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**90-Year-Old Dedicates New
'Amazing Grace' To Carter**

By Erwin L. McDonald

LITTLE ROCK (BP)--A 90-year-old Little Rock minister-educator-poet has written a new version of President-elect Jimmy Carter's favorite hymn, "Amazing Grace," and is dedicating it to Carter.

Joseph Boone Hunter, a former Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) missionary to Japan, has had his hymn copyrighted and is making it available at no charge to churches wishing to use it as a feature of worship on "Inauguration Sunday," January 16, the Sunday just ahead of the presidential inauguration on January 20.

Hunter wrote the new version before the presidential race and decided to dedicate it to Carter as he listened to the Carter interview by New York journalist Bill Moyers on national television.

At that time candidate Carter told of his "born again" religious experience and indicated that "Amazing Grace" was his favorite hymn.

"I was greatly impressed with Mr. Carter's sincerity of purpose and his personal religious experience," the veteran minister said in an interview here. "He impressed me as being the kind of leader our country desperately needs at this time."

Hunter sees the Carter election as "an answer to prayer," and commends the new President to the "continuing prayer support of people of all denominations."

The first two verses of the Hunter hymn relate to the "new birth" of the Christian religion, which received wide publicity during the presidential campaign as a result of the Carter statement of faith:

"Amazing Grace, His boundless love, surrounds and fills my soul; And since I hold Him in my heart, My life has joys untold.

"I tried for years to live alone And keep His love away; But, He, my path, did walk beside, To shield my steps each day."

Although the third stanza was written with all Christians in mind, Hunter sees it as particularly reflective of the life experiences of the president-elect:

"I know I've crossed o'er swollen streams and yawning chasms wide; Perhaps some fainted soul at prayer, Though unseen was my guide."

The closing stanza highlights the Christian's commitment to God's purposes for his life:

"And now I would my witness bear, His love and Grave make known; I've found my task along life's road; His call shall be my own."

Churches may secure copies of the hymn at no charge by writing to Hunter at his residence, 68 Berkshire Drive, Little Rock, Ark. 72204, and enclosing 26 cents in stamps for the cost of mailing.

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He will provide one copy to a church with permission for it to be reproduced for church use. His copyright is to protect his rights as author against someone publishing the hymn without his permission.

Writing poetry and hymns has been a lifelong hobby of Hunter, who was born at Allen, Tex., in 1886.

He has written a Christmas poem each year since 1929 and is presently composing a poem for the Bicentennial Christmas of 1976.

"I agree with the late Robert Frost that 'A poem has to begin with a lump in your throat,'" said the minister. "If you are going to write poetry, you have to begin with a deep motional experience--a great joy, or perhaps, a heavy burden."

For a long time, Hunter has felt the need for the old hymns to be reworded. Besides "Amazing Grace," he has written new versions of other hymns, including "Just As I Am" and "Rock of Ages."

Some of his versions have been widely used.

He has also written a number of new hymns, including one entitled, "Personal Peace," which he wrote after a conference with a man who had been on his way to commit murder, but who gave up his gun for Christian commitment.

Better prepared academically than most people of his generation, Hunter has the bachelor of arts degree from Transylvania College, Lexington, Ky.; the master of arts degree in political science from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.; and the bachelor of divinity degree from Yale University Divinity School, New Haven, Conn. He also has the honorary doctor of divinity degree from Butler University, Indianapolis, Ind.

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Erwin L. McDonald is religion editor for the Arkansas Democrat and editor emeritus of the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

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Colorado Baptists Elect
Larry Jerden Editor

Baptist Press
11/11/76

DENVER (BP)--Larry R. Jerden of Memphis has been elected editor of The Rocky Mountain Baptist in a special called meeting of the Colorado Baptist General Convention's executive board here.

Jerden, 32, associate editor of World Mission Journal, published by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, will join the Colorado staff, about Feb. 1, according to Glen Braswell, convention executive director.

He will succeed O. L. Bayless, who retires Feb. 28, serving as the fourth editor in the young state convention's 21-year-history. He will also be director of public relations, Braswell said.

The 8,600-circulation Rocky Mountain Baptist is one of 33 state Baptist news publications of conventions which cover Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) work in 50 states. The Colorado Convention, among the newer conventions in the 131-year-old SBC, has some 150 churches with 55,000 members.

Before joining the Brotherhood Commission staff in August 1973, Jerden served for five years on the Baptist Standard, weekly news publication for Texas Baptists, as staff writer and assistant editor.

Previous positions include assistant editor of Baptist Men's Journal, predecessor to World Mission Journal; news writer in the public relations office of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville; and reporter for United Press International, Little Rock.

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During college Jerden, was a part-time sports writer for the Bryan (Tex.) Eagle, 1966, and worked for two summers on the Rutherford (County) Courier, Smyrna, Tenn.

A graduate of Texas A & M University, with a bachelor of arts degree in journalism, Jerden also served as staff writer, sports editor, chief editorial writer and associate editor of the campus newspaper, ~~The Battalion~~.

He has completed all but a thesis on his master's degree in journalism from East Texas State University, Denton, and has attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

A native of Arkansas and reared in Texas, Jerden married Kathy Hoke of Bay City, Tex., in 1966 and has two children.