

# Saints and sinners: Time to bring back the 'Golden Years'

"Darn it!"  
When was the last time you heard anybody say that? You've heard (bleep) and (bleep) and (bleep) and maybe have used those four-letter words yourself, but "darn" went out of style years ago when a tide of profanity began engulfing our culture.

It's hard to believe "darn" was considered a swear word. There is a comedy by Cal Stewart from an old Victrola record I have, called "Uncle Josh and Aunt Nancy Put Up the Kitchen Stove."

He wants to go fishing, she wants him to put up the stove. Finally, Uncle Josh says, "All right, if somebody will help me, I'll put up the darned old stove."

Aunt Nancy replies, "I'll help you, but you needn't swear about it."

Some folks might be right when they say they see nothing awfully wrong with swearing. But can't the decline of standards and the disappearance of taste in our society be traced to this habit of ours to accept anything so long as there is nothing "awfully wrong" about it?

The fact that there is nothing "awfully wrong" with a thing doesn't mean it is elevating, and until we become more concerned than we currently are with elevating our speech and actions, our civilization will continue to decline.

People have always sworn. The Gospel of St. Mark (King James Version) says that the apostle Peter (who became the first pope) "began to curse and to swear" in the garden of Gethsemane during a tense moment in Holy Week.

What is relatively recent with swearing is that women now swear as much as men and men swear in front of women. Women got to swearing in earnest, I believe, as a result of the feminist movement. Anything men could do, women could do, including take up this vulgar habit. On top of that, any man who would swear in front of other men but not in the presence of a woman was accused of being sexist.

Another relatively recent development is swearing in movies and on television. Vul-



**george plagenz**  
● saints & sinners

garity and obscenity in these two mediums has reached the point where the "C" word (censorship) is again being heard in the land.

The Legion of Decency, the morals watchdog of the Catholic Church, was primarily responsible for imposing censorship on the movies. Founded in 1934 by the Catholic Bishops of the United States, every film that came out of Hollywood had to pass the cleanliness test. Hollywood adhered to these guidelines from the legion's inception to the mid-1960s when, after years of diminishing authority, the organization loosened its grip on the movie industry.

Mae West, in particular, was giving the bluenoses fits with her insinuating walk and

talk. "Come up and see me sometime" was her classic line. Double entendres of hers such as "I've found a new way to go to town" were also drawing deep frowns from the movie moguls with the blue pencils.

Vulgarity of even the mildest sort drew a no-no from the guardians of the country's morals. When the script for the movie version of "Born Yesterday" (1950) called for Brock, the junk dealer tycoon played by Broderick Crawford, to belch, the censors let out a loud noise of their own: "Eliminate the burp from Brock." It was cut.

Before the Legion of Decency, in the face of organized boycotts by Catholic moviegoers, the film heads formed their own censorship organization to police what came out of Hollywood. In 1922, they organized the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America and named William H. Hays as their president with all the powers of a censor.

Hays had the perfect credentials for the job. An elder in the Presbyterian Church, teetotaler and non-smoker who never

swore, coming from small-town America (Sullivan, Ind.), Hays became active in Indiana political affairs, was chairman of the Republican state committee, and served as chairman of the Republican National Committee from 1918 to 1921. He was postmaster general under President Harding for two years, from 1921 to 1922. As president of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America from 1922 to 1945, he administered the motion-picture moral code (popularly called the "Hays Code"), which was made effective in 1934 by an agreement of the leading men of the industry.

Protests by authors and producers that the "Hays Office" was ruining their creative efforts did not appear to have had much validity. Quite the contrary. The 1930s, when the studios raised the cry that they were being forced to operate under impossibly restrictive moral standards, turned out to be Hollywood's "golden years."

Would censorship today bring back those golden years?

# Collecting information on sects produces invaluable guide

By Richard N. Ostling

AP Religion Writer

Americans are proud of their freedom of religion, and the work of J. Gordon Melton shows they have a whole lot of religions to choose from.

The Roman Catholic Church may be huge but it's only one among 116 Catholic denominations. Orthodox Christians have an even higher total, and Protestantism is notoriously splintered; its Pentecostal segment alone counts groups by the hundreds.

There's a denomination for practically everyone.

If the Episcopal Church won't do, worshippers can move leftward into the Metaphysical Episcopal Church or Free Episcopal Church, or rightward into dozens of breakaways like the Anglican Mission in America.

Does Unitarianism seem too conventional? The denomination offers a subgroup of Unitarian Universalist Pagans.

Moving further from the mainstream, there's always the Church of God Anonymous, the Nudist Christian Church of the Blessed Virgin Jesus or the Only Fair Religion.

All are among 2,630 U.S. and Canadian faith groups described in the new edition of the indispensable "Encyclopedia of American Religion." Melton, a one-time United Methodist pastor, treats each entry with nonpartisan objectivity and — when necessary — a straight face.

The total includes ecumenical organizations, loosely-knit movements and defunct faiths. But most are still-existing denominations with distinct flocks (Melton prefers to call them "primary religious groups").

Melton's task includes placing religions into 26 "families" — and then breaking those down into subcategories. For instance, his "Psychic New Age" family includes Sun Myung Moon's Unification movement, Jim Jones' suicidal People's Temple and the Church of Scientology.

Among religions difficult to classify are the eight that practice drug use, 22 that believe in UFOs — including the Raelians at the center of the recent human cloning claims — and 12 mail-order religions that dispense instant clergy credentials or divinity degrees.

Melton's curiosity originated during his Alabama boyhood, when he attended a family reunion at a rural church. His mother warned, "What-

ever you do, don't talk about religion" because some relatives were touchy Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses. By late high school, he had given up stamp collecting for sect collecting.

In the 44 years since, he has obsessively compiled data on more creeds than anyone knew existed.

He has deposited his trove of 70,000 books and 40 filing cabinets of materials at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he teaches part time. The campus is two blocks from his Institute for the Study of American Religion.

Melton, 60, is especially adept at tracking obscure, smaller groups. He's an expert on occultism and takes pride in discovering religions that practice rigorous secrecy, such as the Kennedy Worshippers, who have made the late U.S. president into a divinity, and the Two-by-Two's, a network of nomadic evangelists.

Other Melton mentions: • All-One-God-Faith Inc. (based in Escondido, Calif.) is simply a soap company that spreads its eclectic doctrines through the labels of its products.

• The Church of the New Song (Bluffs, Ill.) recruits prison inmates and once claimed porterhouse steaks and Harvey's Bristol Cream to be its communion elements.

• The Embassy of Heaven (Strayton, Ore.) considers all earthly governments illegitimate and takes the logical step of issuing its own auto license plates.

• The Worldwide Church of God (Pasadena, Calif.) did something no other new religion ever has, rapidly reverting to standard Christian theology after the death of idiosyncratic founder Herbert W. Armstrong, known for his "World Tomorrow" broadcasts and Plain Truth magazine.

Two points emerge to Melton from his counting, tracking and compiling.

The United States is the most religiously diverse nation in the world — especially since immigration laws loosened in 1965 — though Europe as a whole is comparable. Christianity is the biggest single element: 70 percent of Americans belong to "some brand of Christian church."

What's more distinct, Melton says, is that America "is the most religious country that has ever existed, in terms of voluntarily taking part in religion. There's no country to equal

us, to date." The turning point was World War II when "the majority of the public became church members for the first time."

"The Christian groups know they have to compete. It keeps them alive, growing, and adapting, not resting on their laurels as groups in the major-

ity tend to do," he says.

The latest encyclopedia, its seventh edition, has some 250 groups that are newly listed since the 1999 version.

As soon as the manuscript went to the printer, Melton began discovering more to add. He has 10 new faiths, three of which believe in vampires.

## Worship warms the heart

### Calvary Gospel Church

**Pastor:** Rev. Steve Rains  
Fourth & College • 899-3605  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am  
Morning Service: 10:30 am  
Evening Service: 6:00 pm  
**Wednesday:** Adult Prayer and Worship: 7:00 p.m.  
Youth @ the Rock House: 7:00 p.m.  
Helping you focus upward in worship, inward in commitment and outward in evangelism

### Our Lady of Perpetual Help

**Pastor:** Father Norbert Dlabal  
307 W. 13th • 899-7205  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**  
4:30-5 pm Saturday or by appointment  
**Mass Schedule:**  
**Saturday:** 6 pm, **Sunday:** 10:30 am  
**Spanish Mass:**  
1st & 3rd Sunday: 2 pm



### Sonrise Christian Church

Ninth & Caldwell • 899-5398  
**Minister:** Tony Kafka  
**Youth Minister:** Doug Bean  
**Sunday:** Worship Service: 9:30 am  
Sunday School: 10:45 am  
**Wednesday:**  
Junior/Senior High Meeting: 7 pm  
Adult & Children's Classes: 7 pm

### Word of Life

**Joursquare Church**  
10th and Clark • 899-5250  
**Pastor:** John Coumerilh  
**Sunday:** Worship Celebration  
and Kids' Church: 10:30 am  
**First Wednesday**  
K.W.A.M.! (grades 1-5) 7 pm

### Pleasant Home Church

Serving the rural community  
for over 100 years  
Rt. 1, Box 180 • 694-2807 • 3190 Road 70  
**Pastor:** Charlie Busch  
694-2242  
**Sunday:** Worship Service: 9 am  
Sunday School: 10 am  
Evening Service: 6 pm

### Bible Baptist Church

**Pastor:** Don Crutcher  
Fifth & Broadway  
899-7368  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9 am  
Worship Service: 10 am  
Evening Service: 6:30 pm  
**Wednesday:** Evening Bible Study: 7 pm

### Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

1200 15th Street • Burlington, CO • (719) 346-7984  
**Sacrament Meeting:** 9:30 am  
**Sunday School:** 10:45 am  
**Priesthood/Relief Society:** 11:30 am

### Iglesia Del Dios Vivo

La Luz Del Mundo  
Spanish Speaking Church  
**Minister:** Esteban Ortiz B.  
1601 Texas • 899-5275  
**Daily Prayer:** Sunday thru  
Saturday: 5 am & 6 pm  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 10 am

### United Methodist Church

**Brewster:**  
**Pastor:**  
Worship Service: 10:45 am CST  
Sunday School: 9:45 am CST  
**Winona:**  
**Minister:** Rev. Bob Winters  
Worship Service: 9 am CST  
Sunday School: 10:15 am CST

### First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)  
**Pastor:** Loren Strait  
Eighth & Arcade • 899-5233  
**Sunday:** Worship Service: 10:30 am  
**Sunday School:** 9:15 a.m.  
**Activities:** Junior High & High School Youth Groups,  
Adult Bible Study, Choir, Men's and Women's Groups,  
Devotions Study, Monthly Fellowship  
**Special Notice:** Handicap Accessible, Hearing  
Assistance Equipment and Infant and Toddler  
Nurseries Available

### Kanorado United Methodist Church

**Pastor:** Leonard Cox  
399-2468  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9 am  
Worship Service: 10:15 am

### Church of the Nazarene

**Pastor:** Matthew Delp  
Third & Caldwell  
899-2080 or 899-3797  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:45 am  
Worship Service: 10:50 am  
Evening Service: 6 pm  
**Wednesday:** Evening Service: 7 pm

### First United Methodist Church

1116 Sherman  
899-3631  
**Pastor:** Rev. Janet Hernandez  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am  
Worship Service: 10:30 am

### Goodland Bible Church

109 Willow Road • 899-6400  
**Pastor:**  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:45 am  
Morning Worship: 11 am  
Evening Worship: 6 pm  
**Wednesday:** Call for location

### First Baptist Church

**Pastor:** Bud Chester  
Fifth & Center • 899-3450  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am  
Morning Worship: 10:30 am  
Evening Worship: 6:30 pm  
**Tuesday:** Mens' Prayer Group: 6:00 am  
**Thursday:** Night Bible Study: 7:00 pm

### St. Paul's Episcopal Church

13th & Center  
899-2115 or Rectory 899-2114  
**Priest:** Father Charles Schneider  
**Deacon:** Gretchen Talitha  
**Adult Forum:** Sunday: 8:30 am  
**Morning Prayer:** 9:30 am 1st & 5th Sundays  
**Holy Eucharist:** 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Sundays: 9:30  
Sr. Warden for emergencies during the week 899-2067

### Grace Fellowship Church

104 E. Hwy 24 • 899-6423  
**Pastor:** Bob Snyder •  
Residence: 899-0134  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 10 am  
Worship Service: 11 am  
Youth Group at Gattshall's at 5:30 pm  
Adult Bible Study 6 pm

### Seventh Day Adventist Church

1160 Cattletrail  
**Pastor:** Arlin Cochran • 785-332-2888  
**Saturday:** Sabbath School: 9:30 am  
Worship Service: 11 am

### Emmanuel Lutheran Church

13th & Sherman • 899-6161  
**Pastor:** Scott Grimshaw  
**Sunday:** Sunday School: 8:45 am  
Worship Service: 10 am  
**Wednesday:** Confirmation: 6 pm

### Church of Christ

401 Caldwell  
899-6185  
**Sunday:** Bible Study: 9:45 am  
Worship Service: 10:45 am  
**Wednesday:** Bible Study: 7 pm

The following sponsors urge YOU to attend your chosen House of Worship this Sabbath:

**Short & Son Trucking**  
Hwy. 24

**Koons Funeral Chapel**  
North Main

**Good Samaritan Center**  
208 W. 2nd

**Goodland Daily News**  
1205 Main

Thinking about buying your first home? Let Cynthia help you find the perfect home at the perfect price!



1316 Clark...\$42,500

Reasonably priced and ready to move into, this 3 bedroom home offers living room, eat-in kitchen with appliances, den and master bedroom with bath. Basement offers large laundry room, 2 bedrooms, storage and bathroom. Includes garage and carport.

534 W. 10th...\$62,000

Just kick back and enjoy...all the work has been done for you! Has new windows, siding, trim, guttering, central air and sprinkler system. Inside you'll find a beautiful kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, full basement with family room and an enclosed sun room perfect for family gatherings.

528 W. 13th...\$52,000

This fully remodeled home offers 4 bedrooms, bath, eat-in kitchen with appliances, large living room and utility room. Oversized double garage offers heat, air and bathroom, improvements include new sheetrock, texture, paint, wiring, and carpet. This home is ready to move into!

You can find these and many other homes available through our office, stop by for a visit and speak to Terry, Cynthia or Donna, we'd love to help!

Cynthia Butts, 899-3944; Donna Moore 899-6159.

**RICHARDSON'S HOMESTEAD REALTY, INC**

1023 Main • Goodland, KS 67735  
785-899-2328 or 1-800-974-2426

ORE-MAIL US AT: [homestead@goodland.ixks.com](mailto:homestead@goodland.ixks.com)

Visit our website: [www.goodlandksrealestate.com](http://www.goodlandksrealestate.com)