

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

Contact: Bob McGill



Mailed March 25, 1981

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio - Dr. Sidney E. Mead, renowned lecturer and author who is considered "dean" of American church historians, will lead a community forum series April 3-6 at Youngstown State University.

This series of discussions and lectures, free and open to the public, is to explore the role of the church in the development of American culture.

The five programs during Dr. Mead's four-day visit were arranged by two faculty members of YSU's College of Arts and Sciences, and two local clergymen: Dr. Earl E. Eminhizer, associate professor, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies; Dr. Alvin W. Skardon, professor, History Department; the Rev. Edward J. Searl, minister of First Unitarian Church; and the Rev. William Brewster Jr., rector of St. John's Episcopal Church.

Dr. Mead's appearances here were made possible by grants from the local chapter of the American Professors for Peace in the Middle East, First Unitarian Church, the Ohio Program in the Humanities, and the university's Special Lecture Series Committee.

Purpose of the forums is to make the public aware of the place of religious history in American culture, and to dispel the idea that the study of religion and its history should be limited to only those involved in theology or church related professions.

At 8 p.m. Friday, April 3, Dr. Mead will participate in an informal discussion with area religious leaders in the Faculty Lounge, Arts and Sciences Building, Fifth Avenue and Spring Street. This will center on concerns with religion in culture. Among those invited to attend are members of the Mahoning Valley Council of Churches, Warren Area Ministerial Association, and other area ministerial groups.

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Area historians and other interested persons are invited to meet with Dr. Mead at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 4, in the same faculty lounge. Theme of this meeting will center on the religious history of America and its relation to other areas of historical studies.

At 11 a.m. Sunday, April 5, Dr. Mead, a prominent Unitarian, will make a formal address to the public at First Unitarian Church, Elm Street and Illinois Avenue, on the theme of the programs, "The Role of the Church on the Culture of the United States."

Dr. Mead will speak and hold an open discussion with YSU students and those from other area colleges at 11 a.m. Monday, April 6, in the Carnation Room (Room 217) at Kilcawley Center on the campus.

The guest lecturer's final presentation will be a public lecture on the church and American history and culture at 3 p.m. Monday in the Carnation Room, Kilcawley Center.

Dr. Mead, a former president of the American Society of Church History, was president of Meadville (Pa.) Theological School 1956-60, and since his retirement as a teacher, has been special lecturer at Vanderbilt University, Yale Divinity School, Union Theological Seminary in New York, and other universities.

He received bachelor degrees from University of Redlands, Calif., and Yale, and master's degree from the University of Chicago. He taught in the University of Chicago's Divinity School, and later became chairman of its Church History Department. He also taught in the Southern California School of Theology, University of Iowa, University of Montana, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is a member of the American Historical Association, Organization of American Historians and American Catholic Historical Association.

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