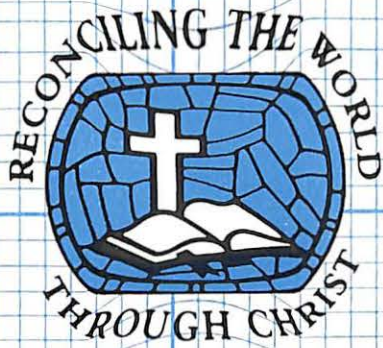


Baptist Herald

May 1988





from the church growth director

Finding Another Way

by David Samf

"You are unique and special, with a creative gift of sharing the Good News."

Have you ever read this story? One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there. And the power of the Lord was present for Jesus to heal the sick.

Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat. They tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

"When Jesus saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven.' He said to the paralyzed man, 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home'" (Luke 5:20, NIV).

"Immediately, the man stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on, and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, 'We have seen remarkable things today'" (Luke 5:24b-26, NIV).

Have you ever heard this story? What is it about? Most of us would say it is a story about a miracle that includes forgiveness of sins and physical healing. . . and I would certainly agree. But read it again! In addition to forgiveness and healing, it is a story of determination, creativity, commitment, adventure, ingenuity, and a spirit that says, "It is possible, it can be done."

Imagine with me four men carrying a friend on a stretcher. These men obviously had heard about

Jesus and felt that the friend they carried could be helped by Jesus. Now carrying a stretcher is not the easiest task even for the shortest distance. There is the weight itself, walking in sync with the other three, and then the bearers in the rear maybe not being aware of all the chuckholes along the path. Then, when they get to the house, there is not even standing room. I can just imagine that there was a moment of panic and then almost in unison, "There has to be another way!" I can also imagine that the paralytic's optimistic spirit fell at that moment to an all-time low, thinking about all this effort, time, energy, anticipation, and now. . . so close, and yet so far.

These men held a strategy meeting. An idea! Let's go up the outside of the stairs, take some tiles off the roof, and lower our friend so Jesus will have to see him. The people will have to make room. I would venture to say that one of the men might have said in today's English, "Don't you know they have just redecorated and had a new roof put on? Now you're suggesting we disturb that?" Another might have thought, "Do you realize how steep those side stairs are, and, in addition, they are very narrow."

I rather feel that the men knew of the obstacles, but they would not be delayed or repressed in their efforts. What was the result of such an effort? Forgiveness and healing were seen and experienced. Was the result worth the effort? Yes, it was! Winning people to Christ is always worth the effort.

We live in exciting and creative days. God is still permitting us to

have 24 hours in each day and has blessed our North American Baptist Conference family with churches filled with creative people, desirous to share the Good News. They are people with vision, determined not to let anyone say it cannot be done, and also looking for ways to help others "see" Jesus.

This edition of our **Baptist Herald** contains stories of people of our North American Baptist Conference churches who are carrying out the Great Commission in their communities. Some are different; yet each is experiencing results.

It was in 1830 that the U.S. Congress suggested the closing of the patent office because, "Everything had been invented." All the methods of evangelism have not been tried. You are unique and special, with a creative gift of sharing the Good News. Try it and experience people finding Jesus. He gave you a unique gift within your comfort zone; use it, and watch it happen.

I recently attended a seminar where each participant was asked to memorize this statement: "There is no chance, no destiny, no fate that can circumvent or hinder or control the firm resolve of a determined soul"—even to the extent of being one of four carrying a stretcher bearing your friend up the steep, narrow outside steps, and cutting a hole in the roof in order to find Jesus. □

The Rev. David Samf is Church Growth Director for the North American Baptist Conference.



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Forging Ahead in Planting New Churches

by Bernard R. Fritzke

The excitement of planting new churches continues to grow. Presently, the Church Growth Department is assisting 32 projects, as they move toward becoming self-supporting churches.

1987 Statistics

During 1987, five projects "graduated" from support. Seven new projects were recognized and approved as church planting projects:

- Hope Fellowship Baptist Church, Kansas City, Missouri, the Rev. Dennis Dewey, pastor;
- South Austin Fellowship Baptist Church, Austin, Texas, the Rev. Gordon Stork, pastor;
- Christ Community Baptist Church, Puyallup, Washington, the Rev. Gordon Bauslaugh, pastor;

- Valley Community Baptist Church, Tracy, California, the Rev. Dennis Dearmin, pastor;
- Antelope Springs Baptist Church, Sacramento, California, the Rev. Stephen Kellar, pastor;
- Pacific Bible Church, Dana Point, California, the Rev. Keith McKinney, pastor;
- Mountain View Baptist Church, Fontana, California, the Rev. David Bolton, pastor.

1988 Statistics

In 1988, we have already started five church planting projects:

- Riverside Baptist Church, Devon, Alberta, the Rev. Larry Froese, pastor;

- Discovery Baptist Church, Cedar Hill, Texas, the Rev. Doug Bittle, pastor;
- Vacaville, California, the Rev. David Wesner, pastor;
- Okotoks, Alberta, the Rev. Cornel Van Eyk, pastor;
- Mississauga, Ontario, the Rev. Wayne Jorstad, pastor.

Franklin Township in Wisconsin (Greater Milwaukee area) has been approved, and a planter pastor is being sought.

Requests for support of five more church planting projects have been received. These can be planted as funds are received. In addition, a Chinese congregation, already meeting in Southern California, is re-

questing some assistance. So you see, the challenges and opportunities to advance for Christ abound.

The accounts of a few of our church planting projects on the following pages give you an idea of ministry and growth. □



The Rev. Bernard R. Fritzke is Associate Director for Church Planting, Church Growth Department, North American Baptist Conference.



Giving God Our Best

by Stephen Kellar

"To experience the very best God has in store for us as individuals and as a church, we must first be willing to give God our best. The number one emphasis in our church is to bring every believer to grips with the importance of walking in the Spirit."—Stephen Kellar

In considering the remarkable growth of our church in the five short months we've been meeting for worship, it would be tempting to ascribe our progress to the scintillating sermons of the pastor, the dynamic personalities of the leadership, or some other human component from which we could derive praise. Yet that simply isn't the case. Solomon instructs us, "Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it" (Psalm 127:1).

The principle we began within our Bible study of nine, and continue with in our congregation of more than 90, is abundantly clear: To experience the very best God has in store for us as individuals and as a church, we must first be willing to give God our best. Translated into everyday practical living, we are committed to abiding by Ephesians

5:18, "Be filled with the Spirit." The number one emphasis in our church is to bring every believer to grips with the importance of walking in the Spirit. Calling programs will fall flat; discipleship will be disastrous; and worship simply won't work, until the motivation for ministry is an intrinsic stimulation of our spirits yielded to His Spirit.

With the underlying commitment to Spirit-directed ministries, we've found several strategies to be effective in enhancing growth. First, we are committed to assimilating new members by meeting their personal spiritual needs and providing creative, structured opportunities for growth. We begin with community canvassing, progress to an individual call in their home, guide them through our new members' class, strengthen them in one of our five Care-A-Cells, and train them for leader-

ship in a discipleship group or in the women's core ministry. We've found this formula for growing the individual grows the Body naturally.

In addition to assimilating new members, we are committed to impacting the community with the gospel. We're not content with a simple reshuffling of the corporate deck; we want our growth to be evident through our evangelism. We have baptized more than 20 young believers to date, and we hope to continue to see God glorified in this manner for years to come.

A final component that we've seen God use to build this body is an uncompromising stance toward Scripture. From our sermons on Sunday to the devotionals at youth group, we emphasize the

integrity of God's Word. Sound exegetical presentation coupled with powerful practical application is what hungry hearts desire and require of God's Word.

In conclusion, Antelope Springs Baptist Church is growing because the Lord is providing the growth. He will continue to cause the increase as we remain submitted to His Spirit, intent on His purpose, and students of His Word. □

The Rev. Stephen Kellar is pastor of Antelope Springs Baptist Church, Antelope, CA, a church extension project begun in 1987.

"From our sermons on Sunday to the devotionals at youth group, we emphasize the integrity of God's Word."





Ministry to Adults Meets Needs in Walnut Grove

by Jim Calamunce

The ministries that we find people responding to in our Walnut Grove Baptist Church are 1) the "Adult Only Potluck Nights" at the Calamunce's (biggest house), 2) the "Guest/Dessert" Sunday evening service held once a month, 3) the ministry to Trinity Western University students, and 4) the "Women's Fellowship Night."

At our first "Adult Only Potluck," 18 adults attended and had a great time. At our second "Adult Only" night, 19 adults celebrated Valentine's Day. This "adults only" emphasis has really been appreciated.

The "Guest/Dessert" Sunday evening service is an event we are going to count on in the future. When we used to have our Sunday evening services in a home, we would have 24 or 25 people in attendance. At our first "Guest/Dessert" Sunday evening held at the hall where we meet on Sunday morning, 35 people attended. On a "Guest/Dessert" night, we have either a special soloist or a guest group so people can bring their guests to something really special.

The third ministry that is going well in our church is a ministry to Trinity Western University

students. We, as a church, set the third Sunday of every month aside to invite any Trinity student who wishes to eat lunch with us. At one such setting, 17 students joined 54 church folk for a delicious lunch. We presently have five Trinity students attending our church on a continuing basis, and we really appreciate them.

The fourth ministry, involving nine to thirteen ladies, is the "Women's Fellowship Night,"

held once a month. Some of these ladies do not know Christ as Savior. This night's program may consist of singing, a craft, a special speaker, or a devotional. The women always do a superb job, and the church is proud of them!

The Rev. Jim Calamunce is pastor of Walnut Grove Baptist Church, Langley, British Columbia.



Women's Fellowship Night at Walnut Grove Baptist Church draws Christians and non-Christians to a special program.

Church Planting Works Because HE Works in Us

by Dennis Dearmin

What's working for Valley Community Baptist Church? What gets people to come? What gets people to stay?

We've tried about everything to get people into the doors of our ministries: Recreational programs, door-to-door contacts, newspaper ads, public seminars, food, telephone contacts, and direct mailings.

"They wanted a shepherd to lead from the flock, not above the flock. Why not? God sent His Son to become man, our ultimate Shepherd, and the sheep followed because He walked with them and as them. Jesus humbled Himself to be like them in order that they would know His walk, talk, and smell. They not only heard His excitement for the Father, but they also saw it; they felt it. What an example for the church planter."

Although we have a full range of ministries (Sunday school, Bible study, visitation, choir, and youth ministry), we have found that people respond for different reasons. It may be a newspaper ad or the professionally done sign on the corner of the place where we meet that draws them. This is as varied as each person God has uniquely created. The most common method of reaching people has been word of mouth coupled with the excitement of the person who spoke the words and who were already "involved."

What keeps the people coming? What causes their lives to change and commitment to grow? About six months after we began to plant this church, I did an informal poll. The number one answer almost always was the personability of the ministry and its pastor. Churched and nonchurched, saved and unsaved, growing and devastated alike responded that they had had it with the "Penthouse Preacher" leading from afar, full of platitudes with no practicality, unreachable, untouchable, and invulnerable. They wanted to see



the excitement of Christ in example not exposition. They stayed because of counsel, personal notes, and individualized letters in contrast with "too busy studying," calls from secretaries, and endless form letters found in other churches.

They wanted a shepherd to lead from the flock, not above the flock. Why not? God sent His Son to become man, our ultimate Shepherd, and the sheep followed because He walked with them and as them. Jesus humbled Himself to be like them in order that they would know His walk, talk, and smell. They not only heard His excitement for the Father, but they also saw it; they felt it. What an example for the church planter.

There is an awesomeness to being in His service, to somehow try to understand, "Why me, Lord, I'm so inadequate? Why have you chosen me?"

Then in my ears I hear: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

It is His pleasure to advance His kingdom when, where, and with whom; therefore, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Rev. Dennis Dearmin is the founding pastor of Valley Community Baptist Church, Tracy, CA, a church extension project begun in 1987 by the Northern California Association.



Keys in Devon: Worship, Evangelism, Fellowship, and Prayer

by Larry Froese

"We hang door hangers on every door in the community."

Four keys to reaching people for Christ through Riverside Baptist Church in Devon, Alberta, are worship, fellowship, prayer, and evangelism.

Worship

Our two guitarists and pianist lead in exciting, stimulating worship during the first 15-20 minutes of the Sunday morning service. The congregation is totally involved as we sing praise, worship, and scripture choruses. Along with simple, expository preaching, the overhead projector is used for the children as well as their parents to take notes. The children always hear a story, and the congregation leads in prayer. There is total involvement by the people. Six or seven people lead in various aspects of worship in every service.

Fellowship

A small growth group meets weekly for sharing, caring, and prayer. We began with a 13-week video series on encouragement by Dr. Larry Crabb. Now we are studying the book of Ephesians. People have become real to each other and have "taken off their masks." Transparency and risk are the two elements that make for our fellowship.

Every second month, we have an "agape" feast: The Lord's Supper with a noon meal. On alternate months, we celebrate this in our growth group. Each of the board members have agreed to care for three families within our church.

Prayer

Our people are encouraged to pray daily at one of two set prayer times: 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. This is one way people are involved in prayer without any extra meetings. Along with this, the whole congregation is reading through the Bible by following the schedule laid out in the *One Year Bible*. We print the passages in our weekly bulletin.

Evangelism

We are involved in the community in various ways. I teach and supervise the weight room at the high school twice a week. I also supervised the



Twenty-eight people gave their testimony and joined Riverside Baptist Church during the charter membership banquet on February 19, 1988.

distribution of Christmas hampers to the poor in Devon. We use our Benevolence Funds to help the poor. We also hang door hangers on every door in the community and have personally talked to 25 percent of all the people in town.

Our people are involved in an evangelism training program (Evangelism Explosion III International). Last week on our second visit, three people accepted Jesus Christ as Savior. Nine people have accepted Christ in the last two months.

We have a strong emphasis on discipleship and obedience. Twelve people were baptized on February 14; more have expressed their interest. One of the requirements to join our church is to share your personal testimony during the Sunday morning worship service. On February 19, 28 people gave their personal testimonies and joined our church, Riverside Baptist. □



The Rev. Larry Froese became the pastor of the church extension work in Devon, Alberta, in 1987.

A New Church on the British Columbia-Alaska Border

by Judy Paquette and Anne Wright



Situated in northern British Columbia, bordering Hyder, Alaska, is the town of Stewart, known as Canada's most northerly ice-free port. God has been here all the time, for He set the glaciers and year-round snow-capped mountains in place.

Stewart, a small coastal mining town, has a history of being a "boom and bust town." Miners, looking for gold and precious minerals, have come and gone, but no one told them of the love Jesus has for them. In the summer of 1986, God caused a church to start here in order to glorify His name.

As my husband Paul and I drove into Stewart that summer day to begin this new church, we wondered how God saw Stewart, Judy recalls. He knew every heart that was, or would be, His. Only Christ Himself could lead us to those souls and give us wisdom to win them to Himself. Our success did not depend on what would work for us, but on WHO was working for us. "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

The word went out through invitation, posters, and newspaper ads. We waited as our first Sunday service—to be held in our home—was about to begin. Who could have expected more than 20 people that first day? Then. . . funerals, weddings, questions, and still more questions. . . we felt that we just couldn't keep up. The people of Stewart and Hyder seemed pleased that there was someone who was living here with them and willing to serve their obvious needs. God had prepared hearts to receive His Word. Praise the Lord!

Bible studies on Friday nights? Well, all right,

Lord, your ways are not our ways. In a town where alcohol is the number one social problem, Friday night Bible study soon became a place of refuge as people heard God's Word. Families came and went with the shifts in mining and logging as markets rose and fell; yet the numbers in attendance remained constant. We are not so concerned with expanding the local church as we are in expanding the Kingdom of Heaven through the Body of Christ.

Opposition came mostly from within, as we held up the Word of God against false teachings. We continued to reach out through vacation Bible schools, summer and winter camps, with always the same message, "Ye must be born again."

Finally, the group began to stabilize. Church services moved from our home to a school gymnasium and then into a rented hall. As young Christians continue to grow, they are used by the Lord. At the same time, God has sent families here who are grounded in the Word and who are being used by God to help carry the work load. God is faithful.

Now almost two years later, our one-room Sunday School is divided into four classes, with a faithful teacher in each class. About sixty attendees, young and old, are finding their needs met on Sunday mornings.

Friday night Bible studies continue with 20 growing Christians. Ladies Bible studies also meet the needs of a handful of women and have good outreach.

Another study is held by Terry Ray at a highway camp located 40 miles outside of Stewart. Terry has accepted this challenge, and the Lord has richly blessed him in his step of faith.

Logging and mining camps dot the outskirts of Stewart while ships from all around the world come into port. Many of these sailors have left with Bibles, taking them back to Turkey, Japan, and China. All these activities will continue to grow as long as we put our trust in the Lord and seek His guidance.

It is no secret what God can do as He leads our fellowship out into our own community and gives *(continued on page 27.)*

Taking Church Growth Seriously

by Ray Harsch

In the next several articles in this BAPTIST HERALD, you will be reading about North American Baptist Conference churches who have taken church growth seriously.

Recently, Dr. Donald McGavern said, "We stand today in the midst of a truly extraordinary interest in church growth. . . all the more remarkable when it is observed that some 15 years ago the words were never seen."

In a time when four of five churches in the U.S.A. and Canada are not growing, we see a new interest being given to what church growth is all about. C. Peter Wagner of Fuller Seminary said, "Church growth means all that is involved in bringing men and women who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ into fellowship with Him and into responsible church membership."

We need to also be aware that not everyone is for church growth. Opposition to church growth also marks our time. Around 1960, a new theory and theology of missions seized leaders of many denominations. They became convinced that contemporary churches and Christians ought to rout out racism, stop sexism, increase brotherhood, smash oppressive social structures, and destroy everything that diminishes human dignity. This deliberate turning away from evangelism and church growth is the chief

reason for the stagnant condition in so many congregations.

Some new and exciting things are happening in North American Baptist Conference churches from coast to coast. People of many languages and cultures are at our doorsteps. We are reaching out to our communities by seeking to meet needs of people. Our eyes and our hearts are being opened by God to people who need the Lord all around us. Our hearts are being stirred with the reality of the lostness of mankind. We are catching the vision to reach out to people with the Gospel.

Churches experiencing growth today are involved in the work of evangelism and are seeing people come to know the Lord in a personal way. Nothing stirs the congregation as much as when the Gospel changes lives. As we do the work of evangelism, we experience church growth. □



The Rev. Ray Harsch is Associate Director for Evangelism and Church Growth for the North American Baptist Conference.



Meadowlark Focuses on Network of Relationships

by Randy Mitrovich

Oscar Thomson wrote, "The most important word in the English language is *relationship!* Relationship is the track; love is what rolls over the track. Love moves through a relationship. But the thing that satisfies our deepest longing is a relationship with someone."

We, at Meadowlark Baptist Church in Edmonton, Alberta, received that same message from Ray Harsch at our "Catch the Vision" Church Growth seminar (Phase II). Since that

memorable weekend with Ray, we have increased our efforts to focus on the network of relationships God has given to us, His body.

Last April and May, we zeroed in on friendship. May 24 was targeted as "Celebration of Friendship" Sunday, and our preparations began eight weeks in advance. Banners, posters, announcements, Sunday school lessons, and messages from the pulpit directed our attention to the importance of friendships in bringing peo-

We have increased our efforts to focus on the network of relationships God has given to us, His body.

ple to Christ. Bookmarks, as bulletin-gifts, reminded our people to pray for their friends and for our church as May 24 approached. Together, Sunday school teachers discussed the purpose of "Celebration of Friendship"; they developed curriculum and promotional ideas for the friendship theme. The excitement began to build!

One bulletin insert was actually a worksheet. It asked people to list their friends, relatives, and neighbours, and then to pick one or two people/families who they would covenant to pray for and invite to Sunday school/worship service on May 24. We encouraged people also to invite their friends home following the service that day for dinner and fellowship.

An artist in the congregation sketched a unique bulletin cover/poster: Two cuddly panda bears—one giving a balloon bouquet to the other. A computer expert printed a 20-foot banner joyfully announcing "CELEBRATION OF FRIENDSHIP"; this hung over the doorway of the sanctuary for three weeks. Two seamstresses constructed felt banners for the front of the sanctuary. We prayed from the pulpit for our people as they invited friends throughout the month of May.

I sent letters and phoned local members of the legislative assembly (from opposing political parties) who responded with delight and joined us for our celebration.



The pastoral staff let our people know we were inviting friends. My wife and I invited our doctor, a bank teller, and a greeting card store owner, who all agreed to come to church and dinner. We invited other church members to join us as well.

On May 24 we had more than 100 visitors at Meadowlark! As they all stood, they were welcomed with a spontaneous burst of applause.

It was thrilling to sense the love of Jesus being shared with friends. Each guest received a booklet on friendship. The worship service was full of joy, and the message, "Being Friends with God," was powerful. Children proudly showed pals and parents their buttons, balloons, and artwork. What a day! Thank you, Church Growth Department, for challenging us to build strong friendships for Christ. □



The Rev. Randy Mitrovich is Associate Pastor at Meadowlark Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB, where the Rev. Ken MacDonald is senior pastor.



Ministering to Women Who Attend Church Alone

by Robert Brown

Kathy Yirka signs for the hearing impaired.

Red tape. Synonymous with the local church, right? We have to form a committee to see if the standing committees should continue. We joke that we would have to call a quick meeting at the sound of the trumpet to give our OK to the rapture. But, thank God for those exceptions to the rule!

Our Church Growth Task Force at Round Lake Baptist Church outside Gladwin, Michigan, met at its regular meeting on November 10, 1987. The previous Sunday, the adult "Power for Living" magazine from Scripture Press had as its cover story, "Misfits Who Fit." It stated that "things changed when WWACA was organized." The story went on to describe a Sunday school class for Women Who Attend Church Alone. It began with five present the first Sunday, and now, five years later, has grown to more than 25. It was for divorced women or for women whose husbands did not attend church.

We had some women like that. In fact, several. Could we do it? Would it sell in Peoria (Gladwin)? "Yes," the Task Force responded. "Who?" and "When?" were the next big questions. Who might teach it, and then, when could it possibly be launched? "I will volunteer to teach it," said one of our members.

A new quarter was set to begin in less than a month. "Would there be enough time to advertise?" "Would we need more curriculum?" Questions came from every corner, but the interest, support, and feasibility were growing. "Let's do it December 6th and see what happens," said our volunteer teacher, filled with excitement about the possibilities of such a class. And we did it!



The WWACA class with teacher Fran Vigneault, second row, third from right.

Attendance has averaged six, with 11 on the rolls. Of that number, five had never attended Sunday school before.

P.S. Don't catch yourself saying, "I'm too old to teach. It's time to let the younger generation take over." Our volunteer teacher is a lady of 70 who goes like 39! □



The Rev. Robert Brown is senior pastor of Round Lake Baptist Church, Gladwin, Michigan, a church of about 225 members located in the rural area outside Gladwin.

Acceptance: The Need to Belong

by Harold E. Kelm



The Young Couples' Group at Bethany enjoys an Oriental Supper.

A comment that pastors often hear is, "I just don't feel accepted by the church," or "I feel like an outsider in the church." One of the priorities of our church is to move people from the fringe of our fellowship to being an integral and vital link in our ministry. One of the ways that we have seen this happen is through the use of small groups. Through these groups, individuals have come to see Bethany Baptist Church in Hutchinson, Minnesota, no longer as "a" church but as "their" church.

Inclusion within a small group communicates acceptance to an individual. There is a great need in all of us to belong, to be valued as an important contributor, to be known on a first name basis; a small group can provide for these needs. Not only do we find support and nurture in these relationships but also accountability. In a small group, people who have become friends spur one another on to new growth in their Christian and personal lives.

The small groups at Bethany Baptist Church revolve around individual common denominators for each group. Some of them are for the purpose of Bible study. Here the groups subdivide into different days, times, and topics. Other groups are for fellowship; here the divisions occur by gender and age. Some of the groups combine fellowship and

service. Others can be for the purpose of support and encouragement. There must, however, be some central factor that draws the groups together.

The use of small groups requires us, as a church, to remain flexible to changing needs. If a group is needed, we respond by recruiting someone to initiate the formation and recruitment of that group.

The dangers of small groups are varied; one is overprogramming. This means having too many people in more than one group and overburdening the people of the church. Another problem related to this is that of small groups becoming rigid and outdated. There must be the freedom to not only form groups but also to disband them and rechannel those individuals into other areas.

Small groups can be a real asset to the work of the church. At Bethany Baptist Church, they are an integral part of who we are as a church, and our small groups have become ports of entry into the mainstream of our church's life. A sample of a few of our small groups are

Partners Potluck Groups - Small fellowship groups meet monthly in homes or a restaurant on a rotation basis.

Helping Hands - People 60 and over meet for social activities and service projects.

Prayer Chains - Women of the church serve as a prayer resource for the church.

Women's Bible Studies - Different topics are examined at various times and days each week.

Men's Fellowship - Men meet for fellowship, study, and service opportunities.

Recreational Teams - Sports teams form as interest is expressed. □



The Rev. Harold E. Kelm is pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, Hutchinson, Minnesota.

Enthusiasm, Vision, and Expectation Found in Vancouver Church

by Rick Laser

"We are sensing how God is leading us step by step into the 'fullness of time' in which an explosion of church growth type ministries is imminent."

Some of the most telling words in all the Scriptures concerning God's activity in the world are penned by the Apostle Paul in Galatians 4:4, "When the time had fully come, God sent His Son. . ." That God is sovereignly at work in the progression of His church is likewise true. After all, did Jesus not say, "I will build my church"? Church growth experts have astutely observed the progression and cycles of churches and have based some very helpful insights on these findings.

We, at Bethany Baptist Church in Vancouver, British Columbia, were privileged to be the recipients of such analytical insights for our church in 1987. Through the encouragement and challenge of the Rev. Ray Harsch and our Church Growth Department, we entered into the process of being formally exposed to church growth principles.

The first of the seminars in June 1987 so enthused 17 lay people that they were absolutely committed to offer a repeat seminar only four months later. Imagine the *force of enthusiasm* that must have abounded for 12 people to meet regularly throughout the vacationing summer months to gather together the materials for Stage Three of the Church Growth Strategy, an in-depth analysis of the church's ministry in seven specific areas!

In the meantime, this group was already planning the second seminar in October as well. When the Rev. Ray Harsch came for the second seminar, almost 60 persons attended. In the progression of our church life, enthusiasm was transformed into a broad *vision* for the potential of church growth ministries for our own situation. An expanded task

force was established to deal creatively with the vision that had come out of the analysis and the recommendations of the Church Growth Department.

Right now, we are sensing how God is leading us step by step into a "fullness of time" in which an explosion of church growth-type ministries is imminent. That has brought about the third characteristic of this progression: *expectation*. While we have not been engaged in any new ministry long enough to speak of long-term trends, there are signs of promise. Whether it be the Food Bank Ministry or a refocusing of the evening service with child care opportunities; whether it be a proposed youth drop-in center or the Friendship Meals for church visitors after the morning worship service; in any case, it is not only gratifying to be filled with expectations of church growth, but also exhilarating to see God progressing His "older" children from enthusiasm to vision and finally to expectation.

Thank you, Ray Harsch and the Church Growth Department, for your part in this ministry. □



Dr. Rick Laser is senior pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Discover a Need and Fill It

by Rubin Herrmann



Hearing a Bible story at Redeemer Baptist Church.

Whenever one is asked, "What's working for you in your church?" one is tempted to shy away from answering too optimistically lest one gives the impression that he is blowing his horn. Yet, as a result of carefully analyzing our own community and ourselves as a church, we discovered some blockages to growth. This centered on identifying specific needs, and several important areas immediately became apparent. Youth and children required our highest priority.

As we examined the church calendar and the annual budget, we saw an imbalance between activities and expenditures which tended to center more on ourselves within the church than on ministries outside the church. We needed to target the persons in our area to whom we could most effectively minister.

The surrounding community was growing; new young families now occupy newly constructed homes. To help meet this need of ministering to children, the part-time youth worker, John Nelsen, was brought on staff full-time in September 1987, to put into place a weekly children's program. This program for children grades K-6 began in September. An excellent core of workers participates each Wednesday following a family potluck. For the first time in the pastor's five-year ministry, visitors have outnumbered church

members at several special occasions such as Vacation Bible School and Christmas. Parents are grateful for this ministry of compassion expressed for their children.

It was a joy to baptize the firstfruits of our youth ministry as a Korean high school student followed her Lord in baptism. When her adopted parents disowned her, she was taken into the home of one of our members who are lovingly caring for her. This same family brought a neighbor's child to VBS. Not only is the child now regularly attending Discovery Club, but also the mother is attending services regularly with her children. During a recent pastoral call, the mother stated how the Lord has drawn her back to Himself by the loving acceptance shown her by the people of this church. She expressed a desire to become actively involved in the life of this church. This is yet another example which illustrates a valid principle in Church Growth: Discover a need and fill it in the name, love, and power of Christ.

"Discover a need and fill it in the name, love, and power of Christ."

When our people see genuine human need, they have fantastic resources. Some of these resources are being tapped for Christ with the result of seeing the expansion of His kingdom. The possibilities of constructing a multipurpose building to more adequately facilitate an enlarged ministry for Christ is now being explored by the Feasibility Committee. We solicit your prayers as we attempt to minister to our community. □



The Rev. Rubin Herrmann is senior pastor of Redeemer Baptist Church, St. Paul, Minnesota.

The Lazarus Church

by Sidney Morrison

The business meeting was set, and I felt all the anger, frustration, hurt, and disappointment that Martha must have felt when she lashed out at Jesus for not being there and keeping her brother from dying.

I remembered how just thirteen years ago God had led my wife and me to select a lot and build our home just four blocks from the church. We knew His plan for us was to help "build His church." The church had relocated from the inner city under the North American Baptist Conference Church Extension program just several years earlier.

Many of our friends had made the pronouncement that, "This church is dying," by leaving for other places of worship. We had fallen from an average attendance of about 125 down to a faithful 35. We were meeting to see if we should disband and close our church. The very thought of this was enough to make a grown man cry!

I felt that there must be some way we could still leave a legacy of North Highlands. God spoke to me and told me that we should leave an heir and not give up until that child was able to take care of itself.

Through the sale of some surplus land and our parsonage, we had more than \$100,000 being used to help the Conference at that time. The Southern Association was ready for church extension, but the funds were not available.

We were like proud parents who would give everything they had to see their children make it in this world. This became the vision of a dying church.

I presented a motion that showed that we had enough funds to sustain a church extension project in North Carrollton as well as ourselves. We would simply try to hold on until they could be self-sufficient. The vote was unanimous. We offered our resources, two families for a core, our money, and some effort by our members, to God, and He gave us this new child. We became like proud parents who would give everything they had to see that their children could make it in this world. This became the vision of a dying church!

I am a great believer in the "cause and effect" theory when God is dealing with men. Some would say that it was ironic that the same year



The same God who had the power to call Lazarus back to life from the dead has called our church back to life!

North Highlands Bible Church staff: (l. to r.) Judy Morgan, secretary; Barbara Stout, bookkeeper; Mike Hendrix, music director; Paul Wilson, senior high youth pastor; John Plotts, junior high youth pastor; and Dennis Eenigenburg, pastor.

that North Carrollton Baptist Church went off all support was the same year that the North Highlands Church had to start two morning worship services and adopt a new \$700,000 educational building program to accommodate all the new people who wanted to serve and worship there.

Unknowingly, two things happened to us. First, while meeting our obligation of reaching out to "Samaria," we were receiving the power of the Holy Spirit just as described in Acts 1:8. That Spirit has been blessing and building our church. Secondly, in our desire to survive, everyone seemed to put away their own priorities and agendas and let the Spirit take control.

It is not irony that we who were at death's door are now alive. This phenomenon is attributable to the direct faithfulness of a loving God who answers prayer and honors commitments. Or we could say that the real lesson is "New Churches. . . New Life."

The same God who had the power to call Lazarus back to life from the dead, can, and has called my church back to life! □



Sidney Morrison is moderator of North Highlands Bible Church and treasurer of the Southern Association.

A UNIQUE CHURCH

by William Kresal



Bellwood, Illinois, a western suburb of Chicago, has gone through transition. Twenty years ago, the majority of the population was Anglo; now it is Black. The First Baptist Church of Bellwood has gone through this same transition, also.

Our Church has been unique from the very beginning of the transition. As a declining Anglo congregation, our Church spent much time discussing and praying about the Church's ministry in this area. The congregation came to a critical point in 1976 when it had to make a decision to either relocate or aggressively reach this community. The Church came to the conclusion that our Church was here to reach and minister to the people of this area.

The Evangelism Committee decided to make this message known to the people of Bellwood. Dr. John Binder, chairman of this committee at that time, and the former pastor, the Rev. Loren Weber, with a few specially chosen people went from door to door, up and down the streets within a one-mile area of the Church, proclaiming the message of salvation and inviting the residents to our Church. Our Evangelism Committee continues to reach out to the community, and individuals freely invite their friends and neighbors to our

Church. Visitors say they have heard about our Church - about its friendliness and ministry.

The first Black family who visited and eventually joined our Church was that of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Delane. Mr. Delane is presently a deacon and Mrs. Delane a deaconess. When asked what factors drew them to become members, Mr. Delane answered: "This Church teaches salvation through Jesus Christ. It also teaches what it means to be a Christian as well as what the responsibilities of a Christian are. My family and I also felt accepted by this Church family."

This is only one indication that the Bellwood Church is a unique Church. In our church, we have no cliques; we are a family of God. We do not see differences in color of individuals; we see brothers and sisters in Christ.

What types of ministries have been effective in our Church? As the pastor, I do not see that our ministries are any different from those of other churches. I asked this question of one of our members, Mrs. Nancy Lewis; she replied, "Our Sunday school teachers teach our Lord's commandment to love one another; our pastor preaches our Lord's commandment to love one

another; and the people of our Church practice our Lord's commandment to love one another."

Our Church has at least one social event every month for all members and friends of our Church. These events can range from a hayride party to a thanksgiving dinner; from an Easter breakfast to a roller skating party; from a trip to a botanical garden to an ice cream social. My wife Evelyn and the fellowship Committee assist me with the social life of our Church. Our social events have helped to bring us even closer together as a Church family.

Our Church continues to grow. In 1987, 28 new members were added to our membership roll. Why? Programs? No! We are a unique Church. We show our Christian love for one another; everyone is welcome to worship with us; and we are a family of God-fearing people.

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters live together in unity" (Psalm 133:1). □



Mr. William Kresal is pastor of First Baptist Church, Bellwood, Illinois.

What's Working in Your Church in Women's Ministries?

God sets before us, as women, a wide, open door for service through our local churches, association, and North American Baptist Conference. As we commit ourselves to support our local church and its program, we are involved in almost every phase of the church program.

The purpose of a women's organization in a local church and on the Conference level is to provide opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth as well as to provide for outreach ministries at home and overseas.

Taking advantage of opportunities to serve our Lord, women become involved in Bible studies, discipleship, and other small groups designed to meet the needs of women. Unitedly, we support projects that the Women's Missionary Fellowship has adopted. Financially, our women support the missions program of our N.A.B. Conference at home and overseas with a goal of \$950,000 over a three-year period. The support of White Cross material, which our women supply for the medical centers and hospitals in Cameroon, is also included in that financial goal.—LaVerna Mehlhaff, women's work director, North American Baptist Conference



Widows' Luncheon: Sunrise Baptist, Fair Oaks, CA



Women in the Word: Bible study at Redeemer Baptist, Warren, MI



Music at the Retreat: Calvary Baptist, Bethlehem, PA

In this section of the *Baptist Herald* this month, three women answer the question, "What's Working in Women's Ministries in Your Church?"

A New Look at Women's Work

by Linda J. Ebel

We had reached a low point in women's ministries at Redeemer Baptist Church, Warren, Michigan. We seemed to be ingrown - not reaching the new women or the younger women of our church. Fewer women wanted to be leaders. Negative attitudes and discouragement were prevalent. We needed something!

We took a new look at our women's involvements in the church and were surprised. We had limited our thinking and had put everyone into a traditional "women's organization"; we were doing more than we had given ourselves credit for!

Using these new discoveries, we evaluated what we were doing: 1) How much are we doing to minister to those already in the church? 2) How much of what we are doing is an outreach to

nonbelievers with the gospel of Jesus Christ? This enabled us to identify our strengths and weaknesses. We were ready to plan for change.

We realized that to grow in our faith we needed to use Bible study and prayer as the foundation. "Women in the Word" gives women of all ages and stages of growth opportunity to meet weekly for in-depth Bible study. Women from our neighborhood attend; some have become members of Redeemer. We also formed prayer circles designed to pray specifically for Women's Ministries, our church leadership, and for the personal needs of those around us.

We now provide opportunities for outreach to nonbelievers by planning three major events each year. We encourage the women of Redeemer to invite family and

friends who are nonbelievers. These events are non-threatening and include a clear presentation of the gospel. The three events this past year were a Mother-Daughter Banquet, a dinner/fashion show, and a Christmas tea. We have seen eight women pray to receive Christ. This is eight more than a year ago!

This is only a beginning. We have a very long way to go to reach the goals we have in mind, but at least we have begun! □



Linda J. Ebel is Christian Education Director at Redeemer Baptist Church, Warren, Michigan.

Mother-Daughter Event: Sunrise Baptist, Fair Oaks, CA

Showing Love to Others

by Nancy Korpics

The purpose of the Ladies Christian Fellowship of Calvary Baptist Church, Bethlehem, PA, is to unite our women into a fellowship that will encourage growth in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer, Bible study, evangelism, development of a missionary spirit, and Christian stewardship. To fulfill this purpose, we have a variety of ministries.

One ministry for women of all ages focuses on Bible study, prayer, and fellowship. A study is chosen for our five circle meetings held at different times in our women's homes. One study is held in the morning where baby-sitting is provided, another in the afternoon, and three in the evening. One circle involves girls from grades nine through twelve. The

women in each circle also correspond with and support a missionary family as well as visit shut-ins regularly.

Several joint meetings are held at the church with a speaker, music, and special feature such as flower arranging or interior decorating. In April, the highlight of our year centers around a mini-retreat weekend featuring a speaker, who focuses on the topic for the year, music, and several workshops.

During our church's missionary conference in October, our women meet with the missionaries and get to know them on a personal basis. Some of our women also enjoy doing White Cross work.

Special ministries include providing meals for those who are ill or shut-in, or sitting with recuperating or terminally ill people. A spiritual sister ministry,

where two women are paired for one year, helps the women develop close relationships through regular contacts, cards, and sharing of prayer concerns.

1 John 3:18 says, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." The women's ministries in our church give women the opportunity to show their love for others through their deeds.

Above all, prayer is what makes this ministry work. □



Nancy Korpics is president of the Ladies Christian Fellowship of Calvary Baptist Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Reaching Out to Others

by Elenor Kern

The personal involvement of one woman reaching out to another woman is the basis for the love and acceptance our women feel at Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, California. Some ways are

Women of all ages are included in our planned outreach. (*Lavender & Lace*—younger women honor older ones at brunch; *Baby-sitting Seminar*—equips youth and serves mothers; *Mother Daughter event*—hosted by young and older.)

Opportunities to study God's Word are the foundation to our ministry. (Several options are *Explorers*—indepth Bible study; *For Better or Best*—marriage helps; *Blessed Unbelievers*—support group for wives of unsaved husbands; *Finishing Touch*—diet, discipline, and discipleship; *Evening Class*—career and working women; *Neighborhood Coffees*—reaching neighbors in homes.)

Missionary emphasis is necessary. (*Grant-A-Wish*—contact missionaries and give special gifts; *Adopt-A-Missionary*; *Prayer Favors*—reminders to pray for specific missionaries.)

Electives are provided to enrich women's lives. (*Learning skills: cake decorating, tole painting, stenciling, or exercising. Doing White Cross* involves non-Christian friends also and encourages women at home to feel fulfilled.)

Nurturing new believers. (Each woman is encouraged to pour her life into another woman's life through friendship in order to help that woman grow in Christ.)

'Support Single Women. (Small groups for single moms in evening Bible studies; *Counseling*—assisting with financial help when needed; *Resume and job skills*—our college girls offer this service; *Crisis Pregnancy Center*—provide some volunteers and resources.)

Warm caring. (*Widows' monthly luncheon*; *H.O.M.E. [Help Others Meet Emergencies]*; *Hospital Glad Bags*—little gifts of cheer wrapped with Bible promises; *Tender Touch Ministry*—a group of women are assigned one shut-in to visit and telephone regularly.)

Offer help to young mothers with *Mom's Day Out*. (Mothers drop children at the church for a day of preschool activities. They shop, read, or go out to lunch.)

Reach out creatively. (*Friendship Tea*—women invite unsaved friends; *Guest Night*—women invite husbands; *Craft Night*—women and girls make Christmas items; *Keepers at Home*—women display crafts and take orders to make for others; *Christmas Coffees*—women open their homes.)

Keep women informed. (Bulletin boards; bulletin inserts; women's yearly booklet; *Ministry Faire*—present ministry opportunities.)

I find it a great joy to serve our wonderful Lord by loving and ministering to God's precious women! □



Mrs. Elenor Kern is Director of Women's Ministries at Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, CA, and wife of the senior pastor, the Rev. Gene Kern.

What Is Working in My Church in Youth Ministry?

by Carol Potratz



"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:4, 5).

These verses from Paul's letter to the Philippians are the basis for what we do in our youth program. My dream for my kids is to be others minded but also to be careful not to neglect their own life. . .to strike a balance. To achieve this balance, I try to provide opportunities for growth personally, through our youth group, and through missions.

Personally—our youth group provides a "youth devotional book" for each junior and senior high youth through their senior year in high school; each youth has opportunity to share their talent in worship or service (depending on the talent); each youth (who chooses to) may lead their peers spiritually through our youth prayer breakfasts or socially in our summer youth program (the whole summer program is youth planned and led).

Group—Every thirteenth Sunday, our group takes charge of the evening worship service. We take this opportunity seriously and attempt to address areas we are convicted of through the medium of drama, song, and scripture. Each summer, our youth group goes on a "Traveling Retreat" to some point-of-interest (like Chicago, Denver, Calgary). En route, each person has a specific job (fill fuel, do windows, load van), and EACH takes a turn leading the group in devotions and prayer. To earn money



for these "Traveling Retreats," we do various "ministry projects." I REFUSE to call them money makers because that is NOT our primary purpose; our primary purpose is to minister and if we earn money as well—Praise the Lord! One such project is a Sweetheart Banquet. The Men's Brotherhood always sponsors a Valentine's Meal for their wives; we have volunteered to cater it for a free will offering, thus allowing those who might not otherwise afford it to come and allowing others to give more IF they choose.

Missions—We have supported a Mexican girl for a year; sent Bibles to Africa; sent money to Juan and Amanda Luna for new chairs and tables; caroled at the local Baptist Home and senior citizens' homes; and gone to Texas to conduct vacation Bible school for Luna's church.

Most of the kids in my youth group are from church homes . . . they remind me of "Timothys"—a rich Christian heritage. Because of the heritage they have seen and accepted as their own, I try to "fan into flame the gift of God within them" by helping them lead in various ways. I guess the real test of whether or not all this is "working" is to see how these kids USE this training as adults. . .so ask me this question again. . .in five years. □



Carol Potratz is the director of Christian Education and Youth at Bismarck (North Dakota) Baptist Church.

Youth Want More than Comfortable Christianity

by Annette Konrad



know God in a deeper way so that they might, in turn, make Him known among the people of the world. Ultimately, the goal is to prepare each person to be on a short-term, cross-cultural evangelistic outreach team.

The Intensive Discipleship Training, a 12-week curriculum, utilizes well-known speakers, both live and on video, who teach on prayer, worship, and committed discipleship to Jesus Christ. Session topics include the messenger and his God; the messenger and his enemy; the messenger and his relationships; and the messenger and the lost.

Following this lecture phase, the training culminates in a two-week cross-cultural field trip; frontline ministry in discipleship and evangelism is experienced firsthand. On these outreaches, we join forces with North American Baptist Conference Church Extension projects and home mission fields. We have gone to Rio Grande City, Texas, to work with the Rev. Juan Luna at Garcia's Ranch Baptist Church, and to Newark, New Jersey, to work with the Rev. Rubens Domingos at Walnut Street Baptist Church.

The Team's aim is always to work alongside the church's ongoing ministries, serving and encouraging in any way that the pastor wants.

Costs of the outreach are kept to a minimum through bus travel, sleeping bag accommodations and economical meals. Participants finance their own trips; however, costs are never prohibitive.

Past training sessions have included young singles and young married couples, but we expect that senior highs, young families, and middle-agers can also serve. Anyone who has a sincere commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, and who wants

more than anything else to grow in God, is a candidate for the intensive training.

At Central, IDT has served as an equipping agent to train people and then release them for service. Whether they become involved with home ministries or decide to go to a cross-cultural setting, these students have tasted what frontline mission work is all about. They know how to pray for missionaries and encourage full-time workers. They also

know that financial support is vital to these ongoing ministries. Through the training and then practical application that outreach provides, the graduates want to be involved as never before in our church, our community, our city, and our world. □

Annette Konrad is Assistant for Mission Bridge at Central Baptist Church, Edmonton, AB.

"Some things in life are optional and some are not. Becoming a Christian is optional. But once you decide to ask Jesus Christ to take control of your life, involvement in world missions is no longer optional."—C. Peter Wagner, Fuller Seminary School of World Mission

At Central Baptist Mission Bridge, we are seeing more than ever before that young people desire more than

comfortable Christianity; they desire involvement in world missions, which means being "ruined for the ordinary." For many here at Central Baptist Church in Edmonton, the question is not yes or no to missions, but "How can we prepare ourselves to fulfill the calling that God has for us?"

The foundation of the Intensive Discipleship Training (IDT) is missions training—helping our people



Testimony of an IDT Graduate

Anonymous

Prior to Intensive Discipleship Training (IDT), I loved the Lord and desired to have Him Lord of my life, but I lacked the desire and discipline necessary to spend quality time with Him in prayer and in reading and meditation of His Word. My faith was weak; I lacked boldness to share the gospel with others, and my effectiveness as a "salty" Christian living and working in a secular world was limited. The

IDT application process required completion of a "resume" summarizing my Christian beliefs and involvement in Christian service and study. I was appalled at the disparity between the energy and commitment I'd invested in professional preparation and what I'd invested in equipping myself as an ambassador of Christ.

IDT offered a unique opportunity to be "discipled" by four caring and

committed leaders and eleven other participants. I enjoyed the fellowship, support, and encouragement offered by a group of Christians who were "pressing on" (Philippians 3: 12-14). By listening to live and videotaped speakers, I learned about many attributes of God and learned that more than my service, God desires that I develop and maintain a personal relationship with Him as my Saviour, Father,

and Lord. I was warned to "beware the barrenness of the business of service" and was challenged to devote myself to God, have "eternity stamped on my eyeballs" (Ravenhill), and in response to His Lordship, see His hand in all my activities. Repentance was sought; habits of daily prayer and Bible study established; the reality that I am in a spiritual battle realized.

As a result of IDT and the "Outreach" at Christmas, I have received spiritual nourishment, been drawn closer to Christ, and have been "spoiled for the ordinary" (Keith Green). More firmly grounded in Christ, I am better equipped and excited to minister to others.

For my required book report, I read the *Master Plan of Evangelism* and was struck by the similarities between the structure and purpose

of IDT and Christ's ministry to the 12 disciples. Coleman wrote that the "acid test" for the disciples was whether they would carry on Christ's work without His bodily supervision. Now that IDT is finished, I am now faced with a similar challenge. I now have the privilege and responsibility to apply the lessons I've learned and to integrate them into my life. What an exciting pursuit! □

Commissioned to Witness

Praise God for Churches Growing Through Baptisms and New Members

■ **STEAMBOAT ROCK, IA.** Pastor Mike Lerud baptized four young people and six adults at First Baptist Church, Dec. 27, 1987. On Sunday morning, Jan. 3, 1988, these ten plus one adult, by letter of transfer, were welcomed into the church. On Jan. 31, 1988, Pastor Lerud officiated in a child dedication service. Six children were dedicated to the Lord by their parents.—*Verna Luiken*

■ **JAMESTOWN, ND.** Pastor Ray Hoffman baptized four adults and one child at Temple Baptist Church, March 6, 1988. At the communion service which followed, these five candidates were welcomed into the fellowship of the Church.—*Leona Meisch*

■ **BURLINGTON, IA.** "Recently, one man and two women showed their love for the Lord and their obedience to Him through baptism at Oak Street Baptist Church," reports Diane Weyl. Senior Pastor Gregg Donaldson baptized the three during a worship service.

■ **SIOUX FALLS, SD.** Dr. John Terveen baptized seven young people at Hillcrest Baptist Church. These along with four other persons were welcomed into the fellowship of the Church during his last two months of ministry there. The Church held a farewell reception for Dr. Terveen, his wife Laura, and children Matthew and

Rachel, on Jan. 31, 1988.—*Louise Westerman*

■ **CAMROSE, AB.** Valentine's Sunday morning was a special celebration at Century Meadows Baptist Church as eight believers were baptized. Pastor Mark Morris spoke on "What Does Baptism Mean?" "The church was filled to capacity as many people shared in this important event," reports Ruth Muzika.

■ **MEDICINE HAT, AB.** Following their recent baptism by the pastor, Rev. Erwin Kujat, seven adults were received into membership of Temple Baptist Church, Feb. 24, 1988.

■ **DICKINSON, ND.** Pastor Daryl Dachtler baptized two children at Hillside Baptist Church, Feb. 13, 1988.—*Mrs. Fred Kulish*

■ **EAST DETROIT, MI.** Seven people were baptized Easter Sunday at Ridgmont Baptist Church by the Rev. Doug Timm, pastor.

■ **BURTON, TX.** In January, Greenvine Baptist Church held revival meetings with "The Musical Dalzells," Ron and Marjorie Dalzell of Jamestown, ND. "With a variety of musical instruments, magic tricks for the youth, and nightly sermons, the Dalzells brought a special time of inspiration and fellowship," reports Cathy Mashburn.

Three young men made their confessions of faith during the meetings.

On Feb. 1, 1988, Pastor Don Mashburn baptized one of these young men and a family of four. All five were welcomed into the fellowship of the Church.

Hawkwood Church Dedicates New Facility

CALGARY, AB. The congregation of Hawkwood Baptist Fellowship held their first service in their new facility on Jan. 24, 1988, with 140 in attendance. At the dedication service held March 6, 278 people attended as the Rev. Charles Littman, area minister, spoke. "Our work continues to grow under the blessing of the Lord," reports the Rev. George Redington, pastor.

Fifty Children Involved in Jamestown Church Club

JAMESTOWN, ND. During the school year, Wednesday evening is the time for children of all faiths to gather at Temple Baptist Church for "Awana" night. Up to 50 children participate. At the Awana Fair, the children brought many of their parents and friends. "The enthusiasm of these children is a joy to behold," says Leona Meisch.

New Day's Ministry Appreciated by Kansas Church

HUNTER, KS. "Bethany Baptist Church and community appreciated the ministry of the New Day team, Jan. 22-28, 1988," reports Katherine Loofbourrow. "They delighted us with their beautiful singing, drama, and puppets. They presented a spiritual challenge at each meeting, resulting in several commitments to the Lord."

The Rev. Anthony Dickerson is pastor of the Church.

Freiter Speaks at Hillside Church

DICKINSON, ND. The Rev. and Mrs. Gordon Freiter, Ebenezer, SK, ministered for a weekend at Hillside Baptist Church in February. On Saturday afternoon, Rev. Freiter conducted a three-hour workshop, "Small Group Ministry," at the Church. He also spoke during the Sunday morning worship service. The final service Sunday evening focused on an effective strategy with group therapy. At the conclusion of the session, each small group spent time in prayer.—*Mrs. Fred Kulish*

25 Commit Lives to Christ at Youth Retreat

ALPENA, MI. Eight youth and sponsors, Pastor Tim and Traci Powell, from Ripley Boulevard Baptist Church joined

some 350 youth and sponsors for a senior high winter retreat at Spring Hill Camp, Evart, MI, Feb. 12-14, 1988. Speaker Gary Zelesky spoke on "Taking a Stand for Christ in Your High School." In response, 25 young people committed their lives to Christ; two from Ripley Boulevard Baptist Church were won to the Lord.

The junior high retreat held at the camp, Feb. 19-21, 1988, included among the 400 attendees 18 youth and their sponsors, Tim and Donna Pollard and Gary Smith from Ripley Baptist. Mark Reed, a youth evangelist, spoke on "Dating Relationships" and "Making a Decision for Christ." The young people responded with 50 decisions being made for Christ.

Activities enjoyed during the retreats included an ice cream social, broomball tournament, cross country skiing, horseback riding, ice skating, tubing, and horse-drawn hayrides.—*Doris Turnbull*

Wessellers Speak at Hunter Church's Women's Anniversary

HUNTER, KS. Bethany Mission Circle ladies hosted a church fellowship dinner at Bethany Baptist Church, Feb. 14, 1988, in observance of their 67th anniversary. Mr. and Mrs. Delmar Wesseler, special morning and afternoon speakers, shared their slides and impressions from their recent visit to the Brazilian mission field.

The Rev. Anthony

Alpena Church Focuses on Youth in February

ALPENA, MI. During February, the emphasis at Ripley Boulevard Baptist Church centered on youth. Tim Powell, minister of youth and education, spoke during the Sunday evenings following the youth retreats. Comparing youth today with David battling Goliath, he related how our youth struggle with peer pressure, self-acceptance, and self-esteem. They are confronted with the drug problem, alcoholism, promiscuity, and birth control methods. Adults need to encourage, guide, and be an example to youth. Powell concluded, "Youth of all ages are a vital part of the ministry of the church; they are the future church."

This year, Pastor Powell will be working with WPHN, a Christian radio station, to help institute a major youth program in northern Michigan.—*Doris Turnbull*

Dickerson is pastor of the Church.—*Katherine Loofbourrow*

Women View Briscoe Videos at Retreat

BURLINGTON, IA. The women of Oak Street Baptist Church and their friends shared in an overnight retreat, March 11-12, 1988. Highlights enjoyed by the 62 attendees included special music by a trio and the "Retreat Chorus," learning tole painting, and a humorous "Tonight Show" skit.

Minnesota-LaCrosse Association Gives Support for Apple Valley Worker

APPLE VALLEY, MN. At its annual meeting in September, the Minnesota-LaCrosse Association decided to give financial support for three years to Apple Valley Baptist Church enabling the Church to employ a visitation/outreach staff member. This decision was made following the Church Growth Committee's finding that Apple Valley/Eagan was the fastest growing area in Minnesota. The Committee recommended the Association help strengthen this church, keeping in mind the goal that it would one day parent a new church.

Andrew Owzarek, a graduate of N.A.B. College and N.A.B. Seminary, accepted the position of



Visitation/Outreach Worker at Apple Valley Baptist Church on Nov. 1, 1987. He devotes 30 hours a week contacting and visiting those new to the community and others to whom the Lord leads him. Andy also assists with worship services at this growing Church, and his wife Nancy directs a children's choir.

"Pray for Apple Valley Baptist Church, its pastor, Etan Pelzer, and Andy and Nancy Owzarek in their continuing service to the Lord and His community," requests Shirley Maytan.

Called to Worship

The Bible study feature, "By Hook or by Crook," three videos by Jill Briscoe, examined the lives of the disciples chosen by the Master to become "fishers of men." "I believe each woman involved in the retreat was blessed by the fellowship and touched by the message presented," reports Diane Weyl.

Youth Plan Dinner for Calgary Trip

DICKINSON, ND. The youth of Hillside Baptist Church hosted an Ethnic Dinner for the purpose of

raising money for the trip the group is planning to take to Calgary, Alberta, for the Triennial Conference in July.

During March, Hillside Baptist Church participated in a Sunday school contest to encourage adults and children to get to Sunday school on time, bring their Bibles, and bring extra guests to Sunday school.

Mrs. Manuel Wolff, Bismarck Baptist Church, addressed the W.M.F. on "The Quiet Pain of Hurting Parents."—*Mrs. Fred Kulish*

Commanded to Care

Warren Church Benefits from Grief Seminar Led by Dundas

WARREN, MI. "Little did we realize what a hunger there is for people to talk about and share their grief," reports Dr. Kenneth C. Fenner, senior pastor, Redeemer Baptist Church. The Church held a three-session Grief Seminar, March 16, 23, and 30, 1988, led by the Rev. Jack Dundas. Topics addressed were "The Process of Grief," "The Family and Grief," and "The Church and Grief."

At the first session, about half of the 101 people attending were from the community who had read the church sign or seen the newspaper notice of the seminar. One woman who is in her early thirties and whose husband

had died with cancer just two weeks ago came, also. "Together, we cared, shared, wept, and prayed," reports Dr. Fenner.

Warren Church Provides for Needy Family

WARREN, MI. Redeemer Baptist Church is reaching into its community with excitement and vision. Recently, the congregation assisted a mother and six children who moved into the area and had little clothing and no furniture. God's people gathered together clothes for the entire family and fully furnished their home with beds, dressers, sofas, vacuum cleaner, and toys for the children.

Dr. Kenneth C. Fenner is senior pastor of the Church.

Medicine Hat Church Focuses on Church Growth

MEDICINE HAT, AB. A Church Growth Committee was formed at Temple Baptist Church as a result of last spring's seminar with the Rev. Ray Harsch, associate director for evangelism and church growth. "The immediate area of the church was canvassed and some contacts attended the open house for our newly renovated facilities and were introduced to our church programs," reports Mrs. Madeline Kern.

"Adult Sunday school shows good interest in a series of electives on the subjects of caring, encouragement, and family and marriage relationships."

Special Classes Geared for Children and Young Married Couples

STEAMBOAT ROCK, IA. A special class, New Life Changes, began for children in grades 5 through 8 at First Baptist Church in February. "This series of classes was designed to help this age group to better understand the changes and challenges they will face as adolescents and to give them the biblical basis to cope with these challenges," reports Verna Luiken. Instructors for these classes are church members and community people.

The Pathfinder Sunday School Class (ages 20-40) recently completed viewing and discussing the video series, "After I Say 'I Do.'" The purpose of this series was to encourage Christian marriage enrichment.

Compelled to Serve



McConnell Recognized for Service

APPLE VALLEY, MN. The Rev. Etan Pelzer, pastor, Apple Valley Baptist Church, recently

presented AWANA'S highest award to Sharon Elaine McConnell, commander of the Church's AWANA clubs.—*Shirley Maytan*

Correction: In regard to the news item concerning

McDermot Avenue Baptist Church, Winnipeg, MB, the entire windows (stained glass) of the church were professionally restored at a cost of \$69,000 not just one stained glass window as stated.

NATALIE BREDIN (91), Kelowna, BC; born Aug. 30, 1896, to Michael and Juliana Kin in Antonowka, Russia; died Feb. 21, 1988; married Alfred A. Bredin, May 29, 1917, who predeceased her; immigrated to Canada, May 1927; charter member, Trinity Baptist Church, Kelowna, BC; predeceased by one daughter, Mary Klassen, one grandchild, and two great-grandchildren; survived by four sons and their wives: Ervin (Mary) and Archie (Anne), Kelowna, BC; Sam (Adoline), Edmonds, WA; and Ertman (Agnes), Studio City, CA; one daughter and her husband, Ida (Otto Hemmerling), Kelowna, BC; 19 grandchildren; 32 great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren; Rev. Tim Schroeder, pastor, funeral service.

ERNEST CRAIN (84), Newport Beach, CA; born Jan. 1, 1904, at Lawton, OK; died Jan. 28, 1988; member, founder, Harbor Trinity Baptist Church, Costa Mesa, CA; predeceased by his wife Minnie; survived by his son, Gene Crain, Laguna Beach; his daughter, Carol Wood, Jackson, WY; five grandchildren; and one great-grandchild; Rev. Bruce Merrifield, pastor, funeral service.

HARRY L. JOHNSON (83), Elgin, IA; born Jan. 8, 1905, to Henry H. and Carrie (Janzen) Johnson, at Steamboat Rock, IA; died March 21, 1988; married Kathryn Krueger, Sept. 21, 1933; member, First Baptist Church, Elgin, IA; trustee, N.A.B. Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD, 1959-73; predeceased by two brothers, Edward and Victor; survived by his wife Kathryn; two daughters: Marjorie (Mrs. Robert Hach), Solon, IA, and Patricia (Mrs. Dennis Hoffman), Rochester, NY; four grandchildren; one brother Dr. Louis R. Johnson; and three sisters: Mrs. Evelyn McMullen, Mrs. Ella Mae Carragher, and Mrs. James (Mildred) Gossen; Reverends Norm Miller and Willis Potratz, pastors, funeral service.

ROBERT O. LAESSIG (82), Shawnee, OK; born Oct. 21, 1904, to Robert and Elisabeth Scheibe Laessig in Gotha, Germany; married Hildegard Viglahn, May 20, 1935; missionary to Cameroon, West Africa, 1936-1940, until, with his wife and two children, he was captured by the British and held captive in Jamaica for 6½ years; immigrated to the United States in 1947; member, University Baptist Church, Shawnee, OK; survived by his wife Hildegard; two sons: Klaus-Peter, Killeen, TX, and Martin, Key West, FL; one daughter, Erika Loseman, Brea, CA; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; one half-brother, Lutz; and one half-sister, Ingrid.

JAMES HOWELL SORELLE, SR., (67), Carmine, TX; born July 2, 1920, to Thomas and Lettie SoRelle; died Feb. 20, 1988; married Mary Elizabeth Sayre, July 14, 1942; member, men's Sunday school teacher, Greenvine Baptist Church, Burton, TX; survived by his wife Elizabeth; one son, James, Jr., Kyle, TX; two daughters: Sandy (Mrs. Ronnie Rippenhagen), Brenham, TX, and Judy (Mrs. Evan Laughton), Carmine, TX; three grandchildren; and two brothers: Walter and Vernon SoRelle; Rev. Don Mashburn, pastor, funeral service.

DENA F. WOLFF (96), Aplington, IA; born Oct. 3, 1891, to Henry and Altje Lukes Frey in Ackley, IA; died Jan. 28, 1988; married Jacob Wolff, Feb. 24, 1916, who predeceased her; member, Aplington (IA) Baptist Church; predeceased by three brothers: Joe, Henry, and Herman; one sister, Bertha Ammann; one granddaughter, Linda Meinders; and one great-granddaughter, Tressa Meinders; survived by two sons: Garrelt and Henry, both of Aplington, IA; two daughters: Swanetta (Mrs. William Hemmen), and Luella, both of Aplington, IA; 11 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; and one sister-in-law, Marion Frey; Rev. Donald Patet, pastor, funeral service.

wedding anniversary

Harry and Harriet Luiken of Steamboat Rock, IA, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, 1988.

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A New Church...

(continued from page 9.) us a heart to reach out to the lost. The Body of Christ continues to grow as we see even the new and young Christians doing their part in serving the Lord Jesus. All men will be drawn unto Jesus as we continue to lift up His Name.

The battle has just begun, and all of us must keep watch. There are so many more to reach in the future; this town is expected to double in size over the next two years. Stewart's future looks bright; yet we must not lose sight of reaching the lost in Stewart and northern British Columbia as well as the world for Christ.

Mr. Paul Paquette is pastor of Stewart Christian Fellowship (British Columbia). His wife Judy and a member of the Stewart Church, Anne Wright, wrote the article.



Religious Faith and Marital Commitment

by J. Walter Goltz

"The lowest levels of personnel commitment are found among males of conservative religious affiliation."

Most of us assume that our religious faith makes a significant contribution to our marital commitment and stability. The concept of marriage as covenant in which God plays a significant part in our relationship ought to contribute to the happiness and adjustment of this relationship. A great deal of research supports the finding that like-faith couples who attend church regularly are much less likely to experience marital breakdown.

In this column of the March issue of the BAPTIST HERALD, the differentiation was made between personal commitment and structural commitment. Personal commitment was defined as an inner determination or strong personal dedication to make my marriage work despite adversity or temptation to deviate. Structural commitment, in contrast, was defined as external pressures to remain married regardless of personal commitment (for example, stronger divorce laws, presence of children, negative church reaction).

What impact does religious affiliation have on marital commitment? We are all aware that different denominations, and different churches within the same

denomination, react differently to the permanence of marriage and the possibility of divorce. In my study using Edmonton, Alberta, data, I have analyzed four major religious groupings. The first group consisted of those who had no religious affiliation. The second group was composed of those belonging to mainline denominations (including Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and United Church). The third category included all Catholics (Greek, Roman, and Ukrainian). The final group was made up of those belonging to conservative religious denominations (including Baptists, Mennonite, Pentecostal, and Salvation Army).

It is probably no surprise to discover that the lowest levels of structural commitment were found among those couples who had no religious affiliation, while the highest level was found among those of conservative religious affiliation. In other words, the strongest external barriers to terminating a marriage are found in those of conservative religious affiliation.

What is surprising, however, is that the highest levels of personal commitment are found among those of no religious affiliation;

whereas the lowest levels of personal commitment are found among males of conservative religious affiliation. It may be that where external barriers to marital breakdown are strong, the development of strong personal bonds may be regarded as unnecessary.

Within conservative/evangelical circles, the dominant approach to increasing marital stability or preventing marital breakdown, has been to increase external barriers to divorce. Far too often, we have made little or no attempt to strengthen the personal bonds uniting spouses in a spiritual covenant of mutual love, caring, respect, adjustment, and effective conflict resolution. It is only recently that some attempts are being made to conduct marital enrichment seminars in which spouses are helped to make good marriages better. In this day in which external barriers are systematically weakening, we need to place a growing emphasis on strengthening marital bonds. □

Dr. J. Walter Goltz is President of North American Baptist College and North American Baptist Divinity School, Edmonton, Alberta.

■ *The Rev. Traugott Vogel* has moved to 460 East 48th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V5W 2E5.

■ *The Rev. Ray A. Seutter, Ph.D.*, is the Executive Director of Cornerstone Counselling Centre in Edmonton, Alberta. He also has Associate Supervisor Status in the Canadian Association of Pastoral Education.

■ *The Rev. Harold Anderson* has accepted the call to North Carrollton Baptist Church, Carrollton, Texas, effective June 1, 1988. He has been serving as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Parkersburg, Iowa.

■ *Dr. Lawrence Wilkes* became pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, Anaheim, California, effective March 16, 1988.

■ *The Rev. Kenneth Raphael* resigned as Minister of Music at Temple Baptist Church, Lodi, California, effective February 15.

■ *Dr. Robert Schreiber* is the Visitation Minister at Temple Baptist Church, Lodi, California.

■ *Lewis Day* became pastor of Canaan Baptist Church, Crawford, Texas, effective February 28, 1988.

■ *The Rev. Joseph Schneider* was installed as pastor of Bloomingdale Baptist Church, Bloomingdale, Illinois, on April 10, 1988.

■ *Mr. Randolph Morgan* has accepted a staff position at Colonial Village Baptist Church, Lansing, Michigan. He formerly served as Associate Pastor of Christian Education at Bethel Baptist Church, St. Clair Shores, Michigan.

■ *The Rev. Paul Davis* resigned as pastor of Cypress Springs Baptist Church, Coral Springs, Florida, effective May 1, 1988. He and his wife will continue their ministry with "Caring Place," a home for unwed mothers.

■ *John Dotson* becomes pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon, effective June 1, 1988. He is a 1988 graduate of Western Conservative Baptist Seminary.

■ *The Rev. Anthony Guenther* of Crystal, Minnesota, became part-time chaplain at Friendship Village on March 7, 1988.

■ *The Rev. Harald Gruber* becomes assistant pastor at Grace Baptist Church, Kelowna, British Columbia, effective June 1988. He has been the

pastor of Brooks Baptist Church, Brooks, Alberta.

■ *The Rev. Craig Perry* has accepted the pastorate of an independent church in Bakersfield, California.

■ *The Rev. Klaus Joujan* has resigned as youth director at Grace Baptist Church, Kelowna, British Columbia, to return to Zambia as a missionary under Africa Evangelical Fellowship, effective March 31, 1988.

■ *Mr. David Wesner* was called by the Northern California Association to plant a church, Vaca Valley Baptist Church, in Vacaville, California. He began his ministry there the end of March 1988.

■ *The Northern California Association* has closed down the church planting ministry in Pleasanton, California, as of February 1988.

■ *The Romanian Baptist Church of Orange County* was recognized as an official North American Baptist Conference congregation and received in to the Southern California Association on February 19, 1988. *Pastor Daniel Branzai* serves as pastor of this congregation which meets in *Magnolia Baptist Church*, Anaheim, California.

■ *Discovery Baptist Church* is the name chosen for the new church planting work in Cedar Hill, Texas, with *the Rev. Doug Bittle* as pastor.

■ *Central Baptist Church, Yorkton, Saskatchewan*, expressed appreciation and gratitude for the leadership of their pastor and wife, *the Rev. and Mrs. Delvin Bertsch*, on January 24 during special services. Pastors and visitors of other neighboring churches also attended this farewell. The Bertsches are now pastoring Emmanuel Baptist Church in Morris, Manitoba.

■ *Mr. Ed Hughes* resigned as pastor of Whyte Ridge Baptist Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, effective May 31, 1988.

■ *The Rev. Arlo Grenz* has resigned as Director of Christian Education and Outreach at Brentview Baptist Church, Calgary, Alberta, and has moved to California. He was united in marriage to Miss Christa Oelke on April 30, 1988.

■ *The Rev. Klaus Hildebrandt* has accepted the pastorate of Bothwell Baptist Church, a member church of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, effective April 10, 1988. He had been serving as interim pastor of the church extension work in Mississauga, Ontario, through March.

■ *Warren Wetherbee* is Minister of Evangelism/Discipleship at Grace Baptist Church, Racine, Wisconsin, as of March 1, 1988.

■ *Mr. Herb Latin* retired from the position of Visitation Minister at Temple Baptist Church, Lodi, California.

■ *The Rev. Oliver Bender* was installed as the new pastor at First Baptist Church, Fessenden, North Dakota, recently. The Rev. Ralph Cooke led the installation service.



■ *Dr. J. C. Gunst* (81), after serving 50 years in ministry with the North American Baptist Conference, officially retired Dec. 31, 1987. For the past 17

years, Dr. Gunst served as a part-time Estate Planning Counsellor. Before that, he served in a number of positions: pastor, Grace Baptist Church, Grand Forks, and First Baptist Church, Wishek, North Dakota; general secretary, Young People's and Sunday School Union, promotional secretary, Central District Secretary, and South Central Area Secretary, North American Baptist Conference.

"We salute Dr. and Mrs. Gunst for their long, faithful, fruitful ministry," says Dr. Connie Salios, estate planning director. "As Estate Planning Counsellor, Dr. Gunst was instrumental in assisting hundreds of individuals to write wills and trusts. As he is remembering the Lord's work in his estate plan, he has diligently encouraged others to do the same," says Salios. "Local churches and the united ministries of the Conference will benefit because of his service." Dr. and Mrs. Gunst reside in Salem, Oregon, and are members of the Riviera Baptist Church.

Church Growth Tips



"How Do People Come to Christ and to the Church?"

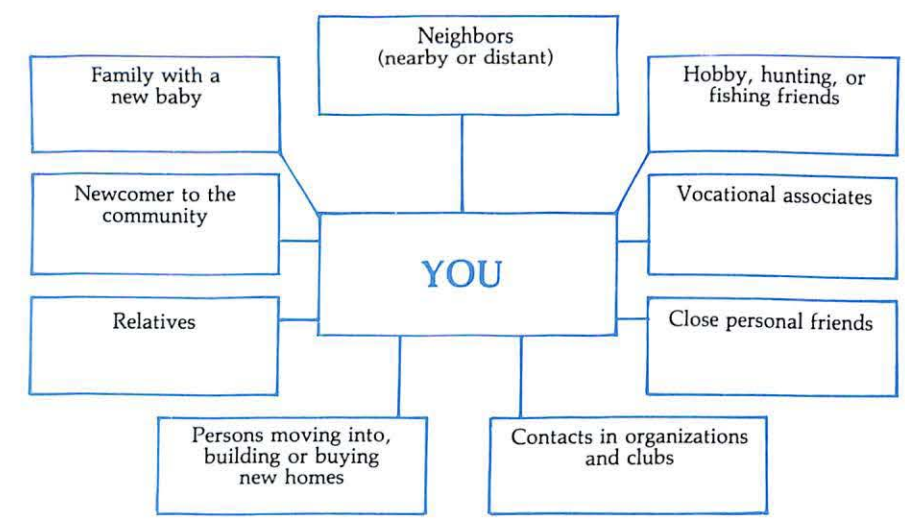
Several thousand believers were asked, "What ministry or what person influenced you the most to accept Christ as your Saviour and to come to the church?" Approximately 85 percent said a relative or friend brought them to Christ and the Church.

The most effective evangelism today is "people bringing people." Our task is to prepare God's people for God's work, so that the church can reach out to people all around us.

Dr. Peter Wagner of Pasadena, California, says, "In countries of the world today where faith is growing the fastest, none of the movements are clergy centered—they are all *lay* led." The diversity of voca-

tions and influences enables the laity - not the clergy - to be the most effective expression of the church at work in the world.

Every believer knows eight or more people within driving distance of their church who need Christ and the church. This is the church's most effective prospect list. To help you discover who these people are, *write their names in the appropriate box(es)*. Plan and pray for opportunities for you to share your love and friendship with them: A coffee at your home, a sports event, a shopping trip, a picnic, a breakfast at your church, a concert, or a special night at your church.



These are the people God has placed into the pathway of your life. Select one or two with whom you can share your love and friendship in the months ahead. Create opportunities to share the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ (I Thessalonians 4:12).

Growing churches have discovered that these are the people who come to Christ and the Church. □

Ray Harsch, Associate Director for Church Growth and Evangelism

baptist world aid



Funds Needed for Relief in Burma

Four natural and man-made disasters occurred in 1987 and 1988 in Burma, resulting in the need for relief and resettlement aid for people of the churches of the Burma Baptist Convention.

Due to these disasters, many people lost their lives, and many others face famine and other social hardships, and/or are homeless.

Thousands of rats, appearing in the paddy fields as if they were dropped from the sky, destroyed all crops in areas of the Shan and Kachin States. 897 families from Baptist churches now face famine and food storage problems, and need seeds to plant next year's crop.

Civil strife at the Thai border area of Burma has forced 581 families of the Baptist church community to flee their homes and leave everything behind them. They have become helpless, displaced people.

A severe drought in Thantlang Township, Chin State, severely affected 80 percent of the crops. About 5,000 people in 50 villages, mostly Christian, now face famine. Food supplies are urgently needed for at least six months as well as seeds to plant the next crop.

On March 20, 1988, a fire killed 113 people and destroyed 2,096 houses in Lashio Town, Shan State. Among the 64 injured and hospitalized were a number of Christian families.

The Burma Baptist Convention has expended all its relief funds and needs help.

Your contributions designated for this need should be made out to North American Baptists, Inc., and designated for "Relief for Burma," and sent to North American Baptist Conference, Baptist World Aid, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181.

Meadowlark Baptist Church of Edmonton, Alberta

Invites all friends and former members to attend the 25th Anniversary Celebration of our congregation October 7-9, 1988

Inquiries or greetings, contact: Andrea Doell 9200 - 156 Street Edmonton, AB, T5R 1Z1 (403) 489-0291

capital funds

\$609,376 Contributed in 1987 for Capital Funds

Thank you for your contributions amounting to \$609,376 in 1987 for the "Building on the Foundations of Faith" Capital Funds Campaign.

At its meeting in February, the Conference Executive Committee distributed funds to Associations that had participated in the Capital Funds Campaign to raise funds for themselves. They also made distributions to the various ministries of the Conference: Missions, Church Growth, North American Baptist Seminary, and the support services at the North American Baptist International Office. These support services are the Financial Services and Development Departments, as well as to the General Council for the 90-day operating reserve.

On five overseas mission fields, projects still need to be fully funded and completed. This is also true of all projects in North America.

Your continuing, faithful support for the Capital Funds Campaign through December 31 of this year is needed. The Campaign officially concludes at the end of December 1988.

"We encourage you, as individuals and churches, to do all that you can to complete your covenants and goals," says Dr. Connie Salios, campaign director.

Thank you for your gifts. The work of the Gospel is being advanced because of your special contributions to the "Building on the Foundations of Faith" Campaign. Thank you again for your generosity. □



N. C.

• • •

N. L.

coming soon!

"Celebrating a Century of God's Grace"

First Baptist Church 200 SW Third Minot, North Dakota 58701 will celebrate its centennial anniversary July 22-24, 1988

Friends and former members of the Church are invited.

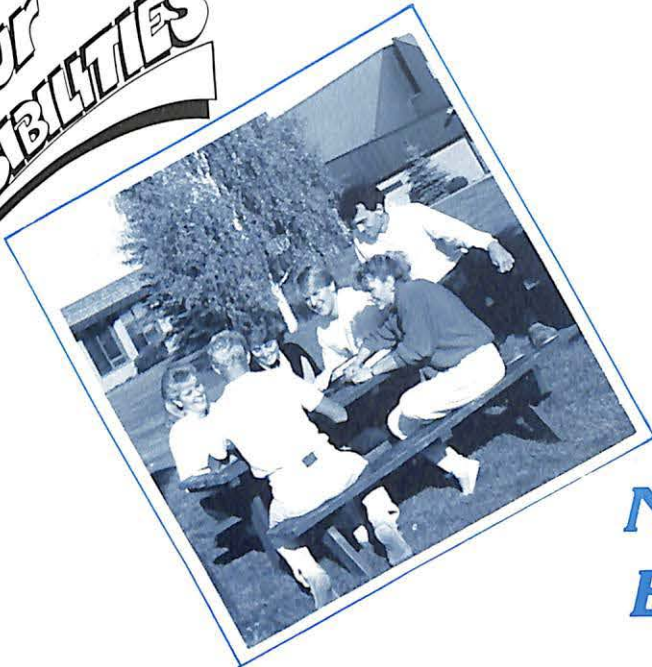
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