

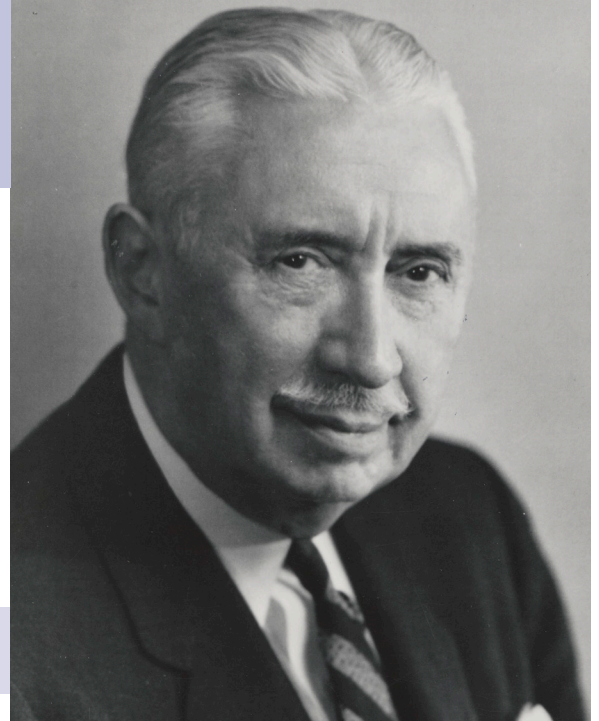


Telling Our Stories

250 Years of United Methodism
in the New York Area

1766-2016

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UTS Records Series 18 Faculty Photographs. The Burke Library at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University in the City of New York

Nationally-Known Radio Preacher and Pastor of Christ Church

1889-1970

Ralph Sockman

In 1946 *Time* called him “the No. 1 Protestant radio pastor of the U.S.” He received more than 4000 letters per week from fans of his Sunday morning *National Radio Pulpit* broadcasts.

Rev. Dr. Sockman was pastor of Christ Church in New York from 1917 to 1961. His goal was to both teach and inspire:

“You’ve got to put something in people’s heads, rather than just give them a shot in the arm.” - *Time*, Oct. 1961

Known as much for his caring and calm demeanor as for his busy schedule, Sockman preached three times on Sundays, traveled frequently on lecture/preaching tours and wrote many books. In 1961 *Time* reported that he recently preached in a whisper into a microphone to avoid breaking his 44 year record of never missing a sermon because of illness!

Sockman believed in the importance of deeply personal preaching. Among his words of wisdom still widely quoted:

“The test of courage comes when we are in the minority. The test of tolerance comes when we are in the majority.”

“Our growth depends not on how many experiences we devour, but on how many we digest.”

For Discussion

- Listen to Rev. Sockman’s sermon on the *Voices of Lycoming* web site (<https://www.lycoming.edu/library/archives/voices.aspx>). What do you think of his preaching style? How does it differ from preaching you might hear today?
- Rev. Sockman believed that radio might nudge more people into church. How do you think modern forms of media can bring people closer to the church?

New York Annual Conference
Commission on Archives and History
C. Wesley Christman Archives
archives@nyac.com - 914-615-2241