

Baptist Herald

March 1990

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V I S I O N

2000

Our Strategic Focus On The Biblical Imperatives



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Who Will Provide Spiritual Resources for New People?

People are on the move today. When they come to a new community, they look for schools, grocery stores, shopping centers, and medical services.

However, Jesus said that people need more than the physical necessities of life. People need to hear and be nourished by God's Word and to experience His love. By helping to plant a new church in a new community in North America, you can make needed spiritual resources available to them.

"New Churches...New Life," an evangelistic outreach through a church-planting strategy, has three major goals:

- To win people to Christ
- To double the number of new churches planted annually, 1989 to 1991
- To raise \$1,800,000 in cash and covenants by May 1, 1990
- **Campaign update:** As of January 26, 1990, 321 covenants totalling \$718,980 have been made.

Write today for your copy of "New Churches...New Life," a brochure explaining the need and how you can help meet the need.

- ☐ **Yes, I want to help provide spiritual resources for people in new communities**
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Send to: "New Churches...New Life," North American Baptist Conference,
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BAPTIST HERALD (USPS 042560) (ISSN-0 005-5700) is published monthly (except January/February and July/August bi-monthly) by the North American Baptist Conference, a binational conference of churches in Canada and the United States, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181. Phone: (708) 495-2000; Fax: (708) 495-3301. Second class postage paid at Villa Park, IL 60181 and at additional mailing office, and registered as Second Class Mail under permit #9327 at Norwich, Ontario.

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

ADVERTISING RATE: \$8.00 per inch single column (2 1/4 inches), black and white. **OBITUARIES:** \$8.00 US; \$9.00 CDN., to accompany obituary; (100 word limit).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Six to eight weeks notice required for change of address. Furnish effective date and address label from recent issue. Send address change to **Baptist Herald** subscriptions, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181-3906.

Member of Evangelical Press Association.

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

Because Herbert Hiller strongly believes that we desperately need persons of integrity, he offers

AN INTEGRITY STRATEGY

by Herbert Hiller

The search for integrity is on. Two tragic world wars and scandals in government, big business, schools, and churches have made people skeptical. Whom can you believe or trust?

Dr. Warren Wiersbe in his book, *The Integrity Crisis*, points out that people everywhere struggle with "the blemished life-styles of their leaders, with problems of their accountability, morality, and loss of credibility."

However, should anyone feel like going about with the oldtime Greek philosopher Diogenes and his lantern at noonday in search of an honest man, let him recognize that each of us is engaged in "a constant battle to balance the strong public with the weak private self-image." Yet we desperately need persons of integrity who do what they say, or promise, to hold together time-honored institutions, ethical standards, and values. What then is the integrity we are looking for?

Dictionaries tell us that the word integrity derives its meaning from the Latin word "integer," which means entire, whole, as distinguished from fraction; or it can designate constituent parts of an integrated whole, working together harmoniously. As a moral value, it means entireness, wholeness, uprightness, trustworthiness in personal and corporate character, without pretense or hypocrisy.

In a *Decision* magazine article, Dr. Billy Graham describes an integrated person as one who is "the same on the inside as he is on the outside, no discrepancy between what he says and does, between his walk and talk." Hence, he has nothing to fear or to hide, he is transparent, his word of promise, like his honor, is as good as gold. This is the rare treasure people and God are looking for (2 Chronicles 16:9).

However, when we think of pursuing integrity, we become aware of the finiteness and frailty of our weak, sinful nature — our deficiencies, deceptions, duplicity, evasions, temptations, errors, and the polluting "Zeitgeist" (spirit of the times). Experience also teaches

us that it is in the nature of sin to disintegrate, dissolve, and divide, which makes life discordant and difficult. How then can the evil spell be broken, and fragmented life be reassembled and integrated?

The Mysterious Realm of the Mind

An honest search for an integrity strategy takes us into the mysterious realm of the complex human mind. Here is where man in his dignified elevation over nature and animals pursues knowledge, truth, and beauty. But also in weakness, he succumbs to poor judgments and wrong decisions, making him sink to the lowest depths of evil-doing (Genesis 6:5). However, the merciful God always sought to retrieve the repentant from his sinful ways and transform him in character from "a glaring scarlet-red to snow-white purity" (Isaiah 1:18).

Again and again Christ challenged people to think clearly and Scripturally (Matthew 22:29), for "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). With the apostle Paul, we are to be concerned that "every thought be brought into obedience to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). Since every act is first a thought and so thoughts fashion life-style and destiny, equip your embattled minds with a Scriptural system of insights and values.

Control of Our Emotions

An integrity strategy must also include the control of our emotions. As distinct from thought or intellectual processes, they constitute a strong power surge of various inner feelings, which seek expression for good or ill in wants or cravings.

As life's driving force, emotions, their chill or warmth, are never to be discounted. Good feelings, favorable inclinations, and fond attachments add spice to life — tone, color, and temperature to expressions — and give wings to words and thoughts. As compel-

ling desires and affections, they are amplifiers or steam-rollers of ambitions and dispositions, which determine our course of action.

More than intellectual reasons, emotions play a dominant role in the molding of life's decisions, as people often choose vocations and marriage partners for reasons mind cannot define nor justify. Hence the voice of wisdom cautions that we "guard our heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

When Christ, who was all grace and truth, confronted the reasonable Nicodemus with the absolute demand of a spiritual rebirth, He grounded it in the basic emotion of God's love. Dwight L. Moody, who firmly believed that nothing like the Gospel can warm the human heart, urged soul-winners to "aim at the heart, for if you get it, you will get the head, feet, and everything; you get the whole man." Head-faith may chill, but heart-faith warms and wins.

However, while emotions are the obvious driving force in life, one must also carefully guard against mere emotionalism or sentimentalism, which is like racing the motor of a car with the clutch out, going nowhere (Luke 11:27). Worse still are the unholy emotions and lustful, unbridled passions taking control and creating situations beyond human ability to handle. Ill-guided or unchecked, their danger, like that of a car out of control, is frightening. For safety, the Apostle Paul recommends that our emotions be Spirit-controlled (Colossians 3:2, 3). We will then see evil checked by what Thomas Chalmers in his classic sermon calls "the expulsive Power of a Great Affection."

The Submission of the Will

The last important area in our search for integrity is the Will in its needed submission to the sovereign Will of God for an ever-growing and rewarding blessing. As the prophet Isaiah stated: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the best this earth yields."

"The will is the man" was the ringing assertion of William James, for he insisted that "we are made what we are, not by our thoughts nor emotions but by our wills." But a renowned poet also said: "Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

However, by nature we are not so inclined. We want our willful way. We have sometimes heard it from children who defiantly stamped on the floor and said, "But I don't want to."

This stubborn willfulness is so often expressed by the rebellious human family in its resistance and disobedience to God. Indeed, He has much trouble with stiff-necked, willful people all over the world. It made Jesus weep over many a city like Jerusalem or a soul like Judas whom He wanted to save, but "They would not..." (Matthew 23:37).

Still as troublesome as is the frustration of stubborn willfulness, the Lord also knows the worth and power of joyous willingness — the eager heart and mind to learn and obey, to do, to be, to become. God valued

open doors with locks, open windows with screens, to keep the evil out.

People are useless to God until their wills are committed. According to temperament, some people may be converted intellectually or emotionally, but says Dr. Billy Graham, "They will not last, until the will has been surrendered."

When a person's will is won, he will throw all his power into an undertaking, even as did Jesus without a waver in His loyalty (John 5:30). To His disciples, Jesus stated the genius of true service by saying, "If any man will do His will, he shall know the doctrine" (John 7:17).

Each of us is engaged in "a constant battle to balance the strong public with the weak private self-image."

Accordingly, seeming doubts and inability are most often a shield cover of our unwillingness to do what we know to be His will. An entirely committed life has a purpose and a momentum that is well-nigh irresistible.

Jesus taught that the Kingdom will come through the efforts of available, willing people who cheerfully carry out the Great Commission with what they know and have, learning amazingly much by just doing. The golden act proves the genuineness of their intent. This is integrity in workclothes — competent, honest, upright, and trustworthy.

People may differ in type or temperament — some being more intellectual, others more emotional or volitional — yet these differences need to be bridged, modified, and controlled for a richer relationship with Christ. Too much emotion at the expense of reason or action will shortchange spirituality. Instead, a proper balance of intellectual truth and emotional motivation, empowered by the Holy Spirit, will produce exciting results — right attitudes, fresh insights, personal purity, and consistency in teamwork for dimensional living and warmest memories.

With King David, we pray: "May every fiber of my/our being unite in reverence to Thy Name" (*Living Bible*). Can you imagine what astounding progress the Lord's work would score if every fiber of our being were united in a whole-hearted response to our Conference's strategy of *Vision 2000* with its six Biblical Imperatives, with our emphasis especially this year on Challenged to Grow?

Dr. Herbert Hiller is a retired pastor living in Warren, Michigan, and the author of The Living Stream, a devotional book available from him or the Conference office.

What Price Integrity?

Does It Pay to Tell the Truth?



Maria and Gregg Evans

by Gregg and Maria Evans

This is part III of Ed's story that began in the July-August issue of the Baptist Herald. Part II appeared in the September issue.

The official rate of unemployment in the Philippines is 8.6 percent, but chronic underemployment, barely distinguishable from unemployment, is more than 40 percent. Most Filipinos (over 55 percent) live below the poverty line. The minimum daily wage is under \$4.50, and per capita income is \$670 a year. Jobs are hard to come by, and the opportunity to land one must be taken.

Two years ago at age 16, Ed falsified his age on several important documents in order to get a job. Now Ed is 18 and unemployed again. He needs a job. He has his grandmother, wife, and infant son to support. The four of them live on the \$50 sent to them each month by a relative in the States.

A large department store chain recently advertised job openings; so Ed, along with a few hundred others, applied. This time, in addition to presenting his falsified papers which say he's 21, Ed also told the interviewer that he had completed most of a two-year college course, though he's never been to college. The interviewer liked what she heard and told Ed to return with his high school diploma the next day for

orientation.

Ed knew the job could be his if his diploma could be altered to correspond to the ages and dates stated on his other documents.

Before Bible study that evening, Ed had a friend change the diploma to say he graduated in 1985 rather than 1987.

"Christ's Lordship is not something that can be compartmentalized. It extends to every area of our lives."

This kind of thing goes on all the time. It is just part of the application process. So much so, that Ed didn't have the slightest inkling that he was doing anything wrong, even though he had received Christ as Savior three weeks earlier.

Ed needed a job, and the store needed a worker. In Ed's mind, the accuracy of the information on a job application is not important. Effectiveness, not honesty, is the issue.

The application and interview process is merely a test of one's ability to say whatever it takes to get the job. That's the way Ed has thought for most of his 18 years. That's the way the world thinks.

But the Bible says, "Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Mental renewal needed to begin transforming Ed.

That night at Bible study, it dawned on Ed, for the first time, that for a Christian honesty is always an issue, even in applying for a job. Christ's Lordship is not something that can be compartmentalized. It extends to every area of our lives. This was a revelation that would really test Ed's commitment to Christ.

Ed found himself in a very difficult position. Could he confess to God and not to his employer? Could he continue in the deception and be forgiven later? What is real repentance? Is it possible to repent without turning from the thing repented? Would God want him to throw away a job for which we had been praying? Isn't supporting his family more important than being honest on a job application?

And there were a host of other questions, less theological, perhaps, but just as real. What would his grandmother say? What would his wife say? What would his wife's family say? What would his friends say?

But the question it all finally boiled down to was this: What would Jesus say? Ed knew the answer to that question, and he based his decision on it. The next day he would tell the interviewer the truth.

Ed stopped at our house on the way to orientation the next morning. I asked him if he had explained his decision to his wife.

His reply brought tears to my eyes. He had told her, "We have become Christians. We have died to sin, how can we continue in it?"

These words came from the mouth of a three-week-old Christian who has a grandmother, wife, and baby to support, but who had decided that he would throw away a good job, if necessary, rather than get it dishonestly.

I asked him what his wife said about his decision. "She understands the idea," he reported, "but she also says we have no money." We prayed together, and he left. Maria and I prayed the rest of the day.

At the interview, Ed "came clean" about everything. The interviewer was shocked that anyone would confess such a story on the day of job orientation.

Ed was allowed to continue with orientation, while his status was reviewed. He was prepared for the worst, but at the end of the day, he was told that everything was fine, and if he passed his physical exam on Monday, he'd have the job!

"And Ed passed the physical, got the job, and he and his family lived happily ever after." Right? Wrong.

Ed failed the physical due to some minor physical condition. So he has no job, no prospects, and no money. He still has a grandmother, wife, and son to support.

Life is like that even for Christians. But Ed has something that a job or money can't buy. Ed has something that the Enemy tried and failed to take away from him. Ed has Christian integrity. □

Gregg and Maria Evans are serving as missionaries in Legazpi City, Philippines.

More than \$6,600,000 given in 1989

Churches and individuals overwhelmingly responded during December as they prayed and gave to meet the financial needs of Conference missions and ministries. At year end, we found giving totalled \$6,610,309, the largest amount ever. This is \$212,000 or 3.4% more than last year in total giving to the basic budget, the growth budget, and special projects.

We thank God for His provi-

sions and you for your good stewardship.

In spite of this excellent record response of \$1,341,375 in December, there still was a shortfall of \$263,570 in meeting the goal of \$4,750,000 for basic mission and ministries in 1989. That is a significant shortfall, which will demand careful evaluation and reduction of some ministry goals for 1990.

It should be noted that in 1989 department directors exercised good management of expenditures so that the basic budget was under-spent by about \$30,000.

On behalf of all ministry departments of the North American Baptist Conference, I express our deepest appreciation to all churches and individuals for this excellent

demonstration of Christian stewardship. We are grateful to God for His intervention and blessing.

Your full participation in the 1990 ministry goals and support of financial goals are needed. The total financial goal for all areas of ministry for 1990 is \$7,289,195. (Subject to possible revision by the Executive Committee in February.)

Pray for renewal by the special moving of the Holy Spirit among us as we are **challenged to grow** spiritually this year as part of **Vision 2000**.

Together, as a Conference of churches, with God we can do more than any one of us can do alone!

—John Binder
executive director



Darlene Haschke.

THE HOPE OF EASTER SUSTAINS ME



by Michal Bossard

power of positive thinking that she could get her hands on.

"Somehow I wasn't completely satisfied though," she says. "I wanted a change in my life." She decided one evening in 1973 to tune in to a Billy Graham Crusade on television. "He was explaining how we all are searching for peace," she says. "I wanted that peace, so I remember kneeling in our family room and making my commitment to Christ. From that moment on, my own ambitions became less important, and I saw others in a new light. I also became much more interested in what the Bible had to say."

The Turning Point

In the spring of 1980, Darlene was diagnosed with cancer at Mayo Clinic. She was faced with two surgeries only ten days apart as well as six weeks of radiation treatments. What she found most difficult to face, however, was having to be away from her family.

"I had three teenagers back home and a husband busily farming," she says. "My oldest daughter was graduating from high school, and I had to miss it! As I look back, I realize this was a major turning point for me, as I had to learn to let go of the people I loved. I was forced to become more dependent upon the Lord. I also realize God was preparing me for trials yet to come."

Darlene went through radiation to treat a lung tumor and cancer in the lymph system during which, "Twice, I honestly thought I'd die from the treatments."

Later, in Omaha, X rays indicated regrowth of a tumor on her lung. The Mayo doctors told her she had three months to live.

"Amazingly, after all this, the Lord chose to heal me!" Darlene said. "I sought competent medical treatment and prayed for God's healing touch. God deserves the

glory for the wonders of medicine and for the miracle of healing. True faith is simply acknowledging God's sovereignty in such matters."

Miss Nebraska

The Haschkes' oldest daughter, Sandra, accepted Christ as her personal Savior through the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, while she was a sophomore at university. When Sandra was selected Miss Nebraska in 1982, her busy schedule proved to be another type of endurance test for the Haschke family. The crown gave her (now Sandra Magnuson of Dallas, Texas) many opportunities, though, to testify about her belief in Christ.

Great Risk Taken

In 1985, the Haschkes' youngest daughter, Kim Bender of Humphrey, was diagnosed with Hodgkins disease. She was five months pregnant at the time. Kim went to extremes, at great risk to herself, not to harm the developing baby. After delivering a healthy boy by Cesarean section, she went through a spleenectomy and six weeks of radiation treatments. She is now in her fifth year of remission.

"Kim was told she'd never have another baby," Haschke said. "But, we're very thankful that she was blessed with a second child."

God Chose Not to Heal Him

On February 1, 1987, Darlene's beloved husband, Leon, suffered a massive stroke that left him bedridden and totally dependent upon others for his daily needs.

"I had seen God work to heal me, so I naturally prayed for Leon's healing, too," she said. "He had been a six-foot four-inch tower of strength to me, and I believed God could return him to complete health. But, God has chosen not to heal him in that way."

Though Leon could not speak at first, he now can speak well enough to be understood, at times. Also, when he is able to listen and concen-

trate, Scripture readings bring peace to his spirit. Darlene said, "Since Leon is blind and immobile, his spiritual well-being has become of first importance."

Darlene was advised to place her husband in a nursing home or skill care unit. "For me, the absolute last resort would be to put Leon in a facility," she said. But, she found the management of a 700-acre farm in a deteriorating farm economy a tremendous challenge.

"We were financially strapped with all that had happened," she said, "But I took Leon home, because I wanted to try to care for him myself. My son, Brian, and I, with the help of Leon's Aunt Eleanore, volunteers from various churches, and some hired nurses worked to run the farm and care for Leon at home."

"A lady from Columbus called and asked how she could help. I asked that a man come once a week to read the Bible and have a Bible study with my husband, my son, and me. I had found that during the first eight months in the rehab center that the only way my husband would be at peace was to read Scripture or a meditation to him, and pray with him."

"My friend told me about a new pastor living seven miles up the road. He is Marlin Mohrman, pastor of Creston (Nebraska) Baptist Church," says Darlene. "She said that he would love to come to our home and have a Bible study for our family. This he did."

It was through this, that Darlene became a part of Creston Baptist Church. "I'm so grateful for God's faithfulness in my life; He constantly encourages me."

Then the unthinkable happened.

We Had Talked about Death

On June 23, 1988, the Haschkes' only son, Brian, age 21, was accidentally electrocuted while moving irrigation pipe. This was a devastating loss for Darlene, as it would be for any parent. Not only had Brian been working extremely hard to run

the farm, but he was very close to his dad, and he had spent much of his spare time comforting his stricken father.

Darlene said, "I take comfort in the fact that Brian was a committed Christian. Brian and I had talked about death (due to Leon's condition), but, of course, we had no idea Brian would pass on first."

Darlene tried to continue caring for Leon and managing the farm, but without Brian's help, she was physically unable to continue.

"I wanted to care for Leon, but simply couldn't," she said. "So, Leon had to be admitted to a skill care unit."

Darlene continues to live in the home Leon built near Humphrey, and she drives to Columbus to visit him as often as possible. In spite of the calamities she has experienced, Darlene has not lost her trust in God. In fact, she says, "I have had to die to myself, and the Holy Spirit has become my source of life."

A Bible verse that offers comfort to anyone, but which seems particularly fitting for Darlene Haschke is found in 1 Peter 4:19: "So if you are suffering according to God's will, keep on doing what is right and trust yourself to the God who made you, for He will never fail you."

"One must look to God for strength and help. God has blessed us with so much of His grace and comfort," says Darlene. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms' (Deuteronomy 33:27). When I can realize that there's nothing man can do, I get real excited — and it is easy to let go and know that it is in God's sovereign hands. We would live in so much light and freedom, if we were not trying to control but instead letting God walk us through life."

Reprinted by permission from the Pawnee Scout, August 6, 1989, Pawnee Scout, Inc., Columbus, NE.

Darlene Haschke is a member of Creston (Nebraska) Baptist Church.

It is impossible to comprehend how one human being could weather the storms of life that Darlene Haschke has had to weather. Any one of the several catastrophes she has faced might defeat men or women of lesser strength. But, she takes no credit for her resilience. In fact, she says, "Everyday I choose to look at Christ's resurrection rather than His

death. Because Christ is alive and lives within me, the losses I've experienced are balanced by His presence."

A Storybook Family

In 1970, the Haschkes could be described as a happily married Humphrey, Nebraska, farm couple with, "three healthy, wonderful children." Darlene says, "Leon was successful at farming and talented in other ways, too. He built our beautiful home."

She recalls feeling like there was nothing they couldn't accomplish once they set their minds to it. In fact, she read every book on the

from the professor's desk

Learning from the Land of the Bible

by J. Gordon Harris

Living in Israel and studying the land revolutionized my understanding of the Bible.

During the Fall of 1988, I allowed the land of Israel to teach me. I removed my tourist hat and humbly put on student lenses. Now the Bible breathes with new color and significance.

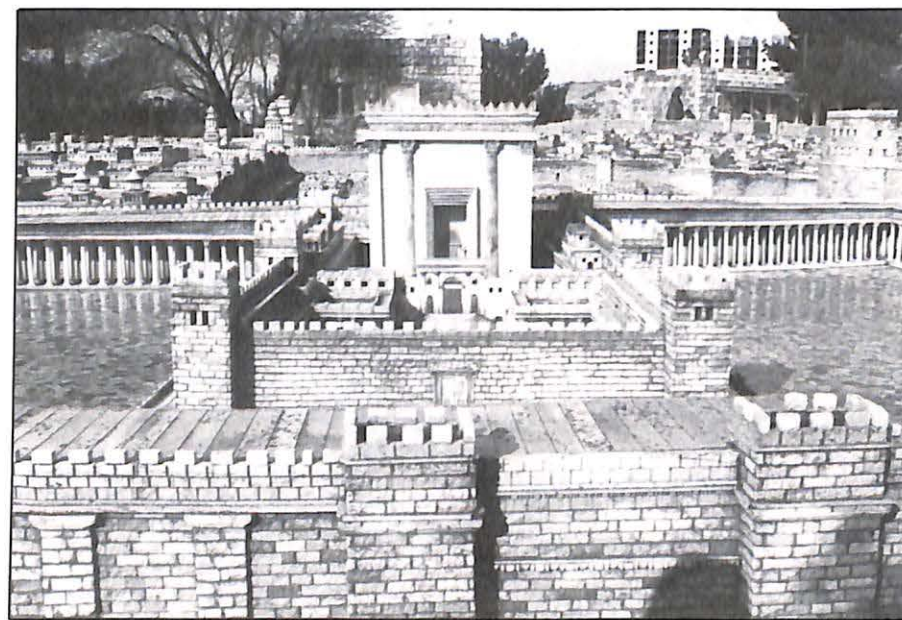
The Contours of the Land

The extremes of the land are amazing. Everything in Jerusalem goes uphill. No wonder the Bible talks about going up to Jerusalem.

Ruins of the city, which David conquered, remain on a hard, limestone cliff. It was a small fort with a population of the royal family and government employees until the time of King Hezekiah.

The palace and temple of Solomon were built on a higher hill that he connected to the city of David. From the time of Hezekiah until the present, the city was built on higher hills surrounding the others.

The hills of Jerusalem were very imposing to pilgrims in the Bible. And God certainly seems present, high and lifted up, on the Temple mount.



Model of Jerusalem Temple courts.

Cutting through the central mountains are wadis, which resemble deep canyons. Though not as big as the Grand Canyon in the U.S., they are steep and long. They carry heavy rains from the mountains west to the Mediterranean Sea or east to the Jordan River/Dead Sea. The wadis are so deep that ancient travelers traveled to Jerusalem or Hebron on adja-

cent ridges, not through the wadis. Armies caught in the wadis could easily be slaughtered.

Wadis limited approaches to the hill country and protected Israel more than its military did. Wadis and mountains allowed slaves to settle in the central highlands safe from the chariots and war machines of Canaanites and Philistines. God gave



Israel. Dr. Harris visited all areas on this map!



Herodium Fort/Palace built by Herod the Great near Bethlehem.

able. Grass is brown, and the countryside blends in with the rock. The desert wind blows in dry, hot air.

The rainy season begins in October. By November, the cold goes to your bones, and chill causes colds and sickness. Besides the two seasons, northwestern Israel is rainy, and the southwest is extremely dry. Israel experiences every type of weather.

Even during the hot, dry season, ultra-orthodox Jewish men and their sons wear white shirts, ties, and long black wool coats, wool trousers, and black wool hats. Their wives and daughters wear long dresses and cover their heads. Such garb would feel good in November through February but must test those convictions the rest of the year. I decided that those folk have more stamina and piety than I do.

Some Arab Bedouin wear the traditional robes of the desert in the heat and rain. To me, they seem overdressed in the dry season. Nevertheless, in Israel a person needs as much protection from the sun as from the rain.

Travelers must be prepared for anything in this land. Jesus' command to give away the coat/outer robe and shirt (cloak) to someone who sues you (Matthew 5:40) means more to me because of this experience. Clothes represent more than what can be bought in a department store, as clothes were very expensive. They signify identity and provide protection in ways that only Midwesterners who experience blizzards can understand. In a land where shade, air conditioning, and adequate heat are rare, clothes mean survival.

Communities in Israel cherish their trees. Most of the trees are planted and cultivated.

Fruit trees and vines have the most value. I enjoyed fresh grapes and fruit in Israel, and I learned to appreciate pomegranates. In the Old Testament, they symbolized fertility.

Jezreel, splits the northern mountains moving east to west. The Jordan River Valley (Great Rift) moves from north of the Sea of Galilee to the south ending in the Dead Sea. The Jezreel Valley in the north is the most fertile of the valleys. The Dead Sea area is the lowest point (-1,282 feet) on the earth's surface. Mount Herman in the northeast (Lebanon) towers over mountains on both sides of the Jordan (8,232 feet).

Cities and important roads dominated the lowlands. Here lived the enemies of the people of God. Armies passed through valleys and conquered fortresses along the way. Egypt and then Assyria claimed this land between the great empires.

Israel and Judah were important primarily because of location. The major highways gave Israel an opportunity to tell to the world its faith. Lowland agriculture and trade helped Israel make a living and a statement about their God. Ruins in the lowlands remind Bible students that the cities became too much of a temptation for rural Israel to resist. Still, they provided a way to communicate the unique faith of the Bible.

Weather, Trees, and Fruit

Israel has two seasons: rainy and dry. In August, the heat is unbear-



The back yard of an Arab house in Bethany.

Israel a land of mountains and wadis through divine providence.

Surrounding the mountains and interwoven with them are the lowlands. Foothills (Shephelah), west of the central highlands, lie between the coastal plain and the highlands. The desert (Judean wilderness) begins in mountains east of Jerusalem and continues into the valley beside the Dead Sea. A large fertile valley,



A sycamore tree at Jericho.



Qumran Cave 4 where manuscripts were found.

They play an important role now in the New Year's festival meal. Israelis eat pomegranate fruit to ensure a bountiful new year.

Wine and bread play important roles in holy meals. Rabbis bless the very sweet bread and wine at the beginning of the meal.

I ate the Sabbath meal with orthodox Jews while my oldest daughter was in a hospital in Jerusalem. I was not sure I belonged with them. They insisted that I stay and loaned me a hat to show adequate respect. So in a foreign country, I discovered generous friends with a different religion.

I will never forget the hospitality of friends with whom I shared grief and pain during the illness of my daughter at the Hadassah Hospital at Ein Karem.

Religious Festivals

Experiencing the religious life of Israel impressed me, as a seminary professor, more than anything else. The sights, tastes, and sounds of special feast days remain in my consciousness. Their festivals revolve around two elements: synagogue worship and family sacred meals.

In the synagogues, participants sing loudly and well. The songs vary

with the festival. Early in the morning and late in the evening, synagogue worshippers go to the western wall to begin and end the holy day. Most of the days begin in prayer and/or confession and end in joy and forgiveness. One theme dominates the closing of a festival: God has heard and delivered the people; rejoice and dance in the Lord; salvation is assured.

Special meals involve all family members as they recount the story of the festival. Father and mother explain the significance of each element to the children. Hospitality for outsiders is valued as a good work.

At the Feast of Booths, families build shelters on the porch of their apartment or wherever they find space. They eat meals, and some sleep there. The experience reminds the family that the nation lived in tents in the wilderness after leaving Egypt.

The meals are important events. A family buys special foods for them, and the mother carefully prepares the food.

With fond memories, I recall some of the events of the five months I spent in Israel. Although I felt perfectly safe in the country, I sorrow

over the strife that continues between Palestinian Arabs who remain in the land and Israeli neighbors. I recall the struggles of Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Jerusalem and Samaria.

Permanent inhabitants of the land attack each other rather than foreigners. An election in Israel and increased conflict with the Palestinian Intifada during the five months I spent in the country remind me that it remains difficult to love a neighbor as we love ourselves (Leviticus 19:18, 34; Luke 10: 25-37).

Still, the sounds of trumpets (Shophar) during New Year's Day and the awesome silence on the Day of Atonement echo in my memory from time to time. The Bible lives more as flesh and bone, not just as an object of study. I have seen with my eyes, handled with my hands, and known directly the land of the Bible. God's Good News lives now in a colorized version in my teaching and preaching. □

Dr. J. Gordon Harris is Professor of Old Testament and Academic Vice President at North American Baptist Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD. He spent five months of his sabbatical last year in Israel.

MISSION FAIRS—

They Could Spark Up YOUR Conference!

by Judy A. Gazard

Something had to be done to raise awareness of missions in our Calgary area churches. The annual conference was attracting mostly the middle-aged to older group and had kept the same format for years. What could be done to involve and attract more people?

A committee was formed, mostly lay representatives from the Mission Boards of the local churches and a couple of pastoral representatives. After many meetings where we did little more than brainstorm, we came up with the idea of Mission Fairs. We decided that one would take place every night of the Conference, and that all seven Calgary churches would be invited.

Apart from day-time lunches and breakfasts, the Fairs were the main event of the Conference. The idea was to give people an enjoyable, but educational evening. Each fair focused on one of our mission fields. The missionaries attending the Conference participated in many different ways, instead of only showing their slides as in the past.

One church showed a general film on the culture of a country before people, in groups, were ushered onto a "plane" to fly to that particular country. En route, the passengers were given several different cultural rules they had to follow during their visit. As they arrived in the gym, decorated to look like the country, they were greeted by a choir of children singing choruses in the national language.

The activities used by the different churches during the Fairs included:

- 1) Information about the country
 - a) Charts on the walls; people were given a question sheet to answer during the evening, and the correct answers were given at the beginning of the service.
 - b) Self-correcting multiple-choice charts with interesting information about the country.
 - c) Displays of literature (obtained from Consulates)
- 2) Missionaries' slide shows were shown by other people (tapes accompanied the slides, freeing the missionaries to interact with people in different ways).

Prayer points were shared in creative ways (eg. at the Japanese Fair, Sunday school classes wrote to the missionaries asking for prayer points. These they wrote out on many small pieces of paper, which they attached to "prayer trees." People leaving the presentation were asked to take a prayer request and use it).

3) The missionaries were used in the following ways:

- a) to teach some of the language (eg. a greeting or chorus or more)
- b) to demonstrate a skill (eg. cooking, flower arranging)
- c) in skits
- d) in panel discussions
- e) to demonstrate something peculiar to their country (eg. how to wash five pairs of hands in one cup of water)

4) Food from the different countries was served, usually in quite small portions, as a snack.

5) Various activities were provided for children (eg. flag-making, origami [Japan], African stories).

6) A booth was set up to help people compare the price of goods in Canada with prices of goods in the missionaries' countries.

7) Art work and artifacts from the country were displayed. Posters were obtained from Consulates and travel agents.

8) Some volunteers in costume from ethnic churches in the area helped in various ways.

9) Skills from various countries were demonstrated (eg. karate from Japan).

10) Different groups from within the churches were asked to participate (eg. Sunday School classes made cherry blossom trees; the youth made signs for the

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A choir of children, singing choruses in Japanese, greeted each "plane" of people.



The night before the fair, willing helpers turned the church foyer into the inside of a plane.



by Glenn L. Durden

A Mile of Pennies for Missions*

When MaryAnn Thimmes suggested that the Missions Committee of Cascade Park Baptist Church in Vancouver, Washington, attempt to gather a mile of pennies from the body of that church, there was a healthy skepticism among the other committee members. She persisted and showed how paper "rulers" could be made and taped to the wall with donated pennies taped onto these rulers.

"Each ruler would contain 15 pennies," MaryAnn said, "and we only need to fill 5,280 of these rulers to have our mile." A little quick arithmetic told us that we would need 79,200 pennies to complete the task. The majority remained unconvinced.

MaryAnn persisted. "We have more than 400 people attending church every Sunday," she stated. "If every person coming through the door would bring 198 pennies, we would reach our goal."

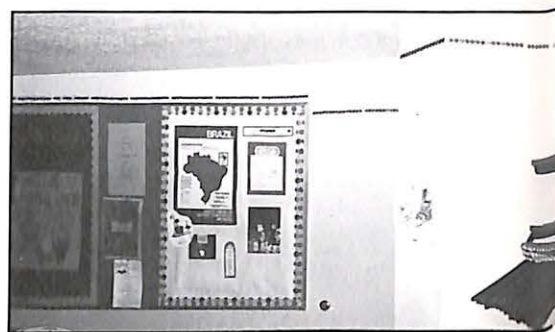
When it was put that way, the committee felt a little better about the prospects for success. The month-long drive was launched on the first Sunday of April 1989.

Throughout the month of April, children and committee members

took their places by the front door in the foyer of Cascade Park Baptist Church to accept the pennies, which began as a trickle and grew to a flood. As fast as the pennies came in, they were taped to the paper rulers. Soon the rulers completely circled the foyer and extended down both sides of the hallway, extending past the pastoral offices and past the Sunday School rooms, which ran the length of the building. Many more pennies, other coins, and paper contributions came in. Soon we were out of space.

In the end, the skeptical committee members were right. We did not collect 79,200 pennies or other contributions to equal that amount. We did, however, collect contributions equaling \$500, which was exactly the amount needed to pay for the special project selected by the committee.

That project was the renovation of a basketball/soccer court for the Santa Catarina Baptist Association in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The committee felt that this athletic facility would be an important evangelical tool in sports-happy Brazil. This project also would catch the imagination of the young people of Cascade Park Baptist Church, who were the focus



The "Mile of Pennies for Missions."

of our penny drive.

The Missions Committee and the members and visitors of Cascade Park Baptist Church were happy to accept the challenge to provide the resources to help our missionaries in Brazil as they reach out to the people there. We pray that the new facility will draw many young people who will be encouraged to play on the courts and then be introduced to our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

And the next time that MaryAnn Thimmes makes a suggestion, you can bet that the rest of the committee will be listening!

Glenn L. Durden is a member of Cascade Park Baptist Church, Vancouver, WA.

Mission Fairs — continued from page 13

booths, the choir organized the nursery).

11) Retired missionaries and other resource people can be a valuable asset as well. They may have a display, also.

The Fairs ran from 6:30 to 8 p.m.; then a special programme was held for children. The adults had their own service. This included special music, singing, choruses in the language of the country being featured, an offering for special mission projects, and a keynote speaker.

This year's speaker focused on the theme, "Part of the Team." At the concluding rally, many people committed themselves to being "part of the team" in specific ways (eg. praying, writing letters, reading more about missions). They were encouraged to share this commitment with their pastor or one of the missionar-

ies at the fellowship that followed the service. This took the form of a "mini-fair" with all the missionaries present and some of the decorations from each Fair.

The conclusions reached were that the Fairs involved more people, gave the missionaries lots of opportunities to interact on a personal basis with others, and drew people from our seven different churches together — something that doesn't happen often in Calgary.

It was more work, and some things we'll do in a slightly different way next year, but the Fairs certainly excited people about missions as they haven't been for some time. So, if you'd like to try Mission Fairs, begin now to study a particular country, write to missionaries in that country for ideas, choruses, and recipes, and, above all, use your imagination!

Judy A. Gazard is a member of Brentview Baptist Church, Calgary, Alberta.

Worship Is Thanksgiving

by Myrna Goodman

Many times this year I have worshipped by thanking God for His care and direction.

I remember the night at SIH village — sitting all night in a smoke-filled kitchen with a labor patient who was bleeding seriously; thankful for God's answer to our prayers to keep her till morning light so we could travel the treacherous rainy season roads to get her to the hospital and medical care.

I also remember the night at Bom as I rejoined the Life Abundant Programme (LAP) team. How we praised God with thanksgiving for His miraculous care over her as we made that five-hour trip to the hospital. Though she was in shock when we left the village, and the baby had died, her own life was spared. We pray that this evidence of God's care will continue to witness to her family.

I thank God for the Health Center here at Mbem, and Peter Kakute, with whom I first worked at Bansa Baptist Hospital years ago as a young ward helper. I think of experiences shared with him this year as a qualified nurse in charge of the health center.

One Sunday morning, I spent several hours helping him to safely deliver a mother who had already lost the first baby, so that the second twin might live. In the absence of transport out, we did some unorthodox but effective treatment. As I returned to my house, I praised God with thanksgiving for the life of that little baby.

I also remember the beautiful dedication service in church a few weeks ago as Peter and his new



bride, Sara, were formally married with church recognition before family and friends.

I remember with thanksgiving the Bible study group and Peter's excitement as we began to meet with several staff members to study a discipleship series. We have had some good studies, but with irregular schedules, coming and going of various members, it is progressing slowly. I am thankful for the interest in learning more of God's Word.

I praise God with thanksgiving for the results seen in several LAP Posts. The Village Health Care promoters show increased interest in providing antenatal care. A growing number of mothers are receiving care as a result. We are working with two of the posts for further development of this, and we thank God for the female promoters who are interested in taking TBA (Traditional Birth Attendant) training in February 1990, pending government approval.

I am very grateful to God for continued health and strength to do this work. At times, it has been very exhausting and strenuous physically, but I am thankful for

that power to take "just one step." This kept me going as I had to trek out of one village after a hip injury from a fall while in the village.

I am also thankful for the result of two weeks of enforced rest at home with time to prepare for teaching continuing education classes, doing financial audits, and other office work, which cannot be done while out on trek so constantly.

I am also very thankful for you, your prayers, letters and cards, and financial support, which make it possible for me to be here. These are an encouragement to me of your love and concern.

God bless you as together we worship God with thanksgiving for His greatest gift of love sent to us in the form of a babe. May this thanksgiving continue to grow and show in our lives as we share this gift with others in that specific ministry to which He has called each one of us.

Myrna Goodman of Texas is a short-term medical missionary serving in the Life Abundant Programme, a primary health care work in Cameroon, West Africa.

Pressure to Revert to Traditional Religious Sacrifices



by
Nancy
Palmer

When I began to take cultural anthropology courses, first at seminary, then later at the University of Kansas, it was because I felt that this subject had much to offer missionaries who are trying to understand a culture quite different from their own. I have been especially interested in learning about traditional religious and medical beliefs and practices. To do this, it has been necessary to build up friendships outside the local Christian community.

Recently, I felt I achieved a significant breakthrough when I was able to observe two traditional sacrifices. (The traditional religion here holds that even after a person's relatives die, they continue to be concerned about and involved in what happens to those still living.)

In the first sacrifice, a chicken was killed, and prayers made to a woman's deceased mother for the mother's blessings on the woman's crops. The second sacrifice concerned reconciling a generations-old dispute between two villages.

Observing these occasions, and later talking with those involved and with others, has helped me to better understand how strong some non-Christian beliefs are here.

Within the church, there are many strong Christians who stand firm in their Christian faith when illness and adversity come into

their lives. But for Christians from non-Christian families, there is often much pressure to resort to devination and sacrifice when illness or other misfortune comes. It is very difficult to withstand this pressure, especially if it comes from parents.

Because of these pressures on Christians here, I ask you to diligently pray not only for missionaries but also even more for the Cameroonian pastors as they evangelize and teach true discipleship. Pray also for the Christians as they learn to truly trust solely in God's provision and power in their lives.

Three Cameroon Workers Receive Medals from Government

Three men received labour medals from the Government of Cameroon. They faithfully work at Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary in Ndu, Cameroon.

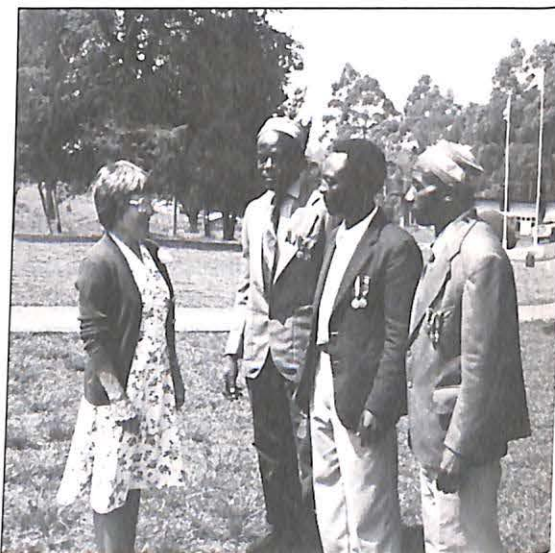
Mr. John Gamngong has been keeping the campus "running smoothly" for more than 30 years. He repairs and drives vehicles, repairs the electric generator, and sees that the Diesel engine that operates the water pump is taken to town for repair. (It needs it often!)

Moses Bako recently received his ten-year as well as his fifteen-year labour medal for faithful service as an office clerk. He has typed many class notes, exams, and business letters. Now he is the financial clerk at CBTS. He received his labour medal on Labour Day, May 1.

"Pa" Elijah has served faithfully as cook for almost 40 years without taking any sick-leave at all. He "commutes" to work by walking for at least one hour from his village to Ndu where CBTS is located and back in the evenings.

When students are on vacation, he helps in many other ways on campus, cooks for Field Leaders' Seminars, and short-term Bible school.

"Without these faithful co-workers," says Missionary Anne Marie Hattenhauer, "I could not teach courses, such as, Christian Education, in which our students learn how to assist in Sunday School Teachers' Seminars and to write and assist in the editing of Sunday school lesson books.



Missionary Anne Marie Hattenhauer (left) congratulates Mr. John Gamngong (left center), Moses Bako (center), and "Pa" Elijah (right) workers at Cameroon Baptist Theological Seminary in Ndu and admires the medals presented to them by the Government.

Nigerian Christians Face Religious Pressure

by Barbara Kieper

So that Nanah could go to school, he was sent from his village, Killayang, to Mayo Ndaga. Even though he came from a pagan family, he was given accommodations in a Muslim compound. The Muslims are very generous in this way.



James (center back) with his family.

Over the years, Nanah was converted to Islam. As a result, his father told him he could not return home.

Nanah's father eventually became a Christian and changed his name to Noah. After Nanah completed his schooling, he returned home. Many witnessed to Nanah, and he became a Christian and took the name of James.

That was 12 years ago. James has been very active in his church, and the village has chosen him as their Village Health Worker.

When the Primary Health Clinics (Village Health Worker Ministry) was started in 1979, James learned quickly. Day or night many people would come to him for medicine.

When I moved to the same village, Killayang, in 1983, no one could come to my compound for medical help unless they had been seen by James or unless he brought them. The whole process became an excellent teaching experience for him. Many times, I went to his compound to help him.

In 1987 we decided to collect funds from the community to build a medical dispensary, and James actively participated in this

effort. As a result, the dispensary was built, and it opened on July 18, 1987. James now works at this dispensary. Many people still go to him to explain their physical problems so he can tell Mr. Beye, the chief of post.

Since James is trusted by everyone, he is also the field treasurer and the association treasurer.

James has the keys to my house. When I am gone, he feeds my dog and chickens and waters my plants.

But pray for James! The other day an Alhaji, a Muslim family head, offered to give him a 911 lorry truck if he went back to Islam.

The Muslims are putting much pressure on the Christians to convert to Islam. Pray that all our Christians will remain faithful, and when this kind of temptation comes to them, they will have the strength to say NO.

Pray for the Christians of Mambilla Baptist Convention in Nigeria that they will remain steadfast and true to Christ.

57 Complete Village Health Workers' Course in Nigeria

Fifty-seven men and women, chosen by their villages, completed a Village Health Workers' Course on the Mambilla Plateau in Nigeria.

Missionary Barbara Kieper, Mr. Zephania Beye of Killayang Health Centre, and Mr. Emmanuel Fechu of Mbamnga Health Centre served as tutors for the three different classes.

The Workers received training to serve their villages in primary health care as well as to provide spiritual help along with the physical. All but eight are from villages that have not had this ministry previously.

Along with classroom teaching, students viewed medical and Christian filmstrips in the evening, used drama to do health teaching, and inspected the Bible School and Mbu village.

The students were divided into four groups. One of the groups dealt with the whole person as they also witnessed to a young man, who said he agreed with what they said and would now begin attending church.

The cost of feeding the group for the two week course had tripled since last year. Eighteen pans of corn were used at each meal.

During the first week of training, one of the tutor's wives was being taken by ambulance to Mbamnga as she was in labour. They thought they had plenty of time, since she usually was in labour for 12 hours. As they came to cross the river, she requested to be taken back. Twenty-five minutes after her return, she delivered a lovely baby boy. Mr. Beye assisted Miss Kieper with the delivery.

Pray for the Village Health Workers. Pray that they will be diligent in their teaching and good supervisors of the medicine and funds.



Worshipping the Lord in Nigeria

by Elmer C. Strauss

A rhythmic beat goes forth from the pounding of the sticks on the hollowed-out tree stock called a drum. It is the same beat six days a week. But today, it is announcing Sunday — the Lord's Day — the day His people gather to worship the risen Savior and His benevolent Father. What good would a calendar be to people who cannot read? But the message of the drum gets through.

With a smile of joy mingled with relief from the tedious farm work, the believers prepare themselves for worship. Worship is not something that they had to be taught. There were appointed days when they gathered to bless their deities and petition for rain, crops, and children. Then they knew when to worship by reading the signal sent forth from the moon. But now, they know God's name and have a Book which guides them on their pilgrim way.

As we approach the typical mudblock building of about 15 by 24 feet, we note a door and about two openings, called windows, on each side. The backless benches on the right, or "man-hand side," are for the men, while the ladies take their place on the "woman-hand side." They quietly enter, sit down, and bow their heads as they address in prayer the Lord Jesus Christ who walked on this earth.

Someone begins a song, and they all join in with jubilant singing. Since they have no hymnbooks to hold, they utilize their hands in vigorous clapping.

As you look about, you will see joy and peace reflected from their faces. These have been redeemed by the blood of His sacrificial Lamb.



The offering is very important. No one goes to worship empty-handed. With a bit of diligence, something acceptable is found. It may be a kola nut, an egg, bananas, a coin, or even some folding money. It is not only what is given, but also how it is given that produces gratefulness in the heart of the giver.

The average group of believers hopes that some day a trained man "called of God" will come to lead them in further discipleship training. Many of the churches just spring up in a village. They multiply faster than workers can be trained. We do remember the last words of Matthew 9:37: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."

Have you ever attended a worship service where there was no open Bible up front? Or where the deacon would ask if anyone present had a small Bible (New Testament)? Such a one would be invited to come forward and read from it for the spiritual refreshment of all.

A school boy comes with his Gideon New Testament. He turns to the Gospels for he knows the believers thrill to the stories that Jesus told. He thus avoids the the-

ological words used by the Apostle Paul. The reading proceeds slowly. He reads in English to himself and then seeks words in the local language so the story will be understood by the villagers. This takes time, but the believers eagerly wait for each word from God's Book. With the word "amen," the boy has come to the end of his struggle. And all the blessed people also say "amen!"

They prepared their hearts. They sang His praises. They brought Him their gifts. They heard His Word. They went forth refreshed, because they had worshipped the Living God.

Their worship style is simple. No bulletins, no piano to keep time, no light bills to pay, no insurance on the building, no P.A. system to go wrong, no drinking fountains, no rest rooms, and no nursery.

But God has been worshipped, and they depart to witness now with a sense of mission. ☐

The Rev. Elmer Strauss is a retired missionary who served in Nigeria and Cameroon, West Africa. He also pastored churches in the U.S.A. He and his wife Ruth now live in Dallas, Texas.

in memoriam

ELIZABETH ALBRECHT (82), Oakbank, MB; born July 15, 1906, in Russia; died June 18, 1989; immigrated to Canada in 1913; married David Albrecht, May 2, 1933; member, Oakbank Baptist Church; predeceased by daughter, Lorraine in 1971; survived by her husband, David; two daughters: Madelin (William) Schmitke, Winnipeg, MB; Grace (William) Elke, Oakbank, MB; four grandchildren; the Reverends Don Harder and Bryan Hochhalter, pastors, funeral service.

WALTER REUBEN HOFFMAN (65), Regina, SK; born August 11, 1924, Nokomis, SK; died Dec. 21, 1989; married Hazel Ostlund, July 1950; member, Calvary Baptist Church, Regina, SK; predeceased by his parents; one brother, Lorne; one sister, Loretta Bradley; survived by his wife Hazel; one daughter, Linda, North Battleford,

SK; two sons: Allan (Cindy), Hanley, SK; Darrell (Darcie), Regina, SK; five grandchildren; two sisters: Vivian (Mike) Popil and Mildred Litwin; one brother, Bill (Ellen); the Reverends Bruno Voss and Hans Serger, pastors, funeral service.

ARTHUR R. LEHR (72), Jamestown, ND; born Aug. 16, 1917, to Fred and Bertha (Hochstetter) Lehr; died Nov. 22, 1989; member, Temple Baptist Church, Jamestown, ND; survived by his wife, Frieda (George) Lehr; two daughters: Margaret (Selmer) Dockter, Atlanta, GA; Ardella (Pat) McCarty, Glasco, AZ; one son, Cordell, Jamestown, ND; two stepdaughters: VerDella (Emmett) Nitschke and Marlys Hust; two stepsons: Lee Roy and Clifford Hust; seven grandchildren; 1 great-grandchild; 12 step-grandchildren; four step-great-grandchildren; four sisters: Dora Austin, Nora (Ervin)

Gums, Pearl Lehr, Rosella (Richard) Gross; two brothers: Raymond and Milbert; predeceased by his parents and one brother; the Rev. Raymond Hoffman, pastor, funeral service.

GERTRUDE MUTH (90), Yorkton, SK; born Aug. 14, 1899, to Andrew and Mary (nee Niebrandt) Knoll; died Dec. 2, 1989; married August Muth in 1923; member, organist, pianist, West Ebenezer Baptist Church; member, Heritage Baptist Church; predeceased by her parents; her husband, August, in 1962; an infant son; four brothers: Louis, Albert, Joe, and John; four sisters: Eva Hirte, Lydia Statz, Mary Galenzoski, and Julia Muth; survived by one son, Morley, North Battleford, SK; daughter, Shirley (Herbert) Bushkowsky, Edmonton, AB; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; three sisters-in-law; the Rev. Ed Broadway, pastor, funeral service.

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estate planning

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Four Sources of Commitment

by Lyle E. Schaller

"I wish our people displayed a stronger commitment," sighed Emily Maxwell. "We have so many members who apparently believe that if your name is on the membership roll of some church, that's a ticket to heaven."

"You're a wonderful model of a truly committed Christian," interrupted Tom Parker. "Tell us, Emily, what's behind your commitment to this church? Why are you so actively involved here? Why do you give of yourself so generously? Maybe that would help us understand why some people are more committed than others."

"That's simple," replied Emily. "I want to be involved here. I love the Lord; I love this church; and I want to serve my God through this, His church. That's all there is to it!"

"Our neighbors are an example of heavily committed Christians," offered Jack Evans. "They're members out at Calvary Chapel, and they're out there every Sunday morning, every Sunday evening, and every Wednesday night plus one or two other times during the week. Awhile back, I asked them about why they spend so much time in their church. I consider myself to be a pretty good Christian, but they spend three times as many hours in church every week as my wife and I do. They told me that's simply the way of life for everyone who is a member of that congregation. That church expects a high degree of commitment from every member."

"Our next door neighbors represent a very different pattern," observed Margaret Fulton. "Shortly after they moved in, they came over to see us to talk about churches. We invited them here, and we thought they would be wonderful members. They

were full of enthusiastic stories about their involvement in the church they had been members of before moving here. She was president of the women's fellowship; they both sang in the choir; both had taught Sunday school for several years; he had chaired the church council for three years just before moving here; and they also were members of a Tuesday evening Bible study group back there. To make a long story short, they came here every week for several months, and they joined a month or two after moving here, but less than a year later they dropped out. I doubt if they came to church more than five Sundays all last year."

"You can't always measure a person's Christian commitment by their church attendance," declared Betty Gomez. "I've never known a more committed Christian than my mother, but I doubt if she attended a church a dozen Sundays after my father died. She simply was too busy making a living and raising a family."

This brief conversation illustrates four sources of commitment. Those who seek to enhance the level of commitment among the members of their congregation may want to study which ones are consistent with the personality, the culture, and the value system of their church.

Involvement Follows Commitment

One group of churchgoers resembles Emily Maxwell. Their commitment to a particular worshipping community clearly is a product of their commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. They love the Lord, and one way to serve the Lord is through their involvement in a particular worshipping community. They come to church to worship God and also see the church as a vehicle for serving Him. They

do this as naturally as other people eat or sleep. The only two negative comments one hears about this group of churchgoers are 1) their numbers are too few and 2) they often assume every Christian will respond the same way, and they are puzzled when that does not happen.

Commitment Reflects Expectations

A second source of commitment was illustrated by Jack Evans as he talked about his neighbors who go to Calvary Chapel. Some churches expect a high level of commitment and involvement from everyone who seeks to be admitted to full membership. One result is in many of these churches the average attendance at worship is two to seven times the membership.

Those who are perceived as not fully committed are welcome to participate in worship and in certain other activities, but typically they cannot hold elective office, teach in the Christian education program, or serve in policy-making committees until after they have been admitted to full membership.

This is a common source of that high level of commitment found in thousands of recently organized churches and in scores of theologically conservative congregations. The passage of time and frequent changes in pastoral leadership often make it difficult to maintain this exceptionally high level of commitment. Hundreds of what today are low commitment congregations once were high commitment churches. In at least a few of the theologically liberal congregations, these expectations or demands are interpreted as inconsistent with the teaching of the Christian faith and written off as excessively legalistic.

Commitment Follows Involvement

A widely shared worldview is that commitment leads to involvement. This is Emily Maxwell's understanding of the nature of the Christian faith. Those who truly love the Lord will want to serve Him through His church.

A third and different source of commitment may have been the pattern Margaret Fulton observed in her new neighbors. For a substantial number of people, growth in their level of commitment, both to the Lord and to a particular institution or organization, is a product of their involvement. Margaret's neighbors apparently were heavily involved in the life and ministry of their former church, but when they moved here, they

did not become involved and soon were on the sidelines.

This source of commitment often is denounced as the heresy of salvation by works, but that may be an oversimplification of reality. A better way to look at it would be to affirm, as Emily Maxwell does, that commitment and involvement do go hand in hand. The basic distinction, however, is that for some people involvement follows commitment, while for others commitment is enhanced by meaningful involvement. (Sometimes excessive or meaningless involvement can lead to "burn out" and undermine the commitment to that organization without affecting one's Christian commitment.)

Does Commitment Require Involvement?

A huge body of research suggests that thousands of adults subscribe without reservation to every one of the basic tenets of the Christian faith but are not actively involved in any way in the life of any worshipping community. (It also should be noted that many self-identified agnostics not only are regular churchgoers but also give generously of their time, money, and energy in support of a particular congregation.)

One example of this research can be found in the responses to the question, "Do you think a person can be a good Christian or Jew if he or she doesn't attend church or synagogue?" In 1957, 1978, and again in 1988, three-fourths of the respondents answered "Yes." In 1988, 72 percent of the self-identified "Protestants" and 83 percent of the self-identified "Catholics" answered "Yes" as did 88 percent of all "unchurched" people, but only 68 percent of respondents living in the South answered "Yes." (PRRC *Emerging Trends*, Princeton Religion Research Center, February 1989.)

In other words, believing and belonging do not automatically produce a one hundred percent overlap. Some, like Betty Gomez's mother, may not have enough hours in the week to attend worship. Many others have felt rejected by a particular congregation, or disillusioned by the conduct of one minister, or "burned out" by being overworked and not spiritually nourished, or discovered that congregation's theological stance no longer was consistent with theirs.

A strong, deep set of beliefs in the basic teaching of

continued on page 27



President's Focus

by Manetta Hohn,
W.M.F. president,
Kelowna, BC



Growing Through Quiet Times

Quiet times with our Lord are special and needed; yet in our noisy, busy world, we often struggle to find them. We know how important it is—God's Word urges us to spend time with the Lord—yet our busyness is a hindrance. However, we have many examples of men and women, who were busy, also, yet who devoted regular time to the Lord. Our best example is Christ Himself. Jesus realized the importance of daily fellowship alone with His heavenly Father and made it His number one priority. He often rose a great while before day and went to a solitary place to pray.

During our daily quiet times, we spend time alone with God, seeking Him through the Word and prayer. Our purpose is to deepen our relationship with the Lord and become prepared to live each day as He would have us live it.

Allowing God to speak to us through His Word increases our knowledge of Him and, as we get to know Him better, we understand more fully what He requires of us. We need to remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit as He reveals fresh insights from the Word for our personal application.

Prayer, the ministry, which God has ordained for our benefit and His praise and glory, has many aspects, such as adoration, confession, thanksgiving, intercession, and more. Praying Scripture, such as the Psalms and Paul's prayers in his letters and other portions, is a meaningful and challenging way to pray. I am always challenged and blessed in doing this, not only for myself but also for my children and others.

A speaker that I heard recently in referring to Philippians 4:6, said, "Prayer is not everything, but everything is by prayer." Everything we do and are needs to be by prayer.

If we take our quiet time seriously, we will find we are engaged in a battle. It often seems easier to give up the fight; but we need to resist the enemy in all areas, such as wandering thoughts, lies, condemnations, and distractions, and exercise the authority we have through His name, His shed blood, and the Word of God.

God created us to have fellowship with Him, so time alone with Him should be our first priority every day. If we neglect this, we not only deprive ourselves of precious fellowship with Him, but also we

create hurt in God's own heart.

The little booklet by Robert Munger, *My Heart... Christ's Home*, has an excellent illustration on this. The author was determined to spend time with the Lord in a special room each day. After some time, little by little, under the pressure of responsibilities, this time was shortened; yet the Lord faithfully waited, despite the man's faithlessness. One day Christ said to him: "You have been thinking of our quiet time as a factor in your own spiritual progress, but you have forgotten that this hour means something to Me, also. Remember, I love you. I redeemed you at a great cost. Whatever else may be your desire, remember I want your fellowship."

Jesus waits for us each morning. Do we earnestly look forward to those times when we can be with Him?

Much of God's guidance, in both little and big things, comes to us as we meet our Lord in prayer and quiet consideration of His Word. Let us accept the challenge to grow through our quiet times.

"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him..." (Psalm 37:7, NIV).

Concerts of Prayer

by LaVerna Mehlhaff,
Forest Park, IL

Prayer is the most powerful force on earth, and this power is available to every born-again believer anywhere in the world, whatever their status in life. Through prayer, we can influence people for God and have a greater role in advancing the cause of Christ. The devil trembles when he sees God's weakest child on his knees. Think of what could happen if every Christian took praying seriously.

Powerful results will occur only as God's people are committed to pray. To experience power in prayer requires time and commitment. The more complicated our lives, the more time needs to be set aside for prayer. Prayer must be the priority in our lives if we want to experience its power. Developing a close relationship with our heavenly Father will result in praying in His Will, which will result in answers to prayer (Romans 8:27).

Because we, at Forest Park Baptist Church, realize the importance of prayer in the life of the church and its members and friends, the Concert of Prayer was begun. Two hours on a Saturday morning are set aside every quarter. This time is planned and led by our pastor, David Steinhart.

Steinhart states, "It is not possible to overestimate the importance of prayer in the life of the church. Prayer is the means by which the power of God is unleashed to work within our lives, our church, and the world. Prayer is not just a nice thing to do on occasion, it is trench warfare in the spiritual battle against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

There has been enthusiasm among our people for such a time to be set aside specifically for prayer. Our first Concert of Prayer was held in February 1989 with 27 attending. It was advertised through the church monthly news publication, the Sunday bulletin, verbal announcements at our worship services, and in adult Sunday school classes.

Those who attended said, "I needed this time to help face a difficult situation in my home." "It is good to be able to have an unhurried time to pray." Many said, as they left, "This was good!"

The first hour is spent in expressions of praise, thanksgiving, and worship of God. There are alternating prayer times between small groups and large or combined groups.

In the second hour, opportunity is provided for individuals to share their personal needs and prayer concerns followed by a time of prayer for the concerns expressed. We pray for worldwide concerns as well as for church and personal concerns.

This has been a good experience, and there has been good participation. We leave reluctantly when the time is over, for there is yet so much more for which we need to pray. We always look forward to the next Concert of Prayer.

Perhaps, you, too, would like to consider starting Concerts of Prayer in your church. Helpful materials are available from: National Prayer Committee, 6400 Schroeder Road, P.O. Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895.

tools for ministry

WMF 1990 Program Resource

The Women's Missionary Fellowship provides an excellent programming resource annually. The resource is divided into sections using the **Vision 2000** Biblical Imperatives, providing a wide range of ideas that can be used in churches of any size. It can be ordered from the Conference International Office in Oakbrook Terrace, IL.

The following resources on prayer are taken from the "Challenged to Grow" section:

My Relationship with God by Janelle Hiatt is a devotional based on Psalm 23.

Prayer, a program idea by Lenore Lang, gives instructions for planning a Bible study on prayer.

Concert of Prayer by Jan Bartels provides ideas for planning a concert of prayer using the women of your church.

Quiet Time Calendar by Child Evangelism Fellowship. This sample gives you ideas for setting up a prayer aid that can be used individually, as a family, with a Bible study group, or with all of the women of your church.

4-E Prayer Brunch by Jan Bartels. "Eat, Encourage, Enjoy the Lord, Enter into His Gates." Gives the details for planning a special prayer event around a brunch.

2000

Our Strategic Focus On The Biblical Imperatives

Commissioned to Witness

Praise God for people receiving Christ as Savior and for His growing church

■ **MINNEAPOLIS, MN.** The Rev. Harvey Mehlhaff held a dedication service for five babies at Faith Baptist Church. — *Anne Kruegel*

■ **AVON, SD.** The Rev. Jason Haas baptized three young people and welcomed them into the fellowship of Danzig Baptist Church. — *Janet Wormsbecker*

■ **MEDICINE HAT, AB.** Pastor Mario Giraldi baptized a young man and welcomed him into the fellowship of Grace Baptist Church. — *Violet Treiber*

■ **CAMROSE, AB.** Century Meadows Baptist Church was filled to capacity as Pastor Mark Morris baptized seven people obedient to God's call and ready to follow Him. — *Ken Gerber*

■ **ABILENE, KS.** Ebenezer Baptist Church extended the right hand of fellowship to 11 people by baptism and one by testimony.

"Our Church is growing, and we sense the moving of the Holy Spirit," says Pearl Martinitz. The Rev. James Grupp is pastor.

■ **MELVILLE, SK.** On "Called to Worship Sunday," Pastor William Gould welcomed eight new members and dedicated a baby at Melville Baptist Church.

■ **ALPENA, MI.** The Rev. Fred Sweet baptized five persons, ages eight to 87, at Ripley Blvd. Baptist Church. These five received the right hand of fellowship at the New Year's service. — *Doris Turnbull*

■ **BOCA RATON, FL.** Evangel Baptist Church praises God for the 14 new members who have recently joined the Church. Two of them were baptized by Pastor Paul Meister.

"We are looking forward to the New Day team coming and the enthusiasm of the congregation will undoubtedly grow through the experience," says Pastor Meister. "New visitors are continually attending the Church, and we thank God for His blessing."

■ **KITCHENER, ON.** The Rev. Fred Kahler, pastor of Central Baptist Church, baptized five people and extended the right hand of fellowship to them and three other people. Communion was celebrated with the new members. "Our desire is to continue to grow in the

grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to be used of Him at home, in the Church, and in the community," reports Karen Yahn.

Ebenezer women invite non-churched to retreat
■ **EBENEZER, SK.** The Women's Missionary Fellowship of Ebenezer Baptist Church sponsored

a retreat as an outreach to women in their community. Approximately one third of the 80 women in attendance were non-churched members.

Mrs. Sharon Mayforth, Edmonton, AB, served as guest speaker. The Rev. Gordon Freiter is pastor. — *Martha Dreger*

Called to Worship

Martin church invites Anamoose and Rosenfeld churches

■ **MARTIN, ND.** Challenging personal testimonies, readings, special music, refreshments, the showing of the film, *The Peace Child*, and communion were the events scheduled at Martin Baptist Church with Anamoose and Rosenfeld Baptist Churches as guests on New Year's Eve.

"What a way to see in the new decade," was the reaction of many people in attendance," reports Delma Kost.

Musical used for evangelism ministry

■ **KITCHENER, ON.** Friends and neighbors were invited to the musical, "Go Ye Therefore

into All the World," presented by the Sunday school of Central Baptist Church.

"Worship and praise to God was prevalent, and an invitation for salvation was given," reports Karen Yahn. A time of fellowship followed where members welcomed visitors. The Rev. Fred Kahler is pastor.

Melville women have group Bible study

■ **MELVILLE, SK.** A ladies' Bible study was held on Wednesdays during the month of November at Melville Baptist Church. Joyce Thompson led the study for the nine ladies attending. The Rev. William Gould is pastor. — *Shirley Herman*

Challenged to Grow

New church begins in Mechanicsburg

■ **GETTYSBURG, PA.** There were ten people present at the first service

of Atlantic Association's church planting project in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. The service was held at the home of Mr.

and Mrs. LeRoy Burd on December 3. The Rev. Bill Mummert, pastor of Gettysburg Baptist, will lead these meetings until a pastor is called. — *Chris Mummert*

Youth warned about Satanism at Crawford rally

■ **CRAWFORD, TX.** The Rev. Louis Day, pastor of Canaan Baptist Church, conducted a Crawford Area Youth Rally for three days. A police detective from Waco shared testimony regarding the influx of Satanism and Satan worship dominating our country. He encouraged the youth to be strong in the Lord and not fall into this evil. 175 youth attended the Sunday evening session.

Ebenezer Church makes plans to build

■ **EBENEZER, SK.** Ebenezer Baptist Church, built in 1911, plans to build

a new church. Arlan Fandrey serves as building committee chair. A building fund offering was taken in conjunction with the 100th celebration of the Signing of the Charter in 1889. The Rev. Gordon Freiter is pastor. — *Martha Dreger*

Camrose church expands church building

■ **CAMROSE, AB.** Century Meadows Baptist Church held a sod turning ceremony to officially proceed to build an expansion to the Church. The concrete footings, foundations, and floor are finished. The lumber framing is in process. With completion scheduled this spring, the new building will provide Sunday school rooms, two pastors' studies, secretarial office, gym/fellowship hall, kitchen, and washrooms.

"God is good and is supplying our financial needs for this project," reports Ken Gerber.

Commanded to Care

Bethel Church welcomes 65 Russians

■ **MISSOULA, MT.** Immigrating to the United States because of religious persecution, about 65 Russians made Missoula, Montana, their new home. Bethel Baptist Church hosted these fellow believers in Christ at a dinner prepared by the Women's Missionary Fellowship.

Pastor Michael Campbell spoke on "Singing a Song of Victory and Vision" from Exodus 15. "Our guests shared with us in praising God

for their new found freedom," reports Doris Vann.

A pantry shower was given to one young Russian couple who chose Bethel Baptist as their home church. "Although we were not able to understand each others' language, we had a special time of fellowship together," says Doris Vann.

Quail Lakes Church finds every home telephone vital

■ **STOCKTON, CA.** Our goal in the next few weeks

is to contact each home in the Quail Lakes Baptist family to get a glimpse of the ministry from the viewpoint of the people, encourage involvement in a small group, and receive the prayer needs of the people for our 24-Hour Prayer Time.

Over the last five years, Quail Lakes Baptist Church's annual Every Home Visit project resulted in a wave of encouragement across the congregation. The project shifted from "door knocking" to the telephone with the calls only five to ten minutes each, promising to be an enjoyable experience for caller and receiver of the calls.

For one 24-hour period, there was prayer around the clock for the needs of the Church family noted on the prayer request forms from the Every Home Telephone Prayer and Care Ministry. The Rev. Fred Jantz is pastor.

Ebenezer Church sets example of service

■ **ABILENE, KS.** Ebenezer Baptist Church recently

Melville Church provides meals

■ **MELVILLE, SK.** Melville Baptist Church delivered "Meals on Wheels" for one month. Seven people delivered meals to shut-ins throughout the city. The Rev. William Gould is pastor. — *Shirley Herman*

Auch and Derman wed

■ **MARTIN, ND.** Interim Pastor Clem Auch and his wife, Darlene (formerly Derman), were honored at a dinner and program at Martin Baptist Church celebrating their recent marriage.

Compelled to Serve

Southern Association men help construct Texas church

■ **RIO GRANDE CITY, TX.** Southern Association men joined together in September to assist Garcia's Ranch Baptist Church as

they put up rafters and walls for their new church facility.

Pastor Juan Luna and his people are most grateful for the help.

The project was led by the Rev. Winston Smith,

2000

Our Strategic Focus On The Biblical Imperatives

2000

Our Strategic Focus On The Biblical Imperatives

pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Kyle, TX, and Mark Rogalski, president of the Southern Association Baptist Men.

Remodeling is being done at Monte Vista church

■ MONTE VISTA, CO. Extensive remodeling is taking place at Grace Baptist Church. Pastor Michael Mirelez reports excitement for much improved facilities.

New Day leaves warm memories at Alpena church

■ ALPENA, MI. "New Day has come and gone but the warm memory lingers on at Ripley Blvd. Baptist," reports Doris Turnbull. "The Christmas season was made more joyful with the songs, instrumental numbers, and skits of the New Day team under the direction of John Kiemele and Daniel Grueneich."

During New Day's stay, they ministered in music at local schools and nursing homes with daily meals provided by the Church women.

A love offering was taken and sent to North American Baptist Conference International Office, which sponsored New Day. The Rev. Frederick Sweet is pastor.

Missionaries speak at Melville church

■ MELVILLE, SK. Melville Baptist had their Round Robin Missions Conference with Daphne Dunger, missionary to Cameroon,

as a guest speaker at the missions banquet. Dr. Ed Kern from North American Baptist Divinity School and Berneice Westerman, missionary to Cameroon, were guest speakers at the worship services. The Rev. William Gould is pastor. — Shirley Herman

Herkes tell plans for Cameroon ministry

■ MINNEAPOLIS, MN. Faith Baptist Church gave Eric and Claudia Herke the opportunity to share their plans for serving in Cameroon the next eight months. The Herkes left for Cameroon on December 10. Eric is a computer consultant and is putting mission business on computer. Dr. Claudia Herke is working at Banson Baptist Hospital.

Also at this service, the Rev. Harvey Mehlhaff recognized church secretary, Susan Bartelt, who, after eight years of faithful service was leaving. — Anne Kruegel

McDermot Avenue Celebrates a Century of Grace

■ WINNIPEG, MB. "To God be the glory, great things He has done!" expresses the feeling of McDermot Avenue Baptist Church as they celebrated the Church's 100th anniversary in June 1989.

Former members and friends came from all over Canada and the United States to share in the celebration. "I don't know any of these people, but seeing

this joyful meeting has been a blessing to me," says Joe Otto, whose father, Jacob Otto, served as church deacon.

Festivities began with a Homecoming Fellowship led by Hans Rogalski. After inspirational music by the Church's own musicians, visitors and friends reminisced. Ron Rogalski, a son of the Church, wrote a hymn for the Centennial expressing renewed commitment to growth and service. A multi-media presentation traced the history of the Church from the visionary zeal of the pioneers in the 1880s to the present.

Dr. John Hisel, senior pastor, presided over the Welcome Service. Sons of the Church, Dr. Art Patzia, San Francisco, CA, and the Rev. Ernie Rogalski, Sacramento, CA, served as guest speakers.

A Centennial picnic drew a big crowd on Saturday noon. The celebrating ended that day with a banquet and pageant at Fort Garry Place with more than 600 in attendance. Dr. Reinhold Kerstan gave the meditation.

Participating at the combined English/German worship service on Centennial Sunday were former pastors, the Rev. Daniel Fuchs and Dr. C. Seecamp. Dr. H. Waltereit, Chilliwack, BC, and the Rev. R. Hohensee, Vancouver, BC, were guest speakers. The centennial male choir gave some visitors opportunity to join the choir.

Members of 50 years or more were recognized, and several were commended and honored for their years of faithful service in the ministry of the Church. Dr. John Foerster presided over the afternoon Celebration of Praise



service. Among those in attendance were the Honorable Jake Epp, minister of energy, mines, and resources.

The singing of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" by the centennial mass choir set the tone of adoration and praise as the congregation prepared their hearts for the message from the Rev. Richard Goetze, London, ON, who served the Church from 1974-1984. An informal "Afterglow" was held in the homes of several members to cap off this special weekend.

Among the special guests at the celebration were Executive Director Dr. and Mrs. John Binder and Associate Director of Promotion, Missions Department, the Rev. Herman Effa and his wife, Ardath.

"Our speakers challenged us with these thoughts: we serve an unchanging God; God is always greater than our need; our Church is not to be a museum but a ministry; gratitude for the past must never become a longing for the good old days; longevity must never become a reason for lethargy. We were challenged to keep the right perspective and priority, which was the vision of our forefathers, that is, reaching the lost for Christ," says Maria Rogalski.

Commitment

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the Christian faith does not always result in active involvement in any congregation or a high level of commitment to that church. Many self-identified committed Christians express their commitment through their love for their children. For others, it may be through giving of their time, energy, gifts, and skills to some other philanthropic enterprise, rather than to a particular church. For others, their faith is a deeply private matter, and they rarely express it openly.

How Is Your Church Perceived?

Perhaps the first question to be asked by those leaders who long for a higher level of commitment by more members is, "What is the basic source of commitment in this congregation? Do we assume that a deep Christian commitment automatically will reproduce that level of involvement? If so, what are we doing to deepen that personal commitment of our people?"

For other congregations, the critical question is, "Do we want to try to raise the level of involvement by raising the level of expectations we project of our members?" (This is easiest to accomplish in new missions or following the arrival of a new pastor, and usually very difficult to achieve if the present pastor has been on the scene for four or more years.)

In many other congregations, the primary source of a deeper level of commitment is involvement. Perhaps

the most obvious example is the church that depends largely on parents of children to staff the children's division of the Sunday school.

A second example is the frequently expressed hope, "Maybe if we ask that person to serve on this committee, he or she will become more active."

Operationally, these congregations appear to be following the principle that involvement can and will deepen commitment. If that is the operating principle, two additional questions need to be raised: 1) What are we doing to expand the number and variety of meaningful opportunities for people to be involved in helping with the life, ministry, and outreach of this congregation? 2) What new opportunities, new groups, and new ministries should we be creating to enable our newer members to be engaged in helping to pioneer a new era for this church? (This is based on the generalization that many new members prefer to help pioneer the new rather than to volunteer to help maintain or perpetuate the old.)

Finally, some will ask, "When are those members who separate commitment from involvement likely to participate more actively?" Four of the more common responses to that question are 1) following the arrival of the new pastor, 2) when they help pioneer a new group, class, choir, or ministry, 3) after switching their affiliation to another congregation, or 4) following a change in their life cycle (marriage, birth of a baby, widowhood, moving to a new community). □

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church anniversaries

Quail Lakes Church celebrates 30th anniversary and retires 2.5 million dollar debt

STOCKTON, CA. Quail Lakes Baptist Church celebrated its 30th anniversary November 30. More than 650 members, guests, former pastors, including the founding pastor and wife, the Rev. and Mrs. E.E. Rauser, and friends gathered for a dinner at Stockton's Civic Auditorium. The program included music from the Heritage Singers and a meaningful time of sharing, expressing love and

appreciation for the gift of joy, encouragement, love, and spiritual guidance given by significant people in the life of the Church.

Pastor Fred Jantz topped off the celebration with the announcement that the 2.5 million dollar debt on the sanctuary would be retired by the end of 1989. An anonymous donor in the congregation offered to match a dollar for every dollar given toward the debt reduction. "We praise God for the response to this 'matching' fundraising event and what He has done in our midst," says Pastor Jantz.

in memoriam

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ERMA NORMAN (70), Watertown, WI; born Feb. 3, 1919, to David and Lillie Goetsch; died Dec. 15, 1989; married Roger F. Norman, June 12, 1942; member, First Baptist Church, Watertown, WI; served as choir director, Sunday school teacher, church li-

brarian, financial secretary, member of building committee, church clerk, and WMF president; predeceased by her parents; survived by her husband, Roger; three daughters: Kathryn (Russ) Miller, Lake Mills, WI; Nancy (Larry) Evens, Sioux Falls, SD; Dorothy (Philip) Strom, Beresford, SD; one son, the Rev. Ronald (Sandra) Norman, Elk Grove, CA; 13 grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; two brothers: Marvin (Eunice) and Edgar (Lorraine); the Rev. Allan Kranz, pastor, funeral service.

Poems of Life

Designed for personal and church use. Includes New Year, Easter, Graduation, Wedding, Father, Mother, Christmas. Biblical principles emphasized. All proceeds to North American Baptist Conference Missions. Send \$5 to Poems of Life, Box 289, Morris, MB, Canada, R0G 1K0.

Implications for Churches Ministering in the 90s

"We must not become so enamored with the 21st century that we ignore the opportunities and threats of the 1990s," said Reginald M. McDonough, in his address to the North American Baptist Fellowship meeting in Philadelphia in May.

McDonough is the Executive Director of the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Three of the many megatrends that McDonough believes will dramatically affect every church and denominational entity in North America during the 1990s are 1) the Age Structure Evolution, 2) the Changing Family, and 3) the Values Revolution.

The age structure evolution, he believes, is the major social trend of our

day. The most dominant factor or group in the age structure is the baby boom generation (born between 1946 and 1964). This group has a significant impact on every institution that it touches.

Yet, he says, senior adults, youth, and the children of the baby boomers "will also be major players in the changing age structures of North American society." He pointed out that the over 65 generation is growing twice as fast as the remainder of the population. Each day, it grows by over 1,400. McDonough says that currently women outnumber men three to two; by 1995, over 60 percent of the women 75 and older will live alone; most retired persons remain in the same area after they retire; about three of four older adults

own their own home; fourteen percent of the people over 65 fall below the poverty level with older women fast becoming the single poorest group in North America."

"Senior adults present a paradox to churches and denominations," says McDonough. "On the one hand, they are becoming a growing target for ministry, while at the same time, they are becoming one of the greatest resources for ministry."

The baby boom generation (born 1946-64) is by far the largest and most influential generation in North American history. About one third of the North American population is in this group; it's the most educated generation ever; it has grown up in affluent times and is ill-prepared to handle its unfilled expectations created by recent economic difficulties; it has grown up with television, has moved from the verbal to the visual, is the first generation to have heroes and role models from outside its communities, and it has experienced a total revolution in family life styles.

As this generation has grown older, it has become impossible to characterize it precisely. Some are politically conservative, while others are politically liberal; some are very religious and involved in church, while others are secular and uninvolved; some are urban dwellers, while others have made the flight to the rural areas; some are married, while others are single and divorced. Because of this type of polarization and fragmentation, consensus in the 1990s among the baby boomers will be extremely difficult to achieve, McDonough says.

"The generation following the baby boomers has often been characterized as the 'baby bust' generation. A lower birth rate and the fact that couples have been waiting longer to have children means that the youth gen-

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■ **The Rev. Michael Bradaric**, pastor of Magnolia Baptist Church, Anaheim, CA, received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Biola University on Dec. 15, 1989. The title of his dissertation was "The Impact of Pastoral Leadership, New Friends, and Ministry Involvement upon New Member Incorporation." Dr. Bradaric serves as part-time instructor in Homiletics in Biola's Talbot School of Theology.

■ **Robert Amor** became pastor of Garfield Road Baptist Church, Mt. Clemens, MI, effective January 1.

■ **Dr. Alvin Harsch** accepted the position of staff chaplain at Emmanuel Hospital and Health Center, Portland, OR, effective January 15.

■ **The Rev. David J. Mitchell** received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, on Dec. 15, 1989. Dr. Mitchell's dissertation was entitled "Strategy Evaluation for Increasing First Time Church Attenders." Dr. Mitchell is the pastor of First Baptist Church, Lodi, CA.

■ **The Rev. John Ziulkowski** has accepted the call as pastor of First Baptist Church, Paul, ID. **The Rev. Norman Miller** completed his interim ministry at Paul on December 17.

■ **Lyle Schrag** has accepted the call as pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, Vancouver, BC, effective mid-February. He formerly pastored at Prospect Heights Baptist Church in Park Ridge, IL.

■ **Dennis Reinhold** has accepted the call as pastor of Pioneer Baptist Church, Pound, WI.

■ **The Rev. Arnie Kirschner** is serving as interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Sumner, IA.

■ **Pat Allen** became Singles Pastor at Quail Lakes Baptist Church, Stockton, CA, on January 28. He formerly served at Arcade Baptist Church, Sacramento, CA.

■ **The Rev. R. I. Thompson** is serving as interim pastor of Ashley Baptist Church, Ashley, ND, since January 21.

■ **The Rev. Brian Prong** has resigned as associate pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, St. Clair Shores, MI.

■ **The Rev. Allan Gerber** and family were honored at a farewell party given by Ashley Baptist Church, Ashley, ND, on December 31. Rev. Randall Tschetter of Venturia Baptist Church gave the farewell message. Pastor Gerber served as pastor of the Ashley Church since April 1977. He is now serving at First Baptist Church, Valley City, ND.

■ **Ross Aalgaard** is the new Minister of Outreach at Apple Valley Baptist Church, Apple Valley, MN.

■ **Chaplain (LTC) John Hoffman** received the Army Achievement Medal (1st Oak Leaf Cluster) for "meritorious service as the religious officer, 354th Civil Affairs Brigade."

■ **Dwayne Turner**, pastor of Southfield Memorial Baptist Church, Detroit, MI, was ordained into the Christian ministry on January 28 at Rosedale Park Baptist Church, Detroit.

■ **Jim Calamunce**, pastor of Walnut Grove Baptist Church, Langley, BC, was ordained into the Christian ministry on January 14 by Walnut Grove Baptist Church.

■ **Jim Milliken** resigned as Minister of Youth at Sunrise Baptist Church, Fair Oaks, CA, effective August 15, 1989.

■ **The Rev. Myrl Thiesies** resigned as pastor of the Federated Church, Palouse, WA, in December 1989. He is awaiting the Lord's leading in pastoral ministries.

■ **The Rev. Dale Hufnagel** resigned as pastor of Community Baptist Church, Taber, AB, effective February 6.

■ **Kevin Barke** accepted the call as youth pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Kenosha, WI, effective the end of January.

■ **Dan Santos** was installed as youth director at Olympic View Baptist Church, Tacoma, WA.

■ **The Rev. Herbert Vetter** resigned from the pastorate of First Baptist Church, Plevna, MT, to retire effective April 1. He has served the following churches during his ministry: Isabel Baptist, SD; Grace Baptist, Bison, SD; Bethel Baptist, Missoula, MT; Valleyview Baptist, Everett, WA; and First Baptist, Lorraine, KS.

baptist world aid



Funds Needed for Relief in Romania

The overthrow of the communist dictatorship in Romania has brought to light the truth of the terrible sufferings of the people.

Shortages of food, medicines, fuel, and other necessities have been created deliberately, causing death or disability to many Romanians.

Before the revolution, Baptist World Aid sent \$18,000 to help to minister to some of the needy.

Now that Romanians are free, a relief program has been launched which will deliver much needed food, medicines, and other supplies to the people of Romania. Shipments will be made by truck from Germany and Hungary. The relief supplies will be delivered to Baptist Churches to be distributed by Baptists to needy people in the communities they serve.

Funds are needed to meet this Emergency. Please send contributions designated for relief in Romania to North American Baptists, Inc., 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181-3906.

Implications for Churches Ministering in the 90s

continued from page 28

eration is decreasing as a percent of population. Since the present generation of youth will be the young adults of the 1990s, a severe shortage of volunteer workers and young adult ministers is likely to occur."

The children of baby boomers are the "boomlettes." This group is an encouragement to churches, since church nurseries are now filled and running over. By the mid 1990s, this generation should have a significant impact on church and Sunday school growth.

The North American family, the second megatrend, is undergoing considerable changes, which will affect our churches and institutions well into the next century. Less than 10 percent of today's households are composed of traditional families. More than one half of the women in America are employed outside the home. It is predicted that the number of women in the work force will expand to more than 60 percent of all women by the year 2000. For over a decade, approximately one half of all marriages ended in divorce; however, one quarter of these persons remarry, resulting in "blended families."

Changing family styles greatly impact the church and its ministry; and church leaders have been frustrated in their ministries to families. "The 1990s will be a period of continued searching to find models and programs that will meet the developmental and crisis needs of families."

A third megatrend, the values revolution, will likely reach a crescendo during the 1990s, McDonough believes.

"At a time when morality is said to be at 'zero,' we are facing some of the most troubling moral decisions the world has ever known: The right to die and euthanasia, pro life and pro choice, genetic engineering, environmental issues, organ transplants, sterilization and overpopulation, world hunger, refugee needs and resettlement, toxic waste disposal, and the rights of women and minorities in the market place and in the church."

"How will the church respond?"

asks McDonough. "Some are responding by what is being called New Puritanism. Others are responding by joining religio-political groups that attempt to use government as a tool to legislate morality. Others are opting for the New Age religions. And, it appears that some Christians have chosen not to face the issues and to retreat behind the walls of the church, being content to be God's faithful remnant."

"It is obvious that we are in the midst of a values revolution," he continues, "and that people are searching for the norms by which to live in the next century. This is an awesome threat and opportunity for the church."

Implications for the Church

It is impossible to accurately project the effect of these and many other trends says McDonough, but he projects eleven implications.

1) While society will be dominated by the baby boomers, the church will be dominated by the senior adults. Power in churches and denominations will be an arrangement of shared power that is negotiated between the baby boomer generation and the senior adult generation. This presents an explosive dilemma to churches, since the baby boomers will dominate most other institutions in North American society during the 1990s.

2) Consensus will be difficult to achieve because of the fragmentation of attitudes among baby boomers and because of the clashes between baby boomers and senior adults.

3) Church finances will tend to flatten because of the fixed income of senior adults, and because baby boomers are more oriented toward special interest causes. We can expect special (designated) mission offerings to continue to grow faster than undesignated mission giving.

4) Qualified young adult leaders will be in short supply.

5) Women will increasingly assume ministry roles that are now being filled by men due to the shortage of qualified male young adult leaders and the increasing acceptance of women in ministry roles.

6) Church attendance and involvement will be on the upswing in the last half of the decade as the senior adults live longer, the baby boomers

mature, and the boomlettes create a larger pool of children and youth.

7) Specialized staff members and programs related to family issues including senior adults will be the fastest growing segment of the church programming.

8) Church schedules, programs, and facilities will continue to undergo major changes as churches become more sensitive to the needs of baby boomers and senior adults.

9) The debate regarding values will intensify and increasingly move into the local congregation. Ministers will need training in conflict resolution and negotiation.

10) Churches will not only be identified (find their identity) on the basis of age, economic standing, theological stance, and ethnicity, but also on the basis of adherence to certain value issues such as abortion, the environment, the role of women, and world hunger.

11) Churches that are effective in reaching and discipling persons will be those who know how to identify and speak to the specific, felt needs of particular segments of the society. The use of contemporary marketing strategies will be commonplace.

"The 1990s will be a testing time for the church as we prepare for the 21st century," states McDonough. "The challenges will be awesome, but the opportunities will also be great." □

Custodian Couple Wanted for Oregon Church

Riviera Baptist Church, Salem, OR, is searching for a retired couple interested in the custodial position at the Church. The position requires prayerful consideration and willingness to become a part of the Church family.

Responsibilities include maintenance of the building, inside and outside. No heavy lifting, mopping, and waxing of floors is required. A complete job description is available upon request.

Any couple interested may contact the Church by writing to: Trustee Board, Riviera Baptist Church, 1650 Brush College Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304.

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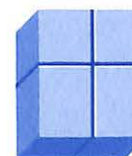
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