

# Baptist Herald

MAY 1984



Growth:

Our Great Commission Priority





# First Century Church Growth

by Gene A. Kern

Being a first century church in the 20th century was a concept that recently gripped my mind. How does such a statement relate to the ministry of CHURCH EXTENSION AND CHURCH PLANTING? As I thought about and wrestled with this concept, several things started to flash through my thinking.

First of all, my mind went back to Scriptures regarding some of the general principles and characteristics that seemed to be common to all of the emerging first century churches. There I find people receiving the Word and in the process becoming rightly related to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They publicly evidenced this commitment to Christ in the obedience of baptism. Then they continued in a unique devotion to Biblical instruction, fellowship, communion and prayer (Acts 2:41-42).

It's amazing to find that the first church at Jerusalem was, in a very real sense, born out of a prayer meeting. It immediately became a large church, three thousand members! How could that be when there was no organization or program? Only through the power and moving of the Holy Spirit was that accomplished. In fact, the Biblical record continues in stating that as the people continued with a spirit of unity to live out Christ's love, the Lord kept adding those who were being saved to their number day by day (Acts 2:47). That was not only first century church growth, but also a fulfillment of Christ's promise made in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my Church."

What does all of this mean to the 20th century Christian church? I believe that while we need to be innovative and creative, stretching forth with all of the energy and resources available to us, we dare not replace the power and working of God's Spirit with modern techniques and means. We need to continue to be aware of Christ's leadership over his church. It is his work and we are his ambassadors. The

leadership: pastors, elders and deacons of the 20th century church, must measure and evaluate itself against the Biblical ideal as set forth in the pastoral epistles of Timothy and Titus.

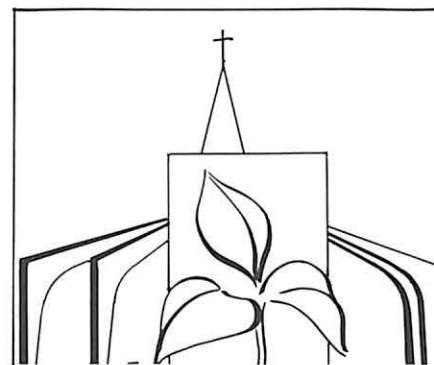
I believe that as 20th century North American Baptists, we need a good shot of first century commitment. We need a fresh vision of what it means to "proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ." (Col. 1:28)

My heart rejoices when I see 20th century Christians devoted to first century Biblical principles, yet not so set and narrow in their ways that new means and methods cannot be used in communicating God's unchanging message of hope. When this attitude and commitment prevails, God's Spirit seems to be free and at work, resulting in 20th century church growth. A growth that is evidenced in both quality of Christ-like maturity and character and quantity of people who are genuinely filled and transformed with new life from above. □

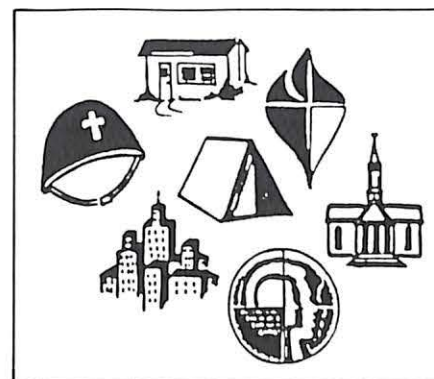
*The Rev. Gene A. Kern is senior pastor of Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, CA, and moderator of the N.A.B. Conference, 1982-85.*



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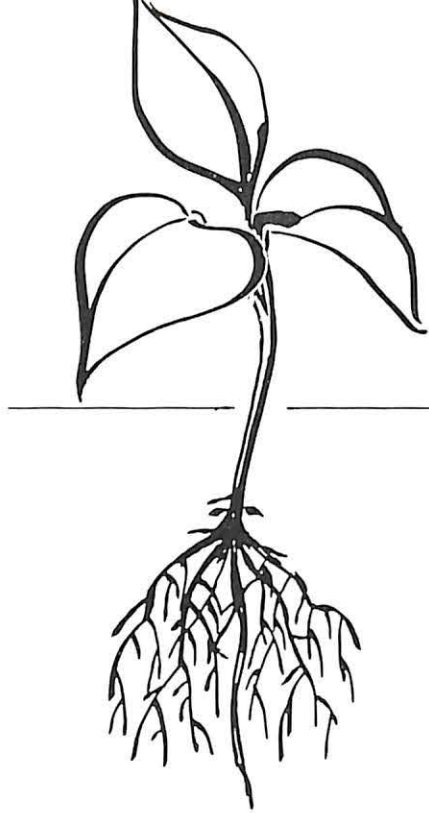
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## Sixty-three Million Adults Nonchurched by Ron Carlson

*Ron Carlson says there are more than 63 million nonchurched adults on a mission field that he would like us to visit with him. Take this tour and find out where this field is . . .*

I invite you to accompany me on a visit to a missionary environment of great magnitude. The field, which I am about to describe, has more than 63 million adults who are not members of a church or any other religious institution.

There are numerous churches and other religious organizations already present in this modern, but pagan, society. In fact, the first missionary attempts date back to the 16th century. Nevertheless, many of the local churches have failed to impact their communities with the gospel. Consequently, only three persons in ten in that land report that religion is the most important influence in their life.

Many of the unchurched people in this potential mission field have, at some time in their life, looked to the

church for help in spiritual formation, but many of these enquirers have concluded that churches are "spiritually dry." Consequently, an increasing percentage of these 61 million people are turning to various non-Christian religious movements and disciplines. Numerous pre-Christian religious ideologies are being embraced as can be seen by an increased interest in astrology, Hinduism, Buddhism, voodooism, and more contemporary understandings of reincarnation. An even larger percentage of the unchurched population do not consciously pursue religious interests.

The missionary environment, which I am describing, has had various evangelistic attempts by the indigenous church and missionary organizations. Various Christian fellowships have effectively distributed Bibles and other religious literature. This distribution campaign was so effective that by 1981 nearly every home had at least one Bible. Some mission strategists had hoped

that this would bring about great evangelistic results. However, a recent study shows that only 12 percent of the entire population were reading those Bibles on a regular basis. Even more discouraging was the discovery that 25 percent of the youth (12 to 18 years of age) had never read the Bible at all.

### English—The Primary Language

One advantage in visiting this mission field is that most of its inhabitants, though not all, speak English. Many use English only as a second language but are, nevertheless, quite conversant.

Were you to be called by God to remain in that country as a missionary, learning one of its many native tongues would be helpful for the purpose of evangelistic communication. One might also give consideration to learning the languages of the various immigrant groups and refugees that have entered its borders. These people have been overlooked by the indigenous church; even though many of the church buildings are located right in the midst of its residential area.

### Seventy-five Percent of the Population Live in Urban Areas

Another advantage in visiting this mission field is that your excursion can include both urban and rural environments, 75 percent of the population live in cities.

In these cities, one can view both affluence and squalor. In the same day, it is possible to visit with Christians who live in luxury and with Christians who live in poverty.

The demarcation between the "haves" and the "have nots" is also seen among the pagans of the land; although much of it has been hidden by transportation systems that are routed around the lower income settlements in the metropolitan areas.

The cities offer great evangelistic challenges. Not only do they contain millions of unreached local citizens, but also the cities serve as centers of trade, commerce and education for people from many other nations.

Unfortunately, many of the indigenous churches have failed to see the evangelistic opportunity of these great cities. Consequently, a tour of the urban setting can include visitation of once large churches with declining populations, the sights of closed and boarded worship facilities, and tours of former church buildings now being used as taverns and business establishments.

### Rural Areas Are Included Also in This Land

The rural scene is certainly another pleasant part of our mission tour. Here one views rich farmland and some of the world's finest agriculture. On the surface, at least, one sees the attempts at preserving traditional ways. But here, too, we discover the agents of change affecting both the church and society.

On one hand, many of the children raised in the rural setting have left the farms for the cities. Consequently, an increasing number of rural churches have a higher percentage of the elderly and a decreasing percentage of young adults in attendance.

On the other hand, there is yet another phenomenon that must be kept in mind by mission strategists when visiting this mission field. While there are those who are leaving the rural setting for the cities, a visit to the countryside will show an increasing number of people, particularly the affluent, moving from the city to the country. Many of these new arrivals to the rural setting are unchurched. Others who did attend churches in the cities frequently stop attending after moving out of the suburbs. Sometimes this is due to

their change of life-style. Others find it difficult being assimilated by rural churches that are not always accepting of these newcomers. Unless a mission strategy is developed to reach these people in transition, they, too, will join the 61 million unchurched people of this mission field.

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*The North American Continent is a missionary environment. With 61 million nonchurched citizens in the U.S.A. and 2,400,000 in Canada, it is imperative that North American churches look within their own national borders with the same mission fervor that they project onto overseas mission fields.*

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### A Low Cost Mission Field

The third advantage in visiting this mission field is the low cost and the convenience of scheduling. Many who are reading this article can begin their tour immediately by getting out of their chair and walking out of the door. For the mission field I have briefly described is none other than North America.

The North American Continent is a missionary environment. With 61 million nonchurched citizens in the U.S.A. and 2,400,000 in Canada, it is imperative that North American churches look within their own national borders with the same mission fervor that they project onto overseas mission fields.

The serious missionary going out to proclaim the gospel among people of another nation and religion must first make a thorough study of that land, its people, and their beliefs. That missionary takes great pains to explain the Christian faith in terms

that are meaningful and relevant to the hearer. Supportive churches donate prayer and finances for the purpose of sending missionaries on their way and for continued support of these dedicated workers on the field.

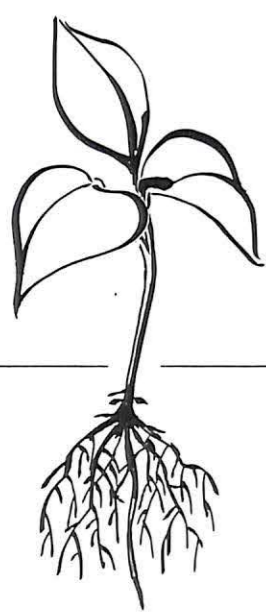
Have we evangelists in our churches who have made a deep study of the millions of unchurched in our own lands? Have we been training to make ourselves understood by the world, which immediately surrounds us? What are we doing about those millions of people in our continent who do not hear the call of Christ, because the church does not speak their language? What are we doing about the multitudes who are unchurched because the churches have moved out of their inner-city neighborhoods? What are we doing about the multitudes who are unchurched, because they have moved to new developing areas where evangelical churches have not been planted? What are we doing about reaching the multitudes right around our present congregations who are unchurched or nominal in their faith?

This issue of the *Baptist Herald* reveals some of the efforts being made by our churches. It demonstrates how we are beginning to take a new look—a more in-depth look—at reaching the unchurched North American for Christ. Hopefully, by seeing what God is doing in our midst, we will be encouraged as a Baptist fellowship to take further steps, heroic steps, for the purpose of proclaiming God's kingdom in our society.

Our churches need to continue to catch the vision that the North American Continent is a missionary environment. We need to continue to recognize that the witnessing mission of the church is global, remembering that we on this continent are a part of that globe. □

*Prof. Ronald H. Carlson is Instructor of Evangelism and Church Development, North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD.*





# Church Growth— A Personal Experience

Several pastors give insight into the reasons, which they feel, their churches have been growing churches.

## Church Growth—An Attitude



perience, they saw God use to positively build his Church. The factors listed below are simply several of hundreds, which in my experience, do contribute to the growth of his Church.

First, any church desiring growth must come to terms with what it means to be the Church. The words of Christ to Peter, "I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," need to be repeated at every church board meeting in North America. For our church it meant, and continues to mean, a turning from a defensive, defeated attitude to a clear understanding that, as God's people, we were and are a force to be contended with. We are the Church! Honestly believing that is the primary step to any outreach program.

Secondly, any church desiring growth must be willing to pay the price. And that price is far more expensive than dollars and cents. In our experience, that meant long-time members vacating the traditional 11:00 a.m. service in order to make room for newcomers. It meant changing hours of worship three times in four years to accommodate more people. It meant Charter Members having to admit that they were essentially strangers in their own church. My heart goes out to leaders in churches where to change the order of a hymn is a big issue, for we have found flexibility and openness one of the primary prices of growth.

Finally, our experience has shown me that church growth requires ruthless self-examination: A willingness to ask why we have not been growing, a willingness to question the usefulness of every program in the

church, and a willingness to face the truth about ourselves. These kinds of questions must be asked constantly in the Pastor's Office and in every leadership position in the church.

The alert reader will be fully aware by this point that I have given no "practical" keys to Church Growth. That is by design, for in my experience, *Church Growth Is Primarily an Attitude.*

*The Rev. P. Tim Schroeder is pastor of Greenfield Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB.*

## Eight Keys to Church Growth



by Larry E. Burd

What are some of the key factors in church growth?

For seven and a half years, I had the privilege of being the pastor of

Bethel Baptist Church in Getzville, New York. Bethel is a dynamic, growing church. During our ministry there, we saw the church grow from approximately 100 to more than 300 people. There were, no doubt, many factors involved in this growth. Let me mention just eight of them.

A dynamic, growing church must be

- 1) **Christ-centered.** Jesus Christ himself must be the focal point of the church. We must "lift up Christ" (John 12:32) in all we do.
- 2) **Bible-based.** People are hungry for God's Word. The Bible must be our main textbook in all our preaching, teaching, counseling, and visitation ministry.
- 3) **Empowered by Prayer.** "A praying church is a growing church."
- 4) **Nurtured through Discipleship Ministries.** Evangelism and discipleship must be kept in balance.
- 5) **Evangelistic.** The congregation must "want" to see people come to Christ. They must "want" the church to grow. The church must be burdened for the lost.
- 6) **Edified through Warm Christian Fellowship.** A caring ministry is vitally important.
- 7) **Encouraged to Maintain Responsible Church Membership.** Membership in a church should not be "cheap" but should compel involvement.
- 8) **Motivated by Faith.** The pastor (or pastors) and church leaders must set the pace for the congregation. They must have a positive, optimistic, believing attitude. The church must be challenged to "Attempt Great Things for God and Expect Great Things from God." Dynamic, growing churches will evidence these characteristics.

*The Rev. Larry E. Burd is senior pastor at Calvary Baptist Church, Bethlehem, PA, since September 1983.*

## Church Growth—Willing to Change



by Kirk Johnston

At the outset of discussing "reasons for church growth," it should be acknowledged that any increase in a local church is ultimately a result of God's gracious provision. Nevertheless, men and women have the responsibility to labor diligently and wisely because God often works through us to accomplish his will.

At North Highlands Bible Church, Dallas, Texas, we believe that there are many factors that have enabled us, as an established but dying church, to begin growing again. However, a few of the major growth factors can be cited.

*In a declining church, it is often necessary for the people to decide that they truly want to start growing again, that is that they are willing to do whatever it takes to grow. Sometimes people say that they desire to grow, but in reality, they only want to if it does not involve much change in the status quo or much effort and sacrifice on their part.*

In our situation, the people had to come to the point, where they were willing to pay the price for new growth. Without this commitment on the part of the congregation, we could not have gotten this far.

One of the first steps we took in order to get going in the right direction was to change the name of the church. The church had been strug-

gling for some years; consequently, it had acquired a somewhat negative reputation in the community. More importantly, the people of the church had a poor self-image. Through the name-change, we were able to quickly shed our old image and feel good about our church again. We solved two problems almost overnight, which otherwise could have taken years to deal with adequately. We doubled our attendance on the Sunday that we became North Highlands Bible Church.

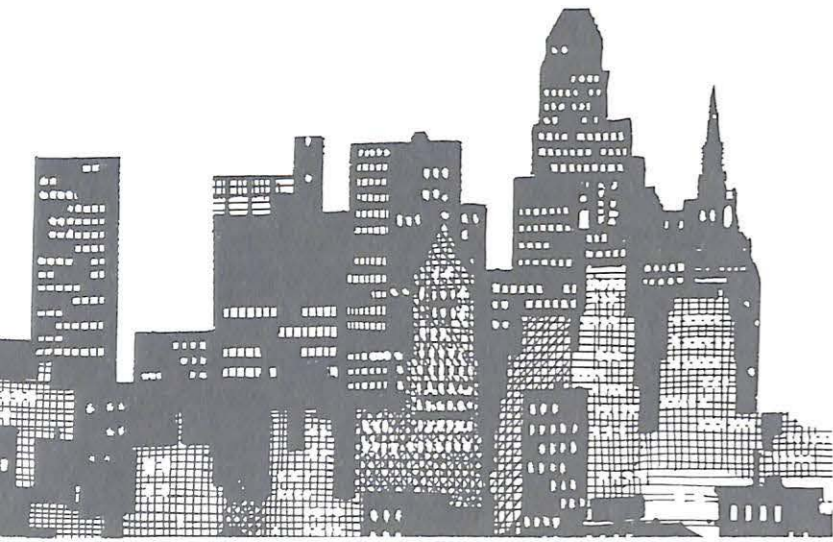
Beyond these two factors, people have a tremendous need to hear God's Word explained to them with accuracy, consistency and application to their daily lives. At North Highlands Bible Church, we have made the preaching and teaching of the Bible the central and foundational ministry of the church. This does not mean that other church ministries are neglected, but God's Word is the solid basis for whatever we do, say or believe at N.H.B.C. We know that this emphasis of our church has attracted a number of people to us.

Finally, we have attempted to "sell" our church to our community. In Dallas, there is literally a church on every street corner, and many of these churches are Baptist and/or evangelical. However, we believe there is not only room for us, but also a need for another Bible-believing church in our neighborhood. We feel that we have certain distinctives, which people are looking for in a church, and we try to impress these in particular upon our friends, neighbors and visitors.

In addition, we work on selling the potential that N.H.B.C. has. We try to encourage people to come to N.H.B.C. on the basis of what it will become and not just because of what it is at this stage of growth. We thank God that a number of people have a vision for what can happen at N.H.B.C. and have joined us to help make our church grow for God's glory.

*The Rev. Kirk Johnston is pastor of North Highlands Bible Church Dallas, TX.*

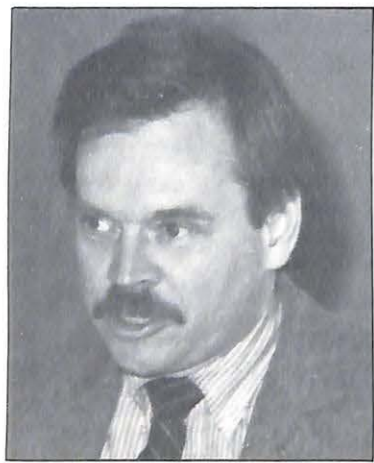




## A Snapshot of N.A.B. in the City

Five pastors in key cities across Canada and the U.S.A. were asked to study the ministry of North American Baptist churches in their cities and report their findings to the Urban Study Group, which was appointed by the Church Extension/Church Growth Department. These five pastors were asked to give the readers of the Baptist Herald their views of the church in the urban area and its task.

### Unity in Diversity and Change Characterize Church



by David Wick

Unity in diversity characterizes Forest Park Baptist Church, Forest Park, IL, today. On a typical Sunday morning, there will be people in our congregation who were born in Jamaica, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Mexico,

*The Rev. David Wick is senior pastor of Forest Park Baptist Church, Forest Park, IL.*

Korea, India, Ethiopia, England, and Germany, as well as the United States and Canada. The congregation is as multi-colored as the stained-glass windows. Nearly every social class and educational level are also represented. Yet a sense of common purpose dominates our church as with one accord and one voice we praise God.

Our church is also characterized by change. It is written, "... it has not appeared as yet what we shall be," (I John 3:2). We are not really faced with the problem of how to get moving. We are moving already; people are coming to Christ and one crisis after another is being resolved in victory. We know that our business is the fulfilling of the Great Commission, but we need to find out what that means for us in Forest Park, given our unique (and changing) resources and opportunities.

Our church board recently appointed a "Transitional Task Force," which will study our church ministries, property, administrative structure, and our community. The board will make recommendations to

our congregation regarding appropriate ministry goals and programs. The Task Force should help us make more intelligent decisions, as we continue to expand our ministries.

Forest Park Baptist Church is also characterized by its ability to say yes to those who want to do something for the Lord, even if it is something different. As a consequence of this ability, we have a new youth program of our own design called "Lamplighters"; a room in the church was redecorated and opened to neighborhood teens as a drop-in center; and we are working in follow-up with men from a Veterans Administration drug detoxification program.

It is too easy for a church to say no to people who want to do things that are new and possibly risky. I think that any church, urban or otherwise, that hopes to bring its community to Christ is going to have to learn to say yes to ideas of ministry that are risky and even beyond the church's strength to accomplish—because God's power comes to its full strength in weakness.

## Old, Small, Financially Pressed, Changing Congregations N.A.B. Churches in New York/New Jersey Metropolitan Areas



by Edward A. Bacon

The pastors of five North American Baptist churches in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan

*The Rev. Edward A. Bacon has been pastor of the Ridgewood Baptist Church, Ridgewood, NY, for the past several years.*

area met on Oct. 1, 1983, to discuss problems faced within the urban setting. This resulted in the following picture of the N.A.B. urban church:

1) It is old—many of the members are senior citizens, and three of these churches in this area are over one hundred years old.

2) It is small—only two of these churches have memberships over 100, and average attendance is less than 50 on Sunday mornings.

3) It is financially pressed—as these congregations grow smaller, their expenses continue to grow larger.

4) It is facing a changing congregation—these churches are ministering to people of Hispanic, Portuguese, Oriental, West Indian, and other backgrounds. Each of these factors contributes to the difficulties these churches face.

Although urban churches deal with many of the same problems as nonurban churches, what is significant about these churches is that while they are at the threshold of one of the greatest mission fields in the world,

they are struggling just to maintain their existence. Millions in the city are crying for help, and these churches desire to do more than only keep themselves alive. Either they will continue in a futile effort of self-preservation or will face the challenges of urban ministry, but they are unable to make this vital transition to urban ministry on their own. They need help.

This was why several of these pastors voiced their concern in drafting the Resolution for Urban/Ethnic Ministry adopted by the delegates at the N.A.B. Triennial Conference in 1982. Through the joint efforts of the N.A.B. Conference staff and urban pastors, it is hoped that some constructive direction can be given to the urban church.

The future of the North American Baptist urban church can be bright, but only if the Conference will realistically appraise the seriousness of the situation and help these urban churches to meet the God-given challenge of urban ministry.

### A Message of Reconciliation for All Peoples

by James Correnti



To us at Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church in Philadelphia, PA, the principle of reconciliation in Ephesians 2:11-22 is a constant challenge and encouragement. Our English-speaking congregation is still largely a white, middle-class congregation that finds itself at the crossroads of Hispanic, Black, and Asian cultures. It is easy to be frightened—even angered—at the threat to change "the way we've always done it." It's a real temptation to retreat into the past

*The Rev. James Correnti is senior pastor of Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA.*

and the safety of the familiar.

Yet, the scripture calls us to reach out with the message of reconciliation and peace to those from totally different backgrounds. The classic New Testament tension between the Jews and Gentiles was one of races and cultures as well as religions.

It is evident from the New Testament that the people of God did not merely separate into convenient "homogenous groups" on the basis of race, culture, sex, class, or education (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). Their very ministering together brought clashes: these became the occasion for working out differences, "knocking off rough edges," and discovering the

(continued on next page)



reconciliation that was their inheritance in Christ all along (see Acts 15, Romans 14, Galatians, Colossians 2:16). While this same truth will be expressed differently in a white suburban setting (that is, Christ doesn't call you to bus ethnics from the city to artificially "desegregate" your congregations!), it is absolutely vital to embrace this (with joy!) as a central principle if you find yourself in a multi-ethnic urban setting.

This also has implications for clarifying our understanding of denominationalism. We have, of course, always seen the great value of being part of our denomination in facilitating fellowship and furthering

ministry among like-minded brethren. But we must never let it become an instrument of separation from other Bible-believing churches of other denominations. Even as the North American Baptist Conference joins the Baptist World Alliance to broaden our global vision and the N.A.B. Seminary joins hands with many other seminaries in Chicago's SCUPE (Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education) program for inner-city training, so individual N.A.B. inner-city churches must aggressively cross denominational lines to Bible-believing churches of different ethnic backgrounds in order to pool our resources and expertise.

With needs so great and individual expertise so limited, separation among born-again believers of different ethnic backgrounds in the city is not only unbiblical—it is suicide!

We must also never forget that Jesus said in John 17:23 that our unity on earth is a witness that he was sent from the Father. In our community, various races live together on the same block, attend the same community meetings, and work in the same factory. Would we dare to suggest that "it wouldn't work" to worship together in our church? If so, how can we tell the world that our ministry is "reconciling the world through Christ"?

## The City Church—A New Vision for a New Community



by Mark Wollenberg

The 1980s are going to be tremendously important for our North American Baptist urban churches. I say this because many of our city churches are finding themselves in situations, which they have never experienced before. Our city churches are now having to face the fact that

Mark Wollenberg is associate pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, Vancouver, BC.

there is a growing number of people outside the walls of their church, across the street or down the block, people who are of a different racial or cultural background or economic status than they.

Upon realizing that their church is in a new and changing community, the next response is the question, "What are we going to do now?" Today, we are faced with making decisions that will affect the future of many city churches.

There are two options open for our urban churches at this point. The first is that they move to a different part of the city where there are fewer differences between the people who attend the church and those who make up the community around the church. Or, the second option is to stay in their community and begin to seek a new vision from God as to how they can touch the community they are in with the message of Jesus Christ. At this point, churches have to grapple with what the real ministry and mission of the church of Christ is to be. We need to look at how the Great Commission applies to us and "the

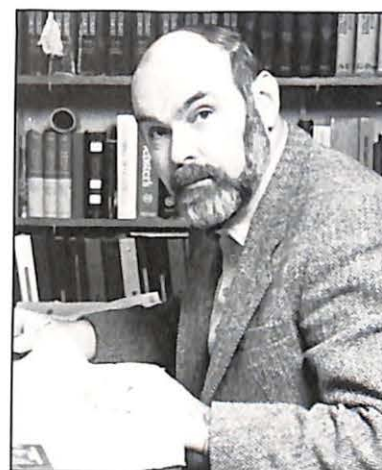
nations" that we find in our communities and not just those overseas.

Urban churches who decide to seek that new vision should also be prepared for the fact that the character of their church will probably change. As different cultural backgrounds and traditions come together, there will be a new look to some of the churches which come from a N.A.B. European tradition.

Yet in the midst of this diversity, I believe we will also be able to celebrate and appreciate more fully the unifying work of Christ as we see him bring us together to form one body. The inner-city church has been given a new mandate for ministry in the 1980s. If we are to reach the people of our cities, we must have a new vision, which will in turn show us new needs in our community that we can meet. We need to be ready to minister to all the needs that arise, be they spiritual, physical, economic or emotional.

I believe that by the grace of God we will see new growth in our city churches as we discover a new vision in the new communities we see around us.

## Seeing Our World for Christ



by Willi Kurtz

In some ways, the average N.A.B. urban church is healthy and vital. We believe in the "Fundamentals of the Faith"; we give our money to the local church and to missions; we respond when we are made aware of a need.

Yet somehow the excitement, the extraordinary aliveness that ought to be part of God's work is often missing—as well as results in terms of changed lives and souls added to the Kingdom. An article in the *Wall Street Journal* described our state thus, "... the current evangelical revival has so far sown little except curiosity among nonbelievers and self-doubt among many faithful."

Why?

The average church is mired down in trivialities. Countless hours are poured into decisions concerning parking lots and the color of the carpets and similar concerns. In fact, so much time is spent on "church business" that little is left to invest in people. Someone said, "We're meeting to find ways to raise money, so

The Rev. Willi Kurtz is senior pastor of Fort Richmond Baptist Church, Winnipeg, MB.

that we have a place to meet to find ways to raise money." As a result, organizational planning and institutional goals become the criteria by which the church community is defined and evaluated.

Lack of authentic Christian lifestyle and belief are very much a part of our churches and individuals within them. For a great many of our people, the gospel has degenerated into an experience that is an end in itself, rather than being the point of entry to a life of discipleship. The church then begins to live for itself as an end, rather than living for Christ as a means to demonstrate the truth and embody his love in the world. We have forgotten that we live in the world of the dying on the way to the land of the living, and act as if it is the other way around.

We suffer from *apathy*, trying to lead an ethereal existence divorced from the grubby realities of a sin-sick world, or at best, from *compassion-fatigue*, reeling from the constant bombardment of needs and crises all around us. Strange, that in our age of high-speed global communication, the people in other parts of the world have become less real to us than they were to our grandparents. They cared that millions of Chinese were dying without a Saviour. We have trouble caring about, or believing in the existence of, people in the ghetto a few miles from our door! But those people are the stuff of heaven. They will endure! Our programs will not!

Christ is the answer, but that truth must be demonstrated by people to people, always looking from people to programs, not vice versa. Frank Tillapaugh reminds us that the Church thus "unleashed" will become the "church visible" in the city. Visible, not because of huge facilities or TV programs, but because everywhere people go, they will encounter Christians who care!

The needs of the poor can only be met by a gospel that touches the earth; the world of parents without partners, refugees, foreign students, street people, unwed mothers, abused children and adults alike.

Yet the needs of the people living around our urban churches, like everyone else's, have spiritual roots.

These needs must be addressed by evangelism, community building, and if there is no church or a church unable and unwilling to actively involve itself, church planting. The bottom line—the gospel addressed to the whole man.

The objective truth of God's written Word establishes our standards and our vision, and needs to be heard, rather than human opinions based on cultural trends.

We need not despair because the church is characterized by weakness, but should our vision of what the church is called to be, become obscured, we will be on the road to hell, for we shall become comfortable and secure in our own failure.

Uncomfortable as it may be, there will be a day of accounting. Lord Shaftesbury, who did so much to stop the exploitation of child labor in the early 19th Century, said towards the end of his life, "I do not think that in the last 40 years I have lived one conscious hour that was not influenced by the thought of our Lord's return!"

Too often, I hear people say they are not led by the Spirit to do a certain job. Often this is nothing more than a pious platitude to cover our unsoiled, worthless hands. When we stand before the Lord, he will gently turn them over, looking for the callouses!

If we hear God and change where necessary, our churches may well become the instrument for redemptive change in what remains of the 80s. □





## What Effect Does a Church Building Program Have on a Congregation?

Five church extension pastors talk about the changes in their congregations as a result of a building program.

### Building the Church: His People and a Building



by Dale Cundall

Though I know from experience that there can be many difficult and trying days in the construction of a church building, the past year in which the Gold Country Baptist Church, Shingle Springs, CA, has been involved in the construction of its first unit, has been a ministry for me and for most of those who have worked alongside. God has greatly

blessed our group with a spirit of unity and cooperation.

Many men, women, young people, and children have participated in the building process. Sometimes more than 50 different people worked at least once during the month, and most all felt that they were an important part of this ministry.

What a joy to have Mike come so faithfully; even though he did not know much about building things, but he wanted to learn. Dave has been so faithful in working at every opportunity, even on the jobs of which he was fearful. I could mention many, many others who served the Lord in this way; they came to work at whatever needed to be done.

I came from a family where building things was a way of life. After college, I worked as a carpenter on many large buildings. This helped me feel qualified to serve the Lord and the congregation as superintendent of construction for our church building. Through it, I have had the opportunity to minister to people in totally different ways. Many people outside the congregation gave me a hearing as I shared the gospel with them when they came on the job site for some part of the construction.

Throughout the past year of construction, our church has grown both

spiritually and numerically. As I have been involved almost every day in building, many others have carried much of the other ministry duties. Much growth has taken place in those who have shared in the preaching and teaching responsibilities. Many have counselled and encouraged one another because "the Pastor was busy building the church."

God has so blessed our people with a spirit of unity and fellowship and love for one another, that through building a building, God was truly "building his church." The average attendance at our morning worship service in February 1983 was 105, and for February 1984, it was 160.

The building is almost completed. There is much excitement as we work together to finish and to occupy, but we are also looking forward to an even greater ministry together reaching out in other ministry ways to our community. I, too, am excited to have the project completed, as I must admit to being very "weary in well doing."

I thank God for the prayer and financial support of the Nor-Cal Association, and for the many others in our N.A.B. family who have given their encouragement. God has wonderfully provided for us through many others.

There have been some stressful times, and we have often reacted to them in fleshly ways, but we have helped one another to see that those, too, were opportunities for ministry and spiritual growth. We are trusting that our North American Baptist family will continue faithfully behind us through prayer, as we begin to use our building in the ministry to which God has called us.

*The Rev. Dale E. Cundall is pastor of Gold Country Baptist Church, Shingle Springs, CA. The church held its first service in its new building April 1, 1984, with 234 people in attendance.*

### Planning Process Brings Unity



by Robert Walther

In May of 1980, I remember the large task ahead as we began a new church extension project in Carrollton, Texas. The job seemed so massive. One of those tasks that I knew lay ahead was a building program. This aspect of church extension caused my greatest fear.

I soon realized this project would not be mine alone. Today, I thank God for talented lay leaders whom God brings into the church. Without them, we would not be where we are today in our church and in our building plans.

At one of our first building committee meetings, it was said to me, "Pastor, we want you to give us leadership in this building program, but most of all we want you to continue to give pastoral leadership to our congregation and community."

I have always asked God to give the leadership needed in every situation in our church. Here was an opportunity to allow this leadership to function with its gifts and abilities. It was gratifying to see this group of six men working together to discern the Lord's will in this building. Watching them grow in their spiritual lives and in their relationships with one another has been worth it all.

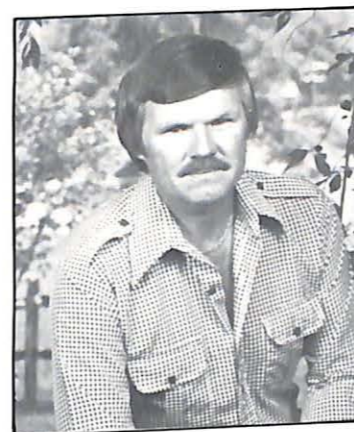
But because of all that time it took to develop those relationships to work well together, there were also the struggles of wishing it would go faster. The committee took the approach to take all the time needed to build the best possible building with the money we had available. It became easy, as pastor, to sometimes say, "I could do that faster myself." Upon those thoughts, I thanked God for dedicated lay leaders.

Even though the planning process has been slow and tedious, this has brought an excitement and unity to our congregation. This unity has always seen unanimous votes on crucial decisions. All this planning has brought us to the day to which we have looked forward. On April 8, 1984, we broke ground for our building. The planning has been tedious, but exciting. Now we can almost see the fruit of all that planning—the building of North Carrollton Baptist."

*The Rev. Robert Walther is pastor of the North Carrollton Baptist Church, Carrollton, Texas.*

(continued on page 20)

### Building a Church—the Joys and Struggles



by Paul Davis

*"Unless the Lord builds the house, Its builders labor in vain"*  
(Psalm 127:1a).

I'm sure you've said, "If I had only known," sometime in your life. In the process of bringing our congregation to the point where we felt our building would finally be realized, I said this many times. I wish it were possible for all pastors to go through the experience of building at least one building and congregation. I'm sure it would give them a whole new perspective on ministry.

The joys of a new congregation are many. One is that you are able to

begin with a people and set your own unique way of worship and fellowship. You don't hear, "We used to do it this way." You have the challenge of starting a new body the Lord is going to use for his glory.

To begin with, a new unit is a joy in that you have a house of worship that is really yours. Before this building, you had to make do; now this will be a building you, as a people, have designed to suit your unique calling.

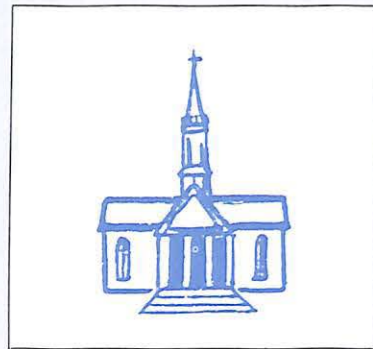
You, too, remember the struggles of inviting people to come fellowship with you. They were excited until they heard that you didn't have a building. Also, you remember those who were not prepared to commit themselves to this big work of establishing a congregation and seeing its house of worship erected.

Now with the hope of a new building you, as a pastor, and congregation, feel "legitimate." There were those who felt you were another "fly-by-night group." Now to God's glory you erect this edifice to his glory with the excitement of using it as a dedicated tool in his hand with your help.

*Paul Davis is pastor of Cypress Springs Baptist Church, Coral Springs, FL. The Church is in the process of building its first unit. The Church plans to be worshipping in its new building hopefully by Thanksgiving.*

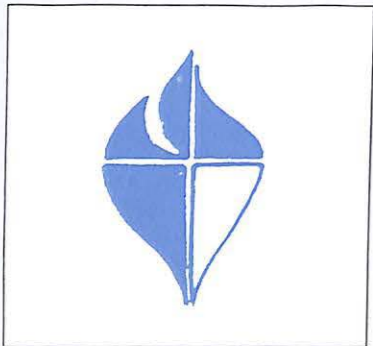


# God's People Joined in Mission... in Canada and the U.S.A.



## CHURCH EXTENSION PROJECTS

Currently, you are helping to provide a witness for Christ in thirty-six communities in Canada and the U.S.A. (1983), with eight additional areas planned for this year (1984) and twelve more in 1985. These church extension projects are located in eighteen associations; this includes five provinces and fourteen states.



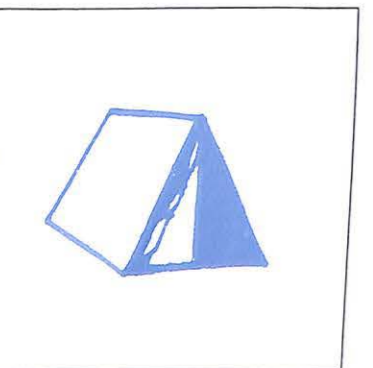
## NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST COLLEGE AND DIVINITY SCHOOL

This four-year Bible college and three-year theological graduate school seeks to prepare students to serve as pastors, missionaries, Christian education directors, church musicians, and church lay workers. The schools are located in Edmonton, AB, with more than 225 students enrolled.



## NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST SEMINARY

This theological school, located in Sioux Falls, SD, seeks to prepare persons for various types of Christian ministry. More than 250 students are enrolled in this graduate school.

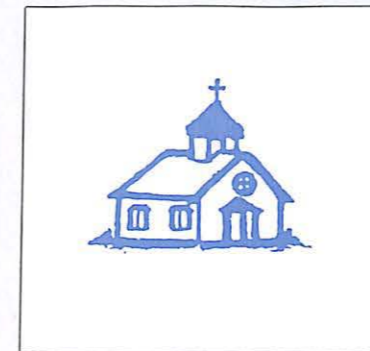


## CAMPS

Ten camp facilities are owned and/or operated by the associations of our conference. Located in five provinces and three states, the camping programs seek to meet the needs from the very young through senior citizens.

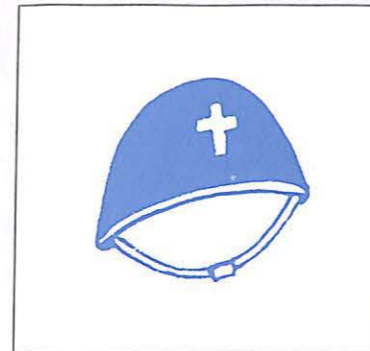
## HOME MISSION CHURCHES

These churches, located in Colorado and Texas, are served by four home missionary couples. This ministry seeks to meet the needs of Spanish-surnamed and Mexican-American people.



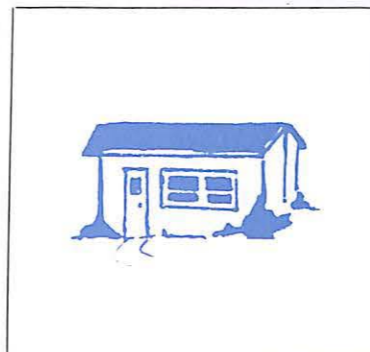
## CHAPLAIN MINISTRIES

Sixteen chaplains endorsed by the N.A.B. Conference minister to persons in the U.S. Army (6), the U.S. Air Force (3), Veterans Administration Hospitals (3), Rehabilitation Hospital (1), and as pastoral counselors (3).



## HOMES FOR THE AGING

Senior citizens homes, owned and/or operated by the associations of the N.A.B. Conference, are located in five states and three provinces.



## URBAN/MULTI-CULTURAL MINISTRIES

These specific ministries seek to reach the multi-cultural population and various language groups for Christ in our cities.



## THE CHURCH EXTENSION/ CHURCH GROWTH DEPARTMENT

consists of eight major sections, which are important ministries of the North American Baptist Conference on the North American Continent.

### CHURCH EXTENSION

Planting and developing new churches so that people may hear the Gospel in their own community. Counseling and assistance are available for church sites and buildings.

### CHURCH GROWTH

Encouraging and assisting church leadership in order to develop healthy and fruitful congregations.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Providing resources for curriculum and personnel for encouragement in more than 40 areas of church ministry.

### EVANGELISM

Helping local churches to develop strategies for evangelism and recommending evangelists for local church crusades.

### HOME MISSIONS

Giving guidance and assistance to specific multi-cultural ministries in Texas and Colorado.

### WOMEN'S MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP

Providing for fellowship, Christian growth, and outreach through local church and associational women's work.

### YOUTH AND "NEW DAY"

Assisting local congregations and associations in youth leadership and programming. Providing outreach and discipleship ministry through "New Day" youth teams.

### URBAN/MULTI-CULTURAL MINISTRY

Providing resources and direction for the development of effective church ministry in urban settings and to different language groups.

### PERSONNEL

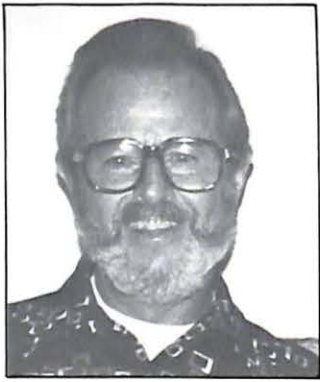
Ron Norman, church extension/church growth director  
Ray Harsch, associate director of evangelism and church growth  
Don Ganstrom, associate director of church extension  
LaVerna Mehlhaff, assistant director of women's work  
Warren Hoffman, assistant director of youth and "New Day"  
Bernard Fritzsche, area supervisor for church extension, Florida

(REMOVE STAPLES AND OPEN THESE PAGES FOR REFERENCE AND DISPLAY OF MAP.)

Keynoted on the map of Canada and The United States are various types of missions, ministry and service sponsored by the people of the North American Baptist Conference.



## Building Program Does Not Distract from Main Purpose



by Willis Carrico

What a joy it is to be servants of Jesus Christ here on earth and to be looking forward to spending eternity with him in heaven! Good things are happening at the Hartland Baptist Church, Prince George, BC. We have been meeting for worship for about three and one half years.

In November of 1983, we began to build the "material" part of our church. What a joy it is to see the actual building, yet unfinished, standing tall and inviting in full view of the thousands of people who pass daily.

We praise God for a Building Committee. The members of it do not fail to express strong opinions about the details of construction; yet they are melted together as one heart in final decisions. The struggles, which we have, usually relate to the finances that are needed. In difficult times like these, nothing short of a miracle will provide all the funds necessary.

Our church family is increasing each month. It is not unusual to find between 90 and 95 worshipping with us on any given Sunday morning. The solidarity of our church family was demonstrated recently at a Church Building Fund Raising Supper. Our people gave and pledged \$13,720 on that evening and are hoping to reach \$20,000 soon. This is in addition to the sum that we had raised before.

As pastor, I am thrilled that building a church has not distracted us from our decision and dedication to preach and teach the gospel in love and truth, and, at the same time, grow spiritually stronger ourselves. We believe that before this year is

out, we will be meeting in our new sanctuary singing praises to our Great God!

*The Rev. Willis Carrico is pastor of Hartland Baptist Church, Prince George, BC.*

## Reminiscences of a Building Program



by Henry C. Wilk

It all began when someone commented, "Pastor, I believe it is time for us to think of building!" We had been meeting in a bank for two years and were facing the problem of finding a new place in which to worship. That suggestion forced me to consider whether we were ready for a building.

First, there were reasons why I felt we were not ready. There was the size of our group—our membership was 28, with about 35 attending services. However, the biggest obstacle was the lack of finances.

Then I considered reasons why we were ready to build. Although small in numbers, we were large in determination. Several years ago our Atlantic Association purchased land for us from money received from the sale of the Evergreen Baptist Church in Brooklyn. Money was still available as a gift. We would have to trust God for the rest!

I brought the matter before the people at our annual stewardship meeting. That night about 25 met in our home. I felt the unusual presence of the Lord as I shared my feelings. Immediately, there was a ripple of excitement, and enthusiastic comments were made. We came alive with anticipation at what God was going to do.

Obstacles were prayed over, and a decision was made to step out in faith. That evening became memorable in the history of our church. Great commitments were made; offerings of time, talent and finances were promised to the Lord. We were ready!

A building committee was formed; architect hired; church plans approved; and we were ready to call on our Association. I must say, their enthusiasm matched our own. It was gratifying to know so many supported us in our decision.

Our first obstacle was finances. The church we designed was simple—"bare-bones construction," we called it. It was a modest building, easily expandable when more people and greater resources were available. Individuals and churches were informed of our plans. A building banquet was held, and funds solicited from concerned friends. And behold, ten percent of our anticipated cost of \$120,000 was raised.

What excitement! What joy! What an affirmation of God's pleasure with our decision. Financing was made available through our Conference Revolving Fund. The obstacle was hurdled. We were on our way!

I wish I could say our problems ended; however, they only began. First, there was the problem of our land being condemned—God intervened, but that's another story. Add to that, problems with permits, contractors, weather, scheduling—by the way, we were the general contractors, and sometimes that was the biggest problem.

In retrospect, now that our building is almost completed, every problem faced was an opportunity for God to reveal his omnipotent hand.

We, as the Middle Island Baptist Church, Middle Island, New York, will never forget our first building project. It was an experience in which our faith was tested, trust in God affirmed, and love and respect for each other deepened. We now await our first service and the new opportunities we have to minister to our community. □

*The Rev. Henry C. Wilk is pastor of the Middle Island Baptist Church, Middle Island, New York. The Church planned to be worshipping in its new building by Easter 1984.*

## evangelism

# To God be the Glory, Great Things He Hath Done. . . .

by Maria Rogalski

Spirited singing by the Volunteer Crusade Choir opened the nightly meetings of the New Life Crusade at McDermot Avenue Baptist Church in Winnipeg, MB. The words of a song, "There's a great new dawn, for in Christ I have found new life," became a reality in the lives of many new and old believers.

For many months prior to this extraordinary week of blessing, we, as a congregation, had prayed and planned to lay the groundwork and prepare the soil of the hearts of our people to receive and respond to God's word and to reach out to others. Evangelist Ron Susek of York, PA, communicated God's word in a most precise and powerful way. His ministry through the Ron Susek Continental Crusades Inc., is fully endorsed by our N.A.B. conference.

The altar call invitation at the end of his messages called for a definite, intelligent decision, stressing the fact that the real preacher was the Holy Spirit and praying that He, the Holy Spirit, would drive home the truth to the hearts of the listeners.

Alongside the New Life Crusade, a special Children's Crusade with Miss Shirley and Miss Rosie from the Canadian Sunday School Mission was held. A total of 101 children attended this crusade, with only 37 of them from homes of our church members. Personal decisions for the Lord were made.

Actual preparation for the New Life Crusade had begun with a continual emphasis of "Operation Andrew." This encourages the fostering of friendships with unsaved friends and neighbors. We prayed that God would prepare their hearts to accept the invitation to attend the crusade meetings.

The Finance and Publicity Chairmen had done their jobs well. The crusade budget had been met and topped before the crusade began, so that no offerings during the meetings would be required.

Announcements of the meetings had gone out through newspapers and radio.

*Maria Rogalski is a member of McDermot Avenue Baptist Church, Winnipeg, MB.*

The community around the church had been blitzed on two separate occasions.

A group of counselors had gone through specific counselor training sessions with Pastor Richard Goetze. In special prayer meetings for the crusade during the Sunday school hour and in Home Bible Studies, we had prayed for a revival and a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We tried to heed the command of the Prophet Isaiah, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Is. 40:3). Now it was up to God to act—and he did! That is the only way we can explain what happened during the eight days of the crusade with effects still visible weeks after the meetings.

In his unique and spellbinding manner, Ron Susek made God's Word come alive. He challenged us to utilize Christ's resurrection power in our daily lives through purposeful, passionate prayer. Every night people from the large audience responded by coming forward for first-time decisions, rededication and strengthening of commitments. Secret skeletons, which had been haunting individuals for years, surfaced in the light of God's truth and were brought out of the closet and dispelled by the authority of God's power.

One evening, in response to a message on the power of prayer, 70 people came forward to pledge themselves to a renewed goal of daily Bible study and prayer, writing down their names and commitment.

On Youth Emphasis Night, the church was packed with young people from all over the city. Ron Susek masterfully established rapport with them by sharing some of his personal rebellion in his youth and then went on to challenge them emphatically to full commitment to Christ, the only mandate for success. Scores of young people responded by coming forward to commit themselves to right priorities and a new determination for courage to show their true colors in the college and business environment of their lives.

On the second last night of the crusade, an extraordinary thing happened. A mom and dad who were concerned about the spiritual life of their daughter came to kneel at the front during the invitation in an act of repentance and rededication in

order to remove any hindrance on their part for God's spirit to work in the life of their daughter. Soon they were joined by another couple with a deep concern for their wayward son and daughter. While these parents were on their knees praying, that son who was in a bar at that time felt a sudden driving compulsion to leave the place. Ignoring the appeal of his buddies, he made his way to the home of one of the youth leaders. There, in the wee hours of the morning, with the summoned help of Pastor Goetze, this young man experienced a real breakthrough in a genuine commitment to the Lord.

The highlight of the entire week occurred on the last meeting of the crusade Sunday night. That morning, during the Sunday school hour, the usual crusade prayer meeting was swelled by individuals who, encouraged by their new confidence in the power of prayer, interceded passionately for the salvation of individuals by name, among them young people who had been a concern for a long time. God's spirit moved in a miraculous way that evening. During the invitation, those very young people broke down and with tears of repentance made their way to the front of the church, where they were soon met by tearful parents and family members who already had been on their knees at the front "storming the gates of heaven." That was a real victory celebration. Tears of joy fell freely from many eyes all over the congregation. It was like a mini-revival, above and beyond our expectations.

There was a reluctance on the part of many that evening to leave the hallowed place of new beginnings. We joined hands, forming a circle around the entire church, and sang songs of praise spontaneously, finally disbanding with prayer.

Not all of those we had prayed for had come and made or renewed their commitment to the Lord, but this miracle of answered prayer has given us a new spirit of hope and confidence for God to work "in his time."

The blessings of this crusade are already evidenced in increased attendance at the services and in the lives of many individuals. This crusade definitely brought New Life, not only to unbelievers but also new life to old believers. Truly it was of the Lord! "To God be the glory, great things He has done!" □



## A Woman of God

Eva Helwing,  
German Program Packet editor, shares an interview with Conference  
Women's Work Director LaVerna Mehlhaff.

*Eva:* LaVerna, how would you describe your job as director of women's work?

*LaVerna:* I believe the most important part of my work is to keep women informed about the W.M.F. and its activities. I would like to see our women working unitedly on W.M.F. goals and projects. For this to happen, they need to know the purpose of the W.M.F. which is to provide fellowship, Christian growth opportunities and outreach opportunities at home and overseas for the women in the local church. The W.M.F. is a service-oriented organization with a ministry in the local church, the community, the nation, and overseas.

I am also involved with a lot of correspondence. I keep in close contact with our executive committee and the 20 association presidents. Then, too, local church women's groups often write asking for various kinds of help and counsel. I also see that each group receives information about W.M.F. opportunities for service and outreach on a world-wide basis.

Much of my time is spent visiting our churches and working with the local women's groups.

*Eve:* Besides this, you keep abreast of the needs of women on the local level.

*LaVerna:* Yes, I believe I can do this best by visiting with the women in our churches. I also meet with women's leaders of various denominations. We talk about what's happening in the world of women today, and the opportunities women have to make an impact on our world. I try to read widely about issues relating to women.

*Eve:* What kind of help is available for women's groups?

*LaVerna:* We have a number of things. There are materials to help groups in their program planning. We share ideas from various groups. We also give guidance and encouragement to those who are beginning new W.M.F. groups—especially church extension churches or to those facing difficult times in their organization.

We share information about our mission work at home and overseas and provide encouragement and ideas as to how local women's groups can become involved in our mission program. Many women's groups participate in missions by writing letters and sending cards to missionaries as well as preparing and sending kilo packages and gifts. Through White Cross, our women work unitedly to provide materials for the medical work in Cameroon, West Africa. Strong emphasis is placed on prayer support for all of our mission ministries.

*Eve:* Much help is given women through publications. What is your part in this?

*LaVerna:* I am involved in gathering information for publication in *Sharing Time*. Ginny Smith, the editor, follows through on its publication and distribution. I supervise the publication of both the English and German program packets and materials for the Baptist Day of Prayer and the World Day of Prayer. Regularly, I write articles for the *Baptist Herald*, and "N.A.B. News," and, at times, provide information or articles for "Tie" and "Together," publications of the North American Baptist Women's Union, which is a part of the Baptist World Alliance.

*Eve:* What do you like most about your job?

*LaVerna:* Without a doubt, I enjoy most being with people.

Visiting local groups, sharing in the joys they experience, and often the difficulties has most rewarding. I enjoy sharing ideas, giving encouragement, and praying with our women. I have also gained much by attending association meetings and seeing our women in action. The retreats are especially meaningful to me.

*Eve:* Do all of our associations have retreats?

*LaVerna:* Almost all of them do. These are valuable for women of all ages—younger, middle-aged, and older women. Here women from all walks of life can meet together for fellowship and to grow in their walk with the Lord. Many beautiful things happen at retreats as women learn to know each other and share their experiences with one another. It is a good time to draw apart from one's daily routine and spend time in inner spiritual renewal.

*Eve:* What are special highlights for you?

*LaVerna:* That is hard to answer because there are so many highlights. Each visit I make to a local church, an association, a retreat, or whatever the occasion, is a highlight for me. But Triennial Conference times are extra special, for there we meet together as a big family and can share what the Lord has been doing. When we meet for our Luncheon, it is a thrill to hear and see what women working unitedly can accomplish. Our Triennial Luncheon at the Niagara Falls Conference when the W.M.F. celebrated its 75th anniversary was such an event. Triennial Conferences are times of celebration and praise to the Lord, and I am sure that our next one in Anaheim, California, next year will be also.

*Eve:* LaVerna, what would you like to see happen in the next five years?

*LaVerna:* My dream is to see women excited about the local women's organization and its opportunities for outreach on the local level as well as nationally and

overseas. I would like to see women continue to use the program packets for Bible study topics and as a forum for discussion. I would like to see them share outlines and information about workshops and social functions they have enjoyed and would like to share with others.

I would like to see more tools for training women's group leaders available so they can effectively minister to the women of the association.

One aim is to help women become more familiar with and aware of our home and overseas mission outreach. We plan to prepare an audio visual presentation, which can be used in our churches, to show the opportunities for ministry for women throughout our Conference.

*Eve:* The Lord has used you in many ways, LaVerna. Could you tell us a little about yourself?

*LaVerna:* My life started on a farm in South Dakota. These were great years of training. I had the privilege of being born into a Christian home and was taught the importance of serving the Lord. Our family was regular in church attendance, and we were always on time. This taught me how important God is and what joy it is to be part of a Christian family. I accepted Christ as my Savior when I was eight years old. The pastor came to our home and explained the plan of salvation to me.

*Eve:* I believe you taught school for a time.

*LaVerna:* Yes, after graduating from high school, God led me to enroll at Sioux Falls College. After two years, I graduated with an A.A. degree and taught school first in the country and then in town.

*Eve:* LaVerna, you have such a unique understanding of the church and its outreach. Tell us about your experiences in church work.

*LaVerna:* I went back to Sioux Falls College for two more years and graduated with a B.A. degree.

## . . . For the Potter's Pleasure . . .



by Iona Quiring,  
W.M.F. president,  
Rogers, MN



*"Thou art worthy, O Lord . . . for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created"* (Revelation 4:11).

Once in awhile I do something special to please my husband, like sewing a long-missing button on his jacket, or cleaning the garage, or polishing his shoes, just because I love him. I want to make him feel good. It also makes me feel good. Then I wonder why I don't do things like that more often. He probably does, too!

How often do I do something special for God, just because I love him and want to please him? Not often enough. What gives God pleasure? The Bible has some answers.

It pleases God when his people know and love him. He desires my constant love, not my approval. He wants me to really know him

personally, not just to listen to tapes or attend services. He expects obedience, not excuses. He asks for my tongue along with my tithe. God is not pleased when we just play church; in fact, he says he wishes someone would close the church doors instead (my translation of Malachi 1:10).

We also bring God pleasure when we love and serve other people. "Do good and help one another . . . these are the sacrifices that please God" (Hebrews 13:6). That could mean taking a meal to someone, or making a telephone call, or leading a Bible study. There's room here for everyone's spiritual gift. Just think how pleased God would be if each one of us used her spiritual gift to encourage or build-up someone today. We would all feel so good! We would wonder why we don't do things like that more often. God probably wonders, too. □

The Lord said, "Follow me to Cleveland, Ohio," and I spent 11 years there as a director of Christian education, first in the Erin Avenue Baptist Church and then in the Parma Heights Baptist Church.

*Eve:* Your most important training for your present work was probably the mission field. I believe you were a missionary on three of our mission fields.

*LaVerna:* Yes, the Lord opened the door for me to serve as a short-term missionary first in Cameroon and then in Japan. I was also privileged to serve for a month on our Colorado field. During all these years, the Lord trained and

taught me, and he still does. After I returned from Japan, God opened the door for me to become the Conference women's work director. I know the Lord opens doors and says, "This is the way, walk in it." He has supplied all of my needs. I praise the Lord for his way of leading and for all his provisions through the years.

*Eve:* LaVerna, it has been a pleasure talking with you. We appreciate your warm, enthusiastic leadership and the love you show to each one of us. I know God will continue to bless your leadership of the W.M.F. You are truly a woman of God. □



## Church Growth

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA.** Four individuals were received into the fellowship of the Fountain Valley Baptist Church in February.

Dr. Richard Houts of the N.A.B. Seminary spoke recently on "Marriage Enrichment."

The Church served as the Educational Center for 30 Japanese University Students with the Interstudy Program during February and March. Many of the students were hosted in the homes of the Church people. The Rev. Eugene Stroh is pastor of this Church. (Clara Unruh, reporter.)



**GLEN ELLYN, IL.** Eight persons (pictured) expressed their faith in Jesus Christ through the waters of baptism at Village Green Baptist Church on January 15. The entire service that evening centered around the meaning and significance of baptism. Dr. David Korb (left) is pastor of the church.

**HILLSBORO, OR.** Five people joined Faith Baptist Church in February, four by baptism, and one by transfer of letter.

The two young people, who were baptized in January and who became members of the Church in February, had special significance to the Church. Their entire families are now active members of Faith Church. The other two who were baptized were mother and daughter, with the father joining by transfer of letter. The father of this family has already been very active in the music program of the church, serving as choir director since late 1983. He also has led our choir and other area church choirs in a Community Christmas Concert.

"We praise God for this oneness of these families in Christ and in his Church here in Hillsboro. God is blessing. We look forward to more growth for Christ during 1984," says the Rev. Jim Green, pastor.

**SPEARFISH, SD.** On February 12, Mountain View Baptist Church witnessed the baptism of three people, including a 74-year-old woman. "All who attended this service felt the presence of the Holy Spirit during the time of sharing and testimony that followed," states Nancy Peep, reporter.

The Rev. George Robinson has been the interim pastor since August. Under his direction, attendance has increased, and new programs are being planned, such as outreach and visitation. Every Sunday morning, Pastor Robinson shares a "Thought for the Day" on a local radio station.

Once a month, the community is invited to view a Moody Science Film.

"We praise God for our faithful members and their willingness to work for Him," says Nancy.

**ELGIN, IA.** Pastor Norman Miller baptized one person recently at First Baptist Church. During the communion service, which followed, the hand of fellowship was extended to five new



members (pictured) by Pastor Miller (left). (Ruth Jacob, reporter.)

**PRINCE RUPERT, BC.** Bethel-First Baptist Church recently had the privilege and blessing of watching three more persons follow the example of their Lord Jesus Christ through the waters of believers' baptism.

"As a body of believers, God continues to do a work within our hearts and lives, as he not only grows us in



numbers but also in the unity and the power of the Holy Spirit," says Dot Potter, church clerk. The Rev. Terrence Jarosch is pastor of the Church.



**PARKERSBURG, IA.** The members of Calvary Baptist Church thank and praise God for 13 people who joined the Church recently. Pictured is the Rev. Oliver Ringering, interim pastor, with nine members who joined through baptism. Two young couples also joined by profession of their faith. (Sandi Kluitner, reporter.)

**KELOWNA, BC.** Thirteen members were added to Lakeview Heights Baptist Church in 1983, eight by baptism, four by transfer and one by testimony.

On Dec. 18, 1983, the Senior Choir presented the cantata, "A Reason to Rejoice." Women's Ministries are enjoying Bible studies and crafts every Thursday morning, with up to 61 ladies in attendance. (Dorothy G. Fritzsche, reporter.)

## Mission Conferences

**SWAN RIVER, MB.** Pastor Leland Bertsch and his wife Jennell returned from the Philippines and are ministering to Temple Baptist Church after a year's leave of absence. A delicious Philippine supper was prepared by the pastor and his wife and enjoyed by members of the Church. A slide presentation of their work in the Philippines followed.

"The following Sunday, it was our privilege to have as guest speakers, Reimer and Nobuko Clausen, missionaries to Japan," reports Lynn Patzer. Nobuko sang a solo in Japanese. The Clausens presented their work in Japan through slides.

**RAPID CITY, SD.** Esther and Ray Hoffman, missionaries to Cameroon, shared with the Sunday school classes, the children's church classes, and the morning worship service during Super Missionary Sunday, Jan. 29, 1984, at South Canyon Baptist Church.

In the evening, Interim Pastor George Robinson and his congregation from the Mountain View Baptist Church of Spearfish joined with the South Canyon Baptist Church for a pot-luck fellowship and the evening service. The Hoffmans presented a slide presentation. (Mazine Bettenhausen, reporter.)

## Church Dedications and Anniversaries

**GRAND FORKS, ND.** A skit depicting the past brought laughs and tears to those attending the Feb. 10 banquet which was prepared by the Men's Brotherhood at Grace Baptist Church. This marks the beginning of the church's 75th jubilee celebration.

Mr. Carl Carlson, master of ceremonies, introduced the Rev. Bill Keple, Martin Baptist Church, who gave the devotions and challenge. Music was presented by the Redemption Sound Quartet (Milt Derman, Clayton Edinger, Bill Keple and Peter Johnson.)

A canvas oil painting of the two former and the present churches, painted by Chester, Faul, Jr., was displayed and presented to the Church.

The Church plans to celebrate its 75th Jubilee on June 15, 16, and 17. The Rev. Ralph Cooke is pastor of the Church. (Mrs. Charles Balogh, reporter.)

**RIDGEWOOD, NY.** The 129th anniversary of the Ridgewood Baptist Church was celebrated January 22. "A thought-provoking sermon was given by Pastor Edward Bacon on the relevance of the attitudes of Nicodemus to our own lives," says Marion von Ahnen, reporter. A dinner followed the service. Reports were given by the trustees, deaconate and various organizations on the year's activities.

The Rev. Edward Bacon, pastor, resigned effective March 25, and this matter was also referred to during the meeting. Rev. Bacon said he and his

wife Bonnie had been happy to serve us and appreciate the love and support they received.

## Association Meetings

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA.** Fountain Valley Baptist Church hosted the Southern California Association Meetings, February 25-26. The Rev. Ron Norman, church extension/church growth director, N.A.B. Conference, was guest speaker. A special feature at the closing Sunday evening rally included selections sung by each choir of the seven participating churches, climaxing with a mass choir number. (Clara Unruh, reporter.)

**PORTLAND, OR.** The Central-Pacific Association met Nov. 4-6, 1983, at the Glencullen Baptist Church. Giving a challenge for missions were missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Earl Ahrens, Monte Vista, CO.

"Their firm commitment to Christ and his work was convicting," states Judy Schmitke, recording secretary for the Association.

The Rev. Ron Norman, church extension/church growth director, emphasized the work that God is doing through the N.A.B. Conference. The Rev. Ben Hulsing shared praise and prayer concerns from the North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD.

"The challenge left to us was to 'Respond to God's Vision' as we concluded our 96th session," says Mrs. Schmitke.

## Special Events

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA.** The men of Fountain Valley Baptist Church meet once a month with a guest as speaker.

A laymen's program was presented by the men of the church on January 8. A feature included testimonies on "How I Apply My Christian Witness in My Vocation" given by five men in the

following vocations: Investments, Hospital Volunteer Service, Real Estate, Engineering, and Medical Doctor.

An evening of pledging for a phase of the Church building program was held on January 29, preceded by a potluck dinner. The film, "The Gift of Love," was shown. Pledges taken totalled more than \$26,000 exceeding the goal of \$25,000. (Clara Unruh, reporter.)

**KELOWNA, BC.** Dr. Ron Mayforth was guest speaker at "Deeper Life" meetings, January 4-8, 1984, held at Lakeview Heights Baptist Church. Dr. Mayforth's ministry was greatly appreciated. He is Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at N.A.B. Divinity School, Edmonton, AB. On Jan. 15, 1984, Lakeview Heights Baptist Church welcomed Loren Stark, new assistant pastor, and family, with a special service and pantry shower, including words of welcome and challenge to the Starks by the Rev. Gerald Scheel, senior pastor. (Dorothy G. Fritzsche, reporter.)

### LAURA REDDIG MEMOIRS

I am presently assisting Laura Reddig, former missionary, in the writing of her autobiography and would appreciate hearing from any Baptist Herald readers who have special stories concerning Laura's influence on their lives over the last 45 years. Please include the dates and details of memorable events that should form part of the record. Send information to:

Pastor Ed. Hughes,  
Grant Park Baptist Church,  
1077 Grant Avenue,  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3M 1Y6

**STOCKTON, CA.** "The Quail Lakes Baptist Church proudly announces the addition Jon Hathorn to the staff as Director of Junior High Ministries. Jon, a son of the church, recently completed his M.A. and will specialize in Youth Ministries.

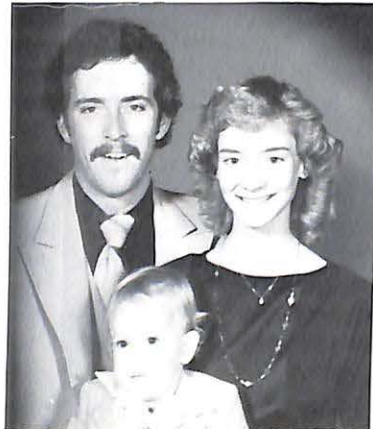
"We also rejoice at the completion of a new 6,000 square foot adult classroom and office building, which was dedicated in January totally debt-free," says the Rev. Fred Jantz, pastor. "We praise God for his faithfulness in our midst!"



**SWAN RIVER, MB.** Members of "Covenant" from N.A.B. College, Edmonton, AB., presented their ministry of song during the morning worship service at Temple Baptist Church.

During the evening service, Phyllis Schroeder and Calvin Dahl, short-term missionaries to Brazil, presented their work there. (Lynn Patzer, reporter.)

**GRAND FORKS, ND.** Mr. Grant Opland began his ministry as Assistant Pastor of Youth and Christian Education at Grace Baptist Church on Nov. 22, 1983.



"We are thankful and blessed with the enthusiasm and dedication of this young man," says Mrs. Charles Balogh, reporter.

Nine adults have volunteered to pray for the needs of our youth and Pastor Grant as he leads them. They are called the Youth Prayer Council and meet every third Sunday of the month after the evening service.

Grant, Cindy and son Matthew are living in the parsonage.

**MADISON, SD.** Pastor Appreciation Night was the theme of a recent Sunday evening service at West Center Street Baptist Church. Special music was presented by Susan Schrepel and the "Glanzer Gospel Singers"; words of appreciation were shared from Dave Stenberg, James Schrepel, and Lois McGillivray, church secretary.

On the lighter side, Wayne Kerslake showed slides depicting the life of Pastor Oliver Bender. (Ramona Bender, reporter.)

**GACKLE, ND.** More than 60 people attended an open house hosted by Grace Baptist Church for Mrs. Bertha Klundt on her 99th birthday. Mrs. Klundt is a member of Grace Baptist. Articles of her past were displayed along with a fresh loaf of bread she just baked. (Betty Anderson, reporter.)



**WEST FARGO, ND.** On Aug. 28, 1983, a service dedication was held for two infants (pictured with parents) at Grace Baptist Church. Pastor Jay Holston was in charge of the Dedication. (Desiree Morton, secretary.)

**ELGIN, IA.** Thirty senior citizens of the First Baptist Church were guests of the youth group for a valentine dinner. The youth escorted their guests to the tables, where a dinner, prepared by youth mothers, was served. A program included singing, readings, and a skit. Cookies, decorated by the youth at an earlier meeting, were served. (Ruth Jacob, reporter.)

**OCHRE RIVER, MB.** Through prayers and the effective leadership of its pastor, the Rev. H. Poschwatta, and through the Lord Jesus Christ, Grace Baptist Church has realized many blessings. Attendance at the church services continues to grow in 1984.

At the Watchnight Service on New Year's Eve, each family participated in the service either in music or word. This was followed by a time of inspiring testimony and fellowship.

At the annual Thanksgiving program and dinner, a record missionary offering was given. (Fred J. Amman, reporter.)

**MADISON, SD.** Dakota State College was the location for a one-day retreat for West Center Street Baptist Church leaders and all interested persons. Special speaker for the day was Dr. Stan Grenz from the N.A.B. Seminary, Sioux Falls.

Four half-hour input sessions: "What Is the Church?", "What Is the Calling of the Church—Our Priorities," "Keys to Fulfilling Our Calling—Unity," and "Keys to Fulfilling Our Calling—Diversity?" were sections of the theme for the day. "Building a Maturing Body." Throughout the day, there were small group discussions between the speaking times. The day ended with a group prayer-time. The Rev. Oliver Bender is pastor of the Church. (Ramona Bender, reporter.)

**PARKERSBURG, IA.** Members and friends of the Calvary Baptist Church welcomed the Rev. and Mrs. Howard Anderson as its new pastor and wife on Feb. 8, 1984, at a special evening reception.

Pastor Terry Tareila, Victor Baptist Church, welcomed the Andersons and challenged the congregation concerning their ministry together.

Rev. Anderson was installed as pastor on February 12. At this time, he also welcomed 11 new members into the Church.

Pastor Anderson graduated from the N.A.B. Seminary, Sioux Falls, in December 1983. He served as Minister of Christian Education and Youth at Second Reformed Church, while a student at the Seminary.



**BURTON, TX.** Fritz Poerschke was honored at a luncheon following services on January 15 at Greenvine Baptist Church, in celebration of his 90th birthday. His sons, Fred and Werner, were in attendance. Poerschke was presented with a plaque in recognition of his more than 30 years of service and membership at Greenvine Baptist.

"A gifted carpenter, Poerschke built many of the lovely pieces of woodwork that adorn Greenvine Baptist Church today," reports Mary Ricks Zorn.

## Ordinations

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN.** Twenty-four delegates from twelve churches in the Minnesota-La Crosse Association participated in an ordination council meeting held on Jan. 7, 1984, at Faith Baptist Church. Alan W. Steier, the candidate, ably presented a statement of his call to the ministry and his beliefs. Upon motion from the council, the church was asked to proceed with an ordination service.

Ben Woyke introduced Alan and his wife, Judy, and their daughter Jennifer Lynn to those who assembled for the ordination service on Jan. 15, 1984. The host pastor, the Rev. Harvey

Mehlhoff, gave an inspiring message, "You Are a Burning Bush." The Rev. Jack Kruegal gave a charge to the church; the Rev. Robert Coombe the charge to the candidate; and Dr. Frank Veninga the prayer of ordination.

The Steiers have been appointed as career missionaries to Japan by the North American Baptist Conference. They left for the field in March 1984. (Vernon Heckman, ordination council clerk.)

**WARREN, MI.** An ordination council comprised of 12 delegates from Michigan Association Churches and three delegates from independent Baptist churches met to examine Mr. Vincent Messina for the Christian ministry on Sept. 17, 1983, at Redeemer Baptist Church. Mr. Messina was raised at Redeemer Baptist. It was there that he accepted Christ and later committed his life to God's call to the ministry.

Pastor Kenneth Fenner was elected by the council to serve as moderator. After the Council heard Mr. Messina's testimony, call to the ministry, doctrinal statement, and the defense of his faith, it recommended him for ordination.

A service of ordination was held at Redeemer Baptist on September 25. Rev. Messina continues to serve the Lord as pastor at the Mt. Pleasant Bible Church of Goodells, MI.

## Wedding Anniversaries



David and Ruth Kramer joyously celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with relatives, friends, and church members at Faith Baptist Church, Regina, SK, on Oct. 16, 1983.

Pastor Richard Quiring presented a gold cross to the Kramers on behalf of the Church.

**BERTHA HECKENLAIBLE** (nee Hinzman) (74), born May 26, 1909, on a farm near Avon, SD, to Emanuel and Lydia (Giedd) Hinzman, died Dec. 28, 1983. Bertha accepted Christ as Savior and was baptized at Danzig Baptist Church, rural Avon. She remained an active member there until she moved to Sioux Falls, SD, where she joined Hillcrest Baptist Church. On Dec. 2, 1938, she married Alfred Heckenlaible in Tyndall, SD. The couple lived near Menno and Avon until 1957, when they moved to Sioux Falls. Survivors include her husband, Alfred; a daughter, Mrs. Morris (Patsy) Buchholz of Sioux Falls, and a half-sister, Mrs. Everett (Mary Ellen) Combs. She was predeceased by her parents, an infant daughter, Ruby Mae, and one brother, Alfred. The Rev. John Terveen officiated at the funeral service.

**PEARL ELIZABETH HUBER** was born May 15, 1938, near Herreid, SD, to Christ and Elizabeth (Wolfer) Huber, and died Dec. 24, 1983. At the age of 11, she accepted Christ, was baptized, joined Herreid Baptist Church. Her life was centered in teaching young people in public school and Sunday school, and serving on boards and committees related to youth work. She is survived by her mother, Elizabeth; 1 brother, Harvey O. Huber, Yakima, WA; 2 sisters: Mrs. Ervin (Estelline C.) Quenzer, Moberly, SD, and Mrs. Frank (Lila L.) Tranby, Wadena, MN; 6 nephews, 2 nieces, 4 great-grandnieces and 2 great-nephews. She was predeceased by her father.

**JONATHAN OTTO** (98), born Aug. 28, 1885, in Wolhynia, died Jan. 23, 1984. In 1895 he gave his life to Christ and was baptized. In 1910, he married Minnie Mueller who died in 1956. On Sept. 19, 1959, he married Martha Penno. In 1906, he immigrated to Canada and joined First German Baptist Church (McDermot Ave.), Winnipeg, MB, where he served as deacon and trustee. On Jan. 9, 1949, he became a charter member of German Baptist Mission Church. He served as deacon, trustee, Sunday school superintendent, and Sunday school teacher. To many he was an example of faith, love and hope. He has been a great blessing to many throughout the N.A.B. Conference. Survivors include his wife, Martha, and two sisters. The Rev. Siegfried Hoppe officiated at the funeral service.

**MICHAEL GINTER** (89) of Swan River, MB, born in Lutsk, Poland, March 12, 1894, died Aug. 5, 1983. He accepted the Lord at an early age, was baptized and joined the Baptist Church. On Jan. 22, 1918, he married Agnes Gutowski; they immigrated to Canada in 1928. In 1918, they moved from Forestburg, AB, to Minitonas, MB, where he was a member of First Baptist Church until his death. Survivors include his wife, Agnes; four sons: Milton and wife Carol, Prince George, BC; Seferin and wife Joyce, Burlington, ON; John and wife

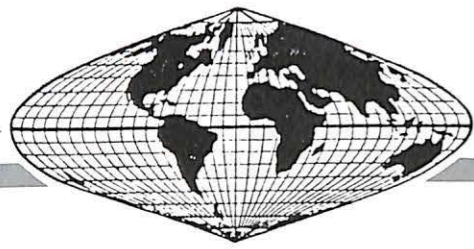
Dawn, Red Deer, AB; Harold and wife Alice, The Pas, MB; four daughters: Linda Walter, Yorkton, SK; Alma and husband Ed Gellert, Bowsman, MB; and Frieda and husband Wallace Tolton, Minitonas, MB; Gertrude and husband Frank Friesen, Swan River, MB; 26 grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his oldest son Bernhart in 1956 and son-in-law Rae Walter in 1977. The Rev. Ron Kelway officiated at the funeral service.

**LILLIAN LYDIA JANZEN** (nee Hoffman) (89), Morris, MB, was born in Plum Coulee, MB, May 3, 1894, and died Jan. 3, 1984. She accepted Christ at an early age, was baptized in 1911, and joined Emmanuel Baptist Church. There she was a faithful member, teaching Sunday school, visiting the sick, and helping wherever she could. In 1919, she married Jacob J. Janzen; they lived in southern Manitoba until retirement, and then in Morris, MB. Survivors include her husband Jacob; two sons: Eldon and his wife Bertha of Flushing, NY, Leslie and his wife Elfrieda of Morris, MB; two daughters: Myrtle and her husband Waldemar Ertis of Kelowna, BC; and Myra and her husband Alfred Neuman of Winnipeg, MB; 13 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren. The Rev. Morley Schultz officiated at the funeral service.

**PAUL RICHARD PERMANN** (70), Hesketh, AB, born Feb. 21, 1913, in Eureka, SD, died Dec. 26, 1983. In 1921, his parents and he moved to Carbon, AB. In 1946, he married Alice Metzger, who died 23 years later. Paul joined Freudental Baptist Church, and later Zion Baptist Church, as a charter member. He served as Sunday school treasurer and could be counted on for a helping hand. In 1970, Paul married Lena Kappes. Paul was predeceased by his parents, Christian and Karolina Permman; four brothers, Christ, Jake, John and Sam; and three step-sisters, Ernestina Smith, Emma Hector, and Ella Musiko. Survivors include his wife Lena; his son, Ronnie, and Myrtle; two grandchildren, Toby and Kandice; two sisters, Emma Giner and Ida Rempfer; two half-brothers, Walter and Bennie; one step-sister, Frieda Rempfer; two step-brothers, Ted and John Schmidt. Pastor Allen Unger officiated at the funeral service.

**MRS. CHRISTINA RENZ** (nee Vilhauer) was born April 29, 1897, near Artas, SD, and died Jan. 10, 1984. She married August Renz, Sr., Dec. 14, 1915, in Herreid Baptist Church. They farmed near McIntosh and later near Herreid until retiring in 1943. She is survived by two sons, August Renz, Jr., of Herreid and Ruben Renz of Moberly, SD; three daughters: Mrs. Johnny (Lizzie) Quenzer and Mrs. Harold (Emma) Berndt, both of Herreid, and Mrs. Erwin (Lenora) Rau of Java, SD; 17 grandchildren; and 31 great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband in 1963 and two sons, Jacob and Phillip.





**NO NEW STUDENTS ALLOWED TO ENTER BUCHAREST SEMINARY STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN**

During the meetings of the Council of the European Baptist Federation, Sept. 29-Oct. 2, 1983, in Soedertaelje, Sweden, delegates gratefully received the news that Baptist churches in Romania continue to grow and show great vitality.

At the same time the Council members expressed deep concern and regret that no new students have been permitted to register for instruction at the Baptist Seminary in Bucharest, in spite of previously given promises from State representatives. They also registered their disappointment over the fact that the long overdue Congress of the Union, with its proposed election of a new executive, again had to be postponed for an indefinite time.

**3,000 YOUTH REGISTERED FOR BAPTIST YOUTH WORLD CONFERENCE**

**BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA**—About 3,000 youth from Latin America have already registered for the Baptist World Youth Congress to be held in Buenos Aires this summer. An equal number of participants are expected to come from other countries. The Conference theme will lead these young people to the quest for "truth and peace in Jesus Christ."

**BAPTIST YOUTH FIND WAYS TO COMBAT HUNGER**

**WASHINGTON, DC**—Baptist youth are searching for various ways to combat hunger in the world. Since only a few of them have a regular income, they are trying to find extra employment.

Numerous reports have reached the Baptist World Alliance office: young men organize car washes; young people have flea markets;

youth groups open up "Third World shops;" young girls arrange for baby sitting services; some young Christians even give up meals or birthday gifts in order to use the money for hunger ministries.

**GERMAN BAPTISTS TO CELEBRATE 150th ANNIVERSARY**

**HAMBURG, WEST GERMANY**—The Johann Gerhard Oncken Baptist Church in Hamburg will celebrate the 150th anniversary of Baptist beginnings in Germany on Easter Sunday 1984.

From August 1-5, this celebration will continue in conjunction with the Congress of the European Baptist Federation, to convene in Hamburg. The theme of the EBF Congress is "Seek the Welfare of the City."

**PRESIDENT OF BRAZIL TURNS TV STATION OVER TO BAPTISTS**

**RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL (BP)**—Brazilian President Joao Figueiredo has signed over a television broadcasting license worth \$1.5 million to a production company formed by Baptist evangelist Nilson Fanini.

The license gives Fanini's company, Television Ebenezer Limited, control of an inactive television station in Rio de Janeiro formerly run by the Roman Catholic Church. The station can reach 40 million TV watchers in southern Brazil and with expanded facilities could reach the nation's entire television audience.

Fanini has two years to raise \$5 million to equip the defunct station, or he loses the license. "This is a tremendous, wide open door for evangelism," Fanini said. Besides preaching the Gospel,

Fanini wants to program "Christian soap operas, drama, news and everything."

The presidential decree giving the station to Fanini's company aroused controversy in the Brazilian media. "All the papers, all the magazines are wondering why the president did that. We are a Catholic country, but he gave it to us," said the evangelist.

**BAPTISTS TO CELEBRATE 100 YEARS IN THE USSR**

**MOSCOW, USSR**—The All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists will observe the 100th anniversary of the Baptist Union in the USSR in late October 1984. Celebrations will take place both in Leningrad and in Novo-Vasilievka, where the first Congress of Baptists and Menonites met in 1984.

The All-Union Council, with an official membership of 545,000 members in about 5,000 registered churches, has received permission to publish 20,000 New Testaments with Psalms, 10,000 Bible concordances and 10,000 hymnals during the anniversary year.

**KOREAN BAPTIST CHURCHES GROWING QUICKLY**

**SEOUL, KOREA**—The Baptist churches in South Korea belong to the fastest growing churches in the world. During the last three years, the Baptist Convention there has doubled its membership and now has more than 300,000 members.

The leaders of the Convention have decided to invite the Baptist World Alliance to hold its World Congress in 1990 in Seoul. The Alliance will respond to this invitation at the 1985 World Congress in Los Angeles, California, where 24,000 Baptists are expected to participate.

**what's happening**

*The Rev. Richard F. Person* becomes the chaplain of the North American Baptist Home, Madison, SD, effective May 1, 1984. He has served as pastor of the First Baptist Church, Chancellor, SD, since 1978.

*Miss Sharon L. Samson* resigned as Director of Christian Education at Redeemer Baptist Church, Warren, MI, effective May 6, 1984. She has served in this position for 17 years. On May 31, she leaves for the mission field in Liberia, West Africa.

*The Rev. Kenneth Hayes* resigned as pastor of Neustadt Baptist church, Ontario, effective May 31, 1984.

*Mr. Dave Henkelman* has accepted the pastorate of Wiesenthal Baptist Church, Millet, AB, effective May 7, 1984. He had been serving as the associate pastor of Greenfield Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB.

*The Rev. Robert Lennick* resigned as pastor of Eagle Rock Baptist Church, Idaho Falls, ID, effective March 25, 1984. He has served as pastor of this Church since 1977.

*Mr. Reuben Nuss* is Director of Development at Temple Baptist Church, Lodi, CA.

*Mr. Valentin P. Potloff* is the Facilities Administrator at Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, CA.

*The Rev. Rudy Lemke* resigned as pastor of Hudson Bay Park Baptist Church, Saskatoon, SK, effective March 1, 1984.

*The Rev. Greg Odell* resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church, Plevna, MT, effective April 30, 1984. He has served this church since 1980.

*The Rev. Jack Jones* resigned as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Brookfield, WI, after serving there since 1975. He becomes manager of Cambridge Towers, an American Baptist Home in Milwaukee, WI, on May 1, 1984.

*The Rev. Fred Penner* resigned as pastor of Anchor Baptist Church, South Sioux City, NE, April 30, 1984.

*The Mountain View Baptist Church, Chino, CA,* was accepted as a recognized N.A.B. church into the Southern California Association at its annual meeting in February 1984. *The Rev. Norris Helms* is the founding pastor of this church extension church, which began in January 1982.

*Mr. Paul Wilson* is the Minister of Youth and Music at Brentview Baptist Church, Calgary, AB.

*Mr. Keith Essex* is the associate pastor at Magnolia Baptist Church, Anaheim, CA.

*The Rev. Paul Brannan* is the new pastor of First Baptist Church, Sidney, MT. He previously served First Baptist Church, McIntosh, SD.

*Dr. Roy E. DeBrand,* professor of Homelitics, North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD, has authored the book, *The Cross and Beyond,* published by Broadman Press.

*Mr. Norman Poehlke* is the new minister of youth at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Vancouver, BC.

*Mr. Lyle Richards* was ordained by the Parkland Baptist Church, Spruce Grove, AB, on March 11, 1984. He is pastor of this Church.

*Mr. Mike Russ* has resigned as youth director at First Baptist Church, Lodi, CA. He plans to become a counselor in the public school system.

*Mr. Harold Kelm* has accepted the pastorate of Bethany Baptist Church, Hutchinson, MN. He is a 1984 graduate of Bethel Seminary and a member of Ridgewood Baptist Church, Milwaukee, WI.

*The Rev. Michael Campbell* becomes pastor of Foster Avenue Baptist Church, Chicago, IL, on June 1, 1984. He is a 1984 graduate of the North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD.

*The Rev. Fred Fuchs* became pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Shattuck, OK, April 1984. He had been serving as interim pastor at Hillcrest Baptist Church, Sioux Falls, SD.

**"We call Amy and Christy Our Miracle Babies, the Result of Your Prayers"**



**SIoux FALLS, SD.** "My heart was completely overwhelmed when I was told that the whole N.A.B. Conference was praying for me and the twin girls the day I went into surgery," says Wendy Ford, whose husband is a student at N.A.B. Seminary. "God chose to answer your prayers as once again my life was spared, and he gave to us two beautiful daughters."

Wendy's kidneys were failing, so the decision was made for her to deliver the babies by Cesarean Section. Miss LaVerna Mehlhaff, woman's work director activated the W.M.F. Prayer Chain on February 14. Women throughout Canada and the U.S.A. were praying for Wendy and the babies.

"We like to call them our miracle babies. We are aware that people are still praying," says Wendy. "That is evidenced by the fact that I had a quick recovery and the progress of the twins. They are doing better than the doctor expected. We thank God that he has put us in this place at this time. We have competent doctors and an excellent hospital. Thank you for your prayers."

**50th Anniversary Grace Baptist Church 1150 Glenmore Dr. Kelowna, BC V1Y 4P3 (604) 763-3457**

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*The Rev. Gerhard Poschwatta, pastor*



## Our Role in Church Growth

by Ron Norman

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow"  
(1 Corinthians 3:6).

How does one plant the seed? Planting undoubtedly occurs in a variety of ways. In one instance, planting may be accomplished by a casual scraping away of the top-soil and the dropping of the seed. In another case, it may be attained by using a \$100,000 tractor pulling an eight-bottom plow, followed by an elaborate drill that plants the seed with the fertilizer so many inches beneath the surface.

The point is, you have "good news" for the people in your neighborhood and community. Therefore, recognizing your "role," you need to evaluate what you are doing to see that you are using the most effective methods of communicating that message to the unbelievers and unchurched around you.

Here are three important principles to consider when it comes to "planting and watering":

### 1) Experiment - Evaluate - Do What Is Effective for You!

There are innovative techniques of outreach. Test them and make sure they work before you "lock yourself in." But do something! Be able to identify the way(s) in which you as a church are "planting and watering."

### 2) Discover the Needs of the Nonchurched

How? Ask them!  
Develop a fair sampling of unchurched households that roughly match those of your congregation and then take an opinion poll. Here are some key questions:

- Are you an active member of a nearby church? (If they are, then thank them, but don't go further—remember, you're looking for opinions of the nonchurched.)
- What do you think is the greatest need (insert the name of the community you're in)?
- Why do you think most people don't attend church? (This is important—don't change the wording.)
- If you were looking for a church in the area, what would you look for in a church?
- What advice would you give me, as (the pastor) or (an active member), of a nearby church? What, for example, could I do for you?

Take notes. Get at least 100 responses. Study them. Pray over them. Ask God to help you understand the needs identified.

### 3) Based on the Above Responses, Develop Your "Planting and Watering" Strategy.

Don't be careless or unsystematic. "But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way" (1 Corinthians 14:40). As you develop your "message" and "method," do so with these responses in mind.

Remember, growth itself is an activity of God; it is our responsibility to "plant" and to "water." May we fulfill our God-ordained role in church growth with a commitment and determination that will bring results and reward (1 Corinthians 3: 7, 8).

The Rev. Ron Norman is Church Extension/Church Growth Director for the North American Baptist Conference.

## congratulations

to the following churches for joining the Church Family Subscription Plan to the *Baptist Herald*:

*Temple Baptist*, Calgary, AB; Rev. Heinz Schoenhoff, pastor; Mr. Alex Hoffman, agent.

*Calvary Baptist*, Corn, OK; Rev. Edwin Voigt, pastor; Mrs. Mary Lepke, agent.

*Highland Baptist*, Derby, NY; Rev. George Brite, pastor; Mrs. Marge Newman, agent.

*Forest Park Baptist*, Forest Park, IL; Rev. David Wick, pastor.

*First Baptist of Dickinson County*, Hope, KS; Rev. Chester Strobel, pastor; Mrs. C. A. Piper, agent.

*Grace Baptist*, Medicine Hat, AB; Rev. Art Freitag, pastor; Mrs. Martha Anderst, agent.

*Calvary Baptist*, Regina, SK; Rev. Ed Schellenberg, pastor; Mrs. Hazel Hoffman, agent.

*Latta Road Baptist*, Rochester, NY; Rev. Herbert Berndt, pastor; Mr. Carl Miller, agent.

*Southey Baptist*, Southey, SK; Rev. Berthold Milner, pastor; Mrs. Grace Lang, agent.

**Diamond Jubilee  
1909 - 1984  
Grace Baptist Church  
Grand Forks, North Dakota**

Jubilee Anniversary  
June 15, 17

Ralph E. Cooke, pastor

**The 90th Anniversary of  
First Baptist Church  
Leduc, Alberta  
June 30 - July 2, 1984**

Former members and friends are cordially invited to attend this event of picnic and special presentations. Banquet tickets (June 30) need to be purchased in advance.

Please contact  
The Anniversary Committee  
c/o First Baptist Church  
R. R. 2, Leduc, Alberta T9E 2X2  
Dr. Joe Sonnenberg, pastor

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for  
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