

Division & Reunion in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.: A Mississippi Retrospective

Mississippi mirrored the tensions within Southern Presbyterianism during an era of civil rights agitation, theological reassessment, and a conservative secession to form a separate Presbyterian Church in America.

by R. Milton Winter

IN 1983, THE SOUTHERN-BASED PRESBYTERIAN Church in the United States (PCUS) joined with the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to form the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a union strongly opposed by many of the southern church's conservatives. In the decade preceding this union, half of Mississippi's PCUS congregations left to join the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). A few years later, still others left the PC(USA) to join the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. These actions occurred in a region where many considered secession an ancient and honorable means of resolving differences. The Magnolia State's ecclesiastical realignments came in an era when social and political change was rapid, often occurring in tumultuous, disorderly ways. Many found this unsettling, and in Mississippi, far from Presbyterianism's centers of strength, key church leaders grasped the inherently conservative nature of religion and took what some saw as a "last stand" against change. While Mississippi could not withdraw from the federal union, some of its Presbyterians and other conservative Protestants did secede from their denominational bodies. The Synod of Mississippi, one of the smallest in the PCUS, suffered greater loss than any other in the Presbyterian divisions of the 1970s and '80s, with the result that one could no longer speak of a "solid South" in Presbyterian terms. Loss or division of 128 Mississippi PCUS churches

with 17,851 members may be seen as a price American Presbyterians paid for national reunion.¹

After the Civil War, the South's religious separation was more enduring than its political schism. Although several of the smaller religious bodies quickly resumed communion across sectional lines, the three largest—Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian—persevered in disunity. In 1920, churches remained among the nation's most distinctly sectional institutions, and while Methodists reunited in 1939, and Southern Baptists pushed north and west with their own special brand of revivalistic evangelism, the Presbyterian Church, U. S. (retaining the name it adopted in 1865), became virtually the only remaining American institution organized along the lines of the old Confederacy. As late as 1967, Samuel S. Hill, Jr., remarked that except for a few exceptional individuals and locales, Southern churches were "captive" to regional values. This observation throws into bold relief the challenge which faced Mississippi Presbyterians in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s who held social, theological, and ethical views espoused by the Protestant mainstream.²

I

Mississippi Presbyterian resistance to reunification with northern Presbyterians was

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as old as southern Reconstruction.³ Thus in 1873, when James A. Lyon, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Mississippi, urged establishment of fraternal relations with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., he aroused vehement opposition. Dr. Benjamin Morgan Palmer of First Presbyterian Church in New Orleans (which was then part of the Synod of Mississippi) protested that official correspondence would sanction the reunion of the Old and New School Assemblies in the North. That reunion, which had occurred in 1870 despite conservative objections, involved, said Palmer, "a total surrender of all the great testimonies of the Church for the fundamental doctrines of grace." He declared that "of these failing testimonies we [the PCUS] are now the sole surviving heir."⁴

Five years later, when the PCUS revisited the proposal for fraternal relations with the U.S.A. Assembly, Moses Drury Hoge of Richmond, Virginia, rebuffed critics in Mississippi: "If, after all the great sacrifices of confessors and martyrs of past ages, we alone constitute the true church; if this only is the result of the stupendous sacrifice on Calvary and the struggles of apostles and missionaries and reformers in all generations; then may God have mercy on the world and his church." Although most in Mississippi deserved their reputations as reunion opponents, there were a few who favored denominational rapprochement. Dr. H. M. Sydenstricker of the Presbyterian Church at Water Valley (and uncle of novelist Pearl S. Buck), urged in 1884 that the China missions of the U.S.A. and U.S. churches be combined. The proposal came to naught.⁵

By the twentieth century, Northern and Southern Presbyterians stared at one another across fixed chasms. Members and ministers were freely exchanged, and border state congregations existed side by side. Some cooperation existed, as in Louisville Seminary and some mission fields. But those who envisioned greater oneness were warned when J. B. Mack of the *Presbyterian Standard* surveyed the "union question" in 1906

and predicted that if the issue was forced, schism would occur in the PCUS. "Already we have a divided church. The only questions are when and where will the cleavage take place." The bar for union was raised so high as to make it virtually impossible (approval of three-quarters of the PCUS presbyteries was required after 1914). Still, negotiations were carried on sporadically with the U.S.A. Assembly and others. On 6 April 1930, an overture came from the session at Holly Springs to North Mississippi Presbytery calling for "union in one General Assembly of all the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in America." The overture was forwarded to the General Assembly where it languished. The minister offering the resolution was George L. Bitzer, a leader of astonishingly progressive mien in an otherwise conservative region of the church.⁶

Throughout Southern Presbyterianism, opposition to union was bound up with belief that the Northern church was committed to racial integration. In 1940, W. A. Gamble, writing in the *Mississippi Visitor*, the synod's newspaper, listed reasons for opposing union with the U.S.A. Assembly: theological "modernism"; strong support for the Federal Council of Churches (the Southern Church was also a member, albeit sometimes reluctantly); mixing of church-state issues; the "unbridled supremacy" of the U.S.A. Assembly over presbyteries and sessions; the Northern church's support for union with the Episcopal Church; granting of social courtesies to Negroes; observance of Lincoln's birthday; and support for a federal anti-lynch law.⁷

In 1944, reunion opponents, rallied by the *Southern Presbyterian Journal*, called those agreeing with its aims to do everything possible to organize a "continuing church" if and when the "inevitable" union with the PCUSA should occur. By 1949 a Continuing Church Committee was raising funds. Conservatives such as former Belhaven College president W. H. Frazer peppered the church with articles against the proposed plan of union. Reunion was defeated by Southern presbyteries in 1954 (including all five Mis-

Mississippi presbyteries). The vote came just a few months after the Supreme Court's controversial *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregation decision, which brought racial fears to a boiling point and was blamed by many for the proposal's defeat. All the while, predictions continued that whenever union of Southern Presbyterians with their sister Assembly came about, a "continuing" Southern Church would result.⁸

The process of negotiating the reunion of the PCUS and its U.S.A. counterpart (known after 1958 as the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. or UPCUSA) was complex. Several factors influenced Mississippi conservatives to oppose reunion at every step. These gave rise to the agenda which advocates hoped a continuing Southern Presbyterian denomination would uphold. Disputes centered around fidelity to the so-called "fundamentals" of the faith, i.e., the Bible's plenary inspiration and the virginal conception, substitutionary atonement, bodily resurrection, and physical return of Christ; the drawing and redrawing of presbytery and synod boundaries; and objections to ordination of women;⁹ the doctrine of the Church's "spirituality"; and alleged Northern Presbyterian proclivities for involvement in "political causes"; as well as local ownership of church property. Underlying all these matters and exercising influence to a degree still debated was the matter of race. Thus, William Childs Robinson of Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, had written in 1940 opposing reunion: "We remind you of our situation in the South in regard to the race question...."¹⁰

II

Even before the *Brown* decision, conservative anxieties were heightened by escalating controversies over race and challenges to the prevailing system of segregation which characterized all areas of southern society, including church life. Although a few blacks had continued as late as World War I to worship in the churches of their former masters, the vast majority of Mississippi

blacks had long before withdrawn from white-dominated congregations, creating the situation to which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. referred in his famous sermon in Washington's National Cathedral, as "11:00 o'clock, Sunday, America's most segregated hour." Moreover, although the number of black Presbyterians in the South was small and declining, the inclusion of Negroes in meetings of church governing bodies and services of worship (other than attendance at weddings, baptisms, and funerals of whites by whom they had been employed), implied to old-order Presbyterians a bestowal of social equality that opened the way to familiar associations which might ultimately include courtship and marriage. Many sought to perpetuate segregated congregations, presbyteries, and synods, but some Mississippi Presbyterians, black and white, desired change.¹¹

In 1950, Dr. Walter L. Lingle of Davidson College in North Carolina had proposed abolition of the segregated Snedecor Memorial Synod (which served Mississippi's PCUS black constituents), and for the first time that year, blacks attending the PCUS General Assembly at Massanetta Springs, Virginia, were allowed to enter the dining room by the same door as whites. Four years later the PCUS was the first church body to meet after the *Brown* decision. Its General Assembly ratified a statement that segregation in public schools was wrong. The session of Jackson, Mississippi's First Presbyterian Church unanimously opposed this action, and that same year the Synod of Mississippi published a spirited argument by Dr. Guy T. Gillespie of Jackson's Belhaven College contending on biblical grounds for black inferiority and the perpetuation of segregation. The *Southern Presbyterian Journal*, published in North Carolina and edited by L. Nelson Bell, M.D., a distinguished China missionary and father-in-law of evangelist Billy Graham, mounted an offensive against integration. From then on, as Erskine Clarke has remarked, "The bitterness that had once been aimed at Yankees now turned inward on the Southern Church itself."¹²

In 1954, White Citizens' Councils were organized in Mississippi—first at Indianola, then Jackson, Greenwood, and other cities. These urged defiance of civil rights initiatives. 1954, the year of the Supreme Court decision, was Presbyterianism's numerical high point in Mississippi. Thereafter, Presbyterians increasingly divided over race and reunion and membership began to decline. PCUS defenders of the status quo mentioned schism more often. A Yazoo City writer warned the pro-integration *Presbyterian Outlook*, published in Virginia: "Keep on ...until you drive all the Southern Presbyterian Churches out of the General Assembly, then you and the NAACP can be happy." Others spoke in different tones. Warner Hall, former minister at Leland, Mississippi, wrote that "throughout the South there is the uneasy feeling that our way of living is under the judgment of God."¹³

In 1958 Mississippi presbyteries asked the PCUS Assembly to abolish its Council on Christian Relations because it opposed segregation. Denominational youth conferences at Montreat, North Carolina, were desegregated in 1960, after which conservatives organized alternative events. Central Mississippi Presbytery even closed its Camp Calvin rather than permit integrated activities. In June 1960, Jackson's First Presbyterian Church offered a large gift to Columbia Seminary which placed theological restrictions upon professors and limited enrollment to whites. The seminary declined the money.¹⁴

A few Mississippi Presbyterians worked for change. Sara Barry of Benoit (later a PCUS missionary in Korea) wrote her M.R.E. thesis at New York's Biblical Seminary on "The Role of the PCUS in a Segregated Society." Dwyn Mecklin Mounger, a Mississippi minister's son, prepared a thesis at Princeton Seminary on racial attitudes in the PCUS. The Reverend Marsh Callaway was removed from his pulpit at Durant, Mississippi, in 1956 after interceding for a Presbyterian physician and his family at a "citizens' meeting" which evicted workers at Providence Farm, an interracial ministry which

received financial support from the U.S.A. Church. Elizabeth Spencer, a daughter of the Carrollton, Mississippi, Presbyterian Church and an internationally acclaimed novelist, spoke out against the segregationist policies of church leaders in her home state.¹⁵

Meanwhile, as the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss) was forcibly integrated in 1962 with rioting and loss of life, Presbyterian ministers called on their people to prevent further lawlessness. The Reverend Murphey C. Wilds of First Presbyterian Church in Oxford offered a strongly-worded resolution of repentance to St. Andrew Presbytery which was adopted fifty-seven to eight, and his colleague Robert H. Walkup of First Presbyterian in Starkville declared from his pulpit:

We...are quite ready to confess for others. How quickly we have confessed the sins of President Kennedy in the last few days, and how quickly we have confessed the sins of Governor [Ross R.] Barnett. This tragedy, this shame from which we are still numb—we confess is the result of sin. Was it the sin of the State Highway Patrol or the U. S. marshals which caused this thing? Maybe it was the outsiders—the hoodlums and the thugs who came pouring into our state. I was in Oxford Monday of this week, and what a sight I saw! The whole square was filled with men and boys—men of hate and violence, men who had come to defy the United States Army! Very well then, is the blood on their hands? Will it help much if I confess their sins? No! The blood is on my hands! For I, together with too many of our people, helped to create the impression that we wanted them. We made the way for men of violence....

Meanwhile, Dr. Horace Villev of First Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Mississippi, thanked God for men of courage "like St. Paul and Governor Barnett."¹⁶

Mississippi Presbyterians had few outright social liberals in their ranks during the 1960s, but the Ole Miss crisis marked the beginning of a split in segregationist ranks between those committed to segregation at any cost and those who would not support it at the cost of lawlessness and the destruction of the state's educational system. Most white church leaders did not support massive resistance to desegregation, such as advocated by the Ku Klux Klan and Governor

Barnett, and in this respect the state's majority-white churches—Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal—by and large followed a middle course, albeit at times timidly. Mississippi Presbyterians through statements of their presbyteries rejected violent and illegal opposition to civil rights, but condemned marches, protests, and other strident efforts to achieve integration.¹⁷

This was a period in which many Mississippi congregations adopted policies barring "persons who appear with the apparent intent of attending services for any reason other than in a true spirit of worship." Individual pastors opposed these resolutions. The Reverend Stanford Parnell of Holly Springs stated on 22 September 1964 that he could not support the action of his elders in turning people away from services. He said that: "a) such action is unconstitutional; b) he believed it to be unscriptural; and c) that he could not imagine Christ standing at the door and forbidding anyone to enter."¹⁸

Presbyterians who spoke out found themselves at odds with members of their congregations and other ministers. At Jones Memorial Church in Meridian, Charles L. Stanford, Jr., preached on 1 John 4:1–21 the Sunday following the Oxford riots. He declared that "the horror at Ole Miss has been the result largely of Christian preachers who have not been preaching the whole counsel of God to the people of God." After the sermon, Stanford noticed that one of the elders refused the Lord's Supper. Following the evening service, he happened to drive past the elder's home and realized that his session was meeting there secretly. The next week Stanford was given a resolution calling his sermon "untimely" and the references to alleged sins of the congregation "uncalled for." Attendance dropped precipitously.¹⁹

The issue caused strife within families. Hodding Carter, Jr., crusading editor of Greenville, Mississippi's *Delta Democrat-Times*, remembered that when Roy Campbell, Jr., an elder in that city's First Presbyterian Church, told his mother that he thought blacks ought to be seated, the older woman was outraged. "Mother, what do you think

Jesus would do if he were standing at the front door of First Presbyterian Church?" he asked. "I know exactly what He would do," she huffed. "And He would be wrong."²⁰

As well-known PCUS ministers in other states spoke for compliance with laws and court orders requiring desegregation, some Mississippi Presbyterians began to feel that they were victims of "outside interference." Advocates of change found themselves hard-pressed to speak if they could not claim local birth and upbringing. Starkville's Robert Walkup once prefaced a sermon on admitting blacks with a reminder that he was no outsider—he was born in Mississippi. Still, even a Mississippi heritage did not always earn the right to be heard. One Sunday morning in 1964, after casting the only dissenting vote in his session at Canton, Mississippi, against a motion to exclude blacks, the Reverend Richard T. Harbison, a Greenville native, draped his pulpit gown across the chair in his study and pinned to it a letter of resignation.²¹

That summer, forty-two of Mississippi's black churches were burned in the belief that they were meeting places for voter registration drives organized by the Council of Federated Organizations. During COFO's "Freedom Summer," civil rights workers suffered eighty beatings, thirty-five shootings, thirty house bombings, and six murders. While Mississippi's white Baptists raised \$126,766 to rebuild the burned-out churches, Presbyterians were largely passive, bound up in their internal turmoil.²²

When organizations allied with the National Council of Churches assisted in the Mississippi civil rights effort, criticism followed. Many Mississippians looked to Memphis, Tennessee, and were shocked when the Reverend Paul Tudor Jones of Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Memphis urged his people to continue support for the NCC in the aftermath of its activities during the summer of 1964 in nearby Clarksdale, Mississippi. Other Mississippi Presbyterians resisted programs such as Head Start for poor children and resented the fact that when the state refused to accept federal money for this

purpose, the UPCUSA served as a temporary conduit for Head Start funding.²³

The trials of Mississippi Presbyterians in this period were paralleled in other communions where the argument was sometimes more vocal. Yet, the PCUS was the only denomination to suffer major withdrawals because of the controversy. Although the national Methodist and Episcopal bodies, along with Southern Baptists and the PCUS, endorsed the *Brown* ruling, their Mississippi organizations, except the Episcopal Church, defied denominational policy. When the Southern Baptist Convention approved the *Brown* decision, W. Douglas Hudgins, of Jackson, Mississippi's First Baptist Church, insisted that his name be recorded in opposition, and a resolution by First Baptist Church of Grenada, Mississippi, warned that such actions would cause "withdrawal of this and other churches" from the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1965, 7,000 Mississippi Methodists petitioned Bishop Edward J. Pendergrass to oppose integration. In 1964, the Methodist Church had voted to end the Central Jurisdiction, to which black conferences (regional governing bodies) had been confined as the price of a 1939 merger between the northern and southern branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Desegregation of Methodist conferences in Mississippi was not accomplished until 1973. During this period, 200 Methodists formed the Mississippi Association of Methodist Ministers and Laymen to maintain segregated churches. Baptists tried a similar strategy. A 1968 survey revealed six Southern Baptist churches in Mississippi with open door policies, three of which had black members.²⁴

In some ways, Mississippi Baptists made greater progress than Presbyterians in facing the race issue, for though Baptist opposition to integration was fierce, they dealt with the challenge apart from schism. As early as the 1950s, a few Baptist leaders, such as Joe T. Odle, editor of the *Baptist Record*, the state Baptist newspaper, and University of Mississippi chaplain Will Campbell, urged a more progressive direction. Like the Presbyteri-

ans, Mississippi Baptists gradually modified their stance, moving from a convention resolution opposing *Brown* to support for "obedience to the law" (while condemning protest marches and other displays of pro-integration sentiment). "We have moved through the last forty-odd years as if through a millennium," noted Wilmer C. Fields in a 1983 Baptist assessment of southern religion.²⁵

Jackson's Episcopal cathedral (similar in size and prominence to the city's First Presbyterian Church) after initial resistance gathered many of the city's moderate leaders. After the cathedral's dean resigned in the wake of the 1962 Ole Miss controversy, Episcopalians moved forward under the progressive leadership of their bishop, the Right Reverend John M. Allin. A few years later, Allin's forward look and diplomacy were recognized in his election as presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. His successor in Mississippi, the Right Reverend Duncan M. Gray, rector in Oxford during the Ole Miss upheavals, was a spokesman for civil rights. Meanwhile, First Presbyterian in Jackson was a bastion against change, and its ministers, John Reed Miller and Donald B. Patterson, led conservatives in the PCUS and the "continuing church" movement.²⁶

The near-complete polarization of two of Jackson's most prominent congregations was striking, giving the state capital's 5,000-member First Baptist Church an unusual role as a sort of mediator between extremes. The church and its pastor Frank Pollard eventually were recognized as leaders of the so-called "moderate" party in the Southern Baptist Convention and thus developed a reputation for tolerance. This situation was replicated in many of the state's smaller communities, depriving Presbyterians of a role they often played as a "bridge church" between revivalistic, socially conservative Baptists and the liturgical, socially progressive Episcopalians. Mississippi's largest Methodist congregation, Jackson's Galloway Memorial, was also affected, and as a result an Independent Methodist Church was established in the state capital—a situ-

ation that occurred in several communities across the state. However, Mississippi's Methodist withdrawals were in no way as great as those experienced by Presbyterians.²⁷

Jews and Unitarians were generally supportive of change, and for these commitments some of their houses of worship were bombed. These religious communities were small, and while Mississippi's Roman Catholics were not outspoken at first, they later gave leadership for civil rights. Hodding Carter III has written that in the 1950s, the Catholic Church, although committed to integration, did not desegregate Mississippi parochial schools, nor did its priests preach change. Yet, by 1970 Bishop Joseph B. Brunini issued a pastoral letter criticizing segregation as "an affront to the informed conscience," and urged that appeals to the patterns of a "dead past" would do nothing but "defraud young Mississippians of their rightful place in tomorrow's world."²⁸

The small UPCUSA Presbytery of Mississippi—mostly former Cumberland congregations which united with the "Northern" Assembly in 1906—was rural and included a few struggling black congregations. It did little to amplify or oppose positions taken by the General Assembly, even excluding blacks at its camp as late as 1964.²⁹

III

In 1965, Congress passed a sweeping Civil Rights Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Leading the opposition in the Senate was majority leader Richard B. Russell (D-Georgia), brother of Dr. Henry E. Russell, pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis, Tennessee. On this as other occasions, Memphis churches influenced Mississippi Presbyterians. In 1964 the PCUS had voted to amend its Book of Church Order to state that "no one shall be excluded from participation in public worship in the Lord's house on the grounds of race, color, or class." Protests resulted when it was announced that the 1965 PCUS Assembly would be at Second Church, Memphis, which

had a policy of segregated worship. Several presbyteries and synods, including the Presbytery of Memphis, urged Second Presbyterian to change its policy, as did its pastors, but the elders refused. This resulted in an unprecedented decision by Assembly moderator Felix B. Gear (who had been Second Church's pastor, 1943–47), to move the meeting. This was greatly embarrassing to the congregation, and a group of elders and 340 members withdrew to form an independent Presbyterian church which espoused segregation and later drew ministers from the Presbyterian Church in America. Meanwhile, Second Presbyterian instituted elder rotation, opened its doors to all, and the General Assembly accepted its invitation to meet there in a subsequent year.³⁰

In 1966 the PCUS Assembly cited its Mississippi presbyteries for defying a 1964 directive to admit Negro churches into membership from the former all-black presbyteries. It sent a committee of five former General Assembly moderators. The committee reported strong anti-Assembly sentiment, especially in Central Mississippi Presbytery. That year, meeting at West Point, Mississippi, by order of the General Assembly, St. Andrew Presbytery agreed to receive churches and commissioners from the former Louisiana-Mississippi Presbytery of the Snedecor Memorial Synod. (The moderator's tie-breaking vote settled the issue.) Mississippi was the last to accept members of the former black synod, but in its summer 1966 meeting the Synod of Mississippi advised the General Assembly that it could not "in good conscience...place the stamp of its approval upon the recommendation that sessions of constituent churches of this Synod admit persons to membership without reference to race."³¹

In the face of court-ordered school desegregation, thousands of Mississippians—including many Presbyterians—removed their children from public schools (often citing Supreme Court decisions about school prayer as an additional cause) and enrolled them in segregated academies, many sponsored by Presbyterian churches. Advertising

"superior education in a Christian environment," academies were supported almost exclusively by white Christians—and also in the Delta by conservative Asians and Jews. Mississippi's black and more liberal white Presbyterians, led by William F. Winter, the state's first Presbyterian governor in a generation, supported public education and expressed no qualms about any perceived lack of religious freedom in public schools. White Presbyterians such as the Reverend Reginald V. Parsons of Holly Springs were elected to school boards and kept their children in the public schools at a time when many church members turned to other venues for the education of their young. Many Presbyterian teachers in Mississippi were distinguished by work in public education during this period—labor sometimes not supported by their churches or sessions.³²

Critics of change found a voice in Mississippi theological professor Morton H. Smith, of Jackson's Reformed Seminary, who asserted that integration would lead to intermarriage and that the 1960s social revolution would "destroy the divinely created diversity of humankind and help establish Communist domination." He argued that the church should not support integration. In *How Is the Gold Become Dim: The Decline of the Presbyterian Church, U. S.* (1973), he wrote: "The fact is that slavery had been legislated in the Bible, and therefore the Presbyterians in the South refrained from condemning slavery as sinful. The same can be said of the matter of segregation. The fact is that God Himself segregated Israel from the Canaanites."³³

Gradual change in racial attitudes and policies came to the South and Southern Presbyterians. PCUS seminaries and colleges gradually opened their doors to blacks, Belhaven College being the last (1966). In 1972, John M. Mulder asserted in *Theology Today* that white racism in America was declining, and he credited churches with bringing about a good deal of the change. Yet, some in Mississippi claimed that advocacy of integration by Presbyterian leaders caused the division of their church.³⁴

IV

Further impetus toward division came from the 1960 consolidation of Mississippi's five presbyteries into three—an action some said would reduce negative votes against union with the UPCUSA. Others argued that with modern highways fewer presbyteries were needed, and that consolidation would make each presbytery large enough to employ an executive secretary and maintain a summer camp.

Efforts toward governing body consolidation accelerated with the redrawing of synod boundaries in 1973. This effort brought the synods of Mississippi and Alabama into an entity provisionally known as Synod C-F. This plan was eventually revamped into a synod embracing Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, and the Missouri bootheel. While expanded opportunities for mission were cited as reasons for consolidation, critics claimed that it eased the way toward denominational reunion. In the 1970s, Belhaven College, French Camp Academy, and Palmer Home for Children in Columbus, Mississippi (along with Southwestern, the synod-supported college at Memphis) established self-perpetuating boards not controlled by the synod. These actions, taken for a variety of reasons, weakened ties among Presbyterians in the region.

Changes in the Westminster Confession upset Mississippians. While some conservatives chafed under the confession's Calvinism, others believed any change could undermine the church's witness. For years, the synod's *Mississippi Visitor* was filled with articles for and against such proposals. In 1942, the Southern Church's Calvinism was modified by the addition of chapters to the confession on the Gospel and Holy Spirit. Since these were identical to chapters added by the U.S.A. Church in 1903, conservatives balked, claiming that the chapter on the Holy Spirit implied that humanity had unaided power to accept the gospel and that the chapter on God's love in the gospel was so ambiguous that it could be construed to teach universalism. More discontent came

in 1959 when the PCUS amended the confession to broaden its policy on remarriage of the divorced in the church. As many Presbyterians embraced developmental theories of history and doctrine, conservatives held on to concepts of truth as unchanging and absolute. Attempts to bring insights from sociology and psychology to problems before the church were rejected outright. There was anxiety among Mississippi conservatives in the 1960s and '70s about what they perceived as looser subscription to the Westminster Standards and the implications of proposed changes in ordination vows. They charged that instead of adhering to a "system" of doctrine, some affirmed "systems" of doctrine, as well as ever-changing concepts of ethics and belief.³⁵

PCUS Sunday school literature was also blamed for dividing the church's Mississippi constituency. In 1963, Southern Presbyterians adopted a highly challenging church school curriculum known as *Covenant Life*. The new materials made great demands upon teachers as well as church members, who were asked to think critically about ethical questions such as racial justice. The material posed open-ended questions, encouraging class members to think and discuss. The *Presbyterian Journal* charged that the curriculum made "situational ethics" official for the PCUS.³⁶

Although individual ministers and congregations were regarded as "liberal," the Synod of Mississippi was dominated by conservative thought. In 1921 the synod commended "the stirring words of this distinguished man," the silver-tongued orator William Jennings Bryan, who led the charge against evolution and later would lead the prosecution in the famous Tennessee trial of biology teacher John Scopes. A few years later, George L. Bitzer, who had served at Leland and Holly Springs, Mississippi, gave the alumni address at Austin Seminary. Said Bitzer: "We are living in...a time of change and necessary readjustment...amid the challenge of countless new facts in biology, psychology, and sociology." He urged ministers "to think the message through" for

themselves "in the light of all the facts" and "try to restate and reemphasize its message to meet the needs of the questioners." In 1932, Bitzer's friend Cecil V. Crabb of Clarksdale, one of Mississippi's scholarly young pastors, hinted in the *Union Seminary Review* that fear of heresy trials stifled literary output among Presbyterians.³⁷

Mississippi conservatives established a reputation for their synod as the most vigorous quarter in the church for efforts to ferret out perceived deviations from orthodoxy. Central Mississippi Presbytery lodged charges against Charles E. Diehl, president of Southwestern, and E. T. Thompson, a professor in Union Seminary in Virginia. It also petitioned the General Assembly to investigate rumors of unsound teaching on the mission field. A few years later, Meridian Presbytery overtured the PCUS Assembly concerning "liberalism" in denominational publications. The effort's chief supporter was W. J. Stanway, a graduate of Bob Jones University and Westminster Seminary. Several congregations in the presbytery used materials from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.³⁸

During this period presbytery examinations of incoming ministers intermingled social and theological questions. The *Presbyterian Outlook* reported that a Mississippi candidate for ordination was quizzed as follows:

1. Do you advocate the integration of the black and white races?
2. Do you advocate an early reunion of the USA and the U. S. Presbyterian Churches?
3. Are you Neo-Orthodox in Interpretation of Scriptures? Miracles?
4. Do you accept: the Virgin birth of Christ? Deity of Christ? Substitutionary atonement? Resurrection of Christ?
5. Do you believe in salvation through Christ alone?³⁹

The ferocity of the Central Presbytery's questioning resulted in a case which went to the General Assembly. This occurred when Meridian's Trinity Church called the Rev. A. M. Hart, of Arkansas, as pastor. Hart, who had been ordained by Central Mississippi Presbytery in 1953, was rejected in 1962 after examination in presbytery. Protests re-

sulted in the presbytery's being cited by the synod for "acrimonious relations...divisive atmosphere," and a mentality "which tolerated only legalistic interpretations." The synod ordered Hart's reexamination, which was again not sustained. Protest was made and the normally conservative synod again condemned the presbytery's acerbic examinations. Critics believed Hart's anti-segregation views were the cause of his rejection. As late as 1964, Central Mississippi Presbytery issued accusatory interrogatories regarding the infallibility of scripture to the Union Seminary faculty in Virginia. The presbytery voted against every major PCUS constitutional change prior to the vote for reunion with the UPCUSA in 1983.⁴⁰

Influences from the North played a part in the formation of a continuing Southern Presbyterian Church. These came from Westminster Seminary, founded after Princeton Seminary's reorganization in 1929. J. Gresham Machen, seminary founder, and Cornelius van Til, apologetics professor, spoke at Synod of Mississippi youth conferences in the 1930s, creating popular support for Machen during his trial by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., in 1936. J. B. Hutton, pastor of Jackson's First Church and editor of the *Mississippi Visitor*, backed the northern conservatives and brought Westminster graduates to Central Mississippi, giving that already conservative presbytery a distinctly militant cast. Ministers from Westminster found their way to Mississippi in such numbers that in 1957 the *Presbyterian Outlook* devoted an issue to the phenomenon, citing allegations by a Mississippi conservative that the Philadelphia-based seminary and the Orthodox Presbyterian denomination were placing graduates in Mississippi with the hope of furthering their interests. Westminster received funds and students from Mississippi even after Reformed Seminary was organized and in operation. Several other ministers associated with the most conservative portions of Mississippi Presbyterianism also brought influences from outside the Southern Presbyterian environment, including the apart-

heid-oriented Dutch Church in South Africa. Carl McIntire, strident leader of the Bible Presbyterian Church (which split from the Orthodox Presbyterian movement in 1937) also swayed opinion against the PCUS-PCUSA reunion. His *Christian Beacon* newspaper was mailed free to hundreds of Southern Presbyterian ministers, and the *Presbyterian Outlook* blamed McIntire for introducing arguments which Mississippi Presbyterians used in the 1954 reunion debate.⁴¹

Leadership for Mississippi's Presbyterian "orthodoxy" came from First Church in Jackson—by far the state's largest and wealthiest PCUS congregation. Located in the state's largest city, its members included many influential leaders, including founders of the powerful White Citizens' Council. Two institutions allied with the First Church—Belhaven College and Reformed Theological Seminary—sought to counter the influence of Columbia Seminary, some of whose graduates, espousing a gospel of desegregation and broader theological interpretation, had angered congregations. Reformed Seminary sought to bolster the doctrine of biblical inerrancy as taught by nineteenth-century Princeton theologians Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield, and to emphasize with new vigor Presbyterianism's Calvinistic creed, including the doctrines of "absolute predestination" and unconditional election. Faculty were required to affirm "that God has ordained a form of church government presbyterial rather than congregational or episcopal," and that the church, as an institution, "should not presume to enter into areas of activity where it has neither calling nor competence." The seminary received the Westminster Confession "as originally adopted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States," that is, without the 1942 chapters on the Gospel and the Holy Spirit or the 1959 chapter which moderated the church's policy on divorce. Because ministers were viewed as likely to be more liberal, the seminary's board was made up entirely of laymen. The new seminary attracted hundreds of students. It received generous gifts, including a library from the

Blackburn family of South Carolina, who specified that a segregated admission policy be maintained. When academies sprang up around Mississippi, the seminary offered a degree in Christian school administration.⁴²

Momentum toward division grew after 1966 when the PCUS voted to participate in the Consultation on Church Union. The Concerned Presbyterians (successor to the earlier Continuing Church Committee) led the opposition with support from the *Presbyterian Journal*, which editorialized that the COCU decision was evidence that reconciliation among differing factions was impossible, so that withdrawal was the only recourse. To prepare for possible challenges to retention of property, congregations established quasi-independent corporations to hold buildings in trust for them.

A proposed union with the Reformed Church in America in 1969 was not opposed by Mississippi conservatives because it contained an escape clause permitting congregations to withdraw with property within a year after that or any subsequent union. Pleased by the willingness to embrace a union which would take their church beyond its southern confines, the PCUS Assembly immediately reopened negotiations with the UPCUSA. With this action, a direction in the church's life seemed to have been set, after which, as E. T. Thompson remarked, "The threat of division proved no deterrent." Thompson believed that as the PCUS came into the 1970s, it was moving "ever more fully into the mainstream of the nation's religious life." Yet, as he wrote in the final sentence of his *Presbyterians in the South*: "Opposition...intensified, and there were organized bodies anticipating, some...committed to, a final division of the church." He was prescient, for had Thompson published the volume a few years later, the final chapter would no doubt have been titled "Division—and Reunion."⁴³

V

Mississippi sessions were circularized for and against reunion. At its winter meet-

ing, 19 January 1971, St. Andrew Presbytery received thirty-three identical copies from sessions of a mimeographed overture against reunion. The resulting debate reflected near-complete polarization. On 11 August 1971, at the annual *Presbyterian Journal* rally, a Steering Committee for a Continuing Presbyterian Church was announced, headed by Donald Patterson of Jackson's First Church. The committee declared: "We believe that many of the individuals, institutions, boards, and agencies of the [PCUS] are apostate, and we see no sign of repentance and revival among them...."⁴⁴

Tense relations yielded to division in the autumn of 1972. By 1973, a trickle of withdrawals in Virginia, Alabama, and Georgia became a torrent as PCUS leaders decided to postpone a 1974 vote on the Plan of Union, which included an escape clause which conservatives planned to use. Central and South Mississippi presbyteries met in midsummer. On July 17, twenty-two of South Mississippi's seventy-seven congregations withdrew. Two days later, an even greater exodus occurred at First Presbyterian in Jackson as thirty-eight of Central Mississippi's seventy-three churches dismissed themselves from the presbytery meeting in the sanctuary and adjourned to a chapel to organize Mississippi Valley Presbytery of the National Presbyterian Church. In the following months, ten more churches withdrew from Central Presbytery and twelve from the South Presbytery. With the exception of the East Alabama Presbytery, no other region of the PCUS experienced such loss, including many of the most influential congregations of the region.⁴⁵ Losses in north Mississippi were not as great, but involved more local division. St. Andrew Presbytery received word that fourteen congregations had attempted to renounce the authority of presbytery. Congregations that were unanimous or nearly so were dismissed. A "Church of the Pilgrims" was organized for loyal PCUS members whose local churches had left the presbytery.⁴⁶

The first General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church (later named the

Presbyterian Church in America) was held 4 December 1973—112 years to the day after the General Assembly which constituted the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. Like the 1861 Assembly, it published a “Message to All the Churches of Jesus Christ Throughout the Earth,” modeled after James Henley Thornwell’s missive of 1861. It stated:

We are convinced that our former denomination as a whole, and its leadership, no longer holds those views regarding the nature and mission of the Church, which we accept as both true and essential. When we judged that there was no human remedy for this situation, and in the absence of evidence that God would intervene, we were compelled to raise a new banner bearing the historic, Scriptural faith of our forefathers.⁴⁷

While many in the withdrawing party drew parallels to 1861, a major difference was that in that rupture, presbyteries withdrew, whereas the 1973 division was accomplished by individual ministers and congregations. Critics pointed out that in Presbyterian polity, divisions and reunions among churches are ratified by vote of presbyteries. No presbytery voted to withdraw in the PCUS split in the 1970s. Many noted similarities between this and the 1936 rift in the U.S.A. Church led by J. Gresham Machen.⁴⁸

The 1974 PCUS Assembly, which elected the Reverend Lawrence Bottoms as its first black moderator, immediately extended an olive branch to separating churches, declaring that “We affirm our acceptance of them as our brothers and sisters in Christ.” The PCA was invited to send fraternal delegates to PCUS Assemblies (as all Reformed bodies were invited to do), but the invitation was declined. Attempts in succeeding years by commissioners at PCA Assemblies to have their church either recognize or condemn the PCUS as apostate were tabled; meanwhile the PCA began to recruit congregations from the PCUS, placing ads, contacting members and sessions, holding meetings, and distributing literature. The 1974 PCUS Assembly warned that “there are specific groups whose future life and growth de-

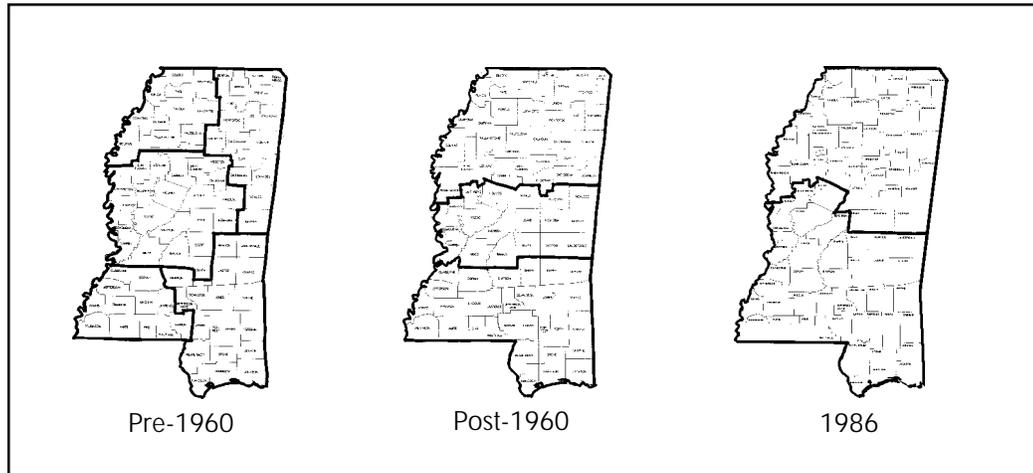
pend, at least in part, upon nurturing unhappiness in the congregations, sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly of the [PCUS], and in wooing away from its loyalty and support members and congregations of this denomination.”⁴⁹

While PCA leaders insisted that doctrinal considerations were paramount, most congregations that withdrew were in areas where the population majority was black and where whites had left public schools. Most PCA churches were located along a so-called “Black Belt” (termed by H. L. Mencken the “Bible Belt”), about one hundred miles on either side of Interstate Highway 20 (from Greenville, South Carolina, through Atlanta, Georgia, to Montgomery, Alabama, and Jackson, Mississippi). Here the southern black population is concentrated and the resulting pressures are said to be most intense.⁵⁰

VI

The 1973 withdrawals did not resolve questions of division and reunion in the PCUS or Mississippi Presbyterianism, where twenty-five UPCUSA congregations ministered alongside their PCUS counterparts. Further controversy in the PCUS frustrated remaining conservatives. In 1980, the PCUS authorized admission of baptized children to the Holy Communion prior to confirmation of their baptismal vows. Proponents argued that the church, having long extended baptism to children of believers, now followed the practice of other churches, welcoming little ones to the Lord’s Table. Conservatives generally opposed the change, although a few argued in its favor.⁵¹

Further tension resulted in 1976 when an attempt was made to revise the PCUS constitution in line with changes made by the UPCUSA in 1967, adding to the Westminster standards several ancient and Reformation creeds, as well as a contemporary statement, “A Declaration of Faith,” creating a Book of Confessions. Changes in the wording of ordination vows were also contemplated—revisions which some saw as weakening adherence both to the author-



Five, then three, then two: the loss of members and churches Presbyterian Church in the United States in Mississippi as shown by the shrinking number of PCUS and PC(USA) presbyteries, 1959–1986.

ity of infallible scriptures as well as to doctrine set forth in the Westminster standards. These proposals, along with measures for union presbyteries with other Reformed bodies and a plan for “weighted” voting to give urban presbyteries more influence, were seen as means to union with the UPCUSA “through the back door.” Court battles led to efforts to amend the PCUS Book of Church Order to specify the denomination’s right to determine disposition of congregational property. This created further anxiety among already-nervous opponents of reunion, and in 1980, seven years after the initial secessions, a second round of divisions occurred.⁵²

Local clashes also became sharper. In 1979, pastor W. Wilson Benton made an issue of his Cleveland, Mississippi, church’s stained glass window. The window, dating from 1928 and illustrating Revelation 3:20, pictured Jesus in the sentimental Victorian pose of Holman Hunt’s painting in St. Paul’s Cathedral, London. Benton urged that the window violated the Second Commandment of Moses. Controversy divided his congregation, and amid much publicity, members loyal to Benton’s interpretations withdrew and formed a PCA church.⁵³

In 1983, a vote by presbyteries on the reunion of the PCUS and the UPCUSA was scheduled. South Mississippi Presbytery (in spite of conservative withdrawals) voted

against the plan, but Central and St. Andrew presbyteries approved it. According to *This Week in the PCUS*, the Reverend Samuel C. Patterson, retired president of Reformed Seminary and a member of St. Andrew Presbytery, startled conservatives when he said: “Twice over a 42-year ministry I have voted against the reunion of these two Churches. I think fear prompted me because fear plays it safe and thinks in the negative. The scriptures propose faith and love. These discount self-protection, think in the positive, and will dare much to achieve our Savior’s ideal for the evident unity of His Church in the world.” He cast his vote for reunion in 1983.⁵⁴ Three-fourths of the PCUS presbyteries supported reunion, which was effected in May 1983. The plan contained an escape clause, known as Article 13, giving particular churches the right to withdraw if certain conditions were met. Several Mississippi congregations formerly aligned with the PCUS were dismissed. In several cases, when divisions appeared, the property was awarded to the withdrawing majority as required by Article 13, and new PC(USA) congregations were organized for those who wished to continue as members of the mainstream church.

The evangelical movement of the 1970s which helped propel Jimmy Carter to the presidency had its effect on Mississippi Pres-

byterian conservatives, where many adopted the designation “evangelical” to distinguish themselves from what they perceived as the rigid fundamentalism of older traditionalists. Many Presbyterian congregations were open to evangelical ministers from Reformed Seminary and others like it, including Gordon-Conwell of Massachusetts. In the late 1980s, when it was still possible for congregations to leave under Article 13, most of these congregations and evangelical ministers withdrew, citing currents in the national church concerning legalized abortion, the ordination of homosexuals, and so forth. When the new wave of withdrawals began in the late 1980s, it was clear that some congregations would follow a different path. Rather than joining the PCA, several affiliated with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, a body that had originated a decade earlier when conservatives in Colorado, Michigan, and Illinois withdrew from the UPCUSA, protesting liberal trends.⁵⁵ The Mississippi congregations joining the EPC followed the lead of the 3,826-member Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis and its pastor, John R. de Witt, a fiery preacher from the Dutch Reformed tradition and a former professor at Reformed Seminary. The advantages of the EPC were said to be that it was less interested than the PCA in seventeenth-century Calvinism, it permitted ordination of women (several conservative Mississippi congregations by this time did have women officers), and was tolerant of charismatics, a theological trait that increasingly became a kind of dual identity among Southern evangelicals. Withdrawals across the South soon gave the EPC a nationwide constituency as well as a strong southern accent. As was done when the PCA openly sought PCUS members, the 1988 PC(USA) Assembly condemned similar efforts by the EPC.⁵⁶

VII

By 1986, Mississippi’s Reformed community was divided among six traditions: the former PCUS and UPUSA, the PCA and EPC, as well as Associate Reformed and

Cumberland congregations in the northern counties. The lion’s share were found in the two largest denominations: PC(USA) and PCA—communities which shared no official correspondence or cooperative work, and which often maintained rival congregations in communities barely large enough to support one Reformed witness. Separation brought a certain peace to both parties although, especially in Mississippi Valley and Grace presbyteries, PCA (which corresponded geographically to the once litigious Central and South Mississippi presbyteries, PCUS), vigorous debates were still carried on, but many in the PCA saw controversy as a means of faithfulness, leading the church toward doctrinal purity and clarity of expression.⁵⁷

The PCA emphasized three distinctives said to mark a return to historic Presbyterianism: elders, deacons, and ministers were male; officers generally served for life;⁵⁸ and chapters added to the PCUS Confession of Faith were deleted to restore traditional Calvinism and enforce prohibitions against remarriage of the divorced.⁵⁹ The PCA also eliminated the requirement of the PCUS Book of Church Order that worshipers be admitted without regard to race or color. It added the word “inerrant” to ordination vows concerning the Bible. In congregations, effort was made to reinstate church discipline in both moral and doctrinal spheres. Embracing a position long shunned by earlier leaders, the PCA promoted a sociopolitical agenda, albeit different from mainline churches. PCA leaders constructed elaborate theories of economics and the relation of faith to life. Governing bodies debated strict interpretations of predestination, mandated literal belief in the six days of creation, affirmed the subordination of women in marriage, and opposed birth control, drinking alcohol, and gay rights. The PCA became a voice on behalf of large outlays for national defense, tax cuts, and officially-sponsored prayer in public schools. It experienced controversy over “theonomy” (belief that all Old Testament moral laws should be written into the civil code). It

sought to ban membership in Masonic and fraternal organizations (though not college fraternities or sororities, where its Reformed University Fellowship carried on vigorous ministries). Some congregations prohibited women's circles from meeting without male supervision. In the 1990s PCA apologists became heavily involved in the ongoing "culture wars," giving leadership in the 1998 effort to impeach President Clinton. Some engaged in civil disobedience opposing abortion. Twenty-five years after the initial rupture, PCA literature made frequent critical reference to PCUS and PC(USA) doctrinal and ethical positions.⁶⁰

For its part, the PC(USA) carried on in Mississippi with much-reduced numbers, finding itself in a new kind of ministry after what some called its "thirty years' war." Often PC(USA) congregations found a distinct role as the only "mainline" witness in a community. Its ministers downplayed theological controversy, stressing the grace and compassion of God over against the "legalism" which prevailed in fundamentalist pulpits. Congregations valued thoughtful preaching in a quarter of the South where an educated ministry was not particularly prized. The presence of female clergy dramatically showed that the PC(USA) was a church where women could play leadership roles. New members often came from the ranks of the "fundamentalist wounded." PC(USA) presbyteries pointed to the increasingly cordial role that members played in denominational affairs, as well as healthy church finances and the establishment of endowments for a number of congregations and causes. Conversations were held with Cumberland Presbyterians concerning cooperative work and the possibility of a union presbytery.

Ironically, evangelically oriented Presbyterians (perhaps by influence of more racially open charismatic members) dealt more effectively with racial inclusiveness than did old-line Presbyterians. John Perkins, a black Mississippi evangelical, began Voice of Calvary Ministries, which won national attention from evangelicals, including many

in the PCA. Reformed Seminary moved much of its operation to Orlando, Florida, and its Mississippi campus increasingly served black and international students.⁶¹

Although both the PCA and PC(USA) made efforts at new church development, membership in both communions declined in roughly equal percentages, though individual congregations prospered and financial contributions in both communions remained high. In 1998, total membership among the PCA and PC(USA) in Mississippi was 30,305, whereas in 1954, PCUS and PCUSA membership in the state had been 34,143.⁶² Many factors were involved in this change, yet it could not be denied that much positive energy had been consumed in the protracted controversies.

NOTES

¹The PCUS reported 241 Mississippi churches in 1971, with 34,668 communicant members.

²Charles Reagan Wilson, *Judgment & Grace in Dixie: Southern Faiths from Faulkner to Elvis* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), 8; Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 16; Samuel S. Hill, Jr., *Southern Churches in Crisis* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967), 21, 30–31; cf. Samuel S. Hill, *Religion in the Southern States* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1983); Charles Reagan Wilson, *Religion in the South* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985).

³Although proposals to rename the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America in a way that would specifically indicate its sectional alignment were rejected in 1865, the term Southern Presbyterian for the PCUS became a semi-official alternate name. The corresponding use of "Northern" for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. was a designation of convenience for southerners, although not accurate, for the U.S.A. Church eventually had congregations in all states.

⁴*Central Presbyterian*, 13 Aug. 1873, 2; Lyon had been moderator of the 1863 Confederate Presbyterian General Assembly; see R. Milton Winter, "James Adair Lyon: Southern Presbyterian Apostle of Progress," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 60 (Winter 1982): 314–35; Presbyterian Church in the U. S., General Assembly, Minutes, 1870, 529–30. Hereafter cited as GAM; Peyton H. Hoge, *Moses Drury Hoge: Life and Letters* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1899), 281.

⁵North Mississippi Presbytery, Minutes, 17 Apr. 1884.

⁶J. B. Mack, "The Union Question," *Presbyterian Standard*, 26 Sept. 1906, 14; 7 Aug. 1907, 4; see Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3 vols. (Richmond: John Knox, 1963–73), 3: 288–89; Ernest Trice Thompson, "Presbyterians North and South—

Efforts toward Reunion," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 43 (Mar. 1965): 1–15; North Mississippi Presbytery, Minutes, 16 Apr. 1930, 28. See Robert Milton Winter, *Shadow of a Mighty Rock: A Social and Cultural History of Presbyterianism in Marshall County, Mississippi* (Franklin, Tenn.: Providence House, 1997), 375–76.

⁷W. A. Gamble, "Union with the Northern Presbyterian Church Would Spell Doom for Our Church and Its Ideals," *Mississippi Visitor* 28 (May 1940): 1, 11; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:564.

⁸"Continuing" assemblies of Presbyterians opposed to unions voted by their denominations are well known having been formed in Scotland, Canada, and Australia, and by Cumberland Presbyterians in the U. S. after the majority of their churches were received by the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. in 1906. Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:564; W. H. Frazer, "Why I Favor Preserving the Southern Church," *Southern Presbyterian Journal*, 23 July 1952, 7; cf. similar articles in the same publication, 26 April and 2 May 1972, by a later Belhaven president, R. McFerran Crowe. The vote and underlying issues were studied by the Laboratory of Social Relations at Harvard, which concluded that the segregation controversy was the major source of the opposition vote. See Sanford M. Dornbusch and Roger D. Irlé, "The Failure of Presbyterian Union," *American Journal of Sociology* 64 (Jan. 1959): 352–55; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:574–75; cf. Dwyn Mecklin Mounger, "Racial Attitudes in the Presbyterian Church, U. S., 1944–1954" (B.D. thesis, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1965).

⁹Mississippi did not ratify the Nineteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution giving women the right to vote until 1984.

¹⁰William Childs Robinson, "Reunion of the Presbyterian Churches U.S.A. and U.S.," *Christian Observer*, 24 June 1940; see Joel L. Alvis, Jr., *Religion & Race: Southern Presbyterians, 1946–1983* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994).

¹¹Willie Morris, a Mississippian and a perceptive critic of southern manners and morals, wrote in 1981: "The churches will be the last institutions to integrate, of course." *Terrains of the Heart and Other Essays on Home* (Oxford, Miss.: Yoknapatawpha, 1981), 33; cf. Edwin Harel, Jr., *White Sects and Black Men in the Recent South* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971).

¹²G. T. Gillespie, "A Christian View on Segregation," reprint of an address before the Synod of Mississippi of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., 4 Nov. 1954 (Greenwood, Miss.: Citizens Council, n.d.); G. T. Gillespie, "Defense of the Principle of Racial Segregation," *Presbyterian Outlook*, 14 Mar. 1955, 5–9; Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 53–55; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:540; Ernest Trice Thompson, "Southern Presbyterians and the Race Problem," *Austin Theological Seminary Bulletin* 83 (1968): 5–28; Kenneth K. Bailey, *Southern White Protestantism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964): 145–46; T. Erskine Clarke, "The History of Ecumenical Relations in the Southern Presbyterian Church," *GAM (PCUS)*, 1976, 473.

¹³Neil R. McMillen, *The Citizens' Council: Organized Resistance to the Second Reconstruction* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1971); "The Synod of Mississippi," *Presbyterian Survey*, Jan. 1956, 36–37; *Presbyterian Outlook*, 3 Mar. 1958, 2; Warner L. Hall, "Race Relations and the American Church: The

Mind of the White South," *Religion in Life* 26 (1957): 361–67; see James H. Smylie, "The Bible, Race, and the Changing South," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 59 (Summer 1981): 197–217.

¹⁴"Southern Presbyterians Reaffirm Anti-Segregation Stand," *Religious News Service*, 30 April 1958; "Racial Declaration," *The Christian Index*, 8 May 1958.

¹⁵Sara Barry, "The Role of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in a Segregated Society" (M.R.E. thesis, Biblical Seminary in New York, 1955); Dwyn M. Mounger, "Racial Attitudes in the Presbyterian Church, U. S., 1944–1954," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 48 (Winter 1970): 38–58; Hodding Carter, Jr., "Racial Crisis in the Deep South," *Saturday Evening Post*, 17 Dec. 1955, 75; Will D. Campbell, *Providence* (Atlanta: Longstreet, 1992), 3–16; James C. Cobb, *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 222–24; Elizabeth Spencer, *Landscapes of the Heart: A Memoir* (New York: Random House, 1998).

¹⁶"Christians in the Crisis Hour," *Baptist Record*, 11 Oct. 1962; Ellis Ray Branch, "Born of Conviction: Racial Conflict and Changes in Mississippi Methodism, 1945–1983" (Ph.D. diss., Mississippi State University, 1984); Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 110; James W. Silver, *Mississippi: The Closed Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964); Sessional Records, First Presbyterian Church, Holly Springs, Mississippi, 14 Sept. 1960; St. Andrew Presbytery, Minutes, 16 Oct. 1962, 20–21; "Oxford, Mississippi Pastors Appeal to Repentance," *Presbyterian Outlook*, 22 Oct. 1962, 3; Russell H. Barrett, *Integration at Ole Miss* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1965); Nadine Cohodas, *The Band Played Dixie: Race and the Liberal Conscience at Ole Miss* (New York: Free Press, 1997); Donald W. Shriver, Jr., ed., *The Unsilent South: Prophetic Preaching in Racial Crisis* (Richmond: John Knox, 1965), 65–66, 131–37.

¹⁷Numan V. Bartley, *The Rise of Massive Resistance: Race and Politics in the South during the 1950s* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969).

¹⁸Board of Deacons, First Presbyterian Church, Holly Springs, Mississippi, Minutes, 22 Sept. 1964.

¹⁹Shriver, *The Unsilent South*, 72–74. Sixteen months later, Stanford accepted a pastorate in Kentucky. The congregation later called a strongly conservative pastor from Reformed Theological Seminary; in 1974 a minority of the members withdrew with him to form a PCA congregation.

²⁰Ann Waldron, *Hodding Carter: The Reconstruction of a Racist* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin, 1993), 248.

²¹Ben Lacy Rose, *Racial Segregation in the Church* (Richmond, Va.: Outlook Publishers, 1957); Rachel Henderlite, "The Christian Way in Race Relations," *Theology Today* 14 (1957): 196–99; Jane Hines, ed., *The Bob Walkup Story Book* (Nashville: Hart Street Press, 1995), 11; Dwyn M. Mounger to R. Milton Winter, 12 April 1999.

²²Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1954–1980* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1981), 169–77; *Beauty for Ashes*, pamphlet, Mississippi Baptist Convention Committee of Concern, Mississippi Council on Human Relations Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Miss. The Mississippi Baptist Convention had not participated in the NCC Delta Ministry, and hence, could take a stance of aloofness from the incidents that caused the churches

to be burned; Mark Newman, "The Mississippi Baptist Convention and Desegregation, 1945–1980," *Journal of Mississippi History* 59 (Spring 1997): 14–15.

²³James F. Findlay, "The Mainline Churches and Head Start in Mississippi: Religious Activism in the Sixties," *Church History* 64 (June 1995): 237–50; Bruce Hilton, *The Delta Ministry* (Toronto: Collier-Macmillan, 1969); James F. Findlay Jr., *Church People in the Struggle: The National Council of Churches and the Black Freedom Movement, 1950–1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

²⁴"The Churches Speak," *New South*, Aug. 1954, 1–4; "The Churches Speak," *New South*, Oct. 1956, 5–7; Hodding Carter III, *The South Strikes Back* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959): 164–65; and Branch, "Born of Conviction," 42–46; "Grenada First Dissents," *Baptist Record*, 17 June 1954; *Baptist Record*, 24 June 1965; Branch, "Born of Conviction," 181–93; David M. Reimers, *White Protestantism and the Negro* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 145–57; Jack Winton Gunn, "Religion in the Twentieth Century," *A History of Mississippi*, ed. Richard Aubrey McLemore, 2 vols (Jackson: University & College Press of Mississippi, 1973) 2:484–85; Branch, "Born of Conviction," 292–320; Newman, "The Mississippi Baptist Convention and Desegregation," 9; see Samuel S. Hill, Jr., *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987); "Southern Baptists Survey Negro-White Cooperation," *Baptist Press*, 18 Oct. 1968.

²⁵Thomas L. Connelly, *Will Campbell and the Soul of the South* (New York: Continuum, 1982); Newman, "The Mississippi Baptist Convention and Desegregation," 1–32; Wilmer C. Fields, "On Jordan's Stormy Banks: Religion in a Changing South," *Dixie Dateline: A Journalistic Portrait of the Contemporary South*, ed. John B. Boles (Houston: Rice University Studies, 1983), 65.

²⁶[Charlotte Capers, et al.], *The Episcopal Church in Mississippi, 1763–1992* (Jackson: Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, 1992), 122–23, 130. See Joel L. Alvis, Jr., "Racial Turmoil and Religious Reaction: The Rt. Rev. John M. Allin," *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 50 (March 1981): 88–96; Will D. Campbell, *And Also With You: Duncan Gray and the American Dilemma* (Franklin, Tenn.: Providence House, 1997). When Gray was shunned because of his support for civil rights during his ministry in Cleveland, Mississippi in the 1950s, Richard A. Bolling, an elderly PCUS pastor, took a risk giving Gray symbolic public support: he was the only one who would sit beside Gray at meetings of the Rotary Club. Duncan Gray to R. Milton Winter, March 1, 1990.

²⁷Twenty-eight young Methodist ministers in Mississippi signed a statement supporting school desegregation in line with the policy of the national denomination; however, all but seven of the ministers left the state within a year, either fired or pressured into resigning. The pastor of First Baptist Church in Belzoni, Mississippi was similarly forced to resign after twenty-one years. "Methodist Ministers Shatter Vacuum," *Christian Century*, 20 Feb. 1963, 229–30; Branch, "Born of Conviction," chapter 5; *Baptist Press*, 28 Oct. 1964. During this period a few Baptists, upset at their congregations' refusal to adopt inclusive seating policies, either changed churches (often becoming Episcopal) or gave up church going altogether. The Episcopal

Church also suffered a minor spate of withdrawals with disaffected members citing prayer book revision and women's ordination as chief reasons for establishing "traditional" Anglican congregations. Byron de la Beckwith, of Greenwood, later convicted of the murder of Medgar Evers, a prominent civil rights leader, was identified with the schismatic movement among Mississippi Episcopalians. The Episcopal Church grew steadily in Mississippi after the PCUS-PCA division (from 17,000 communicants in 1971 to nearly 23,000 in 1999), while the combined membership of the PCA and PC(USA) does not equal the membership of the former PCUS and UPCUSA churches prior to 1971.

²⁸Carter, *The South Strikes Back*, 166. See Donald Cunnigen, "Men and Women of Goodwill: Mississippi's White Liberals" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1987): 359, n. 150; "Mississippi Parochial Schools Will Not Offer 'Refuge From Integration,'" *Religious Herald*, 22 Jan. 1970.

²⁹Mississippi Presbytery, Minutes (UPUSA), 25 Jan. 1964, 80.

³⁰GAM (PCUS), 1964, 1:79; John H. Leith, "The Church and Race," *Presbyterian Outlook*, 27 July 1964, 6; "Memphis 1965," *Presbyterian Outlook*, 27 April 1964, 8; "Bars Up at Memphis Second," *Presbyterian Outlook*, 11 May 1964, 8; "Memphis Second," *Presbyterian Outlook*, 18 May 1964, 8; Carl Pritchett, "What Happened at Memphis," *FOCUS—Newsletter of A Fellowship of Concern*, 22 May 1964, 9; K. W. Cook, "General Assembly Is Moved from Second Presbyterian," *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, 27 Jan. 1965; Felix B. Gear, "The 1965 General Assembly," *Presbyterian Outlook*, 8 Feb. 1965; Charles Conner Gillespie, *History of Second Presbyterian Church, Memphis, 1844–1971* (Memphis: Second Presbyterian Church, 1971); Marthame E. Sanders III, "'A Fellowship of Concern' and the Declining Doctrine of the Spirituality of the Church in the Presbyterian Church in the United States," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 75 (Fall 1997): 184–85; Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 101–03.

³¹"Congregations Barring Negroes Condemned by Assembly," *Religious News Service*, 27 April 1966; GAM (PCUS), 1967, 149–50; Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 96–99.

³²James J. Kilpatrick, "Back to Segregation, By Order of the Courts," *National Review*, 16 June 1970, 611–26; Presbyterian "Day Schools" were organized by the First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, and also in the Mississippi communities of Clarksdale, Cleveland, Columbia, Columbus, Greenwood, Gulfport, Hattiesburg, and Laurel. See Holly Springs *South Reporter*, 6 Jan. 1983, 1, 3. The Episcopal and United Methodist churches in Mississippi supported public education and condemned establishment of private schools to evade desegregation, and the various Episcopal parochial schools within the state quickly adopted racially inclusive admissions policies. "Creed and Color in the School Crisis," *Christianity Today*, 27 Mar. 1970; Branch, "Born of Conviction," 269–72.

³³Morton H. Smith, *How Is the Gold Become Dim: The Decline of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.* (n.p., Steering Committee for a Continuing Presbyterian Church, 1973), 153; cf. Morton H. Smith, "The Racial Problem Facing America," *Presbyterian Guardian* 33 (Oct. 1964): 127–28.

³⁴The college board took action to open admission so that federal funds for student loans could continue.

Its action was unsuccessfully challenged by conservatives in the Synod of Mississippi. Synod of Mississippi, Minutes (1967), 65–66; Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 90–91; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:549–51; John M. Mulder, “Is White Racism Declining?” *Theology Today* 29 (1972): 318–22.

³⁵Winter, *Shadow*, 409; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:488–91, 516–18.

³⁶See, for example, Marion A. Boggs, *What Does God Require—In Race Relations?* (Richmond: CLC Press, 1964). Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:463–64. The word “Southern” was dropped from the title of the *Presbyterian Journal* in 1959. Frank J. Smith, *The History of the Presbyterian Church in America: The Continuing Church Movement* (Manassas, Va.: Reformed Educational Foundation, 1985), 19; See Mark A. Noll and Darryl G. Hart, “The Language(s) of Zion: Presbyterian Devotional Literature in the Twentieth Century,” *The Confessional Mosaic: Presbyterians and Twentieth-Century Theology*, ed. Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990), 187–207. Ironically, a PCA congregation in Saltillo, Mississippi formed in the 1980s took the name Covenant Life Presbyterian Church.

³⁷Synod of Mississippi, Minutes, 1921, 28. In the aftermath of the Scopes trial, the state of Mississippi, along with Arkansas and Tennessee, passed laws prohibiting the teaching of evolution in public schools; George L. Bitzer, *Re-Thinking for Today* (Austin: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 1931), 3–25; also published as “The Changeless Gospel in a Changing World,” *Union Seminary Review* 42 (July 1931): 411–21; Thomas White Currie, Jr., *Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary: A Seventy-Fifth Anniversary History* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1978), 6, 8, 253; Winter, *Shadow*, 356–59; Cecil V. Crabb, “Creative Thought in the Southern Church,” *Union Seminary Review* 43 (July 1932): 419–20; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:500–501.

³⁸In 1931, Central Mississippi Presbytery memorialized the board of Southwestern at Memphis, a college supported by the Synods of Mississippi and Tennessee, questioning the orthodoxy of its president, Charles E. Diehl, who had formerly served without complaint as pastor of one of Central Presbytery’s congregations (Greenville, Mississippi). A committee appointed by the directors of Southwestern, including members of the Central Presbytery, expressed full confidence in his leadership and views. Ten years later, Central Presbytery overruled the PCUS Assembly to appoint a committee to investigate the teaching of E. T. Thompson of Union Seminary, Richmond, who was reputed to hold liberal views of biblical inspiration and social policy. Waller Raymond Cooper, *Southwestern at Memphis, 1848–1948* (Richmond: John Knox, 1949), 133–36; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:338, 320. The PCA and Orthodox Presbyterians later joined forces to produce Christian education materials, with the PCA using literature from the Orthodox Presbyterians’ Great Commission Publications in Philadelphia, Pa. The Rev. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., a graduate of Belhaven College and Reformed Seminary, who served the Presbyterian Church at Tchula, Miss., became editor of Great Commission Publications.

³⁹*Presbyterian Outlook*, 17 June 1957, 6.

⁴⁰Central Mississippi Presbytery, Minutes, 19 Apr.

1962, 64–65; Jackson, Mississippi *Clarion-Ledger*, 8 June 1962; Central Mississippi Presbytery, “The Re-examination of the Reverend A. M. Hart” (transcript, 9 July 1964) Presbyterian Historical Society, Montreat, NC, GAM (PCUS) 1964, 50–57; Synod of Mississippi, Minutes, 1965, 133–57; Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 66–68. For details of Hart’s views on race, cf. A. M. Hart to Alice Thomason Walkup, 22 Sept. 1995, reprinted in Hines, *The Bob Walkup Story Book*, 119–22; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:502–3; Faculty Minutes, Union Theological Seminary, 15 May 1964, 1133–34; Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 137.

⁴¹During the 1920s and ’30s, the pages of the *Mississippi Visitor*, the synod newspaper, were full of references to Machen and his battle with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. “Infiltration—To What End?” *Presbyterian Outlook*, 17 June 1957, 5–7; *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, 4 and 5 June 1958; Jackson *Daily News*, 4 June 1958; James O. Chatham, *Sundays Down South: A Pastor’s Stories* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1999), 85–87.

⁴²James F. Gordon, Jr., *A History of Belhaven College, 1894–1981*, ed. Linda M. Hill (Jackson, Miss.: Belhaven College, 1983). Although Reformed Seminary eventually became the most important institution for the education of PCA ministers, the greatest number of ministers entering the denomination in its formative years held degrees from Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Georgia; *Reformed Theological Seminary Catalogue, 1973–1974* (Jackson, Miss.: Reformed Theological Seminary, 1973), 5–7.

⁴³The RCA union was approved by the PCUS, but failed in the RCA; Thompson, *Presbyterians in the South*, 3:580–82; cf. John W. Kuykendall, “Presbyterians in the South Revisited: A Critique,” *Journal of Presbyterian History* 61 (Winter 1983): 445–59.

⁴⁴St. Andrew Presbytery, Minutes, 19 Jan. 1971, 6–12, 20–26; *Presbyterian Journal*, 25 Aug. 1971, 14; 27 June 1973, 12, 18.

⁴⁵Losses through withdrawals in South Mississippi Presbytery amounted to 3,993 members during 1973, and 7,055 in Central Mississippi for the same period.

⁴⁶“Factions Form New Presbytery,” *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, 17 November 1972; *Presbyterian Journal*, 21 Feb. 1973, 4–5; St. Andrew Presbytery, Minutes, 31 Aug. 1973, 20–37; 15 Jan. 1974, 10–11. St. Andrew Presbytery’s loss through withdrawals and divisions in 1973 amounted to 1,489 members. Ironically, the withdrawing congregations depended upon goodwill of “liberal” members who remained in the PCUS presbyteries to dismiss them with their property, since most conceded that dismissal with property was not absolutely guaranteed—hence the concern to have the escape clause in the 1974 Plan of Union. Mississippi churches were dismissed with property in all but two or three cases where congregational divisions arose and civil litigation resulted.

⁴⁷At its second General Assembly (1974), the National Presbyterian Church changed its name to Presbyterian Church in America, due to a challenge from the National Presbyterian Church, a UPCUSA congregation in Washington, D.C., which was incorporated under that name; *Addresses Delivered During the First General Assembly of the Continuing Presbyterian Church* (Birmingham: Continuing Presbyterian Church, 1973), 6; cf. Alvis, *Religion and Race*, 133–35.

⁴⁸The story of the division is told from a PCA

perspective in F. Smith, *History of the PCA*; John Edwards Richards, *The Historical Birth of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Liberty Hill, S.C.: Liberty Press, 1986); and Kennedy Smartt, *I Am Reminded: An Autobiographical, Anecdotal History of The Presbyterian Church In America* (Chestnut Mountain, Ga.: n.p., n.d.); Historians outside the PCA who have examined the division include: James H. Smylie, "About Those Church Splits!" *Presbyterian News*, Sept. 1972, 3; Oct. 1972, 5; Rick Nutt, "The Tie That No Longer Binds: The Origins of the Presbyterian Church in America," *The Confessional Mosaic: Presbyterians and Twentieth Century Theology*, ed. Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990), 236–56; and Bryan V. Hillis, *Can Two Walk Together Unless They Be Agreed: American Religious Schisms in the 1970s* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Carlson, 1991), 1–43.

⁴⁹Pastoral Letter Concerning the National Presbyterian Church," GAM (PCUS), 1974, 1:198; advertisement, "What To Do If You're Presbyterian And Can't Live With Your Church And Can't Live Without It," *Presbyterian Journal*, 9 Apr. 1980, and *Christianity Today*, 18 Apr. 1980; "Answering Hard Questions about PCA," *PCA Messenger*, Apr. 1981, 3, 6–7; "Recruits from Our Roots," *PCA Messenger*, Apr. 1982, 3–4; "Report of the Committee on Mission to the United States," GAM (PCA), 1980, 173; GAM (PCUS), 1974, 1:198–99; cf. GAM (PCUS), 1975, 1:126; *Presbyterian Outlook*, 14 July 1975, 9–10.

⁵⁰Flynn V. Long, associate stated clerk of the PCUS, studied the "PCA-Black Belt" phenomenon. Some have argued that the increasing urbanization of the upper South increased tension within the PCUS, leaving rural areas of the deep South increasingly isolated, theologically conservative, and pro-segregationist, while the urban areas were more open to theological liberalism and racial integration. Flynn V. Long, Jr., to R. Milton Winter, 23 Mar. 1983; David M. Reimers, "The Race Problem and Presbyterian Union," *Church History* 31 (June 1962): 203–15; cf. Wilson, *Religion in the South*, 168; *Presbyterian Outlook*, 25 Oct. 1971, 10; 20 Dec 1971, 2; 3 Sept. 1973, 9; R. Milton Winter, "Bible Belt," *New 20th Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 75–76; L. H. Whiteaker, "Review of *Religion and Race: Southern Presbyterians 1943–1983*, by Joel L. Alvis (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994)," *Journal of Mississippi History* 58 (Winter 1996): 424–26. PCA historian Frank J. Smith, analyzing the factors which lead to the emergence of the PCA, states that "It was not...social or political questions per se which drove the movement. Nor, we would add, was it racism...Presbyterians historically have fought over doctrine, and this polemical battle was no different." *The History of the Presbyterian Church in America: Silver Anniversary Edition* (Lawrenceville, GA: Scholars Press, 1999) 541.

⁵¹PCUS-UPUSA cooperation in Mississippi was well established, with members regularly exchanged, along with shared pastorates, congregational mergers, etc. David Ng, "The Case for...the Lord's Supper and Children," *Austin Theological Seminary Bulletin* 91 (1976): 11–15. Despite support for admission of baptized children to communion from a theologian in one of Presbyterianism's most conservative journals, reservation of the table to those in full membership became a distinction between PCA and PCUS Presbyterians in

Mississippi. Cf. Christian L. Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?" *Westminster Theological Journal* 37 (Spring 1975): 301–41.

⁵²Reformed Seminary president Samuel C. Patterson, a member of St. Andrew Presbytery, and faculty member A. H. Freundt, stated clerk of Central Mississippi Presbytery, gave public support to the effort to adopt "A Declaration of Faith" and the associated Book of Confessions with its revised ordination vows. As a result of the second series of withdrawals and divisions, St. Andrew Presbytery adopted a resolution warning its congregations against secessionist efforts, particularly by ministers from Reformed Seminary. "Report of the Ad-Interim Committee to Investigate Actions of Those Seeking to Lead Churches Out of the PCUS," St. Andrew Presbytery, Minutes, 5 Oct. 1982, 24–30. St. Andrew Presbytery, Minutes, 1 Feb. 1983, 16; "PCA Asked to 'Cease' Intrusions," *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, 14 June 1983.

⁵³Benton's effort exemplifies neoconservative Presbyterian efforts in Mississippi to reassert a "regulative principle" in worship enunciated by J. H. Thornwell and others before the Civil War.

⁵⁴See Albert H. Freundt, Jr., "An Approach to Open and Honest Political Decision Making in the Presbytery of Central Mississippi in Connection with the Vote on Presbyterian Reunion," (D.Min. major project, McCormick Theological Seminary, 1984). St. Andrew Presbytery, Minutes, 8 Feb. 1983, 30; *This Week in the PCUS*, 31 Jan. 1983. Patterson had urged conservatives not to leave the PCUS. In 1972, he prepared a study paper and visited wavering sessions urging fidelity to historic ecclesiastical alignments. He was credited with preventing or delaying withdrawal of many churches in the northern part of the state. See Samuel C. Patterson, "Seeking a Biblical Basis for the Conduct of Believers who are in an Erring Church" (Jackson, Miss.: priv. pub. 1972); Jackson *Daily News*, 22 May 1982.

⁵⁵Losses from withdrawals and divisions from the Mississippi PCUS and PC(USA) presbyteries after 1973 involved forty-two churches and 5,314 members.

⁵⁶See Martin E. Marty, "The Revival of Evangelicalism and Southern Religion," in *Varieties of Southern Evangelicalism*, ed. David E. Harrell, Jr. (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1981), 7–21. EPC influence found its way to the South through Central Presbyterian Church of St. Louis (formerly PCUS), which became a union congregation with the EPC and was dismissed to the EPC under Article 13. It sponsored the Covenant Fellowship of Presbyterians which rallied Southern conservatives, as well as CFP's lay renewal ministries, which were charismatic in thrust; GAM (PC(USA)) 1988, 1:121.

⁵⁷Two other Reformed communities are also represented with small Mississippi constituencies. A Christian Reformed mission was established in the 1980s at Clinton, to serve CRC faculty and students at Reformed Seminary, and congregations of the United Church of Christ with roots in the New England Congregational tradition exist at Tougaloo College—historically black and affiliated with the UCC—five miles north of Jackson, and in the Back Bay area of Biloxi, originally a mission to shrimpers.

⁵⁸When organized, the PCA granted permission for churches already rotating officers to continue, although almost all chose not to do so. Smartt, *I Am Reminded*, 108–9.

⁵⁹When organized, the PCA adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith, with the text used by the PCUS in 1881, thus deleting three controversial added chapters as well as reinstating original 1647 wording in the chapter "Of the Church," (removed by the PCUS in 1938) which specified the "pope of Rome ... as antichrist." Although the 1881 text was essentially the same as that adopted by the first American General Assembly (1789), the PCA underscored its regional role as the continuing Southern Presbyterian Church by specifying a nineteenth-century date relating to PCUS changes.

⁶⁰"Strict Theonomists Set Up 'Embryonic' Presbytery," *Presbyterian Journal*, 16 March 1983; Smartt, *I Am Reminded*, 151, 189, 199, 180, 185; Richards, *The Historical Birth of the PCA*, 281–83; Nutt, "The Tie that No Longer Binds," 254–56.

⁶¹Just as a PC(USA)–Cumberland Presbyterian tie

developed in Mississippi, so also there was friendship between PCA and Associate Reformed Presbyterian churches in the state, as ARP churches turned to Reformed Seminary for pastors. PC(USA) presbyteries sent candidates and lay preachers to Memphis Theological Seminary of the Cumberland Church, which had several PC(USA) professors.

⁶²GAM (PC(USA)) 1998, pt. 2, pp. 249–51, 388–90 (Mississippi and St. Andrew presbyteries); Presbyterian Church in America, General Assembly Minutes 1999, Part V., Statistical Reports for 1998, pt. 5, pp. 36–37, 64–65, 144–145 (Mississippi Churches of the Covenant, plus Grace and Mississippi Valley Presbyteries); GAM (PCUS) 1955 (statistics as of 31 Dec. 1954), pt. 2:150 (Synod of Mississippi); GAM (PCUSA) 1954, 3:27–28, 174 (Mississippi Presbytery, plus Mississippi churches of Birmingham Presbytery).