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Sunday Schools 1977

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SUNDAY SCHOOLS 1977

Next year, some Sunday School in your state or province will win the fastest growing award. Why not yours?

BY ELMER TOWNS

The fastest growing Sunday Schools in the U.S. and Canada provide every Sunday School five good reasons for increasing their size.

1. *Growth is contagious.* If others can grow, your Sunday School can grow too. Most of these Sunday School leaders were challenged by stories of other successful churches.

2. *Growth is biblical.* People are being reached by the Gospel, brought into the house of God, taught the Bible and added to the church—fulfilling the Great Commission.

3. *Growth is varied.* Sunday Schools are growing by every possible creative means—from old-fashioned visitation to mass television outreach.

4. *Growth is man-inspired.* Growth

comes from God but is expressed through a human instrument. In every case, at least one person took the initiative to see growth occur. Remember, Sunday School growth never just happens, it is caused.

5. *Growth is victorious.* This listing proves that obstacles to growth can be overcome: little money, no buses, old congregation, poor facilities, inner-city or rural location and changing pastors.

America's Fastest Growing

A rumor is going the rounds in some uninformed circles today that the number of Sunday Schools is dwindling and attendance decreasing. Only old wives tales could be more inaccurate.

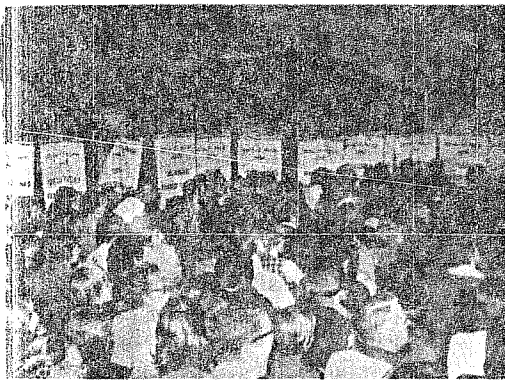
Actually both the number and size of Sunday Schools are booming.

The annual listing of the fastest growing Sunday Schools in the 50 states reflects this healthy condition—at least, in the evangelical segment of Christianity. New Sunday Schools are popping up; old Sunday Schools are growing—and the winners are from all types of churches: small, large, rural, city, racial, integrated, segregated, old and new congregations.

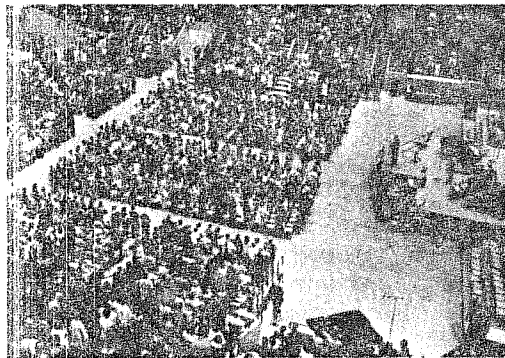
The fastest growing Sunday School in America is Calvary Assembly of God, Winter Park, Fla., with a growth of 1,402 over the previous year. While Calvary Assembly doesn't have buses, they receive more than two million a year in income. Besides a full educational program, the church has an

THE FASTEST GROWING IN TH

State	Church	City	Pastor	This Year	Last Year	Growth
Alabama	Huffman Assembly of God	Birmingham	Rev. D. Ronsisvalle	2,113	1,514	599
Alaska	Anchorage Bapt. Temple	Anchorage	Dr. J. Prevo	1,515	1,507	8
Arizona	N. Phoenix Bapt. Church	Phoenix	Dr. R. Jackson	2,684	2,435	249
Arkansas	First Assembly of God	Siloam Springs	Rev. P. Doherty	365	162	203
California	Los Gatos Christian Ch.	Los Gatos	Mr. M. Rickard	2,904	2,510	394
Colorado	First Pres. Church	Colorado Springs	Rev. J. Stevens	1,769	1,651	118
Connecticut	Faith Bapt. Church	Wolcott	Rev. D. Souza	225	123	102
Delaware	Pine Creek Bapt. Temple	Newark	Rev. R. Hayden	849	658	191
Florida	Calvary Assembly of God	Winter Park	Dr. R. Harthern	2,436	1,034	1,402
Georgia	Forrest Hills Bapt. Ch.	Decatur	Dr. W. Pennell	3,192	2,630	562
Idaho	Meridian Ch. of Nazarene	Meridian	Rev. R. Rodes	329	259	70
Illinois	Calvary Temple Church	Springfield	Rev. M. Johnson	3,214	2,704	510
Indiana	Fairhaven Indep. Bapt.	Chesterton	Dr. R. Voegtlin	1,458	1,076	382
Iowa	Westside Assembly of God	Davenport	Rev. T. Barnett	3,914	3,116	812



Contrary to rumor, Sunday Schools are alive—and growing. Christian Life contest winners proudly display their red and white banners.



Detroit's Cobo Hall is the site for the annual "Fastest Growing Sunday Schools" awards.

extensive music program, a full-color monthly magazine and a continuous building program.

Variety is the key to the winning Sunday Schools. At one time people thought that busing was the only way a Sunday School could enlarge. Yet fourteen Sunday Schools grew without using a bus ministry, one of which was Calvary Assembly. On the other hand, however, the Forrest Hills Baptist Church, Decatur, Ga., brought in over 1,900 riders each week on 43 buses.

Some churches, such as North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz., organized small Sunday School classes that used roughly one teacher per five students. Their weekly attendance averaged 2,684. Other churches, such as Westside Assembly of God, Davenport, Iowa, had almost 100 pupils per class. As their Sunday School grew, Westside Assembly removed the chairs and sat children on the floor. When that got too crowded, they built bleachers in each classroom and Sunday School was taught in the round.

Old-line churches such as First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., saw an increase of 75 per week. In Minster,

Ohio, a town of 2,000 people, which is roughly 98 percent Catholic, Ron Boldman knocked on doors six years ago and found two ladies who wanted a fundamental testimony in that town. Boldman held his first service in Minster's Crescent Theatre, and today Calvary Chapel boasts a School average of 1,061—50 percent of the town's population.

Fourteen Assembly of God churches are listed this year, up one from last year. The Baptists, with 20 listed, show a decline of three from last year's list. Six other denominations are listed plus several inter-denominational churches.

The twelve churches who reappear on the list this year deserve a special applause. It takes unusual effort to grow two or more years in a row. Sometimes a church may grow because of new facilities, new pastors or new programs, but it is difficult to sustain the growth over a long period of time.

Of special interest are the baby churches that won in their first year of existence. The Landmark Baptist Church, planted in the Mormon country of Salt Lake (continued on page 86)

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Denomination	Professions of Faith	New Members	Sunday School Enrollment	Publisher Used	Volunteer S.S. Workers	Full-Time Church Staff	Financial Income	Number of Buses	Average Bus Attendance
Assembly of God	350	322	2,932	Gospel Pub. House	132	16	1,200,000	5	100
Baptist Bible	427	763	3,387	-	161	14	480,000	30	833
Southern Baptist	343	475	5,210	Bapt.S.S. Bd.	588	27	1,232,958	-	-
Assembly of God	200	68	461	Gospel Pub. House	94	6	89,000	5	90
Non-Denom.	-	1,100	-	Gospel Light	310	47	1,698,548	-	-
Presbyterian	149	121	3,700	Gospel Light	131	29	802,631	-	-
Baptist	164	34	397	Reg.Bapt. Press	12	2	31,660	2	96
Baptist	753	116	1,106	Baptist Pub.	75	8	300,000	12	351
Assembly of God	807	590	2,813	Gospel Light	389	42	2,010,000	-	-
Indep. Baptist	-	203	-	Baptist Pub.	56	14	194,993	43	1,940
Nazarene	25	61	589	Naz. Pub. House	34	3	134,825	-	-
Assembly of God	917	323	5,197	Gospel Light	330	16	1,123,000	20	615
Indep. Baptist	2,000	100	2,100	-	60	8	275,000	20	900
Assembly of God	5,206	-	4,760	Write Own	85	8		35	1,200

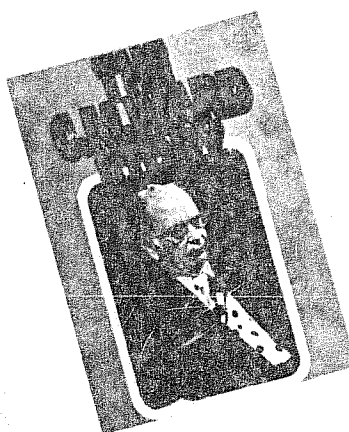
(continued on page 42)

(50 Fastest Growing Sunday Schools from page 31)

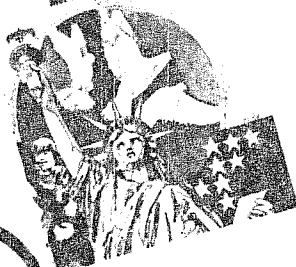
State	Church	City	Pastor	This Year	Last Year
Kansas	First Church of God	Wichita	Rev. R. Cotton	473	405
Kentucky	Victory Bapt. Church	Louisville	Rev. G. Gentry	571	283
Louisiana	First Assembly of God	New Orleans	Rev. M. Gorman	1,377	960
Maine	The Wesleyan Church	Presque Isle	Rev. K. Gorveatte	197	158
Maryland	Woodlawn Wesleyan Ch.	Hyattsville	Rev. R. Fenwick	251	173
Massachusetts	Central Baptist Church	New Bedford	Rev. T. Roddam	181	136
Michigan	Calvary Baptist Church	Holland	Rev. E. Webb	701	428
Minnesota	S.Side Baptist Temple	St. Paul	Rev. B. Liles	261	232
Mississippi	First Bapt. Church	Jackson	Dr. F. Pollard	1,729	1,654
Missouri	Central Assem. Chris.	Joplin	Rev. J. Evans	1,879	1,366
Montana	First Assembly of God	Bozeman	Rev. J. Weaver	432	416
Nebraska	First Assembly of God	Lincoln	Rev. J. Glass	373	227
Nevada	Gateway Bapt. Church	Las Vegas	Rev. D. Pettipiece	229	176
New Hampshire	Bethel Assembly of God	Portsmouth	Rev. P. Miller	186	157
New Jersey	N.Brunswick Bible Ch.	Somerset	Rev. E. Davis	150	82
New Mexico	First Assembly of God	Carlsbad	Rev. G. Sutherland, Jr.	279	188
New York	Gates Community Chapel	Rochester	Rev. F. Brothers	221	23
North Carolina	First Assembly	Concord	Rev. T. Whidden	643	529
North Dakota	First Assembly of God	Fargo	Rev. D. Rothwell	381	337
Ohio	Calvary Chapel	Minster	Rev. R. Boldman	1,061	833
Oklahoma	Bethany/First Nazarene	Bethany	Dr. P. Gilliland	1,984	1,677
Oregon	Faith Center	Eugene	Rev. R. Hicks, Jr.	1,328	1,058
Pennsylvania	First Pente. Church	Spring Mills	Rev. R. Pyle	57	0

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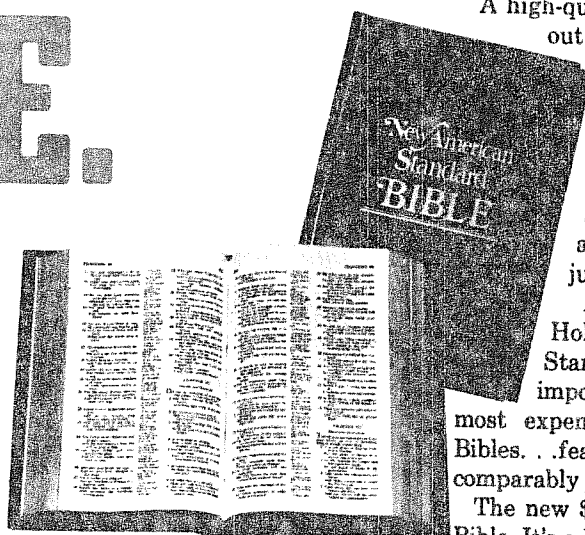
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Denomination	Professions of Faith	New Members	Sunday School Enrollment	Publisher Used	Volunteer S.S. Workers	Full-Time Church Staff	Financial Income	Number of Buses	Average Bus Attendance
Assembly of God	55	-	846	Warner Press	88	7	214,000	-	-
ep. Baptist	482	211	416	Child Evangelism	43	3	101,244	10	476
Assembly of God	-	238	1,435	Gospel Pub. House	60	-	-	7	130
Wesleyan	22	8	384	Wesleyan Pub.	20	2	36,000	2	-
Wesleyan	300	14	500	Free Will Bapt.	12	1	29,866	4	217
ep. Baptist	127	25	-	Baptist Pub.	10	2	6,429	3	84
ep. Baptist	404	88	-	Reg. Bapt. Press	35	4	-	9	333
ep. Baptist	289	75	-	Baptist Pub.	20	1	33,665	5	167
thern Baptist	64	432	3,213	S.S. Board	340	25	600,962	-	-
Assembly of God	500	250	-	Gospel Pub. House	80	18	500,000	20	750
Assembly of God	125	60	560	Gospel Pub. House	38	8	123,000	-	-
Assembly of God	42	8	-	Gospel Pub. House	35	2	131,917	3	115
ep. Baptist	136	86	-	Write Own	17	2	65,746	3	30
Assembly of God	108	54	-	Gospel Pub. House	32	2	66,600	-	-
ep.	186	41	350	Baptist Pub.	20	1	-	5	151
Assembly of God	18	21	255	Gospel Pub. House	28	4	59,286	1	8
ep.	285	75	-	Write Own	18	2	12,000	2	75
Assembly of God	494	164	858	D.C. Cook	58	11	241,800	3	50
Assembly of God	239	24	-	Gospel Pub. House	53	9	88,422	9	300
ep. Baptist	584	350	1,275	Write Own	46	7	135,481	23	850
arene	77	198	2,494	Naz. Pub. House	175	17	750,000	-	-
sq. Gospel	536	1,427	-	Gospel Light	110	39	556,458	-	-
ed Pente.	49	65	65	Pent. Pub. House	9	2	5,375	-	-

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THE BIBLE PEOPLE
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State	Church	City	Pastor	This Year	Last Year	Gr
Rhode Island	Narragansett Bay Bapt.	Cranston	Rev. J. Allen	85	47	
South Carolina	Harbor Bapt. Church	W. Columbia	Dr. D. Wood	1,287	1,043	
South Dakota	First Assembly of God	Sioux Falls	Rev. J. Allen	352	290	
Tennessee	Highland Pk. Bapt.	Chattanooga	Dr. L. Roberson	8,923	7,947	
Texas	Allandale Bapt. Ch.	Austin	Rev. H. O'Chester	1,937	1,611	
Utah	Landmark Bapt. Ch.	Salt Lake City	Rev. D. Evertson	139	35	
Vermont	N.Ave. Alliance Ch.	Burlington	Rev. J. Davey	233	201	
Virginia	Berean Bapt.	Salem	Rev. R. Holland	831	683	
Washington	Landgren Memorial Bapt.	Kent	D. Hopper	439	288	
West Virginia	Briscoe Run Bapt.	Parkersburg	Rev. G. Walls	721	625	
Wisconsin	Pilgrim Bapt. Ch.	Milwaukee	Rev. H. Hoover	280	156	
Wyoming	Sunnyside Bapt. Ch.	Cheyenne	Rev. D. Jones	594	396	
Alberta	Edmonton Bapt. Temple	Edmonton	Rev. J. Moffitt	128	65	
British Columbia	Abbotsford Pent. Assem.	Abbotsford	Rev. G. Lucas	344	279	
Manitoba	Winnipeg Baptist Temp.	Winnipeg	Rev. D. Wetters	184	86	
New Brunswick	Devon Park Bapt. Ch.	Fredericton	Rev. D. Moore	481	363	
Newfoundland	First Bapt. Church	St. Johns	Rev. M. Davis	252	145	
Nova Scotia	Hillside Wesleyan Ch.	Dartmouth	Rev. H. Wilson	288	221	
Ontario	Cent. Gospel Temple	St. Catherines	Rev. J. West	2,010	1,677	
Prince Ed. Is.	Grace Bapt. Church	Charlottetown	Rev. A. Rockwell	134	130	
Quebec	Snowden Bapt. Church	Dollard Desor.	Rev. M. Brown			
Saskatchewan	U. Dr. Alliance Ch.	Saskatoon	Rev. W. Boldt	538	530	

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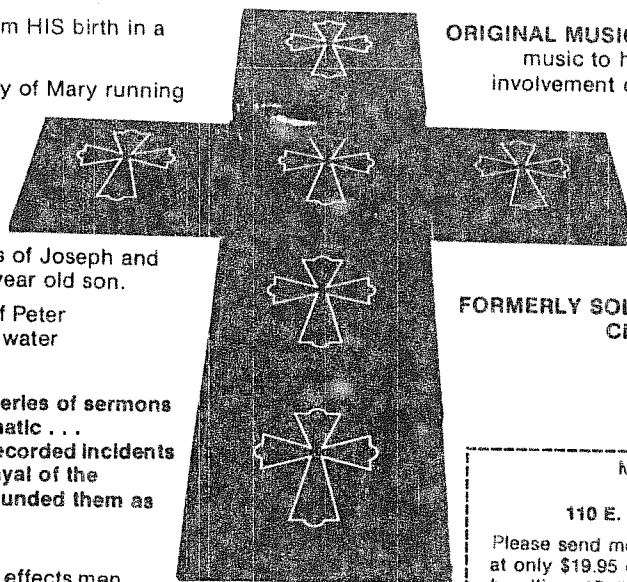
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Denomination	Professions of Faith	New Members	Sunday School Enrollment	Publisher Used	Volunteer S.S. Workers	Full-Time Church Staff	Financial Income	Number of Buses	Average Bus Attendance
Dep. Bapt.	25	173	10	-	10	1	6,500	1	87
Dep. Bapt.	1,275	521	-	Baptist Pub.	131	-	-	15	586
Assembly of God	174	62	471	Word of Life	27	4	151,000	2	34
Dep. Bapt.	2,273	2,542	10,603	Write Own	540	34	-	58	1,846
Southern Baptist	307	530	3,528	Southern Baptist	411	15	755,864	7	140
Dep. Baptist	401	5	100	Write Own	15	1	15,000	4	120
Christian & Miss. Alli.	4	-	382	Gospel Light	41	3	43,025	2	45
Dep. Bapt.	125	116	-	Baptist Pub.	60	9	300,000	13	374
Life Baptist	40	123	-	-	71	7	140,072	3	53
Evangelist	230	160	897	Write Own	36	4	83,566	11	349
Dep. Bapt.	250	45	350	Write Own	20	1	36,000	4	200
Southern Baptist	261	204	981	Southern Baptist	125	5	105,000	10	344
Dep. Baptist	324	74	-	Write Own	18	2	22,977	3	90
Evangelical	-	-	378	Full Gospel Pub.	18	4	93,741	2	25
Dep. Baptist	102	34	300	Write Own	10	1	60,000	-	-
Lawship Bapt.	26	29	741	Scripture Press	42	2	75,412	5	183
United Baptist	38	71	420	Baptist Pub.	48	1	33,893	3	180
Wesleyan	89	17	566	Wesley Press	21	2	68,900	7	236
Evangelical	393	80	2,536	Full Gospel Pub.	200	7	353,000	19	1,120
Lawship Bapt.	-	-	-	Reg. Bat. Press	15	2	-	-	-
Evangelical	100	61	900	-	70	10	435,000	-	-

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