

Baptist Herald

May 1983



By God's Power...
Growing Churches

Keeping In Touch

Growing healthy churches is a primary N.A.B. Conference concern today. There is a new commitment to reach more people with the Gospel.

Our average annual membership growth during the last 10 years has been from one to three percent a year. That is not a very inspiring record. Sometimes, we tend to want to make this fact look a little better by comparing ourselves to denominations that have declined dramatically in membership during this same time. It would probably be more helpful if we would compare ourselves to other groups that are growing more than we are and try to discover why they are growing.

When you think about it, God's process of tree growing is a good illustration regarding growing healthy churches. From the growth rings on a tree stump, you can chart the life history of a tree. During the good years when water is plentiful, the growth rings are wide and distinct. In other years when the tree suffered from draught, fire, or disease, the rings were marred and hardly visible. Trees that year after year sustain healthy and consistent growth are strong and mature. Their trunk and root system will support a large and dense array of limbs, leaves and fruit.

Churches also need healthy and consistent growth to be strong and mature. How healthy is your church? Have you analyzed your growth (or decline) during the last 10 years? Are you satisfied that you and your church are doing the very best in seeking to reach all people in your community regardless of ethnic or other differences?

I have been very encouraged lately by reports from our churches regarding growth goals that have been set

for 1983. It is exciting to note that growth goals of three percent, 10 percent, 30 percent, 50 percent and even 100 percent are being set. To me, it means that churches are planning and setting priorities: making new commitments of time, energy, and resources to reach people in their communities. These high goals have not been recommended from the N.A.B. Conference office but have been initiated within the churches through the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

I believe that nothing can replace the local church in God's plan of Christian growth and reaching the world for Christ. We must realize, however, that churches are living things. They can be built up, or they can be cut down. They can grow, or they can die. They are either growing or dying. There is no inbetween.

In Acts chapter 2, we are given some suggested marks of a healthy, growing church. We note that the people involved had a deep desire to understand Christian doctrine. They longed to know who God is and how he works in our world. "... They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teachings" (vs. 42). The infant church craved inspired instruction and was furnished it. Inspired teaching is the breath of the church.

There was unity and love in the early church. They enjoyed each other's company. It says, they "devoted themselves to fellowship and breaking of bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness" (vs. 46). The people were loved into the kingdom. Often there are no results of our witnessing because we do not love the people whom we are trying to reach. It was said of the early church, "Be-



hold how they love one another." That is the mark of a true disciple.

They presented the gospel to non-believers in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the world. If there is no sowing, there is no harvest. Every farmer knows that principle very well. We tend to forget that in the church sometimes. There is a direct relationship between witnessing and the results. Regular, consistent presentation of the gospel and seeking of a response will bring results. God has promised it. People are not won into the kingdom by winning theological debates. People are won by the simple, consistent, and clear communication of the message of Jesus Christ and by living that message in society. The Apostle John reports that "when he (Jesus) is lifted up he will draw all people unto himself."

There are many more marks of a healthy, growing church. Discover them from scripture and seek to achieve them in your church. □

John Binder

Executive director
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Biblical Keys to Church Growth

by Gene A. Kern

Church growth is an emphasis and concern that can be either exciting or threatening, it depends upon your attitude and place in life. If you are in a numerically growing church, you are excited. However, if you are in a congregation that may be declining or barely hanging on, you may be somewhat threatened.

I would like to share words of encouragement to the discouraged along with some thoughts of caution to those of you who are riding the crest of a spiritual high because of increased numbers. Increasing numbers of people may not necessarily be the most valid measuring stick of effective, God-honoring ministry. If it were the only ingredient that counts, then we would have to say that the cults are right on track, for they certainly are growing numerically.

Personally, in the 19 years that I have had the privilege of being a pastor, the Lord has seen fit to always surround the ministry I was a part of with a certain measure of numerical growth. I have often wondered why. Possibly God knows that if I would not see that ingredient, I would become discouraged.

Frequently the question is asked of me: What is it that you are doing which brings about such rapid numerical growth? Let me assure you, I am asking that question myself. I am convinced that it is not so much what I am doing but what God is doing; although I do recognize that the Lord most definitely uses us, as servants, in the building of his church.

A Church Begins

Sunrise Baptist Church, just like every other Christian body of believers, was conceived by God long before the foundations of the world were laid. Then, in 1973, the Northern California Association of North American Baptist Churches prayerfully and carefully considered where they would be involved together with the Holy Spirit in the planting of a new church. Almost simultaneously, a survey was done in a growing area of suburban northeast Sacramento to determine the needs and interest for the start of a new church along with possible church land sites. Seven people began to meet regularly in the study of the Word of God, and 5.6 acres of prime property was purchased by the Nor-Cal Association working together with our N.A.B. Church Extension Department.

In September of 1973, we, as a family, were called to become the pastor's family of this new ministry. Responding positively, but not without fear and limited

Th Rev. Gene A. Kern is pastor of Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, CA, and is moderator of the North American Baptist Conference, 1982-85.

faith, we reluctantly left Calvary Baptist Church of Aberdeen, South Dakota, and headed west, arriving in Fair Oaks on January 1, 1974.

Five days later, Pastor Art Brust introduced us to the seven people meeting for Bible study. Pastor Brust and the staff of Willow Rancho Baptist Church, Sacramento, CA, had given leadership to this infant work until we arrived.

In February of 1974, we began meeting for Sunday worship and the study of the Word in a Sunday school



"God in his own sovereign way will build his church, but it is paramount that we stress the qualities of depth in Bible teaching and preaching, prayer, caring, loving, and equipping of people for the ministry."

setting. Our temporary facilities were anything but desirable and adequate; however for almost two years, we witnessed God do great and mighty things. At our first service, we had 18 in attendance for Sunday school, and 22 were there for worship. By the time we had completed our first building late in 1975, we had grown to about 150 people.

Today, it is really hard to measure the total breadth of God's ministry through the body of Sunrise Baptist Church. Our membership has exceeded the 1,300 mark with about one half of those being new Christians. Because of space limitation, we have had to demonstrate flexibility and for the past three years have had three Sunday morning worship services.

In all of this, I want to be very careful that I or we, as a church, do not draw praise and acclaim to ourselves. This is God's ministry, and each day he is teaching me something new. As I endeavor to daily be what God wants me to be, I believe I am gradually coming to an understanding as to the Biblical Keys to Church Growth. While I have shared something of the numerical growth of the body, I am keenly aware that church growth involves much more than numbers of bodies, budget and buildings. When we examine Scripture, we find that numbers of people were not stated as a goal to be

reached but rather a fact of what God had done as a result of some key factors. So, numerical growth must be viewed as a result of something far more significant. Those key vital signs are what we want to focus upon.

God's Sovereign Will and His Design for the Church

I believe that the number one Key to Church Growth is related to *God's own sovereign will and design for the church*. In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 16, verse 18, Christ said: "I will build my church."

Nowhere in the Bible do we have a mandate to build or grow a church (Psalm 127:1). We certainly are called upon to be faithful in witnessing, praying, teaching, and in caring for one another. As we are faithful, God brings about the increase and in his own unique way keeps building lives into his body. Consequently, the size of the congregation is, by and large, the Lord's doing.

I have come to the conclusion that in God's eyes there is not a church that is too small nor is there one that is too large. If the Lord is the builder of his church, then he always knows how large a church is to be at each specific point in its history. Yes, we, as people, may say: "That church is too large or too small." But, I guess then we also have to say to the Lord, "Lord, you don't know what you are doing—you've built too small." Keep in mind, I am not at all at this time speaking of buildings, which we often refer to as churches, but rather I am thinking about people who have trusted Christ as personal Lord and Savior and by faith are placed into his body, the church.



"It is not so much what I am doing but what God is doing; although I do recognize that the Lord most definitely uses us, as servants, in the building of his church."

Concern for Depth of Ministry

Because of God's sovereignty, I must admit that I do not encourage the setting of membership and attendance goals. I am more inclined to set ministry goals, which relate to quality of Biblical ministry. These are harder to measure, but I am convinced that they are more Scriptural. For example, as we examine the early accounts of the Christian church in Acts 2, we find that as Peter preached the Gospel message and called people to repentance, 3,000 received the Word, were baptized and subsequently added to the body of Christ. That is

tremendous Church Growth, but it is reported as a statistical fact, not a goal. Nor do we find anyone saying that is too many or this church is too large.

In the next verse, we find that they continued in devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. They were key ingredients in the life of the early church, and I believe they should still be today.

At the close of Acts 2:47, we find that those people in that congregation were praising God and were approved of by all the people. *AND THE LORD WAS ADDING TO THEIR NUMBER DAY BY DAY THOSE WHO WERE BEING SAVED!*

In other words, if we will be faithful and consistent in the sharing of the Gospel message, the Lord will bring about the increase. This includes not only the calling of the unsaved to repentance, but also the ministry of discipling the saved and the equipping of the saints for ministry as well as a constant nurturing and shepherding of the flock. Let's all be concerned about the depth of the ministry and let God take care of the breadth.

We have another early example of Church Growth in Acts 6:1, where it says: "Now at this time while the disciples were *increasing in number* . . ." A complaint arose. What was it? Possibly it was related to the size of the church. Not really, although it was related to that. As there was an increase of people and needs, a specific neglect became apparent. It is very important to notice what happened. While the initial neglect was related to the needs of widows, an even greater neglect would have resulted if the apostles would have run off in all directions meeting a very legitimate need only to create a greater one in neglecting their time in the ministry of the Word and in prayer.

Today, because of constant needs among our people, it is so common for pastors to be out endeavoring to be all things to all people; consequently, we come to our pulpits on Sundays dry, shooting from the hip, shaking ourselves in an effort to say something which will meet the deep inner spiritual needs of our hurting people, but we cannot. Why? Because we have been everything to everybody, and most of all, we have neglected our time in the Word and in prayer.

I am convinced that unless we have the luxury of living in a community where there are no unreached people, God in his own sovereign way will build his church. But it is paramount that we stress the qualities of depth in Bible teaching and preaching, prayer, caring, loving and equipping of people for the ministry.

A pastor of another generation said: "Wherever the Bible is preached, church growth occurs, for people are always searching and hungry for the Word of God." My challenge to you, as well as to myself, is to let God, in his sovereign way, build his church, but at the same time, we must stretch forth in great depth with a quality Bible-centered ministry that meets the needs of people in a practical way right where they live. □

On Growing Churches

Pastors of some of the churches that achieved the most growth in 1981 in their respective Associations answer the question: "What, do you think, was the most significant factor in causing your church to grow?" The answers show these characteristics prevalent: A desire to grow; an open, friendly, warm congregation; a loving, caring group of people; and an openness to all ethnic groups.

An Atmosphere of Freedom, Acceptance

by Roger Cauthon

Over the past year and a half, Meadow Hills Baptist Church has doubled in attendance. A contributing factor is obviously that the church is ideally located in a growing area of a growing city, Aurora, Colorado. Aurora is Denver's largest and fastest growing suburb and is rapidly becoming a major city in its own right. The city holds the distinction of being the fastest growing city of its size in the nation.

Meadow Hills Baptist Church began in late 1974 as a home Bible study. Land was purchased, and an educational building was erected in late 1976. That same building continues to serve as a worship center, educational facility, and fellowship hall. Sufficient land was originally purchased to allow for future growth. However, the city was growing rapidly for many years while the church did not grow. Therefore, other factors must be considered.

A primary factor in the growth of Meadow Hills is the atmosphere of the church. Last year, the decision was made that Meadow Hills should have an atmosphere of freedom, acceptance, and creativity. The stated desire is that while the Gospel

The Rev. Roger Cauthon is pastor of Meadow Hills Baptist Church, Aurora, CO.

is faithfully proclaimed, the outworking of its message must be a people living under its demands and enjoying life as God's people. Worship was seen as crucial to this atmosphere. Herb Berry, music director, planned services that allowed people to participate and be active in worship. Through Mr. Berry's efforts, the congregation can sense an expectancy in worship as the church gathers each Sunday.

A second factor to growth was the two-fold desire of the church leadership to personally mature and to become true spiritual leaders of the church. Deacon Chairman Tim McPherson invested hours of work in arranging a functioning leadership team. The two-fold stress was

"The atmosphere of the church of freedom, acceptance, and creativity is a primary factor in church growth."

always present: grow personally in your walk with the Lord and then become true spiritual leaders.

Following the lead of the deacons, the church responded by beginning to open their homes in hospitality, sharing their time schedules, and sharing their families to include other people. Visitors continually remark that the church has a very friendly atmosphere.

Also crucial to growth has been the strong sense among the people that God wants to do something through Meadow Hills. As the Lord sent new people, the members allowed them to become involved quickly. The emphasis was placed upon people using their gifts for the whole church. Practically, realizing that God was moving among us, the people voted to increase missionary giving and set some financial priorities. Being faithful stewards of God's gifts and building his Kingdom now were important factors in the church. The church moved to stress the essentials of the

Gospel and refused to allow the minor issues to interfere with our fellowship. Those and other steps beyond self-centeredness have made Meadow Hills an exciting place to be.

All of these factors continue to be major guideposts for the development of Meadow Hills. The firm belief held by several faithful families that God wants to do something through Meadow Hills is now being realized. The growth of the church in spiritual maturity has allowed a greater ministry to people. The community of south Aurora is beginning to see a group of people build a community of believers. □

An Earnest Desire to Grow

by Edward Klingenberg

In considering the most significant factor in causing College Heights Baptist Church in Prince George, British Columbia, to grow, it was, first of all, an earnest desire to grow on the part of the whole church. We began by choosing a church growth committee to gather information on church growth and then share these findings with the congregation.

The need for outreach came across very forcefully; consequently, with earnest prayer, various avenues were explored. Weekly home Bible studies were organized and conducted totally by the laity with good results. The Women's Missionary Fellowship successfully planned and conducted periodic outreach programs, as did the Sunday School and youth groups. Home visitation and personal witnessing were and are great contributors to growth.

As new people began coming, the

The Rev. Edward Klingenberg is pastor of College Heights Baptist Church in Prince George, British Columbia, since 1978.

excitement grew. Welcoming new people and showing them that we loved and cared for them was and is continually being practiced by the congregation; consequently, again and again we are hearing testimonies that a great factor for them in choosing College Heights Baptist Church was the warmth and love manifested by the people.



Another great factor in causing growth was that we were able to erect and move into our own facilities. As long as we were meeting in a school gymnasium, some people were hesitant to commit themselves, not being sure that we were really here to stay. However, once the church was built, they felt more confident and had something with which they could identify.

"A significant factor in our growth was an earnest desire to grow on the part of the whole church."

Even to this day, it is exciting to meet new people in church almost every Sunday. We trust that the Lord will continue to keep the vision of lost souls before us and use us to reach these for him that his name may be glorified through College Heights Baptist Church. "The Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad." (Psalm 126:3). □

Faith-Vision, Goals and Caring

by James De Boer

Faith-vision, goals and caring are some of the key factors that have been instrumental in the growth of Hillside Baptist Church of Dickinson, North Dakota. For 14 years, Hillside struggled to grow numerically, in fact the Association church extension committee at one point wrestled to determine whether to continue supporting Hillside in order to keep the doors open. However, during that time, faithful men of God laid a solid scriptural foundation that helped the church through some very difficult times. "The conflicts and struggles that occurred during those years, caused a humbling and a turning to God for wisdom," one of our members said recently.

Faith-Vision

Probably the most important factor was the faith and vision of about 50 people to relocate—a \$250,000 venture of faith and vision. This small group of committed people began to plan for growth. Facilities were built to accommodate 150 in Sunday School. God has honored that faith as today a Building Committee is at work seeking to provide additional facilities because we are almost at capacity in Sunday School. A sanctuary was also built to accommodate about 225 plus an overflow. We are about ready to use the overflow space.

Goals

Almost three years ago, the church felt a need to streamline the Constitution to avoid overlapping of committees and boards. After a year of trial, a "one board" type of church government was adopted and has been functioning very well. The Elder Board and the various

The Rev. James De Boer is pastor of Hillside Baptist Church, Dickinson, North Dakota, since 1980.

committees have well-defined responsibilities and are accountable to the church body.

In 1980 a goal was set to begin a club ministry, but not until we had an adequate number of workers. God honored that goal, and in January 1983, Awana was begun. In six weeks, we already have contact with six non-church families, and a full aggressive thrust into the community will not begin until the leaders are well trained.



Home Bible Studies were also implemented. This unique ministry of Bible study, prayer, sharing, and outreach has seen many individuals grow and mature in their relationship with the Lord.

"Probably most important, was the faith and vision of about 50 people to relocate—a small group of committed people planning for growth."

Long and short-range goals are worked on yearly by the boards and committees.

Caring

Visitors over and over again share that they feel Hillside is a loving-caring group of people. All ideas

(Continued on next page)

and suggestions are listened to and respected. We may not agree, but there is a respect for the individual and his ideas. We work at this, and God is honoring it.

Are these all the factors? No. Committed leadership, hard-working, involved people, and continual shepherding complement the above.

Yes, God is at work in people's lives; yet we have only scratched the surface. As we continue to demonstrate faith in God, be visionary people, set goals and in a caring-loving way provide a Christ-centered, Biblical-based ministry, we expect God to do even greater things through his people. □

A Renewed Attitude Leads to Growth

by Rudy Lemke

I realize that in identifying some of the factors that have made for growth in our church, I run the risk of omitting a good number of significant contributing ingredients; yet some specific growth factors stand out.

One of these factors was a renewed growth mentality. It affected structural changes, but best of all, it brought new excitement and positive attitudes to ministry. How did it come about? Several of the ingredients were already present, but the encouragement of leaders and concerned believers, enhanced by good positive planning and the appearance of several new challenges, sparked progress.

Our prayer that the Lord would broaden our vision and deepen our concern unfolded before our very

The Rev. Rudy E. Lemke is pastor of Hudson Bay Park Baptist Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, since 1980.

eyes. The talk in board meetings related to people-oriented ministries and activities. New attention was given to enhance the worship service and greater effort was given to Biblical preaching that fed people spiritually. The reasoning was that people would go where their needs are met. Warm fellowship became even more inviting to new people.



Various growth factors came into focus around renewed attitudes. A new expression of confidence, expectation and openness developed an even more inviting fellowship. This process did not happen by itself. Several events triggered a new way of looking at opportunity. One was the challenge of initiating the beginnings of a new church in our city. Another was the challenge to sponsor refugees who were related to a Laotian family already attending our services. There were more.

"I understand that your church helps people with problems."

The renewed attitude and mentality for growth affected our budget, our decision-making process, and a person-centered concern that kept surfacing. A youth Bible study group formed almost spontaneously. Plans emerged for re-establishing our summer vacation Bible school.

The most exciting happening in our church now is the day-to-day lay ministry of many in our congregation. This includes spontaneous

visitation, praying with a person in need, phone calls of concern, mutual ministry invitations to new people, adoption of a friendship brother, lending a helping hand, caring in special ways, and just spending time with another person in counsel and encouragement.

One of the results of this ministry attitude is in the response of the community. There are perpetual visits from church neighbors. The presence of a good number of youth often draws affirmation from visitors. One recent phone call started, "I understand that your church helps people with problems," and the caller continued to identify a spiritual need. What a blessing to hear!

Attitude precedes action. We have sensed that in the growth of our church. □

A Genuine Friendliness Brings Growth

by Willi Kurtz and Kurt Frers

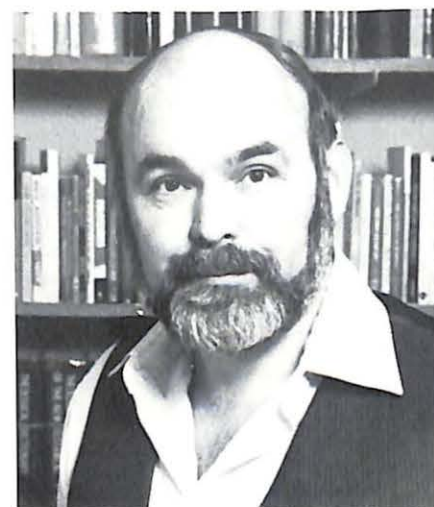
Fort Richmond Baptist Church is centrally located in a middle-to-upper class residential community in Southern Winnipeg, Manitoba. There are some housing projects within the area, as well as the large Campus of the University of Manitoba with approximately 23,000 students.

The Church has grown from the original three couples who began the work to a membership of 106, with an average Sunday morning attendance of 170 in its tenth year. This is despite the fact that there is a fairly active shift of constituency through job transfers and relocations.

To look at the growth of the Church, it is perfectly obvious that God in a sovereign way brought people here, often despite what was happening in the Church. That is rather exciting.

The Rev. Willi Kurtz is pastor and Kurt Frers is moderator of Fort Richmond Baptist Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

At the same time, under the leadership of Pastors C. Wiebe and David Lake, certain characteristics developed that increased the probability of the Church growing. The people developed a genuine friendliness towards visitors (some people stuck around because even the "teens" are friendly!), an authentic way of caring for one another and visitors who came; and a deep-seated hunger to see people receive Christ.



There is a very real perception among the people, noticeable now more than ever, that it is not a matter of initial spasms followed by chronic inertia! People stay here because of some of these things and the commitment of the leadership to move to grapple with problems and solve them. Example in point is the increase in giving from \$64,000 in 1980 to a budget of \$97,000 in 1983, the result of stewardship training programs, and a positive willingness to give.

"Our church has a philosophy of ministry in mind that is determined to address people's needs."

Another is the present activity of Long-Range Planning, with a philosophy of ministry in mind that is determined to address needs. Family-centered education has led to a very active club program, and a better than fifty percent increase in attendance in Sunday School in 1982, as over against 1981.

The significance of this is that it involves a rapid growth in the Adult Department, with a growing perception of the need for training. We try to provide it "in house" with expository preaching and teacher training as well as participation in locally offered seminars.

Right now our Christian education facilities are fifty percent less than what is needed. The worship service has gone beyond the eighty percent easy seating capacity.

The leadership is grappling with these needs. Coupled with the commitment to deepen the congregation's grasp of Scripture, especially as it applies to the Life of the Body, and a rising consciousness of the effectiveness of prayer, we look into the future with great anticipation and expectation. □

Growth—An Answer to Prayer

by Larry Froese

Our church, Century Meadows Baptist Church, Camrose, Alberta, has not only grown but also exploded. To what do I attribute this growth? First and foremost, I must honestly confess that the church grew not because of me but IN SPITE OF ME. "He must increase, and I must decrease," is my pastoral motto.

When I arrived four years ago, a small group of ladies were praying in earnest. They are responsible for what has happened—our growth is an answer to their prayers.

Evangelism is always at the forefront. More than 110 people have made first-time decisions for Christ in our Church during the last four years. Lay people are now doing the evangelism training of our church.

Change is constant. Our people are open to change, and we have experienced many changes. Small home Bible studies, caring

The Rev. Larry Froese is pastor of Century Meadows Baptist Church, Camrose, AB, since 1979.

ministries, two worship services, and outdoor summer movies are but a few of them.

The strongest and most exciting aspect of our church is the men. Four years ago, a few women did most of the work while the men looked on. Today, men have taken their God-given leadership in the homes and in our church. Our new temporary organization has seven elders and seven deacons. These 14 men exercise leadership in the church. Along with these men are the growth group leaders and caring ministers. God has answered my prayer to be surrounded by Godly men.



Church discipline is exercised according to Matthew 18. Offenders are confronted, and reconciliation is affected, or their names are removed from our membership. We have seen family members saved after church discipline has been carried out.

"Our growth is an answer to prayer." "Evangelism is always at the forefront."

There are, however, still some obstacles to growth: Psychological—We have a rural history, and people do not like a big church; Pride in the past—"Look what we have done" is not enough; we must keep on growing; Complacency—We will be debt free this year. Are we willing to launch out again?

Prayerlessness—In desperation four

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years ago, everyone prayed; today there is danger in resting on our "laurels" instead of genuine prayer.

We emphasize long-term commitment. When I came, I said I would like to stay until I had preached through the entire Bible. There are still a lot of books I have not preached through, and judging by the response of our people, they want to continue in the Word along with me and for that, I praise the Lord!

A Desire to Serve God Leads to Growth

by Jake Leverette

The most significant factor in the growth of Pineland Baptist Church, Burlington, ON, has been the desire of the people to serve the Lord. The form of that service has been as varied as the gifts and talents which God the Holy Spirit has bestowed on the individual believers who worship the Lord here. There are, however, some principles or factors, which encompass the total congregation.



There is a sincere concern for and love of people. Visitors to our church are overwhelmed by the

The Rev. Jake Leverette is pastor of Pineland Baptist Church, Burlington, ON, since 1980.

warmth of welcome extended to them. People in the community who have need and have been assisted by the church have been amazed by the love exhibited. A banker, who has helped us in financing the recent addition to our church, said that the officers of the bank could not believe the unity and harmony of the congregation, their love for their church, and their willingness to sacrifice for it. This congregation, to a large degree, exemplifies the counsel of Jesus in John 13:35: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." That spirit of love draws people who are spiritually hungry, those who need to be loved, those who are looking for reality and meaning to life, and those who want a "live" church.

"The desire of the people to serve the Lord is a significant factor in the growth of our church."

There is commitment to the purpose of our church, "Win the Lost—Teach the Saved," which goes beyond lip service. The practical reality of that purpose is the very life of the congregation. We have a vital visitation ministry with continual training, a discipleship training program, and many who accept Christ are disciplined individually or in small groups week by week. Counselors have been trained to lead people to Christ and to help those believers who need direction in their life.

The most exciting thing happening in our church is that the congregation expects God to do something new in our midst every week. When the invitation is given for people to respond to the claims of Christ, there is anticipation that there will be response. They have worked and prayed to that end.

There is great joy in pastoring this church where there is optimistic enthusiasm that 1983 is going to be a great year of harvest to the glory of God. □

Reach Out and Touch Somebody

by Eugene Stroh

Ma Bell, in her advertising, has urged all of us to "reach out and touch somebody." Measurable growth has taken place at Fountain Valley Baptist Church, California, because Christians have been engaged in that very activity. Many people have been attracted to the warm, loving spirit of our church. The gift of hospitality is a wonderful gift demonstrated time and again by our people. Only a year or two ago, some folk were strangers to us, but today they are actively involved in ministry because their neighbors, members at this church, showed an interest in them.



We are overshadowed by super church ministries in Southern California. This does not deter us from fulfilling our mission. The mobility of the population makes it difficult to show net increase, but fortunately those who move away are replaced by lovely people sent our way.

At this time, we are excited with our developing music ministry. A very successful Outdoor Christmas Nativity pageant, with nine animals, including a camel, drew good response from the community. In a

The Rev. Eugene Stroh is pastor of Fountain Valley Baptist Church, Fountain Valley, California.

letter to the congregation, the Mayor of Fountain Valley wrote: "It was a beautiful contribution to the community for the Holiday Season. We look forward to attending this presentation in future years." A high percentage of all age groups within our church family participated in this meaningful activity. An equal amount of energy was applied to the Living Easter Pageant. In addition to the ministry of our Adult Choir, we now have a Men's Chorus and Children's Choir.

"Measurable growth has taken place because our people were willing to 'reach out and touch somebody.'"

We are a family-oriented church. A well-coordinated Nursery, innovative Children's Church program, six Awana Clubs (a ratio of one leader for every three children enrolled), person-centered youth program, strong camp-retreat programs, excellent women's and men's fellowship programs, and Bible Study outreach for career women make for a high percentage of constituency involvement.

Christ is the Head of the Church. He asks us to let the church be the Church. We are glad to let him take the lead. □

Church Growth—Not a Secret

by Edward Carter

The "secret" to church growth is nonexistent. There may be keys, steps, and methods, but it is no secret what God can do if a church will: 1) engage in long-range planning; 2) have compassion for the unsaved and unchurched; 3) put legs to her prayers; and 4) remain sensitive to the will of God. There must be seed sowing before there is reaping.

The Rev. Edward A. Carter is pastor of First Baptist Church, Bellwood, Illinois.

ing. Cultivating, which includes fertilization, must proceed a harvest.

Such was the case at the First Baptist Church of Bellwood, Illinois, in 1976. Under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Loren Weber, First Baptist grappled with a problem some churches either ignore or shy away from. The problem was twofold: 1) declining membership (from 154 in 1975 to 126) and 2) ethnic and social change in the community.



Their decision was to receive and welcome into membership people of all ethnic and social groups who sought it as long as they met with the requirements set by the Constitution. Without that decision being made, church growth would have been impossible.

That year (1976) the Evangelism Committee began the positive action of sowing seed under the leadership of Dr. John Binder, its chairman. Sixteen members of the church plus 14 of "God's Volunteers" made 1,164 survey calls, 739 contacts and 147 follow-up calls, which resulted in 19 decisions for Christ. In addition over 1,000 flyers were distributed just before Vacation Bible School, and a new church bus route was developed. It was a time of sowing. Only three additions were realized for the year.

Little by little the attendance increased, and beginning in 1977 things started to happen. Fifty percent of the 10 additions in that year gave evidence that the community was beginning to respond. The Evangelism Committee, under new direction, did not continue the seed sowing, but engaged in fertilization

and cultivation with Bible studies in homes. The patient, persistent, and faithful ministry of Pastor Weber was to be admired, for the next two years, 1978-79, the total growth was only eight (still more than some churches).

The 42% membership growth over the next three years (14% per) took place in the two closing years of Loren Weber's ministry and the nine months' interim ministry of the Rev. Daniel Fuchs who was used of God to continue what Weber started (22 additions). Noteworthy are the facts that not since 1976 has there been an ambitious outreach as there was that year, and that 60 of the 64 additions since 1979 represent those people in the Bellwood Community that the church refused to turn her back on in 1975 and reached out to in 1976.

"Sixty of the sixty-four additions to the church since 1979 represent those people in the Bellwood community that the church refused to turn her back on in 1975 and reached out to in 1976."

What was then most significant is that new members brought their neighbors, friends, and family to church—they reached out to others, and they, in turn, reached out. The church reaches "outward" rather than staying "inward."

There is no secret to church growth, but the formula is sensitivity to the plan and will of God, persistent prayer and positive action, beginning with long-range planning on the part of God's people, and the love and grace of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9 & 10).

(Continued on next page)

The Bethel Story

by Darrell W. McKay

"Why has your church grown so much over the past two years?" When asked that question, I often take some time before responding, for I am not sure I know nor understand all the dynamics at work at Bethel Baptist Church, in Sheboygan, WI. There are a number of reasons for the membership increase.

Of the several factors, which led to our initial spurt in membership in 1981, the most significant was being willing to grow. Several of us had been praying for growth, and God answered our prayers in the fall of 1980 when he sent a large contingent of Hmong refugees from Laos.



From our perspective, the Hmong came because of prayer, but somehow I feel that from God's viewpoint they came as a test to reveal our hearts. I believe God wanted to see if we would accept growth if it meant coming from those who were "non-white" and from "outside."

This area is not known for its hospitality to those who are not "family," and many of the Hmong experienced acts of hostility and

persecution during their first few months in the community.

The willingness to grow even in this fashion was seen in the wonderful response our people gave to this test from God. Through a great outpouring of love, many needs were met. As a result many of the Hmong were open to hear about Jesus and subsequently to receive him as Savior. As we ministered to them, we were most conscious of the words of our Lord, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

"The most significant factor in our church growth was being willing to grow."

Both 1981 and 1982 were substantial growth years at Bethel. As of this writing, 41 Hmong have become members.

But Bethel's growth has not been solely from the Hmong. *With our church needing people with certain spiritual gifts, talents, and a desire to serve in strategic areas, some of us prayed for God to meet these specific needs.* He most graciously answered. As a result, our growth in 1982 was slightly greater than in 1981.

This has produced some exciting effects. First, our congregation has become more cosmopolitan with recent members and attenders coming from Laos, the Philippines, Columbia, and England joining with the German, Dutch, Irish, Scotch, Spanish, Swedish, and other nationalities already here. Another pleasing result was to see one of our Hmong members elected to the Board of Deacons in January. Not many are far enough along in language study and knowledge of the church to be active on boards and committees, but some are. They are beginning to be involved in the organization and ministry of the church.

Growth has brought some challenges as well. The first is to make our congregation truly one. Presently, we have a special worship service for the Hmong in their language three Sundays out of four. Thus we have two congregations,

This will eventually change when they advance in English, but an allied challenge remains: To bring the two congregations together socially. This is beginning to happen as some help and minister to the Hmong.

Another challenge is to get the entire Bethel family to see the need for expansion of facilities to meet a growing Sunday School and Awana program.

"Why has Bethel grown so much over the past two years?" We say as did the psalmist, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give glory" (Psalm 115:1). □

Local Church and Conference—Together Church Grows

by Ron Heisler

Southside Baptist Temple, which is located in the greater Toledo, Ohio, area, is an example of church extension at work. Our local church growth is a demonstration of the combined efforts of the N.A.B. International Office in Oakbrook Terrace and the local congregation working together. As Nehemiah said, "... they strengthen their hand for this good work" (Nehemiah 3:18).

Several factors have contributed to what God has done at Southside. There are three which are presently in force. In 1983, we will add a fourth: 1) the "fishers of men" outreach; 2) the new members' reception; 3) the "faith promise mission" conference; and 4) "stewardship with service."

Fishers of men is a program of commitment to reach our community for Christ. We meet in a twelve-week study and share time. Then we are involved in twelve weeks of on the job training in visitation. Last but not least, six months are devoted committing ourselves to

Dr. Ron Heisler is pastor of Southside Baptist Temple, Monclova, Ohio.

reproduce a disciple. This class is repeated three times annually.

New Members' Reception is a public recognition of those who



What, do you feel, your role is as a church extension pastor's wife?

I have always felt that a pastor's wife must be supportive of his ministry. I need to be willing to use the gifts that God has given me within the body of Christ.

When you move to a new church extension work, there are special needs relating to the children. Usually there are not many others their age. I need to be more available to them to help them establish relationships.

What are some of the ways a pastor's wife can give support to her husband?

Making the home life as comfortable and as pleasant as she can is

Sally Neufeld is the pastor's wife at Timberline Baptist Church, Lacey, WA.

have come into our church during a designated time period. It is like a wedding reception receiving line, where the new members are introduced to the officers and pastoral staff. A photo is taken of this wonderful occasion and given to the new members as a gift. A challenge is then shared to engraft the new member in immediate enlistment of fishers of men. A fellowship time follows.

The Annual Faith Promise Missions Conference is a week-long missions challenge when burdens and successes in development of worldwide evangelization are shared.

The stewardship with service ministry combines the command of our Lord to all Christians to have a maintenance of the ministry with practical visible results. We call these stewardship that demonstrates and service that communicates.

A Church Extension Pastor's Wife Speaks

Sally Neufeld, wife of Larry, pastor of Timberline Baptist Church, Lacey, WA, was asked her view.

important; especially with the fact that often the church extension pastor's study is in the home. Being willing to help out with things that need to be done within the church is important, also. In both of the churches that we have been in, I felt a real need to be available to do things in the church: things I never before could have pictured myself doing, or thought that I might be doing.

I was willing to say, "There is nobody else here to do this right now, and so, perhaps, Lord, that is an area I need to stretch." That's probably true of all pastors' wives, but I think especially in terms of church extension, they really have to be willing to stretch themselves.

What are some illustrations of having to "stretch" yourself?

When we got to Oregon and began to plan our first church service, they asked, "Who's going to play the piano?"

I was the only one who played the piano. So I had to be willing to say with the limited abilities that I

In conclusion, we feel that a yearly program built on these biblical principles combined with an informed and trained people brings about the product of a happy, motivated Christian family busy in the Master's service.

We thank you, the people of North American Baptist Conference, for your vision, encouragement, and financial support. During the trial and error time of the beginning years, your encouragement and wise counsel in presence and letter has to be considered a paramount factor in our church growth.

This combined commitment of the local ministry and the helpful guidance of the church extension ministry of our Conference has together built a "church which the gates of hell shall not prevail against" (Matt. 16:18). □

had at that point, "Lord, what I have is yours, and I'll play the piano." There are opportunities to use things that maybe in a different situation you would never have the opportunity to use.

In regard to women's ministries, women look to the pastor's wife for leadership. It is exciting to see the ministries for women grow out of the needs and desires of women to minister.

So you feel that your ministry is to be available and to be used however you are needed, or that God leads you into whatever things need to be done?

That's right. I try to do so cheerfully. I feel it is a way to set an example or model to the lay people. I often verbalize this, that I am a lay person, and that we all need to be there to be used by God. Sometimes God calls us to do things that we never would have dreamed. God is stretching all of us, and especially, maybe not necessarily, in church extension. It seems like a very good place to stretch and to grow. □

A Conversation With Larry Neufeld on Church Extension

In a conversation with the editor, Larry Neufeld reflects on his ministry in his first church extension pastorate, Hollyview Baptist Church in Boring, Oregon, where he served for eight years, and now as pastor of Timberline Baptist Church, Lacey, Washington. Lacey, with a population of about 15,000, is located about 20 miles south of Tacoma, Washington, and 50 miles south of Seattle.

Serving as the founding pastor of Hollyview and the second pastor of Timberline, as well as having pastored an established church, Northside Baptist Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, have given him opportunities to note the characteristics common to all three churches which draw people to a church.

You served as pastor of a church extension project in Boring, Oregon, for eight years before coming to Lacey. What is there about church planting that has caused you to accept the challenge of a second project?

I guess part of my heart for church extension goes back to my Seminary days. Sally, my wife, and I had been accepted as short-term missionaries to Cameroon, but medical problems prevented us from going. I guess church extension is the closest thing to missions for me. Even at that point in Seminary, we felt the desire for church extension in our first pastorate, which was Northside Baptist Church, now Hillcrest, in Sioux Falls, SD.

Also, our experience in the church extension project in Oregon was so positive. Coming from a traditional church to a church extension church was a struggle. In the church extension situation, the people were open and very willing to accept the humanity of their pastor. It was a growing experience for us as a family and for me as a person. We really felt the Lord work. I felt that I had some gifts that allow me to do church extension. We really enjoyed it.

What, do you think, are gifts needed to be a church extension pastor?

One thing that I think is important for a pastor is a *strong pulpit ministry*. When people come to any church, and especially to a church extension work, they want to hear good preaching.

I think you have to be *people-oriented* in church extension. I realize that is my perspective. Some pastors are very program oriented and have been very successful. But in terms of churches as I see them, I think you need to be people oriented and have a real openness. I think you have to be *flexible*, because you are reaching out to people with different kinds of backgrounds and perspectives.

I also am blessed with an *extremely supportive wife* who is very good at relating to people and has a beautiful way of helping me when I am down to laugh

at myself. That is one of the neat things I have going for me.

What are other gifts needed by a church extension pastor?

One gift that is obvious, yet important, is the gift of *administration*. Obviously, in church extension, if you are going to build a building or if you are going to put together a constitution, there needs to be administration. Administration is simply ways of generally equipping others to help them do the task that God has called them to do. So that is another gift that I feel I have.

I think a church extension pastor has to be *good at calling*. I do not see myself as a strong evangelist, but I do a lot of evangelism. It is something I do because I think the Lord expects me to do it, and sometimes somewhat effectively.

I think I have been *more effective at equipping and motivating people* in the area of evangelism than being a strong evangelist as such. But I think you do have to enjoy calling and have a heart for calling, to enjoy sitting down and talking to people, getting to know them, love them and share with them.

What are ways that you do equip and motivate people?

I find myself doing a lot of *one-to-one* with people: sitting down, talking, and sharing. For example, in our church in Oregon, we spent a lot of hours talking, sharing and praying together with a couple who worked with youth and who are still with the youth.

In terms of my whole philosophy of ministry, both the church extension congregations have been very much aware of the fact that I use the term ministry not as a professional term. We are all ministers. This is the philosophy that I have tried to model for people: that we are all to minister.

I feel that I have been gifted in helping new Christians to be excited about who they are. Even though they may not always be perfect in the presentation of the Gospel, they have the freedom to share the excitement that they are Christians. A lot of modeling and one-to-one discipling is very important.

Much emphasis is put on goals today. They may be ministry goals or church growth goals. What goals have you set?

I have a degree in mathematics from Washington State University. I chart out everything, and so I have goals.

In our Lacey, WA, church, our growth from July 1982 to January 1983 was about 100 percent. We went from 40 to 80. Our growth goal in attendance between now and December 1983 is to increase by another 50 percent and to be at 120. As a church, we are always setting growth goals.

In church extension, you need a vision for growth;

although again I would step back and say that the Lord calls us to be faithful. If he chooses to make that work really grow, great. If he does not, then it is our job to be faithful where we are and to do what he calls us to do.

In terms of growth goals, we do have a numerical growth goal. We have tended, at this point, not to be as heavily program oriented, as to concentrate on encouraging people to live Christian lives where they are.

What, do you think, are the keys to church growth?

In Oregon, we had a 20-25 percent rate of growth, but we had some really slack times, when even for a whole year, there was practically no growth taking place. Here in Lacey, in the last couple months, we went from the upper 50s to the 80s and 90s. I think sometimes we are looking for a magic formula. I am convinced that God works differently in every situation.

It is important that we are faithful to do what God calls us to do. I have a tremendous heart for pastors who are sitting in some areas that have no growth as far as people moving into the community. These pastors have a far harder time than church extension pastors do.

What challenges are there in church extension that are not found in an established church?

From a positive point of view, there is a lot of optimism in a church extension work. You are going to grow. Something is going to happen.

One of the struggles I had at an established church was hearing, "Well, we tried this before, and it didn't work. It's not going to work now."

When we dedicated our church in Oregon, I said to the board that we should have somebody who has some name recognition come to speak. In the morning, we ended up having Senator Mark Hatfield speak. I said to the committee, "Somebody like Mark Hatfield. But I'm sure he wouldn't come."

Everybody said, "Oh sure, he will, pastor. Let's call him."

There was just an assumption, an optimism, that, of course, he would come. At the time, we were averaging 35 people in our morning worship service.

The same has been true in Lacey, also. I am just amazed. We are in the process of starting our building program. The people are shooting far higher than their pastor is. They are really optimistic that the Lord is going to bless.

In an established work, I think you have to deal with past hurts and frustrations.

What are some of the problems or differences faced in a church extension work?

Certainly, one of the disadvantages is facilities. We were in a grange hall in Oregon. Sometimes the furnace did not work. Maybe the night before in the building there was a wild party with beer all over the place. It would smell like a brewery when we came in for worship.

Here, in Lacey, we are meeting in the Seventh Day Adventist Church; sometimes meetings conflict with each other when both need the facilities the same night. Some families look for churches with youth programs or other programs. As a very young church, a church extension

project cannot offer a variety of programs.

A lot of pastors talk about the difference in church structures. There is some advantage in church extension because you are somewhat freer. At Hollyview Baptist Church in Boring, OR, the church was almost totally built on new Christians or people who had not been actively involved in the church before. Here in Lacey, we have a number of established folks who had church background, and for one reason or another, have come to Timberline. Consequently, we have had very different structures. Here we have very traditional boards: deacons, trustees and Christian education.

In Oregon, we had one board. Both of them work. If you have good people who are trusting, who trust their pastor, and the pastor trusts them, they can both work and function.

How do you prepare or train people for their tasks or responsibilities in the church?

Let me give you an example. In our Boys' Brigade and Pioneer Girls' programs, we were very blessed to have Carl and Betty Bullock, formerly from the Calvary Church in Tacoma, as workers. They had had experience with Boys' Brigade and Pioneers Girls' clubs. Following an appeal, seven men and eight women responded to help them. Carl and Betty are modeling for them in terms of their training program. So we have been able to have very well-equipped people in terms of teaching ministry.



"I am excited about church extension and about the pastorate. People are hungry to have someone accept them where they are at, to love them and to share the Gospel with them, and to allow them to grow at their level and at their pace."

In church extension, you find that people are a lot more willing to do things.

In Oregon, each of our Sunday school classes had teachers and assistant teachers. The teachers were models for the assistant teachers. It is "on-the-job" training.

Does your church extension church have a missions budget or support a missionary?

Yes, this year we voted at our budget meeting to give a minimum of ten percent for missions. That really

(Continued on page 18)

Key: (as of Dec. 31, 1982)
Church Name
City, State
Pastor; Date project started; (Date church
recognized by Association); Average atten-
dance in 1982

20. Silverwood Baptist Church
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Erwin Kelbert; 10-1-82; (); 18
21. Gillette Baptist Church
Gillette, Wyoming
Harry Haas; 1-1-79; (); 82
22. Southdale Community Baptist Church
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Jerry Edinger; 1-1-78; (1982); 45
23. Metropolitan Baptist Church
Fargo, North Dakota
Terry Stoltzenow; 7-1-77; (1978); 54
24. Brandon Valley Baptist Church
Brandon, South Dakota
Mervin Kramer; 1-1-78; (1980); 63
25. Anchor Baptist Church
South Sioux City, Nebraska
Fred Penner; 7-1-78; (1979); 35
26. College Blvd. Baptist Church
Overland Park, Kansas
Anthony Salazar; 1-1-79; (1982); 26
27. North Carrollton Baptist Church
Carrollton, Texas
Bob Walther; 1-1-79; (1981); 74
28. Treschwig Baptist Church
Spring, Texas
Ron Miller; 7-1-77; (1978); 21
29. Dayspring Baptist Church
Maple Grove, Minnesota
Robert Coombe; 1-1-77; (1977); 35
30. Community Baptist Church
Sun Prairie, Wisconsin
Dave Rushton; 1-1-78; (1981); 83
31. Tri-Community Baptist Church
Elk Grove Village, Illinois
Fred Sweet; 1-1-77; (1978); 77
32. Faith Baptist Church
Mississauga, Ontario
Chris Creech; 1-1-82; (); 34
33. Southside Baptist Temple
Monclova, Ohio
Ron Heisler; 7-1-77; (1974); 100
34. Grace Baptist Temple
Upper Sandusky, Ohio
Everett Jennings; 7-1-77; (1976); 40
35. Highland Baptist Church
Derby, New York
George Brite; 1-1-76; (1956); 58
36. Middle Island Baptist Church
Middle Island, New York
Henry Wilk; 7-1-79; (1982); 33
37. Neshaminy Valley Baptist Church
Bensalem, Pennsylvania
Dennis Kee; 7-1-77; (1978); 98
38. Community Baptist Church
West Boca Raton, Florida
John Hisel; 1-1-80; (); 66
39. Evangel Baptist Church
Boca Raton, Florida
Arthur Bollaert; 7-1-75; (1976); 69
40. Cypress Springs Baptist Church
Coral Springs, Florida
Paul Davis; 7-1-77; (1980); 43

reflects the philosophy that I have, too. We could take the attitude that we are a church extension project; therefore, we cannot afford to give because we are a mission work already. When a church starts building, that can be an excuse not to give to missions. If a church is growing, and the church wants additional staff and a new addition, that can be used as a reason not to give. I think that is probably true in any church, whether new or established.

I really feel that if we expect the Lord to bless, if we really believe that Christians should at least be tithing, not as a legalistic sort of thing, but as a minimum in terms of our gratitude for what the Lord has done for us, we, as a church extension church, should express our gratitude to the Lord in terms of our mission giving for people outside of ourselves. This is the first year we have followed that principle, and about 13 percent of our 1983 budget is going for missions. We recently voted to support Missionaries Elmer and Ruth Strauss in Nigeria. Since Ken and June Goodman, the founding pastor, came from Nigeria, we wanted to have some kind of Nigerian involvement. Part of that mission giving includes an amount for the association budget.

How did the call to the ministry come to you?

I was a math major at Washington State University, and really felt the need to get more training as a Christian. I had grown up in the Calvary Baptist Church in Tacoma, but in college I came to the point where I put a lot of things in perspective in my Christian life.

I was planning work for a doctorate in mathematics, but decided to take a year after college before I went to graduate school to go to seminary. In fact, a layman, Paul Stolt, was very influential. He was on the Board of Trustees at the North American Baptist Seminary at the time and encouraged me to consider the Seminary. In fact, he flew me to the Seminary during the Board of Trustees' meeting.

Paul now is one of the founding families at Timberline Baptist Church. It has gone full circle. The Lord used him as a tool in terms of my going to Seminary, and now I am his pastor.

The more I studied at the Seminary, the more I realized that as much as I liked my computers, I really felt the need to be involved with people in a very real way. I went on to my second year of Seminary. Between my second and third year, I had the privilege of working under Eldon Schroeder, pastor at Temple Baptist in Lodi, CA, at the time. I really appreciated his attitude. He cared about his people, and he taught me a lot about caring for people. That was an exciting summer of being involved with the people in Lodi.

It was a growing sensitivity that the Lord wanted me

to be doing something beyond my working with machines and computers and being an effective layman. There was something else he wanted me to do. I was interested in missions at that time. But with medical problems, I felt more and more the call into the pastoral ministry. It was a growing consciousness of the leading of the Lord.

I understand that you did go through a time of physical illness and was wondering if that changed your outlook on life.

I think it changed some things for me. The illness came as we were dedicating our church building in Oregon. Certainly, it taught me a lot about lay people. I had shared weekly in the bulletin at Hollyview Baptist Church that "the ministry of this church is carried on by each person who comes and worships with us, the equipping minister is Larry Neufeld."

During that period I knew I was going to be out of the pulpit for several months. I suggested getting an interim pastor. I remember the church clerk saying, "Pastor, you have been telling us for two years now that you are equipping us to serve, and it is about time we serve."

The people took over, with Dean Gonnerman as moderator. They did some things that were phenomenal. They started a new program; they continued a very effective outreach program, and ministered to my wife and kids in just an exciting way.

One of the things that grew out of that period was a tremendous commitment on my part to lay people. It is important that the pastor is doing his job in church extension, but you cannot make a church extension project go without good lay people.

When people visited Hollyview and when they visit Timberline, invariably they say, "I felt comfortable; I felt people care; I felt good when I was there."

The key to any church, church extension or not, is that the pastor has to be doing his job. He has been called by the Lord to do his job, but you have to have lay people who care and are doing their job. What the lay people did really impressed me. It made me very, very lay oriented.

Timberline has things happening that I do not know about. That is neat. I do not need to be totally on top of everything, because God is using a lot of lay people in many ways.

Probably the other thing that this illness did was to give me a lot more compassion for hurting people. I had never been sick a day in my life. Suddenly I was in the hospital for a month and was down for a couple more months. When I visited people in the hospital, I used to be kind of a ruffian; I was tough: "These people can't take any pain." Now I know what it is like to look at a hospital wall for a month. It gives you a very different perspective.

How have the people of the Association churches helped your church?

In Oregon, we did not have a mother church per se; although Trinity Baptist in Portland really did function as a mother church in many ways. When I came on the field, before we started services, I was asked to speak in all of the churches of the Central Pacific Association. So

first of all, I got to know the churches quite well.

We had ongoing support. Each Sunday a different church provided special music for us. Whenever there was an association activity, there were people who came to me. I sensed their interest and concern about the work. We had quite a bit of financial backing from the Oregon churches. There was a real openness and support on the part of the Association.

I am newer to the Pacific Northwest Association. In terms of financial and prayer support, the Pacific Northwest Association has been very supportive.

What I have appreciated the most is knowing that the people in the Association care. You can feel so alone in a church extension project. I think that is one of the strengths of the N.A.B. Conference. We can say, "We are not here alone. If we struggle, we have some backup and support, some people who care and will help."

What is the most exciting thing that has happened to you in this past year?

That is a multi-faceted question. One has been our move from Boring, OR, to Lacey, WA. It has been a highlight to see how God has worked.

In terms of the Timberline Baptist Church in Lacey, WA, the neatest thing is seeing the Church move from a group of people to become a family with a growing sense of caring. That is a highlight for me.

We have people rejoice with those who rejoice and hurt with those who hurt, a sense of really caring for one another. To me, this is one of the high priorities in the church: that we come to the point where we can hurt and celebrate together. This feeling was here when we came to Timberline, but our newer people, in particular, are moving from simply attending on Sunday morning to really identifying with those who are here. They feel an investment in their lives.

How are people finding a sense of community through your church?

A lot of it happens very spontaneously. Within our worship service, there is opportunity to share, and after the service, we have a coffee and punch time in the fellowship hall. A lot of people come. We have a good core group of people who are really very caring people, people oriented, very "others" oriented. They have done a super job without a program. They have spontaneously reached out to people and have expressed their concern.

Why, do you think, it is important for a N.A.B. church to be in Lacey?

It has been obvious that there is a need for this kind of ministry in Lacey. In the last couple months, we have seen some phenomenal growth. People are looking for a ministry that is evangelistic, that is concerned about people coming to know the Lord, that is biblically sound—based on the authority of Scripture, but also that is loving and caring.

I think that we, as North American Baptists, have something very, very desirable to offer in communities: Churches that are biblical and that have love, warmth, and concern for one another.

In Oregon, the church became a significant part of

that community. People were involved in school boards as well as in all levels of community life. Churches need to be willing to be involved in the life of the community and really be the salt and light in the institutions that exist in the community.

Why are you excited about church extension?

I am excited about church extension because we are in a society, at least as I have seen it in Oregon and Washington the last nine years, of so many people who are hungry for the Gospel. People are looking for the Gospel because it provides hope and a foundation in Jesus Christ and because as it is translated into people's lives, a real concern is shown toward one another. I think that we have a "million places" where we should be starting church extension works because there are people who are hungry for the Gospel.

We, as North American Baptists, are so fortunate because we have a strong support structure. When you go into church extension in our Conference, and you talk to pastors in churches of different denominations, you realize how unique we are.

North American Baptists are people who care. The very fact that there is a whole issue of the *Baptist Herald* on church extension/church growth and the fact that we have strong associations backing church extension shows that we have a tremendous amount of support.

We have a history, as a Conference, of being very mission-oriented, very evangelistically-oriented, very positive. We have not been caught up in theological fights as other groups have. Just the fact that we can pass a doctrinal statement so overwhelmingly at the Triennial Conference shows that we are a very positive, upbeat kind of people.

I think we have a lot to offer to America and Canada, countries that are so empty and lacking in direction. That is why I am excited about church extension. That is why I am excited about the pastorate. That is why I am glad I am not working with computers, as much as I like to do that for recreation. People are hungry to have someone accept them where they are at, to love them and to share the Gospel with them, and to allow them to grow at their level and at their pace.

What is your emphasis in your pastoral ministry?

One of the themes I have in the pastoral ministry is very simple. I think that a pastor has to love his people. Sometimes I get frustrated by pastors who always tell me all that is wrong with the people in their congregation.

We need to come to a point where we can look at our people, with all of their humanness and struggles, trying to be what God wants them to be, and really love them where they are. To me that is very elementary, but I think so often we talk about the ministry as a profession, and it gets in our way. If you are really caring about your people, they will sense it. □

Church Extension Project

The Lord Is Building His Church!

by Alan G. Blackburn

"Each Sunday at this time in our service, we take a moment to pray for one another. I encourage you to take one or two of these prayer requests home with you this week, and in your quiet time, pray specifically for these special needs. Are there any prayer requests this morning? Beatrice?"

"I would like to pray for all my friends, and for all the people who aren't here today, and the choir, and Anne and George, and Dennis and his wife and mother, and all the children, and everyone here today, Amen."

"Thank you, Beatrice. Dee?"

"I want to offer a word of praise today. My brother-in-law Bill awoke from his coma last week, and it's really a miracle because the doctors had given up on him. I want to thank the whole church for praying for him and ask for continued prayers for his recovery."

"Thank you for that good news, Dee. Bob?"

"Yes, Dennis, let's remember to continue to pray for our church growth." God is answering these prayers!

After five years, Neshaminy Valley Baptist Church, Bensalem, PA, said goodbye to the school gymnasium and moved into a new church building in the fall of 1982. Since that move, those who were reluctant to attend worship services on the hardwood of the elementary school's basketball court have come out to worship with us in our new home.

Neshaminy Valley is a very young community. In the 1950s, the flight to the suburbs leapfrogged over this area to Levittown and places farther out from Philadelphia. But the recession and inflation of the 1970s sparked a move closer to the city, and Bensalem Township mushroomed with new townhouses, apartments, and single homes. Many of the young families in the area have little or no church background.

We pray that God shows us how to reach these people, drawing in friends, neighbors, and relatives through small-group Bible studies, and reaching boys and girls in the neighborhood through the Pioneer Clubs. We're continuing to reach out to the community in other areas. Two women's aerobics classes meet at the church during the week, exercising to Christian records and spending time at each meeting in devotions. The people-oriented Sunday evening service has recently featured a series on disciplining our children, in response to feedback asking for guidance in raising children in today's world. And we're winning hearts—one woman who converted from Judaism years ago was never able to find a church in which she felt comfortable. She has been attending one of our Bible studies and has found great joy in her heart.

But we need your help. It's a great step of faith to build a church in today's economy, and there's room for more people than we have right now. We've built the building, and now the Lord must build the church. It's a financial struggle, but with God's help and yours we can win.

We praise the Lord for the support you've shown us so far. □

Alan G. Blackburn is a member of Neshaminy Baptist Church, Bensalem, PA.



The adult Sunday school class meets with Jim Barrett, teacher.

Pastor and Mrs. Dennis Kee have been with the church since its beginning.

The building of Neshaminy Baptist Church built in 1982 and dedicated in April 1983.

"New Day"—What Is Its Effect? by Connie Kaiser and John Kiemele

Is there more than stage lights and microphones? More than clipboards, "calling shoes," and seminar notes? All these indicate a ministry of "giving." Is there no "getting?"

"New Day" definitely has as its aim in ministry to work with the churches of our N.A.B. Conference in their programs, acting as a catalyst in many instances. Giving is a major part of "New Day's" tour, but the members of "New Day" know the truth behind Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given. . . ."

To answer the question, "Is there no getting?", a definite yes rings in the mind of each team member. This is the first half of two reports of some personal reflections of "New Day" members.

Concerts

"I feel that salt analogy which comprises the theme of one of our 'New Day' programs is very significant. In calling me to be salt, I believe God is giving me a three-fold command in relation to my world: To flavor it, to act as a preserving agent in it and to be active in it. As salt, I am ineffective in my salt shaker.

"The drama, 'Home Again: Portrait of a Family,' has renewed appreciation of my own family. It has been exciting to watch the commitments made by families at the end of the drama. More than once, I have had to fight my emotions while watching family members, in tears, hugging one another and making commitments to themselves and to God.

"It has shown me my need to bring love to my family now. The drama presents a very serious picture of the brevity of life. Our families only have a certain amount of time on earth. In this vivid presentation, the drama can expose many blind spots in the lives of our families. It's easy to be content with good intentions. But God has given

me the present, and it is in the present that I am to enjoy, honor and love my family."

Much of what takes place during the concerts leaves special impressions on the members of the Music Section, but the concerts do not result apart from careful consideration and preparation.

Team Jobs

The team's program coordinators are directly involved in this process of tying everything that takes place to the specific theme of the evening, creating a personal connection with what is happening. Likewise, other team jobs yield equal, personal satisfaction.

"As the group leader for the Discipling Section, I have been exposed to many styles of ministry. This has been very enlightening to me by providing me with new insights into the every-day functions of the pastorate. It has been uplifting to see the love, concern, and joys pastors exhibit to their congregations as well as our team. Personally, I have grown to appreciate, now more than ever, those men we call pastors."

The statistician of the Discipling Section also adds, "Involved with making the church visible in its community, I have been exposed to the many different needs people, in general, have. It is comforting to know that I can offer some of them a solution, either directly by introducing them to Jesus Christ, if the opportunity arises, or more frequently by reporting them back to the church for long-term attention. Also, there is something in knowing that the work I do (compiling statistics of our work at the church) helps the church get an overall glimpse of their community

(religious make-up, concerns, attitudes) and begins a process of being moreso 'involved in' them."

Seminars

Following the idea of "getting back," the Discipling Section experiences the excitement that comes from researching the vast truths behind their seminars as well as the thrill of presenting them to church members.

"God's Will" has always been such a mystery to me, and like everyone, I want to know what God's will is for my life. Through this seminar, I have learned that everything God wants me to know is revealed in his Word and also that God has given me a brain and all the resources I need to be able to make wise decisions in areas that the Bible does not specifically address."

"The Sunday School seminar examines the Biblical command to 'make disciples,' and how we can relate it to the function and outreach of our Sunday schools, involving growth attitudes, outward focused activities, and webs of influence."

"I've seen that people in the various churches do care about their Sunday schools and what happens to them. What does happen is determined by each of us. I have come to better understand my role in the Sunday school and that God has provided it as an important tool in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Again, this is the first half of a report based on the personal reflections of the members of "New Day," but already it is obvious Luke 6:38 proves itself true time and time again. . . . (P.S. there's more ahead!) □

Connie Kaiser and John Kiemele are reporters for "New Day."

WOMAN'S WORLD

On Furlough

by Mary June Burgess,
missionary on furlough
from Cameroon

"How long will you be on holiday?" asks a Cameroonian friend as we busily pack for furlough.

"About a year," we reply, "but be assured it is no holiday!"

For the past months, we have been on furlough in the United States. I want to share with you some thoughts and experiences that we have had as a missionary family on furlough.

July 15. Depart from Douala with very mixed feelings—excitement about seeing family and friends after a four-year separation but reluctance to leave behind ones who are very dear to us in Cameroon.

July 7. Arrive in Detroit after approximately 36 clock hours in transit. It's 11:30 p.m. but most of our family is there to meet us at the airport. Who are all these teenagers? Our brothers' families had little children when we left for Cameroon in 1978.

God promises to supply all of our needs. At 2:30 a.m. we arrive at our new home, rented, and arranged by our parents. Through the generosity of many friends and family members who loaned furniture, the house is now completely furnished with food in the cupboards and milk and eggs in the fridge. God is so good!

What new thrills for our three children . . . ringing doorbells, going up and down stairs, talking on a telephone, and waiting for the TV in Aunt Mary's kitchen to come on—only to discover that it's a micro-wave!

August. Attend the Triennial Conference in Niagara Falls. What a privilege to be able to begin a furlough with such challenging messages and rich fellowship with former missionaries and supporting friends. The Missionary Orientation Workshop, which follows immediately, is a great opportunity to reflect on what we have been doing and what we could do to be more effective servants for Christ.

September. Get ready for school to begin. I come home almost in tears thinking how much it will cost to outfit the children. Prices have soared! People have given a lot, though, and we do appreciate it. We wonder how the children will adjust to a regular classroom situation after having been taught by mom at home in Ndu. Dave is concerned about how quickly he'll get back "in the swing" of going to school to work on a master's degree in Library Science. It has been a long time. . . .

October. The initial "culture shock" is over. Circumstances and surroundings have changed. Some loved ones are no longer with us. But God is here, as he was with us in Cameroon. He is faithful and will continue to lead us. We meet a Cameroonian couple, enrolled at the same university where Dave is enrolled. We have them in our home for a weekend and have such a good time making Pidgin together! The letters we receive from students at Cameroon Baptist Theological College and pastors mean so much to us. Maybe we're also experiencing a touch of homesickness.

November. A busy month with many mission conferences to attend. Because of Dave's going to school, the deputation part of our furlough has been very different. Usually we have just been involved in weekend visitations in nearby churches. Our experience has not been that of one missionary wife who told us her husband was gone for 54 days straight. In the spring and summer, we'll have

more time to visit our churches and camps to share what God is doing and thank the faithful for their support.

December. Much of the month is filled with preparations for family gatherings at Christmas. This season is very special.

January, February and beyond. Begin the task of buying and collecting things to take back to the field. Our old Magtag wringer, gasoline-powered washing machine has served us well for twelve years and three children, but it needs to be replaced. Planning for family needs in clothes and shoes for four years is a major task. Much work has to be done.

We thank the Lord for the daily strength and guidance he gives this furlough. Whether here or there, we are in his hands, and we pray that we will be faithful in all things.

May's Opportunities

by LaVerna
Mehlhoff,
women's work
director

As Conference women, we praise the Lord for the privilege of giving support to our May project which is the education of our missionary children in Japan and Brazil.

The Blessing Box money sent to our office will be designated for the Mutengene Home Economics Center in Cameroon. This building will provide space for home economics courses to be conducted from a Christian perspective for girls and women.

Continue to pray about the outreach ministry God has entrusted to us as North American Baptists. □

"If You Had Not Come . . ."



by Eleanor
Weisenburger,
missionary
in Cameroon

Let me introduce you to Mrs. Ndzenyuiy, a mother of six children, deaconess of our Bamkikai Church, a faithful Christian mother and friend. Mrs. Ndzenyuiy was a pagan when she delivered her first child at Bansa Baptist Hospital. Through the witnessing, she heard at the Maternity, God spoke to her heart. Later she went to a Baptist church where God's Spirit continued to convict her, and she became a child of God.

Just recently when about 35 women came to greet me with presents of food, she again said: "If you had not come, I might not have heard the message of salvation."

Mrs. Ndzenyuiy's son, Peter, is headmaster of our Baptist school and a very active member of our Kumba Church. His wife, Rose, is a Bansa Baptist Hospital-trained nurse who serves as assistant director of nurses. What does the future hold for their children, Edward, Violet and Oryn? They are being trained and cared for by their godly grandmother, and I feel sure they will follow in the footsteps of Mrs. Ndzenyuiy and their godly parents.

For over 30 years, I have enjoyed the privilege of working in our well-equipped hospital, maternity and training school. If you had not *worked* making bandages, baby clothes, and other items, my work would have been impossible. Many things would not have been bought, if you had not *given*. Lastly, many days would have been beyond my personal strength, if you had not *prayed*.

Mrs. Ndzenyuiy speaks for many Cameroonian mothers, and myself, as she says, "Thank you for working, giving and praying." (Reprinted from WMF—*Together Then and Now*.)

In the Potter's Hands



by Iona Quiring,
WMF president,
Rogers, MN



" . . . You are in my hands just like clay in the potter's hands" (Jeremiah 18:6, TEV).

We were walking along at the state fair enjoying the many sights, sounds, and some of the smells that are a part of that scene. A small crowd gathered around a man who loudly proclaimed that he could determine your occupation just by looking at your hands. You only had to pay your money, let him examine your hands, and collect your prize if he guessed wrong.

In the Bible, there are many references to God's hands. I can't imagine what they look like . . . hands that made the universe out of nothing, that formed the sea and dry land, that created Adam from dust, and gently fashioned Eve. That's pretty awesome. And even though he's got the whole world in his hands, he still has room for me. It makes me feel warm, safe, and protected, and I like that.

God said that he is like a potter, and I am like clay in his hand. He has the authority, the skill, and the desire to make me into something useful, according to his perfect plan. I like that, too.

It's the process of molding—the kneading, punching, pinching, squeezing, pressing—that doesn't appeal to me very much. It wouldn't

take so long, or be so painful, if there were fewer imperfections to work out, or if I learned my lessons the first time around. For instance, I keep getting uptight about business: "What if we don't get that order? What if so and so doesn't pay? What if . . . What if . . . ?" Yet God has provided faithfully and has forgiven me so often for not trusting him.

Another thing: Why do I procrastinate and then get that bogged-down, panicky feeling because there's too much to do? (God and I have been making some progress there!) Why do I hurt people and then have to apologize? When will I learn to give God prime time every day? Why does it take me so terribly long to write an article or prepare a talk? Why do I find it hard to meet and talk to new people even though I want to be friends? How can I lead without being pushy? To which responsibilities and relationships should I give more time? Why does God seem closer some days than others?

God told Isaiah, "All day long I held out my hands to welcome a disobedient and rebellious people." He didn't give up on Israel, and he won't give up on me. My place is to be submissive and pliable as the molding process takes place. "Thy hands have made and fashioned me: give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments" (Psalm 119:73).

DID YOU KNOW . . .

. . . that our Japanese churches experienced ten percent growth last year? We may not do White Cross work for our missionary work in Japan, but we can continue to pray and to keep in touch with our missionaries there and lend our support in that way.

our conference in action

BEISEKER, AB. Community Baptist Church continues to grow. Two persons were baptized at Carbon Baptist Church and accepted into the fellowship of Community Baptist Church in January.

January 9 was also the first Sunday in which this church extension project had both a morning and an evening service. "We were all blessed at the evening service by the 'Sunshine Singers' of Trochu Baptist Church," says B. Koelwyn, reporter. "They presented musical numbers and puppet shows."

In November 1982, a small church orchestra was started.

In January 1983, Boys' Brigade began with four boys.

Since its beginning in January 1982, a ladies group, JOY, has been busy serving the needs of the Church.

The Church is in the process of purchasing land and preparing to erect a church building.

PARMA, OH. Members and friends of Redeemer Baptist Church said farewell to Pastor Elmer C. Strauss and his family, as they returned to the mission field; this time Nigeria.

The Church is grateful to Mr. Larry Pozza, director of Christian education, as he fills the vacant pulpit whenever necessary.

Guest speakers such as the Rev. Richard Paetzel, academic vice president, N.A.B. College, and Dr. Kenneth Fenner, Great Lakes Area minister, encouraged us with inspiring messages.

Since Feb. 1, 1983, the Rev. Lanny Akers, Richfield, OH, is serving as interim pastor. (Gerda Markowski, reporter.)

ANAHEIM, CA. A joyous and long-awaited event took place at Sunkist Baptist Church on Jan. 9, 1983, when a groundbreaking service was held for the new educational building.



The 10,000 square foot new educational building includes Sunday School rooms and new offices for the Church staff.

The congregation met out-of-doors during the Sunday School hour for the ceremony. Rainer Kunz, Christian education director (pictured right), gave a

presentation of the church's history. Leonard Justus (second from left) is the Building Committee chairman. Dr. Adolph Braun (pictured center) is pastor. (Carol Justus, reporter.)

SIDNEY, MT. Ten candidates were baptized in the new First Baptist Church on Jan. 2, 1983.



After the baptismal service, Pastor Dale Axt (pictured left) welcomed each candidate into Christian fellowship as members. "It was a joyous service," writes Gladys Tibbits, reporter.

BEULAH, ND. The congregation of the Beulah Baptist Church was delighted to attend a Sweetheart Banquet on February 13 sponsored by the youth group. "We enjoyed a delicious meal prepared and served by the youth group and their counselors, Rhonda and Garry Schatz," writes Lue Forthun, reporter.

"Harmony," a musical group from Century Baptist Church, Bismarck, ND, presented an inspiring program. Members of "Harmony" include Mrs. Dan Heringer, Mrs. Curt Martin and Mrs. David Ewing. A great time was had by all in attendance.



CALGARY, AB. The sanctuary choir of Grace Baptist Church presented Joe Parks' Christmas musical, "Joseph, the Carpenter," on Dec. 12, 1982, to a capacity crowd.

Grace Baptist Church appreciated the ministry of "New Day" in January, during

EBENEZER, SK. On Jan. 29, 1983, an ordination council met at Ebenezer Baptist Church to consider the ordination of Stephen Patrick, pastor of the church. The Rev. Richard Quiring was elected moderator, and Pastor Jim Church was elected clerk of the council. Pastor Steve presented a thorough and clear statement on his call and beliefs. He was very well prepared for questions and showed a humble spirit throughout. The Council recommended the church proceed with ordination. (Pastor Jim Church, clerk of council.)

PORTLAND, OR. Visitation pastor, Dr. John Wobig, has retired at the age of 81 after many years of loving care and ministry at Bethany Baptist Church. Ordained in 1931 at Immanuel Baptist Church in Wausau, WI, he served there until 1936. He ministered at Riverview Baptist Church, St. Paul, MN, 1936-46 and at Trinity Baptist, Portland, OR, 1946-1966. Other special ministries include interim pastorates, canvassing for church extension projects, serving as N.A.B. Conference moderator, and writing.

Pastor Wobig and his wife Cecelia extend the hospitality of Bethany each Sunday as they warmly greet all who attend. (Frances Larson, church historian.)

PORTLAND, OR. Bethany Baptist Church welcomed 45 new members during 1982. Twenty-five members were baptized; others came by transfer or experience to show a net growth of 9.5 percent in membership. This is representative of the steady growth of Bethany from 260 in 1972 to 402 in 1982. God has blessed this growth by adding people with special

which time a new attendance record was set. "We praise God for the growth in the ministries of youth and Sunday School as well," reports Warren Hoffman, pastor of Christian education and youth. Dr. Walter Kerber is senior pastor.

gifts used in the extension of his kingdom.

Pastor Donald Miller has been preaching from the gospel of Mark. The adult Sunday School classes are studying more in depth the passage of scripture from the previous Sunday's sermon. This gives continuity and reinforcement to the message.

Leaders of the classes meet with the pastor and his wife Nancy on Wednesday evening where they plan the areas of discussion for the following Sunday. The small group discussions at Sunday School have been stimulating and encourage a deeper commitment to the gospel of Christ. (Frances Larson, church historian.)

WINNIPEG, MB. On the eve of the 30th anniversary of the Rowandale Baptist Church, its members met for the annual business meeting. Various church reports indicated progress. The 1982 budget had been reached, in fact almost by 10 percent more without any pleading. The mission offerings for 1982 were also an all-time high. The 1983 budget includes more than a third of its total sum for home and foreign missions. One major investment for the coming year will be the purchase of a new organ. Private donations for the organ fund started this project several years ago.

Following the business meeting, members shared highlights of the five-year period which they became members. Mr. Richard Gerl, moderator, was the only charter member present. A suggestion was made to give an additional \$1,500 toward the organ fund. Before the "Kaffee and Kuchen" time was over, \$2,000 was received.

On New Year's Eve, the church witnessed another baptism. For these and the other new members, the deacons conduct discipling classes on Wednesday evenings. The young people led the evening service on February 13. Their singing and preaching included a plea to allow God to speak. (H. Kahler, reporter.)

GETZVILLE, NY. Bethel Baptist Church praises and thanks our Lord for the evidence of spiritual growth in the lives of 12 of its people as they followed him in the waters of baptism on Sunday, Nov. 21, 1982. They, along with six



others, were extended the right hand of fellowship on December 5. The Rev. Larry E. Burd is the pastor, and Marc A. Maffucci is the associate pastor.

OAKBANK, MB. On January 23 at Oakbank Baptist Church, the Rev. Ed Fuellbrandt baptized eight young people (pictured).



The lower auditorium was filled to capacity for a lovely farewell supper in honor of Rev. and Mrs. Fuellbrandt. A program followed the supper consisting of special music and words of appreciation for their service here. "We feel spiritually richer for Ed and Sharon's ministry here, and we wish them God's blessing in their new church in Wetaskiwin."

VANCOUVER, BC. "New Day" ministered at Bethany Baptist Church from Jan. 26-Feb. 5, 1983. "Through music, testimony, delightful puppets, neighborhood visitation, and presentation of musical drama, these committed young people expressed their love for the Lord and provided inspiration and challenge for Christian living in God's power," writes Elsie Baum, reporter.

Also, in February, the Church welcomed back members, Curtis and Marva Radke, and their son Aaron, who have been serving as missionaries in Nigeria. They have come home permanently.

MARION, KS. Emmanuel Baptist Church was pleased to hear about the mission work in Nigeria from Missionary Barbara Kieper on Sunday, Feb. 13, 1983. Miss Kieper answered many questions at a dinner following the service.

In the evening, Miss Kieper spoke at the annual W.M.F. program. The Strassburg and Durham churches were invited. Miss Kieper's slides of the work, workers, and scenery were richly enjoyed. "Barbara is a real working missionary with many talents," says Hattie Morse, reporter. A generous offering for missions was received.

WETASKIWIN, AB. On Feb. 6, 1983, Calvary Baptist Church celebrated the arrival of the new pastor, the Rev. Edwin Fuellbrandt, his wife Sharon, and their sons, Jeremy and Paul (pictured). A

potluck dinner followed the morning message presented by Rev. Fuellbrandt.

The afternoon session convened as a welcoming service. Speakers were pastors and friends from the area and neighborhood churches and from the Calvary church family. Special music was also enjoyed. A food shower had been placed in the parsonage prior to their coming.



Rev. Fuellbrandt formerly served as pastor of Oakbank Baptist Church, Manitoba. The assistant pastor of Calvary Baptist Church is Neville Denny. (Minnie Knuenz, reporter.)

SPOKANE, WA. Six persons were baptized recently by Pastor Harvey A. Motis and received into the fellowship of Terrace Heights Baptist Church on Feb. 6, 1983, along with one other by confession of faith and previous baptism.

As her home church, Terrace Heights Baptist has been blessed to have Dr. Helen Marie Schmidt, missionary to Cameroon, here, sharing her faith and work as the church hosted the Pacific Northwest Association in October and showing her slides during the New Year's Eve service.

"We continue to remember her in prayer as she travels doing deputation and as her parents continue to pack barrels of white cross, hospital and personal items for her return to Cameroon," states Dee Rueb, reporter.

BEULAH, ND. What a wonderful way to begin 1983! On Jan. 9, 1983, the Sons of Light Quartet from Goodrich, ND, thrilled a large number of people from Immanuel Baptist Church and neighboring churches. Comprising the group are John Stober, Ken Lang, Glen Hoots, Mark Demke and Ora Schmidt, pianist. Their music proved to be an inspiration to all in attendance. (Lue Forthun, reporter.)

In Memoriam

EMILIE BREITKREUZ (93) of Springside, SK, born Feb. 5, 1889, in Volynien, Russia, died Jan. 9, 1983. At the age of 12, she accepted Jesus Christ as her personal Savior and Lord. As a young girl, she immigrated to Germany with her parents. On March 3, 1906, she married Samuel Breitreuz. Nine children were born to this union. In 1923 the family immigrated to Canada, later settling in the Springside district. Emilie was a charter member of Springside Baptist Church and exemplary in her faithfulness to her Lord through all the years. Survivors include two daughters and two sons: Mrs. William (Irma) Arndt, Mrs. Jake (Enga) Berg and Bert of Springside, and George, Dallas, OR; one sister, Emma, Chicago; 14 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren. Pastors George Breitreuz, Dallas, OR, and Sam Berg, Ottawa, ON, officiated at the funeral services.

PAULINE BUECHLER, nee Geiser, was born May 4, 1904, near Fredonia, ND, and died Jan. 16, 1983, in Ypsilanti, MI. In 1924 she was united in marriage to Max Buechler. They made their home first in Fredonia, later in Kulm. Early in her life she joined the Berlin Baptist Church and remained a faithful member until she died. Her husband preceded her in death in 1977. Survivors include her daughter and son-in-law of Ypsilanti, MI; two grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and one sister, Mrs. Maggie Meidinger. The Rev. A. J. Fischer officiated at the funeral service in Kulm, ND.

WILLIAM FRED EBNER, born in Manhattan, NY, Dec. 22, 1900, died Feb. 18, 1983. Following his retirement in 1962, he and Mrs. Ebner moved to Rossmoor, near Jamesburg, NJ. The Ebners became members of First Baptist Church, Jamesburg, where Brother Ebner served as deacon and vice moderator. He loved the Church of Jesus Christ and supported it in every way as a servant of the Lord. William was a member of Gideon International, New York Chapter, and a member of the Board of Directors of the American Mission to Greeks, International. Survivors include his wife, Laura Miller Ebner; two sons, Wallace F., Amityville, NY, and Donald W., Chattanooga, TN; a brother, Herbert Duttweiler, Yorktown, NY; a sister, F. Catherine Kelley, Rossmoor; six grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

JOHN R. GOETZ (100), Odessa, WA, born Jan. 17, 1883, in Parkston, SD, died Jan. 24, 1983. During his younger years until age 15, he lived in Salem, OR, and later moved to Odessa, WA. In 1908 he married Emma Wagner. At the age of 44, John was baptized and became a faithful member of Odessa Baptist Church where he served in numerous capacities. John's wife, Emma, preceded him in death in 1967. Survivors include two sons: Alvin of Odessa and Jack of Oak Harbor; three daughters: Elsie Davenport and Alma Riley, Spokane, WA, and Irene Schell, Odessa; two brothers: Emanuel, Odessa, and Henry, Seattle, WA; one sister, Emelia Roth, Spokane, WA; nine grandchildren; 20 great-grand-

children, and two great-great-grandchildren. The Rev. Myrl Thiesies officiated at the funeral service.

PAULINA HINSZ (77), McLaughlin, SD, born May 6, 1905, in East Grand Forks, MN, to Fred and Katherine (Brantner) Mehlhoff, died Jan. 22, 1983, in McLaughlin. Pauline grew up in the Tuttle, ND, area. At 14 she accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior. On Dec. 27, 1923, she married David Hinsz at Tuttle. They moved to the McLaughlin area in 1925. She was an active member of First Baptist Church, the only living charter member of the Women's Missionary Fellowship. She is survived by her husband, David, McLaughlin; two sons: Ronald D. Hinsz, Apple Valley, MN, and Clifford J. Hinsz, McLaughlin; a daughter, Mrs. Elmer (Lorraine) Goehring, Lodi, CA; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; three brothers: Daniel Mehlhoff, Jack Mehlhoff, and Rudolph Mehlhoff; and a sister, Mrs. Evelyn Aman. She was predeceased by her parents, a brother, and a sister. The Rev. Paul Brannan, the Rev. Joel McLaughlin, and Pastor Monty Loudenslager officiated at the funeral service.

MRS. DOROTHY OLDENBERGER REINHARDT SCHAPER (78), Bismarck, ND, born Aug. 17, 1904, at Krem, S. Russia died Feb. 12, 1983. She moved to the U.S.A with her family in 1909. In 1921 she married Daniel Reinhardt who died in January 1961. She married Henry Schaper in 1965. After his death in 1973, she moved to Bismarck, and joined Bismarck Baptist Church. Survivors include one son, Raymond Reinhardt, Aurora, CO; two daughters: Mrs. Helen Rehn and Mrs. Floyd (Rose Halverson) of Bismarck; 18 grandchildren; 28 great-grandchildren; one brother, Gideon Oldenberger; five stepsons: Siegfried, Wilfried, Edwin, David and Marvin Schaper; seven stepdaughters: Mrs. David (Gertrude) Retzer, Mrs. Bernard (Mabel) Teske, Mrs. Art (Irene) Mittlestadt, Mrs. Martin (Lillian) Bergstedt, Mrs. Robert (Darlene) Thompson, Mrs. Robert (Vera) Barfield, Mrs. Elmer (Clara) Goetz; a daughter-in-law, Mrs. Irene Reinhardt; and son-in-law, Alex Dilger; 48 stepgrandchildren, 45 great-grandchildren. Officiating ministers were the Rev. M. D. Wolff and the Rev. Arthur Fischer.

FRED RENZ (78) born Nov. 23, 1904, in Russia to Jacob and Elizabeth Schweigert Renz, died Feb. 1, 1982. He moved with his family to Herreid, SD. Later they moved to McIntosh, SD. He married Ida Steinbach on Dec. 29, 1925. In 1936 Fred and his family moved to Paul, ID. He accepted Christ as his personal Savior as a young boy and was baptized at McIntosh, SD. He was a charter member of First Baptist Church of Paul, ID, where he was a faithful member. He served as treasurer for 25 years, deacon and Sunday school superintendent. Surviving are his wife, Elizabeth, of Paul; three sons: Jake, Robert, and Jerry Renz; two brothers: Dan Renz, Spokane, WA, and Alvin Renz, Paul, ID; a sister, Hulda Riemer, 10 grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. His parents, two sisters, and a brother preceded him in death. The Rev. James Dillon officiated at the funeral service.

EDWIN SCHMIDT (70), born in Hebron, ND, on June 4, 1912, the son of Henry Schmidt and Kathrine Staiger Schmidt, died Dec. 29, 1982, in Hebron. He accepted Christ as Savior,

Nov. 22, 1930, and was baptized June 21, 1931. Edwin married Frieda Fehr on March 30, 1939, at Hebron. He served as a member of the church choir and as treasurer for many years. Survivors include his wife Frieda and two sisters: Clara Heinle, Hebron, and Elsie Schneider, Glen Ullin. Pastor Herbert Schauer and the Rev. Ervin Faul officiated at the funeral service.

EILERD A. SENTS (91), born July 2, 1891, to Aelt and Toebe Abben Sents in Grundy County, German Township, IA, died Feb. 13, 1983, in Aplington, IA. On Jan. 29, 1917, Eilerd married Anna Conrads in Big Stone City, SD. Eilerd received Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and was baptized on Aug. 1, 1920. Both he and his wife remained faithful members of the church, attending Sunday school, Sunday worship services, and prayer meeting regularly, as long as their health permitted. Eilerd served as a deacon, trustee, and treasurer for several years. Survivors include his three sons: Henry of Wellsburg, Aelt of Whitewater, WI, and George of McPherson, KS; two daughters: Tillie (Mrs. Leonard Anderson), Minneapolis, MN, and Marjorie (Mrs. Delbert Fleig), Richland, IA; 15 grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, his wife, two brothers, four sisters, and two great-grandchildren. The Rev. Don Patet officiated at the funeral service.

MARTHA SONNENBERG (85) was born Oct. 18, 1896, to John and Louise Biefus and died May 18, 1982. On Aug. 2, 1916, she married Samuel Sonnenberg. They lived on a farm near Leduc, AB, and in 1946 moved to Leduc. She accepted the Lord as Savior as a young girl and joined First Baptist Church in 1916. She taught Sunday school, sang in the choir, and faithfully worked in the Mission Circles. She was predeceased by her husband in 1975 and a grandson. She is survived by a son Fred and daughter-in-law Barbara, Edmonton, AB, and a daughter Violet Fleck and son-in-law Charles, Leduc, AB; three grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Pastor Frank Schmidt officiated at the funeral service.

MRS. HANNAH THOLE (100) of Stafford, KS, born Sept. 27, 1882, in a sod house near Stafford, died on Feb. 5, 1983. She was united in marriage on Oct. 18, 1900, to George Henry Thole. Hannah was a charter member of the Calvary Baptist Church of Stafford, and a lifetime resident of the community. Survivors include five children: Charles Thole, Collin Thole, Marie St. John, Margaret Eisenhour, all of Stafford, and Samuel Thole of Marion, KS; one sister, Mrs. Lena Meschberger, Stafford; 17 grandchildren; 44 great-grandchildren, and 16 great-great-grandchildren. The Rev. Bernard Thole, grandson; the Rev. Leon Bill, grandson-in-law, and the Rev. Elton Kirstein officiated at the funeral service.

Lending a Hand by Fred Sweet

There is a billboard near our church that reads, "Why go downtown for your next nine million?" The ad for the Bank of Elk Grove boasts the ability of a relatively small bank against the large lending institutions in the "Chicago Loop" business district. The question could be modified for small churches looking for "big money": "Why go downtown for your building loan? . . . Church Extension Investors Fund offers double dividends." So the ad would read, and it is true.

Where does a little church go to borrow \$200,000? That was our dilemma at Tri-Community Baptist. How does a congregation of 50 people with a vision and a plan take its first financial step? With barely a "pocketful of change," we had determined, in spite of finances, it was God's time for us to step out in faith. We had to build. One of our very first steps was to gather information about our own N.A.B. Conference-affiliated investment fund. From the beginning, Mr. Robert Mayforth, director of financial services, and Miss Karen Dickau, (C.E.I.F. administrator), were helpful in planning the process.

Quickly we determined that the C.E.I.F. opportunity was better than anything we could find elsewhere. What bank would lend that kind of money to an organization like ours . . . and at such modest interest rates! Rarely does one find it a pleasure to borrow money. But there is something about negotiating an agreement with someone who shares your vision and understands your situation from a spiritual perspective as well as financial.

Yet, far more important than all of these factors are the dynamics of what happened to our congregation in the entire process of securing this loan. Prior to the time we could "break ground," we were compelled

to find individual investors who also believed in what we were doing and who were willing to support it. This was the real challenge! Not filling out forms and qualifying ourselves as a "good risk," but getting others excited about having a share in the future of a young, growing church. The bottom line was this: To borrow \$170,000 (our original goal),

ble" began to happen! By July, we needed our \$170,000 to meet our fall ground breaking schedule. But by June 1, we had only \$85,000. We doubled our efforts. God doubled our faith, and our Association doubled its investments. In six weeks, we saw investments exceed \$170,000, and it kept coming and coming. Altogether \$210,000! And



"At the ground breaking service for Tri-Community Baptist Church, it seemed natural to have all the C.E.I.F. investors, who formed a long line across the site, pulling together on an old-fashioned plow, linking together the investors and members of Tri-Community Baptist," said the Rev. Fred Sweet, pictured at right.

we would have to find people with that much money to invest into "C.E.I.F." on our behalf. The task looked monumental for 50 people. As we began making contacts, the investors seem to "trickle in," a hundred dollars here, two hundred there.

But gradually we perceived something happening. As we formed teams from Tri-Community Baptist to visit from church to church presenting our challenge and our ministry, we ourselves were becoming more excited about the fellowship that developed among our own Illinois Association churches. We began looking forward to each visit. Our sister churches warmly welcomed us. Every church in Illinois not only had investors but also supported our year-long effort. Members of Tri-Community Baptist gained an immense appreciation for the family we call "N.A.B." And the "impossi-

ble" began to happen! By July, we needed our \$170,000 to meet our fall ground breaking schedule. But by June 1, we had only \$85,000. We doubled our efforts. God doubled our faith, and our Association doubled its investments. In six weeks, we saw investments exceed \$170,000, and it kept coming and coming. Altogether \$210,000! And

The most remarkable thing, however, is not that one small miracle. Most memorable for Tri-Community Baptist, and perhaps for our Illinois Association, was seeing the people of God working together for a common goal. In these days when so many churches are pulling apart, the feeling of churches pulling together is a blessing not often experienced. For this reason, it seemed natural for our groundbreaking service to have all our C.E.I.F. investors pulling together on an old fashioned plow, a plow pulled not by a horse, but by a rope, linking together members of Tri-Community, with friends, prayer supporters and investors in the Fund which made it all possible. After all this, who can doubt that "Church Extension Investors Fund" truly pays its investors what it promises—"Double Dividend"?

The Rev. Fred Sweet is pastor of Tri-Community Baptist Church, Elk Grove Village, IL.

We're all ~~YOU~~ ARE THE KEY...



- ✦ We can all help more people meet Christ through new N.A.B. Churches
- ✦ We can all help our vision reach beyond Association boundaries
- ✦ We can all help established N.A.B. Churches to expand
- ✦ We can all help our total ministry grow and without giving extra money!

And we can let our personal savings grow and grow while our investment reaches out to help others.

How? Transfer your savings to N.A.B.'s Church Extension Investors Fund, where we all get a "Double Dividend."

C.E.I.F. pays you interest on your savings and gives you the satisfaction of knowing that your savings are invested in reaching others for Christ.

Your investment in C.E.I.F. is not a gift, not a donation, but rather an interest-bearing loan to your Conference for new N.A.B. Church first mortgages.

The Church Extension Investors Fund is affiliated with the North American Baptist Conference. It is an investment plan in which your interest-bearing savings become a source of loans to build

new N.A.B. churches. A Loan Committee of the C.E.I.F. Board is responsible for the approval, revision or rejection of any loan application.

Get started now by simply deciding how much of your savings you want to transfer into a C.E.I.F. investment. For U.S. investors, this is not an offer to sell. An offer can only be made by our free prospectus.

1800 folks just like you and me are already participating in C.E.I.F., and earning a

+ DOUBLE DIVIDEND +

Church Extension Investors Fund
North American Baptist Conference
1 South 210 Summit Ave.
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181
Phone: (312) 495-2000

YES, I can help. I want to invest \$ _____ (\$100.00 minimum)

Please check the investment term you prefer:

INTEREST RATES				
Investment Term	United States		Canada	
	Stated Rate	Annual Percentage Rate	Stated Rate	Annual Percentage Rate
<input type="checkbox"/> Demand/90 Day Agreement	8.25	N/A	8.25	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> 1-year term	9.00	9.31	9.00	9.31
<input type="checkbox"/> 2-year term	9.50	9.84	9.50	9.84
<input type="checkbox"/> 3-year term	10.00	10.38	10.00	10.38
<input type="checkbox"/> 5-year term	N/A	N/A	11.00	11.46
<input type="checkbox"/> Revocable Charitable Gift	11.50	12.01	N/A	N/A

Please send me a free Prospectus:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Zip _____

Return this coupon to:

Church Extension Investors Fund
1 South 210 Summit Avenue
Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois 60181

Thank you for becoming a part of over 1800 other investors reaching people for Christ.

What's Happening

Grace Baptist Church, Calgary, AB, voted in January 1983 to have the Rev. Danny Kroeker join the pastoral staff full-time as minister of visitation and discipleship. He previously served in this position part-time.

Mr. Stephen Patrick was ordained into the ministry at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Saskatchewan, on Feb. 6, 1983. He has been pastor of the church since 1981.

The Rev. David Berg retired from the ministry at 70 years of age. He most recently was associate pastor at Lakeview Heights Baptist Church, Kelowna, BC.

The Rev. David Haines resigned as pastor of Canaan Baptist Church, Crawford, TX. He served there since 1981.

The Rev. Bert Milner has accepted the pastorate of Southey Baptist Church, Saskatchewan, effective June 1, 1983. He was a N.A.B. missionary to Cameroon, West Africa, since 1978.

The Rev. Steve Berg resigned as pastor of Westland Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB, effective April 30, 1983. He served there since 1979. He has accepted the position of assistant pastor of South Calgary Community Church, Calgary, AB.

The Rev. Richard Grabke has accepted the pastorate of Springside Baptist Church, Saskatchewan. He resigned from Carbon Baptist Church, Alberta, where he was pastor since 1975.

The Rev. Donald Decker will become pastor of Olympic View Baptist Church, Tacoma, WA, in June 1983. He was pastor of Valley View Baptist Church, Apple Valley, MN, since 1975.

Invitation

The Oakridge Baptist Church will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in May 1983. Dr. Kenneth Fenner, area minister, will be with the Church at the 3:00 p.m. service on May 22. A dinner with song praise and thanksgiving will follow in the fellowship hall. Friends and members are invited. The Rev. Jack Whitehead is pastor.

Invitation

to the
75th Anniversary
of

Wiesenthal Baptist Church
Millet, Alberta
on July 29, 30 and 31, 1983

All friends and former members are invited to celebrate this occasion with the Church.

For further information contact:
Rev. Neil Strohschein
Wiesenthal Baptist Church
R.R. 2
Millet, Alberta, T0C 1Z0

Invitation

to
75th Anniversary

Turtle Lake Baptist Church
Turtle Lake, North Dakota
July 9, 10, 1983

Saturday

9:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
12:00 noon Salad Luncheon
2:00 p.m. Reflections
6:30 p.m. Banquet

Sunday

9:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
10:30 a.m. Anniversary Worship Service
6:00 p.m. Looking to the Future

Invitation

to
100th Anniversary and Homecoming
of

Plum Creek Baptist Church
Emery, South Dakota
August 12, 13, and 14, 1983

Special events and speakers, beginning with a banquet Friday evening. You are welcome to attend to help make this a special and memorable occasion.

Please notify us if you plan to attend and want tickets for the banquet Friday night and the Sunday dinner.

Write: Plum Creek Baptist Church
Attn: Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Jucht
Emery, South Dakota 57332

Baptist World Aid Project



El Salvador—the name keeps popping up in the news. This small country in Central America, ravaged by civil disorder, earthquakes, floods and landslides, has endured so much! The country seems to skid from one disaster to another. And behind it all is suffering.

The 7,000 Baptists in a country of nearly five million are seeking to do what they can to alleviate the terrible hurts. They have established four nutrition centers to provide basic food, medicine, clothing, and shelter to those who literally have nothing. Two vocational centers have been begun, where people are motivated and trained to become self-sufficient once again.

If these Baptist people are prepared to lay their life on the line in order to help their less fortunate fellow men, we cannot do less than provide them with the needed funding to purchase the materials that will enable them to make the misery easier to bear.

Contributions

Send contributions to North American Baptist International Office, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181 designated for Baptist World Aid for El Salvador.

Healthy Church Planting Requires A Man, A Model and A Message by Ron Norman

A Man

The man who desires to build a church is usually motivated by the "impossible dream," and he must accomplish the "unperformable task." One realizes that the church is never a human invention, nor is it every man's accomplishment. The church is established by God; He causes the growth (1 Corinthians 3:6). Those who would plant a healthy church must be motivated by God who is its founder.

Life is motivated by selfish gains and pleasures, for men obey their natures and follow the fad. Even though North America has a superior life-style, it still is opposed to the teachings of Christ and Biblical truth. A community will not naturally support the planting of a new church, for the world does not love a church. God must perform a miracle each time a new church comes into existence.

Into this improbable situation steps a man. As once "There was a man sent from God whose name was John" (1 John 1:6); just so God always has a man who will step into



The Rev. Ron Norman is church extension/church growth director for the North American Baptist Conference.

the gap (Ezekiel 22:30) and will respond. "Here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

When the world was overwhelmed with immorality, God worked through his man—Noah. When the nations were given over to idolatry, God had his man—Abraham. When the earth faced seven hard years of famine, God had his man—Joseph. When his people were in slavery, God had his man—Moses. God's man always moves by faith whether his name is Samuel, David, Nehemiah, or Paul.

God still uses a man today. One of the greatest tasks a man can do is plant a church. He begins by obeying God's call. Next he responds in faith and in the power of Christ. A church is built by a man, but never on a man. Churches planted by committees never seem to prosper. God's grace and power must be poured into a man—God's servant. A healthy church is always caused, it never just happens. God always has his servant who sacrifices, prays and works.

What kind of man is needed? The qualities that rise to the surface include: tenacity, meekness, endurance, practical common sense, and commitment to the Word. Practical skills needed are personal life-style evangelism, interest in meeting new people daily, and a deep desire to train others to reach out.

As Daniel stood before the lion. . . .
As David slew his ten thousands. . . .
As Elijah stood alone on Mt. Carmel. . . .
Today, a man goes forth to plant a church. . . .

Who is the man in your association involved in planting a church? Will you pray for him, encourage him and support him? Are you willing to consider being God's man in effective church planting?

A Model

A model is simply a pattern or

standard to follow. Paul commended the Thessalonian brethren for being a "model" for others (1 Thessalonians 1:6). Later he indicates to them that he desires to be their "model" (2 Thessalonians 3:3).

What is the model (pattern or standard) for us in this ministry of planting new churches? Is there a Biblical pattern?

In Acts 13, the church at Antioch provides us with a splendid example of area-wide leadership being made available for the purpose of planting new churches. This congregation was called by the Holy Spirit to "send out" the necessary leadership to evangelize (plant new churches). Later, Paul is found reporting to the Jerusalem congregation (Acts 15). It is obvious that the "Mother Church" of all the churches was concerned about the problems and trials as well as the growth of the new churches being planted.

Certainly one model for planting new churches is that of the sponsoring support church, which, led by the Holy Spirit, commits itself to planting a nucleus congregation in an area, having no evangelical emphasis. The methods used can vary. It may provide financial assistance. This may be in the form of monthly operating expense or a gift of land. A warning here might be helpful. When money is given with "strings attached," it can hurt rather than help. An established church can supply workers to help get a new church started. These can be soul-winners, surveyors, teachers and so forth. It may be on a temporary or permanent basis.

I believe that we must become more intentional as established churches in regard to this matter of planting a new church. If we can support overseas missions with sacrificial giving and prayer, certainly we should consider the same for the unreached in our own community! Too often we have applied the "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:14-16; Luke

24:44-49; Acts 1:8) to overseas missions and have forgotten lost souls in the nearby city or community. The Jerusalem or Antioch model is one we must become more serious about. Could it be that your church's "edge of adventure" for the next five to ten years is to plant a new church?

Another excellent model worthy of consideration is the one established by the Apostle Paul, church planter. Using the bi-vocational method or style (tentmaker on the side), Paul planted churches in various communities (Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, Ephesus).

But in moving on, Paul provided others to minister to these various congregations. He trained them, exhorted and encouraged them in the work of pastor-teacher. Men such as Timothy, Titus, John Mark, Barnabas, Tychicus, Justus, Luke, Demas, Archippus, Appollos, Priscilla and Aquila, Erastus, Artemas and Zenas are but a few of the "interns" that Paul disciplined in the honorable task of shepherding a nucleus congregation.

I believe that this, too, is a model for us to research and use. There are many gifted pastor-teachers in our N.A.B. Conference whom God could use mightily in training other younger, less experienced men in the task and ministry of church planting (2 Timothy 2:2). If we are going to be effective in church planting, this is but one alternative model that must be explored.

A Message

The Apostle Paul placed prime importance on the message that he preached. In his Ephesian letter, he showed the connection between the message preached and the church he had founded (Ephesians 1:13).

The local church is effectively planted because of the message preached. The quality of the message determines the quality of the church. The message that plants (and builds) churches is a Bible-based message.

What are the ingredients essential in a message that plants churches? First, it is one that is Christ-centered. This includes explaining who Jesus Christ is, what he did on

earth, the significance of his death and resurrection, what he is doing and willing to do for those who believe in him now, and his future triumph for this universe.

The church planter must avoid an emphasis on negative communication. Naturally, the sinner must hear the truth of God's righteous law against sin; immorality must be challenged; the tragedy of a sinful life must be revealed—but all of this is only preliminary to pointing to the one true Savior.

Secondly, the message must be relevant and practical to the needs of the hearers. The gospel presentation must show how the specific needs of an individual can be met. This will range from spiritual to emotional to mental to physical needs. It would behoove every pastor to come to grips with the major needs of his congregation, as well as his community and build his messages, Bible studies, and conversations around them!

Thirdly, a church planter should recognize and emphasize the supernatural element in the gospel. Mankind is fed up with man-made "bandaids" to be applied to the anguish and pain of life. Rather, they are longing for a life-changing, miraculous, permanent solution. The message of Christianity is not simply a code of ethics or a philosophy of life. It presents the exciting prospect of divine intervention in the lives of ordinary people.

Lastly, this message must include man's responsibility to God. It is not enough to preach simply the benefits of the gospel; we must also show that Christ is not only Savior, but Lord! This means an absolute and complete surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The head of the Church wants healthy churches—not those sick, diseased or dying. Therefore, it is imperative that we plant healthy churches—those that begin with a man called by the Lord and committed to the unique task before him; those that have as a model the pattern which effectively provides the necessary ingredients for health—continual growth, and those that communicate a message based on the Saviorhood and Lordship of Jesus Christ. □

What's That You Say About Wills??

"My brother-in-law told me". . .

"This guy at work says you can do it yourself!"

"A friend from the church said his brother's son-in-law told him he didn't have to have any witnesses at all."

People, by nature, tend to be well meaning. Unfortunately, when it comes to wills, there is no end to well intended, yet oftentimes, incorrect "advice" on writing wills.

If you would like to have some clear and easy-to-understand information on the subject of writing a will, I invite you to receive a copy of "37 Things People 'Know' About Wills That Aren't Really So."



Please send me a copy of "37 Things People 'Know' About Wills That Aren't Really So."

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____ Zip _____

Telephone () _____

Send to: Jim Frey
North American Baptist
Conference
1 So. 210 Summit Ave.
Oakbrook Terrace, IL
60181

Baptist Herald

1 So. 210 Summit Ave.
Oakbrook Terrace,
Villa Park, IL. 60181

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Why Church Extension?

From church extension pastors come these comments:

• "We praise God for four conversions this month: two couples — one is my medical doctor."

• "We are facing a new year with the goal in mind of becoming self-supporting beginning with a proposed missions budget that reflects an increase of over 60 percent with the addition of one more N.A.B. missionary couple."

• "It was a real privilege to welcome nine new members into our fellowship this month. God again provided leadership where we had specific needs. God has blessed: in 1982 the church raised \$10,000 more than they had budgeted. This surplus has gone into our building program."

• "Charter membership closed with 24 members. Incorporation complete. The key to our growth may be due to the five to seven men praying together before morning worship."

• "Today, people who were strangers a year ago are

actively involved in the church because their neighbors, members at this church, showed an interest in them."

• "We're excited about the use of the new church building. At the first evening service, 86 people were in attendance. Membership stands at 100."

• "Baptizing eight adults was a great experience.... There are at least another 27 prospects for baptism and/or membership."

• "We started a 'Leadership Lab' for men who want to develop leadership ability and practice in the home and church. We meet on the second Sunday of the month."

• "During the morning worship service, a visitor stood to her feet, introducing herself and her husband. She remarked that four years ago that very day she had had life-threatening surgery. She gave thanks for the persistent visitation of the pastor. Her husband stood up and said: 'We aren't now! We're going to'

"Is North America a mission field? Many of the people in our churches don't think of it that way. But the unbelievers in North America stand before God just as lost and in need of salvation as the unbelievers in a small village in Africa," says Don Ganstrom, interim church extension director. "Because of our concern for reaching the lost for Christ in North America, an aggressive challenge has been adopted: '25 New Churches by 1985.'"