

FOCUS: AN AUDIO-VISUAL VEHICLE  
FOR WORSHIP

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
BRIAN K. SHEEN  
1975

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## ABSTRACT

FOCUS: AN AUDIO-VISUAL VEHICLE FOR WORSHIP

By

Brian K. Sheen

This thesis is composed of two parts, an audio-visual example of a "Focus" presentation and this volume. The word "Focus" is used because it succinctly captures in a word, the aim of this audio-visual vehicle in a worship setting. In contrast to the traditional opening verbal monologue-- "The Call To Worship", the aim is to focus the full attention of the individual on worship at the beginning of the service through visual, as well as, verbal stimuli rather than allowing for the somewhat somnolent, gradual awakening as the service progresses. The latter attitude being attributable perhaps to coming to Sunday worship with a Saturday mind and which the traditional "Call To Worship" appears to do little to change.

The Focus consists of a visual dimension through the use of projected 35 mm slides, coordinated with a reading in script form over a public address system with organ music background. This writer has been involved in the scripting, photographing and presenting of focus readings

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Brian K. Sheen

for three years. This volume deals with the methods and equipment used to develop this concept as a meaningful addition to a worship format. There is no research data available on whether or not this concept achieves its aim and while we would like scientific accuracy to measure the effectiveness of the focus presentation, people's responses, nevertheless, make a strong appeal to common sense; revealing that it does heighten interest, attract the attention of all ages in the congregation and create a new awareness toward worship.

This type of thesis suggests that working on a project that required a degree of excellence for presentation to an average of one hundred and fifty people of all ages on a once a week basis for three years, omitting the summer months of June through August, can provide the graduate student with a challenge that requires practical and realistic utilization of all skills acquired in the classroom during the course of academic study.

FOCUS: AN AUDIO-VISUAL VEHICLE FOR WORSHIP

By

Brian K. Sheen

A THESIS

Submitted to  
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Director of Thesis



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The art of appreciation is indeed an art, and one quickly learns how he lacks expertise when faced with writing the acknowledgments for a thesis. However, as art has as its most basic yet absolutely necessary form, the line, so appreciation has as its most basic form, the word "thank you".

I gratefully say thank you to my brother-in-law Robert Keith who spurred me on to complete this project and his wife Joanne for her help and encouragement. I am also indebted to my congregation for their willingness to not only accept a new media form as part of the worship service on a regular basis but to motivate me to continue and perfect it. In particular, I am indebted to Marilyn Knight and Doug Peck, script readers; Eleanor Williams, organist and Flo Benson, audio director. I also wish to express my thanks to my advisor, Dr. Robert Schlater, for making it possible for me to complete this thesis and for his encouragement to develop it in an area that will have continued purpose in my ministry. My wife has been an unfailing source of help and encouragement and I gratefully say thank you for the hours of proof-reading, typing and motivation that have brought this project to fruition.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Since September of 1971, I have been working to develop, under the pressure of a full schedule and a weekly deadline of Saturday night, a script with slides for an audio-visual attention getter, called Focus, to begin the Sunday worship service. I had to persuade our church board to think positively about the importance of multimedia communications and the necessity of using them in the church; overcome the hostility of some people toward bringing such an unheard of "thing" into the sanctuary; and persuade the trustees to invest over a thousand dollars to purchase the necessary basic equipment. For a rural congregation of 205 members that had done nothing more innovative than a bathrobe and bedsheet Christmas pageant in years, this was like asking for a Christmas spectacular of Hollywood proportions. As the ceiling to floor curtains ruffled back and the silver screen lit up with a breathtaking picture of mountain grandure behind the altar on the first Sunday of the Focus presentation, we all knew that we had moved out of the era of bathrobe and bedsheet pageants to the threshold of new multimedia communications.

As Ely, George and Alexander say in Audiovisual Facilities and Equipment for Churchmen,

... in the case of religion we like to believe the message transcends the medium, but with an inadequate medium the message cannot be effectively disseminated or received. Moreover, today the medium is becoming totally comprehensive and we really do not have the choice of ignoring it. Therefore, if the churches are to speak the language of the generations that will be reared on electronic information, it is essential that they prepare now to utilize its full potential.<sup>1</sup>

The implementation of audio-visuals into the church program, particularly in the area of worship, has been much like the experience of the frog in a well--jumping up five feet and falling back four. One can readily understand how this happens when a well-intentioned minister has to present audio-visuals in inadequate sanctuary facilities; with a humming projector on a table in the center isle; an extension cord under the pews to the wall; a tripod screen that tangles with dutiful attendants who must set it up and later remove it; and lights that abruptly switch off and later, just as abruptly, glare on.

Some people may contend that in order for the church to appear somewhat contemporary in the media field anything is better than nothing. But is it? People are becoming more and more accustomed to exercising their right to be

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<sup>1</sup>B. F. Jackson (ed.), Audiovisual Facilities and Equipment for Churchmen, Vol. III of Communication for Churchmen Series (4 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), p. 18.

discriminating and selective in what they choose to commit themselves to, to see and to hear. Where an attempt is made which denies them this right, they may determine to exercise it by changing to another setting. The fact that there are so many empty pews may be mute testimony to the church that it has not kept pace with the changing character of media-conscious America. In the March 1975 issue of The Interpreter, official program journal of the United Methodist Church, it states: "statistics showed an average attendance of 3,612,480 at the principal weekly worship service in the 39,195 local churches, a decrease of 18,781 from a year ago."<sup>1</sup> I contend that in the case of the church, nothing is sometimes better than something when that something causes the ability of the church to communicate effectively through audio-visuals to jump ahead five paces then fall back four. A five to two ratio would be tolerable, but a five to four, only tends to heighten the impression that so many have of the church and confirm the lack of influence of organized religion on the nation as a whole.

In the August 1974 edition of Applied Christianity, television was rated first and the church last in influence,

Leading Americans in many fields were asked by U. S. News and World Report to rate a list of 18 organizations and institutions on a scale of 1 to 10--1 for

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<sup>1</sup>Editor, "Membership Declines But Giving Keeps Rising," The Interpreter (March 1975), p. 40.

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the lowest degree of influence and 10 for the highest. They were asked, 'For each organization or institution would you please rate it according to the amount of influence you think it has on decisions or action affecting the nation as a whole?' The results:  
 1. television; 2 White House; 3. Supreme Court;  
 4. newspapers; 5. (tie) labor unions, industry, U. S. Senate; 8. (tie) government 'bureaucracy', U. S. House of Representatives; 10. financial institutions;  
 11. magazines; 12. educational institutions; 13. radio;  
 14. Democratic party; 15. advertising agencies;  
 16. Cabinet; 17. Republican Party; 18. organized religion.<sup>1</sup>

The use of 35 mm slides in worship is nothing new. However, their utilization as far as this writer can determine is sporadic at the best. Usually they are used for special services presentations such as Christmas and Easter, or by a missionary speaker to supplement his talk.

During my course work in the Television and Radio Department at Michigan State University, I was repeatedly brought face to face with the total comprehensiveness of the media and its impact on society on the one hand, on the other hand in my working experience in the church, I noticed the almost total lack of its usage in any way, shape or form. The costs of experimenting with movie film or TV in the local church setting would have been prohibitive, so I turned to a more realistic alternative, the 35 mm slide and its projection.

The problem I decided to tackle was located in the opening moments of the worship service, "The Call to Worship".

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<sup>1</sup>Editor, "TV First, Church Last in Influence," Applied Christianity (August 1974), p. 60.

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As any TV or film producer knows, the first moments are the most important; the outcome of the remainder of the production depends on whether or not those initial moments gain and hold a persons attention. Every bit as much consideration should be given to the opening moments of worship as is given to a film, commercial or TV program. After all, we are basically all aiming at the same thing; communicating as effectively as possible in order to bring about a pre-determined end result. Whether that result is enjoyable entertainment, the purchase of a recommended product or an attempt to relate God's purposes to the life of man; the opening approach embodies principles of expectations, affirmation and continuation as opposed to apathy, rejection and cessation. Nevertheless, for years the traditional worship opener has been for one person to step to the pulpit and verbally exhort the people to worship amid the distractions of people checking the bulletin for what comes next or if they know, looking up the number of the opening hymn.

In the following pages, is a report on how the focus concept was developed, over a three year period, to make use of what is known about the effectiveness of audio-visuals and in particular, 35 mm slides, to heighten interest, hold attention and create an atmosphere. The worship encounter and religious instruction are so important, and time for them so brief, that the church needs to be more aware of various media methodologies and how to use them skillfully.



Attitudes form a significant part in the objectives of worship, but it is notoriously difficult to translate ideals and atmosphere into action through words alone. To counteract the attitude of starting Sunday worship with a Saturday mind, slides with readings and background music, designed to heighten interest and gain attention to the Call to Worship were introduced into the regular Sunday worship outline under the title of "Focus".

Churches today cannot afford the grandeur of the yesterdays to inspire worship, and in today's world of duplex and condominium architecture, gothic arches and tall steeples mean little for people who have little time to pause and reflect on such hidden meanings as the presence of such structures may have suggested at one time. The interiors of many churches have become almost indistinguishable from secular halls with religious symbols and furnishings cut to a minimum. With a move toward multipurpose areas in church building, the importance of visuals to create an atmosphere of worship and communicate the message of the church will become more valuable as the present trend away from sanctuaries solely for worship persists.

There is no way to convey the full impact of a Focus presentation through this volume and the audio-visual set that accompanies it. To view the slides on a screen without the provisions outlined in this thesis negates all that

we have been striving to effect, and it leaves the viewer with just another slide presentation.

Also, consideration has to be given to what precedes the focus reading in the service outline and what follows it, for it operates most effectively within the total context of worship.

Due to the fact that a creative thesis of this nature is limited in its full presentation, part of which is dependent upon properly designed facilities and smooth operating procedures, we must of necessity leave the final evaluation as to the effectiveness of the Focus concept to bring about an attitudinal change in regard to the Call to Worship, to the imaginative reader who can visualize from the ensuing description the overall impress of "Focus".

This paper will not deal with any of the theological content of a Focus presentation. It is this writer's desire that this concept may be implemented across denominational lines and developed to meet the needs of each congregation in which it is used. The slides for the three examples of Focus readings, along with a sound track on cassette tape for each script, are on file with the Department of Television and Radio.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE NEED FOR AUDIO-VISUALS IN WORSHIP

We are all surrounded from birth with a multitude of sensory experiences; however, the electronic revolution has now produced a multi-media environment in which we live, move and function that, without a doubt, has changed our life style, learning and communication abilities and responses to traditional roles. "We now have a generation of people who have a video tube for a nurse, a transistor for a companion and a computer for a teacher."<sup>1</sup>

For many young people, it is impossible to recall a time when there was no television. Involved as they are in the production of slide presentations and movies in school, linked to the world of reality enroute to and from school by the transistor radio, and participating in popular culture through records, cassettes, and portable televisions, television is simply another part of their environment. As McLuhan says, they "wear it"<sup>2</sup> spending more time in front

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<sup>1</sup>B. F. Jackson (ed.), Communication - Learning for Churchmen, Vol. I of Communication for Churchmen Series (4 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 241.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



of the television screen than any other occupation apart from eating and sleeping. As long ago as 1964, United States television households averaged six hours and four minutes of television viewing per day. John M. Culkin has predicted that:

By the time the average American student graduates from high school today, he has watched more than 15,000 hours of television and seen more than 500 films.... During this same period, the average student has attended school five hours a day, 180 days a year for 12 years to produce a total of 10,800 hours of school time. Only sleeping surpasses television as the top time consumer.<sup>1</sup>

Wittich and Schuller, in their book, Audio-Visual Materials, say that "the interference with classroom communication that derives from non-school media shows no tendency to diminish."<sup>2</sup> This is reflected not only in school situations but in the church as well. The table on the following page shows the trend in the United States between 1960 and 1970.

Table 1 shows that the various interference factors accumulate and reinforce each other to create a demand for attention which seriously challenges the communication skills employed in the classroom and this could be said to be equally true in relation to the church as well.

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Arno Wittich and Charles Frances Schuller, Audio-Visual Materials (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>B. F. Jackson (ed.), Television-Radio-Film For Churchmen, Vol. II of Communication for Churchmen Series (4 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), p. 25.

Table 1. Trends in Extraschool Communications Media in the United States\*

Media	1960	1964	1970
Total Households	51,000,000	55,189,000	60,000,000
Total Newspaper Circulation	58,000,000	59,000,000	61,000,000
Total Magazine, Weekly, Monthly	9,000	20,000	30,000
Radios, Home and Car	151,000,000	183,000,000	220,000,000
Television Receivers	54,000,000	60,000,000	72,000,000
Motion-Picture Theaters			
Roofed	13,000	12,000	11,000
Drive-in	5,000	5,000	6,000

\*Source: Walter Arno Wittich and Charles Frances Schuller, Audio-Visual Materials (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1967), p. 12.

In considering the need for audio-visuals in worship, this revelation of interference factors should cause one to wonder if the voice of the church is not being lost amid the influence of current mass media communication techniques. We need to consider whether or not today's church communication methods are the best that can be employed and whether or not there are better ways for more effective communication.

For historical reasons it has been difficult for the church to assimilate the electronic revolution. Early accounts of monologue preaching reveal that when this communication process failed, Apostles, like Paul, simply brought smaller groups together for dialogue. "This went on for two years with the result that the whole population of the province of Asia, both Jews and pagan, heard the word of the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

In the Middle Ages, due to illiteracy, the message of the church was presented by miracle and mystery plays to convey the salvation story. The music of drinking songs was used to bring the common man into the church and stone carvings, wall paintings and tapestries together with words and music provided a multi-media experience.

Then came movable type and as Meggs, Parker and Culkin say in Television-Radio-Film for Churchmen:

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<sup>1</sup>Acts 19:10 New English Bible.

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There is a certain permanence about the printed word which has a natural and unique importance in the total mass media pattern, but print had a steady and permeating growth for almost 500 years before the beginning of the electronic revolution--long enough for the church to fall victim to its permanence.<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, today we find that Cranmers first Anglican prayer book of 1549 has changed very little. Audio-visuals came into preeminence when the church was no longer the power structure it had been at the time of the print revolution and it was thus unprepared and unable to use the media to its full potential.

The emphasis of the Reformation on the printed word, to the exclusion of art forms and music, dealt Christian communication a blow which causes many churches today to hold rigidly to forms of worship which are inconsistent with the times.

What many ministers do not understand, that whether they like it or not, they are in competition with every entertainment in America. People are becoming extremely sophisticated in the caliber of performance they expect from men and equipment. A good quality, professional performance is only as far away as Saturday night's television programs, and good intentions are no longer an excuse for amateurism in the pulpit (or a worship service) Sunday mornings.<sup>2</sup>

Many people in the church tolerate adherence to a style of worship inconsistent with the times because they have grown up in the church and have not developed a high

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<sup>1</sup>Jackson, II, 27.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., III, 13.

level of expectation, counteracting anything new and innovative with the trite but oft repeated phrase, "but this is the way we've always done it."

Due to the fact that this paper deals exclusively with the use of 35 mm slides and scripted readings as a worship form, there will not be any elaboration of all multi-media resources available. A survey conducted by William B. Lester, Audio-visual Editor for Your Church magazine, revealed that by far the most frequently used materials in the church are film strips or slides. This was especially true of churches in the middle to lower income bracket. He said that:

An astonishing 80% of all 539 churches responding to the survey owned slide projectors.... The size of churches ranged from less than 50 members to those with 5,000 or more. Only 3% indicated that they were not using any audio-visuals at all. The great majority, about 91% indicated that they would like to use more. This holds true across the spectrum of churches large and small. Most churches indicated that they were not satisfied with the status 'as is' and wanted much more. The only group somewhat satisfied with the amount of present use (60%) were churches with 5,000 members or more. These churches, doubtless, have less financial problem with audio-visuals.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, this does not indicate that the resources were used exclusively for worship experiences. However, it makes it obvious that they are readily available. On how multi-media resources are used, the survey showed that they were equally divided between worship, fun and fellowship,

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<sup>1</sup>William B. Lester, "Readers' Forum: Audio-Visuals," Your Church (November/December 1974), pp. 16-18.

small groups, evangelism, fund raising and visitation.

Ever since the development of the 35 mm camera and color film, photography has become a national pasttime, and the 2x2 slide has become very popular. An important advantage of the slide is the fact that excellent color quality is possible at low cost. Convenience of use, quality, low cost operation and ease of procuring are among the principal reasons for the great popularity of 35 mm slides. The convenience of handling and storing small, light-weight slides is self-evident. Also, the slides can be projected in the same machine used for filmstrips. Color slides have little "grain" and consequently can be projected in considerable size without loss of satisfactory definition. Commercially produced slides are available on almost every subject imaginable. With a little photographic skill, practically anyone can take his own slides and make an interesting presentation. Many children are doing this already in third grade.

The price, material and production considerations along with the availability of facilities and equipment are considerably different than if the church chose to do something on a regular basis through film or television as the following equipment/media relationships and considerations show. (See Table 2, page 15.)

With 80% of the 539 churches surveyed by Your Church magazine owning slide projectors, there is no need to

Table 2. Equipment/Media Relationships and Considerations\*

Instrument	Media Used	Materials Production and Considerations	Availability of Facilities and Equipment	Equipment Cost
Filmstrip or slide projector	35 mm filmstrips or 2x2 slides	Inexpensive. May be done locally in short time.	Usually available Requires darkened room.	Low
Motion pictures (projection to groups)	16 mm motion picture (sound or silent)	Specially-produced sound film is costly and requires 6-12 months time.	Usually available Requires darkened classroom.	Moderate
Television (closed-circuit)	Live presenta- tions. Motion picture film. Videotape record- ings. Still pictures.	Normally requires large and skilled projection staff.	Not normally available.	Moderate to high

\*Source: Godwin C. Chu and Wilbur Schramm, Learning from Television (Washington: National Association of Educational Broadcasters, 1967), p. 97.



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elaborate on the fact that this equipment is readily available and at a price churches and organizations can afford. Many individuals and families own their own slide projection equipment. Children, youth and adults can be easily trained to operate this equipment with a minimal investment of time.

Those who would communicate effectively in the church must undergo the discipline of becoming as fully professional in the use of media, as we endeavor to be in religion.

Melvin Wheatly has reminded us "Where excellent resources are available, mediocrity is sin."<sup>1</sup> We in the church have an unwritten obligation to plan and provide the best and most appropriate instruments for the job to be done, even if it means changing some present forms. In his article "Please Don't Yawn When I'm Kissing You", Barry L. Johnson says succinctly regarding meaningful worship, "I am not committed to preserving the church in its present form. I am committed to helping the church become an effective medium for Christ."<sup>2</sup>

We are living in a remarkable age. We can devise the rig for drilling through the earth's crust into the mantle as in "project Mohole". We can land men on the moon and "orbit whole systems of communication satellites in fixed positions 39,000 miles above the earth to provide

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<sup>1</sup>Jackson, III, op. cit., 18.

<sup>2</sup>Barry L. Johnson, "Please Don't Yawn When I'm Kissing You," United Methodist Today (June 1974), pp. 17,18.

international, instantaneous television coverage (COMSAT)."<sup>1</sup> By contrast, however, we contrive to employ outdated and often ineffectual communication methods to create more meaningful worship. The reason that we put up with shoddy practices in our churches, or mundane routine is because we either do not know any better or we are insensitive to the changes in our society brought about by the electronic revolution.

The traditional avenues of information giving and receiving in our services are still reading and listening. This defines the church as preventive and curative, but not creative. Beyond all this reading and listening to verbal stimuli only, there is a wealth of creativity available through employing contemporary communicative avenues. One such possibility is the Focus reading. Is it reasonable to expect that the technology which, in the world outside the church has attained such immediacy in every experience of our day to day lives in areas of mass media communications, should be completely ignored as an information giving, attention holding and attitude forming channel in our worship?

During the last thirty years, research has demonstrated the efficiency of individual communication media: the 16 mm silent films, 16 mm sound motion picture film, television teaching materials and still projected slides. The research efforts of such people as Freeman

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<sup>1</sup>Wittich and Schuller, op. cit., 25.

and Wood into the use of silent motion picture films; Arnspiger and Rulen in 16 mm sound motion pictures and Gibson and Carson and others into still projected images are a few of many significant studies which support the generalization that new media and learning materials, when properly selected and wisely used can help students accommodate increased amounts of factual learning and sustain greater retention.<sup>1</sup>

Ideally then, worshipers should be able to witness combinations of audio-visual experiences which reinforce one another if the church provides the most efficient paths possible for the mastery and understanding of religious concepts.

Worship is a basic function for the church. It is the most important act of the Christian. Dr. Donald MacLeod says,

the service of worship is the central and most important act of faith the church performs. It is the distinguishing characteristic of the church of Christ. Out of their various walks of life the people of God come, gathering to hear and respond to God's Word as a community.<sup>2</sup>

Can visual aids make a contribution to worship? To answer that question requires some understanding of the nature of worship, which determines the shape and content of the Focus concept. A picture presented in a worship service is not worship, but if the picture helps to bring

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 31.

<sup>2</sup>Donald McLeod, "The Dialogue of the Sanctuary," Princeton Seminary Bulletin, Vol. LVI, No. 3 (Princeton, New Jersey, May 1963), p. 25.

people into the mood which leads them to worship, it has rendered a holy service.

When Christians worship, they are aware of God and in active relationship with him. They feel their nearness to him and his response to them. They respond to God in faith and are impelled to do his will in the world. It is an experience which involves emotions and appreciation, beliefs and the will to do.

To name these characteristics of worship is to answer our own question. Visual forms do powerfully aid the production of a worshipful atmosphere and help focus attention on God, thereby clarifying the will of God in terms of the needs of the world.

Common experience speaks to this truth. Many people at one time or another, have felt the mood of worship brought on by a glorious sunrise, the towering grandeur of a snow-capped mountain peak or the silences of the desert. Perhaps it was some such experience that caused Jacob to exclaim, "Surely, the Lord is in this place and I knew it not."

The church has not been altogether unmindful of the value of visual aids in worship. The very appearance of many churches both without and within has been designed to arouse the spirit of worship; graceful spires fingering the sky and the high vaulted ceilings of cathedrals speak to men's souls of the majesty of God. In the mellow candlelight, a person may feel himself alone with his Creator

even in the midst of the congregation. The filtered light of stained glass windows subdue the spirit while the figures and symbols which they embody stimulate the mind of the worshiper through visual response to thoughts of God.

Christian symbols to the eye of the beholder are as open windows through which the soul may enter on holy ground.

The corporate worship service therefore, in many respects, is an experience in auditory and visual perception.

However, other than flowers perhaps, religious visual stimuli are alien to our everyday world. Some transitional media should be used to maintain an image of reality and identification with the sights and sounds of everyday life.

People in our churches are becoming more and more accustomed to learning and relaxing through audio-visuals because of their experiences in schools, offices and television dominated homes. It is becoming increasingly difficult to hold their attention with worship formats that do not employ contemporary visual stimuli.

If the church, in a visual age, continues to adhere to a style of worship inconsistent with the times, it will suffer the same fate as an iceberg unwilling to change its shape in tropical waters. On the other hand, with a preponderance of resources, there is no reason other than perhaps rigidity and apathy as to why multi-media worship encounters should not make many more Jonathan Livingstones out of a great number of ordinary gulls. It would appear

appropriate therefore, that other visual stimuli, such as slides, might be used during a worship service on a regular basis. The attempt to relate God's purpose to the life of man can and should be brought before His people in the most graphic way. This is the aim of the Focus presentation.

Due, perhaps, to the preponderance of visual stimuli in the Roman Catholic church, in contrast to which many Protestant sanctuaries appear bare, an attitude of quiet preparation has been achieved prior to the start of the service, which to many Protestants, is an aspect worthy of emulation. The hubbub and restlessness which preceded worship in my particular charge was a source of great frustration (to me) as the direct effect of such an atmosphere distracted from the spirit of worship. The traditional "Call to Worship", a scripture read or verbal exhortation to "be still and know that I am God" did little to change the overall atmosphere of entanglements with last night's late television viewings and conversational concerns about everything from the weather to who is new in the area. Consequently, the service appeared to register little effect until the children's story or choir anthem, both of which present a change of pace that attract the eye and ear. These portions of the service are usually close to the half-hour of worship time and neither would be appropriate at the beginning without upsetting the balance of the service. Consequently, in reviewing the situation, it was obvious

that a change agent was needed to supplement the traditional "Call to Worship" for people who came to Sunday worship with a Saturday mind.

The "Call to Worship" is designed to immediately focus peoples attention on the worship experience. The appearance of one person in the pulpit reading a portion of scripture, standing against a background of chancel furnishings that are refurbished only occasionally during the year, with a change of flowers (so many are plastic and everlasting!) does little to gain repeated attention Sunday after Sunday.

So in January, 1971, with a newly installed public address system in the church, we started giving a devotional reading with background organ music. The reader stood in a side room and read over a microphone. In the worship bulletin we printed the following at the head of a page:

#### FOCUS

Focus your thoughts "What think ye of Christ"  
Matthew 22:42

Focus your eyes "And every eye shall see Him"  
Revelation 1:7

Focus your hearing "Be still and know that I am God"  
Psalms 46:10

There was something to think about as the devotional reading was given and something to hear. But I realized that what was seen was exactly the same every Sunday of the year other than a change of flowers! Also, what was seen



did not always coordinate very appropriately with what was being read. For example, "There is something challenging about a mountain," and the congregation looked at an eighteen foot wide platform with a three foot high communion table with brown walls around it and a picture of Christ.

The word "focus", as defined in The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary means to make an "adjustment necessary to produce a clear image" in the visual sense. In relationship to hearing, it is the "point to which sound waves converge."<sup>1</sup>

The devotional reading over the microphone was focusing the hearing but it was doing little for the eye. So on Sunday, October 3, 1971, the first "Focus" presentation with slides to depict what was being read was introduced into our worship services and we found what Rogers and Vieth said in their book, Visual Aids in the Church, to be accurate:

The use of projected pictures is peculiarly adapted to the psychology of worship. It provides two desirable elements, apart from the material projected. These are a dimly lighted room and a lighted center of interest. In a dimly lighted room people tend to lose self-consciousness that stands between them and the complete giving of themselves to the service of worship. The lighted center of interest tends to minimize distractions and to encourage concentration. It focuses the worshipers' attention and thus aids the leader of the service to direct the thought of the group.

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<sup>1</sup>The Reader's Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary, Vol. I (1st ed., Oxford University Press).

Under such conditions a reverent hush pervades the room, and in the case of children, the problem of discipline is minimized. These effects are heightened when there is an accompanying use of appropriate music and scripture.<sup>1</sup>

The use of projected pictures in the worship service introduces considerable problems in taking care of the mechanics of projection without interfering with the dignity of the service. Because of the importance of the chancel (altar), care must be taken in placing the screen. To avoid the problems of moving a tripod screen on and off the chancel; prior to our first presentation, we did the following: A 9' x 12' Da-Lite screen was purchased and installed permanently on the back wall of the sanctuary behind the altar. Then the entire wall from ceiling to floor was curtained. This was controlled by a rope pulley from a side room (temporary arrangement due to plans for a new sanctuary with 9' x 12' rear-view screen with electrically controlled curtains). The altar standing three foot high, was moved two feet away from the back wall to avoid snagging the curtains as they closed and to guard against a fire hazard from the candles. Only one small arrangement of fresh flowers is put on the altar, so as not to cast any shadows on the screen which is one foot above the top of

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<sup>1</sup>William L. Rogers and Paul H. Vieth, Visual Aids in the Church (Philadelphia: The Christian Education Press, 1946), p. 70.

the altar. This is not quite high enough, however, to avoid a shadow from the cross. Rather than disrupt proceedings by moving and replacing the cross, we find its shadow is only a negligible degree of distraction. Once again, in the new sanctuary, this problem will be eliminated with a higher rear-view screen. Rheostat switches which dim or brighten lights replaced the abrupt on-off conventional switches. A Sawyers Rotomatic 747AQZ Automatic Focus Slide Projector was purchased with a six inch F/3.5 zoom lens. The church nursery which was above the front entrance of the church was remodeled for a projection room, necessitating the six inch zoom lens for projection because of a distance of fifty feet between the projector and screen. This eliminated any equipment in the church isle. Light from the five 3' x 14' stained glass windows was a problem. The screen was on the back wall of a recessed chancel area at the east end of the building and since the three windows on the south side of the sanctuary were over-shadowed to some extent by the roof of the adjoining building, it was considered in the best interests of our new windowless sanctuary, to sacrifice some of the hue and intensity of color of the pictures, rather than purchase drapes. Another visual problem was the pulpit. This was of necessity to one side due to the altar being the focal point in the sanctuary. By moving it another foot, we were able to make it possible for everyone to see the screen. When the sanctuary doors

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were opened at the west end of the building, the amount of light let in did considerable damage to the picture. Here we had no alternative but to keep the doors shut until the curtains closed at the end of the Focus. This, as it turned out, was a blessing in disguise. People did not want to miss the Focus. Consequently, they came early enough so as not to have to stand in the vestibule until the doors were opened. This brings us to the worship outline which gives the relationship of the Focus presentation to other segments of the service.

Organ Prelude  
 Striking of the Holy Hour of Worship (Church Bell)  
 Choir processional  
 Focus: " \_\_\_\_\_ "  
 Choral Introit and Lighting of the candles.

Welcome and Invocation  
 Verse of Praise  
 Gloria Patri

Hymn of Meditation  
 Pastoral Prayer

Opportunities for Service and Sharing  
 Opportunities for Giving and Receiving  
 Doxology

Children's Story  
 Ministry of Music  
 Scripture  
 Sermon

Response of the Heart  
 Benediction

Scripting and equipment will be dealt with more completely in Chapters three and four. Suffice to mention here that when the devotional reading has been selected and the

pictures provided to match it, four scripts are then prepared. One for the projectionist, one for the Focus reader, one for the organist and one for the curtain operator. All but one script can be eliminated with advanced media techniques by using tape recorders with built-in synchronizers that can record the voice and music and automatically change the slides by means of an electronic signal. Only one script would be necessary then for electronic curtain and light control.

Each person on the Focus team is trained and drilled in the procedures made necessary by the lack of facilities in an old rural church, which however, is surprisingly well adapted in other ways for a presentation of this nature. An intercom system is used between the projection room and the curtain central room at the side of the chancel. Before the first presentation and all subsequent projections a practice session is held and all details such as proper projection focus checked, picture alignment on the screen, how far the curtains should open, how fast and when. All slides are checked and a voice level set on the reader. A courtesy slide: "Just a moment, please" is on hand in case there are unexpected difficulties. The manual control on the projector is also checked to see if it is set for 'forward' and not reverse! As the choir is seated after the processional hymn (see bulletin outline), the sanctuary lights fade slowly. The handling of the lights is an

important factor in successful use of projected pictures in a worship service. The chancel lights remain bright for a few seconds longer, thereby attracting peoples attention to the front of the church. There is something about the effect of lights slowly fading that invariably produces a subsequent hush over a talkative crowd. If nothing seems to be forthcoming however, it is not long before people are talking again. Just before this happens the chancel lights slowly fade and as they do, the first slide appears on the curtains, and the organist, following her script, begins the prearranged background music which is loud enough to fade under when the reading begins. As the curtains open, the title of the Focus is read, the remainder of the pictures follow in sequence with the script. If a dissolve unit is not available with a second projector, so that one picture may appear to fade into the other at various speeds according to the timing on the dissolve unit, the same technique may be done by hand, using a second projector, but with less perfection. However, this is more desirable than using the manual change mechanism which leaves the screen momentarily dark every time a slide is changed. The script is read over the microphone from the projection room taking care to keep far enough away from the projection equipment so as not to pick up disrupting sounds. When the curtains close, and caution must be taken not to jerk them shut, the chancel lights fade up followed by the sanctuary lights. As this

happens, the choir sings an introit reverently while two acolytes (candle lighters) come forward and light the chandles on the altar. This way the candle light has not been a distraction during the Focus. The service then continues with the Welcome and invocation.



## CHAPTER III

### SCRIPTS

During the three year development of the Focus principle as an alternative to the traditional verbal Call to Worship, three basic categories for classifying scripts emerged.

- 1) Inspirational Thoughts
- 2) Emphasis on Special Days in the Church Calendar
- 3) Instructional Objectives

#### Inspirational Thoughts

Scripts for inspirational thoughts need to have the kind of content that will uplift and refresh the listener, a breathing into the mind of some refreshing idea or purpose. It should create some feeling or impulse especially of an exulted kind. An inspirational script should enlarge on the wholesome things of life, the beautiful, the noble. It should lift us away from the mundane and routine by reacting on our feelings and emotions in such a way as to momentarily distract us from ourselves. An inspirational focus can be used to bring to our attention things we are all too often at fault for overlooking in our busy world of taking for granted. Someone once told me they had not noticed a sunset

in three years. The focus reading has the advantage of bringing to some people's attention, for their inspiration, some things they may never otherwise see, through the use of close-up pictures, or photography of foreign places. It can inspire people by showing them pictorially what has been done by others in the past and the challenges that lie ahead.

#### Emphasis on Special Days on the Church Calendar

Every church has days of special significance to its denomination either historically, religiously or patriotically. Some of these days, such as Christmas and Easter, cross denominational lines; others are strictly within their own denominational framework; such as, days named in honor of a founder or saint. The Focus concept can be a unique vehicle for visible as well as verbal emphasis in regard to these special occasions which, coming only once a year, should be given more than token recognition. Emphasis on special days in the church calendar also provides an opportunity through Focus to communicate specifically to certain groups within the congregation; such as, Mothers on Mothers Day; Fathers on Fathers Day; Children on Childrens Day; ecologists on Soil Stewardship Sunday; prospective candidates for the ministry on Ministerial Sunday and so on. We really "perk-up" and pay attention to things which relate to our area of special interest. What better way to gain attention at the opening of the service than to relate the

Call to Worship to the interests of people and thereby motivate them to more purposeful worship.

### Instructional Objectives

Much of the ministry of the church is related to teaching. The Call to Worship and the meaning of worship are themselves often in need of clarification. Research has shown over and over that audio-visual materials can convey facts. Instructional objectives in Focus readings can gain and hold attention because of the 'need to know'. Once we know how to do something, our performance of it, as in the case of "Ten Points for Meaningful Hymnsinging" (instructional objective), makes it more enjoyable and purposeful. Newcomers to church can be taught a variety of information about its history, function and purpose without anyone being singularly embarrassed.

No learning situation is complete without provision for follow-up and reinforcement. This can be done by tying the instructional objective into the rest of the worship format. As in the case of Example 3, "The Church, An Undeniable Fact", hymns, children's story, choir anthem and sermon can all be prepared to reiterate in their own way the message of the Focus reading and slides.

To prepare the Focus script it was necessary to consider first what sources would provide material conducive to the above three categories.

Since the Focus idea was implemented in relationship to worship, a natural source for a script was the Bible. There are innumerable portions of scripture which without any revision or alteration are complete in themselves and adapt readily to the Focus presentation. The 23rd Psalm, for example, is universally known as the Psalm of Comfort.

Not all scripture lends itself so naturally to scripting as the 23rd Psalm, however. Consequently, ideas were derived from certain portions such as "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." Psalms 121:1, and the remainder of the script had to be written to suit the main theme (Example 1--Inspirational Thoughts).

Poetry often lends itself to quick adapting to the Focus presentation and may be scripted line by line in sequence with pictures, verse by verse, or depending on the length, one poem with one picture. There is such a great variety of poetry, both secular and religious, that lends itself particularly to the categories of inspirational thought and emphasis on special days. Poetry also makes a noticeable contrast to straight prose reading and is particularly suited to the dignity of worship (Example 2--Emphasis on Special Days in the Church Calendar).

There are innumerable church and secular publications that have a wealth of ideas for scripts in all three categories. Along with books and magazines, church worship bulletins and periodicals often have usable material.

One example from a church bulletin is "The Church, An Undeniable Fact" (Example 3--Instructional Objectives).

Public parks and gardens, museums and cemeteries often have quotes and sayings inscribed on plaques. These were photographed and included in some Focuses as a visual script. In other words, what was read as a script was also visually seen on the screen. Historic sights and amusement parks such as Disney World and Cedar Point, etc., along with special exhibitions also provided ideas for scripts. For example, from a sign in the gardens of Bok Tower, Florida, "Make you the world a bit better or more beautiful because you have lived in it." In a South African park, "God bless my bit of garden and make its flowers grow that they may bring some pleasure, to all the folks I know." On a fence in Muskegon, Michigan, "Come Ye Apart and Rest Awhile."

Like many amateur photographers, hundreds of slides are taken which are initially enjoyed, then boxed, never to be used except on rare occasions. With the inception of the Focus idea, stored pictures "lit up" and became useful. Slides were catalogued and reviewed, certain sequences of pictures provided ideas for scripts; for example, mountain ranges. The first Focus was entitled "The Mountain of the Lord", inspired by a picture of Champaign Castle in the Drakensburg mountains in South Africa and a scripture reference "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills". With the slides providing the inspirational thought and the

utilization of a verse of scripture, the rest of the script was written to contrast the strength, grandeur and endurance of the hills, with man's commercial "rat race" dilemma and tenuous existence. When slides are categorized, knowing the pictures makes it possible to look for scripts to fit them.

Many songs and hymns lend themselves to easy adaptation for Focus readings. For example, the hymn "The Old Rugged Cross" can be sung using a variety of slides of crosses. Care must be taken to use only the verses suitable to the opening moments of worship. "Let There be Peace on Earth" has been sung using Christmas pictures.

Unlike television or radio scripts, the timing element for Focus is not so demanding or precise and can be tailored to meet the needs of various worship formats. However, since the Call to Worship is usually a brief scriptural quote, the Focus should, under most circumstances, be kept brief as well, and not exceed three minutes.

In the preparation of Focus scripts, it was necessary to consider the following:

- 1) Does it meet the Focus aim?
- 2) Can it be readily adapted to pictures?
- 3) Does it require more pictures than can be screened in the specified time for a Focus reading?
- 4) Are parts of the script too short for a picture to convey the message?

- 5) Does it require pictures that might be difficult to obtain?
- 6) Should the script be read slowly or fast? What does this do to the timing and picture sequence?
- 7) Do some inappropriate parts need to be edited?
- 8) Does it need to be revised to be more pertinent to worship?
- 9) Would sound effects be appropriate?
- 10) What kind of voice will the script require? Male, female, adult, child, deep voice or lilting, etc.?
- 11) What kind of background music will the script require, if any?

Once a script has been selected and its category determined, whether Inspirational Thought, Special Day Emphasis or Instructional Objectives, the next step was to determine the music background and whether it was necessary or not. Due to the ability of music to create a certain mood, very few Focus scripts are read without it. The type of music played is determined by the nature of the script as will be seen in the three examples that follow. Once the Focus script was ready and timed, it was given to the church organist to select the right composition and rhythm to suit the words. The music plays an important part in three phases of the Focus presentation. Before any pictures are seen or script read, the congregation hears the organ introduction. As the curtains open the music creates a

background for the reading and must not be overpowering. When the Focus is finished the organ once again becomes prominent as its music renders the prelude to what has been said and seen.

With these considerations in mind, the following scripts were selected from over one hundred and twenty compiled during a three year period to give an example of the outline and the three categories listed earlier.



EXAMPLE 1Time: 2:55

TYPE            Inspirational Thought

VOICE           Male or female adult

DATE SHOWN

TITLE           "The Mountain of the Lord"

MUSIC           Organ Background--"There is a Quiet Place"

LIGHTS          Fade Sanctuary

LIGHTS          Fade Chancel

PROJECTION    Slide 1 on curtain

CURTAINS       Open when title is read.

READER        There is something challenging about a mountain.  
                  Living creatures, from ~~bears~~ to human beings  
                  try to get to the other side.  
                  As humans, we are often driven by a desire to  
                  do something more exciting than we have been  
                  used to doing--to explore--to excel.

PROJECTION    Dissolve to Slide 2.

READER        At other times we are motivated by a strong  
                  urge to escape from the treadmill of the daily  
                  routine and grind, the "rat race" that dissi-  
                  pates our energies and emotions.

PROJECTION    Dissolve to Slide 3.

READER        Whether mountains shut opportunities in or out,  
                  they add strength and character to the land-  
                  scape by the very fact that they dominate the

horizon. No wonder the Psalmist spoke of

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 4.

READER Looking for help to the hills ... and beyond them to "the Lord who made heaven and earth."

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 5.

READER In our modern world we often feel hemmed in by the demands of a materialistic social order.

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 6.

READER That is the time to lift up our eyes to the "mountains of the Lord" to find spiritual renewal and fresh hope.

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 7.

READER The mountain in Scripture is symbolic of the strength and majesty of God. Its majestic formations tower above us and as we look upon them, from within ourselves comes the acknowledgement, "Yes, I indeed pass by, but you have always been there and it seems like you always will be, long after I have gone."

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 8.

READER The same is true of God, He was, is now and ever shall be. For those of us who sense our destructibility, let us drink of the water of life freely which He, the God of all eternity has allowed to flow from heaven into the soul of man. That we might look to the Mountain of

the Lord, for He alone is our refuge and our  
strength, a very present help in time of  
trouble.

CURTAINS	Close
MUSIC	Up
LIGHTS	Chancel
LIGHTS	Sanctuary

SCRIPT SOURCE: Original based on Psalms 121:1.

EXAMPLE 2Time: 1:33

TYPE Special Days on Church Calendar--Children's  
Sunday.

VOICE Female adult

DATE SHOWN

TITLE "Love and Let Live"

MUSIC Brahms Lullaby

LIGHTS Fade Sanctuary

LIGHTS Fade Chancel

PROJECTION Slide 1 on curtains

CURTAINS Open slowly

READER (As curtains open) Love and Let Live.

READER The soul of a child is the loveliest flower  
That grows in the garden of God.  
Its climb is from weakness to knowledge and power  
To the sky from the clay and the clod.  
To beauty and sweetness it grows under care,  
Neglected, 'tis ragged and wild.  
'Tis a plant that is tender, but wondrously rare,  
The sweet, wistful soul of a child.

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 2.

READER Be tender, O gardener, and give it its share  
Of moisture, of warmth, and of light,  
And let it not lack for the painstaking care,  
To protect it from frost and from blight.

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 3.

READER       A glad day will come when its bloom shall unfold,  
                   It will seem that an angel has smiled,  
                   Reflecting a beauty and sweetness untold  
                   In the sensitive soul of a child.

CURTAINS     Close slowly

MUSIC        Up

LIGHTS       Chancel up--as candles are lit

LIGHTS       Sanctuary up as acolytes leave chancel.

SCRIPT SOURCE: Church Periodical, "The Haven of Rest Log".

EXAMPLE 3Time: 2:25

TYPE Instructional Objective

VOICE Male or female adult

DATE SHOWN

TITLE "The Church an Undeniable Fact"

MUSIC Organ background. Hymn: "The Church's One Foundation"

LIGHTS Fade Sanctuary

LIGHTS Fade Chancel

PROJECTION Slide 1 on curtains

CURTAINS Do not open until the slide is on the curtains.  
Open only far enough for horizontal slides,  
Open when the title is read.

READER The Church, an Undeniable Fact.

READER Church is an undeniable fact. It has behind it  
a history of two thousand years of steady growth  
and amazing achievement. Today it is to be  
found in almost every part of the world and  
numbers among its members, one-third of the  
population.

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 2.

READER The church admittedly has faults and failings  
and poses a human side. However, it is not  
merely a voluntary association of those who  
happen to be interested in religion nor an

accident of social revolution. Its roots lie not in the minds of men but in the heart of God. It is not an end in itself, but its commission is to proclaim the Good News of the love of God in Christ, to all the world.

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 3.

READER From Jerusalem the church has gone out into every land. So much has the church changed every environment in which it has been allowed to function that no one of us, would want to live in a community without it.

PROJECTION Dissolve to Slide 4.

READER The church has been so closely identified with the ongoing life and work of the Risen Lord that it can best be described as the body of Christ. Through manifold trials and attacks something far greater than human strength has sustained it. Without the Church, the doctrines of Christianity would soon become confused and dissipated.

Failure to do our utmost for the Church means failure to do everything possible to serve Christ. The final earthly test of our loyalty to Jesus is the quality of our support for His Church.... Consider this.... Consider it well.

CURTAINS	Close
MUSIC	Up
LIGHTS	Chancel
LIGHTS	Sanctuary

SCRIPT SOURCE: From the article printed on the back of a  
Worship bulletin.



## CHAPTER IV

### EQUIPMENT

It has often been said that "A good picture is worth a thousand words". It has an interest factor not available verbally, and has the added advantage of conveying reality. The right picture can add authenticity, warmth, human interest and emotion and appears to convey more fully the purpose of a written or verbal statement. In the case of a 35 mm slide however, its picture power is very limited unless the right equipment is properly used to project it effectively.

The Focus required the following equipment for its presentation:

#### 1) Slide Projector.

A Sawyers Heavy duty, Rotamatic 747 AQZ Automatic Focus was used with a 6" F/3.5 zoom lens, due to the screen being fifty feet from the projector. This projector has a ten foot remote control extension which permitted the script reader to change slides and read the script when necessary, without the projection noise being picked up by the mike. The Auto-timer which permits slide changing for any

interval between approximately five to thirty seconds, was not used. A 500 watt quartz halogen lamp gives bright, evenly illuminated pictures to the edge of the screen.

- 2) A Rototray Slide tray was used for the slides, which starting with slot No. 1, were inserted with the top of the picture toward the outside of the tray and the emulsion (dull) side of the film facing toward the person loading the slides.

The projector was placed on a projection platform in the projection room which was ten feet from the floor of the sanctuary. Over the distance of fifty feet at this height, a 2 x 2 slide image completely filled the 9 x 12 foot screen. Vertical slides were not used because they overlap the screen from this distance.

Having a projection room made it possible to keep all equipment and personnel out of the church aisle and minimized the noise factor in the operation of the equipment. The projection was over the heads of the viewers, thus eliminating any shadow distraction; the elevation and control position eliminating any keystone effect. A second projector was set up to effect the dissolve technique which had to be done by hand.

### 3) Sound System.

A Bogen public address system was installed in the projection room with two speakers, one on either side of the chancel in the sanctuary. The amplifier has two microphone outlets, a tape recorder or record jack and base and treble adjustment controls. It lacked a sound-level meter, so as a result, voice levels had to be taken on script readers ahead of time and the controls set.

A Realistic Highball 5 Dual-impedance cardiodynamic microphone was used by the reader. It is a unidirectional mike designed for excellent reproduction of voice and music. It features a highly effective wind screen and "pop" filter, and due to unidirectional design, can be used closer to speakers without creating feedback problems. It also prevents the echoing, or "boominess" that may occur in partially filled halls.

### 4) Camera.

The slides used for the Focus were taken with a Mamiya Sekor 1000 DTL Camera with Spot and Average Metering system. This is a 35 mm single lens reflex camera, focal plane type shutter with speeds from 1 to 1/000 of a second and "B" for time exposures.

## 5) Screen.

A 9 x 12 foot Da-Lite screen with ceiling mounting.

## 6) Slide Sorters.

Three plastic slide sorters were used to sort slides for the various focus readings. Each sorter has five rows on which seven slides can be mounted giving a total of 35 slides per sorter with an electric light behind the screen for viewing. These sorters are permanently installed on a desk with shelves for all categorized slide trays.

## 7) Organ: Conn electric.

This organ is comparable with the Lowrey or Hammond standard size organs for church sanctuaries of up to three hundred people. Its various tone and sound variations provide ample selection for various background music requirements. The organ has its own amplification; consequently, it was not necessary to run its sound through the public address system.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

In the beginning of the Genesis record, God appears as a communicating being. He has something important to impart to His people. Seldom in Scripture do we find God communicating verbally. It is usually visual and in every day things such as fire, clouds, an olive branch, a rainbow. This is a lesson which the Focus concept has brought to light; people of all ages respond more readily to that with which they are familiar and can identify. To find these areas of familiarity and identification and capture them through photography and words has been a learning experience that has led to many new environments and relationships. Cardinal Newman said of Napoleon, "he understood the grammar of gunpowder". Understanding the need for Audio-visuals in the church and the correct utilization of equipment to present the Focus Reading necessitated the use of skills, which, in the lecture hall sounded grammatically correct but at the same time also needed to be proved productive.

Taking some of what is known in the media field and applying it to a church in an actual production situation

has provided this student with a realistic challenge to classroom learning. A three year encounter with the medium of 2x2 slides and sound has shown that people retain much more of what they see as well as hear. Effective design and production with this media has bridged the gap between Bible time culture and today. It has helped people identify with specific situations and problems, stimulated discussion and brought present issues into focus for examination. Media communications can motivate, teach and explain, but they are tools not ends in themselves.

This thesis has provided the opportunity to use media tools in a creative production, the design and development of which, will hopefully benefit many churches as they move toward more regular usage of audio-visuals.

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