

Baptist Herald

March 1987



Our Mission in Asia

Commissioned to Witness in Japan

by Douglas Woyke

Pastor Tomokuni (Tom) Aoki (N.A.B. Seminary '81) shared at a recent prayer meeting that there seems to be a new religion-oriented boom going on in Japan right now. He said that the Japanese, however, are not necessarily looking for new things to believe but for something which will assure them of freedom from financial worry, sickness, and stress. One young high school senior stated that if she would be assured of passing her university entrance exam she would be baptized immediately.

What a challenge it is to bring the true gospel of Jesus Christ to these people. We are commissioned to witness to a nation where less than one percent of the population claims to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. The field is wide open.

God has given us, as a North American Baptist Conference, the opportunity to witness in Japan through various ministries. The Japan Baptist Conference, with which we are affiliated, has targeted church growth and church planting as its two top priority ministries.

There are currently seven organized churches and one evangelism station served by seven pastors in the Japan Baptist Conference.

One organized church has started its own church extension work. The Clausens, Steiers, Woykes, and Florence Miller work as church planting missionaries. Lucille Wipf also assists one of the organized churches which is without a full-time pastor in addition to filling in for the Stollers while they are on furlough.

We trust that as you read this issue of the Baptist Herald you will be challenged to pray for Japan, to continue to give for ministry needs, and to possibly go to fulfill the commission to witness!



Missionary Douglas Woyke and Pastor Aoki pray for the people of Japan as well as the seven Baptist churches and one evangelism station of the Japan Baptist Conference.

This issue of the *Baptist Herald* features our North American Baptist Conference mission work in Japan and the Philippines.

Compelled to Serve in Asia

by Alan Steier

What compels some to leave the familiar surroundings of their homeland to preach the gospel in a place where the customs, the language, and the people are so very different? What turns a person's heart in the direction of missionary service?

Why am I in Japan, struggling to speak

Japanese, when I could be in North America preaching and teaching in my native language? After all, are there not many empty pulpits and many unevangelized areas in North America?

There are several reasons why I and a number of other people are *compelled to serve* the Lord on the mission field; even though the

(continued on page 4)

Baptist Herald

March 1987

Volume 65/Number 2

Articles

- 2 Commissioned to Witness in Japan—Douglas Woyke
- 2 Compelled to Serve in Asia—Alan Steier
- 4 Planting a New Church in Yawata—Douglas Woyke
- 5 A Ready Heart Responds—Alan Steier
- 6 Ministry to Whom?—Reimer Clausen
- 7 Treasure in a Clay Jar—Florence Miller
- 8 My Testimony —Ryoji Ito
- 9 Commissioned to Serve in Japan —Douglas Woyke
- 9 Witnessing to University Students in Japan—Ron Stoller
- 10 A Mission Field in Tsu Christian Center—Joan Stoller
- 11 Outreach through the Tsu English Center —William and Lucille Lengefeld
- 12 Bright Marks in a Dark Land—Kathy Kwast
- 13 Outreach through Christian Education—Lucille Wipf
- 14 Witness through Baptism—William D. Lengefeld
- 15 The Benefits Are Mine—Ava Bandi
- 15 Are You the One?—Lea Kramer
- 16 Map of North American Baptist Conference Missions in Japan
- 18 Teaching at Kansai Christian School—Cathy Jennings
- 19 A Mirror Reflecting the Love of God—Christopher and Wendy Vogt
- 20 Commissioned to Witness in the Philippines—Leland Bertsch
- 20 From the Diary of a Language Learner—Leland and Jennell Bertsch
- 22 Map of North American Baptist Conference Missions in Philippines
- 32 Never Give Up Praying—Douglas Woyke



14



15



22

Departments

- 23 Women of Hope
- 23 Women in Ministry: Isabelle Long, Fran Hoogestraat; Reaching In, Reaching Out, LaVerna Mehlhaff; President's Corner, Sara Pasiciel
- 25 Biblical Imperatives in Action
- 28 In Memoriam
- 28 Anniversaries
- 29 What's Happening
- 29 Baptist World Aid Ethiopia—Supplying Oxen to Farmers
- 30 Ten Questions Most Asked by Church Leaders
- 31 Capital Funds
- 31 "Window" Allows Entry to Social Security for Clergy Who have Opted Out

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language is difficult; the people are indifferent; and one's native land may seem quite appealing.

The first reason is that hearing and responding to God's call has become for me the greatest force compelling me to serve in the land of Japan. Jesus, before His ascension, told His disciples, "You will be my witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Just as the Lord called these not-yet-Spirit-filled disciples to proclaim the message of the gospel everywhere, so he calls men and women today to take this message to the ends of the earth.



Youth "get together" with Missionaries Alan and Judy Steier in their new home in Nagoya, Japan.

A second reason men and women are compelled to serve is *the need*. A recent edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia* stated that Asia has the fewest Christian workers per capita of all the regions of the world. In comparison, North America has one Christian worker for every 1,321 people, whereas in Asia the figure is one Christian worker for every 2,760,636 people.

While in seminary, I heard an interesting yet disturbing illustration. It seems that there were several people carrying a huge log. They were having a bit of trouble, because on one end of the log were nine people, while on the other end one lonely person struggled to keep his end up. After this brief story, the question came, "If you were called upon to help, which end of the log would you help carry?"

As North American Baptist Conference missionaries in Asia, we serve because there is a host of people dying without hearing about a Savior. Yes, our end of the log does get rather

heavy at times, yet our burden is made lighter through the faithful prayers and generous financial support of those of you living in North America.

The final reason why your missionaries in Asia are compelled to serve Jesus Christ is that we have been *sent by the Church*. The Book of Acts contains the account of the missionary journeys of Paul and his companions to the unknown, unfamiliar surroundings of the Gentile world. But before that first missionary journey could get underway, God directed the church to set apart His servants for the work (Acts 13). That great legacy remains today as churches in North America and around the world continue to set apart and send missionaries into places where the gospel is yet unknown.

As North American Baptist Conference missionaries in Asia, we are grateful for the opportunity and privilege we have of being your representatives in the Far East. Thank you for setting us apart and for continuing to support our various ministries, be they Home Bible studies, English teaching, Sunday school, or student work. From the Bertsches in the Philippines to the Woykes in Japan and everyone in-between, we are here because you care and because you want God's Word to be proclaimed in Asia. We take that responsibility very seriously.

Of course, the task is far from completed, and we trust the Lord of the Harvest, that He will continue to send workers, compelling them to serve in the great harvest field of Asia. □

The Rev. Alan Steier and his wife Judy completed language study a year ago and began a new church work in Nagoya, Japan. They are entering their fourth year of service in Japan.

Planting a New Church in Yawata

by Douglas Woyke

"What a shame!" mumbled five-year-old Masazumi, as his father, a Nara University professor of chemistry, Dr. Fujiwara, groped for the name of an Old Testament king he had forgotten while teaching the Sunday school lesson. We all burst out in laughter, and any signs of uptightness on our first visit to Yawata were broken! We felt at ease with these dear people who would be our partners in ministry for the coming four years.

Sharon, my wife, and our children, Joyce

and Todd, and I have been led back to Japan following our furlough. Our place of service, however, has changed. After ten years with the Heijo Christian Church, we have been asked to work with Pastor Tomokuni (Tom) Aoki and the members of the Kyoto Rakuyo Baptist Church in strengthening that church's extension work in Yawata City. Yawata is a city of 50,000 people located in southern Kyoto Prefecture. There are very few evangelical churches in the city.

Two Christian couples and two Christian ladies who attend the services regularly in Yawata eagerly expect the Lord to do a great work among us. They want to see growth, and it is exciting working with them in setting goals for the ministry that God has given each of us.

We have home Bible studies, do intensive tract distribution and door-to-door calling, preach on a regular basis, and plan to assist in English classes and special interest meetings such as cooking classes. The six Christians are already committed to distribute literature in their neighborhoods on a monthly basis. One of the ladies has opened her home to an English class taught by Short-Term Missionary Lea Kraemer. The Sunday School ministry has multiplied as we have made a concerted effort to reach children in the area.

We look forward to seeing the Lord do a mighty work in Yawata. Even though the response to the gospel continues to be quite slow, I am reminded of the verse in 1 John 4:4: "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them (those who would oppose the gospel), because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." We are assured of victory!

"I have been praying that ten families would come to Christ this year in Yawata. In Japan, many would say that that is 'impossible'! But God makes the impossible possible."

—Douglas Woyke

I have been praying that ten families would come to Christ this year in Yawata. In Japan, many would say that that is "impossible"! But God makes the impossible possible. Will you pray with us for ten families to come to Christ this year? Will you also pray that we will be prepared to disciple those families until they reach maturity in Christ? Thank you for being part of our new work in Yawata! □

The Rev. Douglas Woyke serves as a North American Baptist Conference missionary to Japan, where he is missions field secretary.



Dr. Fujiwara, a university professor of chemistry, teaches a Sunday school class at the Yawata church. His sons, Masazumi (5) and Naozumi (12) eagerly listen.

A Ready Heart Responds

by Alan Steier

Mrs. Kondo is a bright, vivacious, attractive woman who, unlike most Japanese, made a decision to follow Christ soon after coming to the Nagoya Inokoshi Christian Church. Finding something in the Gospel that immediately met her need, she readily accepted the good news. Even though she responded to Christ rather quickly, there were a number of factors which led to that first visit to the church.

When Mrs. Kondo was a young girl, she enjoyed looking at the beautiful, star-filled sky. She came to the conclusion that there must be a God. For her, the heavens truly did declare the glory of God, and the skies proclaimed the work of the Creator's hands (Psalm 19:1). Even though she thought there was a God, it was many years before she developed a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Another influence on her life was her older brother's decision to become a believer. He told her that if she would believe in Christ she would have eternal life. He gave her a Bible, and every evening she read it.

She was married a bit later in life than most Japanese women and was unable to have any children. At the time, her relationship with her husband was not going well, and as she rarely spoke with anyone, she was quite lonely.

One day at the grocery store "something wonderful happened." While shopping, Mrs. Kondo met someone who seemed very kind, a

member of the Nagoya Church. She and another church member urged Mrs. Kondo to come to the church. For eight years, Mrs. Kondo had known about the church, but it was not until she was given a direct invitation that she felt she could attend.

She began to feel this church was her real home. Her heart was truly ready. A few months later, she put her faith in Christ and was baptized. She continues to be a growing member of the church.



Mrs. Kondo put her faith in Christ, was baptized, joined the church, and is a growing Christian.

Last September, I began an English Bible class for adults during the Sunday School hour; we are studying the Gospel of Mark. Mrs. Kondo, along with two other women and three men, are members of this class. Each one in the class has different questions, problems, and struggles in the faith. Some know a great deal about Jesus, having been Christians for years; others know very little. They also vary in their ability to speak English, which makes teaching a challenge at times. For me, this Bible class is one of the most satisfying and fulfilling aspects of my work in the church.

Not only is it a joy to help people in the class learn more about Christ, but also it is gratifying when, because of the English Bible class, those outside the church are able to come in contact with the claims of Christ. Mrs. Kondo has had a part in this. Her level of English is not very high, so she asks her husband to read the passage in English at home and help her work

through it. He has never read a Japanese Bible, but through his wife, he is being exposed to the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

Will he become a believer? Only time will tell. But for now, Mrs. Kondo and I are trusting that God's Word will not return to Him void but will produce fruit in the life of her husband. □

Ministry to Whom?

by Reimer Clausen

Japanese people are extremely busy; maybe the busiest in the world. It's work, work, study, study. Working men never get home until 9 or 10 o'clock in the evening or even later. They commute long distances to work, work late, and socialize until late after work.

Students are always under pressure to study for the never ending gauntlet of examinations. After school, there are private lessons, tutorial schools, and school clubs. In addition, sport activities and clubs are often held on Sundays.

Housewives often work as well, so Sunday is often the only time the family can be together even for a meal. Community activities and company recreational activities for employee families are all scheduled on Sundays.

In this environment, trying to get people to come to church or even to take time to think about spiritual things is a never ending battle. Even for committed Christians, it is difficult to make church attendance a priority. Many people are seeking, but they are caught up in the rat race. They are on the treadmill and cannot stop.

Some people drop out and withdraw. Close to our house is a large mental hospital with about 600 patients. God has given me an open door to visit there, talk with the patients, and even to take them to church activities. The patients range from severe cases of schizophrenia to that of mild depression. Many of them have withdrawn from reality to escape life. Some used to be successful businessmen.

The hospital has fantastic facilities with a gym, athletic programs, music, crafts, painting, and art lessons. Recently, they had a beautiful display of art works created by patients.

These people have lots of time, and ministering to them takes lots of time and patience. I can explain the gospel many times over, but most don't seem to grasp it. Some have attended church many times, but they don't understand the meaning of worship.

Sometimes, I feel like I am wasting my time,

but the other day, a fifty-year-old man who has spent fifteen years in the hospital, drew a picture and showed it to me. It was a simple but beautiful sketch of two birds sitting on a telephone wire. Underneath was written the word, "friendship." "This is my idea of friendship," he explained. "One of those birds is you, and the other one is me."

He still hasn't comprehended that Jesus wants to be his best friend. He hasn't understood sin or salvation. But he sensed the kindness that I showed him, through our occasional contacts. I can't just leave him and those other patients, even if it takes a lot of my time, even though it doesn't seem to contribute to church growth at the moment.

Pray with me that God will touch some of these lives and heal these people spiritually and mentally. □

The Rev. Reimer Clausen and his wife Nobuko serve as North American Baptist Conference missionaries in Kyoto, Japan. He became a missionary to Japan in 1974 and his wife in 1976. They are helping with the Higashi Muko Christian Church.

Treasure in a Clay Jar

by Florence Miller

Paul says that Christians are like clay jars with treasure inside, because Christ dwells in us, and we have received the light of the gospel. The world does not truly know Christ and His way of salvation. It is our responsibility as believers, not merely to have this treasure within ourselves, but to allow the world to see Christ in us and working through us. Only then will Christ be acknowledged as the hope of the world.

When I returned to Japan after furlough in March 1985, the Ikeda Church had two projects waiting for me. One was to fellowship in a personal way with the members and those who attended the church frequently. Because I was largely engaged in teaching English Bible classes in the church, there was only superficial interaction with them. They desired to know me better as a person, not only as a teacher. The pastor set up a schedule by which I was to meet with one or two individuals a month. Although it seemed rather unnatural at first, because it had been arranged, it has brought me closer to the people. I usually ask them what they would like to do when we come together. One young lady said, "Please explain to me in depth the



Higashi Muko Church in Kyoto dedicated its new building in late 1985.



meaning of the cross." How thrilled I was to hear that. She has been studying the Bible with the pastor for some time.

The second project was to begin a series of biographical talks about my life as a missionary in Japan. The purpose for this was to leave a kind of spiritual and historical legacy for our Japan Baptist Conference churches before I returned to North America, and also to draw some of my English students to the church. The talks are scheduled to be given once in two or three months. I was very reluctant to do this, because I do not like to speak about myself publicly, nor did I think it would be of great in-

Japanese people are extremely busy, so trying to get people to come to church or even to think about spiritual things is a never ending battle.

terest or significance to others. But I agreed to do so with the prayer that God would show the reality of Himself, His guidance, protection, and provision for those who seek to do His bidding.



Florence Miller leads a home Bible study group in Japanese with Mrs. Matsuo and Mrs. Ishibe in Mrs. Matsuo's home. The women are seated in the kotatsu, a Japanese fireplace.

Attendance at the first two meetings has been good. Our little sanctuary was filled. Many of my students came, some for the second time. A former student, who had shown much interest in the Bible, has returned to the English Bible Class after a year's absence, as a result of the first meeting. She said that she decided to come again so that she would not drift away from what she had been taught in the Bible.

One of my most interested students, commenting on my second talk, said, "I could feel that God was very real as you related how God called you and brought you safely to Japan thirty-five years ago, in spite of many difficulties and dangers." How happy I was that the TREASURE in a clay jar was visible to her. □

Miss Florence Miller has been serving as a North American Baptist Conference missionary in Japan for 35 years.

My Testimony

by Ryoji Ito

Struggling with the problem of sin in my life and wondering if my life's destiny was to be unhappy and miserable, I came to the Heijo Christian Church for the first time about two

years ago. I had lost my wife, and my older sister had committed suicide. Missionary Douglas Woyke, an old friend, was serving the Church at the time. He greeted me very warmly as if he'd been waiting for my arrival for a long time. The church people were very kind, and I began to attend regularly.

The church became the only refuge for me. I began to feel like my old self again. I saw what faith really meant as I observed Mr. Woyke's life of faith and service in the church. When the Woykes were almost ready for furlough, we welcomed Mr. Takemoto as our pastor.

To become a Christian in Japan, one must overcome many obstacles and have a great amount of courage. I continued my life as a seeker, walking by my own sense of logic and trusting no one else in life. But something happened last fall. My second daughter, Michiyo, who was in the ninth grade, did not want to go on to high school and was in danger of not even finishing her compulsory education (ninth grade). One day at home, she tried to kill herself. Help came quickly, and her life was saved, but I was reminded of how weak and faithless I was.

There was no solution other than to come to God. I saw that my daughter opposed me, and I saw her choose the way to destruction; it was unbearable! But I also saw myself in my daughter. I had refused God's love up until then. I had disobeyed Him. I had gone against His will, and I saw all of that in my daughter. I learned the depth of my sin; so I repented and decided to become a believer.

The very next Sunday Pastor Takemoto gave an invitation, the only one he had given up to that point. He asked for those who were seekers who wanted to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior to raise their hands. Without hesitation I raised my hand! In that instant, a deep peace came into my heart. The burdens of my heart were lifted. I felt forgiven, and I could not stop the tears from coming!

"The instant I raised my hand to receive Christ, a deep peace came into my heart. My burdens were lifted; I felt forgiven. I could not stop the tears from coming."

—Mr. Ito

Since that time Satan has tempted me to return to my life of darkness. But I now know that I have been recreated by God to do His work, and I am not ruled by Satan as I once was. I was surprised to know that, but I was also very thankful to God for His salvation.

One Sunday, Pastor Takemoto asked me if it wasn't about time to prepare for baptism. That morning I had read about the Lord shutting Noah into the ark. I realized that the Lord was about to shut my past away through baptism. I am grateful that I have now been baptized. I commit my all into His hand! Amen! □



"To become a Christian in Japan, one must overcome many obstacles and have a great amount of courage. I have been recreated by God to do His work."
—Mr. Ryoji Ito, Japan

Commissioned to Serve in Japan

by Douglas Woyke

Supporting the church growth and church planting ministries, Ron and Joan Stoller work in student evangelism and administer the Tsu Christian Education Center, William and Luci Lengefeld teach at the Tsu English Center, and the short-term missionaries (STM) teach English and the Bible in churches, companies, schools, and private homes. Two STMs, at present, assist us by teaching at schools for missionary children.

The challenge to witness is being met. We are trusting the Holy Spirit to bless each ministry. We find it exciting to be here.



The challenge to witness is being met—one way is through home Bible studies.

Witnessing to University Students in Japan

by Ron Stoller

For the last four years, we have coached the Bible Club on the Mie University campus during the lunch hour and after school at the

University as well as at the Christian Education Center where we live and work with the students. Many students come and go. Some

have grown in many ways as they have been introduced to Christianity through beginner Bible studies or have related to mature Christians who want to learn more in discipleship to win their friends to the Lord.

What has happened to the University students who have graduated from Mie University and the Bible Club on campus?

In June 1986, several graduates returned to the Tsu Christian Education Center for a reunion. What a joy it was to have the past five Bible Club presidents and the current president present! They are active in their respective churches and are committed to give of their spiritual knowledge to those around them.

Mr. Tanaka, for example, is a deacon in our own Tsu Church. (Several years ago, as a University student, he and several other men from our Tsu Church visited some of the Northern California churches for a week.) He, his wife, and two daughters are very active in the church where he is also the Sunday School Superintendent.



Mr. and Mrs. Tanaka and daughter Kaori are active in the Tsu Church. Mr. Tanaka was a former Bible Club president.

Another former Bible Club president, Mr. Izumi Akasaka, graduated from a seminary in Japan in March 1986. Presently, he is studying at our North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He plans to return to Japan to work in our Japan Baptist Conference churches.

These and others are direct answers to the prayers of you who have supported our work in University Evangelism these past few years in Japan. We take the challenge to go to teach and to baptize as in Matthew 28:19-20. With some, the work of witnessing is hard, but in and through our daily lives, we can carry that com-

mission to witness with strong confidence knowing that we don't have to do it alone. Whatever we do and say is observed by many in Japan.

As we work on the campus or open our home up for late night coffee times around our coffee table, sitting Japanese style, we are happy to share our life with University students. We never know how God will use these people in the life of the church in the future, but we need to be consistent in our commission to witness. □

Mr. Ron Stoller and his wife Joan are engaged in student evangelism at the Tsu Christian Education Center, Japan, since 1977. Presently, they are on furlough in Portland, Oregon.

A Mission Field in Tsu Christian Center

by Joan Stoller

The Christian Education Center in Tsu, Japan, has gone from a small, one room building, through a dream stage of "something better," to the reality of the present beautiful, three-story building next door to the noted Mie University. The building has become the precious shell in which a multitude of Christ-centered ministries are reaching the community.

Our ministry, student evangelism, can be effective especially because of the location. The third floor of the Christian Education Center houses ten university students, only one of whom is a Christian. We have a mission field right in our building 24 hours a day. We find the students are easiest to talk with between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. They are hungry for meaning in life, and we are happy to fit their schedule.

Having coffee and treats on hand at all times is attractive to students. God has given me joy in being in the kitchen cooking so we can make this available. Students, Christian and non-Christian, come at any time of the day or night to talk about problems, ask questions, study biblical principles or pray. The prayer time with students who are concerned for their fellow students is exciting and frequent. Praise God with us that students who are won to Christ want to then go out to win more.

We live at the Christian Education Center four years out of five (except for furlough like now). Home for our family is on the second floor of this Center. Our three young boys, Jonathan, Stephen, and Aaron, have many memories here due to the fact that we moved to

the Center over five years ago. The yard has their playhouse made from a wooden shipping crate. Their education has taken place here in the form of correspondence courses and attendance at the Tsu Christian School for missionary children.

Being a missionary kid myself, I know the experience of being raised in an environment where Christ was shared with those who had never heard will prove to be a privilege, inspiration, and blessing to them now as well as in the future. They have learned to share our burden for the lost. We are on furlough now, and one son recently made this comment: "Why does Daddy have to speak at American churches? People in American churches know about Jesus, but people in Japan don't." Yes, that's why we have gone to Japan. □

Joan Stoller and her husband Ron serve as North American Baptist Conference missionaries in student evangelism in Tsu, Japan.



Ron, Joan, Jonathan, Stephen and Aaron Stoller (Japan)

Outreach through the Tsu English Center

by William and Luci Lengefeld

In a country where English is taught to all students from junior high through high school for at least six years, there is a surprising lack of fluency in using spoken English. One of the main reasons for this is that the English taught in schools is "examination English," the English needed for entrance examinations for universities and colleges.

For the past three and one-half years, we have been involved in teaching English conversation classes at the Tsu English Center. We try to give the students a variety of opportunities to put their knowledge of English to use in practical, everyday conversation.

The English Center is located in Tsu City, the capital of Mie Prefecture. With a population of around 150,000, it is considered a "country" town. English conversation schools are somewhat less common here than in urban areas; this makes it a good location for our Center. The Center is located next door to the Prefectural University and the adjoining medical complex, so we have many students in our classes who are professors, doctors, assistants, and/or their wives and children, as well as university students, themselves.

The English Center opened in April 1983 with a three fold purpose: 1) to provide Japanese people with the opportunity to acquire English

language skills; 2) to build on student relationships with a specific goal of using every available opportunity to share our faith with the students and to present a steady witness for Jesus Christ, and 3) to provide income for the Pioneer Evangelism Fund of the Japan Baptist Conference. These funds will be used for church planting efforts throughout Japan.

Sometimes teaching seems like a round-the-clock job. Luci teaches classes for women in the mornings and early afternoons. Children's classes occupy time slots in the early evening and on Saturday afternoons, with Bill teaching general classes for adults in the evenings, the latest class ending at 9:30.

Each class has a commercially-prepared textbook which forms the core of the curriculum. To keep things interesting, we utilize additional materials and methods in our teaching, such as singing, role playing, games, and video tapes.

We have 190-some students ranging in age from six years to seventy years, with classes for elementary school children, junior high, and senior high. Six classes for women are offered in varying stages of difficulty, from introductory English to advanced. General classes taught in the evenings cater to the needs of many professional people, with seven classes being offered at various levels. For those who wish to study alone, private lessons are arranged. Our students come from all walks of life, with housewives, doctors, restaurant owners, florists, bankers, university professors,

office workers, and a host of other occupations represented.

There is definitely evidence of God's working in the lives of some of our students. One, a florist, recently attended a special women's meeting at church. As a youth, she attended a Catholic high school and had much Catholic training during her university days. Many missionaries have been her friends. She confided to Luci, "Now the final step of trusting in Christ may not be far off."



"Our students come from all walks of life; there is definitely evidence of God's working in the lives of some." Bill Lengefeld

One man has studied the Bible privately with Bill for three years but still hasn't allowed his knowledge to go from his head into his heart. Another dear lady claims to be "half Christian"; her parents are Christians, but her husband's family is Buddhist. She has come to church at least a dozen times in the past year. She has misgivings about it since she feels that her relationship with God is strictly a matter between God and herself. But she comes if we invite her, so now we invite her every week!

There are so many other people like these three. Please continue to pray for the outreach of the Tsu English Center. It is our prayer that with the message of Jesus Christ, and with your help, the Land of the Rising Sun will become, in God's time, the Land of the Risen Son! □

Bright Marks in a Dark Land

by Kathy Kwast

Having grown up on the mission field myself, and having been taught by my mother

when we were stationed in Cameroon, West Africa, I felt well equipped to launch out to Japan to teach missionary children there. But each field and each situation is different, and though I teach, I'm the one who is learning.

Missionary children are unique bicultural children who many times end up feeling out of place in either culture. The struggles they face are also unique when compared to mono-cultural children. Having come through these myself, it is a privilege to stand on the other end, helping to educate these children.

M.K.s in Japan have materially just about as much as North American children. But material goods usually have nothing to do with social and cultural values, language, and ways of relating to groups and individuals. These are the differences that *make* the difference when the children must adjust back into their home society and build healthy self-identities. A bicultural experience can bring richness into an individual's character and world view, if the struggles do not produce bitterness. By God's leading, many of these children will, in turn, become missionaries.

With parents and teachers who are aware and caring, M.K. education can be not only an academic program but also an opportunity to prepare children for their home country. This is the challenge I have here. Being an M.K. teacher is a way of serving the career missionaries by setting their minds at ease about the education of their children, by allowing them to be close to their children, and by freeing them to give the necessary time to their outreach and work.

Social and cultural values, language, and ways of relating to groups and individuals are the differences that make the difference when the children must adjust back into their home society and build healthy self-identities. —Kathy Kwast

As an M.K. teacher, my opportunities go beyond the classroom. It's exciting to be able to build relationships with the Japanese and share God's light with them.

At the end of each week, the chalkboard in our classroom is washed. It looks so clean and green afterward. But as soon as a single mark is made, the focus is taken away from the board and is given to what is written there. The brightness of the chalk stands out against the dark background. Japan is a land of spiritual darkness, and the gods they worship are dark gods. No matter the position, whether church

planter or M.K. teacher, God has placed missionaries, His children, in Japan, as bright marks writing His Word across a dark land. □

Miss Kathy Kwast began her associate short-term missionary ministry in August 1986. She teaches missionary children at the Tsu Christian School in the Tsu Christian Center in Tsu, Japan.

Outreach through the Christian Education Center

by Lucille Wipf

"You really believe that Jesus was an actual person?" That's the question one non-Christian Japanese woman posed to a Christian woman at the beginning of the weekly English Bible Study. I had brought my copy of *Lion's Bible Handbook*, which contained a list of the miracles and parables of Jesus. The Christian commented that she has this book, and that it contains an article defending the miracles of Jesus. It was then that the non-Christian made the above statement. The Christian proceeded to give an example from her sons' experience of how God had answered prayer and that she *really* believes that Jesus Christ is an actual person who did perform miracles.

Last spring, the Christian woman came to missionary Ron Stoller asking for this English Bible study class for her two non-Christian friends and herself. The three were auditing an English class at nearby Mie University. One of the visiting U.S. professors made comments regarding the Bible, which she felt were not correct, so she wanted her friends to study the Bible from a missionary's or Christian's perspective. Ron accepted the challenge and began the class.

Through two other English Bible classes, we share the message of Jesus Christ. These students have also attended services at our Tsu church. A one-to-one Bible study is also being held with a University student.

Besides teaching two English conversation classes on Saturday afternoon for University students, I teach two English conversation classes on Friday afternoon at the university. During October and November, I worked twice a week with the English Speaking Society Drama club of the University helping them prepare for a drama competition with fourteen other universities. The director of the drama is



one of the ten University fellows who live in the Christian Center dormitory.

"Don't you do anything in Japanese?" you may be asking. Yes, every Wednesday afternoon the University Bible Club meets at the Center. At present, this group is studying the book of Acts with the Christian students taking turns leading the lesson. It is a joy to hear these young people discuss and make applications to their own lives. During their lunch breaks on Monday and Friday, they meet for a short period of Bible reading in one of the classrooms of the University. Each Friday as I attend this meeting I pray, "Lord, help these students to reach out to their classmates."

A Bible study began as a result of a woman wanting her friends to study the Bible from a missionary's perspective in order to counteract a visiting U.S. professor's views of the Bible in a class at a nearby university.

During the annual school festival, the Bible Club sponsored two Christian films as an outreach on campus. At Christmas, they sponsored a "Christmas Tea Party," which included games, snacks, carols, and a Christmas message. Invitations to these various events were distributed to university individuals on campus and at the Center.

"Missionary children are unique bicultural children who many times end up feeling out of place in either culture. It's a privilege to help educate these children."

—Kathy Kwast

The other side of the coin as far as this work is concerned is the administrative aspect: Overseeing the boys' dorm on the third floor, answering the telephone, handling the Center's part of the financial books, just to name a few.

God is always proving to be faithful as I serve Him here. It is because of His faithfulness that I can continue in this work. Pray that as the seed is sown and watered it will bear fruit in His time. □

Miss Lucille Wipf has served as a North American Baptist Conference missionary to Japan since 1960. In addition to teaching English Bible Classes, she is acting as administrator of the Tsu Christian Center while the Ron Stollers are on furlough.



"Through English Bible studies, we share the message of Jesus Christ."
—Lucille Wipf

Witness Through Baptism

by William D. Lengefeld

It was a recent Sunday morning, a special day, with a baptismal service to be conducted as part of the morning worship service. We had made an extra effort to invite a woman whose friend, Mrs. Enomoto, was one of the three who were to be baptized.

This woman is a very special friend of ours. She had lived in Detroit with her family for a period of time, and after returning, she became a member of one of the ladies' English classes at the Tsu English Center, where both of us teach conversational English. She was also a member of a weekly English Bible Class—an all-around Very Nice Person! But she had never actually come to the church for a morning worship service, so this seemed like the ideal opportunity to ask her to come. She promised to be there!

Pastor Murakami began the service, and our

friend was not there! The first hymn was sung; the pastor explained the meaning of baptism; she still was not there! He finished his explanation and called for the first candidate, Mrs. Enomoto, to come forward.

We prayed hard, "Dear God, please get her here so she can see her friend be baptized!" Just as Mrs. Enomoto was stepping into the baptismal waters, we heard hurried footsteps. Luci met our friend in the foyer and drew her to a seat near the front just in time to hear Mrs. Enomoto declare her faith in Christ. Moments later, she was baptized. How we praise God for His timing and for His answers to prayer in small matters and in large.

Since that time, our friend has taken a renewed interest in spiritual matters. In a recent Bible Class, she said that she wants to know more about the will of God as it pertains to her life. Please pray with us for her, and for many of our other students who have indicated a definite interest in knowing more about God. □

Mr. William Lengefeld and his wife Luci became North American Baptist Conference career missionaries in Japan in 1978. They serve at the Tsu English Center teaching conversational English.



Luci Lengefeld teaches ladies English conversational classes.



Bill Lengefeld (left), also teaches English one-on-one.

The Benefits Are Mine

by Ava Bandi

I was the epitome of "the reluctant missionary," and it took a few years for God to convince me to become a missionary. Now, I feel twinges of guilt for enjoying what I am doing, after all it took God to get me to do it! It is no more and no less than what I am also called to do and to be at home in Canada, but in Japan, I am free to devote all my energies and time to doing it.

What am I doing? Very simply, I see people as they are, spend time with them, allow them to be who and what they are, and show love to them. Love is man's greatest need. Judgment is the greatest distancer. From the giving of the gift of love comes the opportunity to share with people the possibility, should they choose to accept it, of acquiring the greatest gift, the greatest Friend, that they could ever covet.

I'm not a super-spiritual person; I'm as ordinary as anyone who ever washed dishes; yet the more I see of God within the confines of my own experience and my own relationship with Him, the more I am convinced of the greatness of the gift of His love for me, and that an introduction to a similar relationship with Him is the most valuable thing I could ever offer anyone else. Yet no one will ever accept this gift unless I first give of myself and, in so doing, portray to them the reality of the peace and in-

fusion of contentment and strength that result from my own relationship with my God.

The truly amazing result is that as I concentrate on living out this non-judgmental accepting and caring, it is really I who reap the benefits, though other people are able (I hope!) to see the difference between my life and their own, and that God makes that difference. Having to be a very public example naturally has me looking more at my own example and what and who He is, so I can better follow and por-



Ava Bandi enjoys her ministry in Japan as a conversational English teacher.

tray Him. My own view and knowledge of God and who I am in relation to Him has increased dramatically as a result! So it is for each of us who seek Him and obey Him. I simply am fortunate that I have been placed in a position where "it's all part of the job"! □

Ava Bandi is from Vancouver, British Columbia, and began her short-term missionary ministry teaching conversational English in Japan in August 1986.

Are You the One?

by Lea Kraemer

Standing room only! Jam-packed! Shoulder to shoulder! Run! Push! Shove! Hurry, hurry! These are words that describe a crowded train or bus and often the journey to them on

JAPAN

Japan is 372,000 sq. km. or about the size of Montana. The population of 120 million is 5 times the population of Canada. The official language is Japanese. Ninety five percent of the population is Buddhist or Shintoist. Average life expectancy is 74 years. Adult literacy is 100 percent.

The North American Baptist Conference in partnership with the
JAPAN BAPTIST CONFERENCE

15-20 North American Baptist Conference missionaries
 6 Churches with 300 members and 1 evangelism station
 1 Christian Education Center at Tsu



Kathy Kwast, Tsu



Ava Bandi, Tsu



Cathy Jennings, Nara



Lea Kramer, Kyoto

Short-term missionaries



Christopher and Wendy Vogt, Matsusaka

Career missionaries



Florence Miller, Osaka



Lucille Wipf, Tsu



William and Lucille Lengefeld, Andrew (8) and Rebekah (5), Tsu



Nobuko and Reimer Clausen, Kyoto



Ron and Joan Stoller, Stephen (7), Jonathan (9), and Aaron (6), Tsu



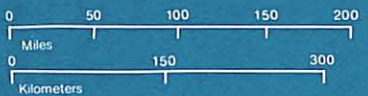
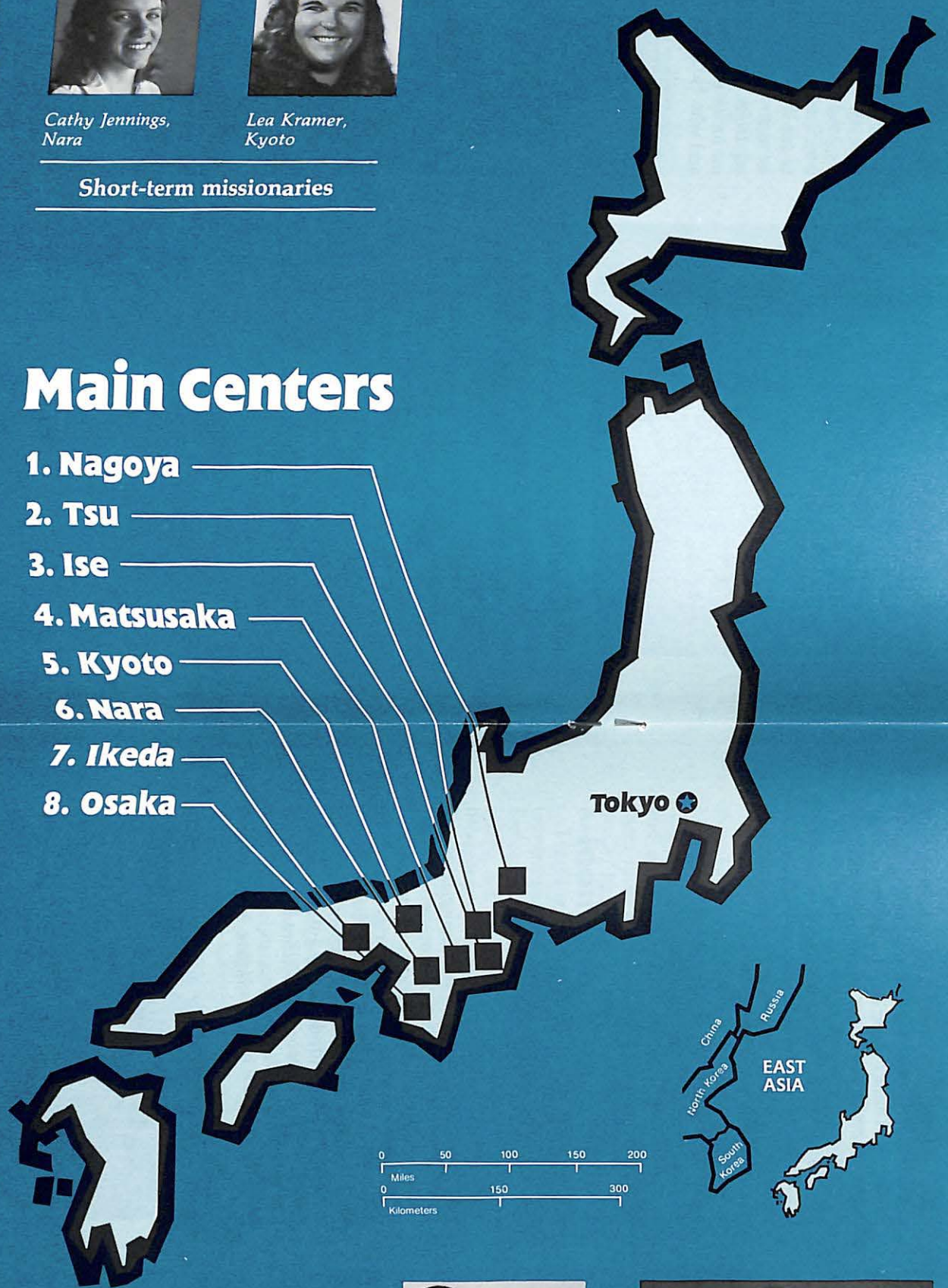
Alan and Judy Steier, Jennifer (3, not pictured), Nagoya



Douglas and Sharon Woyke, Joyce (16) and Todd (14), Nara

Main Centers

1. Nagoya
2. Tsu
3. Ise
4. Matsusaka
5. Kyoto
6. Nara
7. Ikeda
8. Osaka



this island of over 100 million people. I pray that someday these very words will describe their journey to and the scene at the foot of the cross.

As I ride the trains or buses in Japan, I often wonder how many people I see know the Lord. I become overwhelmed when I realize that it's a



Some English class students joined Lea Kraemer at her home for a Thanksgiving luncheon.

very small percentage. What does that mean for the remaining percent? I pray that God would bring people into their lives to show them who Jesus is.

Then another thought arises in my mind—a thought that brings feelings of responsibility and commitment: Maybe I am that one for some of them. I must be sensitive and open to God's leading, ready for every opportunity to give a reason for the hope within me (1 Peter 3:15); whether it is during an English teaching hour, afterwards during a Bible lesson or refreshment time, cooking/baking with women willing to get together, or having others to my apartment for dinner, luncheons, brunches, or tea.

Yes, the thought that "I may be the one" can be overwhelming if I do not ask for God's direction, guidance, and opportunity, but the Lord reminds me that what He has commanded me to do is *not* burdensome (1 John 5:3). I am not alone in the ministry of a people who do not know Him. There are a host of others, seen and unseen, heard and unheard, who are vital. There is the presence of Christ, the working of the Holy Spirit, God's angelic realm, national Christians, and other missionaries in the land of Japan as well as the many at home who are as vital as those on the field.

Without the prayers, financial support, and commitment of others, the work in Japan

would not progress. Working as one body, committed together, we can fulfill God's plan for Japan. Thanksgiving to God for those who actively participate in the ministry in Japan. □

Miss Lea Kraemer is a member of Temple Baptist Church, Lodi, California, and began her short-term missionary service in Japan in August 1986.

Teaching at Kansai Christian School

by Cathy Jennings

Because I spend most of my time with English-speaking people, many times I forget that I'm living in a foreign country, Japan. A few reminders come when I am not able to speak to the cashier at the grocery store and when I must drive on the left-hand side of the road.

You probably wonder what I do, as a missionary, if I don't come into contact with the Japanese people. My definition of a missionary has changed since being in Japan. Missionaries



"Knowing I'm where God wants me gives me strength."

—Cathy Jennings.

leave their native country and go to a foreign country to do what God has planned for them.

God led me to Japan to teach at Kansai Christian School (KCS), located in Ikoma, Japan. KCS is like any American school; the same subjects are taught, only to fewer students. One exception is that you must wear slippers or inside shoes while in the school building.

KCS has thirty-two students in grades one through twelve. I teach in the junior/senior high school where there are sixteen students. Many of the students have grown up in Japan and speak Japanese fluently. The majority of them have gone to school together since first grade, like kids in small towns across North America.

Teaching a number of subjects—American Government (11-12th), World History (9-10th), Biology (9-10th), Chemistry (11th), Physics (12th), and Bible (10-12th) keeps me very busy.

I enjoy teaching the students at KCS. They are the same as in any other school. Some days you love them, and other days it's difficult. The same goes for teaching; some days are good; and others are bad. It's on those bad days that I am reminded that this is where the Lord wants me. Knowing that I am in God's will gives me strength. Psalm 121 says, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." □

Miss Cathy Jennings of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, was involved at Trinity Baptist Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and became a short-term missionary to Japan in September 1986.

A Mirror Reflecting the Love of God

by Christopher E. and Wendy Vogt

Before coming to Japan, we heard many stories of the difficulties we should expect in developing relationships with and finding opportunities to share our faith in Christ with the people here.

Since coming to Japan, Wendy and I have been striving to be "real" people, sincere, friendly, and above all, a mirror reflecting the Love of God in us. I believe that God has created people to respond when they are shown His love. I believe this is true no matter what culture we are in.

We have been in Matsusaka, Japan, for several months. As two of only six non-Japanese in

a city of more than 120,000, we find people stopping to talk to us in their broken English. We try to converse with our inadequate Japanese. Even with the language barrier, we communicate with smiles and the help of our bilingual dictionaries.



On the train, we met a high school social studies teacher; he is now enrolled in two of our English Bible classes and has begun to attend church with us. When we went to visit the National Museum near Osaka, a two-hour Express train ride from here, a volunteer English-speaking tour guide, a housewife, showed us the museum and the nearby Buddhist Temples and Shinto shrines. As we walked and talked, she said she has no religion now, but she is searching for something to believe and is very interested in Christianity. We shared Christ with her and put her in contact with our missionaries living near her. These are only two of several people who already are interested in knowing more about Christ.

You can have a *vital* role in our ministry by praying for the people with whom we have contact, for us as we share the love of Christ with them, and encouraging us with your letters. "Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador. . . . Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should" (Ephesians 6:19-20 NIV). □

Christopher E. and Wendy Vogt of Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, California, began their short-term missionary service in Japan in September 1986.

"You can have a vital role in our ministry by praying for the people with whom we have contact, for us as we share the love of Christ with them and encouraging us with your letters."

—Christopher and Wendy Vogt

Commissioned to Witness in the Philippines

by Leland Bertsch

We're serving in the youngest of the North American Baptist Conference mission fields. So that you might become better acquainted, there are some people and places that we would like you to meet.



"Three persons were baptized in November, and the whole group has been active in inviting unsaved friends."
—Leland Bertsch

Introducing . . . The Baptist Conference of the Philippines: Our national partner organization, numbering close to 8,000 believers spread out across the Philippines in more than 100 churches. By God's grace, they plan to double the number of churches by 1990! All churches begun by N.A.B. Conference ministry will become part of the Baptist Conference of the Philippines (BCP). It is exciting to be part of such a growth-minded fellowship.

Introducing . . . The Baptist General Conference Missionaries: Servants God has used

over the past 30 years to begin and assist the work of the BCP. Also our partners, their genuine welcome and ready assistance upon our arrival signal a good working relationship to come.

Introducing . . . The Bicol Region: Beautiful, hospitable, diverse, deeply religious, insurgent trouble spot, previously resistant to evangelism—all fitting descriptions of this area. Of the four million people, less than one-half of one percent are evangelical believers. The challenge is magnified when you realize that 5,540 people are added to the population every month! We are but two of many missionaries from across the evangelical spectrum who have entered this region in the past few years. We are all hopeful that this is a sign that the time for major harvest has come.

Introducing . . . Our fellow believers in Legazpi City: One young couple and a number of college students from our present core group of believers. Three were baptized in November, and the whole group has been active in inviting unsaved friends. Our strategy is to establish outreach Bible studies among contacts, with the goal of organizing a church within a year. Until our national coworker arrives and until we complete language training, progress toward that goal will be limited.

Introducing . . . Some of the best supporters one could ask for—you! Your praying, writing, giving, and sending have really helped to make this a good beginning. □

From the Diary of a Language Learner

by Leland and Jennell Bertsch

The assignment sounded simple enough: "During the first year of your term, learning the local language must be your priority." We were in complete agreement with the philosophy behind this directive from our N.A.B. Conference Mission Office before departing for

the Philippines. But now that we are on that long and arduous road to language acquisition, our commitment to that task is often tested.

The first hurdle was simply deciding which language to learn. Most missionaries learn the national language, because Bicol, the regional

"Learning Bicol is a subject that is discussed often with the Lord in prayer, and we hope that you do also on our behalf." —Leland and

Jennell Bertsch

language, has so many variations as you go from town to town. Furthermore, Bicol is primarily a spoken language, and there are few published Christian materials. But we observed that in homes and coffee shops, local residents preferred Bicol. So in the end, we chose to learn the language of the heart and home. But as one missionary said, "Whichever you choose to learn, you will wish you had learned the other!" It is not a comforting thought after months of hard work.

For all of you who spent years studying a foreign language in a classroom and still cannot speak a word, you know there has to be a better way. We learn to speak the language by walking the streets and practicing a few new phrases every day. It is an effective method, but self-discipline is severely tested. Sometimes you have to drag yourself, kicking and complaining, out into the neighborhood to fumble your way through another practice session.

There are plenty of memorable experiences along the way. Total strangers welcome you into their homes and serve you snacks, totally pleased that you want to learn their language. Or you try out a few of the sentences you know, and the person runs to all the neighbors to declare, "Here is an American who speaks fluent Bicol." They are too kind! Or the time you are pulled aside and told with a grin that if you ever say that again, you may lose a friend or receive a black eye. Suddenly verb prefixes seem very important!

Some days, it seems like the most valuable thing you could be doing, while other days you feel like you are wasting precious time. Learning Bicol is a subject that is discussed often with

the Lord in prayer, and we hope that you do also on our behalf.

Why do we bother when many other missionaries press on with English only? One of those veteran missionaries recently told us with a look of deep sadness in his eyes, "Not learning



the language of the people I came to serve is the biggest mistake I ever made." And so, day after day, we work at it, longing for the day when we can share the treasure of Jesus in terms the Bicolanos can fully understand. □

Leland and Jennell Bertsch serve in Legazpi City as our first North American Baptist Conference missionaries in the Philippines. Prior to beginning their ministry there in 1986, they served Temple Baptist Church, Swan River, Manitoba.

"We began the language by practicing a few new phrases with the people every day." —Leland Bertsch

PHILIPPINES

The North American Baptist Conference in partnership with the
BAPTIST CONFERENCE
of the PHILIPPINES

2-4 North American Baptist Conference missionaries
126 Churches with 7,400 members

Philippines is 300,000 sq. km. consisting of some 7,100 islands and islets. Eleven of the islands compose 95% of the total land area. Luzon, the largest island, is about the size of Kentucky. The population of 52 million is composed of two main ethnic groups, Malay and Chinese. English is the official language. Eighty three percent of the population is Catholic, nine percent Protestant, five percent Muslim and three percent other. Average life expectancy is 64 years. Adult literacy is 88 percent.



Leland and Jennell Bertsch, Legazpi City



Main Center
Legazpi



WOMEN of HOPE
reaching our world

Women in Ministry:
Isabelle Long
by Fran Hoogestraat, public relations director, N.A.B. Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD



Do we sense an accountability to God for the life entrusted to us? Are we anxious to develop that life to the potential God intended? Do we see God as an Enabler, nurturing His children? Are all called to serve?

Isabelle Long, who serves as registrar at the North American Baptist Seminary, thinks so. She believes in individuals. Isabelle believes in the great blessing of serving in the kingdom of God. Her ministry stretches beyond the office where she plans, orchestrates schedules, and listens to the dreams and visions of students. Isabelle strongly feels that "God takes what we have, *not what we think we need.*" She hears God's call for her life. Because she hears and continues to walk by her vision, she shares the burdens and joys of the countless individuals bustling through the Seminary experience who hear God's call.

Reminiscing, Isabelle says, "What would you do with a student who bursts into your office on Monday morning, radiant, yet aching deeply about the feelings, the calling, the pulling she feels toward the ministry? If you could have seen her face and listened to her, you, too, would have been supportive. It was frustrating to not be able to promise her a place in ministry. I realized then, that a woman's call to ministry is just as genuine as a man's call to ministry."

Isabelle relates to those feeling a responsibility to fulfill a calling from God. She talks of the women students enrolling for one course at the seminary for their personal enrichment. Many come on the coattails of years and years of volunteer experiences. "They've liked what they've felt here . . . the Lord has kept on talking to them. It is a gradual unfolding of themselves and their gifts. They discover very satisfying service to God."

Isabelle recalls a school teacher who attended the seminary at the recommendation of a seminary student who was a summer staff worker at their church. She saw her love of children and ministry finding an acceptable place in Christian education. As she studied at the seminary, her vision blossomed. As the Lord began to unfold His plan for her, her sensitivity and caring grew, too. She followed the master of divinity program with an emphasis on counseling. Her gifts took her into the ministry suiting her skills perfectly—chaplaincy! Today, she is a professional growing in her creative, compassionate ministry at a medical health care facility.

The call women at the seminary feel is clarified when they allow their natural interest in theology, pastoral care, Christian education, counseling, and related areas to grow. Freedom to follow these interests fosters vision, direction, and purpose. Individuals suddenly see the path ahead naturally, beautifully custom fit for a fulfilling life. Often a women's call to ministry comes quietly during the seminary experience. Opening her options, she allows the Spirit to naturally lead her into the best place for the best growth. For many, a call to ministry comes as a

surprise! It has not been a part of their agenda. It simply is where God has led them.

Isabelle began following her natural interest years ago, attending seminary with a heart determined to do God's will. "When I said, 'Here am I, Lord,' I didn't even really know what that meant."

With her bachelor of religious education degree, she came to Sioux Falls College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for another bachelors program. Her skills and interest in office work opened an opportunity for her in the registrar's office at the College and later in the president's office. "Why was I given that opportunity? It was all preparation for the future, but how can you explain that? I really believe in the providence of God . . . you can't explain it unless you give yourself to God. Unless and until you do, your life won't be as full or as rich as it could be."

Career testing affirmed Isabelle's strengths, fitting her exactly into her registrar ministry. "I knew God was saying to me, 'Isabelle, you *are* doing what you should be doing.' I really needed that from the Lord at that time."

Isabelle explains fulfillment as the difference between work and ministry. "Is it a job, or is it a source of growth, creativity, and fulfillment? A part of the fulfillment is discovering and feeling your mission. It is not a job defined by responsibilities that fit neatly into schedules, but it becomes a part of your lifestyle. It complements your home life. When you feel you are where God is using you, it enriches your family. I have felt this so much! Being involved in education helped me understand my three sons. I could

always relate easily. My educational work gave us great common ground."

There is genuine openness and acceptance to hiring women to serve on the seminary staff, and women are encouraged to enroll as students. "I don't feel women have been put down . . . not ever! The women students have developed a heart, a vision, and an excitement in ministry. They are anxious to serve although none come with an exact battle plan of how it all will be and exactly what they will be doing." This generates a lot of excitement as individual agendas are directed by God. New vistas, new openings, new kinds of ministry open for women all of the time. Women often come to Seminary with their husbands, with children, willing to serve as mother, wife, and perhaps work a part-time job. They see their opportunity to develop and learn. Course work and classroom experiences make them better individuals, mothers, wives, professionals, all by the grace of God. They come to Isabelle Long seeking direction, suggestions and possibilities for ministry. They are affirmed for being themselves. She encourages them ". . . to strip their lives of the things that are superficial and don't matter. I want them to concentrate on finding the meat of what they are capable of doing. That alone will take them deeper into their possibilities if they allow it."

Reaching In, Reaching Out

by LaVerna Mehlhaff, women's work director

As women, we have had many privileges and opportunities this year. We attended seminars, Bible studies, retreats, special workshops for women, women's meetings, coffees, picnics, over-nights, and special times of Christian fellowship. We have had opportunities to grow spiritually through our experiences.

Like Job, some of the experiences took us through deep valleys, but our God was always with us and the result was a closer walk with our heavenly Father, and a better understanding of our fellow man.



One of our women, Mrs. Jane Thielenhaus of the Parma Heights Baptist Church in Ohio, shared their Christmas outreach program. It was presented two different times in order to reach as many women as possible. The program consisted of a special feature by their local electric illuminating company on "Craft and Cooking for the Holidays." A part of the program was testimony given by one of the ladies of the church, Linda Harrha. There were 107 women who attended the daytime program with even more coming to the evening program. Child care was provided during the daytime program. It was a joy to hear that, as a result of the program, 15 more women stated that they wanted to know more about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. There is a regular follow up program to reach them.

This is a fulfillment of one of our W.M.F. goals—providing opportunities for outreach at home. We praise the Lord for the vitality of our women and their concern to share the good news of salvation.

President's Corner

by Sara Pasiciel, WMF president, Steinbach, MB



We've changed the format of the president's column and now call it "The President's Corner." This time I share with you some ideas and information, possibly some inspiration, from my journal.

SUNDAY . . . Our pastor spoke about leadership today, and about the importance of handing on the baton, passing on the tasks and the responsibilities of a particular job graciously and with our blessings. Sometimes it's hard to leave a place we've been before or to give up an office that we've held, or

even to let go of a ministry which was once effective and meaningful but now seems to be taking time and energy that could be better spent. How important it is to continually evaluate what we are doing, what the needs of our community really are, and how wisely we are using our gifts and resources.

WEDNESDAY . . . A group of women from several different churches have started a Bible study at lunchtime on Wednesdays. They hope to give working women a chance to be involved in spiritual enrichment and encouragement and give them a chance to bring women they work with to hear the gospel. It seems an unusual setting for a Bible study—the top floor of a huge office building—but it's worth it when you hear women say, "We've been praying for something like this for years!"

Coming Soon . . .

From October 1-4, 1987, the North American Baptist Women's Union (NABWU) will meet in Niagara Falls, New York. Rebecca Pippert of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, speaker on "life-style evangelism" across the country and author of *Out of the Salt Shaker* (IVP, 1979), will be the main speaker. Rosalyn Carter is one of the invited guest speakers. Mary Fall of Bethel College will be song leader and director of a volunteer choir.

Compelled to Serve

Eastern Association Focuses on Holiness

ROCHESTER, NY. "Holiness—A Matter of Urgency," based on Leviticus 11:44, was the theme for the 15th Annual Eastern Association Conference hosted by Latta Road and Winton Road Baptist Churches, Sept. 26-28, 1986. Dr. John Binder, executive director, and Rev. Herman Effa, associate missions director, spoke to 231 persons registered for these sessions.

In his keynote address, Dr. Binder, speaking on "Awestruck by the Holiness of God," stated that God has called all of us to be holy. Holiness is an exceedingly high standard that we cannot set aside.

Answers to prayer and results of giving for our mission work were reported by Rev. Effa, who also emphasized the four aspects of missions: the mandate, motivation, means, and merit.

In addition, 90 Association youth enjoyed a special program including films, a presentation by the Covenant Players, and stirring messages on the need for holiness.

Mrs. Ardath Effa was guest speaker for the women.

A special offering for Cameroon mission projects totalled \$3,500. —*Agnes Mashner and Hilda Metzger*

Startup Church Has Annual Planning Session

STARTUP, WA. Startup Baptist Church conducted its second annual planning session, Nov. 15, 1986. The approximately 30 attendees divided up into groups and discussed six different topics: spiritual growth, evangelism and visitation, lay training for leadership, visitor reception, outreach program, and music.

The list of discussion topics grew out of a larger list established in the previous year's seminar. "A plan of action was noted in several topic areas and responsibility for it established," reports Annette Schalo. The Rev. Erwin Gerlitz, Calvary Baptist Church, Tacoma, WA, gave the closing challenge to the group. The Rev. William Neuman is pastor of the Church.

Women Meet to Study Bible at La Salle

LA SALLE, CO. A women's Bible study was started at First Baptist Church in 1986 under the leadership of Roxanne Meier. The average attendance is eight women. —*Dorothy Oster*

Central-Pacific Association Focuses on Ministry in 99th Session

PORTLAND, OR. The 99th session of the Central-Pacific Association convened at Trinity Baptist Church, Nov. 7-9, 1986. They focused on the theme, "A People of Hope in a World of Despair."

Ron and Joan Stoller, missionaries to Japan and members of Bethany Baptist Church, Portland, spoke and presented slides of their mission work.

Dr. Connie Salios, guest speaker, spoke on "Commanded to Care," John 13:31-35. Special workshops were held by Rev. Fred Martin, "Families Today"; John Reed, "Christian Music Today"; Rev. LeRoy Schauer, "Cross-cultural Missions in Your Area"; and Rev. Phil Yntema, "How a Church Can Organize Itself for Mission and Outreach."

During the business sessions, Reverends Phil Yntema and Dan O'Clair, church extension pastors, gave encouraging reports. The Camp Commission reported the hiring of new camp directors, Ken and Kirby Stoller of Cascade Park Baptist Church. Constitutional revisions made in "Commissions" and "Officers and their Duties" will lend continuity and stronger leadership and commitment in Association ministries. The Rev. Wayne Williams, moderator, conducted all meetings.

Association youth gathered at Trinity Baptist Church on Saturday evening for a "lip-sync" contest and pizza party.

The 100th session of the Association will be held at Bethany Baptist Church, Portland, on Nov. 6-8, 1987. —*Kathy Fornshell*

Gleaners Mark 50 Years at Gackle

GACKLE, ND. The Gleaners Mission Society of Grace Baptist Church celebrated 50 years of mission work and service on Oct. 12, 1986. Guest speaker was Mrs. Clara (Ruff) Grenz, a former charter member and pastor's wife, who now lives in Denver, CO.

The afternoon program consisted of theme songs used throughout the last 50 years. Charter members, past presidents, and former pastors' wives spoke briefly.

The Gleaners began in 1937 when a group of young women of a Sunday School class organized to serve the church and others. An important goal has been the support of overseas missions. Mrs. Lillian (Remboldt) Mueller has been a continuous member for 50 years.

Pastor and Mrs. Milton Falkenberg serve this Church. —*Donna Remboldt*

Meth Retires from Home Chaplaincy

BISMARCK, ND. Rev. Orville Meth retired Oct. 11, 1986, after 14 years as chaplain of the Bismarck Baptist Home. He was honored for faithful service at an open house reception of residents and employees and at a recognition dinner with present and former board members. The Bismarck and Century Baptist Churches co-hosted an area wide recognition service on November 16. Gifts included a video cassette recorder and a love offering.

Orville and Irma Meth served pastorates in Odessa, WA; Stockton, CA; Venturia, ND; Turtle Lake, ND; and Elgin, IA. The Meth's three children are Mrs. Deborah Weimers, Modesto, CA; Daniel, U.S. Navy, ND; and Mrs. Dean Reddington, Minot, ND. Orville will continue at the Baptist Home in a part-time public relations and consultant role. —*Ralph E. Cooke*

Estate Gift Makes Additional Ministry Possible

MADISON, SD. Due to a substantial estate gift, the Church hired a seminary student to direct the choirs and

help in Christian education. The Church welcomed Mike and Robin Decker with a program, "This Is Your Life," and pantry shower. Also, the parking lot was paved, and pews upholstered.

"New Day" ministered at the Church for four days in October.

"The Rev. Oliver Bender, pastor, continues to give spiritual food to fill the needs of the Church and community," reports Berdean Rohrer. "We pray for continued guidance and blessings in 1987."

Raymore Church Observes 75 Years

RAYMORE, SK. Raymore Baptist Church celebrated its 75th anniversary, Nov. 23, 1986. Former members and friends joined the congregation in an afternoon anniversary service.

The Rev. Sig Schuster, area minister, emphasized the theme, "Pressing Forward unto Even Greater Things for God" in his morning and afternoon messages. The Rev. E.H. Nikkel, former pastor, brought greetings and admonishment to remain steadfast in the faith. Events included reading greetings from former pastors, special music, a photo display, reminiscing, and visiting.

The Rev. Alan Johnson is interim pastor of the Church. —Tegwen Orthner

Three Couples Make Commitments to Christian Service

PRINCE GEORGE, BC. Three couples committed their lives to full-time Christian service, and many committed themselves to a closer walk with God during the annual missions conference held in Prince George, BC, Nov. 19-23, 1986.

Prof. Willy Muller and his wife shared from their time of service in Cameroon. Speaking each evening, Prof. Muller gave a historic sketch of mission work in Cameroon and a final challenge to the congregation to be a living sacrifice to the Lord.

Missionaries Annemarie Hattenhauer, teacher at the Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary, and Ron Stoller, Japan, spoke about their experiences on the mission field.

The missions offering of \$6,000 was designated for needy students at the Cameroon Seminary. At the Ladies Mission Tea, over \$400 was collected and mailed for the W.M.F. Triennial Project.

Meetings were held alternately at Bethel, Ft. George, College Heights, and Hartland Baptist Churches. —Ingrid Pankonin

Committed to Give

Flower Mound Seeking Building Fund to Build

FLOWER MOUND, TX. The land fund drive for Flower Mound Baptist Church started out miraculously with over \$8,000 in pledges from its members and friends, reports Anita Hale. \$200,000 must be raised by December 1, 1987, to purchase land on which to build a church building.

Pastor Doug Harsch and various Church members will

visit other churches, presenting the opportunities available to help the people of Flower Mound Baptist Church reach their community in this way.

Offering Goes for Home Missions

LA SALLE, CO. The mission offering taken at First Baptist Church's annual Christmas Eve Sunday school program went for home missions. Twenty-five dollars was sent to each of the three home mission churches in the San Luis Valley to be used to buy treats for Christmas. —Dorothy Oster

Krier and Nfor Speak at George Church

GEORGE, IA. First Baptist Church celebrated its missions weekend recently. Missionary Sue Krier spoke at the Saturday evening banquet. Pastor John Nfor, head of the Cameroon Seminary, spoke Sunday. Two more N.A.B. Seminary students, Pastor Elias Bongmba, Cameroon, and Izumi Akasaka, Japan, held an interesting panel discussion in the evening. Offerings were given to our mission program. —Mrs. John Arends, Jr.

Central Church Gives \$61,000 for Thanksgiving Offering

EDMONTON, AB. "Thanksgiving Sunday, Oct. 12, 1986, was an exciting day at Central Baptist Church," states Kurt Remus.

The Church set a Thanksgiving Offering goal of \$50,000. "Although Alberta is going through difficult economic times, God's people sacrificed and gave \$61,000," reports Mr. Remus. "To God be the glory."

In the morning service, Winkie Pratnew, originally from New Zealand, concluded a week-long series of meetings dealing with problems youth face today.

The Church held a potluck meal in the afternoon followed by a two-hour service of praise and thanksgiving. The four pastors held a panel discussion on the topic of miracles, sharing exciting examples in their lives. They emphasized how we need to see supposedly ordinary events in fact as miracles.

Commissioned to Witness

Five Join La Salle Church

LA SALLE, CO. Five persons were baptized at First Baptist Church during 1986. They and three others were received into the membership of the Church.

Rev. Harold Tuttle resigned as pastor of the Church effective November 30, and the Rev. Allan Williams became pastor of the Church on December 7, 1986. —Dorothy Oster

Four Baptized at Flower Mound Church

FLOWER MOUND, TX. Pastor Doug Harsch baptized four persons at Flower Mound Baptist Church on Nov. 22, 1986, and dedicated one child.

Charter membership, which began in August 1986 with 26 members, closed Dec. 28, 1986, with 34 members. The Church had a record high attendance of 88 on Dec. 21,

1986, when the youth and children presented a Christmas program. —Anita Hale

Central, Kitchener, Welcomes 19 New Members

KITCHENER, ON. Nineteen people were received into membership of Central Baptist Church, Nov. 30, 1986. Pastors Klaus Hildebrandt and Fred Kahler baptized 14 people; five were received by letter of transfer.

"These people came to know the Lord through the many different ministries in our Church," reports Richard A. Koenig. "We praise and thank God for these new members and pray for their continued growth in Christ Jesus."

15 Join Temple Church in Leduc

LEDUC, AB. Pastor Frank Schmidt baptized six young people recently at Temple Baptist Church. They and nine others who represent three families joined the Church.

"We are thankful that all our projects for this year have been fulfilled," reports Vi Fleck. "The Thanksgiving Offering exceeded the Church goal. We thank God for faithful givers. Now we want to clear the debt on our church building and, God willing, do this in the coming year and start to build our education unit."

The Church recently completed the Dobson film series, "Turn Your Heart Toward Home." They were well attended.

The congregation looks forward to celebrating Temple Baptist's 60th anniversary in the summer.

15 Welcomed as New Members at Grant Park

WINNIPEG, MB. Grant Park Baptist Church held a day of celebration recently when 15 people joined the Church, six by baptism and nine by transfer. Pastor Ed Hughes gave each new member a verse to live by. After the worship service, the whole Church family met in the lower auditorium for a celebration feast. "We praise God for being so good to us," states Darlene Sonnenberg.

Three Baptized at Fessenden Church

FESSENDEN, ND. The Rev. Dan Berger baptized two young people and a young father at First Baptist Church, Nov. 23, 1986. "We praise God for how He has been working in our church," reports Regina Pepple.

Seven Join Morris Church

MORRIS, MB. Rev. Morley Schultz baptized two young ladies at Emmanuel Baptist Church on Nov. 16, 1986. They and five others were received into the Church's membership. —Agnes Walters

Seven Added to Meadowlark Church

EDMONTON, AB. Four people were baptized at Meadowlark Baptist Church on Dec. 7, 1986. Three others were received into Church membership at the same service. —Carol Fulmore

Six Baptized at Bethany, Vancouver

VANCOUVER, BC. Bethany Baptist Church rang in the New Year of 1987 with an early evening service which included the baptism of six people. "What a tremendous way

to start a new year—proclaiming one's deep, abiding love, faith, and trust in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, a faith and trust needed for each new year," reports Trina St. Elio.

The Church will celebrate its 50th anniversary, June 25-26, 1987. A historical and pictorial album is being assembled for the occasion.

Called to Worship

Beulah Church Has Bible Study Groups

BEULAH, ND. Beginning in January 1987, Immanuel Baptist Church divides into Bible study groups during the Sunday evening service. The groups meet in different areas of the Church.

The Rev. Ralph Cooke, area minister and guest speaker, spoke Dec. 14, 1986, on "Emmanuel" in a Christmas message.

The Rev. Gordon Voegelé is pastor of the Church. —Rose Voegelé

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in memoriam

FRIEDA DRIESNER (60), Fessenden, ND; born June 16, 1926, to Jacob and Pauline (Frueh) Faul in Velva, ND; died Nov. 22, 1986; married Irving Driesner, Nov. 1, 1968; member, Christian Education Board member, former W.M.F. president, First Baptist Church, Fessenden, ND; predeceased by her parents, two brothers, and one sister; survived by her husband Irving; one sister, Esther Goble; and three brothers: Jake, Nick, and Archie; Rev. Daniel Berger, pastor, funeral service.

GEORGE DURSCHER (84), Clermont, IA; born Nov. 12, 1902; died Dec. 8, 1986; married Clara Miller, May 12, 1932; city clerk assessor, and school board member; treasurer for 26 years, member First Baptist Church, Elgin, IA; predeceased by his daughter, Janice; survived by his wife Clara; and one daughter, Marlene; Rev. Norman Miller, pastor, memorial service.

JACOB J. FISCHER (89), Ashley, ND; born Nov. 11, 1897, to Jacob J. and Christine Fischer at Bergdorf, South Russia; died Dec. 6, 1986; immigrated to the U.S. as a young boy; married Margaret Nies, March 14, 1922; member, deacon, trustee, Sunday school teacher, financial secretary, Ashley (ND) Baptist Church; survived by his wife Margaret; five children: Norma (Mrs. Wilbert Steinwandt), Rapid City, SD; Alma (Mrs. Oscar J. Bertsch), Ashley, ND; Eloise (Mrs. Elroy Kelle, Minneapolis, MN; Orvil, Ashley, ND; and Wilbert, Fargo, ND; ten grandchildren; 8 great-grandchildren; and three brothers; Rev. Allan Gerber, pastor, funeral service.

ETHEL HYMERS GLEWWE (76), South St. Paul, MN; born June 7, 1910, to Frank and Lena Hymers in St. Paul, MN; died Nov. 24, 1986; married Reuben B. Glewwe, June 7, 1928, who predeceased her; member since 1926, Riverview Baptist Church, West St. Paul, MN; survived by two daughters: Elva (Mrs. Gerald Miller); and Lois; one son, Rollin (Joan); seven grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and one sister, Alyce Patet; Rev. Harold Lang, pastor, funeral service.

IDA HILDENBRAND, Lansing, MI; moved to Lansing from North Dakota in 1940; died Dec. 1, 1986; member since 1940, Colonial Village Baptist Church, Lansing, MI; predeceased by her husband; survived by two sons; one daughter; and several grandchildren; Rev. Elmo Tahan, pastor, memorial service.

EMMA A. KIEST (78), Goodrich, ND; born Nov. 18, 1907, to Christian and Elizabeth Schneider near Goodrich, ND; died July 5, 1986; married Walter Kiest, Sept. 22, 1929; member, W.M.F. member, Sunday school teacher for 30 years, First Baptist Church, Goodrich, ND; survived

by her husband Walter; one daughter, Elaine Jurkovich, Aurora, MN; four grandsons; three great-grandchildren; one brother, Herbert; and three sisters: Clara Kandt, Freda Laschkewitsch, and Hilda Geiser; Rev. Daniel Heringer, pastor, funeral service.

WALTER KRAUSE (77), Wetaskiwin, AB; born May 8, 1909, to Samuel and Bertha Krause; died Nov. 28, 1986; married Erna Hammer, Nov. 2, 1938; member, deacon, Sunday school teacher, Calvary Baptist Church, Wetaskiwin, AB; predeceased by three brothers: Elmer, Gus, and Edward; and one sister, Theresa Dickau; survived by his wife Erna; three sons: Larry, Calgary, AB; Eldon, Wetaskiwin, AB; and Dwayne, Edson, AB; two daughters: Joan (Beach), Kelowna, BC; and Sandra (Hildebrand), Camrose, AB; 11 grandchildren; and four sisters: Della Strohschein, Annie Sommers, Elsie Zilke, and Martha Hammer; Reverends Ed Fuelbrandt, Charles Littman, and Henry Schumacher, pastors, funeral service.

MARIE NEUHARTH (88), Turtle Lake, ND; born Feb. 8, 1898, to Frederick and Elizabeth (Heupel) Bender at Eureka, SD; died Nov. 25, 1986; married Albert J. Neuharth, in McClusky, Oct. 28, 1919; he predeceased her in 1974; W.M.F. member, McClusky (ND) Baptist Church; predeceased by her daughter Clara in 1962; survived by six sons: Edwin, Carrington, ND; Emil, Turtle Lake, ND; Robert and Herbert, McClusky, ND; Alvin, Bismarck, ND; and Elmer, Drake, ND; six daughters: Helen Wahl, Edna and Gladys Neuharth, all of McClusky; Mathilda Holcomb, Great Falls, MT; Marian Branson, Lamar, CO; and Evelyn Peter, Valley City, ND; 24 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild; Rev. Oscar Fritzke, pastor, funeral service.

HARM SHERMAN (80), Aplington, IA; born Jan. 25, 1906, to Henry and Lena Uhlenhopp Sherman near Kesley, IA; died Dec. 4, 1986; married Carolyn Ontjes, June 2, 1936; member, deacon, Sunday school superintendent, choir member, First Baptist Church, Aplington, IA; first council representative from the Iowa Association to the N.A.B. General Council; predeceased by three brothers and three sisters; survived by his wife Carolyn; and many nieces and nephews; Rev. Donald Patet, pastor, funeral service.

EMIL WAGNER (90), Harvey, ND; born Nov. 9, 1896, to Christian and Elizabeth (Schafer) Wagner, at Eureka, SD; died Nov. 11, 1986; moved to Lincoln Valley (ND) area in 1899; married Dena Pfaff, Nov. 20, 1925, at McClusky; she predeceased him, Nov. 20, 1984; member, deacon, Sunday school teacher, lay minister, Lin-

coln Valley Baptist Church; member, Anamoose (ND) Baptist Church; predeceased by three brothers and two sisters; survived by one brother, Albert; and brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nieces and nephews; Reverends Rodney Poppinga and Oscar Fritzke, pastors, funeral service.

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anniversaries

Mr. and Mrs. John Schmierer of Trochu, Alberta, celebrated their 65th anniversary on Oct. 31, 1986. They are the oldest living members of Trochu Baptist Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Loebis celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 31, 1986, at Leola (South Dakota) Baptist Church where they are members.

what's happening

Harsch named Church Growth Associate of the Year for 1987

For the second year in a row, the Rev. Ray Harsch was named Church Growth Associate of the Year by the Institute for American Church Growth in Pasadena, CA, Jan. 3, 1987, in recognition of his outstanding achievement in the field of church growth. During 1986, Harsch conducted 32 church growth seminars in our N.A.B. Conference.

Since the church growth strategy has been implemented in the Conference, 62 seminars have been conducted. These seminars are the same as those conducted by the Institute for American Church Growth in Pasadena.

The Rev. John Wesley Holmes resigned as pastor of Cedarloo Baptist Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa, effective Dec. 28, 1986.

The Rev. Dan Payne resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church, Sumner, Iowa, effective Dec. 28, 1986. He has served this Church since 1980.

Ken and Kirby Stoller of Cascade Park Baptist Church, Vancouver, BC, were appointed directors of Camp Tapawingo in Oregon at the Central Pacific Association meetings in November 1986. They succeed John and Jill Vaughn who faithfully served in this position in the past years.

The Rev. Jim Calamunce, associate pastor at Sunshine Ridge Baptist Church, Surrey, British Columbia, since 1984, has accepted the call from the Southern British Columbia church extension council and the N.A.B. Church Growth Board to become the pastor of the Walnut Grove church extension project in Langley, British Columbia, effective March 1, 1987.

Pastor Gordon Denison became the pastor of Sturgeon Valley Baptist Church, St. Albert, Alberta, on Feb. 1, 1987. He formerly served Baptist General Conference and Evangelical Free churches.

Mr. Larry M. Watkins resigned as youth pastor of Glencullen Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon.

The Rev. Paul Brannon, former pastor of First Baptist Church, Sidney, Montana, has accepted a call to a non-N.A.B. Conference church.

Tim Powell, graduate of the North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, accepted the posi-

baptist world aid



Ethiopia—Supplying Oxen to Farmers

One of the difficulties in Ethiopia has been the loss of draft animals which have been the mainstay of farmers in this country. A number of animals died as a result of the drought. The lack of rainfall meant a severe shortage of fodder for animals as well as food for human consumption.

In some regions, for example Kefa, animals died as a result of disease which struck them in their weakened condition.

When oxen are supplied to farmers in Ethiopia one animal is given to two farmers, and they in turn cooperate with two other farmers in order to provide a team, which then serves the four of them.

The recipients are responsible for the care of the oxen and are expected to provide for their feeding and to keep them in good condition.

In this sharing of oxen, the farmers are encouraged to work together. The funds donated for this purpose are therefore being used to greater advantage.

Already many farmers are benefiting from the work of oxen supplied with funds provided by Baptist World Aid. Reports have come of the gratitude of those who "could not

believe that others had cared enough to replace their dead oxen."

A total of \$40,000 is needed from Baptists around the world for this project.

If you are interested in helping to supply oxen to farmers in Ethiopia, send your contribution to: Oxen for Ethiopia, Baptist World Aid, North American Baptist Conference, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181.



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Ten Questions Most Often Asked by Church Leaders

- 1) How can I see more members involved in sharing their Christian faith with others?
 - 2) How can we help our present members to be more open to newcomers and make them feel a part of the fellowship?
 - 3) How can we involve more members in the ministry of our church?
 - 4) How can our new members find a place of belonging in their new church home?
 - 5) How can we train a task force in developing a successful lay ministry program?
 - 6) How can our evangelism program be more effective in reaching unchurched persons in our community?
 - 7) How can we build a strategy of placing members in positions that enhance their spiritual gifts?
 - 8) How can I help our members discover that evangelism does not mean tight collars, stomach butterflies, and sweaty palms?
 - 9) How can we close our "back door" so that people who join our church don't become inactive in the first year?
 - 10) How can we keep our church staff and lay leaders on the "cutting edge" of effective growth and ministry insights, and all pulling together toward these same common goals?
- The Church Growth Seminars presently being conducted and offered by the Church Growth Department to all of the churches in the North American Baptist Conference are designed to help the church discover answers to these questions. Many very helpful resources are available to help your church grow. CAN WE HELP YOU?

Ray Harsch

(Watch this column for helpful hints on Church Growth.)

For more information on helping your church grow, write Rev. Ray Harsch, Church Growth Department, North American Baptist Conference, 1 So. 210 Summit Avenue, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181



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1-(503)-787-3828

Bethany Baptist Church, Vancouver, British Columbia, will celebrate its 50th Anniversary June 25-28, 1987.

All former members and friends are invited to attend and share in this time of remembrance.

For further details, write to
Bethany Baptist Church
115 East 50th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5X 1A4
Dr. Rick Laser, pastor

All former members and friends of
Grosse Pointe Woods Baptist Church, Michigan, are invited to attend a weekend of festivities and fun to celebrate our
**90th Anniversary,
July 10-12, 1987**

Those interested in attending this anniversary event should contact Grosse Pointe Baptist Church at 21336 Mack Ave., Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236 1-(313)-881-3343

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capital funds

A continuing major emphasis for the North American Baptist Conference is church growth in North America. Your support for the Capital Funds Campaign is helping us build on the good foundations for church growth that were established in the years before the Capital Funds Campaign was launched.

Thanks to you and your financial contributions, the Church Growth Department has been able to do the following projects:

Assist in land purchases for two church extension churches: Community Baptist in Boca Raton, Florida, and Flower Mound Baptist in Flower Mound, Texas.

Assist in erecting a church building for Iglesia Bautista Central, a home mission church, in Edinburg, Texas.

Assist plateauing and declining churches through the Church Growth Strategy which has been a primary means to help churches foster a growth mentality.

Conduct 62 Church Growth Seminars. Five churches have now completed Phase Three of the Church Growth Emphasis. This means that they are well on the way to setting up strategies that will help them grow.

Assist urban ethnic ministries in West New York, New Jersey, (Spanish-speaking ministry) and Stockton, California (Vietnamese-speaking ministry) by providing funds for pastoral support in these two ministries.

Thank you for your part in reaching people in North America for Christ by giving to the Capital Funds Campaign. —Connie Salios



"Window" Allows Entry to Social Security for Clergy Who Have Opted Out

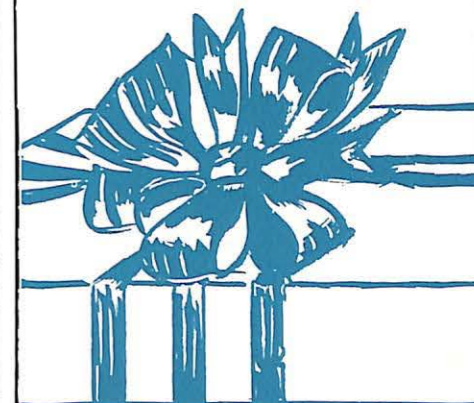
The U.S. Tax Reform Act of 1986 provides that those clergy who have currently opted out of Social Security will be given (generally) until April 15, 1988, to revoke their exemption. If the revocation is made by April 15, 1987, then Social Security taxes would be due beginning in 1986 as computed on Schedule SE of the 1986 Form 1040. If the revocation is made after April 15, 1987, but prior to April 15, 1988, (the last possible date), then taxes are due for 1987 and all succeeding years. An appropriate form is to be prepared by the IRS for clergy to use in requesting revocation of their exemption from Social Security. Once granted, the revocation is irreversible.

The act also provides that the requirements for opting out for those ordained in the future (including those still in the election period) would be made more stringent. A minister desiring to opt out of Social Security would be required to inform the respective church body that he or she is opposed to Social Security on religious grounds during the first two calendar years in which at least \$400 is earned from ministry. Further, the applicant would have to certify that he or she is aware of the grounds for opting out which are acceptable to the law (not economic grounds).

The Baltimore office of the Social Security Administration, after receiving the application for exemption, will telephone the individual and acquaint him or her with the facts of the matter, including the acceptable reasons for exemption. If the applicant, who previously has given proof of his or her denomination, still believes that the conditions for opting out are fulfilled, then the SSA will send him or her a notice that all of the conditions for exemption have been met, and only then is the exemption valid.

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What do I get that special someone on the occasion of his or her anniversary, birthday, or other special event?



Consider a gift that both honors them and the Lord, a gift to N.A.B. Conference outreach ministries in recognition of that person and the special event.

Through this recognition gift, you will be reaching people for Christ and letting that person know how special he or she is with one gift.

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Never Give Up Praying

by Douglas Woyke

Thirteen years ago, I introduced Mr. Akira Shimizu to many of you via a slide presentation called "The Three Faces of Japan." Mr. Shimizu, who attended an English class I taught at that time, worked for the Vicks Company in Japan. He represented the face of Japan which cared nothing about Christianity or its message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

As you have been praying over these many years, the Lord has been drawing Mr. and Mrs. Shimizu closer and closer to Himself. Thirty years ago, Mr. Shimizu contracted tuberculosis. He was cured, but the disease had reduced the size of his lungs and weakened his heart. As a result he, in the past year, has had to be hospitalized twice because his heart could not pump sufficient blood to maintain proper oxygen levels in his body. He has had to quit working.

During his first hospitalization last year, Mr. Shimizu declared his faith in Jesus Christ under the leadership of Pastor Murakami in Tsu. Mrs. Shimizu has also come to Christ. What a joy to see the Lord lead people to Himself!

We are often tempted to give up praying for a loved one or a friend who does not know Christ if they do not respond to the gospel. We are often tempted to think that results must come instantly. I recently read, "Second only to suffering, waiting may be the greatest teacher and trainer in godliness, maturity, and genuine spirituality most of us ever encounter." The Lord worked in Mr. Shimizu's life for over fifteen years before he came to Christ!

Never give up praying for the salvation of the lost, whether they be in Africa, Brazil, Japan, the Philippines, or in your own neighborhood. Praise the Lord for His faithfulness in answering our prayers. □



Mr. and Mrs. Shimizu have declared their faith in Jesus Christ.

"Never give up praying for the salvation of the lost, whether they be in Africa, Brazil, Japan, the Philippines, or in your own neighborhood."

—Douglas Woyke
