

BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of COLLINGSWOOD

Haddon Avenue and Cuthbert Blvd.
Collingswood, New Jersey

Rev. Carl McIntire Pastor
426 Collings Avenue

Rev. Richard E. Coulter
16 Conard Ave. Assistant Pastor

Dear Brother - - - -

Your letter is most unusual. I remember meeting you in Chicago. I have never given information of the kind you are asking to anybody. However, here are the facts in response to your questions.

I was born May 17, 1906 in Ypsilanti, Mich., and am of Scotch-Irish descent. On both sides - my father and mother - we come from a long list of ministers and missionaries of the Presbyterian persuasion. I was reared in a Christian home and do not know the day when I was saved. However, it was in 1927 that I definitely decided to be a minister during my senior year in college. I was preparing for law.

I was born in the Northern Presbyterian Church, was reared in the Southern Presbyterian Church in Durant, Okla., and came into the Presbyterian controversy when I went to Princeton in 1928. I was president that year of the junior class and saw clearly the issues that were involved in the church as they headed up in the Princeton controversy and stood on the side of Dr. J. Gresham Machen and Dr. Robert Dick Wilson. When Princeton was re-organized by the General Assembly of 1929 I withdrew and went to the newly formed Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia under Dr Machen's leadership. Upon graduation from Westminster in 1931 I became the pastor of the Chelsea Presbyterian Church of Atlantic City. In October, 1933, I came to Collingswood. The mandate of 1934, addressed to the members of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, included me. This directed us to resign and support the official Foreign board of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. which we believed to be compromising and modernistic, and to have our churches contribute to the boards of the church, and it said to refuse to support these agencies was as bad as to refuse to partake of the Communion. This we refused to do, and were tried. I was suspended from the ministry by the Presbytery on June 11th, 1935, and the General Assembly of 1936 upheld this suspension, and the Presbytery in June of 1936 deposed us formally from the ministry and we were forbidden to partake of the Communion.

The Collingswood Church, with a membership of 1275, renounced Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. in having departed from the Word of God and putting the word of the General Assembly above the Word of God over the consciences of men. We called our new church the Bible Presbyterian Church of Collingswood, because the Bible was the issue in the great controversy.

We sought to retain our church property, valued at more than \$250,000, but in a court battle of two years the judge refused to enter into the merits of the case and ruled that the property belonged to the General Assembly because the church had been connected with the organization. On March 30th our congregation walked out, 1200 of them, leaving about 75 behind, and for eight weeks worshiped in a large chatauqua tent. Then we erected a tabernacle here in Collingswood seating 1500. We now have a church membership of 1630. Under our ministry here the benevolent giving has increased from 33% of the budget to 50% of the budget, and the budget itself has gone up from \$23,000 to \$50,000. We have two radio ministries - both the services of the church, each being broadcast for one hour -- one over WCAM, Camden, and the other over Philadelphia's largest independent station, WPEN. We have been broadcasting for eight years. We are now the largest church in southern New Jersey.

The Issues simply have been that Christians cannot support or be a part of modernism. The Bible forbids it. The true Gospel must be maintained above the authority of church councils or any other power. This we thank God that people throughout this area have seen, and the whole movement is progressing.

I was one of the thirteen who met in Philadelphia and constituted the articles of association which became the Bible Presbyterian Church. We now have more than 100 ministers in the 10 presbyteries. We carry on a consistent evangelistic ministry, our evening services being particularly evangelistic, and the Lord honors in the saving of souls. Those who come to join us come by confession or reaffirmation of faith. We have also had a good many converts from Catholicism.

The Christian Beacon was started in 1936 in order to give information quickly concerning the controversy and developments that were transpiring. We organized a newspaper staff in our church and started out on a volunteer basis. We now publish 22,000 papers a week, and nearly all the labor is done by volunteer workers, and it is a tremendous job. In the more than 7 years of publication the Beacon has never missed a week, but has always gone out on schedule.

In 1937 Faith Theological Seminary was organized, and I was one of the five men who met together and first decided to establish the institution, and at the first meeting of the Board of Directors was elected president of the corporation and have been president ever since. This institution has grown, as you know, from 23 students the first year to 45 this past year, all of whom are college graduates.

A few facts about the earlier days of my life are: the first three years of my college work were taken in Southeastern State Teachers' College, Durant, Okla., where in the last year I was president of the student body. I was also a janitor in the school and in one of the local churches, and in the summer I went out as a salesman. My last year of college was taken at Park, Parkville, Mo., from which I graduated in 1927. I had four years of intercollegiate debating and won several oratorical contests and a number of extemporaneous speeches in contests.

Well, I guess this is enough. It is probably too much.

We also had a part in the establishment of the Harvey Cedars Bible Presbyterian Conference where we took over a large hotel at the seashore valued at \$160,000, and have made an outstanding Bible conference out of it for a true, consistent testimony in which these great issues of the church are not obscured.

The American Council of Christian Churches came along in 1941. We saw the issues involved and realized the need of such an organization to challenge the Federal Council and to meet the issue in an organizational way. So the Bible Protestants were the first group that we contacted, and they appointed a committee authorizing them to co-operate with other committees in the establishment of such a council. The Bible Presbyterians did it next. Then the two got together and the American Council was launched.

So far as being influenced to take part in these things, it is the love of Christ that constrains us. We live in a free country, we see clearly the issues, and something has to be done about it.

My hobby is fishing, which I love to do. My wife was a Texas girl, was valedictorian of her class, and has seen clearly these issues with me all the way through. We have three children.

Peter Stam can probably help you further. Here is a little folder from the back of one of our books, "A Cloud of Witnesses," an exposition of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews which summarizes these things very briefly.

We must have a trained, consecrated leadership which is not afraid in these days of apostasy to step out and stand and suffer, if need be, for the glorious Gospel.

I hope I have answered your questions and that this may help you. I do not have any candid photograph, however. Here is one of me with my wife taken in a cotton patch in North Carolina two years ago, and here is a photograph. I am also sending you a copy of "The Case for Compromise," in which there is a description of the action of our church in leaving the denomination, which may give you some information.

Cordially,

Signed, Carl McIntire

From the jacket of "A Cloud of Witnesses" by Carl McIntire — Pinebrook Press

Concerning the Author:

(The Rev. Carl McIntire was born May 17, 1906. He is president of the Board of Directors of Faith Theological Seminary, Wilmington, Delaware.)

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. suspended and deposed Mr. McIntire from the ministry and declared he could no longer take Communion. Mr. McIntire stood for the truth and the authority of the Bible in the Fundamentalist - Modernist struggle which has rent the Church. The Board of Foreign Missions of that body, by its attitude toward Pearl Buck and "Re-thinking Missions" and its defence of unbelief, lost the confidence of Bible lovers. In 1933 the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, unaffiliated with any ecclesiastical body and true to the Bible, was organized. Mr. McIntire joined this testimony and is now the board's secretary.

The General Assembly of 1934 directed the members of the Independent Board to resign immediately and support the agencies of the denomination, declaring that a man was under the same obligation to support the boards as he was to believe in Christ. Members of the Independent Board refused, declaring that they had to "obey God rather than men." Mr. McIntire was tried by the Presbytery of West Jersey in 1935 and condemned for disobedience to the Church. He was suspended by the Assembly of 1936 along with other members of the Independent Board.

June 15, 1936, by an overwhelming majority, the Collingswood Presbyterian Church, of which Mr. McIntire was pastor renounced the U.S.A. organization, declaring that it had violated the Word of God and the Church's constitution. In obedience to Christ's commands the congregation separated itself from such sin. Five members, loyal to the U.S.A. denomination, carried the congregation to the Chancery Court, asking for possession of the property valued at \$250,000. March 18, 1938, the judge ruled the property belonged to the U.S.A. denomination. Sunday night, March 27, 1938, a congregation of 1200 walked out of the building which they built to worship in a great Chautauqua tent while they awaited the construction of a tabernacle in Collingswood seating 1500.