on religion
and preached when a minister dared
By Docia Karell in the Springfield Leader

THAT youthful "whoopce" condemned by viewers-with-alarm is but a part of modern youth's quest for truth—an "outer manifestation of inner restlessness"—

Miss Beth Campbell, Leader reporter turned preacher for the occasion, told an audience of more than 1000 persons at the First Congregational church Sunday night.

Miss Campbell, herself just 21 and less than a year out of college, chose to talk on "Youth and Truth," from the text, "Rejoice in thy youth." She made a quaint picture as she entered the pulpit with the pastor of the church, the Reverend G. Bryant Drake, and the chairman of the occasion, York Johnson, youthful attorney, and member of the Sunday Night Forum in charge of the service.

For she is quite a little girl, and was apparently impressed with her responsibility and the seriousness of the occasion. She wore a dress of deep blue with a wide, soft frill of white collar—a cherubic figure, solemnly carrying a large black Bible. A serious smile on her fresh, earnest young face, round and rosy, was her first greeting to the crowd that packed the church to the remotest corner.

Miss Campbell began by saying that her change of role from reporter to preacher "was not such a difficult transition as you might imagine."

"In my mind," she said, "there is a close relation between a newspaper person and a minister. A reporter's business is to get the facts, all of them, accurately; and to relate them fearlessly. The editorial writer in turn interprets them."

"My conception of a real minister is just that and a little bit more. He searches out the truth, faces the facts of life and religion, and presents them fearlessly, interpreting them in the light of the world we live in and in the light of the teachings of Christ."

She spoke firmly and clearly, unembarrassed, and all heard her with ease—even those standing far in the back of the hall.

The words of her text, "Rejoice in thy youth," she said "are heartening to those of us who have heard our generation and its behavior railed at from magazines, books and lecture platforms—and often from the pulpit."

"Who I have heard ministers who talked as if all that was good and honest and worthwhile would die with them and their cronies," she said.

"These pessimistic Prattlers go on criticizing youth far into the night. 'You dance,' they say. 'You smoke, you flirt. You scoff at church, discard everything that is sacred and traditional.'"

"And so they go on, raving and ranting, as if merely being young was a sin."

But her belief is, Miss Campbell said, that "this flippancy, this search for a thrill, is only natural. The whole world today is artificial," she explained. "At the movies we hear artificial singing, even artificial talk. We eat artificial food, come in contact with things that are bogus every day."

"As young people we are trying to adjust ourselves to these conditions. Is it surprising?" she asked, "that we are often dissatisfied? Lost? Puzzled?"

Young people today do want a good time, she said, adding, "and until they see a real stop sign, they will speed merrily along their way. Hellfire and brimstone mean just that much nothing."

"Distant punishments are too vague," she explained. "But this idea of 'living abundantly,' she said, "of 'rejoicing in youth,' and living up to a sort of code, with a daily checkup with yourself, with the kind of a God who is interested—I can see that. I can grasp it. As a young person, I delight in it."

Throughout her sermon, Miss Campbell emphasized repeatedly modern youth's quest for truth—for reality.

"As I was preparing this sermon, I chanced upon a very timely news story that it seems to me illustrates a point," she said. "Five boys die as result of drinking radiator anti-freeze solution which they thought was wine." Seeking excitement, they even went so far as to turn housebreaker to obtain it, and to pass it around to their friends. Now they are dead.

"Those boys were seeking, searching," she said. "Their conception of truth was 'booze at a dance' and now they are 'dancing in hell'—at least so some of my more conservative minister friends would put it.

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YOUTH SPEAKS
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"Dancing in hell"—a striking phrase which the headline writer would grasp greedily.

"Dancing in hell"—an old favorite with a certain type of preacher.

Miss Campbell confessed, however, that after discovering the truth, not all young persons act upon it. As an example, she said, she had supposed that "with the persons act upon it. As an example, she

found that corn whiskey wasn't fit to offer this religion in a form that satisfies Jesus Christ, is what young people want sincerely, a spiritual approach to the world of Christianity that have been hurled at us. And how far is anyone swallowed the whale or the whale swallowed them, that they condemn it all.

"A thrill? There is nothing more thrilling than life that is rich, free-sparkling—life that is taught us by Jesus.

"His pathway is one of adventure; one that challenges youth.

"We young people are seeking, searching for truth; and in Jesus we can find it.

Perhaps this religion game is worth the running that, looking on the world with sparkling eyes, preachers who present us the spectacle of clowns on holy ground; preachers who, shouting salvation, interpret the word of the Man of Love by vomiting rumors of the foulest scandals about their fellow men and women.

With humble respect for Doctor Hervey we would say that we believe he has the wrong majority of them are sincere we gladly concede that the minister must at all times be dignified if it retain respect, we would vouchsafe that dignity does not always walk in with meaning.

"We are scaring young people away from religion rather than drawing them to it.

Some young persons today," she said, "have become so satiated with the brands of Christianity that have been hurled at them, that they condemn it all.

We can't remember whether Jonah swallowed the whale or the whale swallowed Jonah. And how far is anyone going to get arguing who swallowed what or why?" she explained.

"Unless the church takes heed, all I can see for it is an early death and a group of mourning friends.

More optimistically, she suggested that "Organized Christianity must stop, take stock, and realize that it must adjust itself to this modern world.

"Centuries of accumulated dead wood must be dropped off—to reveal that social ideal which was the inspiring motive and the central truth of the teaching of Jesus Christ."

Because of their dissatisfaction with the churches, many young persons today are "essentially religious, but don't know it," Miss Campbell suggested.

Current history and current literature—the war, the new schools of biography—have been disillusioning to youth—and have lead to a new search for truth, she said. When young people discovered that during the war governments themselves perverted the truth—when they discovered that "G. Washington and A. Lincoln weren't always the little tin gods they were cracked up to be"—their quest for fundamental truth became more intense, she said.

"Youth," she said, "wants to know the facts—all of them. By knowing the truth, even if it is derogatory, essential values can be arrived at."

Miss Campbell concluded by saying that "Life must be more than a gymnasium or a glorified laboratory. It must be full to the brim with happiness and also with meaning.

"Youth today is not discarding religion, it is merely discarding the long, doleful face that it often finds not.

Youth today is not discarding religion, it is merely discarding the long, doleful face that it so often wears. It seeks a religion that will teach that joy and happiness are a part of it, that life is merry and happy—and that such is the world's intended life should be.

Beth Campbell may have dared to fling a challenge at the ministry of today—if so, it was a sincere and honest challenge, one that should smolder in the hearts of millions of other Beth Campbells today.

The Leader feels that the Reverend Drake rendered great service to his noble and exalted calling in asking Beth Campbell to take his pulpit. For, as he so aptly said, an opportunity like that given to Youth to express itself—Youth that is good and pure and clean and longs for someone to take its hand and say:
"Come with me with a light heart and I will show you understanding and peace and contentment."

* * *

SOONER BUILDER Passes

(Continued from page 236)

typified the university professor—an able instructor, a trusted friend.

Who is the Sooner who has not a warm spot in his heart for Uncle Buck? No problem was too trivial to receive his earnest consideration, if it was a problem of a student, no problem was too grave for him, when it concerned a student's happiness.

Thirty-five years of service to Oklahoma—thirty-five years of modest, unassuming, helpful service, the memorial of which is the structure of a university, the immortality of which is a precious shrine of love in countless lives.

* * *

By Governor W. J. Holloway

I am deeply grieved to learn of the death of Doctor Buchanan. His passing is a distinct loss not only to our university but to our state. As a member of the constitutional convention he rendered splendid service in helping to formulate the basic law of Oklahoma. Long prior to that time and since statehood his life and work at the university has been a wonderful asset in the development of Oklahoma. His university life will for many years be a constant inspiration to young men and women of Oklahoma. As governor of the state I have issued an appropriate proclamation expressing the above sentiments for our entire citizenship and out of respect to the memory of Doctor Buchanan have ordered the flag lowered to half mast.

* * *

By Frank N. Watson,
President, O. U. Club of Texas

It is with the deepest sorrow that we learn that death has come to one who has long been enshrined in our hearts. Doctor Buchanan's years of unselfish service to our Alma Mater played an outstanding part in its success and his loveable loyalty and affection has benignly influenced the life of every Sooner. To the hundreds of us now living in Texas the passing of Uncle Buck comes as a personal sorrow. Will you please convey to his bereaved family, the officials of the university, and the student body our sincere and heartfelt sympathy.

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