 1969 FOR URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

Year	Areas		Total
	Urban	Rural	
1965	24.77	5.14	17.92
1966	27.74	6.28	20.13
1967	28.99	7.57	21.39
1968	31.44	8.95	23.42
1969	32.86	12.20	25.40

All the data from which the calculations used in this section were based, can be found on Table 14 in the Appendix.

MEMBERSHIP PROJECTIONS

This final section of the report will build from the previous section by extending the trends in evangelistic outreach and membership mobility to estimate the number of members the GCBA will have in 1975. No projections can be made on the rural-urban basis because no measureable trend is evident; therefore what is said about the County must be conditioned by the assumption that one area will compensate for the others in accuracies and in the long run provide a general county-wide picture.

The membership projections are made by mechanically defining and extending the trends in baptisms, letters, and losses. This is accomplished by using the rates as defined on Table 8. Table 11 shows the three rates used in constructing

the high, medium, and low membership projection on Table 12.

TABLE 11
PROJECTED RATES OF THE COMPONENTS OF MEMBERSHIP CHANGE
1970 AND 1975

Year	Projection Series		
	Low	Medium	High
Baptism Rates			
1970	4.43	4.64	4.73
1975	4.03	5.08	5.53
Letter Rates			
1970	3.94	4.09	4.22
1975	1.94	2.69	3.34
Losses Rates			
1970	9.40	9.17	8.94
1975	11.00	9.85	8.70

The more favorable baptism and letter rates are the higher rates while the opposite is true for losses; the lower the losses, the more members remain in that church. Note that by adding the baptism and letter rates and subtracting the losses rate, you can estimate the percentage change in members for that year. To illustrate, the combined addition rates for the high series in 1975 is 8.87 from which 8.70 is subtracted, giving a net change of .17, or an annual net increase of .17 of one percent for that year. The low projection calls for a net loss of over 5%.

As I said earlier these are mechanical extensions of the recent trends and are not presented as goals. Many factors can alter these trends; however, these do indicate the direction in which the churches in the County are headed if nothing occurs or is done to alter the trends.

The principle problems revealed by Table 11 center in serious decline in

receiving members by letter. The baptism rate has maintained a fairly consistent level and, in fact are expected to rise. At the same time the losses, whether by death, moving away, or transferring to another church, is expected to continue at a very high level. Thus we see the problem is not with the usual "evangelistic" activities but with the recent inability of the churches to attract the new residents of the community to affiliate. This has occurred mostly in the last several years compared to the attraction these churches had during the first part of the last decade. Thus the downward trend, when projected, would eventually "hit zero". This will not occur, of course, and so the probable consequences will be that the combined membership of the churches will follow somewhere between the medium and high membership projection series as displayed on Table 12.

TABLE 12
PROJECTED MEMBERSHIP, 1970 THROUGH 1975

Year	Projection Series		
	Low	Medium	High
1970	3,072	3,083	3,090
1971	3,034	3,067	3,088
1972	2,979	3,044	3,085
1973	2,906	3,014	3,082
1974	2,818	2,977	3,078
1975	2,716	2,933	3,073

The 1970 projections do not differ much between the three series but with each new year, the range widens. This is caused by the irregularity of data reported during the past decade which made accurate predictability of trends very low.

Table 13 is the final table in this section and gives the range in absolute number of baptisms, letters, and losses for 1970 and 1975.

TABLE 13

PROJECTED NUMBER OF BAPTISMS, LETTERS, AND LOSSES FOR
1970 AND 1975

Year	Projection Series		
	Low	Medium	High
Persons Baptized			
1970	136	143	146
1975	110	154	176
Persons Received By Letter			
1970	121	126	130
1975	40	69	96
Persons Removed From Resident Roll (Losses)			
1970	278	278	278
1975	253	267	277

No efforts are made to project the participation rates based on the Sunday School average weekly attendance because the downward swing has intensified in the last several years but was not the trend of the whole decade. What is current trend may be only temporary. The reader is probably equipped by personal knowledge of the local attitude than this writer to "guess" what will occur. If the attendance rate falls to 40 to 100 resident members there will only be between 1,175 and 1,230 in Sunday School in 1975 compared to 1,354 in 1969.

The financial data are even less predictable since the lesser active members drift to inactivity and the inner core persevere longer. There is no way to even "guess" about the church income except to rehearse the certainty that the national and local economic trends will affect the member's earning power and that they will usually give in proportion to their ability and motivation. In fact, financial data are the most deceptive of the "success" or "effectiveness" of a church because many extraneous factors affect the total dollar figures that

that are reported.

CONCLUSION

The economy of Grenada County has been long geared to agriculture and somewhat to highway transportation. The prospects are that with the completion of Interstate 55 the industrial activities will continue to dominate the economy with corresponding increases in the "service" sector of the industrial scene. The first several sections of this report reveal two very important population facts related to the above statement; 1) population increases are expected to be felt primarily in the Grenada urbanized area, especially to the south but there will be substantial increases even into the rural areas; 2) Grenada industries attract a large number of commuter employees many of whom will eventually move into the County for the convenience of less travel time. Many of these people will be coming from rural areas and will make their homes either in the newly developing areas or on small "farms" along the better surfaced rural roads. There should be little difficulty on the part of the rural churches to assimilate new residents because the background of the vast majority will be of the same life-style of the region. There is good reason to expect there will be a need for at least one additional church in the urban area in the developing sections south of town. The main impact which will probably alter the life-styles of the population will not take place by in-migration but by the impact of mass media, especially network television. Such changes will probably be subtle and will affect the minister's family and his life-style at approximately the same rate as his constituency.

Thus we conclude that while other cities are confronted by radical adjustments to in-migrants because of widely differing values and life-styles the churches of Grenada County will probably be "spared" of such major impacts but this does not mean they will not be confronted and are not now being confronted with the more subtle pressures. Possibly the declines in Sunday School attend-

ance indicate such an impact.

Finally, this report cannot be complete without realistically facing the racial tensions which have periodically erupted over the past decade. The many persons who have been faithful in the prophetic ministry of reconciliation, both pastors and laity, are to be commended for their courage. Many persons have made personal sacrifices by participation on interracial and interdenominational committees. It appears that the progress that has been made concerning the compliance with the court ordered school integration would indicate that the "worst" is passed and the prospect for the future would be the opening of new areas for interracial cooperation.

TABLE 14

MISCELLANEOUS CHURCH DATA FOR GCBA, 1960-1969 BY RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

Area	Year									
	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Resident Members										
Rural	918	1,006	936	1,026	1,003	1,049	1,080	1,077	1,108	1,117
Urban	1,565	1,595	1,653	1,843	1,904	1,957	1,966	1,956	1,998	1,976
Total	2,483	2,601	2,589	2,869	2,907	3,006	3,046	3,033	3,106	3,093
Baptisms										
Rural	55	62	26	47	47	65	72	41	54	59
Urban	29	43	82	63	134	95	64	77	98	82
Total	84	105	108	110	181	160	136	118	152	141
Letters										
Rural	80	95	58	36	50	37	55	53	54	40
Urban	95	98	122	188	123	101	125	99	115	98
Total	175	193	180	224	173	138	180	152	169	138
Sunday School Enrolment										
Rural	650	707	725	739	771	824	811	732	823	752
Urban	1,701	1,753	1,844	2,004	1,973	2,002	2,030	1,915	1,812	1,817
Total	2,351	2,460	2,569	2,743	2,744	2,826	2,841	2,647	2,635	2,569

TABLE 14--Continued

Area	Year									
	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Sunday School Average Attendance										
Rural	394	427	530	508	502	499	500	508	525	507
Urban	874	867	866	955	952	990	958	938	913	847
Total	1,268	1,294	1,396	1,463	1,454	1,489	1,458	1,446	1,438	1,354
Total Receipts										
Rural	45,242	46,904	52,484	52,470	61,583	74,393	83,400	77,906	96,590	87,346
Urban	122,801	128,242	128,678	139,424	146,749	162,382	176,725	193,223	225,581	212,514
Total	168,043	175,146	181,162	191,894	208,332	236,775	260,125	271,129	322,171	299,860
Total Mission Gifts										
Rural	2,883	3,873	4,217	4,869	5,861	5,395	6,788	8,159	9,926	13,631
Urban	44,006	41,981	46,331	48,080	43,881	48,489	54,545	56,721	62,832	64,944
Total	46,889	45,854	50,548	52,949	49,742	53,884	61,333	64,880	72,758	78,575

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