

**COMMUNITY PROGRAMS
FOR COOPERATING
CHURCHES: A MANUAL OF
PRINCIPLES AND METHODS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649374243

Community programs for cooperating churches: a manual of principles and methods by Roy B. Guild

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

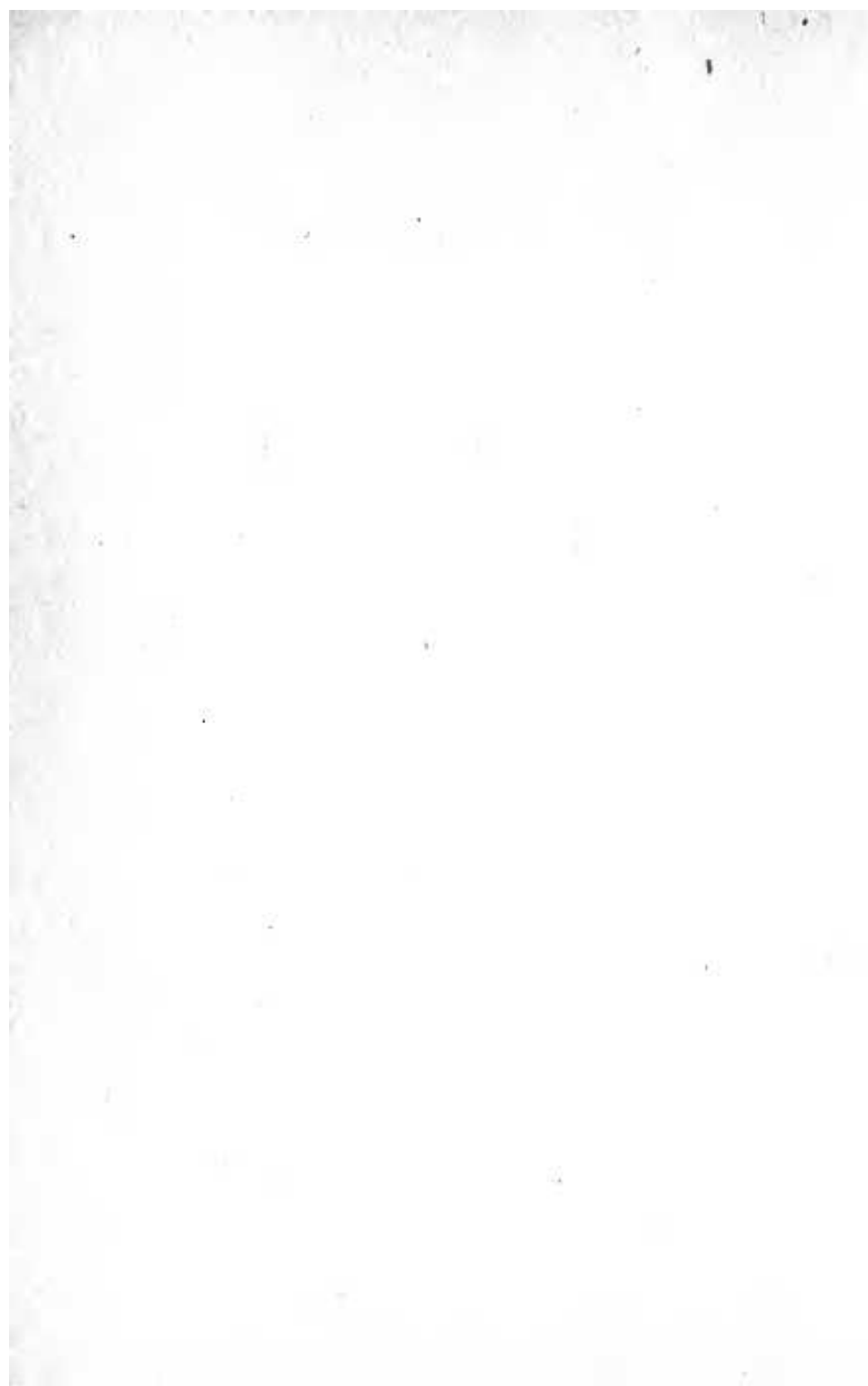
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ROY B. GUILD

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A Manual of Principles
and Methods

Edited by
ROY B. GUILD

ASSOCIATION PRESS
NEW YORK: 347 MADISON AVENUE
1920

EDITORIAL PREFACE

The churches of a community forming an organization to make cooperation effective constitute the sole authority as to form, personnel and name of organization as well as to program. Local autonomy is a fundamental principle. Each Council of Churches is a law unto itself. It has no organic relation with other councils. All fellowship between these councils whether local, state, or national is voluntary.

This fact must be borne in mind constantly by the reader of this book. The Convention for which these chapters were prepared and by which they were revised and approved had no authority. These recommendations are authoritative only so far as they command your attention and your service because of the common sense and Christian spirit evidenced in them.

This book is not a discussion of Christian cooperation on the part of churches. It is a report on present-day cooperation, a presentation of well-tested plans. Those who prepared the reports were charged not to tell why churches should cooperate, but how they do and can cooperate.

The names of those who assisted in the preparation of the reports and the plan of preparation are given in the appendix on page 240. You should read these lists of names that you may know by whom this work has been done. The Commissions were composed of men and women engaged in all fields of religious service in all parts of the country in all the leading denominations.

The reports were presented to the Church and Com-

munity Convention held in Cleveland June 1-3, 1920. This Convention was held under the joint auspices of the Commission on Councils of Churches of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and the Association of Executive Secretaries of Church Federations, of whom there were fifty at the time of the Convention.

"Community Programs for Cooperating Churches" takes the place of the "Manual of Interchurch Work." As the title of the book implies these reports deal primarily with the programs to be carried out in cities. The principles set forth and the plans suggested are, however, applicable to small communities and counties and even to commonwealths. The following statement was approved in the discussion of the report on Principles and Methods of Organization. The next great step in cooperative church work will be the mobilizing of the state forces as has been done especially in Massachusetts and California. State autonomy and state financial support alone can secure success.

"The reports presented and discussed at this Convention deal with the Church and the community. They have not attempted adequately to treat the Church and the commonwealth.

"This fact implies no intention of ignoring the importance of state councils or federations of churches, which some in attendance consider the very keystone in the arch of interdenominational cooperation. It is recognized that organization of the churches upon state lines is necessary to enable them to influence the state, as the primary legislative and executive authority under our Federal Constitution; to secure the official endorsement

of the denominations, which, for the most part, are organized upon state lines; and to cover the whole field of comity and cooperation, both territorially and practically."

There are now forty city councils and federations of churches. There will be steady development in the programs that are adopted. A great deal of literature is being prepared in the cities, copies of which can be secured by writing to the *Commission on Councils of Churches, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.*

As local autonomy is so important an element in a Council of Churches, so local initiative is most important. City after city has formulated plans and perfected an organization because of the vision and the determination of some one clergyman or layman. The advance will continue along this line. The Commission on Councils of Churches, and secretaries and officers of councils or federations, will gladly assist in any way possible to promote cooperation of churches. Special literature can be secured to bring the subject to the attention of those whose interest is desired.

It is not customary to print convention addresses in a volume of this character. The addresses delivered by Dr. Robert E. Speer and the Rev. M. Ashby Jones, D.D., are, however, such strong statements of the truths that must permeate all Christian work that they are rightfully added.

Special thanks are due to the members of the Commissions and especially to the chairmen and secretaries who served with the editor as an Editorial Board. The attempt has not been made to adjust all the duplications

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of suggestions or to run each report into a single mold. The program is not completed. This book only records a stage in the progress of true Christian fellowship and service.

ROY B. GUILD.