



School *of* Theology

DONALD ADDISON COURTNEY SERIES *IN* CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A History of the Sunday School in the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana)

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Introduction

From the beginnings of the Church of God in the 1880s, Christian education has played a crucial role in the life of the movement. One of the most concrete ways in which Christian education has influenced the Church of God is through the Sunday school. For decades, the Sunday school has played a primary role in congregational life and in the broader national organizational structure of the movement. At this point in time, nearly 125 years since the movement began, 85 years since the founding of the Board of Christian Education, and 10 years since the dissolution of the same, we may benefit by studying the history of the Sunday school in the life of the Church of God.

At least one such history has already been written. Donald Courtney, as a Bachelor of Divinity student at the Anderson University School of Theology, wrote a thesis entitled *A Study of the Development of the Sunday School in the Church of God* in 1954. His work chronicles the life of the Sunday school through the middle of its greatest phase of growth. The tone of Courtney's thesis is quite optimistic and excited for the possibilities of Sunday school growth in the future. His later involvement in the Board of Christian Education reveals his lasting desire to bring about quality Christian education in the local church, especially through the Sunday school.

However, in the 54 years since Courtney wrote his thesis, the landscape of the Sunday school in the Church of God – and in the United States in general – has changed dramatically. The tremendous growth of the 1940s and 1950s ended by the 1960s. In the remainder of the twentieth century, the Board of Christian Education made a number of efforts to encourage the growth of the Sunday school in local congregations, but these ultimately did not stop the impending decline in Sunday school attendance. Finally, in 1998, the Board of Christian

Education ceased to exist as an entity as a result of the reorganization of the Church of God national offices. Since 1998, the Sunday school has been “somewhat shrouded in the mists of time,”¹ while attendance figures have continued to decline.

It is widely accepted that figures reported in the Church of God yearbooks are subject to a certain amount of skepticism. The congregational structure of this movement lends itself to uncertainty regarding the accuracy of reported attendance, enrollment, and membership numbers. However, for all of the uncertainty surrounding Church of God attendance figures, one may observe a clear trend in the attendance patterns of Sunday schools in the movement.² The Church of God yearbooks began recording Sunday school enrollment data in 1923 in conjunction with the birth of the Board of Christian Education. These figures were reported yearly until 1973, at which point Sunday school attendance also began to be recorded. From 1997 onward, enrollment figures were eliminated, and only the attendance figures remained in the yearbooks. The data points recorded in Figure 1 represent Sunday school enrollment and attendance only in the United States and Canada.

Enrollment and attendance figures do not stand alone, of course. These should be viewed in light of other data, such as the number of Church of God congregations in the United States and Canada.³ Since the number of congregations has remained essentially constant since 1960, the decline in Sunday school enrollment and attendance since 1960 does truly represent a general decline in the Sunday school. This conclusion is supported by the upward trend in Church of God membership and Sunday morning attendance.⁴ The membership and attendance of Church

¹ Joseph Cookston, e-mail message to author, 6 June 2008.

² See Figure 1, Church of God Sunday School Enrollment and Attendance. Data for all four figures are taken from the *Yearbook of the Church of God* (1917-2008).

³ See Figure 2, Church of God Congregations, and Figure 3, Church of God Sunday School Average Enrollment and Attendance Per Congregation.

⁴ See Figure 4, Church of God Membership and Sunday Morning Attendance.

of God congregations have increased steadily throughout the history of the movement.

Consequently, one may be assured that the curve shown in Figure 1 does accurately represent the life cycle of the Sunday school in the Church of God: it began, it took root, it experienced a period of growth, its growth peaked, and it gradually declined.

This general trend will shape the history of the Sunday school as reported here. Donald Courtney's 1954 thesis will form the basis of the historical divisions set forth below. One may identify the following periods of time in a study of the history of the Sunday school of the Church of God:

1. Beginning Years, 1880-1910
2. Establishment Years, 1910-1940
3. Growth Years, 1940-1960
4. Peak Years, 1960-1975
5. Decline Years, 1975-present

Beginning Years, 1880-1910

In the early years of the Church of God movement, education in general – including both Christian education and higher education – was viewed with a good deal of skepticism. The flying ministers of the late 1800s emphasized biblical, prophetic preaching; the work of the lay Sunday school teacher was seen as less important in the time of the evening light. In fact, “D. S. Warner's early concept of teaching children seems to have been that of preaching geared to their level.”⁵ Thus, the Sunday school as an entity distinct from the preaching ministry seems to have been “of little concern to the earliest leaders of the Church of God movement.”⁶

⁵ James Oliver Childs, “A Study of the Person and Work of the Sunday School Teacher of the Church of God in Indiana” (B.Div. thesis, Anderson College and Theological Seminary, 1954), 8-9.

⁶ Donald Addison Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School in the Church of God” (B.Div. thesis, Anderson College and Theological Seminary, 1954), 9.

The situation regarding the Sunday school at the turn of the century was not, however, neutral in the minds of the early leaders. Other church groups – referred to as sects by Warner and his companions – were beginning to tap into the Sunday school phenomenon as it crossed from Europe to America. Also, other denominations provided seminary training and other schooling for their ministers. Each of these was seen by the Church of God leaders as signs of sectarianism. Religious education in all of its forms was to be avoided. The return of Christ was thought to be imminent; therefore, preachers were not to waste precious time in study, and pastoral care of congregations took a back seat to the proclamation of the gospel.⁷ On occasion, strong language against the Sunday school could be found in the editorials of the Gospel Trumpet. Warner himself wrote many of these editorials, including the following:

Concerning Sabbath schools, . . . we read of no such thing in the Word of God. The Sabbath schools, as ordinarily conducted in babylon, are schools of vanity, and hotbeds of pride and false religion.⁸

Babylonian, worldly Sabbath Schools are schools of pride and error.⁹

The sects keep Sunday school for a church nursery.

They only hope to so induce the character, that the persons will join the sect, and by a life of good morals, and some good works, ultimately obtain salvation.¹⁰

Throughout these scathing editorials, Warner and his associates constantly upheld the value of teaching the gospel of Christ to all people, including children. Evangelism was of utmost importance; Bible study was not as meaningful. Hence, if Church of God congregations were to utilize Sunday schools for their children, the teachers were to teach directly from the

⁷ Ibid., 22-23.

⁸ Daniel Sydney Warner, untitled editorial, *The Gospel Trumpet* 7 (1 December 1885): 1.

⁹ Daniel Sydney Warner, untitled editorial, *The Gospel Trumpet* 10 (15 June 1888): 2.

¹⁰ Daniel Sydney Warner, “Children’s Meetings,” *The Gospel Trumpet* 11 (18 June 1891), 8.

Bible and not from a prepared curriculum. The New Testament alone was to be the Sunday school teacher's help.¹¹

By the turn of the century, feelings toward the Sunday school had generally shifted to a more positive position. By 1895, “Warner's attitude toward education had altered considerably.”¹² In that year, Warner started a training school for children on the campground at Grand Junction, Michigan.¹³ Two years earlier, Warner and Barney E. Warren published a songbook entitled *Echoes from Glory: For the Sunday-school and for Prayer, Praise, and Gospel Meetings, with Primary Instruction in Music*. The preface to this songbook, written jointly by the authors, declares that “music is heavenly and divine. There is great power in spiritual song. The gospel in song often moves and melts hearts that preaching can not touch. . . . We send out this new book in the name of Jesus, with the prayer that it may effectually call many aliens home to God, and inspire much praise to his holy name.”¹⁴ While Warner and Warren wrote this book in support of the Sunday school, they clearly believed it to be an instrument of evangelism. Thus, the Sunday school began to grow in importance in these early leaders' minds.

This shift in thinking regarding the Sunday school took several years to extend to the broader movement. Two general reactions to the Sunday school movement within the Church of God – namely, indifference and opposition – can be identified “even as late as 1910. The *Gospel Trumpet* published articles favoring Sabbath school, but with conservative reservations. And

¹¹ George L. Cole, “The Sunday School Aspects,” *The Gospel Trumpet* 16 (8 October 1896), 2.

¹² Childs, “A Study of the Person and Work of the Sunday School Teacher,” 11.

¹³ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 31.

¹⁴ Barney Elliott Warren and Daniel Sidney Warner, *Echoes from Glory: for the Sunday-school and for Prayer, Praise, and Gospel Meetings, with Primary Instruction in Music* (Grand Junction, Michigan: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1893), preface.

finally, in spite of all the opposition and indifference, some Sunday schools were established.”¹⁵

Establishment Years, 1910-1940

The year 1910 is a landmark year in the Church of God experience with Sunday school, because it was in that year that the Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company produced its first quarterly Sunday school materials. Two publications, *The Shining Light* for older children and *Our Little Folks* for younger children, had been published since 1891 and 1907, respectively. As they developed over time, these two papers became major resources for Sunday school teachers and students alike. In 1910, though, the new Gospel Trumpet quarterlies became the primary curriculum materials of the Church of God.¹⁶ This change is largely due to the work of D. O. Teasley, who wrote in March 1910 that

we have nothing in the way of Sunday-school literature aside from two papers published for the children, and our children are not expected at certain ages to have learned certain lessons or parts of the gospel. The important question now faces us whether we are to let our children grow up and gather what religious training they can from intermittent efforts in children's meetings and such Sunday-schools as we can conduct without much effort, or whether we are going to . . . adopt some systematic and thorough method of conducting our Sunday-schools, so that when our boys and girls reach the age of manhood and womanhood they will have a knowledge of the present truth and fundamental principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ.¹⁷

Two months later, Teasley announced the new Gospel Trumpet curriculum: “Quite an interest has been awakened in the Sunday-school work in various places, and to meet the many demands for literature and helps for this line of work, a series of lessons are being prepared which are to be ready for use in the schools by the first of July. There will be four grades of lessons, namely, primary, junior, intermediate, and senior.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 34.

¹⁶ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 51-52.

¹⁷ Daniel Otis Teasley, “Our Sunday Schools,” *The Gospel Trumpet* 30 (10 March 1910), 10.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

These new Sunday school lesson materials were based on the International Uniform Lessons and were “adapted . . . to [emphasize] the doctrines of the Church of God.”¹⁹ The movement as a whole still felt some hesitancy toward organized Sunday schools, because such organization resembled the nature of the sects from which the Church of God had come out. In order to reassure others that the Church of God was not becoming a sect through its use of structured Sunday school curriculum materials, Teasley wrote a book in 1911 entitled *How to Conduct a Sunday School*. This book supported the Sunday school movement essentially as a means of evangelism. Early in the book, Teasley wrote that “first, last, and always, it is the purpose of the Sunday-school to lead the soul to Christ, and hence every lesson, from the infant class to the highest grade, should point to Christ as the central theme and as the Savior of the world.”²⁰

Evangelism was, in fact, the mode in which many Sunday schools functioned in the early 1900s. “During this [time], the Sunday school was . . . often started in a new community with the intention of later opening up a church.”²¹ Occasionally, Sunday schools were used as preparations for revivals or other special preaching services.²² On the other hand, sometimes Sunday school meetings were held after revivals concluded until full congregations could be formed. In any case, the relationship between the Sunday school and the evangelistic concerns of the Church of God grew tremendously during this period. “In two decades the attitude had changed from where Sunday schools were felt to be in opposition to evangelism to where Sunday schools were made part of the evangelism which characterized the movement.”²³

¹⁹ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 62.

²⁰ Daniel Otis Teasley, *How to Conduct a Sunday School* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1911), 8.

²¹ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 74.

²² *Ibid.*, 75.

²³ *Ibid.*, 76.

Many new initiatives surrounding Christian education in general and the Sunday school in particular occurred in the next several years. First, the Anderson Bible Training-School, now known as Anderson University, was established in 1917. In its first catalog, it described its purpose with these words: “The Bible Training-School was founded for the purpose of providing instruction for those who feel called to the ministry or to the mission field, or to be Sunday-school superintendents and teachers, and for the training of music-directors.”²⁴

This educational opportunity for Sunday school workers, among others, is supported by an interesting development in the Church of God yearbooks, which were born at approximately the same time as the Training-School. In each of the first few yearbooks, advertisements for various educational institutions were included at the end of the ministerial listings. However, the 1921 yearbook was the first to include substantial material describing the educational institutions of the Church of God in detail; furthermore, this material appears at a position of importance: at the beginning of the yearbook, before the ministerial listings. The opening paragraph of this introductory material captures well the changing relationship between the church and the school:

The subject of education is very vitally and permanently before us as a people. Let it be said to the credit of God's people, that they have generally stood on the side of education. The school and the church, as two of the most important institutions of civilization, should sustain a sympathetic relation to each other. There is nothing in education in its true sense that should antagonize true religion. Ignorance and goodness have never formed any alliance. That a man must be ignorant in order to be good is a shallow philosophy. Ignorance is a remedy that cures no ills.²⁵

The growing acceptance of education in the Church of God is directly tied to the growth and establishment of the Sunday school in the Church of God. On the one hand, the Sunday school is itself a form of education in the life of the church. On the other hand, the provision of

²⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*, 77.

²⁵ *Yearbook of the Church of God* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1921): 9.

formalized training for Sunday school workers reinforces the Sunday school as a valid component of Christian education in the local congregation.

The most significant development related to the Sunday school during this time period involves another landmark year: 1923, the year in which the Board of Christian Education was established. In that year, the General Ministerial Assembly passed a resolution to create the Board of Religious Education and Sunday Schools; as it formed, this organization became known as the Board of Sunday Schools and Religious Education. In 1935, its name was changed to the Board of Christian Education.²⁶ In its first year of existence, the Board committed itself to the production of graded Sunday school lessons, the training of Sunday school teachers, the creation of a standard for Sunday schools, and the selection of helpful texts on vacation schools.²⁷ The Board declared that “in the progress of this reformation the Board believes that Sunday-school and religious education work has [*sic*] a very important part, and therefore the Board feels that its duty is to do all it can to further this work.”²⁸

By 1926, the Board had created a doctrinal Sunday school course according to the popular demand of the General Assembly. This doctrinal curriculum was to “[take] up the great fundamental doctrines and teachings of the Bible” and was to be published quarterly according to four different grade levels.²⁹ In the introduction to the first quarter Senior-Adult materials, A. F. Gray wrote these words in support of the Sunday school:

The growing importance of Sunday-school work as a means of religious education calls us to make the best possible use of its opportunities. No service of the church is better adapted to mold the plastic minds of youth and form Christian character. There need be

²⁶ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 82.

²⁷ *Yearbook of the Church of God* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1924), 26-27.

²⁸ *Yearbook of the Church of God* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1925), 30.

²⁹ *Yearbook of the Church of God* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1926), 38.

no hesitation in saying that, at the present time, the Sunday-school is the greatest factor in the moral training of the youth.³⁰

Interestingly, Gray's words speak of the Sunday school as a tool of spiritual formation rather than as a tool of evangelism. This subtle shift in emphasis would continue to grow in subsequent decades.

In the late 1920s, the Board's annual reports in the Church of God yearbooks include statistical data regarding the growth of Sunday schools in the Church of God.³¹ These reports show that the Board recognized the potential for growth and the important role that the Sunday school was playing in the life of the Church of God even at that time.

Two other developments in this period are worthy of note here. First, at least two more Sunday school songbooks were published by the Gospel Trumpet company. In 1928, A. L. Byers, in cooperation with Bessie Byrum, Anna Koglin, and the faculty of the Anderson College and Theological Seminary, wrote a songbook entitled *Children's Praise and Worship*. In the preface to this introduction, Byers wrote that

the interest in child study with a view to more successful Sunday-school methods has been ever increasing. Instruction has become more specifically adapted to the needs of the respective grades. Teachers are training themselves, as if for their lifework, for instruction in a particular grade. Sunday-school work is looming in importance. And all of this means that any selection of songs intended for children must be in accordance with the best standards.³²

Another songbook, entitled *Sunday School Hymns and Songs*, was published by the Gospel Trumpet Company in 1931. The publishers declared their hope that this songbook might “bring many to Christ and be the means of planting the seeds of the Christian faith so deeply in

³⁰ *Doctrinal Sunday School Course, First Quarter: Christian Fundamentals (Senior-Adult)* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1925), 1.

³¹ *Yearbook of the Church of God* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1927), 34; *Yearbook of the Church of God* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1928), 24; *Yearbook of the Church of God* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1929), 23.

³² Andrew L. Byers, *Children's Praise and Worship: for the Beginners, Primary, and Junior Grades of the Sunday School* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1928), preface.

the hearts of these boys and girls that this seed will germinate in later years and bring forth fruit unto righteousness.”³³

The second development worthy of note is the Sunday School Foundation for the Blind. This interdenominational effort received initial endorsements from many groups in Indiana and Ohio and soon received the endorsements of state institutions for the blind from at least 23 states. The foundation was suggested by Reverend E. G. Masters, the Field Secretary for the Foundation of Sunday School Literature for the Blind, who called not simply for Bibles but for the “interpretation of the Bible lessons” for the blind.³⁴ The purpose of this foundation was “to supply a great need of those who cannot see, by furnishing free Sunday-school literature in Braille and New York Point”; the foundation planned to achieve this purpose “by providing a permanent fund for a foundation to support the work through interdenominational cooperation.”³⁵ By 1929, approximately “800 copies of the Sunday School Monthly [were] being sent to blind people each month” from the Gospel Trumpet printing presses.³⁶ This foundation eventually faded out of existence sometime in the 1930s.³⁷

All of these developments and organizations reflect the establishment of the Sunday school in the Church of God during the 1910s and 1920s. Curriculum continued to be published in the subsequent years, and members of the Board of Sunday Schools and Religious Education visited many congregations around the nation. Sunday school enrollment climbed steadily into

³³ *Sunday School Hymns and Songs: for use in Sunday Schools and the Junior Church or Other Children's Meetings* (Anderson, Indiana: Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company, 1931), preface.

³⁴ Franklin McElfresh, Educational Superintendent, to an unknown addressee, 17 March 1925, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

³⁵ D. H. Richardson, copy of resolution, 19 October 1925, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana. This material also appears on all letterhead of the Sunday School Foundation for the Blind, as found in the same collection.

³⁶ Sunday School Foundation for the Blind, to [a congregation in Missouri], [February 1929], Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana. This letter was returned on 21 February 1929 to the Sunday School Foundation for the Blind by a congregation in Missouri along with a payment.

³⁷ The last receipt found in the Church of God Archives is dated 4 February 1932.

the 1930s. In 1933, the Church of God set a goal to create one thousand new Sunday schools; six hundred fifty came into existence.³⁸ By 1940, the Sunday school had become an established mainstay of the local Church of God congregation.

Growth Years, 1940-1960

The Sunday school movement in the Church of God had a solid footing by 1940. The atmosphere was ripe for tremendous growth, and given the baby boom that would occur after World War II, tremendous growth was virtually assured. In this respect, the Church of God was not unique among Christian groups in the United States. In the early 1940s, Sunday school growth was a major issue across the denominations. To this end, a large interdenominational movement called the United Christian Education Advance began in 1941. At the same time, the Church of God began its own form of participation in this program by launching the United Christian Advance in the same year. These two advances were functionally equivalent, but the word education was dropped in the Church of God program “because of the hesitancy in some corners of the church to endorse educational enterprises.”³⁹

The United Christian Advance initially had four goals: to “reach the unreached,” to “train workers,” to “deepen spiritual life,” and to “Christianize the home.”⁴⁰ These were intended to be accomplished through the achievement of four more practical goals in each local congregation. First, the Advance was to ensure that every home contained a Bible. Second, families worshipping together were to increase by ten percent. Third, each congregation was to

³⁸ Sherrill Dean Hayes, “Concerns for Christian Education in the Church of God as Expressed by the Program of the National Board of Christian Education” (B.Div. thesis, Anderson College and Theological Seminary, 1962), 91.

³⁹ Ibid., 92.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 94.

sustain a Bible study class for parents. Fourth, each congregation was to hear at least four sermons each year on the topic of the Christian home.⁴¹

These goals, to varying degrees, revolved around the Sunday school structure that had already developed in the Church of God. In fact, after the first year of the Advance, its leaders saw that it was “a good beginning toward efficiency in the Sunday school.”⁴² Within two years of the Advance, approximately half of all Church of God congregations were actively participating in the program.⁴³ By drawing more families into the local congregation and by attempting to Christianize their homes, the United Christian Advance played a major role in the growth of the Sunday school movement in the Church of God during the early 1940s.

During this time period, the Board of Christian Education saw tremendous growth in its own capacity to influence and encourage congregations, particularly along the lines of the Sunday school movement. This growth materialized in the forms of greater organizational structure and increased congregational programs. “Through more specialized committees, the Board was able to suggest ways of increasing Sunday school activities” to churches, pastors, and lay leaders.⁴⁴ A major development occurred in 1945 when the Board hired T. Franklin Miller as its first full-time executive secretary. Previously, the Board's secretaries were part-time employees; this greater financial commitment on the part of the Board reveals its desire to see the work of Christian education expand in the upcoming years.

At the same time, the Gospel Trumpet Publishing Company continued to produce new Sunday school curriculum materials. These materials were well received by an increasingly large percentage of Church of God congregations. Donald Courtney noted in his 1954 thesis that

⁴¹ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 97.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 98.

⁴³ Hayes, “Concerns for Christian Education in the Church of God,” 96.

⁴⁴ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 109.

“the high percentage [perhaps 92%, according to stated figures] of Church of God Sunday schools buying literature published by the Gospel Trumpet Company is a credit to the continuous efforts to produce better materials. The amount of sales also indicates the continued growth of Sunday schools in the movement.”⁴⁵ In fact, Ken Hall reported in his 1954 thesis that the Church of God was “one of only four American religious groups with Sunday school enrollment larger than church membership.”⁴⁶

This point in the history of the Church of God Sunday school movement is a high-water mark of sorts. Donald Courtney succinctly summarizes the atmosphere around the Sunday school and Christian education in general with these words:

The indication from the growth of the Board of Christian Education and the development of curricular materials is that the Church of God Sunday schools are growing better and better. The Sunday school attendance also shows continued growth. And the number of Sunday schools is increasing. . . . The indications of growth in all phases of the work of the Sunday school are encouraging and thrilling. They do not mean the work is finished. The indications do point to greater things in the future.⁴⁷

Courtney's optimism is certainly justifiable, because in 1954 all signs pointed to more and more growth in the Sunday school arena. However, Sunday school enrollment in the Church of God would reach its peak in the early 1960s, and all future attempts to strengthen the Sunday school and its enrollment would not prevent the upcoming decline from taking place. The reasons for this decline are complicated and varied – and probably, to some extent, cultural. One may be sure, however, that the decline of the Sunday school is not due to a lack of effort on the part of the leaders of the Church of God.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 105.

⁴⁶ Kenneth F. Hall, “A History of Curricular Materials in the Church of God” (B.Div. thesis, Butler University, 1954), 135, quoted in Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 105.

⁴⁷ Courtney, “A Study of the Development of the Sunday School,” 116.

Peak Years, 1960-1975

The 1960s opened with a major programmatic push by the Board of Christian Education toward the goal of continued Sunday school growth. This program was known as the United Church School Advance, and while its name carries similarities to the interdenominational program from the 1940s, this new program was entirely the project of the Church of God. Specifically, it fell completely under the direction of the Board of Christian Education.⁴⁸ The U.C.S.A., as it came to be known, was a three-year program operating from 1961 to 1963. Sherrill Hayes, in his 1962 thesis, gives a first-hand description of the purpose of this program:

The influence of an expanding philosophy of Christian education is evidenced in the present advance. The church school is seen as a much broader aspect of the Christian education program than the Sunday school. The task of Christian education is seen in the context of the church as a learning, growing fellowship; as the redemptive community.

The emphasis of this advance is not as evangelistic in nature as was the first [i.e., the United Christian Advance of the 1940s]. . . . The thrust is more in the area of strengthening the existing organization in the local church Christian education program, and in developing qualified leaders for the program.⁴⁹

These words echo A. F. Gray's thoughts from 1925: the Sunday school phenomenon, especially here in the early 1960s, was transforming into a vehicle for spiritual formation in the church. Evangelism through the Sunday school was not as important of a goal as it had been in the past; the meaning of Christian education was expanding beyond its original meaning within the movement. At the same time, however, an increase in Sunday school enrollment was clearly on the minds of the Board of Christian Education. An undated pamphlet entitled *How to Get More People in Your Sunday School in 20 Hard Lessons* connects the U.C.S.A. to the numerical growth of the local church Sunday school program. Each of its twenty hard lessons starts with the assumption that the reader “really want[s] to increase Sunday school attendance in a big and permanent way.” The tone of these lessons suggests that laypeople have become somewhat

⁴⁸ Hayes, “Concerns for Christian Education in the Church of God,” 98.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 98-99.

disinterested in the Sunday school phenomenon; for example, one lesson flatly reminds congregations “[not to] forget to show some enthusiasm.”⁵⁰

During the first year of the U.C.S.A., executive secretary T. Franklin Miller gave a short report to the Board of Directors of the Board of Christian Education in which he expressed mixed emotions regarding the responses of individual congregations to this program. Some churches were responding faithfully to this advance, but others left Miller somewhat “disappointed” by their lack of participation. Miller's comments reflect a desire to know “the number of calls and visits made, the number of new persons contacted, the increase in attendance, the increase in Sunday school enrollment, etc.”; these reveal an underlying desire that the U.C.S.A. function as a program to sustain or enhance numerical growth in Christian education ministries including the Sunday school. Despite these frustrations, Miller believed that the U.C.S.A. was a manifestation of the movement of the Holy Spirit; he hoped for a “successful future” through this program.⁵¹

Miller's report to the Board of Directors in the second year of the advance provides great insight into the achievements of and difficulties faced by the U.C.S.A. In a nine-page document, Miller sets forth nine difficulties, fourteen achievements, and several pages' worth of affirming testimonies from local Christian educators. The problems Miller cites focus on the local congregation. Some churches did not adequately understand the advance; others could not maintain enthusiasm for a three year program. Many churches were not in the habit of reporting

⁵⁰ Board of Christian Education, *How to Get More People in Your Sunday School in 20 Hard Lessons*, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁵¹ T. Franklin Miller, “The United Church School Advance,” Report to the Board of Directors, 14 June 1961, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

accurate statistical data; many congregational leaders did not utilize materials appropriately or put forth sufficient effort to maintain the program.⁵²

On the other hand, several positive results were surfacing even in the midst of the U.C.S.A. For instance, “churches [were] realizing that Christian education is more than Sunday school work.”⁵³ However, the Sunday school was still of great importance to the Board of Christian Education, because Miller applauds “better organization,” “better records,” a “closing [of] the gap between enrollment and average attendance,” and “increased enrollment and increased average attendance” in the participating Sunday schools.⁵⁴ Miller also includes “a new breath of enthusiasm and joy concerning the teaching ministry of the church” and “an increase in the spiritual tone of congregations that are deeply involved in the U.C.S.A.” among the blessings of the program.⁵⁵ For all its difficulties, Miller implies that the U.C.S.A. seems to have been worth the effort.

At the conclusion of the advance, however, a mystery appears. Miller's 1963 report to the Board of Directors refers to the U.C.S.A. in only two enigmatic paragraphs:

Within a few days this three-year emphasis will have terminated. I wish it were possible to give you some statistical summaries that will show how much has been accomplished through the program. It is the kind of program, however, that does not easily lend itself to statistical data, so I turn to other ways of measurement.

A personal observation of what is happening in churches that have been enrolled and participating in the United Church School Advance helps me to feel that the program has been well worth all it has cost in time, effort and money. The letters that have come from local churches and from some state boards of Christian education confirm this observation. Some of the letters that have been coming in the last few weeks tell us by all means there must be something to follow the U.C.S.A. that will be big in scope,

⁵² T. Franklin Miller, “Report on United Church School Advance,” Report to the Board of Directors, 1 June 1962, , Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana, 1-2.

⁵³ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 2-3.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 3.

dynamic in challenge, and helpful to participating churches.⁵⁶

No mention of the U.C.S.A. appears in any of Miller's later reports to the Board of Directors. It is as if the program simply slipped away in the mists of time. Many congregations certainly benefited from the United Church School Advance, but the Board of Christian Education's numerical expectations for Sunday school growth through this program clearly were not met.

In the latter part of the 1960s, one finds another subtle shift in the emphasis of the Sunday school experience. No longer was the thrust of the Sunday school simply on evangelism as it was originally; no longer was it simply on increased attendance as it was in the two major advances. At this point in time, the emphasis shifted toward strengthening the Sunday school through improved teaching skills and curriculum. In this decade the Board of Christian Education sponsored "several dozen laboratory schools" designed to help Sunday school teachers become more effective. According to one publication, "the laboratory method calls for a skilled teacher to actually teach a Sunday school or vacation school class, with other people [of all ages] observing how this is done."⁵⁷ Also, around 1969, Warner Press distributed a catalog of curriculum resources for use with "trainable retarded children and youth" entitled *Adventures in Christian Living and Learning*.⁵⁸ These movements toward enabling Sunday school teachers to teach more effectively persisted through the following decades.

In 1970, Oral and Laura Withrow published a pamphlet entitled *Parents as Teachers: The Family and the Sunday School*. In this pamphlet, they express a prevalent cultural expectation of

⁵⁶ T. Franklin Miller, "United Church School Advance," Report to the Board of Directors, 29 April 1963, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁵⁷ Board of Christian Education, *How You Can Train Your Workers in Laboratory Experiences*, 1967, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁵⁸ Warner Press, *Adventures in Christian Living and Learning: a Two Part Series of Curriculum Resources for use with Trainable Retarded Children and Youth*, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

the time: that parents may send their children to a nearby Sunday school for religious training. The Withrows state that “deeply committed” Christians will not leave this educational task to the Sunday school alone; instead, “Church of God curriculum resources are designed to build bridges between the family and the church school.”⁵⁹

In the early 1970s, the Board of Christian Education held several “Sunday School Clinics” around the United States for the purpose of strengthening and popularizing the Sunday school in the Church of God. This was done partially in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the Board of Christian Education in 1973. However, there was apparently limited interest in these clinics during their existence. From February 1973 through May 1974, a total of fifty clinics were held in various locations.⁶⁰ According to Board member Irene Caldwell, the Sunday school clinics in Florida did “more to help the Sunday school than anything” the Board had done in the past.⁶¹ In 1975, the Board of Christian Education received 69 more requests for resources for the program.⁶² However, the minutes of the Board of Christian Education meetings from 1976 onward make no mention of these Sunday school clinics.

Daniel Nelms, in his 1974 thesis, gives more insight into the emerging understanding of the Sunday school. He sets forth the following definition early in his thesis: “The Sunday school is the department of the church whose primary purpose is to be the teaching and nurturing instrument for all age levels. It is to provide in a somewhat systematic way the foundational

⁵⁹ Oral and Laura Withrow, *Parents as Teachers: the Family and the Sunday School* (Anderson, Indiana: Warner Press, 1970), 3-4.

⁶⁰ Sherrill Hayes, Report to the Board of Christian Education, 13 May 1974, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁶¹ Board of Christian Education, Minutes, 14 May 1974, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana, 7.

⁶² Board of Christian Education, Report to the Board of Christian Education, 1975, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana, 16.

teachings of the church that the body of Christ may be edified.”⁶³ This understanding of the Sunday school fits in perfectly with the developments that had taken place in the preceding several years. Nurture, education, and edification – in contrast to evangelism and increased attendance – were becoming the primary goals of the Sunday school. Meanwhile, Sunday school attendance had peaked, and in the decades to follow both the attendance and the importance of the Sunday school would steadily decline.

Decline Years, 1975-present

The decline of the Sunday school in the Church of God is seen most clearly through attendance records found in the annual yearbooks. Most relevant publications and other written documents from the end of the twentieth century suggest that the Sunday school movement may appear to be struggling and that some people may consider the movement to be over; however, a great deal of energy is spent in these documents arguing that the Sunday school in the Church of God is as strong and influential as it ever was.⁶⁴

At the 1977 meeting of the Board of Christian Education, Ken Hall gave a report entitled “Church of God Sunday School Curriculum: A View Toward Its Present and Future.” In this report, Hall states that

[curriculum] circulations reached a high saturation level in the 1940s and into the 1950s that was the envy of most other church bodies. Even with some decline in these levels beginning with the 1950s, our saturation figures continue to be far higher than in most church groups. Our continuing, slow circulation declines in the 1960s probably encouraged the development of the Ventures series, which brought a temporary bulge in

⁶³ Daniel H. Nelms, “The Use of the Induction Method of Bible Study as an Approach to Sunday School Curriculum” (M.A. thesis, School of Theology, Anderson College, 1974), 6.

⁶⁴ See, for example, Kenneth F. Hall, “The Sunday School . . . Alive and Well,” *Christian Leadership* 35, no. 6 (June 1980), 6-7.

the circulation graph that was over almost as soon as it began. For the past three years circulations have been on a plateau with small gains here and small losses there.⁶⁵

This report represents the beginnings of a sense of imminent decline in Sunday school attendance. While the Church of God had for many decades produced its own Sunday school curriculum, this publication ministry seems to have reached its peak by the mid-1970s. Hall even hints at an upcoming decline later in the same report when he writes that Sunday school curriculum “remains rather stable and goes on no matter what – at least so far.”⁶⁶ If the Church of God curriculum materials fade in importance, then the structure and organization of the Sunday school movement will fade, as well.

In 1979, the Board of Directors of the Board of Christian Education sensed a need to invest more time and energy in support of the Sunday school. Minutes from one of its meetings state that “the Board needs to do more to visibly affirm the high priority that we give to the Sunday school and the elements within the training programs that are intended to support the Sunday school and the curriculum. It was felt that we need to be known on the field as providing support for our churches in using Ventures in Christian Living Curriculum.”⁶⁷

The “training programs” mentioned here are likely the Centers for Developing Christian Leadership, or CDCLs for short. These initiatives began in 1978 and continued on a yearly basis for at least five years. Each year, several seminars and workshops were held in various cities across the United States. These events were intended to strengthen “Christian education and leadership development” in the local congregations of the Church of God.⁶⁸ The Board of

⁶⁵ Ken Hall, “Church of God Sunday School Curriculum,” Minutes of the Board of Christian Education, Exhibit D, 11-13 April 1977, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana, 1.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 5.

⁶⁷ Board of Christian Education, Minutes of the Board of Directors, 3 October 1979, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana, 2.

⁶⁸ Ken Prunty, Report to the Board of Directors, Exhibit A, 29 October 1980, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

Christian Education planned a three-year cycle for the CDCL. During the first year of the program, the Board commented that “we have been disappointed in the attendance at the seminars” after eight of sixteen CDCLs had been held; however, the general consensus was that “the program is excellent.”⁶⁹ By the conclusion of that first year, the seminars and workshops had a combined attendance of 1,600 people.⁷⁰ The CDCL program continued into the early 1980s, but eventually the Board suggested that CDCLs “should be cut back” in favor of “regional/national Sunday school conferences or perhaps a major event in summer 1985.”⁷¹

In the meantime, the need for a greater revitalization of the Sunday school movement itself was felt strongly. This was emphasized by Ken Prunty in his report to the Board of Christian Education in April 1980; Prunty stated the need for a current emphasis on strengthening the Sunday school in the 1980s. He suggested that “all churches that have improved their Sunday school attendance for the year will be recognized by Warner Press and the Board of Christian Education in the pages of *Vital Christianity*. Any church experiencing 10% or more attendance increase for three successive years will be eligible for the Warner Press Sunday School Hall of Fame.”⁷²

To this end, the Board of Christian Education began to offer Sunday School Growth Workshops in the early 1980s. These workshops were part of “a strategy for a major emphasis on Sunday School growth in 1981” and onward.⁷³ In a pamphlet describing these workshops, the

⁶⁹ Board of Christian Education, Report to the Board of Christian Education, 17 April 1979, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁷⁰ Board of Christian Education, Minutes of the Board of Directors, 3 October 1979, Exhibit A, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁷¹ Board of Christian Education, Minutes, 21-23 March 1983, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana, 6.

⁷² Ken Prunty, “Sunday School Growth Emphasis,” Report to the Board of Christian Education, April 1980, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁷³ Board of Christian Education, Minutes of the Board of Directors, 26 August 1980, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

Board of Christian Education gave an answer to the question about “why the Sunday school needs help”:

More than 200 years have passed since the founding of the Sunday school. The Sunday school continues to be one of the most important settings for teaching the Gospel and building Christian faith. If the Sunday school is to serve effectively in the 80’s its weaknesses must be found and overcome and its strengths recognized and increased. The Sunday School Growth Workshop is designed to do this and will help increase the effectiveness of any Sunday school that will use it carefully.

The Sunday school can grow in the 80’s in its effectiveness in teaching the Gospel and in numbers. This will not happen accidentally. It will happen whenever boards of Christian education, pastors, and Sunday school teachers give the Sunday school the kind of attention, evaluation and support it deserves and needs.⁷⁴

The Sunday School Growth Workshops essentially involved a four part process of analyzing the past, envisioning the future, creating goals, and committing to those goals.⁷⁵

Ideally, a congregation's leaders of Christian education would meet with external consultants, and together they would “set goals for improvement over a five-year period . . . and share and interpret goals and strategies with the entire congregation.”⁷⁶ Goals suggested by this workshop were entirely numerical in nature: total Sunday school enrollment, departmental enrollment, average attendance, number of teachers, and so forth. These workshops evidently faded from the scene very quickly, and Sunday school enrollment figures across the Church of God continued their downward trend.

As early as 1980, the Board of Christian Education felt the need to hire a full-time staff member to focus specifically on “Sunday school promotion and development”; however, the finances of the Board did not allow this to take place immediately.⁷⁷ This position included

⁷⁴ Board of Christian Education, “Strengthen Your Sunday School with the Sunday School Growth Workshop,” Pamphlet, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Board of Christian Education, “The Sunday School Growth Workshop,” Workshop materials, 1980, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁷⁷ Board of Christian Education, Minutes of the Board of Directors, 15 December 1980, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

fourteen specific responsibilities, most of which revolved around elevating the value of the Sunday school in the local congregation, promoting the use of Church of God Sunday school curriculum materials, and encouraging local congregations to participate in leadership training and growth workshops.⁷⁸ By August 1981, the Board decided to hire Dale Senseman to fill this position on a part-time basis.⁷⁹ In 1983, the Board hired Joseph Cookston as its full-time Director of Sunday School Development, a position which he held until 1996.⁸⁰

Early in his time at the Board of Christian Education, Cookston realized two major factors that may have caused Sunday school attendance to peak around 1970:

At least two factors were evident then: (1) the [Sunday school] ceased to be the “front door” to persons coming into the church and (2) “rival” programs were responding to the perceived deficits of the [Sunday school] model for Christian education, such as small groups, discipleship mentoring, short-term adult elective/topical studies. The [Sunday school] deficits most often recited were: the entrenchment of [Sunday school] classes not open to new persons; relational needs of persons (fellowship) shifting from the more propositional/doctrinal/biblical info style of teaching; attenders opting for a 1-hour Sunday morning experience and attending worship only.⁸¹

In response to those factors, the Board of Christian Education made one more attempt to strengthen the Sunday school in the Church of God with its “Decade of Sunday School Development,” which ran from 1985 to 1995. In the first half of this decade, the Board published five manuals, one per year, to assist Sunday school teachers in their tasks: *Catch the Vision*, *Shape the Vision*, *Equip for Vision*, *Share the Vision*, and *Build with Vision*. In the foreword to the first of these manuals, the Board offers these comments:

[At its beginning,] the fires of the Sunday school spirit ignited fervor in whole generations of people. The first four decades of this century provided a climate in which the enrollments of the Sunday school swelled to unprecedented totals. The Sunday

⁷⁸ Donald Courtney to members of the Board of Christian Education, 18 August 1981, Church of God Archives, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Joseph Cookston, e-mail message to author, 10 June 2008.

⁸¹ Ibid.

school and its leaders actively campaigned neighborhoods and sought out persons from all walks of life.

Although the place of the Sunday school in the local church today remains undisputed, its importance has lessened in priority. The reason for its being and what it can accomplish has come into question.

The Sunday school in the Church of God is experiencing numerical decline. Although in some areas there is numerical growth, generally attendance and enrollment totals have declined during the past 10 years.

A cloud of uncertainty has settled around the Sunday school. Some would question its relevance in communicating tenets of the faith to this generation. Others would refer to the lack of vision and motivation of its leaders for real ministry with people. Still others would cite the erosion of enthusiasm into ho-humness as a signal for a complete change in formation.

The Board of Christian Education believes the Sunday school still remains a significant arm of ministry in the local church. It has the support of a vast number of lay leaders and pastors. It has a tenacity that has continued through the years. In an age of high technology and fast paced living, the Sunday school offers hope through its teaching, friendship through its relationships and new life through its Lord.

Therefore, we at the Board of Christian Education have launched a 10-year campaign, Decade of Sunday School Development, committed to energizing the outreach and teaching ministries of the Sunday school. . . .

We plan for this campaign to reach into every Church of God Sunday school. Leaders and teachers desperately need training and support. Training and teaching materials must be useable and flexible in local situations. We must set forth the purpose for each Sunday school for the 90's. We must reclaim the outreach ministry of the Sunday school.⁸²

The final five years of this program involved “the formation of the Sunday School Team, a group of 26 or so persons from congregations and universities across the nation.”⁸³ These people collaborated yearly to plan and prepare workshops for the purpose of training Sunday school teachers in local congregations. These workshops were known collectively as the “Teachers Are Great!” (TAG!) workshops, and “workshop attendance averaged 15 to 40 persons with 50 to 75 workshops a year.”⁸⁴ These numbers appear to have been below expectations; to

⁸² Joseph Cookston, ed., *Catch the Vision: Establishing the Purpose of the Sunday School* (Anderson, Indiana: Board of Christian Education, 1985), Foreword, 2.

⁸³ Joseph Cookston, e-mail message to author, 10 June 2008.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

one Sunday School Team member, it seemed that “the vast majority of churches were not taking advantage of the excellent material that was being produced.”⁸⁵

Despite the overall decline in attendance from the 1970s and onward, many Sunday schools across the United States experienced numerical growth during this particular decade. Reports show that 350 to 400 Sunday schools experienced at least 10% growth in 1988, 1989, and even as late as 1993.⁸⁶

Throughout the Decade for Sunday School Development, the Board of Christian Education published several articles on Sunday school growth in its magazine publication. One article suggests keeping accurate records and communicating with missing attendees as a means of increasing attendance.⁸⁷ Another offers suggestions on increasing the “visibility” of the Sunday school. Among these suggestions is the idea to use the term “class leader” instead of “teacher” and the term “Bible study” instead of “Sunday school.”⁸⁸ A third article suggests that leaders “ask families in [the] church or Sunday school and persons on [a] prospect list to commit themselves to attend Sunday school for three months”; after this period of time, attendance should naturally increase.⁸⁹ These articles represent the Board of Christian Education's final effort to revitalize the Sunday school in the Church of God.

The Sunday school movement faced its most severe blow in 1998 when the Board of Christian Education ceased to exist as an independent organization. In that year, the national offices of the Church of God were massively reorganized, and “there was a general scrambling to

⁸⁵ MaryAnn Hawkins, e-mail message to author, 10 June 2008.

⁸⁶ Joseph Cookston, “Sunday Schools on the Grow,” *Christian Leadership* 43, no. 6 (June 1988), 3; Joseph Cookston, “Sunday Schools on the Grow,” *Christian Leadership* 44, no. 3 (May/June 1989), 7; “Church Growth,” *Leader* 48, no. 4 (July/August 1993), back cover.

⁸⁷ Marilyn Brenden, “How to Grow a Sunday School,” *Leader* 47, no. 4 (July/August 1992), 7-8.

⁸⁸ “How to Get More Visibility for the Sunday School,” *Leader* 48, no. 3 (May/June 1993), 5-6.

⁸⁹ Willard Scofield, “Increasing Sunday School Attendance,” *Leader* 49, no. 5 (September/October 1994),

clarify who was responsible for what and [Christian education] enterprises [such as the Sunday school] became somewhat fuzzy.”⁹⁰ Sunday school curriculum has continued to be published by Church of God Ministries, but no broad programs regarding Sunday school growth or revitalization have taken place in these past ten years. Instead, the focus in Christian education, especially for children and youth, has moved to a small group model that is distinct from the Sunday school.

Conclusion

Is the Sunday school movement over? Has the Sunday school died? The purpose of this paper is not to tell the future; these questions are not intended to be answered here. On the contrary, the purpose of this paper is to tell the *past*. One way of analyzing the history of the Sunday school in the Church of God is simply to look at enrollment and attendance figures; based on such analysis, one may be left with the impression that the Sunday school is struggling greatly for its survival in the twenty-first century. Perhaps it is not even struggling at all. The cultural tide may have shifted, and the Sunday school may indeed be past its peak of usefulness for Christianity in general and for the Church of God in particular.

We may approach this history of the Sunday school from a different perspective, however. Regardless of the changes in attendance, the Sunday school has undergone a dramatic change in its intent over the past century. Initially, the Sunday school began as a way of preaching to children on their own intellectual level. This quickly grew into a means of evangelism, particularly directed toward children. Soon, as those children grew up and had children of their own, the Sunday school developed into an evangelistic tool for all ages, children and adults alike. Gradually, the Sunday school shifted from emphasizing evangelism to

⁹⁰ Joseph Cookston, e-mail message to author, 6 June 2008.

emphasizing Christian nurture and discipleship; children were still taught about Jesus, but adults attended Sunday school in order to grow in their faith and to experience Christian fellowship. This position is epitomized by a 1989 article stating four “primary purposes for a Sunday school”: to “provide fellowship,” to “teach the Bible,” to “build up one another,” and only finally to “share the faith.”⁹¹ The rise and fall of Sunday school enrollment and attendance can be seen in light of these changes in its purpose. As children trained in Sunday school grew up, they and their children attended Sunday school; therefore, attendance rose. As that next generation was trained in the Christian faith and then grew up, it began to seek out forms of Christian education outside the Sunday school; therefore, attendance peaked and eventually fell.

Again, we must be cautious of making predictions of the future. If nothing else, the optimism of Donald Courtney's 1954 thesis shows that one's hopes (and fears) may not necessarily come to pass. The Sunday school in the Church of God has had a long, involved, and meaningful history. Despite the decline of the Sunday school in the past few decades, we may rest assured that the broader goal of Christian education in the local church has not disappeared from the scene.

⁹¹ Harold Perdue, “Why Sunday School Classes?”, *Christian Leadership* 44, no. 5 (September/October 1989), 16-17.

APPENDIX

Figure 1: Church of God Sunday School Enrollment and Attendance

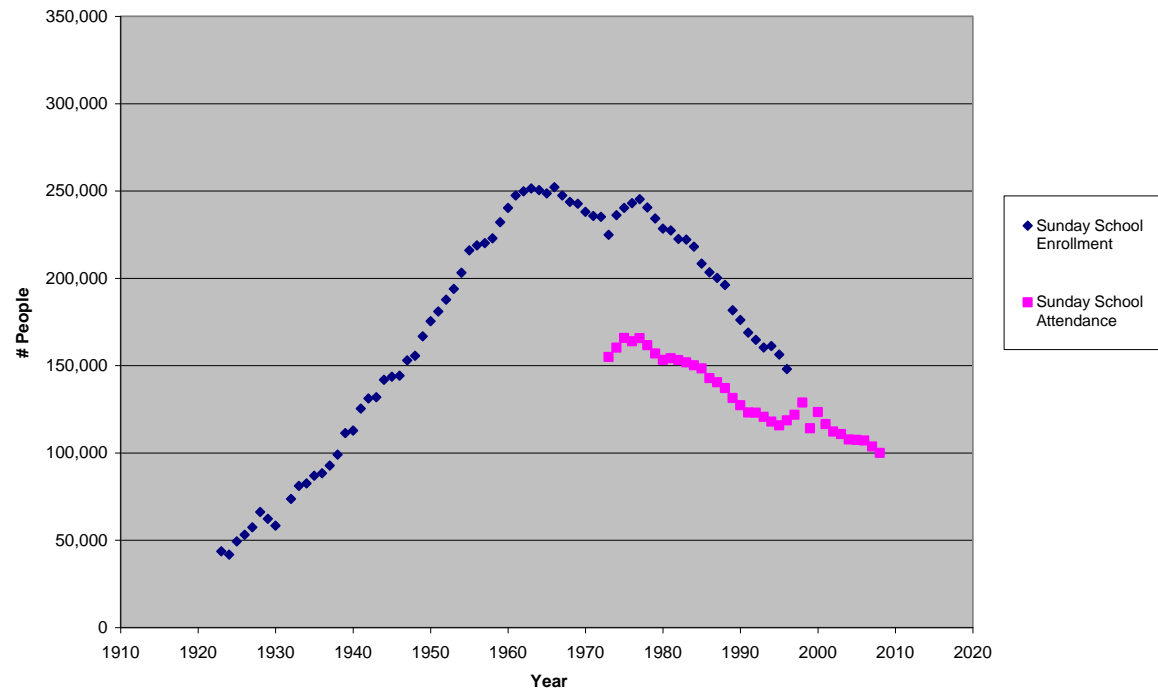


Figure 2: Church of God Congregations

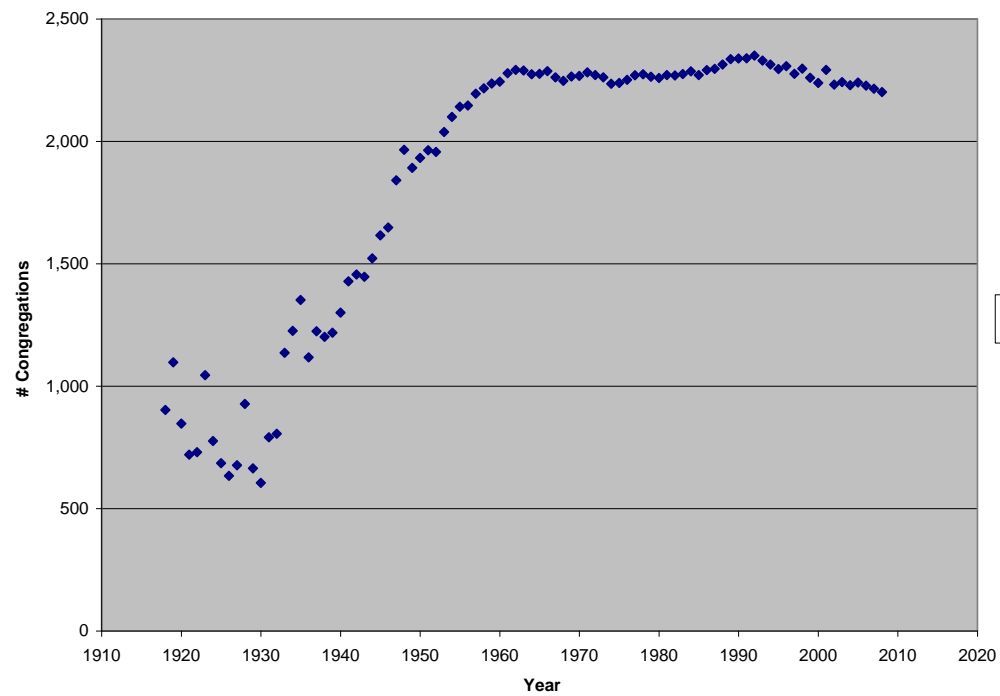


Figure 3: Church of God Sunday School Enrollment and Attendance Averages

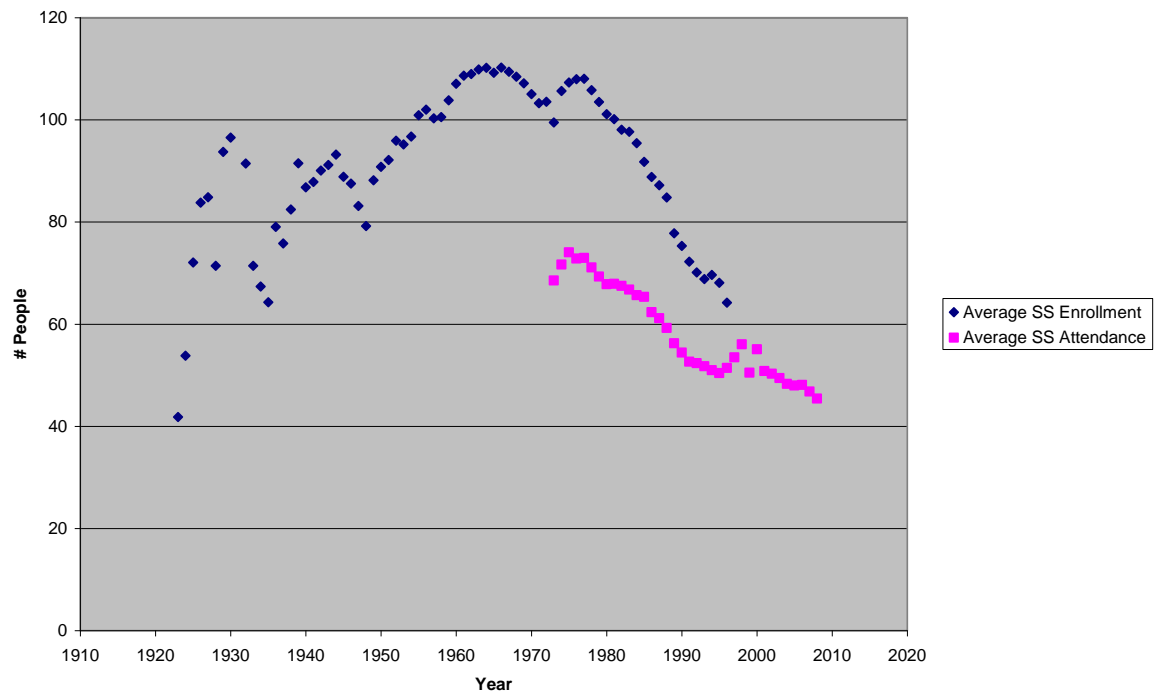
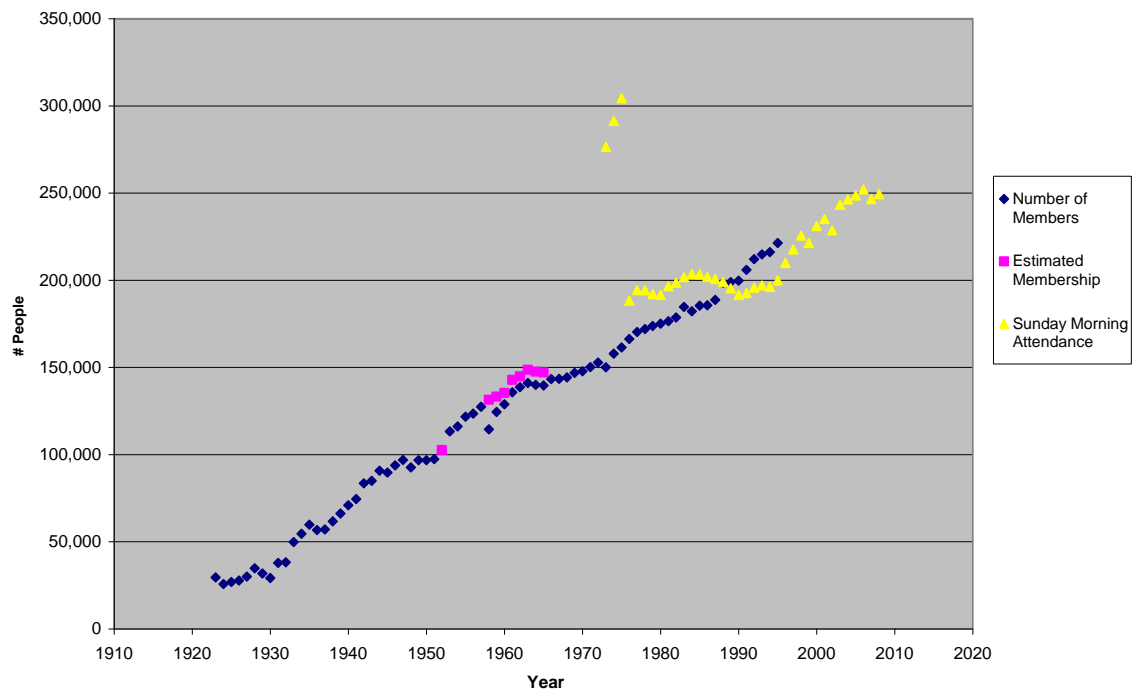


Figure 4: Church of God Membership and Sunday Morning Attendance



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