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W. Carl Ketcherside letters to Hoy Ledbetter

William Carl Ketcherside

Terry J. Gardner

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I'M SOLD ON
St. Louis

4-MAY-1988

My dear Hoy:

It is so precious to hear from you.

I thrill to every word of your letter. It appears that the Father has been busy in your life and I am glad He does not leave you alone. He is great to all of us, but I fear there are times He works for us and we do not recognize Him.

Nell is quite sick at present with the flu that has been going around. She has it quite bad but she is watching herself carefully. I do not think you can cure it. It has to run its course. I am doing all right. I work about everyday, and some days real hard. But I seem to thrive on it.

The Cornerstone is doing well. We have about 50 who walk in off the streets on Sundays. Last Wednesday night I had 19 for study in Romans. They were most of them street people from the community. Tomorrow I'll be there all day. The next day it will be half a day.

I hope that God will enter in to Priscilla's life and make her like Albany more than any other place. I feel sorry for her as she had to leave a bunch of friends

I'M SOLD ON
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May they meet. I had forgotten that
your wife was an operatic singer. We
have lived apart so much that I long
to see you. God bless and keep you and
make His face to shine upon you.

Yours and His
Carl

4420 Jameson 1-C
St Louis, Mo 63109



May at Oak Hill Chapel

6100 Leona

(314) 351-8305

As the weather warms, our activities increase, including those at Oak Hill. Make special note of the May meetings and participate as much as you can.

Sunday morning meetings this month will be led by:

- 1st - Leo Boulicault
- 8th - Larry McClaine
- 15th - Bill McDonald
- 22nd - Paul Payne
- 29th - Teddie Renollet

Bill McDonald will be continuing his fascinating series of interviews of Carl Ketcherside for four more Sunday evenings at 6 PM. The speaker for the 29th will be announced later.

The monthly luncheon has been changed this month only to the 2nd Sunday. This is May 8th, Mother's Day, therefore the men will be doing the cooking. Last year's try at this proved that we have some fine male cooks in the congregation, especially Ennio Cardinali, who by the way is starting up a new restaurant.

May 2nd will be the final MOPS meeting this session... The Tuesday Bible Study is in recess until September 13... The Wednesday evening study in the prophets continues each week at 7:30 PM... Don't forget clean-up day at the building on Saturday, May 14. We will begin at 8 AM with breakfast provided and work through early afternoon. Bring cleaning and fixing tools, and lunch to share. If you can only come for an hour or two, that would be appreciated also. If you don't come, your part of the work just won't get done!

There are two upcoming reunion meetings to note. On May 20-22, East Maple Street Chapel in Hartford will host a reunion for all who were involved with the Hartford Forum. Contact

ages 11 and up, registered. This year they will be showing the film "Twice Pardoned" on Monday of each week, a powerful film for teens produced by Focus on the Family. Please note that no cookies are being asked for this year. Also on the subject of Camp, Mavis Bodenschatz was elected as Oak Hill's new representative, with Jo McClaine to serve as alternate.

Carl held a meeting this past Tuesday to kick off a 4 month's project he's calling the "New Acts". He outlined ways we all can become involved in spreading the Good News as was done in the book of Acts. First he suggested that we make personal visits, write letters, or phone someone new or from our past to tell them about Jesus, concentrating first on prayer. Carl taught some methods of making visits to hospitals, nursing homes, and private homes, and offered to accompany first-time visitors. Target groups include young people, the elderly, those in our neighborhoods, and those of other ethnic groups. Carl asked each of the 12 present to host a 3 night Bible Study in their homes on the Sermon on the Mount. This group will meet every 2 weeks to assess their progress. All are invited to join in this important and timely project. See Carl for instructions on the methods he recommended.

We rejoice with two of our family recently married. Beckie Schumer and Francisco Rodriguez were united on April 22nd, with Katie and Billy assisting in the ceremony. On April 30th, Bill Luong and Roxanne Williams were married at Oak Hill Chapel... Several of our members are ill.

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I hope that God will enter in to Priscilla's³ life and make her like Albany⁴ more than any other place. I feel sorry for her as she had to leave a bunch of friends her age. But there are some there who need her as much as she needs them. May they meet. I had forgotten that your wife⁵ was an operatic singer. We have lived apart so much that I long to see you. God bless and keep you and make His face to shine upon you.

Yours and His
/s/ Carl

4420 Jameson 1-C
St. Louis, Mo 63109

¹ Hoy Gale Ledbetter (1932-). The envelope for this letter is postmarked 4 May 1988.

² Nell Ketcherside, Carl's wife.

³ Priscilla Ledbetter (1966-1992), daughter of Hoy Ledbetter afflicted with Friedreich's ataxia while still of preschool age. This rare neurological disorder eventually renders the nerves incapable to carrying messages to the various parts of the body. When the disorder reaches a vital organ, it is fatal. Priscilla became increasingly disabled. Hoy writes of his daughter, that eventually she was "unable to lift a fork to her mouth. Although she had a brilliant mind, her speech was so impaired that she was hard to understand. She could not write, so her last year in college she had to memorize and solve in her head whole pages of problems in an accounting class. She died 4 days before her 26th birthday." Email from Hoy Ledbetter to Terry Gardner dated 4-May-2006.

⁴ Albany, Georgia. The Ledbetters moved from Atlanta, Georgia to Albany in early 1987. In Atlanta Hoy Ledbetter preached for the Brookvalley church. In Albany he preached for the First Christian Church.

⁵ Lillian "Jary" Ledbetter, Hoy's wife. Jary was a member of the Albany Chorus, which sang with the Albany Symphony. This group performed Verdi's Requiem at Carnegie Hall and toured Europe. Email from Hoy Ledbetter to Terry Gardner dated 4-May-2006.

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Hoy:

We are launching our satellite congregation next Sunday afternoon. This is a tremendous step for us but we feel it is a necessary one for us to take. We are praying daily for God to open up a great door and effectual unto us in the inner city. We are not fooling ourselves. We know that Jesus came not to call the righteous but social outcasts to repentance. And we hope to follow in His steps. There will be disappointments, heartaches and problems, but we can overcome them through prayer and the dynamic of love.

As a result of this effort for which I hope you will find it possible to pray we find ourselves prompted to write about the one body almost without ceasing. If it is all right with you I will submit these articles with the understanding that you will run them when you get a chance. You are more aware than I am that we are facing another fulness of the times. God's word is showing itself to be true in our generation. We are living in great, thrilling, but as always perilous times. We must get the message down on the level of the people. It must be dropped into their laps.

If you could send me a dozen of the papers as Leroy does I will put them all where they will do good. If you will tell me the subscription price we can try to send in a group of subs. In any event if I am writing too much please tell me. I am thrilled to be always both yours and HHS,

Carl

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

My dear Hoy:

It is so refreshing to hear from you and to know that you are well and busy in the work of the Lord. Is the congregation generally at peace? Are there any problems? I trust there are none and that the dewy grace of heaven falls upon the hearts of the saints and waters them and causes them to bring forth fruit. You must not feel under obligation to reply to this, or to any other letter I may write, despite my eagerness to hear from you.

I have just returned from looking at a storefront building into which we may go to begin meeting soon. Oak Hill Chapel will remain as a support group but we will take advantage of the opportunity to dive into the maelstrom of the inner city. It is a radical step for some of our folk but it seems to me to be the most logical thing to do. We have been anointed to proclaim the gospel to the poor as was the Christ. The servant is not greater than His master. I have been troubled lately that we do not go into the places where we are most needed.

We will be going into an area where unwed mothers are common, where drugs and alcohol steal away the minds, defile the bodies and desecrate the morals of a lot of kids. We will have our hands filled with problems to which it will be difficult to see the answer many times. I am confident that you will pray for us, and that through your fervent petitions in our behalf we will succeed.

Our initial experiment of having various men from the religious world around speak to us seems to pay dividends of spirituality. I am thrilled. God be with you, bless you, keep you. I am as ever
both yours and HIS,

Carl

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Hoy:

I fervently pray that you are having a great time in the Lord serving in His kingdom, laboring with the saints, cheering the depressed, comforting the sorrowing and doing all of those things for which you are so marvelously gifted of the Father. I am sure you are beginning to become acquainted with the brethren and are able to teach, edify and admonish them as the Word indicates.

I received the paper yesterday and thank you for it. It was a real issue, not because I occupied most of it but in spite of that fact. I liked the friendly tone you conveyed starting with your editorial. It was great and God will surely bless you. You have the ability to write. I have today written to the editor of Christianity Today and asked him if I might submit an article dealing with the historical background of Paul at Corinth. I do hope he says that I may for I think that I have a fairly decent article that will help some to take a firmer stand.

I am enclosing a little sheet we mail out to give a kind of perspective for the coming month at Oak Hill Chapel. It is a busy place. I am also enclosing another article on the series. Please feel free to discard any of these if it is not opportune to run them. I shall be glad and rejoice to see any of them make the grade. You have a high standard set for the paper. I will send one now and then as I finish them. You may just place them in the files to draw on when you have need. God be with you, bless you, keep you - and also your dear and beloved family. I am thrilled to be always both yours and HIS,

Carl

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Hoy:

If you want to shelve some of the articles and run something else anytime feel free to do it. The articles are numbered so you can keep the sequence. I am preparing to submit a series to Christian Standard on "The Power of God." I pray that they will find them useful and useable.

I am delighted that you are enjoying yourself at Brookvalley because you are upon the cutting edge of change. You were too far north before to notice it and if you were in Mobile you would be too far south. Florida really does not enter into it because it is out of the swim. It is not that change is not taking place there but the average Floridian tries to ignore it. But in Atlanta you are where the action is. I am confident that through your being there you will be able to lead, guide and direct the coming of the great reformation in the channels in which God wants it to go.

That is not always easy because every institution, and especially every religious one is resistant to change. The change is built-in and it is not easy to deal with. It requires a great deal of loving, of concern, of prayer and of the power of God to make it possible for the Kingdom to get going and to keep on track without becoming sidetracked. But you are the man and Brookvalley is the place to lead in whatever God has for us.

It is interesting you should mention to reactivation of the forum. The Christian Church at Saint Ann has asked me to assist in getting it revived again. God be with you and your dear wife and family. How we love you and pray for you. May His blessings abide with you. Here are two more articles for the files. Yours and HIS,

Care

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Hoy:¹

If you want to shelve some of the articles² and run something else anytime feel free to do it. The articles are numbered so you can keep the sequence. I am preparing to submit a series to [the] *Christian Standard* on "The Power of God."³ I pray that they will find them useful and useable.

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/s/ Carl

¹ Hoy Gale Ledbetter (1932-). This letter was apparently written in the Spring of 1983.

² See a series of four articles published in *Integrity* in 1983 and 1984 titled, "The One Body."

³ See six essays on "The Power of God" by William Carl Ketcherside, "The Dynamic of God," *Christian Standard* 118 no 31 (31 July 1983): 700-70; "The Hand of God," *Christian Standard* 118 no 32 (7 August 1983): 722-23; "Providence and History," *Christian Standard* 118 no 3 (14 August 1983): 742-43; "Miracles of Healing," *Christian Standard* 118 no 3 (21 August 1983): 764-65; "No Credibility Gap," *Christian Standard* 118 no 35 (28 August 1983): 794-95; "Energy at Work," *Christian Standard* 118 no 36 (4 September 1983): 819-20.

⁴ The Brookvalley church was located in Atlanta, Georgia.

⁵ In early 1960s WCK had conducted "fellowship forums" in several locations. See for example: "Messenger Service," *Mission Messenger*, 25 no 12 (December, 1963): 191, "W. Carl Ketcherside will conduct a fellowship forum at West Side Christian Church, 1819 West Douglas, Wichita, Kansas, March 5 and 6."

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Hoy:

Through our lives God is getting us ready for the work to which He calls us. Every teardrop, every laugh, every heartache goes into the disciplining process. The stonings, the shipwrecks, the beatings, the imprisonment - all of these are a part of His divine preparation for the great work that is to follow. The sting of ingratitude, the attacks we feel, the slurs we endure, none of these can hurt us. If we are His He uses them, moulding us, fitting us, using us for His greater purpose. That is why I am glad you are at Brookvalley with the fine brethren there. God kept trying until just the right man came along and it so happens you were that man.

I am glad you are to continue with Integrity. It is a worthy little journal. It has something to say and it says it well. I have occasionally felt that it was too far advanced for some of the brethren we are trying to reach. It is hard to lead unless the sheep can see you. But I have been, on the whole pleased with its content, and always overjoyed with its goal and objective.

I will accept your invitation to write for it and will hope that I what I say will enhance rather than hinder it. Again let me tell you how thrilled I am that you will continue it. Give my love to your faithful wife and assure her of my remembrance of her. How long ago it seems when I was at Flint and we first met. I am happy that I can be always both yours and HIS,

Carl

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/s/ Carl

¹ Hoy Gale Ledbetter (1932-). This letter appears to have been written in December 1982.

² Hoy Ledbetter began work with the Brookvalley congregation in Atlanta, Georgia the first week of November, 1982.

³ Hoy Ledbetter was the editor of *Integrity* when he moved to Atlanta in 1982. Ledbetter wrote of the impact of his move in an article titled, "Making Our Move," *Integrity*, 13 (October-December, 1982): 114, "The first week in November [1982], if God permits, I will move to Atlanta to begin my new work as preaching minister of the Brookvalley Church. However, except for some minor transitional changes, it will be business as usual for *Integrity*, since the members of the board are unanimously committed to maintaining publication without interruption and to retaining me as editor."

⁴ Jary Ledbetter (better known as Lillian).

MISSION MESSENGER
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, EDITOR
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SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Hoy, my beloved brother:

I trust that in these dying hours of the old year that God grants you at least a measure of the peace that transcends all human thought, and that as you sit and ponder your future in Atlanta you will envision only what is good lying before you. How wonderful is the Father of all mercies in making it possible for us to associate with those of like precious faith who can bolster us, comfort us and sometimes aggravate the life out of us.

I have prayed and given much thought to your gracious and kind (even merciful) invitation to me to write for your journal and I want to submit a proposal to you. I would like to write on the one burning issue which the Spirit of God has brought to the surface in this time when even TIME selects as its man of the year the computer. We are no longer living in the rosy days of our childhood nor trampling down little weeds in God's garden. It is time now for us to "go for broke." The burning question of the day is unity. Men must hang together or they will all hang separately. The issues are too great for us to play around the campfire watching the sparks fly upward.

I would like to write a series on The One Body. You can publish them when you get space. I shall write them in units of four pages each. If that is too much tell me. That is what I write for Ensign and Restoration Review. I am sending the first one here-with. The rest will follow soon if it is allright. We must get into the incoming tide or else we shall be washed out to sea. I am convinced that this is the way for me to go. God be with you, bless you, keep you - take care of your dear ones. I am ever both

Yours and HIS,

Carl

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¹ Hoy Gale Ledbetter (1932-).

² This letter was apparently written 31 December 1982.

³ Hoy Ledbetter moved from Grand Blanc, Michigan (a suburb of Flint) to Atlanta, Georgia the first week of November, 1982.

⁴ *Time Magazine* began selecting a "Man of the Year" in 1927 with Charles Lindbergh. In 1982 *Time* selected "The Computer" as its Man of the Year. *Time* later changed the title of its selection to "Person of the Year."

⁵ Quoting Benjamin Franklin who said at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, "We must indeed hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall surely hang separately."

⁶ "The One Body (Part 1)," by W. Carl Ketcherside, *Integrity*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Jan-Feb, 1983): 131. The other articles in this series followed in successive issues of *Integrity*. Part 2 appeared in *Integrity*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (March-April, 1983): 22; Part 3 appeared in *Integrity*, Vol. 14, No. 6 (December 1983): 83; and Part 4 appeared in *Integrity*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (January/February 1984): 11.

⁷ *Ensign* began as *The Ensign Fair* in May of 1973. Effective June of 1979 the name was shortened to *Ensign*. In 1982 R. L. Kilpatrick was the editor of *Ensign* and W. Carl Ketcherside wrote the following articles for the paper: "The Totem Authority," "The Pattern – Nos. 1, 2, 3," "Strategy for Unity," and "On Being One."

⁸ *Restoration Review* (1959-1992), a religious journal published and edited by Carl Ketcherside's long time friend, Leroy Garrett (1918-).

In the Air with

W. Carl Ketcherside

MISSION MESSENGER
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Hoy:

The growth that is being made by INTEGRITY is quite remarkable I think, and it pleases me no end. I am glad that our plugs in Mission Messenger help and I shall continue to make mention of the paper at such times as I believe it will do the most good. It is quite obvious that people cannot take it if they do not know about it. You are doing a great job of editing it!

Our article on THE NAME PATTERN sort of brought the house down on us again. Several asked to have their names taken off, although all had been sent the paper free by someone else. I did not realize that the "title" of the institution was so dear to the hearts of a lot of people who trust in it. One elder got up in New Mexico and flourished a copy and asked how many took it. They were all afraid to admit it. He assailed it and a sister or two took public exception to his remarks and this perturbed him. Finally, they called Reuel Lemmons to come over and straighten them out but he confused them more than ever, taking one position on Sunday morning and the opposite on Sunday night.

I am glad Talmadge McNabb wrote you from Germany. He is no slouch of a thinker and writer. Judy Romero lives on the very edge of one of the largest hippie communes in America and she and her husband have sought to serve the needs of these drop-outs from the social structure. She is a young woman with a heart filled with compassion and a pocketbook empty of coins. With love for you and yours I am as ever

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Yours and HIS,

/s/ Carl

¹ Hoy Gale Ledbetter (1932-). This letter was written in late August or September of 1970.

² *Integrity* was founded "to encourage all believers in Christ to strive to be one, to be pure, and to be honest and sincere in word and in deed, among themselves and toward all men." The paper usually appeared monthly or bi-monthly. Hoy Ledbetter founded the paper and served as "Editor-in-Chief" for the first fourteen years of its existence (through December 1983). Ledbetter was followed by an Editorial Board composed of: Joseph Jones, Laquita Higgs, Natalie Randall and Dean Thoroman.

³ "THE NAME PATTERN" by W. Carl Ketcherside, *Mission Messenger*, 32 (August 1970): 1.

⁴ Reuel Gordon Lemmons (1912-1989). In 1970 Lemmons was the editor of the *Firm Foundation* and a well-known preacher.

⁵ Ketcherside wrote of Talmadge F. McNabb (22 March 1924 - 7 August 2002), "Talmadge F. McNabb, whose articles have appeared in this journal is now Senior Chaplain of the largest hospital complex in Germany, located at Frankfurt. . ." "Messenger Service," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 31, No. 9 (September 1969): 143. For articles by Talmadge McNabb see, for example, "The Church with No Creed," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (February 1969): 24 and "The Great Appreciation Dinner," *Mission Messenger*, Vol. 31, No. 7 (July 1969): 100. McNabb is referred to as an Assemblies of God Military Chaplain.

⁶ Judy Romero (XXXX-) eventually left the Churches of Christ and made her way to the United Methodist Church. In 1998 she became pastor at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Socorro, New Mexico. She considered herself a lay minister for the first 25 years of her adult life; time she spent holding Bible studies in hippie communes and in her home. Romero also contributed articles to Hoy Ledbetter's periodical, *Integrity*. See, for example, "Church-Made Hippies," *Integrity*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (September 1970), 57 and "Obstacles to Our Greatest Aim," *Integrity*, Vol. 2, No. 8 (January 1971), 122.

In the Air with

W. Carl Ketcherside

MISSION MESSENGER
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

June 15, 1970

Dear Hoy:

I am thrilled to know of the upward look for Integrity and I think we have mention of it again in another forthcoming issue of Mission Messenger. If there are other ways that I can help let me know. I recommend it when brethren of various segments ask me for advice as to what they should read the keep abreast of things. David Warren is president of the bank at Berger and an elder. He has distributed more copies of VOICES OF CONCERN than any other single person. I was really sorry that we had printed the letter by Ralph. We generally ask if it was submitted to another editor. It is a little bit unnecessary to publish an article like that in so many journals. It is important because it shows a trend bit not that important really. You are doing a great job and the paper you edit gets better with each issue, I think. With prayers and best wishes I am as ever

Yours and HIS,

Carl

AN AREO-GRAM

In the Air with

W. Carl Ketcherside

June 15, 1970

MISSION MESSENGER
139 SIGNAL HILL DRIVE
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63121

Dear Hoy:¹

I am thrilled to know of the upward look for Integrity² and I think we have mention of it again in another forthcoming issue of Mission Messenger.³ If there are other ways that I can help let me know. I recommend it when brethren of various segments ask me for advice as to what they should read and keep abreast of things. David Warren is president of the bank at Borger and an elder. He has distributed more copies of VOICES OF CONCERN⁴ than any other single person. I was really sorry that we had printed the letter by Ralph.⁵ We generally ask if it was submitted to another editor. It is a little bit unnecessary to publish an article like that in so many journals. It is important because it shows a trend bit [sic] not that important really. You are doing a great job and the paper you edit gets better with each issue, I think. With prayers and best wishes I am as ever

Yours and HIS,

/s/ Carl

¹ Hoy Gale Ledbetter (1932-).

² *Integrity* was founded "to encourage all believers in Christ to strive to be one, to be pure, and to be honest and sincere in word and in deed, among themselves and toward all men." The paper usually appeared monthly or bi-monthly. Hoy Ledbetter founded the paper and served as "Editor-in-Chief" for the first fourteen years of its existence (through December 1983). Ledbetter was followed by an Editorial Board composed of: Joseph Jones, Laquita Higgs, Natalie Randall and Dean Thoroman.

³ See for example, "MESSENGER SERVICE" by W. Carl Ketcherside, *Mission Messenger*, 32 (June 1970): 95, where Ketcherside wrote, "The March issue of *Integrity* was a tremendous issue as we look at it. Have you asked for a sample copy? Wrote to P.O. Box 1205, Flint, Michigan 48501. These men tell it like it is. . . ."

⁴ *Voices of Concern*, critical studies in Church of Christism, St. Louis, Mission Messenger, (1966), edited by Robert Rex Meyers (1923-).

⁵ "TROUBLE NOT ISRAEL" by Ralph M. Sinclair, *Mission Messenger*, 32 (June 1970): 92. Sinclair lived at 1197 Holz Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45230 when this article was published.