

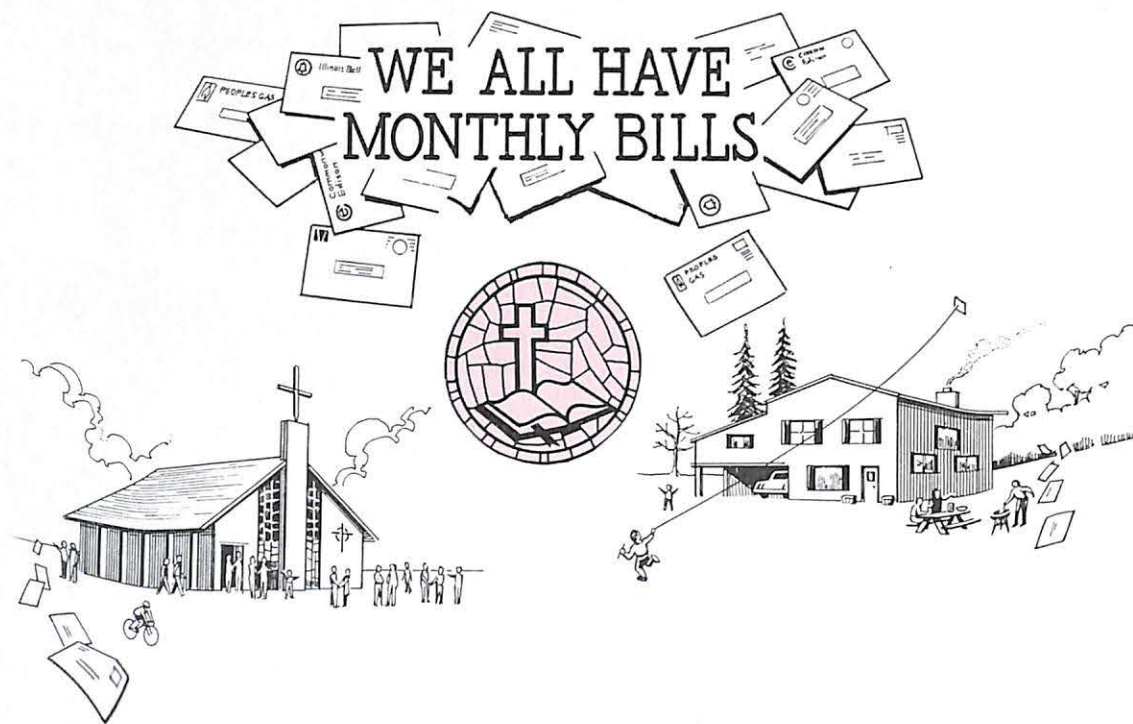
Baptist Herald

June 1987



North American
Baptist Conference

1986 in Review



As we put God first,
we will meet our
commitments and that's a promise.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God,
and His righteousness, and all these things
shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33



North American Baptist Conference

Reconciling the World through Christ

1 South 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois 60181



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BAPTIST HERALD (USPS 042560) (ISSN-0 005-5700) is published monthly (except January/February and July/August bi-monthly) by the North American Baptist Conference, a binational conference of churches in Canada and the United States, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181. Phone: (312) 495-2000. Second class postage paid at Villa Park, IL 60181 and at additional mailing offices, and registered as Second Class Mail under permit #9327 at Norwich, Ontario.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES in the United States—one year \$8.00; two years—\$15.00; Canada—one year \$10.50; Church Family Plan (United States)—\$6.00, (Canada)—\$8.00; Single copy (US\$)—\$1.00; foreign subscription (US\$)—\$16.00 one year.

ADVERTISING RATE: \$8.00 per inch single column (2 1/4 inches) black and white. OBITUARIES: \$8.00 US Funds, to accompany obituary; (100 word limit).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Six to eight weeks notice required for change of address. Furnish effective date and address label from recent issue. Send address change to *Baptist Herald* Subscriptions, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181.

Member of Evangelical Press Association.
News reported and views expressed are not necessarily the position of the North American Baptist Conference (Printed in the U.S.A.)

We Need a Revival

by Ervin Gerlitz

We don't have time for funny stories
flowery speeches
fancy theological treatises.

We need a revival!

I need a revival.

I have a tiredness that a good night's rest or a two week vacation cannot remedy.

I have a sadness no counselor can comfort—a sadness like the Prophet Jeremiah's.

I have a sickness no doctor can cure, and until we have the final cure for sin,

I need a revival!

What Is a Revival?

When a person drowns and the limp, blue, bloated body is pulled out of the water, and the killing fluid is pumped out of the lungs as life-giving oxygen is pumped in, when the skin turns pink again—

That is revival.

When a boxer receives a stunning blow to the head and loses consciousness, and then comes out of the coma with the ability to be rational, to communicate, to give and receive love again—

That is revival.

When a fireman rushes into a burning building to save lives and is overcome with the heat, exhaustion, smoke, and poisonous fumes, and is then brought out and given oxygen, as the cobwebs clear from his brain, and he smiles at his friends and says "thanks"—

That is revival.

That is what we need in our churches. The only difference between a resurrection and a revival is one of degree. Either way,

We need a revival!

Who Needs Revival?

We do! I'm not talking about the Christless cults which swarm over our communities like hordes of voracious locusts. They need to be *saved*.

I'm not talking about the Bible-denying humanists or liberals who infest our culture with a powerless form of religion.

I'm not talking about the "successful" evangelicals in their campus-like churches with multiple staffs, numerous activities, and entertainment oriented, Christian nightclub circuses.

I'm not talking about "them that ain't here," the drop-outs, the inactives, the once-a year-attenders, or the barely members.

I am talking about *us*—Bible believers, born-again talkers, churchgoers. Most of us come from small, struggling, barely surviving congregations. Oh, we make our churches as nice as we can afford with organs, padded pews, stained glass windows—but we can barely keep on plodding.

We need a revival!

Why Do We Need a Revival?

Because we're almost dead and often don't even know it.

When we find out that some of the very same people who fill our pews regularly frequent X, R, or PG-13 movies and laugh with the God-haters about the very things God hates—

We need a revival.

When we become aware that the ones who purchase pornography, rent X-rated videos, and support the very industry that is destroying America are often members-in-good-standing in our churches—

We need a revival.

When we discover that the very people sitting in our pews are also practicing incest, being unfaithful to their marriage vows, and blaspheming the name of Jesus by their immoral conduct, when members never give a sign of conviction, or repentance, God help us—

We need a revival.

We need a revival because the Spirit of the Living God is not manifest among us. The God who brought judgment on the people who built the tower of Babel, the God who loosed the heavens and broke up the earth to scour the earth with the great flood, the God who exploded mountains and sent rivers of molten rock and clouds of poisonous fumes to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah—this is the God to whom we must answer, and we aren't even scared.

We need a revival.

When Will We Have a Revival?

We will have a revival when those who are still spiritually conscious get serious about rescuing the perishing—the perishing Christian, the unconscious paralyzed, drugged, almost dead Christian.

We will have a revival when our priorities begin

to change. This is not a time to act sophisticated, to spend fortunes on fashions, to think up clever diversions and sip champagne—this is a time to

"Tremble, you complacent women;
shudder, you daughters who feel secure!
Strip off your clothes,
put sackcloth around your waists.
Beat your breasts for the pleasant fields,
for the fruitful vines
and for the land of my people,
a land overgrown with thorns and briers—
yes, mourn for all the houses of merriment
and for this city of revelry.
The fortress will be abandoned,
the noisy city deserted;
citadel and watchtower will become a
wasteland forever,
the delight of donkeys, a pasture for flocks,
till the Spirit is poured upon us from on
high,
and the desert becomes a fertile field,
and the fertile field seems like a forest."
(Isaiah 32:11-15, NIV)

Then we will have revival.

When churches get back to the basics—

When Bible teaching, faith-building fellowship, prayers, and evangelism become the MAIN activities of our churches—

Then we will have revival.

When Sunday school classes can no longer go on having profound discussions about current events or some abstract theological doctrine, but must fall to their knees crying out to God for mercy—

Then we will have revival.

When the choir, the youth, the men's group, and the Women's Missionary Fellowship, or even the children, realize that this is a time of crisis, a time to cry out "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

Then we will have revival.

When there are more prayer meetings and fewer parties,

When there is more God-seeking and less self-seeking,

When we are known more for glad holiness than glad-handedness—

Then we will have revival.

Yes, I confess—I need a revival—and I think there are many like me.



I feel like I'm drowning in a moral cesspool.
I feel like a dazed boxer reeling from another blow to the head.
I feel like a firefighter overcome by toxic fumes.

I need a revival.

I am tired of being tired. I long to be re-energized by God's Spirit.

I grieve over my grief. I long to sing glad songs with my whole spirit.

I long to express love for God with my whole heart.

I long to praise God with my whole being.

My church needs a revival.

I have never asked my church to march in an anti-anything march, but now I am asking my church to kneel in pro-God prayer.

I have seldom pushed a letter writing campaign to our legislators, but now I am asking God's people to send prayer messages to God.

A campaign for revival.

If you are still able to hear God speaking,
If you are still conscious enough to fight for your spiritual life,

If there stirs within you a longing for an outpouring of God's Spirit,

Then let's join together in prayer for revival.

God will show us how and will draw us together with others who care.

Brothers and sisters, let's pray.

Then we will have a revival!

The Rev. Ervin Gerlitz is senior pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Tacoma, Washington.

The Reflections of a "Churchless Pastor"

by Bruno Voss

It all happened in September 1984. I was serving a church in a major city in Canada. Suddenly the bottom dropped out of my world. Our church had gone through a charismatic split and a relocation, followed by a building program. The pressures of it all became traumatic. I resigned my position as pastor. I had no other place to serve, and I found myself in a state of limbo.

The initial feeling was one of extreme relief. I had forgotten that life could be so exhilarating yet so peaceful. It seemed I had settled on a new planet. I was certain this is what the Lord intended life to be.

However, this feeling of utopia was short-lived. Standing in line at the Unemployment Insurance Office did little to enhance my deflated ego and my severely damaged self-image.

Many questions bombarded my mind and remained unanswered: "Lord, why this? Do I not have a good track record? Lord, have I betrayed you? Have I become one of the disqualified? Has my call to the ministry been rescinded? O God, have you forgotten to be gracious! I am now in my late fifties, dear Lord, and you know far better than anyone that my chances of a call to another church are virtually nil. O, my God, what do I do now!"

Furthermore, we had purchased a home and the mortgage payments did not cease with the loss of a job. A substantial loan from the church had to be repaid. Talk about a bleak future! The only light in the tunnel was an oncoming train. Tears, sleepless nights, unceasing prayer, and an endless barrage of questions defied answers. Yet, through it all, we maintained a semblance of order. Never did we cease to thank God even for these "earthquakes" for which we had no answers. I thank God for a faithful and supportive spouse, plus two loyal children who "stuck with us" without becoming

bitter or totally disillusioned with the Church.

We started attending another church in which we became active. Both pastor and congregation were most accommodating and supportive. We needed that. On Sunday evenings, we attended a church closer to home. There, too, the powerful yet encouraging preaching became God's voice to us. The uplifting music and singing transported us to "higher ground."

Slowly but gradually, our lives began to take on a new dimension. We became very much aware that the Lord had not forsaken us. It was during this time we learned what Romans 8:28 really means. I had quoted this verse many times, but now it took on a new meaning, just for us.

After a year, my Unemployment Insurance benefits (Canadian, not available in U.S.A. for pastors) ceased.

"On a Sunday morning, over 20 people, led by a group of young people, responded to a call for recommitment. Tears of joy flowed down my cheeks as I thanked God that my confidence in Him was not in vain."

ed, bringing with it a renewed sense of anxiety. However, my fears were groundless. The Lord provided two interim positions in another Province. It meant being separated from my wife and family, but that was a small price to pay for answered prayer.

In these two churches, I received such affirmation and positive input that my self-confidence was restored, and my self-image began to elevate. On Sunday morning, over twenty people led by a group of young people, responded to a call for recommitment. Tears of joy flowed down my cheeks as I thanked God that my confidence in Him was not in vain.

Before the interim work was completed, I had already candidated at the church I am now serving. We received a unanimous call from this church, so with great enthusiasm we began our full-time ministry in January 1986. We praise God for this church! The loving and caring attitude of members and friends is contagious.

The question might well be asked: "What have I learned through these experiences?" Allow me to itemize a number of lessons learned:

- 1) I have learned that these experiences are meant to be "growing-up" episodes of a Christian's life, a stepping-stone to spiritual maturity, and I must make the choice as to whether this will happen. I can choose to rebel.
- 2) I have learned, though it hurts me to say it, some Christians, including pastors, can be unloving and uncaring. They refuse to be identified with a so-called "loser." No wonder the Word of God has to remind each one of us, "love one another" and "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."
- 3) I have learned that in times of crisis, true friends come out of the woodwork, yes, even non-Christians. Thank God for these "support

Jamestown Woman Has Caring Ministry to College Youth

This month, we feature an individual, Leona Meisch, a member of Temple Baptist Church, Jamestown, North Dakota, who believes that Jesus Christ commanded us to care and, as a result, she is helping people adjust to new places and situations.

Have you ever felt alone in a crowd? That's how I felt when I attended college. While there, I was invited to a home like the one I grew up in. This gracious lady was like a mother to me and many other college students.

As I was growing up in a small town, our home was always open to strangers who visited our church—visiting groups, high school students—and the list goes on. After I had my own home, I continued to invite people, also.

When my husband and I moved to Jamestown for employment reasons, I was very unhappy about the move. Dr. J.C. Gunst, then Area Secretary, while visiting me, pointed out that I had the gift of hospitality. He said that God had put me in Jamestown for the purpose of ministering to others through this gift. I had not thought of it that way before.

One of these special ministries that gives me much joy is inviting students to my home for Sunday dinner; sometimes they come on a Saturday night for food, fun, and fellowship. The joyful conversation around the dinner table makes it all worthwhile. Now that my husband has passed away and my own children are miles away, I have a loving family of college students. I look forward to the school term each year to see what young people God will send my way—and they are always just great!

These students come, and they go, but it is a joy to hear from them at special times of the year or through a note just to tell me they are thinking of me. I am "mom"

to many. Parents write and express their appreciation to me for making a "home away from home" for their kids while they are in college. How I wish every church family would realize how much joy they themselves could receive from having these young people in their homes.

One of my "sons" is a pastor now and one an assistant pastor, but whatever field they choose, I am proud of every member of my "extended family." God has blessed me with the gift of hospitality, but the blessing is all mine. The students know I care about them, and they care in return. In Matthew 10:42, we read that for "giving a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward." I feel I already have my reward. —Leona Meisch



Leona Meisch, surrounded by the love of her "student family."

systems." Moreover, it is a fact that most Christians are loving and caring. I thank God for the supportive role of Conference workers and staff, plus the loyal support even of the members and friends within the church from which we had resigned.

4) I have learned how utterly dependent we are upon our Heavenly Father. Indeed, "without Him we can do nothing."

5) I have learned that the Scriptures provide untold comfort and that they seem to "burst into reality" in time of trouble. Paul's words in II Corinthians 1:8-11 meant so much to me: "... We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in

our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God who raises the dead (emphasis mine). He has delivered us from such a deadly peril (for us, it was), and He will deliver us. On Him, we have set our hope that He will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayer."

6) I have learned that even these unpleasant experiences are to be cherished. The Lord knows what He is doing! Since then, I have been able to counsel and advise others in similar situations and circumstances and be able to say, "I've been there. God helped me through, and He has His

own way to help you through this tunnel of life."

7) I have learned the powerful truth expressed in I Corinthians 10:13: "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful (emphasis mine); He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." □

The Rev. Bruno Voss is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Regina, Saskatchewan.



Philadelphia Church Draws TV News Coverage Over Drug Issue

by Jim Correnti

It was hard to keep in mind that this Sunday morning was like any other as we gathered together at Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church to worship God. The woman with the television camera perched on her shoulder swung its glaring lights in every direction while the local reporter from a major news network sitting next to her took notes, listened, and gave her instructions. We encouraged the congregation not to be nervous and addressed our two visitors directly to clear the air. We also let them know that we had been praying for them. After all, people visit our church for all sorts of reasons, but our desire is that they would meet God face to face in Jesus Christ and be saved by His grace.

Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church is located in the midst of Philadelphia's cocaine capital where it is estimated that as much as \$150,000 worth of this drug is sold daily. A major selling site about two blocks south of the church building has received regular press coverage and has become the popular symbol of one of Philadelphia's most serious problems.

There was a time when the Fleischmann church followed the typical "path of least resistance" in such frightening circumstances; we pretended that we had nothing to do with it. But our path of retreat, isolation, and defeat neither pleased God nor fostered good relationships with neighbors. Jesus said His disciples are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He also applied this truth: "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16, NAS).

By God's grace, we have turned the corner and are becoming not only good citizens of our community, taking advantage of the privilege of rais-

ing our voices in the process of democracy, but also seeing a platform raised from which we can more effectively preach the gospel of grace with integrity. We have brought the Word of Life out to the community in our "street meetings," including corners where drugs are sold. We have worked increasingly hard on training God's people in "friendship evangelism" in which all members of the congregation draw up personal plans on how they can grow in their relationships to their neighbors to more effectively present Christ in a natural context. We pray for the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit through our witness in the community. But we also are growing in our involvement with civic and religious leaders in community meetings of the Anti-drug Task Force, holding numerous strategic meetings in our church building.



The critical factor in bringing the reporters to Fleischmann that Lord's Day morning was the spiritual bearing of our ladies "just being themselves." They gave evidence that God is alive today and making the difference.

In one such meeting about a year ago, our task force of community leaders presented a detailed proposal to Wilson Goode, mayor of Philadelphia, and two of our area councilmen. Most recently, Edwin Meese, attorney general of the United States, visited our community in connection with the charging and arresting of several dozen "middle management" drug dealers, with the concentration being the cocaine trade in our area.

On the news that evening, the press seemed intent on saying that there had been little change; they quoted some angry and discouraged neighbors to prove the point. The following morning, this major TV news network was back in the area, attempting to further establish this line of thought with more interviews.

When the TV news people came to Fleischmann, our ladies' Bible study group was meeting, and with both

pastors providentially unavailable at the time, they invited the reporters into their meeting. In the process of 45 minutes of discussion and interview, the ladies made it clear that they were not satisfied with the previous night's news coverage.

While we are not foolish enough to assume that the drug problem has suddenly been solved, we are a people born again of the Spirit, who live in hope. We have been praying that God would do a marvelous work, and we believe that He will. Some organizations may choose to leave troubled areas because the situation is "too hot to handle," but with Christ's supernatural resources, there is also an argument for the church to stay, believing that our God delights in manifesting His supernatural glory in situations that the world pronounces "impossible."

The situation did not seem to be going well. The reporter repeated several times that he understood what the ladies were saying, but that he was out on assignment and that their angle did not fit his story. Of course, our ladies insisted that his story, if he truly was interested in reporting "the feelings of the grassroots," should reflect their statements. The situation looked even worse on that evening's news when, to our dismay, his story was not only everything we had feared, but also included a sentence from one of our women as part of his story. It had come in response to one of his pointed questions but was totally removed from the context in which it was said.

In our conversation with the women the next day, it became clear that their impression of the integrity of the press was at an all-time low. We passed around the name and address of the reporter, committing ourselves to pray for him as well as to protest through a letter campaign. The Holy Spirit was obviously at work. Two

days later, on the Lord's Day morning, before any of our letters had even been sent, the reporter called us, assuring us that he had really been honest with us; he had been out on an assignment and had to follow through with the story. But he was also genuinely impressed by what he had heard and felt that it merited its own feature story. He asked to come and tape some of our service to add to those already taped at the ladies' Bible study. With considerable relief about the past (and some new fears about the upcoming service), we gladly invited him to join us.

The critical factor in bringing the news people to Fleischmann that Lord's Day morning was the spiritual bearing of our ladies' "just being themselves." If they had complained about the neighborhood, venting their hatred and fear about the drug pushers, outlining in vivid color their despair over one of the most shameful and dangerous aspects of living in our city, they would have only proven themselves bona fide candidates for the reporter's first story! There would have been no reason for a follow-up story. There would not have been a shred of evidence that God is alive today and is already making a difference.

This incident affirms how the Lord has been creating a new community—a genuine spiritual counterculture—in the midst of one of Philadelphia's least desirable areas. The ladies were not briefed by the pastors to be artificially propped up with some spiritual platitudes for the sake of the press. They simply spoke out of the fullness of their hearts. We thank God that their hearts were filled with the wisdom, love, and fullness of Christ.

The lay people of God have opportunities that the paid leadership does not. Unfortunately, the world suspects that the "professionals" are



The women spoke out of the fullness of their hearts. The Lord has been creating a new community—a genuine spiritual counter culture—in the midst of one of Philadelphia's least desirable areas.

paid to give the "party line." But when the other members spontaneously speak it, the world may think it really does have some truth. And so we become "the salt of the earth."

At Fleischmann, we work hard at keeping things in biblical perspective. After the reporter left that morning, Pastor Greg Huston began his message by reminding us, "Getting our picture on TV is the easy part. Living out in practice what we claim to believe is the real test." □

The Rev. James Correnti is senior pastor of Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This church is the oldest church in the North American Baptist Conference and ministers to a multi-ethnic, inner-city community. Rev. Correnti is also an accomplished concert pianist.

What Makes a Successful Youth Group?

by Perry Friesen

I've been asking myself that question since I joined the staff at South Calgary Community Baptist Church as Youth Pastor. When the youth program got going in the Fall, I wanted to challenge the youth by communicating what it takes to have a winning youth group. With all the Olympic hype going on in Calgary, I decided to draw on athletic imagery to make that challenge, an analogy often used in Scripture.

Perhaps more than anything else, youth ministry is like a marathon race. It's not a 100-metre dash that simply requires a burst of energy for a brief moment in time. It requires persistent effort, long months and years of building stamina in relationships that will not give up at the first sign of pain. In my teen years, I was always a sprinter. I didn't have the discipline it took to build cardiovascular stamina. In my Christian life, I tend to be the same way. I can easily get excited over a book or special project and throw all my energy into it. Then when it's done, I need a rest before I'm ready to go again. I don't like be-

ing saddled with long-term projects and responsibility. But I know that growing young lives toward maturity is a gradual life-long process. And if we want our youth ministry to produce runners who won't die in the last mile of the race, our coaching strategy needs to make disciplined preparation the starting point.

Discipline is basic to having a winning youth group. I Timothy 4:8 says: "Train yourself spiritually. Physical exercises are useful enough, but the usefulness of spirituality is unlimited, since it holds out the reward of life here and now and of the future life as well."

Most teenagers are well acquainted with the requirement of athletics at school. They're willing to pay the price of football practices for three hours every night of the week to play on the team. But few are willing to pay the price of 30 minutes a day to grow in their spiritual life.

It really doesn't surprise me to see youth pull themselves out of the race in their late teens, because they

haven't done their sit-ups of Bible study, push-ups of prayer, and distance training of evangelism. A winning youth group is composed of individuals who have done adequate preparation for the race. A winning youth group is willing to pay the price of spiritual discipline.

A winning youth group also knows how to run properly. I had a friend at Seminary who was a track coach. I learned some things from him about distance running that were new to me. I didn't know that there are certain ways of running that are more effective and less harmful than others. An effective runner needs to stretch his muscles, relax his upper body, and use a correctly balanced stride for maximum effectiveness. Focused mental concentration is also essential, for when the body signals pain, winning runners let their mind rule.

Hebrews 12:1-2 says we need to "throw off everything that hinders us" (whoever heard of an Olympic runner in sweats) "especially the sin that clings so easily, and keep running steadily in the race we have started." All kinds of things exist as distractions from making a commitment to a youth ministry; not all of them are bad, either. School athletics, homework, TV, movies, dances, dates, jobs, sleepovers, and laziness are all excuses made by youth who choose not to come to youth activities, fund raisers, or Bible studies.

Some conflicting commitments are unavoidable; however, others could be avoided simply by making a commitment first of all to run the spiritual marathon, even at the cost of laying aside enjoyable distractions. I think too often we underestimate the commitment necessary for a winning youth group, and as a result, we don't challenge youth enough to be excellent runners.

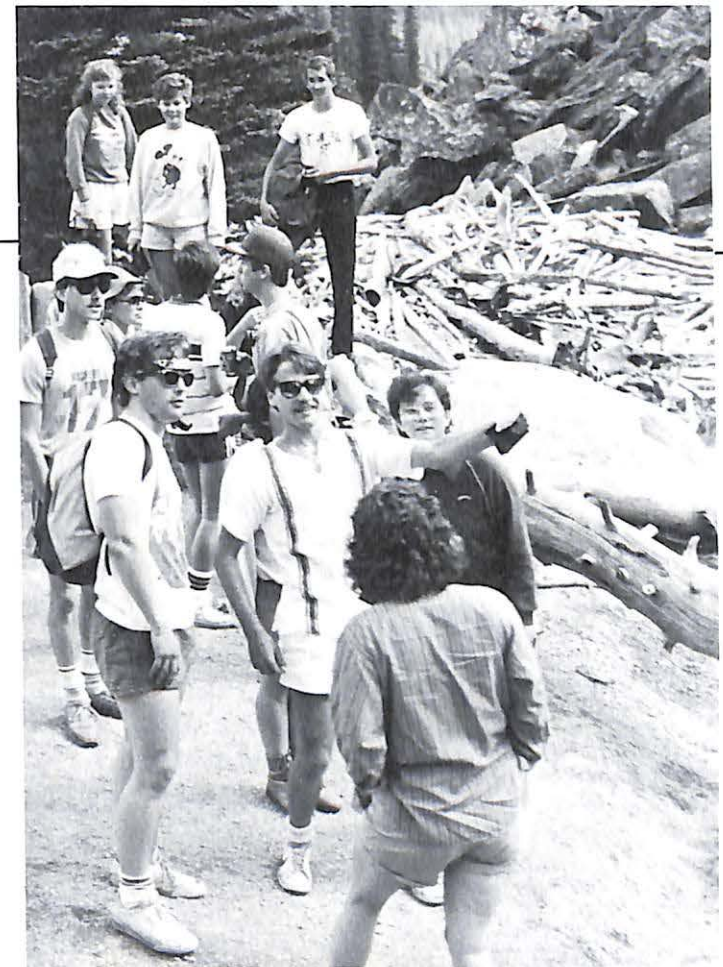
Winning runners are not only focused, they also know how to pace

themselves as they run and use teamwork effectively. Similarly, a winning youth group also needs a balanced program of worship, teaching, fellowship, and outreach. Our youth coaches have intentionally structured the youth program so that it alternates Wednesday night Bible studies with interpersonal relationship building and service projects. This helps to communicate to youth that the Christian life is not just intellectual exercise, but it is a team effort and is service-oriented, not self-oriented.

One other aspect of how to run properly has become quite controversial lately in international competition. The issue is that of rules. The International Olympic Committee is constantly changing its rules, like allowing professionals to race as well as amateurs, or requiring chemical testing for all racers.

Christian youth groups need to follow the rules, too; like an athlete, the Christian "cannot win any crowns unless he has kept all the rules of the contest" (II Timothy 2:5). However, our rules do not change. In fact, in our youth group, we have only one rule: "Love and respect one another." Of course, this rule has many applications: respecting leadership by listening when leaders speak; not taking off without informing someone; no fighting or cutting down of others in the group. But a winning youth group needs to follow just one rule that is easily memorized.

One last thing to reflect on is what keeps a youth group going when it feels like quitting. I believe the answer is encouragement. There's nothing that can help a runner finish as much as a supportive coach yelling, "You can do it!" Lack of encouragement was one of the primary reasons I gave up distance running as a teenager. By the time I finished the race, everybody else had packed up



There's nothing that builds a winning youth group quite as fast as a genuine attitude of encouragement, where new people are automatically included instead of isolated.

pose, and excitement in life. Expressing them to find it in God, and in the prize that is "better than gold" (Philippians 3:14).

In 1988, the 42nd Triennial Conference of North American Baptist Churches will meet in Calgary. We may have between 1,000 to 2,000 senior high and college students for the youth program alone. The theme for the program is "Better than Gold." Plan to send your young person or youth group! Pray that this will produce world-class runners who will discipline themselves and run the race in such a way that they will receive the prize that is better than any gold this world has to offer. □

Mr. Perry Friesen is Assistant Pastor for Youth at South Calgary Community Church, Calgary, Alberta, and is a member of the youth committee planning for the 42nd Triennial Conference in Calgary in 1988.



Members of South Calgary (AB) Community Church college and career group encourage each other as they hike.

Fighting the Drug Problem

by Jim Correnti

The mammoth drug problem of Philadelphia did not begin yesterday, and it will not be gone tomorrow. The church must take its place alongside other responsible groups and individuals in the community to fight the drug problem.

As good citizens, we must join hands. Many organizations are so conscious of "getting the credit" for their good works that they will not cooperate with others. This results in splintering, competition, and mistrust, which allows open drug selling to take root. Our anti-drug force is presently working with a major Philadelphia bank for a large grant to hire extra workers to help blocks organize.

Good citizens must inform on drug activity. Our councilmen have supplied phone numbers where information can be called in anonymously. Even if some pushers return to the streets far too soon, this kind of proper "harassment" is one of the factors which wears them down.

Police must be supported and held accountable. We have met often with our district police chief and other narcotics agents. We want to know them, and we want them to know us. In our community, things were made worse by the district police station's removal from the immediate area about a decade ago. We are working with the offices of the mayor, city managing director, and city police commissioner to get a station back where it is so obviously needed.

The district attorney's office must be approached through council representatives. Many pushers return to the streets quickly because they were sent through the local system. Due to the appeals of the city's top officials with groundswell community support, many cases in Philadelphia now will be tried through the federal court system. Sentences will be stiffer, and they will stick!

Judges must be called to account. Pennsylvania's judges are elected by

the voters. We need to know who are lenient and advertise it well in the community during election times.

Legitimate alternatives must be provided. In an area like ours, jobs are scarce, and recreational programs are few. Lots of spare time spent around undesirable role models is unhealthy, especially for young kids.

This does not minimize in any way the special work of the church in the supernatural realm. It is pitiful to hear the humanists talking so naively about job availability solving problems, for example. These young unskilled workers can only do minimum wage work. They can make more money in an evening selling drugs than they can working a legitimate job for a full week! The fact that their selling is illegal and immoral is a minor detail compared to that kind of fast cash. Obviously, a deeper motivation is needed.

All sinners need the new birth. We must pray for them. We must witness to them through street meetings, individually, as neighbors, in word, in action—in every way we can. Only God can change the heart. Only to a regenerate mind is it reasonable to make in an honest week's work what drug-dealing can earn in one day. And, when a person is converted and now lives to please his Creator and Redeemer, he will also want to improve himself.

Role models for the cause of

righteousness are needed on site. Many young drug pushers only have for models the richer, older pushers, with their gold jewelry, fancy clothes, and new sports cars. A stable life of love, peace, forgiveness, and service has rarely been seen. But sometimes after a prison term or a relationship which has produced a child and a new view of life, they search for another way. We must be available as God's model.

We must join hands with other churches. Sometimes we may be able to launch into a new area with another evangelical church that already has a program we thought we had to develop. With so many unmet needs, how can we duplicate efforts? This is not the time for interdenominational or racial prejudice. What kind of message of reconciliation can we preach to the world if we are not united as brothers?

We must minister to those who are arrested, in prison. Neither an excusing of illegal activity in the name of "love" nor self-righteous fuming about "locking them all up and throwing away the key" will do from a biblical standpoint. We can stand for law and arrests while at the same time we stand ready to minister mercy to those arrested. Through various prison ministries, God is reclaiming sinners for Himself and making them useful and creative servants in His kingdom. □



Ro Fletcher, a member of Fleischmann Memorial Baptist Church, talks to a news reporter with Christ Ows, also from Fleischmann, looking on.



North American Baptist Conference

1986 in Review

Reflections on Family Accomplishments

We are all born into a particular human family, and these roots count. Likewise, when we become Christians, we are born into God's family. When we join a local church, we become part of that family. If that local church has chosen to be a part of the North American Baptist Conference, we automatically become a part of that larger family.

Each local church is to be the church of Jesus Christ in miniature, self-governing and autonomous, but not isolated. The voluntary decision to cooperate with others is a very important witness to the unity in Christ. Our common experience with Jesus Christ and common commitment to His mission in the world is the glue that holds us together as a Conference family today.

As North American Baptist Conference leaders and departments structured for ministry, we are accountable to our family of churches. This "1986 in Review" gives a summary of some of the year's primary Conference accomplishments.

Cooperatively, we invested some of our best talents, gifts, and resources to start new churches. We provided help for all churches to experience spiritual and numerical growth. We sent out and supported home and overseas missionaries. We provided educational opportunities for people called into ministry. Thousands made decisions for Christ, were baptized, and added to churches at home and overseas. Many in special need were helped through relief efforts; many who were faltering and discouraged were helped through counseling and caring.

There have also been some very difficult experiences: several pastors resigned from their churches involuntarily and/or left the ministry; 12 churches

were deleted from Associations' records in 1986; many churches did not grow numerically; monthly giving for monthly Conference expenses lacked consistency. These are major concerns.

I praise God for the many triumphs of 1986. Many people volunteered their time, talent, and resources in the various ministries God has given us. Together, \$6,260,706 was given for the cause of Christ through the Conference. That averages \$104 per member, an excellent record. I am deeply grateful to all who have participated in these accomplishments.

While we understand life better by looking back, we must live it by going forward! We have new challenges for 1987. Let us renew our commitment to integrate into our lives the five biblical imperatives to worship, witness, serve, give, and care. Let us not settle for anything less than our God-given potential. Let us be ambitious and be willing to take risks for God. We need to be faithful in obedience to the heavenly vision—not necessarily successful.

If you are a member of the North American Baptist Conference family, become an active participant in our mission together—you are needed!

John Binder

John Binder,
Executive Director
North American Baptist Conference



(Left to right): Mr. Ron Salzman, missions director; Dr. Willis Potratz, area ministries director; Dr. John Binder, executive director; Mr. Walter Swanson, development director; Rev. Ray Harsch, acting church growth director; Mr. Robert Mayforth, financial services director.



In Missions

North American Baptist Conference churches supported 54 career missionaries and 19 short-term missionaries totalling 72 on five fields as of December 1986.

In Brazil, four missionary families along with the Brazil Baptist Convention work in evangelism, church planting, and church growth. Door-to-door evangelism through tract and Bible distribution, invitations to services, and evangelistic crusades are vital ministries there. 1986 marked 20 years of our mission work in Brazil. Our first short-term missionary to Brazil arrived in late 1986.

In Cameroon, through pastoral education, medical ministries, church leadership support, communication ministries, and administrative support, our missionaries help build the church. They work with the Cameroon Baptist Convention, whose membership is 38,000 with 493 churches. New Life Abundant Programme posts opened in predominantly Muslim areas. Mbingo Baptist and Bansa Baptist Hospitals had more than 5,000 consultations, and more than 700 patients made decisions for Christ. The Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary provided training for 97 students in pastoral ministry and extensive seminars for field and rural church pastors.

In Japan, the Japan Baptist Conference, through which we work, saw a six percent growth in the churches in 1986. Through the work of the Tsu English Center, English classes brought missionaries into contact with Japanese from many areas of society. New church planting projects are being started in Nagoya and Yawata. The Japan Baptist Conference,

with 337 members in seven churches and one evangelism station, continues to assume more of its own financial support.

In Nigeria, 16 pastors graduated from Mambilla Baptist Theological School. A new field (Bali) saw a membership increase from 406 to 500 in 1986. A new evangelistic outreach to Fulani (Muslims) began. Rural health clinics continued to meet people's needs. The Mambilla Baptist Convention, 142 churches with a membership of 12,300, increased seven percent over 1985.

In Philippines, our newest mission field, Rev. and Mrs. Leland Bertsch arrived and began language study. They meet with a small nucleus of believers. A baptismal service was conducted. We work with the Baptist Conference of the Philippines.

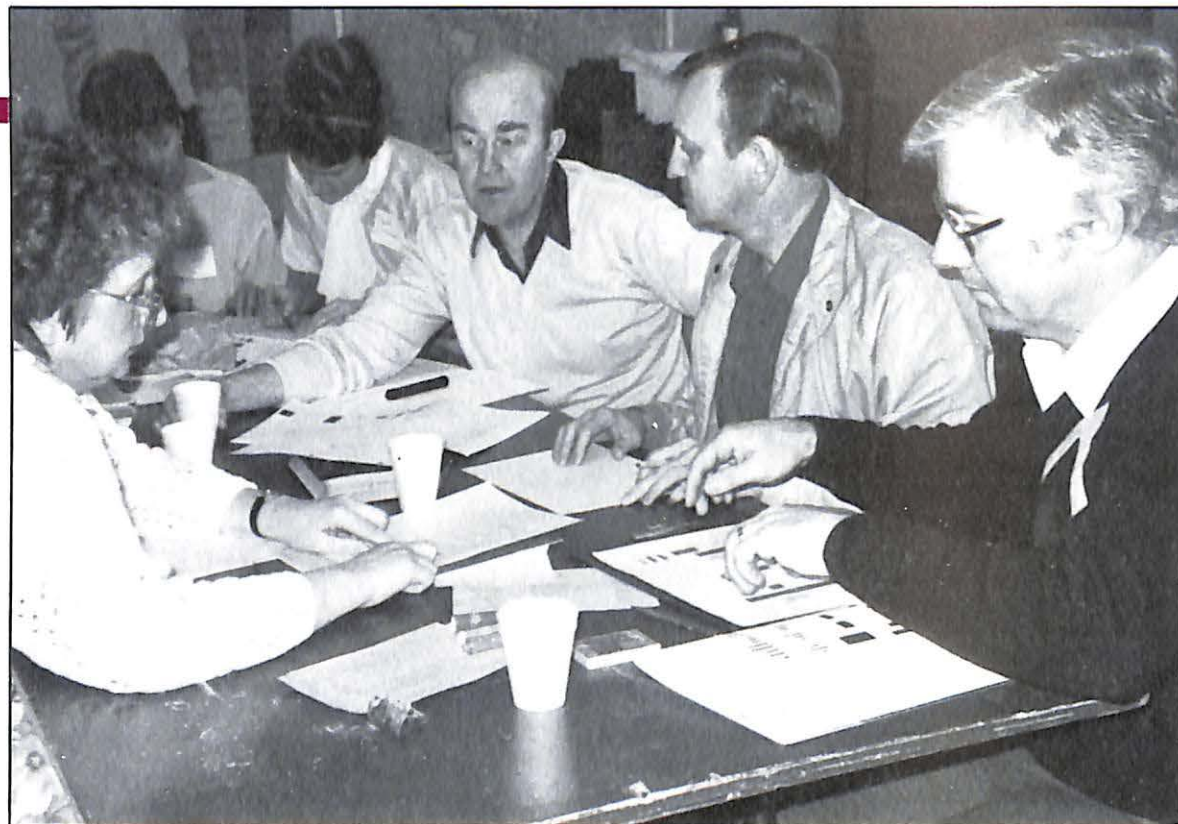
Contributions for world relief in 1986 totalled \$223,521.66 with \$184,200.86 designated for the Cameroon volcanic gas disaster. Twenty-one projects in more than 15 countries received aid, distributed mostly through Baptist World Aid.

One White Cross shipment of 14,500 pounds of medical goods was sent to our mission hospitals in Cameroon.

In 1986, the Canadian and U.S. dollars fell substantially against the currencies in Japan and Cameroon, affecting the work funds for our missionaries.

More than 15 laypersons-in-action worked at projects in Cameroon. The Good News Ambassador Team from N.A.B. College and N.A.B. Divinity School ministered in Nigeria.

In Church Growth



The top priority in ministry of the Church Growth Department is reaching people for Christ in the U.S.A. and Canada.

Five new churches were started in 1986: Faith Baptist, Medicine Hat, Alberta; Coppell Fellowship, Coppell, Texas; Tri-Valley Faith, Pleasanton, California; New Life Center Baptist, West New York, New Jersey (ministry to Cubans); and one in Orlando, Florida.

Church growth awareness raising seminars, conducted throughout the Conference, offered help in four phases.

Approximately 90 percent of our pastors attended a Pastors' Growth Seminar (Phase I).

Large numbers of laypeople and pastors attended 54 Basic Growth Seminars (Phase II) as of April 1987, where they seriously considered how their churches can experience growth.

Presently, 43 churches are involved in the Diagnostic Process (Phase III), which provides information needed to gather necessary data to help uncover hidden potential for growth. Action steps that produce growth are then taken.

In 1986, growing churches reported that their first priority is personal witnessing and outreach. Eighty-seven percent of these churches listed goals.

Declining churches reported that their first priority is to nurture people in the faith. Only 28 percent of these churches set ministry goals.

The Urban/Ethnic Task Force continues to identify tremendous opportunities in urban/ethnic ministries and relates these to churches and associations.

Hispanic churches in Texas and Colorado are ex-



periencing growth. Several new centers of ministry are targeted in southern Texas. Additions were built onto home mission churches in Rio Grande City, Texas, and Del Norte, Colorado.

In 1986, "New Day," a youth evangelistic team, was reduced from two teams to one under the leadership of Loren Kopf, director.

Conference endorsed evangelist Ron Susek ministered in 23 N.A.B. Conference churches in 1986.

In 1987, our goals will include starting churches in growing areas; recruiting gifted church planters; assigning Church Planters and Urban Task Force members to missionary conferences and association meetings; assisting our seminaries to train church planters; helping our churches reach new people for Christ; helping churches to apply church growth principles; and recruiting the finest young people for Christian service.



North American Baptist Seminary

For more than a decade, the North American Baptist Seminary theme of "Reconciling the World Through Christ" has led our mission of enabling students to reach a lost world.

Spiritual formation is foundational, so spiritual development groups meet weekly as faculty and students share spiritual journey growth. During 1986, one group prepared for ministry to a lower-income community in Sioux Falls.

Several recent graduates have pursued church planting. One couple has started a North American Baptist Conference church extension project in Austin, Texas. The groundwork of spiritual formation is primary for this ministry.

1986 ends a decade in which 26 North American Baptist Seminary graduates entered mission ministry. Japan, Nigeria, Cameroon, the Philippines, Colorado, and the Dominican Republic are some mission locations where well-equipped students serve, teach, evangelize, and minister.

According to a recent "Age Profile of North American Baptist Conference Ministers," our Conference needs 193 new persons to capably serve as ministers or missionaries before 1993. Therefore, North American Baptist Seminary is striving to recruit 150 new persons for ministry before 1990 to thwart a serious leadership void.

Our mission is only possible with strong North American Baptist Conference family support. The Seminary completed its fiscal year with a \$2,000 credit, an answered prayer, and welcomed 350 new donors in 1986. The Vera Leischner Gaskill Memorial Scholarship Endowment, an estate gift established in 1986, yearly awards one three-year scholarship. We thank God for the stewardship of time, talent, and financial resources!



In Education

North American Baptist College and North American Baptist Divinity School

At North American Baptist College and North American Baptist Divinity School, 1986 was a year of growth and development. During a time of economic downturn, we experienced significant growth in our student body. "It is encouraging to find that there are still large numbers of young people who are committed to obtaining a strong spiritual foundation for their life and ministry," says President J. Walter Goltz.

Considerable time was spent during 1986 in developing a five-year strategic plan, which sets the parameters for the development of the student body, academic programs, and financial affairs at North American Baptist Divinity School.

During 1986, through the Conference Capital Funds Campaign, we retired all indebtedness against the Schalm Memorial Library. Thank you to those who participated in this venture of faith.

We look forward with great anticipation to further program development during 1987. Two significant decisions were made during the March 1987 meetings of the Board of Trustees. The first decision was to pursue discussions with the University of Alberta leading to an affiliation agreement for the College. This agreement would greatly facilitate transfer arrangements. The second decision was to pursue accreditation of the Divinity School with the Association of Theological Schools which would enhance the recognition of graduates of our Divinity School.

In Area Ministries



1986 was our first year of having ten full-time area ministers throughout the Conference. In addition, the Area Ministries Director serves as area minister for Illinois. "1986 has been our finest and most effective year in ministry," says Dr. Willis Potratz, area ministries director.

Along with pastor and church visitation, area ministers led many church growth seminars, which have been well received. All men gave priority ministry to church extension projects.

Most area ministers participated in a study of the "Ordination Guidelines and Study Documents" with Association credentials committees or pastors' groups. The discussions have been wholesome and supportive.

Although the area minister serves mainly in an advisory capacity, he has key responsibilities in the entire program of the Association(s) of his area. His involvements include urban/ethnic ministries, all coun-

cils, mission conferences, monthly ministerial meetings, camp programs and boards, homes for the aging ministries, as well as the boards of the seminaries and college.

Area ministers shared in the decisions and heartaches of churches disbanding this year, but also had the joy of working with four non-N.A.B. Conference congregations asking to join our Conference in 1987.

A survey of pastoral and staff salaries was completed in 1986 and distributed to pastors, staff, and pulpit committees. *Calling a North American Baptist Pastor and Ministerial Staff* was revised and printed.

The Biblical Imperatives adopted by the Conference—to Worship, Witness, Care, Serve, and Give—provided a central focus for area ministers to run on.

In 1987, area ministers continue to provide special help in church growth to our churches.

Church Extension Investors Fund

During 1986, Church Extension Investors Fund (C.E.I.F.) grew at an exceptional rate. Investments grew by \$1,379,604, to a total of \$11,690,573. C.E.I.F. investors received \$1,142,328 in interest as part of our DOUBLE DIVIDEND ministry. The growth of investments provided sufficient capital to approve twelve new loans to North American Baptist Conference churches. C.E.I.F. has loans amounting to \$11,065,007.

Pension

A total of \$32,460 was distributed to pensioners and widows of pensioners in December 1986 from the Endowment Fund. The pension program is open to ministers and Conference staff.

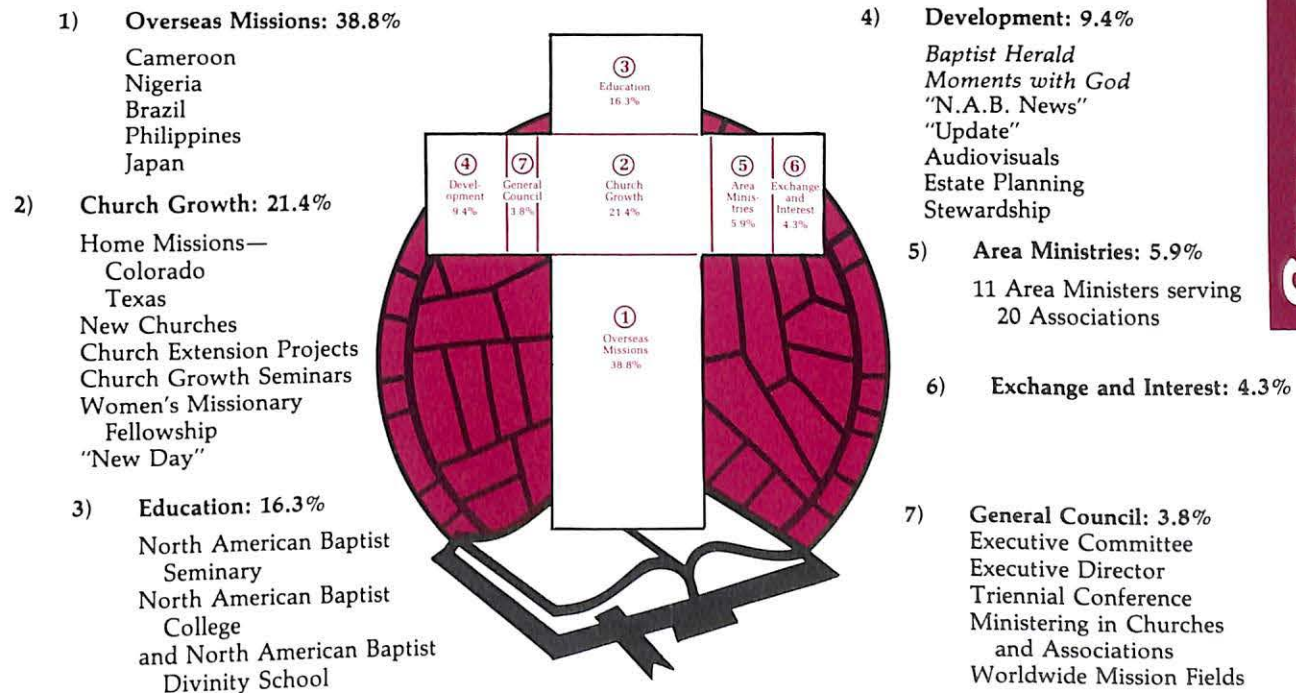
The audited financial report of the North American Baptist Conference is available upon request from the Financial Services Director, N.A.B. Conference, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181.

In Financial Services

1986 Membership and Total Contributions by Association

| Name of Association | Number of Churches | Membership | Total Local Church Giving | Conference Mission & Ministry Giving | Conference Special Funds | Conference Capital Funds | Conference Educational Institutions | N.A.B. Association Ministry | N.A.B. Related Ministry | Total Giving to N.A.B. Conference | Average per Member | Other than N.A.B. Giving | Total all Purposes | Average per Member |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Alberta | 49 | 7,445 | \$ 4,998,755 | \$ 690,400 | \$ 237,003 | \$113,864 | \$171,488 | \$ 263,820 | \$193,307 | \$1,669,882 | \$224 | \$ 234,378 | \$ 6,903,015 | \$927 |
| Atlantic | 12 | 1,411 | 844,989 | 86,253 | 52,378 | 21,026 | 3,686 | 15,822 | 5,120 | 184,285 | 131 | 38,051 | 1,067,325 | 756 |
| British Columbia | 21 | 4,097 | 2,174,641 | 397,720 | 138,115 | 57,254 | 40,913 | 139,098 | 63,280 | 836,380 | 204 | 103,214 | 3,114,235 | 760 |
| Central Dakota-Montana | 27 | 3,403 | 1,492,168 | 183,306 | 51,462 | 14,475 | 36,659 | 42,299 | 20,784 | 348,985 | 103 | 28,271 | 1,869,424 | 549 |
| Central Pacific | 13 | 2,307 | 1,157,682 | 143,542 | 22,215 | 16,282 | 11,881 | 40,572 | 2,873 | 237,365 | 103 | 49,823 | 1,444,870 | 626 |
| Eastern | 24 | 3,321 | 1,827,872 | 233,600 | 67,594 | 16,664 | 32,862 | 58,648 | 19,148 | 428,516 | 129 | 93,510 | 2,349,898 | 708 |
| Great Lakes | 30 | 7,352 | 3,235,915 | 499,425 | 83,713 | 46,458 | 37,889 | 37,308 | 23,466 | 728,259 | 99 | 386,551 | 4,350,725 | 592 |
| Illinois | 17 | 2,340 | 986,273 | 165,181 | 32,437 | 25,200 | 15,104 | 27,294 | 3,716 | 268,932 | 115 | 47,306 | 1,302,511 | 557 |
| Iowa | 15 | 2,544 | 749,411 | 174,404 | 34,050 | 29,755 | 20,628 | 43,703 | 7,733 | 310,273 | 122 | 71,153 | 1,130,837 | 445 |
| Manitoba | 16 | 2,548 | 1,379,769 | 286,083 | 124,597 | 50,543 | 51,165 | 125,267 | 25,368 | 663,023 | 260 | 90,491 | 2,133,283 | 837 |
| Minnesota-LaCrosse | 11 | 1,536 | 752,606 | 157,793 | 42,414 | 47,177 | 30,898 | 24,525 | 5,181 | 307,988 | 201 | 44,198 | 1,104,792 | 719 |
| Northern California | 11 | 5,599 | 4,463,968 | 215,964 | 85,589 | 44,909 | 43,118 | 75,769 | 14,053 | 479,402 | 86 | 196,511 | 5,139,881 | 918 |
| Northern Dakota | 16 | 2,177 | 901,269 | 144,173 | 27,088 | 8,215 | 14,969 | 22,792 | 17,099 | 234,336 | 108 | 65,988 | 1,201,593 | 552 |
| Pacific Northwest | 14 | 1,951 | 871,083 | 103,258 | 43,353 | 14,206 | 10,814 | 18,487 | 815 | 190,933 | 98 | 25,412 | 1,087,428 | 557 |
| Saskatchewan | 14 | 1,348 | 838,577 | 106,223 | 36,771 | 11,816 | 18,361 | 32,063 | 11,276 | 216,510 | 161 | 125,347 | 1,180,434 | 876 |
| South Dakota-Wyoming | 16 | 2,531 | 1,010,558 | 151,447 | 36,512 | 34,400 | 94,448 | 39,858 | 8,454 | 365,119 | 144 | 45,580 | 1,421,257 | 562 |
| Southern | 13 | 1,020 | 433,724 | 39,175 | 18,623 | 6,686 | 12,525 | 26,204 | 9,394 | 112,607 | 110 | 11,331 | 557,662 | 547 |
| Southern California | 7 | 1,527 | 1,226,219 | 116,121 | 15,642 | 2,534 | 9,650 | 39,975 | 11,704 | 195,626 | 128 | 72,953 | 1,494,798 | 979 |
| Southwestern | 27 | 2,510 | 1,047,905 | 200,839 | 36,075 | 23,485 | 41,313 | 33,884 | 12,167 | 347,763 | 139 | 45,978 | 1,441,646 | 574 |
| Wisconsin | 12 | 2,417 | 933,377 | 110,041 | 20,779 | 11,899 | 6,041 | 22,810 | 3,180 | 174,750 | 72 | 83,364 | 1,191,491 | 493 |
| Miscellaneous | | | | 46,586 | 51,099 | 8,443 | | | | 106,128 | | | 106,128 | |
| TOTALS FOR 1986 | 365 | 59,384 | \$31,326,761 | \$4,251,534 | \$1,257,509 | \$605,291 | \$704,412 | \$1,130,198 | \$458,118 | \$8,407,062 | \$141 | \$1,859,410 | \$41,593,233 | \$700 |
| TOTALS FOR 1985 | 372 | 60,266 | \$30,916,762 | \$4,186,878 | \$775,826 | \$797,121 | \$609,973 | \$1,145,878 | \$295,744 | \$7,810,520 | \$130 | \$1,972,601 | \$40,699,883 | \$675 |
| Total Increase (Decrease) | (7) | (882) | \$409,999 | \$64,656 | \$481,683 | (\$191,830) | \$95,339 | (\$15,680) | \$162,374 | \$596,542 | \$11 | (\$113,191) | \$893,350 | \$25 |

DEVELOPMENT

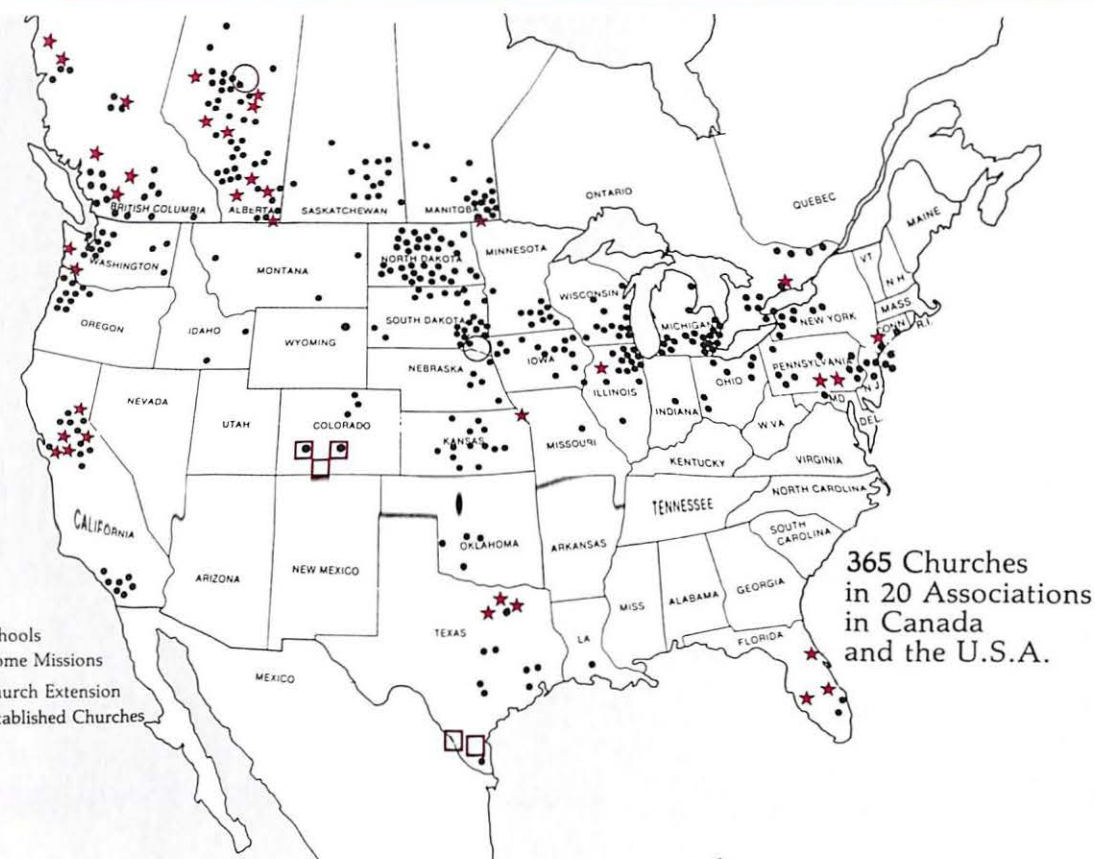


In 1986, you, as a family of churches, the North American Baptist Conference, gave \$4,251,534 toward our basic international mission and ministry commitments. Those vital funds came from Conference churches, from individuals, and from special groups such as our Women's Missionary Fellowship. Your giving and much prayer support, enabled your Conference to go forward in our commitment to reconcile the world through Christ.

You also gave over 2 million in other Conference giving: Growth Budget (\$1,257,510), Capital Funds, (\$605,291), and Bequests (\$146,371). These together with the \$4,251,534 given for our basic mission in ministry work total \$6,260,706. These funds are working around the world.

TOGETHER — WE MAKE IT HAPPEN!

In Giving



His Ways Are Not Our Ways

by Florence Miller

About a year and a half ago, a new family with three small children began to attend the Ikeda church in Japan. The Tamaki children joined our Sunday School and came regularly. They seemed accustomed to going to church. Since they lived near our church, I thought they had chosen to come to our church for that reason.

This was true in part, but there was another reason; Mr. and Mrs. Tamaki met while they were students. He was in seminary, and she was in a mission school preparing to teach in a nursery school. They married, and Mr. Tamaki became a pastor.

Since his wife was not a Christian, things did not go smoothly for them. He gave up his position as pastor and became the head of a Christian kindergarten. His wife worked in a nursery school.

Under the tutorship of her husband, little by little, Mrs. Tamaki came to understand Christianity. They thought it advisable for her to attend a church where she could temporarily shed her title of "pastor's wife" and just be herself, seeking to become established in her own faith and being instructed by someone other than her husband. She studied the Bible privately with Pastor Fujie for a time and then prepared for baptism.

Mrs. Tamaki was baptized on December 7 at the Kyoto Church, since the Ikeda church has no baptism. Eight of the church people accompanied her and her family to witness the event and to celebrate with her afterwards as we shared a meal at a nearby restaurant. The Tamakis, in turn, expressed their thanks to the Lord and to the church people by paying for the entire bill. Even though only one person was baptized, no one thought it a burden to travel an hour and a half on the train to attend the baptism. It was truly a



Mrs. Tamaki and Pastor Fujie of the Ikeda Church at her baptism

climax of the year for the Ikeda Church.

Now Mrs. Tamaki is attending prayer meeting, also, and has become a member of our Ikeda church, knowing that it will be only for a few months. Her husband is preparing to return to the pastoral ministry this spring. Pastor and Mrs. Fujie are happy to have had a part in helping the Tamaki family become one in Christ and one in His service. □

New Missionary Children's School Constructed in Cameroon

NDU, CAMEROON. "We are excited and looking forward to moving into our new Missionary Children's School in about March or so, as the one-room school (originally built as an outdoor kitchen) has reached its limits after adding numerous items to it over the past five months. The new school has three nice big classrooms which will allow for expansion and more movement," says Karin Maertins, short-term missionary teacher. "I am thankful for the continued health, wisdom, and joy the Lord has granted me in teaching the children of missionaries (M.K.s)."

Since the start of the year, Karin has been elected Youth Advisor for

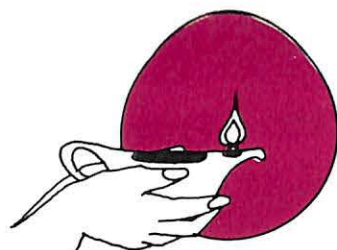
the local church's youth group. Every second week, the students from JMBC (secondary school) and some of the students at Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary meet for their youth meeting.

"The needs of the Cameroonian youth are great," says Karin, "so pray for wisdom and strength as I work together with the Cameroonian youth leaders in guiding these people to mature in their faith."

Kansas Church Sends Mimeograph to Nigeria

The Principal of the Mambilla Baptist Theological School along with the staff members and students check out the reconditioned mimeograph which a Kansas church donated. "Principal and Pastor Philip Sol (wearing glasses) was with us at the Triennial Conference in Anaheim in July 1985," says Missionary Elmer Strauss, whose responsibility it was to help this mimeograph clear customs.





WOMEN of HOPE

reaching our world

My Life Quilt

by Dorothy Kanwischer,
Stockton, CA

*Thou, Lord, my allotted portion,
thou my cup,
thou dost enlarge my bound-
aries:
The lines fall for me in pleasant
places,
indeed I am well content with
my inheritance—Psalm 16:5-6*

These words express my experience of the faithfulness and love of God. Although life has brought me some very painful experiences, God was always there to love, guide, and forgive.

My life can be compared to a piecework quilt composed of parts of different size, color, and materials representing emotions, relationships, and results. Day-by-day experiences develop into squares which, when added together, make up the whole. Construction of a quilt involves fitting together pieces to provide warmth and protection against the bleakness of life. Let me share some of the events which make up my life quilt.

My father worked in a candy factory which made quality candy. Eating cheap or penny candy was prohibited in our home, and our candy consumption was strictly rationed although always available. Penny candy had an irresistible attraction for me. Eventually, I realized that although quality products are available to us we often choose inferior items, and even good things need to be used in moderation. That was an important square in my life.

Another block in this quilt in-



Mrs. Dorothy Kanwischer

volved the realization of the difference between routine and irregularity. God's world is orderly and follows certain laws. We know the sun will rise in the morning and provide light for the day; we know certain foods provide needed nourishment. Each of us needs to establish some regularity in life to conform to God's law. For instance, we know that regular workouts strengthen our bodies; regular eating habits improve our digestion; regular prayer improves our relationship with God; regular church attendance supports our interaction with other Christians and provides outlets for service.

Our life quilts need constant reinforcement to become more effective. One of the most devastating experiences of my life was the accidental death of our 24-year-old son. He picked up some hitchhikers who robbed him and shot him. At a time like this, one is really tempted to ask God, "Why?" It is not easy to say, with Job, "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It was a heart-rending time in our lives. The passing years

have helped to soften the grief, and now we can share with others who have gone through similar situations. This is a somber, dark area in the quilt.

Forgiveness comprises several squares in my quilt. The earlier ones either fade or wear out quickly because of flimsy material or misuse. One of the most distinctive elements in our belief in Christ is the admonition to love our enemies. It is easy to love our friends. Forgiveness implies overlooking hate or spitefulness to look for the good or potential in those who "despitefully use us." Our natural reaction is to strike back when wronged. It takes real love, discipline, and constant vigilance to act in a compassionate manner.

A wise man once said, "The ability to speak in many languages is valuable, but the ability to keep still in one language is priceless." As you may expect, this quilt piece concerns gossip, unkindness, tattling, and idle talk. The opposite of all these is love-speak. Bad reports are destructive not only of the life of the person against whom they are directed but also of the purveyor. In one house I visited, there was a framed motto on the wall, "Love Spoken Here." One felt the serenity and peace which pervaded that home. Love-speak encourages, builds, and supports. This quilt piece is an attractive, pleasing one which harmonizes with the others.

Vincent van Gogh once wrote: "There is the same difference in a person before and after he is in love as there is in an unlighted lamp and one that is burning. The lamp was there, and it was a good

lamp, but now it is shedding light, and that is its real function." How pervasive is love in our lives—love in operation, not just theoretical love? Love permeated Jesus' life so completely that I want my life to be modeled after His. The whole backing of my quilt, what holds it all together, is God's love and faithfulness. In every phase of our lives, God is there whether we acknowledge Him or not. Even when we disregard His commands, or only partially listen, reserving

certain areas of our lives for ourselves, He never forsakes or forgets us. It is incomprehensible to me how He can be involved in every detail of every life in this universe. God would not be God to me if I knew as much as He does. His mystery, majesty, and might make Him worthy of worship.

The binding edge of the quilt is what holds it together—and for me, that is prayer, a mighty link with God's power. "All things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). The key word is *believing*. If we accept the

answer as God's answer, that is the bottom line. His overview exceeds ours. My personal responsibility to God is to create a useful quilt, large enough to cover not only my needs but also, hopefully, the needs of others. He will provide the materials needed—grace, love, and redemption. Living, loving, and dying are activities each of us must do for himself. With God, we can accomplish all three with courage and confidence. Have you seen the bumper sticker, "I can handle anything; I have children"? That is applicable to God. As His child, I am willing to let Him handle everything.

"The Earth Is the Lord's . . . Enter"

This is the theme of the eighth assembly of the North American Baptist Women's Union which will meet at Niagara Falls, NY, from October 1-4, 1987.

Inspirational speaker will be Rebecca Manly Pippert. She is Inter-Varsity's evangelism consultant, has trained congregations

as well as college students and women's groups, addressed conventions and numerous Christian organizations, making a strong case for life-style evangelism.

She is the author of the book, *Out of the Salt-shaker*.



Oct. 1-4, 1987
Niagara Falls,
New York & Canada
Circle the date!

President's Corner

by Sara Pasiciel, WMF
president, Steinbach, MB

SATURDAY: I heard today that the June issue will contain the annual report. It's interesting to think of the people behind the statistics given in that report. We have North American Baptists literally all over the world. In Spain, where we went to "get away" during our sabbatical, we met a missionary whose aunt plays the organ at my parents' church! And in Germany, we had coffee with the son of a man who once taught my father at the old Seminary in Rochester, New York. Coincidence? Perhaps, but I like to see it as God bringing people together to get a small sense of the continuity and unity which has characterized the Christian church since it began and which we, as members of the North American Baptist Conference, are now so much a part of.

WEDNESDAY: I asked my 17-year-old daughter, "What do young women think about these days?"

She laughed, "You mean besides the threat of AIDS, hostage-takings, and nuclear war? Oh, just 'little' things, like what we're going to do with our lives . . . school . . . career . . . marriage . . . you know."

Yes, I do know . . . I remember. It's so much the same, but it's so different, too. I often wonder if we're preparing our daughters and the young women in our churches for their future—or if we really can. Yet Paul admonishes us, ". . . instruct the older women to . . . live a holy life (and) to train the younger women . . ." (Titus 2:3-4, TEV). Very often this happens automatically in our churches and in our women's organizations. But maybe we should check to be sure that it is happening.

Commissioned to Witness

Ten Baptized at Bellwood Church

BELLWOOD, IL. Ten persons were baptized by Pastor William Kresal at the First Baptist Church during the Sunday morning worship service on March 22. Seven of these have been received as members into the Church.

Nine Welcomed into Hillcrest Church

SIOUX FALLS, SD. Dr. John Terveen, pastor, baptized two young adults and three children at Hillcrest Baptist Church recently. Nine persons were received into the fellowship of the Church.

Recently, a Board of Missions was organized in the Church. At the first mission banquet, Diane Itterman, one of the Church young people and a member of Good News Ambassadors, gave a slide presentation on their trip to Nigeria last summer.

Children of the Awana Club presented their scripture work and songs learned throughout this year during an Awana Awareness Night one Sunday evening. —Louise Westerman

Golden Prairie Church Welcomes New Member

GOLDEN PRAIRIE, SK. One person joined the membership of First Baptist Church, April 5, 1987.

"God has truly blessed us here as a small congregation," reports Leota Fritzke. "Professor Paetzel's messages helped inspire us to go forth in faith." The Church recently renovated the parsonage for new Pastor and Mrs. Tim Dekker.

Nine Baptized in Sioux Falls Church

SIOUX FALLS, SD. The Rev. Eric Coulon, senior pastor, baptized nine people at Trinity Baptist Church, March 29, 1987. "Each candidate selected a friend who represented the congregation and read a small portion of scripture just prior to immersion," reports John D. Richter.

Soul Winning Film Shown in Martin

MARTIN, ND. The four-part series, "Adventures in Soul-Winning," was shown on four consecutive Sundays at Martin Baptist Church recently. "In these films, Stanley Tamm shares his experiences as a successful businessman who led hundreds of people to Christ," reports Mrs. Delma Kost.

The Rev. Bill Keple is pastor of the Church.

Rochester Church Has Mission Conference

ROCHESTER, NY. Latta Road Baptist Church held its 1987 Missions Conference, March 28-29, 1987, rallying around the theme, "A Waiting World." During the conference, returned N.A.B. missionary Karin Klettke told of her ministry in Japan and the continued needs there. Professor Warren Woolsey provided the "theology of missions" in his Sunday morning address.

"The thrilling motion picture, 'The Wait of the World,' topped off the weekend's activities," reports Hilla Metzger. "Pastor Marc Maffuci challenged the congregation to remember that we live in 'a waiting world,' and we serve 'a sending God.'"

38 Welcomed as New Members at Bethel Baptist Church

GETZVILLE, NY. "By sharing Jesus Christ with those in our midst, we have added to our membership 38 people since December 1986," reports Betty Lou Kroecker, secretary, Bethel Baptist Church. The Rev. Elwin Colson baptized 24, and 14 were received by letter or reinstatement.

The Church, planning to add on to its facility, has purchased four acres of land adjacent to the present Church property and hired an architect.

Alpena Church Walks Through the Bible

ALPENA, MI. Ripley Boulevard Baptist Church sponsored a one-day "Walk through the Bible" seminar one Saturday with more than 100 adults and teenagers participating. The seminar, with guest speaker Terry Hall of Media Ministries, Chicago, IL, was open to the community.

"During the action-packed, six-hour seminar, Old Testament characters 'came alive' through group participation and review, hand motions, and memorable phrases to help participants gain knowledge, insight, and encouragement to read and study the Bible," reports Doris Turnbull.

Four Join Moosehorn Church

MOOSEHORN, MB. Pastor Reid Galbraith baptized three persons, March 15, 1987, and welcomed them and another person as new members of Moosehorn Baptist Church. "We appreciated the use of the Ochre River Grace Baptist Church's facilities for the baptismal service," reports Diana May.

Eight Baptized at Hebron Church

HEBRON, ND. Pastor Herbert Schauer baptized five adults and three children at Hebron Baptist Church during the Easter morning service. They and another adult joined the Church fellowship. —Shari Krein

Five Baptized at Swan River Church

SWAN RIVER, MB. The Rev. Neal Effa baptized five young people at Temple Baptist Church on Good Friday morning. These and two others were welcomed into the membership of the Church. —Lynn Patzer

Three Baptized at Morris Church

MORRIS, MB. A young mother and two boys were baptized by Rev. Morley Schultz and received into membership at Emmanuel Baptist Church on Palm Sunday.

"Salvation through Christ" was the theme for the Holy Week services held every evening, Monday through Friday, with all the churches in Morris and the surrounding area participating. "It is wonderful to see the community spirit of love from all the different denominations," reports Elma Hoffman. "We are thankful for an active and united ministerial ready to share the love of Christ."

Youth Pastor Baptized 11 Youth in Edmonton

EDMONTON, AB. Youth Pastor Allen Kjesbo baptized 11 young people at Meadowlark Baptist Church, March 15, 1987. They then joined the Church. "It was a real inspiration to see these young people being obedient to the call of their Lord," reports Carol Fulmore.

Nine Baptized at Aberdeen Church

ABERDEEN, SD. The Rev. Bob Klein baptized nine people at Calvary Baptist Church, April 5, 1987. Along with the nine baptized, two joined by letter and were welcomed into the membership of the Church at a special fellowship time held after the evening service. "We thank God for those willing to follow our Lord in baptism and for new people to worship with us," reports Eleane Harms.

Three Baptized at Nepean Church

NEPEAN, ON. Dr. Sam Berg, pastor, baptized three persons at Nepean Baptist Church during the morning worship service, March 29, 1987. They and one more by testimony were added to the membership of the Church. Nepean is a suburb of Ottawa, Canada's capital city. —Elizabeth Craig

Called to Worship

Fountain Valley and Harbor Trinity Share Service

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CA. Fountain Valley Baptist Church and Harbor Trinity Baptist Church, Costa Mesa, CA, joined together for a Good Friday evening service. A joint choir and Pastor Bruce Merrifield participated in the service which concluded with a candlelight communion service. "This is the second time in the past few months that these two churches have worked together on a special service," reports Marilyn Barker.

Minnesota/LaCrosse Association Has Music Festival

ST. PAUL, MN. The Minnesota/LaCrosse Association celebrated their spring music festival at Riverview Baptist Church, March 15, 1987. Musician Steve Gamble provided the highlights of the festival, which brought together more than 350 friends and members of the Association. The Riverview Baptist Church choir gave a 15 minute program which included old-time favorites in German as they celebrated the Church's 100th Anniversary on March 14, 1987.

Riverview Baptist Church will hold a special homecoming weekend in honor of its centennial on Aug. 22-23, 1987. All former pastors and their wives will attend, and all former members and friends are invited.

Children's Musical Presented in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, SD. "Fat, Fat, Jehosaphat," a delightful children's musical, was presented by the Trinity Baptist Church Children's Choir, April 5, 1987. "Nearly 40 children had a part in the program of singing and speaking that taught the message of praying in faith," reports John D. Richter.

The Reverends Eric Coulon and Tim Walker are the Church's senior and associate pastors, respectively.

Alpena Church Participated in 50-Day Adventure

ALPENA, MI. A 50-day adventure, "50 Days to Open My Heart to Christ," was an adult elective team-taught by Pastor Fred Sweet, his wife Doris, and Mary Glawe at Ripley Boulevard Baptist Church. "The purpose of this seven-week course which concluded April 19, 1987, was to enrich the lives of participants with an individual method of study from an Adventure Journal," reports Doris Turnbull.

Commanded to Care

"Conversational Dinners" Held in Alpena Church

ALPENA, MI. During a Fall Leadership Retreat, plans were made for "Conversational Dinners" for the purpose of developing closer relationships within Ripley Boulevard Baptist Church. Involving all age groups, single, married, and newcomers, these informal dinners meet in homes in groups of seven or eight persons. The host changes every month, and all share by bringing food for the meal. Each group decides whether to have table or outdoor games or just conversation.

Heading the Task Force for these "Conversational Dinners" which began in March 1987, continue through June, and resume in the Fall, are John and Carol Ehresman. Some 96 persons have registered for the dinners as of April. —Doris Turnbull

Meadowlark Begins Ministry to Cambodians

EDMONTON, AB. For over a year now, the "shy brown faces" of Cambodian refugees have been a part of the congregation of Meadowlark Baptist Church. It all started with a phone call in November 1985 from Sophon Diep to the home of Rudy and Lydia Penner.

Sophon, his wife Ly Pho, and their three children had just arrived in Edmonton from a Cambodian refugee camp in Thailand. While they were preparing to leave the camp,

the Dieps had met the Penner's daughter, Barbara, who works with Youth With a Mission in that refugee camp helping prepare the refugees for relocation abroad. She gave the Dieps her parents' phone number as a contact for them when they arrived in Canada.

Out of that initial phone call has grown a busy ministry to an average of eight Cambodian refugee families. While the Dieps are Christians, not all of those who come to services at the Church are believers. Those working with the refugees have observed that Cambodian Christians are not popular with other Cambodians.

Ministering to the refugees has involved having special Sunday school classes for the children and the adults, providing bus transportation for them, and having a special Bible class.

The women of the Ladies' Time Out groups shared in the ministry by preparing Christmas gifts for the families. A collection of used clothing was made and the families chose what they needed from the stock. Members of the Church and Ladies' Time Out donated Christmas trees for them at the holiday season. A variety of social times have been planned for them, too. The women have appreciated lessons in Canadian style cooking.

The Cambodians have had access to English instruction through a local Mennonite center, though their contacts with the church have also helped their language learning.

One of the business men in the church has established a cleaning service business to provide entry level jobs for the Cambodians. The service, called "Helping Hands," provides custodial service for the Church as one of its jobs.

Those spearheading the Cambodian ministry say, "It is hard for us as North Americans to understand the trauma and suffering these people have had to go through in fleeing their homes to escape death, then living for long periods in a refugee camp."

The Meadowlark Mission Committee, which has assumed responsibility for the refugee ministry, hopes to involve many more people in reaching out not only to the families who already attend services at the Church, but also to more of the Cambodian community in Edmonton.

For the future, Meadowlark is preparing to sponsor the relocation to Edmonton of the parents and two brothers of two young women who are already here. The Church has also included in its budget a salary for a person to work part-time among the Cambodians, and the search for that person is underway. Ministry to these new Canadians, the Church finds, is like having a mission field at home.

—Carol Fulmore

Compelled to Serve

"Days of Opportunity" Is Great Lakes Association Theme

EAST DETROIT, MI. "Days of Opportunity" was the theme as 142 delegates from churches in Michigan, Ohio, and Florida gathered at Ridgemont Baptist Church, March 12-14, 1987, for the 17th annual meeting of the Great Lakes

Association. Rev. Doug Timm, pastor of the host church, welcomed delegates and guests including Rev. William Taft, area minister, and Mr. Walter Swanson, development director, North American Baptist Conference.

Business items included welcoming Fellowship Bible Church of Troy, Michigan, into the Association; adopting a budget of \$32,700; and electing Rev. Win Decker as moderator.

The Rev. Erwin Lutzer, pastor, Moody Memorial Church, Chicago, Illinois, was the Bible teacher for the three-day meeting. A men's and a women's luncheon closed the meetings.

The 1988 meeting of the Great Lakes Association will be held April 21-23 at Grosse Pointe Baptist Church, Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan. —Darrel W. McKay

George Church Recognizes Teachers

GEORGE, IA. First Baptist Church held a special program and banquet recently to honor all Sunday school and BYF teachers, especially those now retired. Dr. Roy De Brand, professor of homiletics, N.A.B. Seminary, brought the message based on the words "Reach, Teach, Win, and Develop."

Pastor Byron Brodehl, assisted by Sunday School Superintendent Kevin Wagenaar, presented plaques to 14 teachers with a total of 257 years of teaching. "We thank these willing workers and praise God for their faithfulness," states Mrs. John Arends, Jr.

Edmonton Church Provides Intensive Discipleship Training

EDMONTON, AB. Central Baptist Church held its second "Intensive Discipleship Training" school (IDT) this spring. Nine students and five staff members met every Tuesday night and Saturday morning for a total of six hours for worship, prayer, and teaching by guest speakers and on videotape.

"The overall goal of IDT is discipleship through teaching and ministry," reports Kurt Remus. "After 12 weeks of training, the current IDT school will be ministering for two weeks in Newark, New Jersey."

The first IDT team, trained in the fall of 1986, worked with Rev. Juan Luna at Garcia's Ranch Baptist Church in Rio Grande City, Texas, over the Christmas break. Their main ministry was establishing rapport with the church youth and challenging them in their walk with God.

In addition, the IDT team spent an evening witnessing in Mexico, with the church young people acting as interpreters. Bernie Beyer, team leader, reports, "It was exciting to see how enthused the church youth were about sharing the Gospel!"

The IDT team also delivered food hampers (provided by a special offering at Central) to several church families. Central bought a new van to transport the team members, who were required to pay for all their own expenses. Howard Lawrence, associate pastor, taught at IDT and accompanied the team.

MRS. IDA BREITLING BERTSCH (83), Bismarck, ND; born July 26, 1903, to Jacob D. and Katherina Bertsch in McPherson County, SD; died March 20, 1987; in 1927, married Gottlieb G. Breitling who predeceased her in 1950; in 1962, married John A. Bertsch who predeceased her in 1971; member, Tabitha Fellowship, Ashley (ND) Baptist Church; survived by one son, Howard, Wishek, ND; one daughter, Patricia (Mrs. August Ritter), Bismarck, ND; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; two stepdaughters; four step-grandchildren; three sisters; and four brothers; Reverends Orville Meth and Allan Gerber, pastors, funeral service.

MARTHA (ENZIE) FUCHS (79), Drumheller, AB; born March 22, 1907, at Trochu, AB; died Oct. 28, 1986; married John Fuchs, Jan. 10, 1928, who predeceased her, Aug. 10, 1981; attended Creston (BC) Baptist Church, 1953-83, and Parkdale Baptist Church, Drumheller, AB, until her death; survived by three sons: Reuben, Albert, and John; and two daughters: Irene Schmidt and Edna Falat.

PAUL GALAMBOS (81), Waukesha, WI; born April 12, 1905, in Hungary; died March 25, 1987; Baptist minister for 37 years, first in Hungary, then among refugees in Germany (1944-48); from 1949 until his retirement in 1970, served the following N.A.B. Conference churches: Washburn, ND; Streeter, ND; Yorkton, SK; and Austin Street, Buffalo, NY; member after retirement, Temple Baptist Church, Milwaukee, WI; writer for "Der Sendbote," "Die Gemeinde," and "Evangeliumi Hirnok"; predeceased by his wife Magdalena; survived by three sons: Theodore, Minneapolis, MN; Charles, Great Falls, VA; and William, Colorado Springs, CO; and one daughter, Gerda Klingbeil, Elm Grove, WI; 14 grandchildren; one great-granddaughter; one sister, Jolan; and one brother, Andrew; Reverends Henry Ramus and Thorwald Bender, pastors, funeral service.

JOHN GALL, JR., (88), Jamestown, ND; born July 1, 1898, to John Gall, Sr., and Magdalena (Lang) Gall in Worms, South Russia; died March 20, 1987; married Caroline Stockburger, Dec. 12, 1919; member, Sunday school superintendent and teacher, Temple Baptist Church, Jamestown, ND; survived by four daughters: Lillian (Mrs. Albert Gebhart), Orem, UT; Luella (Mrs. Larry Struble), Jamestown, ND; Deloris (Mrs. Ron Rooda), Jamestown, ND; and Ardella (Mrs. Dennis Justice), Billings, MT; four sons: Wilbert, Milbank, SD; Norman, Fargo, ND; Edwin, Coquille, OR; and Leroy, Burnsville, MN; 23 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; two brothers: Emanuel and Albert; and three sisters: Mrs. Caroline

Radke, Mrs. Walter Banek, and Mrs. Emmett Klee; Rev. Ray Hoffman, pastor, funeral service.

EDWIN S. HEUPEL (69), Eureka, SD; born July 16, 1917, to Simon and Magdalena (Bertsch) Heupel in McPherson County, SD; died March 16, 1987; married Theresa Bertsch, Oct. 10, 1940; member, deacon, Men's Brotherhood member, men's chorus, First Baptist Church, Eureka, SD; predeceased by one brother; survived by his wife Theresa; four daughters: Shirley (Mrs. Gary Wolff), Rapid City, SD; Sylvia (Mrs. Don Heinrich), Aberdeen, SD; Donna (Mrs. Derold Follmer), Watertown, SD; and Patty (Mrs. Rick Trupe), Brookings, SD; ten grandchildren; one sister; and four brothers; Rev. Walter Weber, pastor, funeral service.

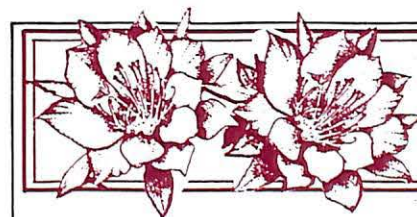
NATALIE RODE (78), Trochu, AB; born Aug. 26, 1908, to Philip and Matilde Young at Kustarnie, Wolinsk, Russia; died Feb. 28, 1987; immigrated to Saskatchewan in 1927; married Ed Rode, Oct. 24, 1930; received Christ as Savior at 16 and was baptized in Wolynina Russia; active member, W.M.F. member, Trochu (AB) Baptist Church.

MRS. KATHARINA SCHNABEL (102), Wishek, ND; born May 12, 1884, to Martin and Christina Bender at Kassel, South Russia; died March 16, 1987; immigrated with her parents to the U.S.A. in 1885; married Jacob Schnabel, Jan. 16, 1906; charter member, Venturia (ND) Baptist Church; member, W.M.F. member, Sunday school teacher, Ashley (ND) Baptist Church; survived by one son, Berthold, Ashley, ND; two grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and three sisters; Rev. Allan Gerber, pastor, funeral service.

WILLY TESCHKE (77), Prince George, BC; born March 21, 1909, in Neugut, Germany; died March 10, 1987; immigrated to Prince George in 1929; married Amalie Tripke in October 1930, who predeceased him in 1952; active member of Bethel Baptist Church, Prince George, BC; married Johanna Krafczyk in April 1953; survived by his wife Johanna; three children: Ruth (Mrs. Heinz Kwiatkowski), Margret (Mrs. Imant Willmann), and Elmer, and their spouses, all of Prince George, BC; one stepson, Michael Krafczyk and his wife; and one sister, Margret Engelhardt; Rev. Arthur Schlack, pastor, funeral service.

RUDOLF ZUKOWSKI (85), Vancouver, BC; born June 23, 1901, to Karl and Susanne Zukowski in Karben, Westprussia; died Feb. 19, 1987; married Hulda Urbigkeit, May 20, 1926, who predeceased him in 1977; immigrated to Canada in 1953; married Ilse Schatz in 1979; faithful member, Immanuel Baptist Church, Vancouver, BC; survived by his wife Ilse; one

son, Siegbert; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; one sister-in-law; one brother; and many nieces and nephews; Reverends Richard Hohensee and Siegbert Zukowski, pastors, funeral service.



Flowers are beautiful—but they fade so quickly.

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Do You Have a Great Commission Conscience?

What is a **Great Commission Conscience**? It is an attitude which permeates the thinking and decision-making process of a church; which sees people outside of Christ as lost; which causes rejoicing when new people join the church, especially if they are new converts; which prioritizes disciple making; which sees mission as both "over there" and "right here;" which motivates both corporate and personal action in prayer, giving, and service for Great Commission results.

How do you determine if the leaders/members of a church have a **Great Commission Conscience**? Simple . . . you ask them. Seven out of ten affirmative answers to the following questions are an indication of a reasonably strong **Great Commission Conscience**:

- 1) I see the primary purpose of the church as responding to the Great Commission.
- 2) I participated in an outreach/training event in the last year.
- 3) I invited an unchurched friend/relative to a church event in the last six months.
- 4) I would support a motion to designate at least 10 percent of our budget to outreach events/training/activities to reach our own community with the gospel.
- 5) I prefer that the pastor call on non-members more often than members.
- 6) I would be willing to take a new member/visitor home for dinner at least once every six months.
- 7) I intentionally introduced myself to a new member or visitor in the past month.
- 8) I talked to an unchurched person about my faith in the past six months.
- 9) I prayed for a specific unchurched person in the past month.
- 10) I would be willing to be the pioneer in a new group or new church fellowship to help reach new people.

Ray Harsch

Acting Church Growth Director
(From the Basic Growth Seminar led by Ray Harsch)

Akes Tell of Open Doors of Ministry in Edinburg



"The doors are wide open; this is the time in Edinburg," says Pastor Ake (at right).

"Hundreds and hundreds of Latin Americans are coming over the border into Texas," says Rev. Lindbberg Ake, home missions pastor in the southernmost tip of Texas, Edinburg. Lindbberg refers to this area as one of the "ends of the earth" that the Lord Jesus Christ told us to go to reach for Him.

The U.S. government and health organizations are trying to find a solution to the question: What do we do with all these people?

"Everyone knows that we, as a church, are here in Edinburg to help these people spiritually," says Lindbberg.

The Akes' enthusiasm, love, and dedication to Christ, and concern for lost people stirred the members and visitors of the Church Growth Board at its annual meeting in April. The Akes became full-time missionaries as of 1987; they served on a part-time basis previously.

The love of the Lord glows on their faces as they speak of the 20 million Spanish-speaking people in the Rio Grande Valley in Texas alone.

"Our emphasis is to reach those who have never met Christ face to face—not disgruntled people from other churches," says Lindbberg.

La Iglesia Bautista Central has been meeting in a two story frame house for 13 years. "This building is much too small for our present congregation. We are holding dual services upstairs and downstairs as the con-

gregation is too large for the present building, and there is no room to invite more people," reported the Akes as they stressed the need for a new church building immediately. Ninety percent of this congregation is composed of youth and young adults in the process of Christian growth.

La Iglesia Bautista Central has purchased land and sold its present church building. "For some time now, we have had a sign on the land advertising that a new church will be built there, but it is taking so long. People keep calling and asking us, 'When are you going to build so we can come to your church?'"

The Women's Missionary Fellowship of the N.A.B. Conference had a \$50,000 capital funds goal in 1986 to fund the construction of this new church, but the goal was not reached. Other funds will need to be added for this project.

Two strong Bible study groups meet—one in the home of the Akes and the other in a trailer home in East Edinburg. There 12 men meet with Pastor Ake while Mrs. Ake meets with the children. "The doors are wide open; this is the time in Edinburg!" say the Akes. This may be the beginning of a second church in Edinburg.

Members of N.A.B. Conference churches who spend the winter in Texas have been a help and encouragement to the Akes and the Edinburg congregation. □

what's happening

The Victor Baptist Church, Victor, Iowa ordained their pastor, Randall H. Battey, on February 27, 1987. Rev. Raymond Unruh of Denison, Kansas, gave the ordination sermon, with Rev. Jacob Ehman giving the charge to the church.

Tim Dekker and his wife Cindy were welcomed to First Baptist Church, Golden Prairie, Saskatchewan, on April 5. He became pastor there on March 15, 1987. They have three children: Jeremy, Nathan, and Amy.

Mr. John Nelsen has accepted the position of Minister to Children and Youth at Redeemer Baptist Church, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Pastor Herb Radke is the Minister of Music and Discipleship at Grace Baptist Church, Calgary, Alberta.

Rev. Dennis Dearmin became church planter of the new church extension project in Tracy, California, a bedroom community for San Francisco, on May 1. This new church is being called Valley Community Baptist Church. This project is supported by the Northern California Association and the Basic Mission and Ministry Budget of the North American Baptist Conference. Dearmin formerly served as Director of College/Career Ministry and Parents in Training at Calvary Baptist Church, Manteca, California.

John Laeger became youth pastor at Redeemer Baptist Church, Warren, Michigan, on June 1. He formerly served as youth pastor and Christian education director at Community Bible Church, Omaha, Nebraska.

The Rev. Allan Strohschein is serving as interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Colfax, Washington.

Mr. Daniel Williams resigned as Assistant Pastor of Youth at Immanuel Baptist Church, Kankakee, Illinois, effective June 1 to enter seminary training.

The Rev. Gordon Bauslaugh became the church planter for a new work in Puyallup, Washington, sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Association. It was erroneously reported that the project was sponsored by the Central Pacific Association.

Mr. John Duba became Director of Youth at First Baptist Church, Ellinwood, Kansas, on March 1, 1987. He is a 1986 graduate of Denver Seminary.

Dr. Bert Katschke-Jennings resigned from the Samaritan Counseling Center to open a private practice as a licensed

consulting psychologist as of February 15, 1987.

The Great Lakes Association welcomed Fellowship Bible Church of Troy, Michigan, into its membership at its annual meeting in March. The Rev. Roland Preisler and Rev. Randy Rheaume are co-pastors of this Church.

The Rev. Allan Johnson resigned as interim pastor of Nokomis and Raymond Baptist Churches in Saskatchewan.

The Rev. Jim DeBoer resigned as pastor of Hillside Baptist Church, Dickinson, North Dakota, effective March 7, 1987, to assume secular employment in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He has served this Church since 1980.

Dr. Joseph Sonnenberg resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church, Leduc, Alberta, to retire effective the end of June 1987. He has served this Church since 1983. Prior to that, he was president of North American Baptist College and Divinity School from 1970-1981.

The Vineyard Congregation and Twin Grove Baptist Church of Buffalo Grove, Illinois, voted to merge on March 21, 1987, and became the Vineyard Congregation with the Rev. Roy Schwarcz and the Rev. Gaylan Banashak as pastors. Reception of the Vineyard Congregation into the Illinois Association was approved by the Illinois Association of North American Baptist Churches on February 28.

The Rev. Ron Orr accepted the call to become pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Terrace, British Columbia, on July 1, 1987. He is a 1987 graduate of the North American Baptist Divinity School, Edmonton, Alberta.

The Rev. Anthony Salazar became pastor of First Baptist Church, Avon, South Dakota, June 1, 1987. He previously served as pastor of Faith Community Baptist Church, Lenexa, Kansas.

Mr. Allan Finger resigned as youth and Christian education director at South Canyon Baptist Church, Rapid City, South Dakota, effective March 7 to assume secular employment.

The Rev. Jeff Patet became pastor of First Baptist Church, Trenton, Illinois, effective May 10, 1987. He had served as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Loyal, Oklahoma.

The Rev. Harvey Friez resigned as

pastor of First Baptist Church, Durham, Kansas, effective April 25, 1987, to accept a call to a Bible Church.

The Rev. Dennis Angell resigned as pastor of Stafford Baptist Church, Wilsonville, Oregon, effective May 31, 1987.

The Rev. Ray Cooper resigned as pastor of Central Baptist Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, effective May 31, 1987, to become the Metro-Director for Christian Businessmen's Committee, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

The Rev. George Robinson resigned as pastor of Mountain View Baptist Church, Spearfish, South Dakota, effective June 1, 1987, to retire.

The Rev. Ron Miller resigned as pastor of Canaan Baptist Church, Crawford, Texas, effective April 26, 1987.

The Rev. and Mrs. Ed Oster resigned as Building Supervisors at the North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, South Dakota. They are moving to Windsor, Colorado, April 24, 1987.

Mr. Kermit Junkert resigned as Minister of Worship, Music, and Administration at Parma Heights Baptist Church, Parma, Ohio.

The Rev. Siegfert Zukowski accepted the position of Minister for German services at Pilgrim Baptist Church, Vancouver, British Columbia, effective February 1, 1987.

Larry Blythe became Associate Pastor of Youth at First Baptist Church of Lodi, California. He previously served as Associate Pastor in a non-N.A.B. Conference church in Windsor, California.

Whitecourt Baptist Church, Whitecourt, Alberta, was received as a recognized church into the Alberta Baptist Association during its annual meetings, March 26-29, 1987. This is a church extension project pastored by the Rev. Edwin Broadway.

The Rev. Norman Dreger and Mrs. Mildred Neuman were united in marriage in April. She is formerly of Kelowna, British Columbia, and a former missionary to Nigeria as well as to Indians in Canada. He is pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Valleyview, Alberta.

The Rev. Art Pearce resigned as executive director of Central Baptist Church, Camp, Lansing, Iowa, effective April 15. He accepted a position outside of the N.A.B. Conference.

Your Will . . . Your Testimony

Because your will is the only instrument that can speak for you with authority after your death, it may be more than appropriate to include your personal testimony.

Realizing that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord and that those who are outside of Christ will never see me again.

Example: "Realizing that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord and that those who are outside of Christ will never see me again, but all believers will, I do hereby make, publish, and declare this to be my Last Will and Testament . . ."

Recognizing God's ownership of all things as His stewards, we are responsible to Him for all that comes into our hands.

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*Does it include your testimony?

*Does it provide for the ongoing work of your Lord?

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Walter Swanson
North American Baptist Conference
1 So. 210 Summit Ave., P.O. Box 159
Oakbrook, Terrace, IL 60181
(312) 495-2000

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Jewish Christian Congregation Joins Illinois Association

by David R. Lawrenz

A unique event occurred recently in the Illinois Association of North American Baptist Conference Churches. A merger of the Vineyard Congregation, a church planted to reach Jews with Gospel of the Messiah in the Buffalo Grove area, and the Twin Grove Baptist Church was unanimously approved by the Illinois Association delegates. This action of merging a Jewish/Christian congregation with a North American Baptist Conference church is a "first" for an association of the North American Baptist Conference.

"The Vineyard Congregation rejoices in being accepted as a member congregation of the N.A.B.," said the Rev. Schwarcz, pastor of the Church. "We feel as though God is using our fellowship to begin to open the door for N.A.B. Conference churches to participate in fulfilling the Great Commission to the Jewish people," Schwarcz continued.

The Buffalo Grove/Long Grove area of Illinois developed with a high percentage of Jewish people. Our Twin Grove congregation, located in the middle of this fast-growing development, was not able to reach its neighbors in sufficient numbers to grow. The Vineyard Congregation, with a specialized ministry to Jewish people (even though its membership is 60 percent Gentile) was in need of a place to worship. The "felt" needs in both congregations brought about prayer, study, discussion, and finally merger. This merged congregation is ideally located with a primary building on nearly five acres of land. "I believe that this merged congregation will be used to bring people who sense 'felt' needs to Christ and will be a blessing to both our Illinois Association and entire Conference," said Dr. Willis Potratz, area ministries director for the North American Baptist Conference.

The American Board of Missions to the Jews/Chosen People Ministries is

the organization responsible for beginning the Vineyard Congregation. Schwarcz, who is also midwest regional director for this organization, is in the process of planting a congregation in Toronto, Ontario, and is prayerfully considering a work in Montreal.

Mr. Keith Murgatroyd, a key lay person from the Twin Grove congregation in making the merger a reality, remarked, "In September 1986, we were at a crossroads faced with divergent alternatives. It was exciting to pursue the merger. We had seen the Vineyard Congregation start and grow, and we had recognized their dynamic and key outreach to our community. The merger is a miracle resulting in a strong church with a clear mission and the key resources to carry out that mission."

"The North American Baptist Conference with its German ethnic background has been learning to be open to all people of God's creation," stated Dr. John Binder, executive director of the N.A.B. Conference. "Today, we have considerable ethnic and cultural diversity among our congregations throughout the U.S.A. and Canada. This merger and reception is an event of very special significance in the life of our fellowship as believers. This is a time to celebrate."

Dave Lawrenz is moderator of the Illinois Association and a member of Village Green Baptist Church, Glen Ellyn.



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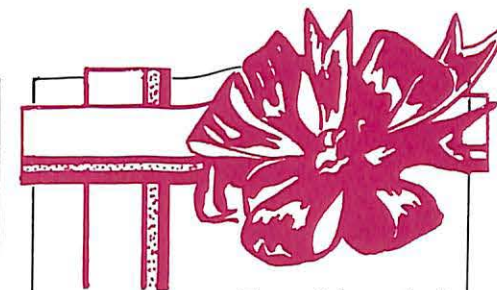
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freedom and continues
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James 1:25
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