



The First United Methodist Church

Green Bay, Wisconsin 54301

April 5, 1974

A MENTAL PROBLEM

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The diagnostician turned quickly in his chair, fixing his steely eyes on me with a foreboding spell. "Moorehead," he said coldly, "I am going to tell you something even your best friends have hesitated to tell you. You have got a problem. It's mental."

Stunned by this sudden intrusion upon my peace of mind, I stammered back: "No. . . do you mean me? I've got a mental problem? Are you sure you don't have someone else's record there mixed up with mine?"

"Absolutely not," came back the reply all too immediately. "People are saying that you have a two, sometimes three or four, often even an eight track mind. When you are talking to someone he is annoyed because he sees your mind slipping off the main track and sliding on to sidetracks, sometimes several at a time. I have been hired by a group of people (this guy looked like Mannix to me) to try to get you on the right track and to inform you that they would appreciate it if you would pay strict attention to what they are saying when they are talking to you."

"Oh, now I know what you are saying," I responded, with floodlights coming on. "I've known that I have had that mental problem for years. My family has been pointing that out to me, and not very kindly, I might add. Even the secretaries have hinted at it - if you call thudding a form of hinting."

"Well, maybe now you can decide to do something about it. These people tell me they are sick of your insulting inattention to what they are saying."

I shall spare you further recording of this conversation and simply say that that evening I drove home to contemplate my disability. At first I wanted to let myself flutter with a sense of flattery when I recalled that the diagnostician had said that I had sometimes an eight track mind, just like one of those stereo tapes. But then I realized, sadly, what he meant: to keep traffic moving on eight tracks takes more than a mere half-watt of power.

It is true, I must admit, that there are often several things on my mind at the same time. I guess I've got a mental traffic problem - too much congestion and not enough one-way streets. Possibly I suffer from a preacher's occupational hazard. Frequently when talking with people or just driving down the street I get an idea for a sermon. Sometimes at a stoplight the light turns green before I get the idea written down. Do you

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suppose that's why people honk at me so frequently? Often when I am listening to someone else give a speech, what he is saying triggers all kinds of little explosions in my brain and I start writing things down. Once a lady in the congregation, seeing me do this, informed me that she thought I had insulted the speaker. I never felt that way myself. If I see someone writing while I am talking I like to think he thinks that what I am saying is so important that he must write it down. Of course if he is actually writing a letter to his girl friend I don't want to know it.

Now you don't need to proof-text this disability for me because I already know that the Letter of James in the New Testament says: "For the doubter is like a heaving sea ruffled by the wind. A man of that kind must not expect the Lord to give him anything; he is double-minded, and never can keep a steady course." (1:7,8 NEB)

I am honestly going to try from hereon to keep from staggering around mentally. Please bear with me, and pray for me. You say Easter is coming? I'm awfully glad to know that you will be with us on that. . . . Say! That reminds me of something that Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote in One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich. . . .

Lee C. Moorehead

P.S.: I realize that this could be the last day in the Green Bay pastorate of Lee Moorehead.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S PLEDGE TO MISSIONS

One of the purposes of the United Methodist Women is. . .to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

In 1973 the total amount appropriated by the Women's Division was \$13,218,120. Just under 40% of that amount was appropriated to the work of the National Division of the Board of Global Ministries. These funds are used for community centers and development, urban and rural ministries, student work, US-2 Program, children's homes, Goodwill Industries, co-operative missions, new church development, and educational and medical work. Eighteen missionaries from Wisconsin are involved in these programs.

Another 40% was appropriated to the work of the World Division to support a missionary force of approximately 1000 persons who serve in 41 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe. Sixteen missionaries from Wisconsin are among those supported by World Division.

The remaining 20% of the funds was divided among various responsibilities of the Women's Division.

This \$13,218,120 is received as pledge to missions and other undesignated gifts from units of United Methodist Women. Our own local unit of United Methodist Women pledged \$3500 for 1974.

The missionary effort is a way of witnessing to people everywhere that there is a God who loves them and a Son who provides abundant and eternal life for them. It is Christianity at work. Lolajean Morey, Mission Coord.