

**A WORKING PAPER:  
THE CHURCHING OF THE METRO-FRINGE  
CASESTUDY: SOUTHERN BAPTISTS IN KANSAS CITY/RAYTOWN, 1945-1995**

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The conclusion of World War II, in retrospect, initiated what has proven to be a radically new day for planting and developing churches in and around the great cities of USAmerica. First, the size, shape, patterns of movement (transportation), life-style, economics, communication channels, schooling, churches, and racial/socioeconomic character of our city's neighborhoods have changed significantly in this half century. Second, television, freeways, racial desegregation, the baby boom, urban sprawl, and deindustrialization coupled with the rise of the service industries, the breakup of the old ethnic ghettos, the suburbanization of jobs, increased drug abuse, and the diminished role of railroads are among the changes that have significantly reshaped the cities. And then, the nature of churches themselves was undergoing very significant changes, as well. I believe, it is time for us to pause and consider these changes, a time to review the past 50 years to see what can be learned from our efforts at church planting and growth on the metropolitan fringes. I propose to initiate this study by developing a case study of one region of one city in USAmerica.

Kansas City in 1945 claimed something over a half-million persons in the city and its suburbs. The urbanized, industrialized area was shaped remarkably like a cross. The upright part was about 10 miles long, north and south, extending from water-works hill above North Kansas City to 95th Street (Bannister Road) on the south. The Kansas State line was the west boundary and about 3 to 4 miles east lay the Blue River Valley industrial district and Swope Park forming the eastern boundary of the city. The cross member included Kansas City, Kansas, to the west and Independence, Missouri to the east, with the downtown area in the middle. The growth of Kansas City over the next two decades focused largely on urbanizing the metro fringe areas beneath the cross bar. On the east it was the Raytown school district. To the west it was the Shawnee Mission area in Johnson County, Kansas. (See Map 1.)

The opening of these new areas for urbanization following World War II provided an opportunity and challenge to the churches and denominational bodies to plant new congregations and to grow old ones. The focus of this paper will be upon what happened in the Raytown area in the half century since the end of World War II. By discovering and sharing the story of church extension in Raytown, I seek to identify some principles which will give meaning to the past and provide guidance for the future. This area was selected because the writer moved there in 1946 as a 10 year old, lived there until age 25, and continues to visit relatives and friends there down to the present. (The study began in February 1995. The following February, my daughter Amelia moved to Raytown to become the manager of the Baptist Book Store, a true serendipity). The focus will be upon Southern Baptists, but I hope that this study might stimulate similar studies by the other denominations in the area, studies of the other regions of metro Kansas City, and studies of church planting and development in other metros across USAmerica. The conclusions drawn from this study will need to be tested in other places by other persons, certainly.

My methodology will be very simple. I have gathered data about the Southern Baptist churches in Kansas City and Raytown for the period. I have also gathered data about population growth and movement. And I have gathered some data about the other denominations in the metro area. I have reflected upon my experiences in the first part of the period as a young participant. I have shared my

findings with others whose role and length of experience are different than mine. I see this as a growing effort and hope that as you read and reflect upon my findings you will enter into the process by sharing your observations and analysis.

I hope that you will see this effort as much more than the musing of a person at about age 60 and getting into the early stages of the "life review" process. And I hope that you will not dismiss what I have to say because I am a rural specialist writing about an essentially urban issue. Sociologists have long advocated hearing from the "underside" or minority voices, those who have another view than the one that becomes "common or conventional knowledge." So, I am bold enough to believe that as a rural specialist I bring to the issue of urban growth and expansion into traditionally rural areas a seldom-heard perspective that will enrich the discussion.

My driving belief is that some very significant things have happened to church work over these 50 years; things that we only dimly understand. I believe that all too often we have focused on specific congregations or on state or national data. The missing piece has been studies on the township, county, and urban area levels. (The Missouri Rural Church study has township data, but as far as I know, it has focused more on the state as a whole rather than tracing change within the townships.)

The choice to make a first effort at such a study in the Kansas City area may prove to be a good one. It is one of the few places where the nation's two largest denominational families have similar numerical strength which has not been impacted significantly by recent immigration from abroad. With the Midwest Research Institute located there, if this study merits further development, there will be good data bases in place for more careful analysis of the various communities in the metro area across time.

## **RAYTOWN IN 1945**

Raytown was simply an unincorporated rural crossroads at the end of World War II. The village center contained a bank, two grocery stores, two drug stores, a variety store, a Ford dealership, two feed stores, a ready-mix plant, a high school, some doctors offices, offices of two rural water districts, a gas station or two, a newspaper office, a Masonic lodge, an appliance store, and the Baptist and Disciples churches. The village traced its founding back almost 100 years to when a blacksmith, William Ray, set up a shop there. His early trade focused on the needs of travelers along the Santa Fe trail who discovered some problem after traveling about 10 miles from the starting point in Independence. Later, it became a service center for the scores of family farmers who surrounded it. In the 1930s there had been some subdividing nearby. Laurel Heights, Hilltop Gardens and Wildwood Lakes were three of the more visible and well-known subdivisions.

The school district was really what Raytown was about. It had been formed in 1903 by the consolidation of eight rural elementary school districts and the creation of a central high school. By 1945 there were seven elementary schools which were arranged two east and west and three north to south (save the northwest part of the Raytown district which had two public schools). The total area included about 32 square miles. It contained much of the territory in the township which lay south of Independence and east of the mid-town and southside of Kansas City. It was shielded from Kansas City by Swope Park and the Blue River Valley on the west. (The main route of the Kansas City Southern Railroad also followed this line.) The north boundary was roughly 43th Street and the southern was 87th Street. Cutting diagonally from northwest to southeast across the Raytown district was US Highway 50, now renamed the Blue Parkway. US Highway 40 dipped into the northeast part of the district. (Today, Interstate 70 runs along the northern edge of the district. Blue Ridge Boulevard wandered from northwest to southwest through Raytown. It follows the ridge line between

the Big and Little Blue Rivers and makes a big bow through the heart of the Raytown school district. The other primary arteries were Raytown Road which connected Raytown with the General Motors/Fischer Body plant in Leeds and other industrial plants in Blue River Valley and Blue Ridge Cutoff which ran from 35th to 67th about a mile west of Raytown, cutting a big bow out of the ridge route. The Rock Island railroad provided freight service from Kansas City to Raytown. The rail line ran pretty much parallel to Raytown Road to the village center. (See Map 2) The eastern edge of the Raytown district followed roughly the township line east of the course of the Little Blue River from about 87th Street to about 43rd Street. The Missouri Pacific Railroad line ran through this river valley on its way from Independence to Lee's Summit.

In addition to the Baptist and Disciples churches in the village center in 1945, there was a Methodist church two miles northeast next to Chapel school. Besonia Baptist was about a mile south of the Raytown district out Raytown Road. Little Blue Baptist was just inside of the district at 72nd and Noland Road. Blue Parkway Methodist was just west of the Raytown district on US Highway 50. A non-denominational Sunday School had been started during the war in the Spring Valley School in the southwest part of the district. It was comprised of Baptists, Methodists, Disciples, Independents, and a Brethren family. After the war they began to have worship using student pastors from Central Baptist Seminary in Kansas City, Kansas. Soon it became a mission of the Raytown Baptist Church. In the early 1950s the Independent segment formed a Bible Church and settled on Blue Ridge Road a mile or so south of the Spring Valley site. There was a similar "union" Sunday School arrangement at the Parkview school during World War II, I am told. This seems to have been the stock of churches in and near the Raytown district before the great surge of suburban development began. (See Map 3) Certainly, some Raytown residents commuted to the churches in Independence, Kansas City, Lee's Summit, and Hickman Mills.

In 1945, the seven elementary public schools had about 30 classrooms and about 900 students. The high school served about 300 students. Many of these classrooms were make-shift arrangements meeting in the basements of the schools and in churches. The industrialization generated by World War II had drawn many families from farms and distant villages to the Raytown area. A school population of 1200 suggests a general population of 5,000 to 6,000. The initial strategy of the school board was to close the five smaller rural schools (Spring Valley, Parkview, Lane, Bennington, and Stormy Point) and consolidate elementary schools in Raytown and Chapel, making the old Raytown elementary a middle school. This strategy was short lived. In only a decade the school enrollment grew from 1,200 to 5,500. This great surge of growth called for many new schools and a second high school in the 1960s when school enrollment peaked at 16,000. Today, the enrollment stands at 8,300, of which 80% is Anglo. (See Map 4). (NOTE: Four parochial schools in Raytown serve about 1,000 additional students.)

In sum, the Raytown of 1945 was still a township, farm service village. A significant part of the population still operated small general farms. This was particularly true in the river valleys. Some suburbanization had occurred in the two previous decades. Along Blue Ridge Boulevard some fine homes had been built, mostly by business and professional persons with offices in Kansas City. The same was true of some lakeside homes which had been developed. Along US Highways 40 and 50 and near the village center, some more modest homes had been built for working class and lower-level white-collar workers, mostly in war related industries. Raytown had been stressed, somewhat, already by an influx of new persons due to industrialization. The Raytown area provided good access to the Blue River identified district and also the Lake City arsenal east of Independence and to the Pratt and Whitney aircraft engine factory south and west of Raytown. This was to be accelerated for the next quarter century. The village elite were to become wealthy by the sale and development of their former farm land, but they were also to lose control of the churches, schools, and community during the

period being studied.

## **KANSAS CITY IN 1945**

The city at the end of World War II was very much a “public transit” city. It was platted in the gridiron fashion of older cities. Public transit was available within one-half mile of most homes, so that most persons were within a 10 minute walk of a bus or street-car stop. Long lines run north and south along Wornall Road, Main, Troost, The Paseo, Prospect, and Swope Park Boulevard. Crossing lines ran along Sixth, Twelfth, Fifteenth, Twenty-third, Twenty-seventh, Thirty-first, Linwood, Armour, Thirty-ninth, Forty-seventh, Fifth-fifth, Sixty-third, Gregory and some other lines.

Earlier, following World War I, the city had experienced explosive growth. Essentially, the city grew south from about Thirty-first to about seventy-first streets (about 5 miles). House lots typically had 35 feet of frontage on the street. In the mid-1920s the JC Nichols Company developed the Country Club Plaza area on the west side around Forty-seventh and Main. It was anchored by an extensive suburban shopping center. Better apartment houses surround the Plaza and beyond them fine single-family housing was constructed for the expanding middle-class professionals. The Nelson Art Museum and the public university, KCU, were nearby. Nichols developed a second Southwest hub about three miles further out, Brookside, in the 1930s. Many of the wealthiest families relocated in the Plaza area, some of them across the state line into Johnson County, Kansas.

Back in the mid-town area, out The Paseo, Prospect, and Benton Boulevard, beyond Thirty-first Street, thousands of homes for the blue-collar workers sprang up. This was particularly true out to Fourth-seventh Street. From there on out to Sixty-third, much of the housing was somewhat more upscale with a mix of blue and white collar families. On the East side, beyond the Blue River Industrial Area, between the older city and Independence, there was considerable development of small, working-class housing. (see Map 5)

In this period between the World Wars, about 20 years, the urbanized area of Kansas City almost tripled. Had the Great Depression not slowed the growth, it probably would have done so. (Some of the suburbanizing that occurred during this period followed and filled in the settling that had occurred along an interurban rail line that ran on south from the Plaza through Brookwood, Marlborough, and Waldo on down to county seats of Harrisonville and Clinton. Similar lines ran out to St. Joseph on the north, Kansas City, Kansas on the west and Independence on the east. (This later line included other “English” place names like Kensington and Maywood.) A fuller study will want to get beyond my impressionistic presentation of this period, but for this research proposal, perhaps this is sufficient, except we need to look at the church planting that was done during this period.

First, I believe that it was during this period of time that the major congregations of the larger Protestant denominations relocated along Linwood (32nd) about three miles south of downtown. Each of these churches was a “public transit” church with good access to streetcar lines. They were located in the Hyde Park district which was developed at the time as upscale housing. I know that both First Baptist and Linwood Methodist attracted more than 1,000 worshipers per service during those days.

Second, many new churches were formed during this period. For Baptists a Home Mission Society (Northern) missionary, C. P. Jones, led the work. It appears that his strategy called for a church in most elementary school communities in the growing city. From 1918 to 1945 the following congregations were added in the Northeast Industrial District: Bethel, Blue Summit, Greendale, Mount Washington, Munsell, and Rockwood. In the area south of Linwood and west of Troost are the following: Antioch, Armour Heights, and Wornall Road. And in the city east of Troost and south of Linwood the following were planted: Garfield, Grace, Monroe Avenue, Parkway, Southeast, and Trinity. In addition several of the older churches such as Oakwood, Rockhill, and Swope Park were refocused from rural to suburban

during this period, I suspect. In addition several churches were added to the old city during this period. (Some also closed, merged, or disappeared from the records. For example, Monroe Avenue had earlier been the first German Baptist Church and was located further north.)

Third, as a child I remember C. P. Jones as a balding, short, heavy-set, rather loud preacher. He was certainly held in high regard by the Garfield church, one of his church plants. The Garfield church set on two city lots. There was no off-street parking. People walked to the church. Within two miles of its site at Fiftieth and Garfield were the Trinity, Parkway, Michigan Avenue, Forest Avenue and Rockhill Baptist churches fanned out in all directions. I doubt that anyone in the old city of 1945 was more than 20 minutes by foot, and/or by public transit from a Baptist church. Jones had done his work well. Not only was his a "walk-to-church strategy," I suspect it was also informed by other elements of the "village" church mentality of the Baptists who had just come to the city. For example, my parents, like thousands of other Baptists in the city, must have thought that they were duplicating what they had left behind. Garfield was to be much like the churches in Greenridge and Hughesville where my parents had grown up. It would be a multi-generation church for themselves, their children and their grandchildren and for folk like themselves, or who would wisely elect to become like them. They had come from stock that had pioneered in Pettis County, Missouri, more than a century before. There, their ancestors had built churches for their descendants. So, when they moved to Kansas City in 1936, their vision of the future was that they would be urban pioneers doing much as their rural predecessors had done. (Actually, the typical rural community could sustain a very limited population earning their living from farming. If it grew beyond, say, 2,000, it had to add industry, an institution, or some other facility. More typically, when a rural community became "settled up," it exported the surplus population on to the Western territories or into the cities for a vocational change.) But it was not to be.

City communities (or metropolises) were not destined to be static like rural communities seemed to have been. Their life-cycle seems to have been less than 50 years. A very significant exception to this appears to be the Country Club Plaza, one which has continued to be "up-scale" for about 70 years and shows little sign of being anything different. Garfield has no members now who can recall the planting of the church 70 years ago. Nor are there any who can recall the story as told by their parents or grand parents. No group can be found to tell again the story. No congregation gathers to retell stories about C.P. Jones, or about his successors--Revs. Pitney, Brown, Coulter and other pastors at Garfield. This is not the case with the churches in the villages of Greenridge and Hughesville, back in Pettis County. The story continues in them. But Garfield is now an African American Baptist church, as is its neighbor, Trinity. New stories are being made and told. But, I wonder if it will become a multi-generational church for African Americans. Or is the destiny of the walk-to, neighborhood churches that were planted in the growing cities between the Wars to be a way-station for waves of new to urban peoples. My point is that the strategy that Jones adopted worked, but it reflected a paradigm that has become obsolete.

When I look around Kansas City today I see scores of church buildings that reflect the patterns of life that characterized life in villages--buildings that can handle 100 to 200 persons with little off-street parking. However, around the perimeters I see mega-churches that are responding to the "age of the automobile." And when I look more closely, and particularly when I listen carefully, I discover some "house churches," those single-cell groups that are not tied to place and give expression to the transitory nature of modern life. I am impressed that these are the two major models of the near future as far as urban church planting is concerned. I believe that this will become more evident as we look at the work in Raytown from 1945 to 1995.

Before turning to the Raytown study, I want to say a little bit more about Kansas City Baptist churches. First, by focusing on Raytown I will be neglecting the good work done by Wornall Road, Swope Park and other Baptist churches in planting new congregations on the south side after 1945.

Particularly, in the period from 1945 to 1970 when the Raytown area churches were being planted to the east and southeast, Red Bridge, Santa Fe Hills, Ruskin Heights, Holmeswood, and Colburn Road were being planted on the south. Since then, some old city congregations have moved south and additional congregations have been formed, even into northern Cass County. Similarly, Kansas City churches have been planted north of the Missouri River, although most of the new churches there are affiliated with the Clay-Platte Association. And some of the church planting by Southern Baptists across the state line in Kansas drew their support from old city Missouri churches. Finally, my Raytown focus will also cause me to neglect the active work of planting new congregations out in Independence in the first twenty years and since then in Blue Springs and on east out the I-70 corridor, as well as most of the work in Lee's Summit, Greenwood and beyond.

Fourth, in a Southern Baptist mission study book written in 1927 by E. P. Alldrege, *The New Challenge of Home Missions*, I find that Kansas City then had a population of 324,410. The Roman Catholics were the largest denominational group with 42,895 adherents. Methodists placed second with about 19,000. White Baptists were the third largest group with 13,321. And African American Baptists were a close fourth with 12,921. From this data, until further study is done, I am concluding that Roman Catholics were still the largest grouping after World War II, but unlike St. Louis or Chicago, the Protestants were in the majority. (If a broader study is done, I would like for this topic to be greatly expanded.)

Fifth, I sense that even in home missions-type agencies and denominational judicatories, we tend to continue to look at the cities via the old "village" church in the cities paradigm. So, while we have accommodated some to the reality of the auto, we are still planting churches to serve an elementary school district. This carries with it the baggage of being tied to the traditional family model. And the church will wax and wane with the raising and "departing" of a generation or two of children. Certainly, this is an expensive way to do church and it seems to miss a lot of people. Often when we see this we want to recycle our real estate and get the folk who come to settle in the old neighborhood to do church in ways that the building dictates. Often this has not happened. Again as a rural guy looking at the city, it seems to me that we need help here. I can't think of an answer. I believe that what I have found in the Raytown study to this point validates what I have said in this section. Please read on with a critical, challenging mind and respond.

## **THE FIRST POST-WAR WAVE, 1945-1955**

My family moved in 1946 to a subdivision, Hilltop Gardens, that had been partially completed just before World War II. It was out US 50 near the Stormy Point school in the southeast part of the Raytown district (roughly two to three miles southeast of the village center). At that time it contained about 60 homes on one-half acre lots. There were 10 to 15 additional lots not yet built upon. Soon a second phase was opened with an additional 20 lots. We soon joined the Raytown Baptist Church. I recall that it was running about 200 in Sunday School then. The auditorium was one of those 1900 broad ones with the curved seats, the floor slanted toward the pulpit area, and ante-rooms were separated from the main auditorium by wooden partitions that rolled up, sort of like a roll-top desk. The Sunday School for children met in an annex, a rather utilitarian box of a structure. The youth and young adults met next door in the Raytown elementary school. (The Disciples of Christ had moved from across the street a few years before and had a very attractive Tudor style building a few blocks away near the high school.) Very soon George Hook was called to be pastor. He was completing his education at Central Seminary. The church grew well under his leadership. George had a missionary vision. He must have realized that as additional crowds of people moved to Raytown, his church could not accommodate them. (Even then the ratio of churches to population was less than the one per 1,000

which was seen by many as appropriate for rural areas.) He saw in the policy of the school board to close the rural elementary schools an opportunity to have buildings to house the needed new congregations. (Rev. Hook experienced a call to Home Missions in the early 1950s and moved to New Mexico and then on to Arizona to work with Native Americans. His brother was an American Baptist Missionary in Tibet and was martyred by the Communists. George died early of a heart attack.)

In quick succession, Hook moved to accept the non-denominational congregation at Spring Valley as a Southern Baptist mission, enlisted "stackpole" families for leadership there at Parkview (it too was interested in becoming a Baptist church), and a proposed church start at Lane school. Rather than overtax the resources of the Raytown church, a little later Hook got Lee's Summit Baptist Church to start a congregation at Stormy Point school. (The Bennington school became the site of a new Reorganized Latter Day Saints congregation.) Our family was asked by the Raytown church to serve as its representative in the Spring Valley congregation. We did that from 1948 to 1955. Mother and Father provided leadership for Woman's Missionary Union and Sunday School during most of those years. The Spring Valley church purchased the building from the school board about 1950. The early years were difficult. Factors included problems related to moving from a non-denominational to a denominationally affiliated congregation, significant socio-economic diversity in the area the church identified as its field or parish, and difficulty in attracting appropriate pastoral leadership. But in time it grew and added facilities. It peaked about 1970 running about 500 in Sunday School during the long pastorate of Joe Porter. Since then it has had its ups and downs. Most of the area around it was developed in the 1950s. The families of the first dwellers have been raised. The children are gone. Their grandchildren are being raised farther west or south in Jackson county. New people are moving into the old places. Spring Valley has had mixed success in reaching the new people.

Parkview was renamed Parkridge. It was located on 67th Street near Swope Park. This was an isolated area and the church never really prospered and closed in the early 1960s (An Assembly of God church is now in that location). The Lane school building was condemned so that church starting's effort died birthing and really never got off the ground. However very soon thereafter, the Currys, a prominent Baptist family in Calvary of Kansas City, bought and subdivided the old Eastwood Hills Golf Course nearby. (This family controlled a major thrift in Kansas City, built a major mall, and was very active in real estate development.) The Currys' arranged for the old club house to be used as a location to start a church to serve the families moving into the several hundred "starter" homes they were building there. The resulting church, Eastwood Hills, although located in traditional Blue River Baptist Association territory, elected to unite with the Kansas City Baptist Association. While the two associations had divided amiably less than 30 years earlier, there was some tension between the two bodies as a consequence of this decision. The new church was successful. Lots of young families parenting baby boomers affiliated. Membership reached about 700, I am told. Then, many of the pioneers moved on the larger homes. The neighborhood changed. It is now mostly African-American. And the church has been replaced with a very effective, growing African-American Southern Baptist congregation.

The Stormy Point school became the High Point Baptist Church. That part of the Raytown district was slow in developing and the church struggled. During the 1950s it served mostly the rural poor of the district, an undoubtedly valuable function in a suburbanizing area. By the time (the 1970s) the acreage around High Point had developed, it was, however, disadvantaged by the fact that a Kansas City Baptist Association church had relocated nearby, and Raytown First had become a true mega church drawing people from its community and beyond. (NOTE: A fuller, more formal study would deal with each of these churches in terms of the time divisions I am proposing. But for the purpose of this proposal, I have summarized the history of the churches.)

The first wave of post-war settlement in Raytown drew heavily upon from the "blue collar"

neighborhoods of Northeast Kansas City and the inter-city area, which had served as "points of entry" for workers coming to the war-time industries from the farms of the Ozarks, Kansas and North Missouri. These new Raytown residents were families that saved up some money made from working in the defense plants during the war. Many had been living in gerry-rigged apartments because of an acute housing shortage. They were looking for a home of their own. Some wanted a place where they could raise a garden and perhaps even keep some chickens. Many of these persons were members of the large Baptist churches in the Northeast and inter-urban Kansas City areas--Bales, Beaumont, Bethany, Kensington, Mt. Washington, and Maywood (See Table 1). Many of the future leaders of Raytown churches had developed their leadership skills in these congregations. They came as factory hands, craftspeople and small business owners. (Of course, some came directly to Raytown from the farms and villages. And the Methodist and Disciples churches may have had a different migration stream.)

The white-collar folk in old Kansas City seemed more likely to resettle in Johnson County, Kansas, or in southwest Jackson County during this period. This trend was amplified by the development of the first Kansas City freeway which linked the Country Club Plaza area near 50th and the State Line with Downtown Kansas City. So the office workers in downtown were attracted to the suburbanizing west and the factory hands were attracted to the suburbanizing east. (See Map 5)

Toward the end of the first post-war decade, yet another Southern Baptist congregation was formed in the Raytown school district area. This was Birchwood which served the Chapel Elementary area. With this, each of the old elementary school districts had at least one Southern Baptist congregation. The founding pastor of Birchwood was Fred Raines. His father was a prominent pastor in St. Louis. Fred had trained as an architect and was a member of Raytown Church during the 1940s. After he entered the ministry and received training at Central Seminary, he was approached by some of the Raytown Baptist Church members concerning the creation of a new congregation. It was located in the more affluent part of the Raytown district which lay along Blue Ridge Boulevard north of the village center. Quite a number of the wealthier, better educated members of Raytown Church moved to Birchwood, hastening the "blue-collaring" of the old first church. This proved to be one of those too rare occasions when both congregations prospered as they each served a target population.

By 1950 the Baptist/Methodist/Disciples hegemony of the Raytown district began to crack. The Ong Airport tract of several hundred acres at 71st (Gregory Blvd) and Blue Ridge Extension was subdivided and several hundred homes were built there, Gregory Heights. Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic church and school were also located on that corner. A mile east, an Assembly of God church was formed near Raytown Road and US 50. In 1950, a Presbyterian congregation was formed near the village center. The founding pastor, Roy Ray, I remember as our school bus driver in 1951-1952 or 53. He was a student at the Nazarene Seminary and later became president of Friends University in Wichita. The first Lutheran congregation formed in 1951. An Episcopal Church, a Church of Christ, and another Lutheran congregation were formed in Raytown during this decade.

This first wave of suburbanization resulted in very significant growth by Raytown Baptist Church. In the early 1950s it relocated about one block away and built a facility that would service a congregation with up to 500 in attendance. But it was also a period of real strife in the church. The long-time Raytown residents saw their church changing. It was no longer a village church. It was becoming more like the churches in the working class neighborhoods of the city. In one sense it became less urbane because the new members were probably less well-educated than the long-time members. It moved from a multi-bonded relational congregation to an industrialized, highly structured organization. It was growing from a mid-sized to a large church. This broadening and growing cost the church some of its old members. It also cost the pastor of the early 1950s, George Harriman personally.



Besonia grew during this period under the leadership of Richard Waltz, a dynamic Central Seminary student, who, after a 10 year pastorate there, returned to the American Baptist Convention and became an important leader in the Great Plains. Little Blue was little impacted by suburbanization during this period. It continued to be a small, rural church meeting in a traditional clapboard building.

One other new congregation, Blue Ridge, was formed beyond the northern boundary of Raytown. It has had a more blue-collar, aggressively evangelical cast. Its has waxed and waned across the years. Periods of phenomenal growth have been followed by periods of conflict and decline. Today fewer than 100 persons worship in a facility that might serve 7 to 10 times more.

To summarize the growth of the Baptist movement during the decade, 1945-1955, let me note that it began with a village church at the center of Raytown and two country churches on its edges. Five additional congregations had been added to serve the old elementary districts, and an additional church was formed on the edge of the district. The stock of Baptist churches serving Raytown grew from three to nine. And the population of the school district grew from about 5,000 to over 20,000. It is my belief that this record of maintaining about the same ratio of congregations to population in periods of such rapid growth is very unusual. Certainly, it is the consequence of several factors including the missionary vision of George Hook, the nature of the persons moving to Raytown, and the tensions created in the old village church as it was swept over by new members--transfers and converts. (All of the pastors in the Raytown Church during this decade would be categorized as very evangelical. This is true to the present.)

Two events in the mid-1950s brought this first wave to an end and initiated a new wave. The most significant one was the Supreme Court decision to desegregate public schools. The second was the decision of Southern Baptists to launch a church planting project called the 30,000 movement. Its goal was to form 5,000 new congregations and 25,000 missions and preaching points by 1960. Desegregation accelerated the movement of African-Americans in Kansas City south of the old 27th Street ghetto barrier and east of Prospect. This resulted in some Kansas City churches relocating in the Raytown district. It also stimulated "white flight" to Raytown from non-professional white collar and working class neighborhoods in the mid-town area of Kansas City. (Map 6)

## **THE SECOND MIGRATION WAVE, 1955-1970**

Kansas City was not a true Southern city in 1954. The public schools were desegregated rapidly. When I taught at East High School in the 1957-58 year, desegregation there was in its second year. Things seemed to move along rather smoothly. (I recall the African-American students being less than five.) However, within two to three more years, nearby Central High School had become predominantly black. The difficult years came in the wake of murder of Martin Luther King in 1968 which resulted in riots and significant destruction. Since then much of the 1945 city has become African-American. My friends and relatives who live there seem to fear venturing into the old city, particularly getting off of the major arteries. I find this to be very sad. As a child and youth, I truly enjoyed the city. I regret that today's youth will not have this experience.

I can recall the Baptists of Kansas City and Blue River holding an inter-racial youth rally at St. Stephens, a National Baptist Church, located at 15th (Truman Road) and The Paseo. This must have been in about 1948 or 1949. Both at Garfield Avenue (the Kansas City Baptist church at 50th and Garfield where our family belonged prior to our move to Raytown) and at Spring Valley, my father led out in inter-racial worship and fellowship events, partnering with the Friendship Baptist Church, then led by Pastor Henderson and located on Truman Road and Forrest. I now suspect that some of the relationships were paternalistic, but at least there were some relationships. Our Baptist Student Union

at Kansas City University had African-American members while I was a student there from 1955 to 1957. We took integrated groups to the state BSU convention and retreats in those years.

The saddest lesson of this study has been to compare the congregational deployment and work of the Kansas City Baptist Association in 1946 with the stock of Southern Baptist congregations in the old city today. To maximize the input of this section, I want to share data that indicates the growth and decline of the city churches from after WWII to the present. I selected 1959 as a mid-point because it indicated the impact of the revival in church membership in the 1950s and yet was before the impact of “white flight” weakened the churches. (I also picked 1975 to see how the problems of 1968 had impacted the Old City churches. In the 1994 data is resident membership. I used total membership for the earlier years.)

**TABLE 1:** Kansas City Baptist Association Old City Churches in 1946 By Area of the City And Current Condition (See Map 5)

<b>AREA/CHURCH</b>	<b>1946 MEM.</b>	<b>1959 MEM.</b>	<b>1975 MEM.</b>	<b>1994 MEM.</b>
<b>DOWNTOWN/ WEST BOTTOMS</b>				
Temple (now Covenant)	1259	1172	328	76 Strong social ministry
Penn Ave.	84	269	37	closed
Wm. Jewell	453	378	401	closed
First Mexican	94	109	138	108
Harlem	125	150	97	closed
<b>MID-TOWN</b>				
First	2787	ABC; moved south	ABC	In South Metro. Old bld now an Af. Am. Church
Calvary	1458	1867	1168	666
Michigan Ave. (Noland Rd.)	779	810	Moved, dropped 448	Moved to Raytown; Independence 1186
Tabernacle	933	625	284	26 Mission status. Ministry Some hope
Trinity (Spruce--St. Matthew)	294	404	731	Closed; now African American Baptist/SBC 1441
Broadway	559	892	812	excluded by the assn. in 1993

Roanoke	553	558	334	120 /struggles
Garfield (Greater First KC)	339	465	Closed	Closed; now African American Baptist
Forrest	548	570	349	now a ministry to the homeless
<b>SOUTHSIDE</b>				
Wornall Road	1144	1242	857	480
Swope Park	1194	1349	1702	Moved south 1144
Southeast	69	210	Closed	closed. Became Cov. Est. In Lee's Summit-79
Rockhill	220	307	331	very weak
Parkway	278	400	329	integrated congregation. W/black pastor.
Marlborough	702	506	789	239 Resident mem.
Antioch	203	305	423	48 Resident mem weak.
Armour Heights	331	527	663	591
<b>NORTHEAST/ INTER-URBAN AREAS</b>				
Bales	1355	985	361	579
Beaumont	565	786	537	231 Resident mem.
Benton Blvd	716	613	Moved	now Longview in L.S.-239
Bethany	1307	1717	1937	1026 much

				weaker than this number suggests. Less than 100 in attendance.
Bethel	144	328	311	w/Beacon-579
Blue Summit	111	264	482	380 bad area. Very weak
Centropolis	1195	Went Independent	--	--
Fifteenth Street	375	271	no report	221
Greendale	483	556	533	323 Resident mem.
Independence Ave.	805	583	478	509 Ministry to transients
Kensington Ave.	1093	1425	583	249
Leeds	445	474	346	42
Linwood Now Oakwood, L.S.	344	694	Moved	453 Lee's Summit
Monroe Ave. Now Southview	386	944	Moved	Moved to Raytown-55
Maywood	1058	1100	1833	1200 resident members
Mt. Washington	582	1278	924	392 Resident mem.
Munsell (Skyline)	87	201	340	weak, but open-47
Rockwood	810	1188	1188	529 Resident mem.
Valley Memorial	66	170	no report	mission status

Note from this table that during the 1950s the churches were being very effective in evangelizing the new families that were formed at the end of the war and in baptizing the early boomers who were then entering their teens. In the 1946-1959 period, the association had lost two major congregations with

almost 4,500 members; but it had added 15 new congregations and six missions. (Most of the new congregations were outside of the 1946 city and are not listed in this table.) Total membership had grown by 10,000. (The association had also been successful in founding a new hospital which was subsequently turned over to the State Baptist Convention. And in 1957, the SBC decided to place a new seminary in the city.) The report of the churches in 1959 must have signaled great rejoicing. But within a few years, the decline of the churches in the city of 1946 set in (Take note of 1976 figures). The 1993 column indicates that 15 of the 1946 churches have closed and/or moved from that location to one outside of the old city, of them seven have moved to another neighborhood in the suburbs. Only 28 have continued in the old city, but many of them are in such a weakened condition that their survival is in question. Some of the 1946 church buildings now house African-American congregations. A few seem to have plateaued and some are beginning to experience growth again. Fewer than 10 appear to have much vitality. The sadness this calls forth in me is only partially alleviated by the fact that some of the old churches now house ministries for the poor, and that a hand full have successfully integrated and/or become churches serving the African American majority in their old communities.

The bleakness of this picture is lightened some by the fact that in 1994 in the old city there are seven churches, mostly African-American, and seven missions/chapels, mostly ethnic, which have been formed and/or united with the association since 1946. Most of these are less than a decade old. The rechurching of the old city by Southern Baptists is underway. A closer quantitative analysis will be needed before additional conclusions can be drawn.

Some other observations can be drawn from the data in this table. One is that the strength of the Baptist movement (Anglo) was in the old northwest part of Kansas City among industrial workers prior to 1959. Further, it suggests that much of the growth of Southern Baptists since 1945 in the suburbanizing eastern and southern Jackson County, Missouri, is the result of transfer of membership. Even much of the "conversion" growth should be seen as the consequence of having a transfer base which has provided resources for planting new churches in the growing areas. A third observation is that the vital life expectancy of many urban, neighborhood churches seems to be less than 50 years.

Perhaps the most significant truth to be drawn from this data is that had the Southern Baptists not aggressively planted new congregations after 1960 in Jackson County, we would have experienced serious decline in membership. This was made possible in part by the merger of the Kansas City and the Blue River Associations in 1982. In actuality, this was a reunion because in 1926 the Kansas City churches amiably formed a separate association. Blue River is one of the oldest Baptist associations west of the Mississippi. Together they have planted 25 or more new congregations in Jackson and Clay counties since 1959. (Additionally, five new congregations were formed during this period in the non-metro county of Cass which is served by the Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association.) These more than offset the losses in congregations and members sustained since 1959 due to the racial and socio-economic change in the old city.

I will want to return to this subject later, but now I must return to the Raytown case study. During the second wave of migration, 1955 to 1970, Southern Baptists added six congregations in and adjacent to the Raytown district. So, by 1965 there were 15 Southern Baptist congregations serving the Raytown area. In the previous section I introduced Raytown, Besonia, Little Blue, Spring Valley, High Point, Parkridge, Birchwood, Blue Ridge and Eastwood. The second wave church include Loma Vista, New Haven, Norfleet, Southview, Sterling Acres, and Noland Road. First Corinthians, moved to the old Eastwood building later. *(Note that two of the 1955 congregations have gone out of existence. So currently, there are 15 SBC congregations there. One "black flight" congregation has come to Raytown.)*

Three of the congregations that came to the Raytown area in the second period were transplanted

from the old Kansas City. The first was New Haven. It moved to 55th and Blue Ridge Cutoff about 1955. (Actually, this church could have been dealt with in the previous section, but as the first of several congregations that moved to Raytown from the old city, I decided to place it in this section.) It had split out of another Kansas City congregation eight years before. It grew slightly after relocating in Raytown, but it never reached 400 members and has remained a small-to-midsized church all of its life. During the 1960s a large Independent Baptist church, the Baptist Temple, located just across the street from New Haven. (This was the third home of the Temple. Racial change around their previous locations has precipitated the move.) Monroe Avenue moved from Kansas City to a site on US Highway 50 near the second Raytown High School in the early 1960s. Its membership dropped from about 800 before the move to about 350 after the move. And it has pretty much plateaued since. I have been told that it had difficulty in relating to its new community, remaining essentially Monroe Avenue in a new location (Southview). New residential development near it was slow. And now First Raytown, a mega church, is planning to relocate less than one mile away.

In the late 1950s, Michigan Avenue was one of the fast growing Kansas City churches. Its neighborhood changed radically. It moved in 1965 to a location just outside the northeast corner of the Raytown school district. Like Monroe Avenue, its membership was halved. It took about a decade to really take root in its new community. But in the past decade it has grown well and is now larger than it was at its previous location. Membership is now about 1,200. It is currently expanding its facilities.

The other three new Raytown churches in this period were new church plants. Two were sponsored by big northeast Kansas City congregations. The other was a mission start of First Raytown. Following the flow of its membership, in 1957, Beaumont sponsored the new Sterling Acres congregation in the northwest quadrant of Raytown. It has grown and become an effective church, although for a decade now it has been plateaued at about 900 resident members. Near the southwest boundary of the Raytown area, Bethany Church did likewise. Its mission, Loma Vista, grew rapidly in the early 1960s. It weathered a scandal and continued to grow. But in more recent times the twin changes of an aging community and a radically changing area seems to have put the church into decline. Like so many suburban churches of the 1950s-1960s era, the founding generation is moving off the scene and a new vision has either not been dreamed, or if it has, it has not had the resources and/or success in implementing it. Norfleet was a mission of Raytown Baptist. James Smith (1956-1962) who had grown Raytown to well over 1,000 members, and who served as president of the Baptist Men's Brotherhood Commission in the 1980s, saw a need for a church in the area between his church and the Birchwood Church. An experienced church planted was hired and the church grew and prospered for about 20 years from 1962 to the early 1980s. Unfortunately, much of the land near it has never been developed. The location is not on a well-traveled road. And some of the development has been multifamily housing. My informants have suggested that this is an example of a family oriented church not being able to reach into the singles scene of the apartment complexes which have sprung up around it. (NOTE: In a further revision, I need to write a few paragraphs about Raytown church during the Smith, Steinback, and Cole years.) [To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the First Baptist Church of Raytown, the current pastor, Paul Brooks, authored a book. In it, he presents an account of the growth of the church]

**TABLE TWO: SBC Churches Serving Raytown District, 1955-1994 Resident Membership**

	Date first in Raytown area	Formally Sponsored By	1955	1965	1975	1985	1994
Raytown First	1842		954	1912	2800	2726	4210
Besonia	1872		215	386	593	107	90
Little Blue	1920		173	160	125	115	143
Spring Valley	1945	Raytown	188	822	922	842	718
Park Ridge	1950	Raytown	65	closed			
Eastwood	1955	Leeds (KCBA)	165	424	231	115	closed
(Corinthian)	1990	in KC					
Blue Ridge	1950		176	688	444	491	155
High Point	1955	Lee's Summit	95	271	422	495	429
Loma Vista	1960	Bethany		679	728	698	799
New Haven	1954	split from Benton	113	296	872	249	223
Norfleet	1962	Raytown		(Miss)	773	427	223
Southview	1960	Monroe Ave, KCBA	(744)	390	345	359	297
Birchwood	1954	KCBA/Rockwood	83	690	763	946	1658
Sterling Acres	1957	Beaumont		225	595	938	895
Noland Road	1965	Michigan Ave, KCBA	(849)	365	347	437	1180



TOTALS			634	7308	9960	8945	11020
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In reviewing Table 2, you will note that in the decade of 1965 to 1975 most of the Raytown Baptist churches were growing. This was the period when school enrollment peaked. Most of the churches were less than 20 years old, and some of the older ones had changed so much that while the name was old, much of the leadership was new. A closer examination of demographics might suggest that the growth which was occurring might be hiding a significant loss of "market share," but the data presently in hand suggests that in the minds of the churches, this was a good time for Raytown churches. We will hold an analysis of the rest of the data in this Table until the next section.

The development of Raytown from 1955 to 1970 was pulled by economic development in the Kansas City metro area. Much of the industry that emerged in the World War II period had successfully refocused on peace-time production. General Motors and Ford located major assembly plants in Kansas City. Steel mills and other supplier plants expanded. Major League Baseball came in 1955 and AFL football by the mid-1960s. TWA, a major airline, maintained its expanding fleet in Kansas City. Few took seriously enough the shift away from passenger travel on railroad. The cutbacks on the railroads, long a major employer in Kansas City, were not seen as a real problem in the city that was benefitting from the increased use of autos and airplanes for travel. Long a wholesale center for the Great Plains and the Corn Belt, good prices and expanding production on the farms fueled commodity activity and the sale of consumer items in the region. The post-war affluence caused Americans to eat more and more red meat. As the second largest center of livestock processing, Kansas City benefitted. Health care facilities expanded. The private university became a part of the state university system. The metro area expanded from a center in Jackson and Wyandotte counties of Missouri and Kansas to include Clay and Platte to the north in Missouri and Johnson in the south, in Kansas. An interstate system significantly improved access across the metro area and beyond. Initially, it spurred further development in Raytown. Later, it made places in east and south Jackson counties and in the outreaches of the other four metro counties as accessible to business and industrial cities in the old city as Raytown was in the first two decades after World War II. The 1970 census counted 1,215,000 residents in these five counties. This translates into a more than doubling of the population of the metro area since the end of World War II. During this period, Raytown failed to develop a communal center. On US 40 at Blue Ridge Boulevard to the north, a strip mall was converted into an enclosed mall and added major anchor stores. On US 50, some strip communities developed around Raytown Road. An old strip mall was added to the village center. The only other unoccupied tract of land was not available for development at that time. The subsequent development of malls and "power centers" have been at the edges of the Raytown district. Nor did Raytown attract or develop any major industry. It was slow in incorporating so parts of the district are inside the city limit of Kansas City and Independence.

(See next page for Table 3)

**TABLE THREE:** Kansas City Metro Population, 1970-1990

COUNTY	1970			1980			1990		
	TOTAL	WHITE	AF. AMER	TOTAL	WHITE	AF. AMER	TOTAL	WHITE	AF. AMER
JACKSON MO	655,000	539,023	112,852	629,000	488,451	125,773	633,000	478,849	135,649
CLAY MO	123,000	122,014	871	136,000	133,050	1449	153,000	147,721	2,693
PLATTE MO	32,000	31,768	—	46,000	45,007	569	58,000	55,127	1,217
WYANDOTTE KS	187,000	150,556	35,620	172,000	124,664	41,506	162,000	108,728	44,469
JOHNSON KS	218,000	216,024	1,081	270,000	262,619	3,161	355,000	338,770	6,917
<b>TOTALS</b>	1,215,000	1059305	150,224	1,269,000	1,013,791	172,458	1,361,000	1,129,195	190,945

The future looked bright for the Kansas City area in 1970. But as we will see in the next section, the economy was tied to a set of industries that would suffer significantly.

Not only did Baptists expand in Raytown during the period of 1955 to 1970, others did as well. The Roman Catholics added a parish in the northern part of Raytown and another just beyond the south boundary. Three additional Assemblies of God churches located in Raytown, including Central, which had been once a flagship congregation in the old Kansas City in the 1940s and 1950s. Like many of the SBC transplants, it did not regain its former strength. The Disciples of Christ added five congregations well scattered through the Raytown area. Additionally, three Churches of Christ (non-instrumental) came to call Raytown home. The Presbyterians added only one congregation, but their "cousins", the Cumberland Presbyterians, planted another. The United Methodists added two in and one just south of Raytown. One was the relocation of old Blue Valley to Eastwood. Of these one was an Evangelical and United Brethren congregation which became Methodist as a result of the denominational merger. The Lutherans now have three Raytown congregations, one ELCA, and two Missouri Synod. The Nazarenes list two, the Episcopal church one, and the United Church of Christ two. Interestingly, no Mormon (LDS) church is listed, but two RLDS congregations are. About 20 additional congregations, mostly independent, are listed by the Chamber of Commerce. What happened in Raytown in the period was happening in other suburbanizing communities all around Kansas City and across the nation. The mix of congregations in each became richer. The hegemony of three or more old line Protestant denominations was broken by the additional mainlines, Roman Catholic, new Pentecostal and Holiness denominations and many independents. And the old established congregations in the various suburbanizing communities often found new or transplanted congregations of their own faith family invading their traditional turf, competing with them for members, or so they seemed to think. I see this as a very significant fact.

(NOTE: Further study must include interviews with the leaders of the various denominations with congregations in the Raytown district, as well as leaders of the Independent churches.)

The resultant mix of churches in Raytown allowed for choices, both within and across denominational lines. Church cultural factors seem to have become more important than location in selection of church to attend (or rejection). This is evident among Baptists even during this period. The two rural churches were not successful in becoming urban. Some of the transitional ones never really adapted to the "new place." Some of the new congregations defined the "place" too narrowly and therefore waxed and waned within the neighborhood. In my mind, this raises the issue: should the vision of the churches planted now and into the foreseeable future, which involves the purchase of land and the construction of a building, work from the vision of being a regional church? Conversely, a congregation that aims at serving families in a neighborhood should see itself as having a life-span of about 40 years and should build and staff accordingly.

(NOTE: A further study should examine the congregational cultures of many of the congregations. A history of Raytown published in 1975 contains some basic benchmark data on the churches at that time.)

**TABLE FOUR:** 1990 Population, Raytown area by Zip Codes

ZIP CODES	TOTAL	WHITE	BLACK
64129	12,008	8,284	3,439
64133	33,484	30,711	2,195
64136	979	933	22
64138	25,394	22,145	3,019
TOTALS	71,864	62,073	8,675

Zip codes do not coincide with school district boundaries. Parts of 64129 and 64138 are actually in pre-1945 Kansas City. Part of 64138 is south of Raytown school boundaries. Some of the northern part of Raytown lies in Independence zip codes and was not included. With this give and take, the “Raytown” population would be close to this total but include about 3 or 4 thousand fewer Blacks. Zip code 64133 is the heart of the Raytown area. Additional analysis will note that this is an old and aging population. The population of Raytown city is about 30,000 and declining slowly. I would estimate that the school district population is about 50 to 55 thousand.

**TABLE FIVE:** Jackson County, MO; Churches and Adherents

DENOMINATIONS	1950		1970		1980		1990	
	CH	ADH	CH	ADH	CH	ADH	CH	ADH
Roman Catholic			48	90,584	47	85,996	53	73,120
ELCA			14	4,520	11	3,650	12	2,739

MO Lutheran			15	8,599	18	8,762	18	8,785
Disciples			49	24,200	40	23,000	42	21,000
Presbyterian			64	13,500	59	12,500	34	13,600
Nazarene			15	2,562	15	3,460	14	3,961
Episcopal			15	13,207	14	11,808	13	6,150
UCC			11	4,011	10	3,688	9	2,739
UMC			59	34,392	58	30,932	59	30,567
Southern Baptist			83	53,526	87	69,943	92	78,997
Assembly of God					32	8,595	33	10,512
Church of Christ							24	3,603
LDS							10	4,467
SDA							9	3,130
Black Baptist								44,000

**TABLE SIX:** Growth and Decline of 1945 Open Country SBC Churches in Jackson County

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	1946 Total	1965 Resident	1976 Resident	1982 Resident	1993 Resident
Besonia	153	383	605	111	98
Little Blue	100	160	136	129	125
New Salem	115	386	391	264	180
New Liberty	115	206	536	337	277

Six Mile	159	289	466	457	448
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**TABLE SEVEN:** Growth and Decline of 1945 Village and Small Town SBC Churches in Jackson County

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	1944 Total	1965 Resident	1976 Resident	1982 Resident	1993 Resident
Blue Spring	318	710	1069	1844	1957
Buckner	111	209	236	267	242
Grain Valley	62	175	335	287	332
Grandview	400	1368	1471	1969	2290
Greenwood	94	114	199	361	925
Lee's Summit	456	1084	1299	1160	1355
Oak Grove	145	284	429	569	875
Raytown	425	1912	2833	2918	4092
Lone Jack	95	267	250	217	365

**TABLE EIGHT:** Adherence of Major Denominations in Greater Kansas City, 1970-1990

<b>ROMAN CATHOLIC</b>	1970		1980		1990	
	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population
Jackson	90,584	13.8	85,996	13.7	73,120	11.5
Clay	13,744	11.1	16,422	12.0	14,029	9.1
Platte	1,953	6.1	5,740	12.4	5,476	9.5
Wyandotte	29,100	15.6	21,834	12.7	27,912	17.2
Johnson	40,200	15.5	48,772	18.0	61,260	17.3
<b>TOTALS</b>	175,581		178,764		181,797	

<b>SOUTHERN BAPTIST</b>	1970		1980		1990	
	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population
Jackson	64,326	9.9	69,943	11.1	78,997	12.5
Clay	18,667	15	20,233	14.8	23,806	15.5
Platte	4,203	13.1	5,093	11.1	8,030	10.4
Wyandotte	5,304	2.8	5,915	3.4	5,841	3.6
Johnson	4,995	2.3	6,622	2.5	9,564	2.7



<b>TOTALS</b>	97,495		107,806		126,238	
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<b>OTHER BAPTISTS</b>	1970		1980		1990	
	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population
Jackson					47,500	
Clay					1,200	
Platte					450	
Wyandotte					16,450	
Johnson					8,860	
<b>TOTALS</b>					74,460	

<b>METHODISTS</b>	1970		1980		1990	
	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population
Jackson	34,392	5.3	30,932	4.9	30,567	4.8
Clay	9,743	7.9	10,070	7.4	9,482	6.2
Platte	2,410	7.5	2,583	5.6	3,068	5.3
Wyandotte	11,021	5.9	7,525	4.4	5,470	3.4
Johnson	16,436	7.6	15,195	5.6	17,213	4.8

<b>TOTALS</b>	74,002		66,305		65,800	
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<b>PRESBYTERIAN</b>	1970		1980		1990	
	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population
Jackson	16,330		12,500		13,590	
Clay	1,298	1.1	4,290		117	.8
Platte	676		955		461	.8
Wyandotte	2,405		1,683		821	.5
Johnson	16,975	7.8	22,300		17,381	5.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	37,684		41,728		32,370	

<b>ASSEMBLY OF GOD</b>	1970		1980		1990	
	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population	Adherents	% of Population
Jackson			8,595	1.4	10,512	1.7
Clay			2,013	1.5	2,901	1.9
Platte			565	1.7	593	1.0
Wyandotte			3,800	2.2	1,753	1.1
Johnson			1,412	.5	2,113	.6

<b>TOTALS</b>			16,385		17,872	
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**TABLE NINE: NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONS BY DENOMINATION IN 5 METRO KC CHURCHES  
1970-1990**

	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>G/L</b>
<b>Southern Baptist</b>				
Jackson	83	87	92	9
Clay	29	33	33	4
Platte	12	14	14	2
Johnson	9	12	16	7
Wyandotte	14	12	16	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Roman Catholic</b>				
Jackson	48	47	53	5
Clay	7	8	7	0
Platte	2	2	2	0
Johnson	10	12	15	5
Wyandotte	18	17	16	-2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>United Methodist</b>				
Jackson	59	58	59	0
Clay	15	14	14	-1
Platte	6	6	6	0
Johnson	15	17	20	5
Wyandotte	18	16	16	-2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>2</b>

	1970	1980	1990	G/L
<b>Disciples of Christ, Christian Church, Church of Christ</b>				
Jackson	49	40	32	-17
Clay	14	15	12	-2
Platte	13	18	16	3
Johnson	10	12	14	4
Wyandotte	14	13	13	-1
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	88	87	-13
<b>Episcopalian</b>				
Jackson	15	15	13	-2
Clay	2	3	3	1
Platte	0	1	1	1
Johnson	5	6	6	1
Wyandotte	3	3	3	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	25	28	26	1
<b>Church of Nazarene</b>				
Jackson	15	15	14	-1
Clay	3	4	4	1
Platte	1	1	1	0
Johnson	8	8	10	2
Wyandotte	5	10	9	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	32	38	38	6

	1970	1980	1990	G/L
<b>Lutheran (ELCA, ALC, LCA, MO.Synod)</b>				
Jackson	29	29	30	1
Clay	9	9	8	-1
Platte	3	3	4	1
Johnson	15	14	21	6
Wyandotte	11	11	10	-1
<b>TOTAL</b>	67	66	73	6
<b>Presbyterian (USA, US, PCA)</b>				
Jackson	64	59	34	-30
Clay	15	13	3	-12
Platte	3	4	1	-2
Johnson	11	26	14	3
Wyandotte	8	17	6	-2
<b>TOTAL</b>	101	119	58	-44
<b>UCC</b>				
Jackson	11	10	9	-2
Clay	0	0	1	1
Platte	0	1	1	1
Johnson	2	3	3	1
Wyandotte	5	5	5	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	18	19	19	1

	1970	1980	1990	G/L
<b>Assembly of God</b>				
Jackson	N/A	32	33	1
Clay	N/A	13	12	-1
Platte	N/A	2	3	1
Johnson	N/A	5	7	2
Wyandotte	N/A	8	7	-1
<b>TOTAL</b>		60	62	2
<b>American Baptists</b>				
Jackson	5	4	6	1
Clay	0	1	1	1
Platte	0	0	1	1
Johnson	12	12	14	2
Wyandotte	24	23	22	-2
<b>TOTAL</b>	41	40	44	3

#### THE GREYING OF RAYTOWN: 1970-1995

The suburbanization of industry and the spread of Information Age industry skipped over Raytown. Several major industries settled southeast of Raytown near Lee's Summit. So, today, Raytown lies mid-way between the old smokestack industry of the Blue River Valley and the higher tech industry of Lee's Summit. However the major growth areas in metro Kansas City today are in Platte County, near the airport, but more so in Johnson County, Kansas, where a major "edge city" has developed in the Overland Park area. One might say that Kansas city, like most metros, continues to grow toward the west more than the east (the "stench" theory of urban growth--be upwind).

As noted previously, the school enrollment reached a peak of just over 16,000 in 1969 and has declined since, reaching a plateau in the low 8,000s in about 1985 plus about 1,000 in non-public schools. Factors in this include the decline of blue collar industry in the Blue River Valley, the aging of the post World War II homesteaders, the limited supply of land for further extension, and the aging housing stock is not that attractive to modern families. Of course, 1970 also marks the year that the last of the Boomers entered school. Personally, I wonder about the future of Raytown. I wonder if it might not go into decline such as the old northeast Kansas City industrial neighborhoods have experienced. The growth of solidly African-American communities seems to be mostly south out to Grandview along a mile-wide band between Prospect and Troost. So, I am told that most community

leaders do not see Raytown becoming Black, but I find there is a large stock of small pre-1960 homes which will not be attractive to new Anglo suburbanites. Most of the undeveloped land in the district lies in the river valleys and will not be developed, I suspect. How will the shrinking of the Blue-collar/middle class really play out there?

Certainly, the changes in American economy since 1970 has impacted the Kansas City metro and particularly Raytown. It was hit by declines in automotive assembly. As the airline industry moved to "hubbing" its flights, Kansas City was hit by the decision of TWA to hub out of St Louis. The old industries of livestock slaughter, railroading, wholesale distribution of goods, and steel fabrication upon which Kansas City had long depended has declined significantly, or has organized in a decentralized fashion since 1970. This is reflected in the population of the metro area since 1970. The population has been pretty much plateaued, and in the counties where the old city is located, the population has actually declined.

(I will need to gather some data on what has happened to the population in Raytown since 1970. This will be included in the further revision of this paper.)

My sense is that, religiously, the 1945 city was Protestant, but that the largest denominational presence was Roman Catholic. I recall that, politically, the city elections were a struggle between the Democrat machine which controlled the ethnic and African-American wards north of 27th Street and the more mainline Protestant southside. My guess is that Methodists and Baptists were similar in size of membership. (I will need to seek hard data to support this assumption.) The church data I have from 1970, 1980, and 1990 by the counties in the metro area seem to support my recollections. It is of interest to me to know that this half century has seen a very significant growth of the Baptist movement in the metro Kansas City area. Much of this can be attributed to migration of rural whites and blacks from the rural south and Midwest. Much of it can be attributed to the larger families of Baptists. But much of it may be the result of aggressive evangelism and church planting. It also suggests some things about the mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in the area. Lets look at the tables now.

First, we need to review Table 3 which deals with the metro population. Note that it grew by only a little over 10% in the 20 years from 1970 to 1990. Jackson and Wyandotte Counties, where the 1945 city was located, have actually lost population since 1970. Nearly 100,000 fewer Anglos live in these counties now than did in 1970. This is more than made up for in the growth of the three other metro counties. African-American population has grown about 40,000, mostly in the old city counties, during the period. This data suggests an hypothesis that the old line denominations would tend to gain membership and congregations in the newer metro counties of Clay, Platte, and Johnson, while losing both in Jackson and Wyandotte.

(Need to check the latest metro county designation. How the metro areas added counties as a result of the 1990 census.)

Table 5 provides data on the changes among the major denominational bodies in Jackson County, Missouri, from 1970 to 1990. It draws its numbers from the CMS or Glenmary Reports for these decades. (I need to access 1950 data. This will enrich my observations.) Note the rather significant growth of Baptists, Assembly, and Nazarenes. I see this as suggesting the significance of being evangelical, the tendency for workers in the blue collar and service industries to move east and south out of the old city, and in the case of the Southern Baptists to plant additional congregations. The Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, and ELCA denominations suffered significant declines in Jackson



County. I see this as a result of the flight of white collar persons from the old city to the new metro counties, some weakness in reaching African-Americans, and a tendency for the better educated and affluent to depart from the "faith of their fathers." (In the case of Roman Catholics, I would suggest that many of the children and grandchildren of the blue collar workers of 1945 got a college education and moved into the white collar ranks. They left the old Italian, Irish, and Eastern European neighborhoods of the old city for the new metro counties, where many have dropped out of active church involvement. The other denominations seem to have remained plateaued. Since they are mostly Anglo, to have done so with a shrinking Anglo population and in the face of growth among some denominations and growth of independent and charismatic groups might be viewed as a small victory. (Note: There were major problems related to the funding of schools in the old Kansas City district during this period which spurred growth on the Kansas side.)

(NOTE: Another thesis that should be explored is the idea that religious activity tends to center in the upper levels of blue-collar and the lower levels of white-collar life. This would involve much deeper analysis of what has happened demographically and religiously in the old northeast section.)

In Tables 6 and 7, I present membership data on the Southern Baptist rural and small town churches of 1945. The first learning that I find here is that the growth of Southern Baptists in Jackson County after 1970 was little related to the growth of the existing churches. All but one of the rural 1945 churches have been in decline during this period. The small town churches have done much better but account for less than half of the Southern Baptist gains from 1970 to 1990. I suspect that the town churches are more accessible, culturally, to the new people moving into the developing parts of the county. Many of the newcomers are second or third generation urbanites. Yet, my informants tell me that in most instances these congregations experienced significant conflict in moving from village or small town to suburban congregations. Most often one or more new congregations were hived off during the process of assimilating new people. Often it was some of the new folk. Other times it was some of the old-time folk who did not like the changes. Sometimes congregations of both groups left. (Recall our earlier discussion of the Raytown Baptist Church.) The Lee's Summit area has been the recipient of several transplanted congregations from the old city and some new starts as well. The same is true of Blue Springs and Grandview. This same process is now happening in northern Cass County, but since it is not yet truly a part of the metro area, I am not dealing with them here. Second, note that while the rural churches often grew for a time, there seemed to have been some crisis from which they have usually not recovered which made them small again.

Third, it seems to me that denominational leaders who have responsibility for church planting/development and growth in an expanding metro area may need to take seriously the significance of congregational "culture." Certainly, this seems to be true for Southern Baptists in areas where they are strong. We cannot expect many of the existing churches to reach the new-to-ruralites as they move from the city to the countryside.

I need now to expand our present view to include the whole of the Kansas City metro. In tables 8 and 9, I present data from the CMS studies on adherence and on congregations in the five metro counties by major denominational families. (The African-American data is incomplete. I hope that this can be addressed by further field study.)

The Roman Catholic church continues to be the largest denomination in the Kansas City Metro area. It stands at about 180,000. However, it has gained only 6,000 in the past 20 years. In real numbers the Roman Catholic church has declined in the old metro counties. These losses have been matched by growth in the white collar area of Johnson County. In the 1980s Roman Catholics lost "market share" in all of the counties except Wyandotte, and there they lost in real numbers. In the 20 years

covered in Table 9, Roman Catholics gained 8 congregations in the metro area. I know that they have closed several inner-city parishes, so the number of new congregations must be nearly 20.

Southern Baptists gained nearly 30,000 adherents from 1970 to 1990 in the metro area. In all of the counties except the smallest, Platte, we gained "market share." Even there the Southern Baptist adherents nearly doubled. Prior to the 1950s, the Kansas counties were seen as the territory of American (or Northern) Baptists, so the SBC got a late start in Wyandotte and Johnson Counties. Therefore, while the SBC is the second largest denominational family in the metro, it is the largest on the Missouri side. And when the whole Baptist family is added together--National, American, Independent, and Southern--the Baptist movement is larger than the Roman Catholics with over 200,000 adherents. During the period from 1970 to 1990, the Southern Baptists experienced a net gain of 24 congregations, growing from 147 to 171. For those of us who have a professional interest in church planting or extension, we see in this data evidence that supports our efforts. This is to say, that we would attribute the growth of Southern Baptists in the metro area to the continued emphasis on planting new congregations. Secondly, we would see some support of the concept of transplanting old ones. The most serious problem I see in this data is the continuing lagging of the Baptist movement in Johnson County. This is the most affluent county in the metro and seems destined to become dominant in the future as a second major urban center develops in the Overland Park area. It is my feeling that the HMB, the two state conventions and the consortium of associations of Baptists need to address this fact aggressively. A second concern has to do with relationship with National Baptists in the old city. Because of a policy of the Missouri Baptist Convention that it will not accept into its membership churches that are aligned with national bodies other than, or in addition to, Southern Baptists, very few African-American congregations in Kansas City have aligned with the regional, state or national bodies of Southern Baptists. So while Southern Baptists can rightly be proud of our growth in the suburbs and on the metro fringe, particularly on the Missouri side, the old city seems to need fresh attention from us. (Interestingly, many National Baptist congregations purchase SBC materials and resources from the Baptist Bookstore.)

Turning our attention to the United Methodists, one must note that they lost about 8,000 adherents during the two decades under study. Given the white collar orientation of urban Methodism, I was surprised that their numbers are so flat in Johnson County. Further, I note that Methodists had a net loss of 2 congregations there and a gain of only 2 in the two decades. In my opinion this underscores the need to aggressively keep planting new congregations in growing areas. Of course, these numbers may hide very significant changes in the overall stock of UMC churches in the Kansas City metro. This will need to be attended in further studies.

I find the Presbyterian data difficult to deal with without some field work. They have experienced both merger and major defections during the period under study. I am afraid to draw any observations from the data I have at hand.

The Assembly data is only for the latter of the two decades. Frankly, I was surprised by the flatness of their growth during that decade. The national image of the Assemblies is one of very great growth during this period. But here, near their headquarters in Springfield, Missouri, this does not appear to be the case. They netted only two additional congregations during the 1980s. More fieldwork will be needed before valid observations can be made. Perhaps they suffered some defection.

In Table 9, you will note that other old line denominations seem to have lost congregations in metro Kansas City during this period. All of this suggests that the fact that data on African-American and Independent congregations is not captured very well by the CMS data and that field work in the old city needs to be done in order to more fully understand the situation of Christianity there.

Having looked at the metro area for the 1970 to 1995 time period, we need now to focus again on the Raytown district. Essentially, the Southern Baptist church planting occurred before 1970. The one

additional church is an African-American transplant from the central city to the facilities of the Eastwood Hills church about 1990. (At least two other African-American churches have come to Raytown.) With the exceptions of First, Birchwood, and Nolan Road, the SBC churches there have been plateaued or in decline during much of this period. (Reference Table 2 and include analysis plus data from field interviews.) First has become a true mega church with over 1,500 in attendance each Sunday. It is planning to move about two miles south of its present location to a large tract of land near the Hilltop Gardens addition where I grew up. This is close to two other SBC congregations. The campus includes about 20 acres and has good access. The growth of First may have had some impact on the decline of the other SBC congregations in Raytown. Also, the aging of Raytown, as reflected in the halving of the school enrollment, can be seen as contributing causes. Further, many of these churches may have had a field or parish mind-set and have waxed and waned with the population in their neighborhoods. This may be continued as the racial makeup of the neighborhoods change. Here, too, I see a need for additional field work.

The growth that Raytown experienced in the 1960s and early 1970s have moved farther out beyond Blue Springs, Lee's Summit, and Belton to Oak Grove, Greenwood, Raymore, and Martin City. And in these places old churches are changing and new churches are being planted. This development reflects the creation of a second perimeter highway around Kansas City, and the freeways of Interstate 70 east and of Blue Parkway and US71 South which makes it possible for persons to get to the city about as quickly as the Raytown homesteaders of the 1940s and the 1950s did in their day. The push of "white flight" (and more recently of "black flight") and the pull of newer and nicer homes and good schools continues to keep the metro area expanding. Soon Raytown will celebrate its 150th birthday. Founded at a crossroads, it may also be facing another crossroads. As the aging population dies off and/or moves away to live in retirement villages or on Ozarks lakes, who will want to live in their old houses? And what approaches will the churches of Raytown need to take, what changes will they need to make to reach the next wave of population change? I suspect that the leadership of Raytown is already seeking answers to these questions.

Southern Baptist growth in Raytown seems to have been spurred by the rural to urban migration associated with the industrialization brought by World War II. I wonder what impact future change will have upon Southern Baptists? We excelled in developing Industrial Age churches. We reached Industrial Age people. What must we do to reach Information Age people? Specifically, what will we need to do to reach the growing number of persons in Jackson County who work in the service industries? I do not have a ready answer. But I believe that we need to be busy about finding one. If Southern Baptists go into decline as we begin the 21st Century, it will be because we have not found how to do church in this emerging era. This is as true theologically as it is sociologically.

Here I need to include several paragraphs based on interviews with pastors, local historians, and others regarding the growth, plateau, decline of the churches of other denominations.)

## CONCLUSION/OBSERVATIONS/LEARNINGS

Below I have abstracted and listed some ideas that this study has presented to my mind. I am not ready to present them in final forms, so they are merely listed. I hope that you will suggest others that can be included in another revision of the study.

### LEARNINGS

1. KC Baptists maximized the rural to urban migration of the 1940s and 1950s. Created big country churches in cities and suburbs.

2. Underscores the importance of moving/branching congregations.
3. Underscores the importance of planting/branching/branching new congregations.
4. Supports the concept of keeping the process of planting close to local control and involvement.
5. While inclusion and integration of a congregation need to happen and should happen, it has not been an effective strategy to now.
6. Small town churches seem more likely to receive new folk, grow and stabilize than do rural or village ones.
7. New churches seem to grow and stabilize better than old ones that grow for a while.
8. Some plateaued churches can grow again.
9. The poverty issue needs to be addressed.
10. Urban/suburban/fringe communities change. This makes their churches far less stable over a 50 year period than those in non-metro settings.
11. The several denominations took different routes in relocating outside KC
12. While the low number of SBC in KS reflects a late start, it probably also reflects social class/status factors.
13. To "win the cities for Christ," SBC need to get very serious about starting and relating to African American Churches.
14. Further we need to reach the new immigrants.
15. The SBC seems to be doing well in the other Mo. suburbs.
16. The SBC policy on Dual Affiliation may be deterring effectively reaching KC and St. Louis.
17. Urban neighborhood churches seem to have a life span of about 40 to 50 years in a single location.
18. Figuring out how to do church in the Information Age is the major challenge now confronting us.
19. The Kansas City metro is spreading beyond the 5 counties tracked in this study. They need to learn from what is presented here and prepare for the future.
20. There is much other information that needs to be accessed about the history and the future of the region.

## APPENDIX ONE

### Some Strategy Questions to Ask in a Rural/Metro Fringe Assn.

1. What are the corridors along which growth is occurring?
2. What are the magnets/barriers which also impact growth (towns, lakes, mountains, swamps, large land holdings, zoning rules, industrial parks, schools, shopping centers, utilities, etc.)? Where will new magnets likely to be located?
3. How are existing congregations responding to growth? (Typology)
  - country - family
  - country -community
  - village - service center
  - village - mill or
  - small town - first
  - small town - second
  - older suburb - relocated city church
  - older suburb - neighborhood church
  - ethnic church
  - large regional church
4. Which of these are usually more open to new folk?
5. What are the ingredients or factors you have observed that seem to be causative in a church becoming effective in reaching the new people?
6. What are the personal qualities that you have observed as being basic to successful church starting by a pastor?
7. What resources—physical, material, spiritual, and personal—seem to be necessary in successful church starting?
8. What background do the new folk have?
9. What needs do new folk present?
10. What barriers slow the evangelization and congregationalizing of new folk?
11. How can these barriers be bridged?
12. How does one keep from neglecting the old—time residents?
13. How does one deal with pioneer/homesteader tensions?
14. What role may mega regional churches play in suburbanized areas?
15. What do you see the association doing to assist churches to adjust to this change?

16. What is the role of the association in changing attitudes and in interpreting the changes which are occurring?
17. How does one get the resources—land, building, leadership, to start a new congregation?
18. How does growth from a rural based to a metro-type association take place—staff, facilities, church relations, programs, conflicts, diversity in the association?
19. How does one help an older, existing congregation become more attentive to new folk?
  - facilities
  - leadership
  - program
  - overall culture
20. How does one deal with the territoriality of a "family chapel" adjacent to a "high dollar" subdivision?
21. How does the DOAM need to change in such a changing context?
22. Are you optimistic or pessimistic about your association's successfully responding?
23. How do you get around the geographic factors in church starting? (The territorial imperatives)
24. Can the association accommodate these new people in offices and activities?
25. Where does your association's leadership come from? Rural/town/growing churches, etc. Their mind set can influence the association's development and outreach to new people.

## APPENDIX TWO

### "Some Twenty Observations About Non-metropolitan Churches Confronting Change" (More Universal Than Specific)

1. Almost every pastor wants to change his church-- bigger, more evangelical, better quality of worship and/or added programs. But . . . .
2. Most congregations more than 25 years old are plateaued and not subject to change without considerable pain.
3. It is very unlikely that a church that has been plateaued for a long time at a level of less than 70 active members will grow significantly.
4. It is unlikely that an older, smaller congregation whose life has been characterized by conflict will grow significantly.
5. It is unlikely a church that has developed a "defeatist" attitude about itself will overcome this and grow larger.
6. It is unlikely that a "family chapel" will become open enough to newcomers that it can grow significantly.
7. Older rural congregations must be aided in dealing intentionally with the changes occurring. Some of those that can and will change must recognize the cost. Those which cannot need to adopt the attitude of the "First Baptist", John. Others may remain rather constant.
8. The small church that seems likely to remain small needs to major on its strengths --a sense of care and community, stable-orientation and strong worship --rather than lamenting that it cannot offer all the programs and does not have the fine facilities of the large church. (In fact, with so much emphasis on moralizing and psychologizing in contemporary media preaching, some of the best and truest worship occurs in smaller congregations.)
9. The most likely way for a smallish (single-cell) rural church to grow is for the pastor to form a second cell. The second cell grows and hopefully adheres to the first. But there is a point of danger in this strategy.
10. The fewer the barriers separating the pioneers from the homesteaders, the more likely it is that growth will occur (e.g., a good strong town church will likely present fewer barriers than a weak, open country or crossroads village church).
11. Since a growing church typically offers worship/program which meets the expectations and needs of those to be reached, it is unlikely that a program for farm or mill people will reach "citified" folk. (The same may be true of the church that programs for "white flight" Southern Baptist families.)

12. The appropriateness of the style of pastoral leadership is crucial, but not the only crucial "ingredient." (E.g., goals must be clear, biblically-based and attainable. And nothing succeeds like success.) [See Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church*]
13. Frequently, the lay folk with a sense of mission coming from their involvement in mission education/action provide the actual critical leadership for evangelical and congregationalizing outreach and growth. They feel that they must win the lost and disciple the saved and this makes their church grow even when they are unhappy with the growth because indeed the church that they know will never be the same.
14. In contemporary suburbia, the older determinants of territoriality, denominational affiliation and replication of 'down-home style' of worship are becoming less significant in attracting new people. In fact, "slickness" of performance in worship, quest, appearance of success, practicality of preachments and peer sociability seem to be of growing significance. (E.g., many church-oriented Yankees seem to find it easier to move into a Presbyterian or Methodist congregation than into many Southern Baptist ones, even though this has not happened in Kansas City, if one can judge from the CMS data.)
15. A transportation corridor strategy of placement of new congregations seems to be emerging and this should be affirmed.
16. It is likely that some "super churches" will develop along the corridor. However, they cannot reach anyone. Growth means that area population will become more diverse and so should the churches. As one bright pastor told me, "We are living in the 'back door' of the mega church."
17. For the foreseeable future, it appears that rather large urban congregations will be formed at or near the interstate interchanges and the major commuting routes where the urbane ex-urbanite commuters will settle in greater density. The interior population will be mixed with pockets of old-timers or pioneer residents, blue-collar subdivisions and high-dollar estates. Some of the existing smaller rural churches will survive pretty much as they are now. Some neighborhood congregations will emerge and this will include some "elite folk" chapels.
18. Associations should be concerned with Kingdom growth. And in 2000 AD Blue River/Kansas City Associations and similar metro fringe associations, will likely be comprised of several very large churches, some town churches, some neighborhood and some family chapel congregations. Each will have a role to play, each will have its strengths, each will have its weaknesses; but cooperatively they will be more effective than if each were a franchise copy of the other.
19. For this to happen we need to stress teamship. Each congregation has a role to play. For example, a congregation that has had problems and does not have the critical mass to attract new people might be loaned some key workers by a stronger church. Or a good town church might start a new congregation as a satellite that might become a super church one day, dwarfing its mother.
20. It seems that most congregations within the sphere of major metropolitan areas will have to deal intentionally with change every 25 to 30 years henceforth. And as this happens, there will be growth and there will be decline. And as Schaller has so effectively demonstrated, as a church moves from one size category to the next it will be and should be a very different kind of organism.



This church will not be the same anymore. This is part of the reality with which we seem destined to deal.

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NOTE: Many readers will note multiple debts to Lyle Schaller in this list and throughout the study. These are gratefully acknowledged.

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