

# BAPTIST HERALD

APRIL 1995



## A Journal

(see page 10)





## BWA protests Bulgarian Baptist persecution

In what is another blow to their religious freedom, Baptists in Bulgaria may lose their land and partially constructed church buildings in Sofia, because the mayor "has come under pressure" to stop the Baptists.

The Baptist World Alliance has written the President of Bulgaria asking him to intervene in this latest "harassment of our Baptist believers and their building project in Sofia."

The BWA has also alerted the U.S. President Bill Clinton and Congressman Newt Gingrich, both Baptists, and Senator Robert Dole to this latest blow to religious freedom for Baptists in Bulgaria and asked them to "seriously plead for full religious freedom for all peoples" with Bulgarian President Zhelyu Zhelev.

In a letter to US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, Lotz asked him to remind the Bulgarian government of its obligations under the United Nations charter and the Helsinki agreements on religious freedom for all.

Even though the Union of Baptist Churches in Bulgaria has a contract agreement with the local municipality, Theo Angelov, president of the Bulgarian Baptists, says the mayor now wants the project reviewed by the main municipality for "a new decision."

"I am almost positive that, under the existing conditions, they will withdraw the decision and take back the land," Angelov said.

Bulgarian Baptists would lose their church, school, orphanage, and would not begin to recover the money already spent.

Baptists around the world have

prayed and hoped with Bulgarian Baptists for their first new buildings under freedom, and many are giving financial support for the cost-effective prefabricated church buildings. (BWA)

## Asians attend unevangelized peoples conference

MADRAS, INDIA. (BWA) More than 250 pastors, evangelists, and leaders attended the "Hope for a Needy World Conference" in Madras, India, Jan. 16-19, 1995. They heard electrifying reports about Baptists going to the borders of many Asian countries to evangelize the unevangelized people of the world.

It was reported that more than one and one half billion people who live mostly in Asia have not yet once heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Baptist evangelists from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, many parts of India, Thailand, Mongolia, Korea, and other places shared stories of Asian missionaries who are bravely and sometimes with persecution sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those who have not heard.

"To advance the Gospel in Asia, you have to be ready for suffering," said Jason Das of Bangladesh. But in spite of the suffering, all of the evangelists who reported said it was worth it. "Joy comes when one person says, 'Yes, I accept Jesus Christ the Savior,'" said Esther Ao, missionary to the Amri Karbi peoples in Assam in India. "When we baptize, people come out with smiling faces."

Cooperation was stressed since it will take all believers in Jesus Christ working together to reach this "last frontier" of evangelism. Evangelism to the unreached is being done through literature, distribution of Bibles, radio, and by caring for human needs.

There is a great sensitivity to the  
(continued on page 29)



6



10



16

## 2 News

## 4 Out of the Darkness Jim Leverette

## 6 Exploring Disciplemaking

An Interview with Phil Yntema and Jim Fann

## 10 A Journal Harold Dressler

## 12 Discipling through the Bible School in Samara

Harold Dressler

## 14 A Church Is Born . . . Horizon Baptist Church, Galt, CA

## 16 Rural Health Care in Cameroon Makes a Difference

Eric Mangek Ngum and Daphne Dunger

## 18 Tips for Youth Leaders Dave Veerman

## 20 How Are You Organized? Lyle E. Schaller

## 22 Broken Vessels Part 2 Jennifer Sudderth

## 23 Tools for Ministry

## 24 Church News

## 25 In Memoriam

## 26 Youth News

## 27 Making Charitable Gifts during Lifetime or at Death

## 28 News

## 29 What's Happening

## Baptist World Aid

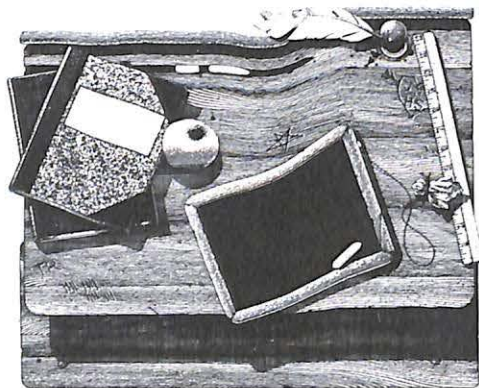
## 30 On Prayer

## 31 CEIF Investors Help Church Help Drug Addicted

Amy Swanson

Cover Photos:

## We Get Back to the Basics



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# Out of the Darkness

by Jim Leverette

## “... and darkness came over the whole land” (Luke 23:44)

**I**t was in darkness that the Light of the World hung in agony and shame.

It was in darkness that the Son of Man spoke His last words.

It was in darkness that the Son of God breathed His last breath.

It was the shadow of darkness that hid His face contorted by pain.

It was the cloak of darkness that fell between mother and son.

It was the obscurity of darkness that provided safety for those who would hide.

In darkness, the disciples were left without hope.

In darkness, Mary was left with a broken heart.

In darkness, the sinful world was left without relief.

In darkness, God's will was accomplished.

In darkness, Jesus' mission was fulfilled.

In darkness, redemption's plan, eternity's desire, and heaven's hope were realized.

### Consider the Darkness

Darkness was the condition of the creation in Genesis chapter one which tells us that “... darkness was over the face of the deep ...”.

Darkness was the experience of those living in Egypt when God stretched out His hand bringing a “... darkness that can be felt,” where no one could see anyone else.

Darkness surrounded the Unfaithful Servant as the judgment fell upon him for his wickedness.

Darkness is the life lived apart from Christ.

Darkness is the reward of those who reject the gift of God.

Darkness is the judgment on those who refuse to live according to the Light.

Darkness is a mother watching her child suffer.

Darkness is a son separated from his father.

Darkness is one who suffers in loneliness.

### Consider the Moments of Darkness

Pain, suffering, agony.

Isolation, separation, loneliness.

Rejection, misunderstanding, abuse.

Confusion, dissolution, despair.

There may be few who have ever experienced the depth of darkness or the extent of suffering as that which surrounded the death of Christ. There may be few who ever witnessed the death of a family member or loved one. There may be few who ever endured the magnitude of agony, abuse, or despair that occurred at Calvary, outside Jerusalem.

But I have no doubt that everyone has walked the road of darkness, everyone has suffered, everyone has cried out in pain, and everyone will. It is because of that conviction that I also believe that this passage and this reminder will be of help to each of us today.

I encourage you to see how the despair of darkness can be turned into the light of hope.

### The Experience of Darkness

I have to confess that there are times when I think that our Christian platitudes and attitudes do a great deal of harm to those who are suffering. We are quick to quote our favorite verses to those who are walking through the darkness of pain and, in doing so, we deprive them of the right to suffer.

Yes, Scripture tells us to, “Rejoice in the Lord always ... and not to be anxious about anything ...” (Philippines 4:4-6). And yes, the Word of God tells us that “... the joy of the Lord is our strength” (Nehemiah 8:10). And we are reminded that Paul encourages us to join in the fellowship of suffering with Christ (Philippines 3:10).

But does this mean that we have to enjoy the experience of pain? Does this mean that we are to like going through the darkness of suffering? Does this mean that we have to be happy when our world falls apart, or when our life hangs in the balance between heaven and earth, or when sickness and sorrow attack us? **NO!**

Look at Jesus' experience of darkness. Is there any joy? Is He laughing? Is He having a good time? In Jesus' experience of darkness, there is pain, loneliness, despair, abuse, and death, but there is no joy.

If I were to ask you which is your favorite book of the Bible, which is the book you go to most often when you are in need of encouragement and comfort, most of you would say *The Psalms*. This book was the hymnal of the Church for generations and continues as the devotional book for many believers today.

But how do you deal with the angry psalms, those psalms that are not so encouraging, not so uplifting, not so worshipful? Like many of you, I have often struggled with those passages. As I have re-read these Psalms (such as 13; 88; 137), I have been reminded that not all of life is happy. There are times when my prayers are not filled with words of joy and kindness.

In life there are times of darkness, when all we feel is pain, when our experience is depressing, and when we feel that even God has abandoned us. I've stopped accusing myself and others because there was not always happiness.

We need to note that Jesus' experience of darkness was not filled with words or evidences of gladness or happiness. But in His experience of darkness, He shows us how to endure our darkness. Notice that He maintained His trust in God. Even in the darkness, He committed Himself to God.

Such commitment did not remove the darkness. It did not take away the pain. It did not make everything alright. He still suffered; He still died; but He did it trusting God. I suggest to you that one of the reasons that Jesus experienced His darkness so publicly is to show you and me how we should endure our times of darkness.

### The Duration of Darkness

Notice the words of Scripture, “**It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour.**”

For those who have suffered pain of one kind or another, you understand one of the basic principles of suffering: **Suffering seems to make time stand still.**

Some of the longest days of my life were those I endured while groping through the darkness of pain, and some of you would agree. We look back on those times of pain. We see how short they were, but at the time, they seemed like an eternity, as seconds become minutes ... minutes multiply into hours ... hours into days and weeks. We don't see a light at the end of the tunnel of darkness. Sometimes we lie in our bed with our head pounding, our back aching, or our heart breaking. We wonder if the pain will ever go away.

As we reflect on Jesus' time of painful darkness, we note that it did not last forever. Likewise, even for those who watched in horror and pain, they, too, endured darkness only for a time. For this darkness, which fell over the earth, in which there was so much pain, only lasted from the sixth hour to the ninth hour. Although it must have felt like an eternity, it was in reality far from it.

We need to learn to put our pain into the perspective of time. No matter how bad the pain, no matter how intense the darkness, we know it will not last forever. See your pain and darkness from the perspective

of what you know, not from what you feel.

Some pain lasts for only a matter of days or weeks. It is possible to say, “I know that the day will come when this won't hurt, and I will be able to get on with my life.” Sometimes suffering attacks in such a way that it lasts for our whole lifetime, every day and every night. However, we comfort ourselves and others with the reminder that in heaven there is no pain or sorrow or darkness.

I cannot pretend to understand how it is that God allows short-term pain in the lives of some people, while others endure a life-time of suffering. I do not want to minimize the suffering of anyone, yet I am simply reminded that God has put a time limit on pain. It is God alone who turns our darkness into light.

### The Power of Darkness — Broken

What happens to the darkness?

We all can and will experience the darkness caused by pain and suffering. We will all understand what it means to endure the loneliness and agony of darkness. However, the message of the cross is that the power of darkness is broken. For in the darkness, God accomplishes His greatest plan. Out of the darkness of Calvary came the Light of Life. So out of the darkness of your life and mine comes the light of hope and confidence on the presence of the Lord.

### Consider the Light

Light overcomes darkness.

Light penetrates darkness.

Light eliminates darkness.

Light is the prayer of those who have walked in the shadows.

Light is the hope of those whose life has been veiled in the fog of despair.

Light is the desire of those who have experienced the darkness.

Light is the Son of God who came to show the way to the Father.

Light is the need of the world that is separated from God.

Light is the challenge of all who have found the Savior.

For those who are enduring the darkness of suffering, the light of eternity is coming.

For those who are stumbling through the midnight of pain, light is dawning.

For those who wander in confusion of darkness, the Light is coming to show the way. □

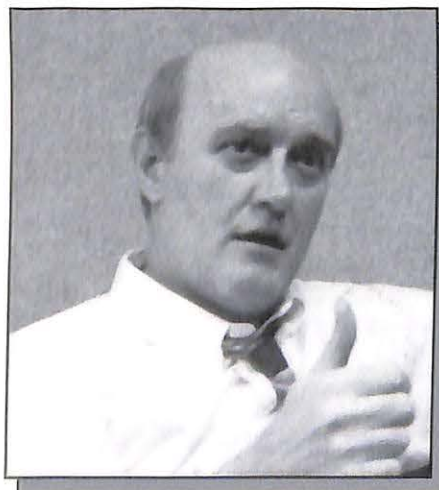
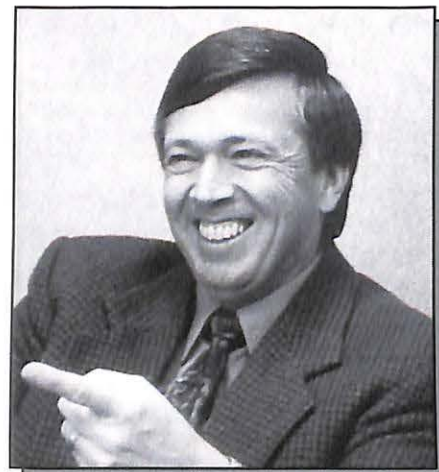
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The Rev. Jim Leverette is pastor of Zion Baptist Community Church in Edmonton, AB.



# EXPLORING DISCIPLEMAKING

## A Baptist Herald interview with Phil Yntema and Jim Fann



**F**or you, what was the most exciting thing that happened during the discipleship seminar weekend in Saskatchewan in January?

**PHIL YNTEMA:** For me, it was seeing the transferability of an effective method of discipling from church to church in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Whyte Ridge Baptist Church in Winnipeg successfully transferred its approach to discipling to Rowandale Baptist Church in Winnipeg, and it successfully transferred its discipleship strategy to Ebenezer Baptist Church in Saskatchewan. What we want to happen has already happened naturally.

**JIM FANN:** I was genuinely impressed with the level of enthusiasm during the prayer time. The group started with a concert of prayer on Friday evening led by Jake Leverette. We walked into a setting where the people were exactly on the same wave length as we were.

On Saturday morning, we again focused on prayer. As Phil led us through the steps, the people affirmed with their amens that this was God's direction. There was a good spiritual undergirding there. Also, I was excited by the number of representatives of the Saskatchewan Association as well as some Manitoba churches in attendance . . . about 75 people. They are genuinely interested in discipling.

**Yntema:** I agree. There was a good age blend, too . . . lots of 35 to 45-year-olds and a few older.

**How did this weekend focusing on discipling come about?**

**Yntema:** The area minister, Jake Leverette, invited us to come to Saskatchewan. Also, it was the cry of the rural churches. They really want to have a meaningful ministry in discipleship; they are looking for support.

**Fann:** The Saskatchewan people understood that we were exploring. It was a mutual learning experience. We learned some things through them, and they learned some things from us. The Saskatchewan Association consists mostly of town and country churches. The Regina, Yorkton, and Saskatoon churches are in urban areas.

**What was the purpose of the weekend?**

**Fann:** We asked people to come, ask God for guidance, talk about discipling presently happening in their churches, and receive input into the discipling process. We were there to introduce the idea of discipleship. We came away pleasantly impressed that many of our churches had already started in this direction, and those who hadn't were really excited about doing so. The purpose was to reinforce the direction the Conference is heading, also.

**Yntema:** And to marry the concert of prayer and discipleship emphases in a single entity. They cannot be divorced one from the other. They must go together, or the other will fail.

**I understand a concert of prayer was part of the weekend program. Describe a concert of prayer.**

**Yntema:** It is a concerted prayer direction with two thrusts: The first

is fullness. Praying for the fullness of Christ within the individual, within his church, and then within his country. The second is fulfillment. Praying for the fulfillment of the Great Commission over the whole world.

We started out in pairs praying for ourselves. Then we went into huddles, where we prayed for our churches and the immediate area. Then we met in the total group to pray for the entire world for fullness and then for fulfillment.

**Fann:** I like the analogy of a musical. First, we prayed solo . . . alone . . . examining our own hearts before God, confessing any sins there might be, and asking God to make us instruments of renewal in our churches. Then we joined in duets . . . praying with a prayer partner. Each one of us played a different musical tune in different kinds of groups. It was intended to be well-pleasing to God. It really is a concert of prayer, an orchestra of voices.

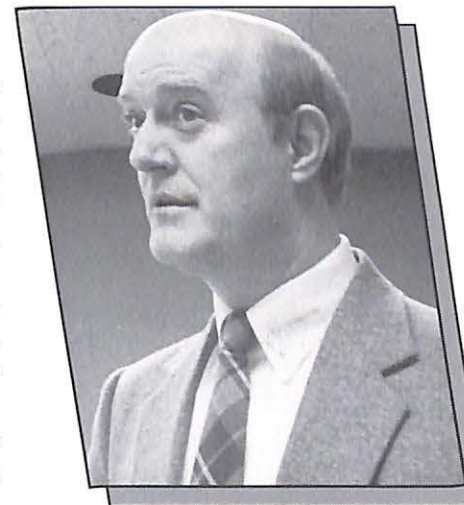
**Will you be emphasizing concerts of prayer throughout the Conference?**

**Yntema:** Yes, right along with discipleship. It is our hope that Jim and I, or a representative, will visit all the Associations to begin concerts of prayer. We're going to provide workshops to train people.

**What do you hope will be achieved by the concerts of prayer?**

**Yntema:** That North American Baptists will be praying about the same things. Mainly that the fullness of Christ would be within each individual and within our churches and that we would fulfill the Great Commission.

For this whole discipleship emphasis to work, it's going to depend on three things: First of all, prayer power. The power will come



through prayer. The second is personnel: Solid leadership . . . especially the senior pastor . . . in each of our churches. The third: Discipleship principles that a church can use to begin to disciple people. So prayer

**"So we want to win people who follow Christ. They look like Christ by manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. They look like Christ by living those kind of character qualities that are found in II Timothy and Titus. That is the essence of what it means to be a disciple." —Jim Fann**

is one third of the mix. If we do that right and start that well, then the other two will be taken care of by God.

**I note, Mr. Yntema, that you spoke on discipleship—a shared dream. Please explain briefly what the shared dream is.**

**Yntema:** The dream is this. That 100 years from now someone will be disciplined because of a chain of events we start today in discipleship. We would disciple someone who would disciple someone, and this would go on until Jesus comes

back. So by winning a disciple, a single person, we may have been starting something that would disciple people for years and years to come. That is the dream . . . a multi-generational approach.

**How would you describe or define discipleship?**

**Fann:** I use a broad definition. Helping people follow Christ from wherever they are spiritually. If a person doesn't know Christ as his or her personal Savior, it means helping that person become a follower of Christ. If a person does know Christ as his or her personal Savior, it means strengthening that person's depth of commitment. Churches need to find ways of helping people to follow Christ with accountability and intent.

**Yntema:** It's having as the focus not the person you are discipling, but the person he or she is going to disciple. It is preparing the disciple from day one to eventually disciple someone else. So it's not keeping your eye on the first generation but beyond.

**Fann:** The phrase Phil uses often is making disciplers.

**How are the approaches or the tools that you are recommending different from a one-on-one approach?**

**Fann:** It is a church-focused approach, and it is intentional. Churches, whether they recognize it or not, are helping Christians to mature and winning the lost. They go through this somewhat by rote and maybe by accident. They have Sunday School and small groups; they do some witnessing.

What I see us doing is helping the pastor by providing some training and tools. For example, the Sunday School and the small groups can become intentional discipling instruments. In this way, they



become a part of the overarching program of making disciplers. The heartbeat of the local church is making disciplers . . . it's attempting to fulfill the Great Commission.

### What is the difference between a disciple and a discipler?

**Fann:** The disciple is an individual who is learning to follow Christ more closely. A discipler is someone who is producing or equipping disciples who produce disciples who produce disciples. I'm referring to II Timothy 2:2.

**Yntema:** We're interested in discipling people in such a way so they can disciple their own children . . . or disciple people at work. So the pastor is not the only person working in the area of sanctification. He is equipping 100 "pastors" in his own church who, in turn, will equip 100 "pastors." When it works, it produces results far beyond the ordinary.

**Fann:** The goal of the Great Commission is disciples. Jesus said make disciples.

We can clearly define a disciple by looking at Galatians 5. A disciple is a person who is learning to manifest the fruit of the Spirit on ever increasing levels of growth. I include passages in Timothy and Titus that talk about the ideal leader of a church. This is the kind of life-style that is required of a disciplined individual.

So we want to win people who follow Christ. They look like Christ by manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. They look like Christ by living those kind of character qualities that are found in II Timothy 2:2 and Titus. That is the essence of what it means to be a disciple.

The people continue to reduplicate their lives in other people's lives. And they are doing it in the context of the body of Christ . . . the church.

Some will do this best through a one-on-one kind of ministry. Some will find mentors who will help them. Some will disciple in a small



group setting. Some will do it in traditional structures like the Sunday School or in a board meeting. It is making the discipling program intentional. We are not offering anything unique. We are discovering that there is already a movement of the Spirit. We're discovering that we're a part of a greater move-

**"The dream is this — that 100 years from now someone will be disciplined because of a chain of events we start today on discipleship. We would disciple someone who would disciple someone, and this would go on until Jesus comes back... that is the dream . . . a multi-generational approach."**

**—Phil Yntema**

ment that God has already put together. We're applying general biblical principles within our N.A.B. Conference family to make sure that we, as a Conference of churches, have bought into the discipling dream.

**So when you talk about making disciples, you are talking about nurturing, mentoring, helping them to grow as a Christian to become Christlike.**

**Fann:** To receive Christ as Savior, you enter the process of discipleship. That's stage one. Then that individual needs to be challenged beyond that entry point. So Jesus says not only just to baptize but also to teach them to obey all things.

Thus the next level is an intense level moving believers to learning how to pray, learning to study their Bible, learning how to fellowship in the context of the body. Too many groups leave people there. Let's make sure that people, once they have learned how to study and once they have learned how to witness, are also learning how to reduplicate themselves. They are learning how to go on with Christ at a continued growth rate. And they are multiplying themselves in the lives of others.

**Yntema:** Not only that, if you understand the process at the beginning, it will enhance how hard you work. If I told you that I was going to teach you some things and that tomorrow I was going to require you to teach them to someone else, you would pay a lot more attention and work a lot harder knowing that you had to pass these things on.

I think we rob our people of a great motivational tool by not telling them of God's expectation. The key word in II Timothy 2:2 is **entrust** to faithful men. It's not yours to keep. You are to pass it on to someone else.

### What are the criteria you are using in recommending discipling programs for N.A.B. Conference churches?

**Fann:** We established three or four broad criteria. First, any discipling methodologies we will recommend to our churches and pastors must have a biblically comprehensive definition of discipleship.

Second, to be recommended, discipling methods must be church focused and local church based. There are good programs

available that anyone can use in the context of their own home or friend to friend, but we believe that the local church is at the center of God's program. We think that any tool we recommend ought to be the kind of tool to be used by the pastor and church leadership in the local church setting.

The third criterion that we have established is that we want the discipling strategy to be transferable. A discipling approach to life is a whole approach to life.

During the weekend, we looked at equipping tools or instruments like T-NET, the training network program . . . a very high commitment, very intense kind of discipling program. It requires homework assignments and is a two-year commitment. We think this is the best tool. But all of our churches will not be able to use this because of the high intensity and the cost.

Churches Alive and SonLife's Growing a Healthy Church Ministry are other strategies that meet the four criteria. The commitment level in these is not as high as T-NET and somewhat less comprehensive. We are also looking at something in the area of rural ministries.

**Yntema:** Our ideas and approaches are going to be field tested in our associations. It's not going to be our experience; it's going to be what the associations tell us they want as they see workable ideas demonstrated in churches in our Conference. A pastor will tell the group how this strategy has been successful in his church.

### I understand that you asked someone who used one of these strategies in his church to present that tool to the Saskatchewan group.

**Fann:** That is a part of the philosophy. We don't want to reinvent the wheel. Ken Dueck from Rowan-



dale Baptist Church in Winnipeg told the group of his experience in using the Churches Alive strategy. He also had been working with Wayne Jorstad at Ebenezer Baptist Church to help start that strategy there. Whyte Ridge Baptist Church had introduced the process to Rowandale Baptist Church.

**"To receive Christ as Savior, you enter the process of discipleship . . . Then that individual needs to be challenged beyond that entry point. So Jesus says not only just to baptize but also to teach them to obey all things. They are learning how to go on with Christ at a continued growth rate, and they are multiplying themselves in the lives of others." —Jim Fann**

**Yntema:** I asked Dueck, "Have you produced generations in discipling?" He told us that at least one person is at the third generation in discipling. We see it works.

### Was the Saskatchewan weekend a pilot project? Do you plan to do this in every Association?

**Yntema:** Yes, we do.

**Fann:** We hope to do two or three of these as pilot projects before this fall. We chose Saskatchewan because we think it is good to go back to the established church and to some of our rural communities—to our roots. They are the backbone of our Conference.

We are attempting to communicate a prayerful spirit and a philosophy . . . we will be equipping the churches through the area minister and the pastors. We are not trying to solve their problems or sell them a program. We plan to serve by researching tools for the churches. We will hand these tools to the area minister, and he will get them to the pastor for the church.

### What was the general response of the people in Saskatchewan?

**Fann:** I thought it was excellent. We created opportunities for interaction all the way through, and the crowd responded very well. We had a plea from one of the church representatives that we not forget the rural church. Half a dozen of the men stood up and talked about discipling programs they were already involved in. The response during prayer time was overwhelming.

**Yntema:** The Saskatchewan churches are ready to make disciples. Their hands are open, waiting for the tools. We did not have to convince these people that discipling is necessary. They believe it already. The Saskatchewan churches are affirming and positive . . . just splendid people.

**Fann:** We thank Heritage Baptist Church in Yorkton for hosting us. □

*Phil Yntema is Executive Director of the N.A.B. Conference, and Jim Fann is Church Planting Director and Acting Church Ministries Director. Their offices are in Oakbrook Terrace, IL.*



# A Journal

Excerpts from the travels  
of Missionary Professor  
Dr. Harold Dressler.  
He is the N.A.B. Conference  
missionary teaching in  
seminaries and Bible schools in  
Central and Eastern Europe.

## MOSCOW — September 17

Our baggage did not arrive . . . everyone prayed . . . the baggage was found after five days. A new, eager class of pastoral students studied Old Testament Survey. Motivated, they bring a good knowledge of the Bible to class.

On Sunday, I preached in a church of about 300, meeting in a community hall. Later I spoke to the leaders of the women's ministry groups, this time about "the last things," enthusing them about our future glory of seeing Him as He is.

## SAMARA - October 2

Traveled by train for 19 hours for the 600 miles from Moscow to Samara in a closed compartment for two. Windows cannot be opened because of air-conditioning, which does not work. We were taken to the apartment rented for our professors.

The Bible School opened officially on Monday at 10 a.m. with 21 male students. They were enthusiastic throughout the two weeks of Systematic Theology.

The food was excellent for the students.

I preached Wednesday night, had a question-answer session for



Dr. Dressler teaches in five or six seminaries and Bible schools in four to five countries.

roundings, but it is frightening when it happens in Kiev, in Prague, in Novi Sad, but especially in Kiev. We were told that Kiev is famous for murdering tourists, that the airport is a very unsafe place, and that you should not trust any taxi driver.

. . . grateful that in Kiev, the Lord rearranged Dr. Provost's flight schedule so that he and his wife had to be on the same plane we were on. Dr. Provost is

president of the Slavic Gospel Mission.

While I went to look for our illusive contact, Ruth met Dr. Provost's wife. She solemnly promised not to leave us unless we were taken care of. Hallelujah for a brother and sister in Christ who, but complete strangers, loved us enough to make all necessary arrangements not only for a safe trip to the hotel, a booking there, a restful night, but also arranged for their driver to pick us up the next day, take us shopping, buy for us the tickets at the train-station, put us on the train to Odessa, and phoned the seminary in Odessa to pick us up.

Ukrainians pay \$30 for this flight from Odessa to Moscow; foreigners like us pay \$150 just from Moscow to Kiev. It's \$450 from Moscow to Odessa. We took the train — a 12 hour ride — for \$8.

the church on Saturday, preached in Otradjin and Samara on Sunday.

Ruth (my wife) spoke to the women in the church twice, challenging them to a close walk with the Lord and to trust the Lord completely. This was greatly appreciated as many women suffer much (often physically) from their unbelieving husbands.

## ODESSA, UKRAINE

—October 16

Do you know the terrible feeling of being forgotten as you wait — wait — wait in a strange airport for someone to walk in, smile at you, and profusely apologize for being four hours late because of a flat tire, or a fire in the home, or an argument with his wife, or whatever? It's bad enough when it happens in familiar sur-

At the seminary, I taught the book of Genesis to students who aspire to become theological teachers.

Ruth continued to establish warm, personal contact with various students who are very grateful for counsel and advice.

## OLOMOUC, CZECHIA

— October 28

No one meets us in Prague to put us on the train to Olomouc. So we rent a car and drive to Olomouc. We arrive at a deserted school.



In Moscow, an eager class of pastoral students studied Old Testament Survey.

They did not expect us until Monday. Friday was a national holiday, but the young people meeting in the school let us in.

I taught Systematic Theology to the Senior Class and Psalms and Jonah to the Freshmen.

The school has expanded to a three-year program, is accredited by the Ministry of Education, and is rated as one of the best in Czechia.

## NOVI SAD, SERBIA

— November 11

We share in the joy of twins born to the director of the Seminary.

In spite of the political and military situation in Serbia, our Lord is richly blessing those who make personal sacrifices to study the Word of God (six in the seminary, ten in the Bible School).

Living conditions are most difficult: power-cuts almost every night, no heat

in the church, food very expensive. But the Christians keep on hoping and praying, realizing that the Lord is with them and that they must keep on witnessing to His love and grace.

## VANCOUVER, BC

— December 4

Happy to be home. Received a report from Rev. Perry Kallis, who followed me as the teacher for two weeks in Samara: "The most exciting, meaningful, inspiring, and worthwhile missionary service I have ever been in — a wonderful blessing. These men will make a real difference in Russia as they go out as missionaries to plant churches."

## REFLECTIONS

N.A.B.s make our ministry possible through prayers, financial support, and willingness to participate by allowing your pastors to serve overseas. The leaders in Moscow, Samara, Odessa, Olomouc, and Novi Sad express their immense gratitude time and again and ask us to greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. They extend their appreciation for your love and concern, for your sacrificial giving, which makes this ministry possible as N.A.B. Conference missionaries in these seminaries and Bible schools.



Motivated, students bring a good knowledge of the Bible to class.



The Christians keep on praying, realizing that the Lord is with them . . . and that they must keep on witnessing to His love and grace.



The new Seminary building in Moscow, Russia.



# Discipling through the Bible School in Samara

The school will only train those who have a call to the mission field and who wish to serve the Lord as home missionaries.

by Harold Dressler

**T**he Bible School, sponsored by the N.A.B.

Conference, officially opened Oct. 3, 1994, in Samara, Russia. The District Secretary or "Bishop," the Rev. Victor Ryaguzov, senior pastor of the Transfiguration Baptist Church, welcomed the students.

As a practicing Baptist, Ryaguzov was prohibited from studying medicine at the local university, so he made his living from working as a skilled worker in the building industry.

Through Ryaguzov's ministry as a pastor and as an evangelist in Samara, there are now three established Baptist churches with a membership of more than 1,000 persons. A fourth church is presently being planted with services held in the public library.

Everyone at the Transfiguration

Church had hoped that the Church's building addition would have been completed by the end of the summer of 1994. However, due to rising inflation and the difficulty of procuring materials and tradespeople, the students meet in the



*It had been hoped that the Church's building addition would be finished in September 1994 in time to house the Bible School.*

basement of the Church.

Men and women from the church continue to work hard to move the building project forward. When it is finished, the school will have an adequate classroom on the first floor with large windows, a smaller room as a study-room, and a small library on the second floor.

In his opening address, Brother

Ryaguzov emphasized that this school would train only those young men and women who had a call to the mission field and who wished to serve the Lord as home missionaries. In Russia, the progression of service in the church is dea-

con-trainee, deacon, missionary, pastor.

As every city church has a number of preaching stations (sometimes as many as 25) in the vicinity, the deacon-trainees, together with a deacon, look after these stations.

After a good number of years of experience, young deacons work as missionaries in a community without a Baptist church.

During the past 75 years, these men had

no theological training whatsoever. What they knew, they had learned from deacons and pastors. They also diligently read and studied the Word of God.

Now the time has come to offer to these young missionaries and pastors an eight-month program of theological education. Every subject taught in this school, from System-

atic Theology to Music, from Old Testament Survey to Homiletics, from History to Ethics, is geared to the needs of the students.

**I**n October 1994, I taught the first class. The majority of the 21 students range in age from 19 to 35 years. One student, sent to the school by his church, is a 51-year-old pastor with nine children.

All of the students are highly motivated, eager to study and to learn, quick to understand, willing to grasp new insights. They carefully examine what the Bible has to say — and sometimes discover that the Russian translation occasionally went its own merry way. (Whereas the original says that King David "sat" before the Lord and prayed, the Russian translator must have felt that he could not possibly translate it this way. Therefore, he

Bible? Would they translate theological concepts and terminology correctly? Questions, questions.

But again our Lord, the true Master of this School, had made all the necessary arrangements. At our disposal are three translators — two full-time and one part-time. They have translated previously not only for pastors but also for evangelists and Bible teachers.

Our chief translator taught English in a Private School in Samara for many years and has served for a year as a full-time translator for a Christian missionary society. She grades all tests and keeps an academic record of every student.

The second in command is a university instructor in Physics with a Jewish family background. His translations are admired by all students because of his flawless and beautiful command of the Russian language.

For me, it's a pure pleasure working with both translators. They translate every sentence as quickly as they hear it. Praise God for these competent translators.

Incidentally, we pray that the Holy Spirit will convict Igor and draw him to our Lord. As a translator, he has never been so forcefully confronted by the claims of the Lord and His truth.

We also thank God for the Rev. Victor Ryaguzov, our unofficial but totally involved, administrator of the school. He is kind-hearted, generous, well-organized, reliable, and an astute businessman. He oversees the whole operation: the two cooks, ever cheerful and often singing; the kitchen helpers; the car driver (picking up the instructor in the morning and taking him home again, but also fetching him from the airport and taking him there on time); the instructors who are new to the

school, church, and city every two weeks; the translators who face their own problems; and the bookkeeper of the church who serves as bookkeeper for the school, also.

Everything we do in this school must be above board and open to inspection by the government at all times.

Finally, how have our own instructors reacted to their two-week teaching stint in Samara? They arrive fairly tired from a long trip. But it seems that their spirits

pick up quickly as soon as they meet their class. This reaction is typical: "It was one of the most touching and delightful times of my life. Probably this ministry that God

allowed me to be involved in was as important as anything I have ever done." □

Incidentally, Stalin's bunker was built 14 stories underground; it is drab and empty. His private room consists of a bed, an armchair, and a desk. And to those of us, who loved to listen to the Don-Cosacks sing their folksongs, the name Stepan Rasin is well-known.

Unofficially, the city of Samara has a population of more than two million people. □

*Dr. Harold H.P. Dressler is the N.A.B. Conference missionary for Central and Eastern Europe and teaches in seminars in four or five countries.*

## ON SAMARA

**A** Russian travel pamphlet describes Samara as "a large industrial and cultural center of the Volga region. The history of Samara is rich and glorious. Formerly known as Kuybychev, its citizens played a big role in the 'Peasant War' of 1670 under the leadership of Stepan Rasin. Stalin's 'secret' bunker was built here in 1942 and was recently discovered and opened to the public in Samara."

Incidentally, Stalin's bunker was built 14 stories underground; it is drab and empty. His private room consists of a bed, an armchair, and a desk. And to those of us, who loved to listen to the Don-Cosacks sing their folksongs, the name Stepan Rasin is well-known.

Unofficially, the city of Samara has a population of more than two million people. □



*Due to rising inflation and the difficulty of procuring materials and tradespeople, construction was not finished. The Church people continue to work on the project.*

changed it to "stood before the Lord," thus enforcing the cultural tradition to stand always for prayer).

Organizing a Bible School, where all instructors have to be translated, remains a dubious undertaking until one has met the translators. The success of the whole school — of every lecture, of every communication with the students — is completely dependent on the calibre of the translators.

Would they be too young? Would they be familiar with the

ART HELWIG PHOTOS



# A Church Is Born!

## New Arrival!

### A Church Is Born!

Name: **Eastside Baptist Church**  
 Date: September 17-18, 1994  
 Place: Galt, California  
 Planting Pastor: Steve Lemke  
 Proud Parents: Northern California Association of the N.A.B. Conference

**T**he Nor-Cal Association of the N.A.B. Conference and Church Planting Pastor Steve Lemke are pleased to announce the birth of Eastside Baptist Church in Galt, California.

Pastor Steve Lemke and his wife, Jill, arrived in Galt, CA, on Sept. 15, 1993. After a week at NCI Church Planters "Bootcamp" in Crested Butte, CO, they began the prenatal phase of developing Eastside Baptist Church. First, the Mission Statement was set in place: "Eastside Baptist Church exists to help the unchurched discover Jesus Christ and become fully devoted disciples making a difference in their community."

Then, through community research and much prayer, the following EBC Core Values were selected:

- 1) Expanding Influence: to be a reproducing church, multiplying cells and churches for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.
- 2) Personal Growth: encouraging the individual application of the classical spiritual disciplines (fasting, reading God's Word, prayer, and meditation) that result in right living.
- 3) Relevant Worship: providing a balanced, celebrative/reflective experience featuring need-oriented preaching, music, drama, and video.
- 4) Ministry Mobilization: discovering and utilizing the unique individual gifts that build up the church, community, and world.

- 5) Safe Community: creating an atmosphere of love and acceptance for the instruction of and introduction to Christian living.
- Contact was made with the three closest N.A.B. Conference churches surrounding the Galt area: First Baptist, Lodi; Temple Baptist, Lodi; and First Baptist, Elk Grove, to determine interested families living in Galt but commuting to these churches. Informational meetings were held to let interested people know about this new work. By December 1993, three "Discovery Group" Bible study groups were meeting in various homes.
- From these studies, a core group was formed. EBC was blessed to

find several dedicated Christian families who wanted to make a difference in their neighborhoods and in the city of Galt.

**F**irst, EBC held informal "Pre-Season" worship services at the home of one of the core families, beginning on June 5, 1994. Nursery care took place in the children's bedrooms. Average attendance June through August was 25. On August 21, worship moved to the Galt Boys' and Girls' Club for four more weeks of "Pre-Season" with an average August attendance of 33.

Grand Opening Weekend took place on Sept. 17-18, 1994, with a city-wide volleyball tournament, barbecue, and concert on Saturday, and the first official public worship service on Sunday. Attendance on Sunday was 119.

EBC has seen tremendous spiritual growth among those involved in the Discovery Groups. They are studying the Willow Creek "Friendship with God" curriculum. Sunday attendance numerical growth has been steady, with a September through December average of 103. But best of all, EBC is making a difference in the neighborhoods of Galt. In addition to neighbor contacts and "fishing pool" events, EBC people recently served as volunteers at the Galt Community Thanksgiving Dinner.

Currently, EBC offers many ways to get involved and make a

difference. Sunday morning worship services include an upbeat worship band, contemporary special music, frequent drama presentations, and relevant sermons. Child care is available for infants through age two. Two to three-year-olds have their own special Sunday school. Children age four through sixth grade are involved in Super Teams, a high energy, high variety time of Bible instruction and fun.

A monthly "New Community Praise and Prayer Gathering" incorporates a more intimate "spirit-led" worship time and communion celebration. Seven neighborhood "Discovery Groups" meet weekly. A Men's Breakfast Group meets

every three weeks and is studying the Promise Keepers material.

We have just started a new Sunday School program. For the first half hour of church, the children join their parents for the worship portion of prayer, singing and Scripture reading. They are dismissed to the Super Teams portion of Sunday School. To date, there are two teams, the Sunday School class is divided into two groups from ages four to sixth grade. Their lesson is the same topic their parents are hearing in the church service. They compete for points by memorizing Scripture, answering questions about the story, and showing love or good attitudes. (We borrowed the ideas from a Baptist church in Elk Grove, CA.)

Future dreams include a Youth Group for Junior and Senior High youth, a mid-week Children's Club, greater community involvement, and moving towards incorporation.

On Jan. 1, 1995, EBC changed its name to Horizon Baptist Church in an effort to remain sensitive to the potentially divisiveness of the East/West and to the gang influences prevalent in the area, one of which is called Eastside. EBC now looks toward the Horizon, and to the great things God has in store for Galt, CA. □

(Submitted by Horizon Baptist Church staff.) Francie Spinelli photos.



Steve and Jill Lemke



Horizon Baptist's Praise and Worship Band "Lion House."



Bunco Night was a community fishing pool event. Several families have become regular attenders as a result of this night. Ty Beckman (right) is a zealous player.



A potluck dinner preceded the Christmas program. It became an outreach to people who normally would not attend other activities.



"Steve Letterman Show" with Pastor Steve (at right) as the show's host with guests who talk about their Christian walk.



# R

# ural Health Care in Cameroon Makes a Difference

by Eric Mangeh Ngum

**L**ife Abundant Programme (L.A.P.) is an outreach ministry designed to bring good health care to the people of the underserved communities. L.A.P. provides comprehensive health care. It impacts the physical, spiritual, mental, and social health of the communities where it operates.

L.A.P., like other primary health programs, begins as a local committee set up to sensitize, mobilize, organize, raise funds, and carry out health education in a rural community.

"Prevention is better than cure," say Missionary Daphne Dunger and Mrs. Pat Mitchell of the L.A.P. Central Office in Bansa Baptist Hospital. Primary in their rural health care programme is the determination to prevent disease and immunize.

Mrs. Mitchell, acting L.A.P. administrator, says, "When a disease is prevented, the diseases that may follow from the first are also prevented."

Rather than missionaries and the hospital medical staff going out to give medicine to people in their rural areas, the new initiative is to get the people themselves involved. This gives them the feeling of ownership and greater sustainability. Even after the missionaries are gone, the Village Health workers remain with the commu-



Mothers and children at a L.A.P. Post waiting their turn for weighing and vaccination.

nity. The people are taught how to provide good mental, physical, spiritual, and social health care for themselves. This results in a healthier and a happier society.

Asked who is the brain behind this golden idea, Sister Daphne Dunger (missionary) immediately responded, "God."

While people prayed for many years, she was led by God to come up with the idea, of which she says, "It's not purely my idea, but the Lord's — given that there are so many unreached people in Cameroon. There was the need to do something to reach these people. Lots of them were dying in ignorance. Some were barred from seeking medical help by the bad roads and the long distances they had to cover on foot, so they hopelessly and helplessly died. Now with the existence of L.A.P., medical care has reached the homes of many."

The Health Board of the Cameroon Baptist Convention now operates 24 L.A.P. posts in four different provinces of Cameroon. This has reached hundreds and thousands of Cameroonians who are now healthy, happy, hard-working, active, and lively men, women, and children living an abundant life. Thanks to the services of L.A.P.

## How does L.A.P. get to a village?

When a need is identified, it is addressed, examined, and attended to. This has been the case with Tintah, a village without a motorable road in the South West Province of Cameroon. Since 1988, there has been great improvement in the health and sanitation care of the people. The health of pregnant women and the life of their babies

has changed tremendously.

As L.A.P. expands its activities to many underserved villages of Cameroon, the Word of God is spreading. In a healthy and happy body, Christ builds His Church. Therefore, the need for complete and comprehensive health care cannot be over emphasized. This is exactly the kind of health care some opportuned villages of Cameroon are receiving from the Life Abundant Programme.

The Medical Board of the Cameroon Baptist Convention has a two-fold objective as it performs its duties. While they make sure the body is healthy, they are more concerned the spiritual body is healed, also.

Reports from the 24 L.A.P. posts speak of many who have offered their lives to Christ as they set out to receive physical healing. In Tintah and other places, churches have been opened, and prayer groups started. The Lord is not only using the L.A.P. post staff to minister good health to the people, but it is using those involved to spread His word. As the activities of L.A.P. expand, the Word of God is also reaching the unreached villages of Cameroon. □

Eric Mangeh Ngum serves in the Communications Ministry in Cameroon.



Weighing at a L.A.P. Post.

## Helping people understand fullness of life in Christ

**I**f I do not continue to do the necessary things, Monni Wata (mother water) may take my only son as a sacrifice. I do not see how I can give up the charms and payments required . . . I am afraid." This was the feeling shared recently by a woman in training to become a Village Health Worker in the Life Abundant Programme (Primary Health Care). The spiritual struggle that surrounds Christians and those desiring to follow Christ . . . is real, touching them to the core of their being.

What a joy then, during a Bible Study and fellowship time at one of our Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Centers located in a strong non-Christian area, to hear the pastor, our L.A.P. Coordinator there, encourage another young male trainee by acknowledging his changed lifestyle and behaviour since his return from the L.A.P. Basic Training. Now, in contrast to his previous ways, the young man was obviously sincere in his attendance and participation at Sunday school and other Church activities.

Just three Sundays earlier my Cameroon co-workers and I had led our training class in a spiritual retreat on a rocky mountain-

top. This followed seven weeks of intensive Bible Study morning and evening, a Theological Education by Extension course, *Bringing People to Good Health*, (written in the context of Christianity confronting African Traditional Religion), and the consistent examination of how Bible truth would need to be practically applied in everyday situations as these Village Health Workers would provide health care back in their respective villages.

All 13 of the trainees (including a non-Christian seeking Christ), plus ourselves, stood on a rock of dedication . . . asking God to strengthen, protect, empower, and show the way for each one.

How I praise God for the privilege to be here in Cameroon at work bringing people to Christ and helping them to understand the fullness of life in Christ and what it really means to follow the LORD . . . with *no* turning back . . . or from side to side . . . and then to see them bringing yet others to Christ, to the Glory of God! □

Miss Daphne Dunger is an N.A.B. Conference missionary serving in the Life Abundant Programme as L.A.P. Education Coordinator and advisor to the L.A.P. Field Coordinators.



# • • • Tips for Youth Leaders • • •

## Answering Sticky Questions without Getting Stuck

by Dave Veerman

**A**s Chuck prepared to wrap up the meeting, the members of his group sat quietly, their silence broken only by the distant sounds of traffic. He began his closing remarks, using well-chosen words to communicate God's concern for how people live and to motivate his students to moral purity.

"But wait a minute, Chuck," interrupted Matt. "What about gay guys and lesbians? Do they go to hell?"

Now *that's* a sticky question—at a sticky time!

Whether they're ill-timed, public interruptions or carefully worded, private whispers, sticky questions are part of youth ministry. Questions can be sticky because of the **topic**, the **timing**, or the **tact**.

Whatever the case, the youth workers should be prepared "to give an answer . . . with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

### How to Respond

#### Step 1: Take it in stride.

Regardless of what is asked, keep your cool and try not to act shocked. This applies to group situations as well as to individual counseling appointments. Even if the questioner is trying to embarrass you or put you on the spot, you will defuse his or her attempt by staying calm, and treating the question and questioner with respect.

The fact that kids are asking is a good sign. It shows that they are thinking beyond the surface, that they aren't afraid to say what they (and possibly many others) think. It shows they feel safe in the group, and that they think you can help them find the answer.

#### Step 2: Affirm the person.

Thank the questioner for asking his or her question, even if it's not appropriate. You could say something like: "That's a great question, Heather. I'm afraid it would take too long to discuss it right now, but let's make that our whole topic of

discussion next week."

Don't go overboard with this, but let the person know that it's good to ask questions and that you appreciate the fact that he or she is thinking things through.

#### Step 3: Determine the motive.

This is a very subjective step, so be careful. What you decide here will often determine how you will frame your answer. Is the person sharpshooting, trying to give you a hard time, not really desiring an answer?

The Bible makes it clear that we should avoid foolish arguments and discussions (Titus 3:9), but it is also a biblical principle that people should seek the truth (Hebrews 11:6). So if someone wants to draw us off onto a tangent or into a meaningless, trivial discussion, we should gracefully avoid it. But we should seriously engage those who are sincere and honest.

If you know the questioner well, you will probably have a good idea about his or her motive. If Todd has a history of making bold statements

or asking controversial questions at inappropriate times, his latest query probably falls into that category. If Carin is struggling with her home life and is dealing with a lot of anger, her pointed question about God's justice may not be the real issue—she may have another question beneath the surface.

#### Step 4: Choose your words carefully.

What you say as you begin to answer is very important. With any controversial topic, people have very strong opinions on both sides. So don't alienate half your crowd by jumping quickly to one side of the issue.

One of the best ways to begin is

bodies and the fetus growing within them. The other side says that the fetus is a human life, so the mother's choice should not include abortion because that would be murder."

Then I could ask for opinions and begin a lively discussion. Or I could carefully lay out the arguments on both sides and eventually state my convictions.

Choose your opening words with care. And with everything you say, be fair and be honest. If something is your opinion and not a fact, say so. If you don't know something, admit it. This will encourage your students to be open and honest in their statements, too.

#### Step 5: Be a guide.

decide for themselves.

#### Step 6: Be a learner.

Believe it or not, there will be times when a question may arise for which you do not have an answer. For example, how do you feel about the abortion pill, the crude oil spill, the machine that will kill, the new landfill, and the living will?

When you're stumped, don't fake it. Admit that you don't know and that you will try to find an answer. Even if you are well-versed and rehearsed, it's good to let students know that you are open to new information. Be a learner and thus encourage them to continue to



to admit that there are two sides to the issue, even if you firmly believe that one side is almost totally wrong. Take the issue of abortion. I believe abortion is murder and that it is wrong in just about every imaginable situation. But I also know there are many wonderful, sincere people on the opposite side of the issue. It would be a mistake to begin my answer or a discussion on the topic by saying something like, "According to the Bible, an unborn baby is a human being, so abortion is murder."

It would be better to say, "This is a very controversial and emotional topic in our society today. One side says that women should have the choice about what to do with their

Perhaps the easiest way to respond to any question is to give an answer and move on. But that wouldn't be the most helpful approach. Remember, we're in ministry—trying to help young people come to faith in Christ and then grow in their faith. In other words, we should help them find the answers themselves, not just accept what we say as Gospel truth.

It's not that we shouldn't have opinions. It's best to have thought through most of the hot issues and to have found our own answers. And it's all right to let kids know what we believe. But we should lay out the facts and the biblical principles, encourage kids to think things through, and then guide them to

seek the truth with you.

### Any Questions?

Sticky questions are part of youth ministry. They come with the territory. Adolescent minds are growing, developing, and gaining perspective—and they want to know. Don't see their questions as threats or insults; regard them as opportunities to help kids think and find the answers for themselves. □

*Dave Veerman is vice president of Livingstone Corporation, a company devoted to helping Christians and Christian organizations improve their ministry effectiveness. Reprinted by permission of David C. Cook Publishing Co., Elgin, IL 60120.*



# How Are You Organized?

by Lyle E. Schaller

**"T**his congregation was founded in 1881 as a rural church by a group of immigrants from Germany," explained the pastor. "About a third of today's members come from pure German stock, but most of them are past 50. The boats stopped coming over many years ago, but we still haven't carved out a distinctive new role for ourselves."

"If we can find the right pastor, I'm sure the best days of this congregation are ahead of us," declared a veteran leader at another church.

This congregation was founded in 1923 as a neighborhood church by a young and energetic pastor. It peaked in size in 1958 with an average worship attendance of nearly 350. Two years later, the founding pastor retired. He was followed by another pastor who served from 1960 to mid-1991, when he retired.

During the 1980s, the congregation gradually (a) grew smaller in numbers, (b) grew older in the median age of the membership, and (c) grew more widely scattered in terms of the place of residence of the members. The pastor was followed by a one-year intentional interim pastorate, a two-year serious mismatch between pastor and parishioners, and a one-year intentional interim pastorate that recently was extended for an additional 12 months. The average attendance

**WHEN DOES A CHURCH  
BECOME  
A HAUNTED HOUSE?**



**When those who want  
to grow old together  
scare away young people!**

at worship has dropped from 290 in 1980, to 265 in 1990, to 240 in 1991, to 170 in 1993, to 155 last year.

The Pulpit Committee has been asked to find a highly competent young pastor who can reverse that decade of numerical decline.

"Back in 1955 when my wife and I moved here, this was the largest congregation in the city," recalled a longtime church leader at a church in a county-seat city with a current population of nearly 20,000 plus another 15,000 in the surrounding trade area.

"We had the best choir in the county, an outstanding preacher, and a big Sunday school.

"Today at least five or six churches draw bigger crowds on Sunday morning than we do. I often wonder what the future holds for us as a downtown church."

These three examples illustrate three of the most widely used systems for organizing a congregation.

- One was a common language and national heritage. That was undercut when the boats from Europe stopped coming.

- A dual focus system was the geographical church organized around the attractive personality of a long-tenured pastor followed by another attractive long-tenured pastor who also recognized the value of building on local traditions. That was undercut by the widespread ownership of the

private automobile and the emergence of the regional church.

The third example illustrates the 1950s model of a presentation approach to the corporate worship of God combined with utilizing the Sunday school as the conceptual framework for smaller face-to-face groups. That model has been undercut in recent decades by an increased demand for a participatory style of worship, by the emergence of a new era of Christian music, by the decline of the traditional Sunday school, and by the emergence of a variety of expressions of the small-group movement.

## What Are the Choices?

These are only a few from a long series of central organizing principles that have been and are being used to gather a collection of individuals together to create a unified and cohesive congregation. A far from complete list includes these common central organizing principles.

1. Word, ordinances, and worship service format.
2. A common nationality, language, racial, or ethnic heritage.
3. A long-tenured and personable pastor who also is a respected community leader.
4. Social class.
5. A narrowly and precisely defined doctrinal statement.
6. A geographical definition of community.
7. Specific, attainable, measurable, challenging, and highly visible goals.
8. Opposition to a common enemy. (Examples include the Devil, lodges, sin, denominations, the Roman Catholic Church, wealth, modernity, fundamentalism, Yankees, slavery, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, war, and abortion.)
9. Converting nonbelievers.
10. Denominational loyalties. (This is more influential with adults born before 1930 than with adults born after 1955.)
11. The local reputation or the community image of a particular congregation.
12. Exceptionally attractive and meaningful preaching.
13. A common occupation. (Farming, mining, and working in the mill are three examples.)
14. A strong emphasis on world missions.
15. A focus on the power of intercessory prayer.
16. A long list of local traditions.
17. Attachment to that sacred place.
18. A long history of shared experiences.
19. Survival goals that rally people together in support of institutional survival by a heavy reliance on volunteers.
20. Contemporary Christian music, drama, and a participatory style of worship.
21. Social action goals.
22. Meaningful worship experiences.
23. An extensive network of closely knit small groups.
24. "This is where all my friends go, and we enjoy growing old together."
25. A strong network of meaningful one-to-one relationships with the pastor at the hub of that network.
26. A Christian day school.
27. A central focus on the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
28. An extensive and remarkably varied seven-day-a-week program that offers something for nearly everyone.
29. A role as the nondenominational community church as contrasted with sectarian and denominationally related congregations.
30. Meaningful responses to people's desires to learn more about the Christian faith.
31. Healing ministries.

32. An extensive and varied ministry of music.
33. An extensive network of Sunday school classes.
34. Excellent liturgical worship.
35. Attractive ministries that involve a large number of teenagers.
36. Eating together.
37. That cemetery located next to the church building.
38. A role as a landlord church housing many "outside" activities and organizations and social welfare programs.
39. Two or three interrelated family trees.

This is **not** offered as an exhaustive list! These examples of organizing principles are **not** listed in order of importance or value or frequency or influence. Please feel free to add to this list before moving on to the six questions for self-appraisal. Ideally every congregation will enjoy the cohesive influence of at least five or six central organizing forces.

## Questions

1) Which of these central organizing principles stand out in your congregation? Rank the four or five in order that provide much of the glue that holds your congregation together.

2) Which of those central organizing forces no longer are the powerful cohesive factors they once were in your congregation? What has replaced them? If they have not been replaced, what are the implications?

(Continued on page 28)





# Broken Vessels, Part 2 . . . Picking Up the Broken Pieces

*This article completes the series. Part I, "The Escalating Crisis of Female Abuse," appeared in the March 1995 issue.*



by Jennifer L. Sudderth

Few victims of abuse see the church as a support and an advocate for them. Most feel that secular movements and organizations, as well as parachurch organizations, have done more to call attention to the plight of the abused and to fight for human justice for the victims than has the church.

Reasons why the evangelical church has been slow in responding to the issue of wife abuse varies. One reason for the lack of response is that pastors and church leaders are not trained in seminary or elsewhere to deal with issues of domestic violence and abuse. They lack the counseling skills necessary to assist the family and are uneducated as to the resources available to both victims and perpetrators. As a result, church leaders give inadequate help, if any, to the families.

Another reason that the evangelical church has been slow in responding to the issue of wife abuse is that the church holds to the traditional attitude that marriage is "for keeps" and has conveyed to female victims of violence and abuse that they are required by God to stay married at all costs—even if the cost is their very lives.

Lastly, the reason that the evangelical church has been slow in

responding to the issue of family abuse is that, generally speaking, the church holds a hierarchical and a patriarchal view of the world that has caused it to focus more on roles than partnership and egalitarian relationships in marriage. The church has been guilty of carelessness and bias in its interpretation and in its teaching of the biblical principles of "headship" and "submission," both of which have been used to support the concept of male superiority and male dominance. These concepts dehumanize women and give husbands license to abuse their wives. Through its silence, the church has become an accomplice to the perpetrators of domestic violence.

## The Church's Responsibility

We are engaged in spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:12). Violence and abuse is evil. Acts of evil are sin. Sin is anything contrary to the holy character, the divine nature, and the perfect will of God. All evil is of Satan who delights in broken people and broken relationships. Violence is evidence of Satan at work in the world, turning order into chaos, love into hate, tenderness into violence.

It is the church's responsibility to denounce the violence and abuse of women by becoming "pro-life" in the real sense of the word. To be "pro-life" means to be "for life." This should not be limited to the issue of abortion but must also

apply to any condition that poses a threat to the dignity and sanctity of life.

Violence and abuse destroys human life. It destroys human freedom, dignity, self-respect, trust, and personhood. It destroys the very purpose for which humankind was created, and that being to glorify God. The church, who declares the sanctity of life, must not stand silent, while living for millions, is reduced to a matter of surviving the next attack.

Following are some ways the church can begin to more effectively respond to the issue of wife abuse:

- 1) Acknowledge that the problem does exist.
- 2) Talk, preach, and teach about the subject of abuse and offer resources that both educate the abuser and shelter the abused.

3) Be observant of the telltale signs of abusive relationships.

4) Be willing to confront and discipline the abuser.

5) Hold the abuser accountable for his actions and guide him through the process of reconciliation should both parties choose this option.

6) Become part of the process of healing for the victim, helping restore what the violence and abuse has destroyed.

The church can begin to more effectively respond to the issue of wife abuse through education for prevention. Beginning with our standard curriculum, the Bible, pastors, teachers, counselors, and laity alike must apply careful hermeneutics to the passages concerning "headship" and "submission." The church must listen carefully to the

call of submission. Is it a call for wives only to submit? Or is it a call for all of God's people to replace their need for power and control over others with the spirit of mutual subordination?

We must determine whether or not the intent of these passages is to define roles and set forth a hierarchy of human relationships based on patriarchal dominance or whether the intent is to communicate to all people that we can only live in harmony when Christ's examples of sacrificial love and mutual submission become the guiding principles in all human relationships. □

*Jennifer Sudderth is president of North American Baptist Women's Union of the Baptist World Alliance. She was the guest speaker at the Triennial Conference Women's Luncheon in Dallas, TX, 1994.*

## TOOLS FOR MINISTRY

**Battered into Submission** by James and Phyllis Alsdurf (InterVarsity Press)

Citing their findings from extensive research and summarizing eight years of interviews with victims, abusers, and pastors, the authors show the psychological, spiritual, and personal impact of wife abuse and call the church to re-examine its role in addressing the issue.

**Help for the Battered Woman** by Lydia Savina (Bridge Publishers)

This book deals openly with the patterns and examples of woman and child abuse, the pathology of the abusers, and the responses of the abused. Included are listings of support groups and shelters;

specific helps on dealing with the police, courts, and friends; recommendations for self-protection; and the proper Christian response to battering.

**The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse** by David Johnson and Jeff VanVonderen (Bethany House Publishers)

The patterns of abuse in a home often also manifest themselves in the church, and this book, though it may seem controversial to some, attempts to answer some hard questions: What are the abusive spiritual dynamics that can develop in a church? How do people get hooked into these abusive systems? How can an abused Christian find rest and recovery?



### Praise God for people receiving Christ as Savior and for His growing Church

■ WEST FARGO, ND. Interim pastor Rod Enger baptized one person and welcomed four people into the fellowship of Grace Baptist Church.—Bonnie Walther

■ LEHR, ND. The Rev. Harry Haas, Venturia, ND, baptized five people at a combined baptismal service held by Ebenezer Baptist Church and First Baptist Church, Ashley, ND. One couple was welcomed into the fellowship of Ebenezer Baptist Church.—Anna Entzie

■ SIOUX FALLS, SD. Trinity Baptist Church celebrated the baptism of seven people, which included a family of four. Pastor Gordon Stork welcomed an additional eight persons into the fellowship of the Church. In 1994, 32 members came into the church by baptism and testimony.—MarJean Johnson

■ ONOWAY, AB. Pastor Rick Foster baptized two couples and welcomed them into the fellowship of Onoway Baptist Church.—Bonney Guidinger

■ BROOKFIELD, WI. Ridgewood Baptist Church welcomed four new members. Dr. John Binder serves as interim pastor for the English congregation and the Rev. Elvin Schuelke as German pastor.

### Construction begins on Christian Life Center

■ ROCHESTER, NY. Construction began on the new Christian Life Center of Latta Road Baptist Church. The Center will house a gymnasium, library, additional Sunday school space, and enlarged nursery facility.

"The flexibility of this additional space will greatly enhance our ability to make an impact in this community for the Lord Jesus Christ. This addition is all about advancing His Kingdom," says Pastor Marc Maffucci.

### Puyallup church prays for government leaders

■ PUYALLUP, WA. God has given Christ Community Baptist Church a unique ministry of prayer support in regard to special callings for two of our Church families. The Church prayed specifically for God's blessing and wisdom upon newly elected U.S. Congressman Randy Tate (pictured on the right holding daughter

Madeleine with his wife Julie) and Washington State Representative Tom Campbell (pictured on the left next to his wife Lynn).

"What makes this even more special is that Randy Tate is a Republican, and Tom Campbell is a Democrat," says Pastor Gordon Bauslaugh.



### Beulah church hosts community singspiration

■ BEULAH, ND. Immanuel Baptist Church hosted a Community Singspiration Worship service with several of the churches providing musical numbers. The Rev. Terry Midkiff is the pastor.—Ottillia Allmer

### Grosse Pointe men enjoy venison dinner

■ GROSSE POINTE, MI. Grosse Pointe Baptist Church's Annual Men's Buck Dinner was a sell-out . . . 280 men crammed into the fellowship hall.

The program included a Tae Kwon Do demonstration . . . many bricks and boards broken, lots of kicking and grunting . . . lots of fun to watch.

The Sojourners Men's Quartet and the "So Juniors" Women's Quartet provided fantastic music.

Gene Taylor, Christian comedian and writer for a local FM radio personality, spoke on "Seek Them, Show Them, and Sell Them for Jesus."

The results: five first-time decisions for Christ; seven indicated they rededicated their lives to Christ.

"This is what I went into the ministry for!" exclaimed the Rev. David Wick, pastor. "Praise God! Twelve men requested information on the Promise Keepers rally at the Silverdome, April 28-29; and nine men indicated an interest in our summer men's outing to the Old Club on Harsen's Island."

### Balgonie church celebrates milestone

■ BALGONIE, SK. Balgonie Baptist Church celebrated a special milestone on Nov. 13, 1994: the 30th anniversary of the Church and the 42nd anniversary of the Sunday School.

Each of the former pastors in attendance expanded on the theme, "We Have Come This Far by Faith," and praised God for His wonderful guidance and blessing.

The Rev. Jake Leverette, area minister, brought greetings from the N.A.B. Conference and Saskatchewan Baptist Association, and gave a very inspiring message.

The mayor of Balgonie and the pastors of the United, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran congregations of the surrounding area extended greetings to the Church.

The former pastors and the present pastoral staff received a scroll of appreciation and a copy of the Church history book, "We Have Come This Far by Faith."

The book is available at \$12 plus postage and handling from Mrs. Edith Weslowski at (306) 771-2638.

### Woman finds Christ through son's death

■ FLOWER MOUND, TX. Nov. 4, 1994, began like any other work day for LaNeece Harris of Flower Mound, TX. It was Friday and the last day of the work week. She strapped her two-year-old daughter into her car seat in the front seat. As she carried her very tired three-year-old son to the car shortly before 7 a.m., he begged her to let him sleep on the rear seat the mile or so to day care. She relented and began the short drive. Approximately six blocks from home, her minivan was struck broadside, and her son was thrown out of the vehicle, dying instantly.

"Almost one month, to the day, after I met LaNeece on that tragic accident, I received a phone call from LaNeece," says Ron Presley, pastor of CrossTimbers Baptist Church. "Distraught, she agreed to look up Scriptures that we read

together over the phone. That evening she prayed, committing her life to Jesus Christ. A changed LaNeece is now attending weekly Bible study and coming to church with her husband, C.T., for the first time in more than 15 years."

While still grieving deeply and struggling with Chancellor's loss, LaNeece Harris knows that her only son's death brought his mother to eternal life in Christ. She can truly appreciate God's gift and sacrifice, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

"LaNeece Harris now has everlasting life and WILL see her son again. Remember LaNeece and C.T. Harris in prayer," requests Pastor Presley.

### Carrington church ministers through groups

■ CARRINGTON, ND. A new women's ministries group has been organized to provide support groups to minister to the needs of the congregation.

The women's Bible study, under the leadership of Lenor Franchuk, is studying Kay Arthur's book, "Free from Bondage God's Way."

The monthly "Sharing Singles" group and Singspiration is well attended as well as the Men's Prayer Breakfast and Bible study. The Rev. Loren Franchuk is the pastor.—Vi Pepple

### Wedding Anniversaries

■ EBENEZER, SK. Ebenezer Baptist Church celebrated the 50th wedding anniversaries of Leslie and Ella Reiman and Lawrence and Ruby Zimmer. Each couple was presented with a plaque by the Church moderator. The Rev. Wayne Jorstad is the pastor.—Martha Dreger

■ BERTSCH, LORENE, (71), Lodi, CA; born April 28, 1923, to Christ and Martha (Forscht) Heupel in South Dakota; died Nov. 30, 1994; married Walter Bertsch in 1940; member, First Baptist Church, Lodi, CA; predeceased by her parents and sister, Alice Smith; survived by her husband, Walter, Lodi, CA; two sons: James, Acampo, CA; Mike, Lockeford, CA; two daughters: Gwen Leonard, Rancho Calaveras, CA; Lois Bolion, Galt, CA; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; four brothers: Roy, Clifford, Art, and Elmer; three sisters: Ruth Walth, Eldora Meidinger, and Marsha Mohr; the Reverends David Mitchell, Merle Brenner, and Aaron Buhler officiating.

■ KECK, JACOB, (91), Startup, WA; born Jan. 2, 1903, in Washburn, ND, to German-Russian immigrants; died Oct. 29, 1994; married Elizabeth Klein in 1925; active member, Sunday school teacher, trustee, deacon, Hillcrest Baptist Church, Sultan, WA; survived by his wife, Elizabeth; two sons: Leander (Jan), New Haven, CT; Don (Kristie), Startup; several grandchildren; the Rev. William Neuman officiating.

■ OHLHAUSER, SAMUEL F., (93), Calgary, AB; born June 11, 1901, in Long Lake, SD; died Dec. 19, 1994; migrated to Carbon, AB, in 1909; married Bertha Bertsch in 1923; member, Carbon (AB) Baptist Church; Bridgeland Baptist Church; Brentview Baptist Church, Calgary; predeceased by his wife, Bertha, December 1977, and two granddaughters; survived by three sons: Ivean (Ruth); Milt (Linda); and Roy; one daughter, Priscilla (Marvin) Busenius; seven grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; Dr. Sig Schuster and the Rev. Ron Kernohan, officiating.

■ VIGARIO, ALTA IONE, (73), Lodi, CA; born Mar. 18, 1921, to Jacob and Catherine (Treftz) Zimmerman in North Dakota; died Oct. 23, 1994; married Arthur Vigario, Aug. 7, 1953; member, First Baptist Church, Lodi, CA; predeceased by her husband, Arthur; three brothers: Jake, Christ, and Harold Zimmerman; one sister, Bertha Fricke; survived by two daughters, Sharon Walls, Los Gatos, CA; Shelly Firestone, Alaska; three grandchildren; three sisters: Ruth Lehr, Emma Larson, and Lydia Mueller; the Rev. David Mitchell, officiating.



# Youth News

Yorkton youth sponsor Brazilian street children



■ YORKTON, SK. The Sunday School at Heritage Baptist Church studied a series on early Christian missionaries. The materials encouraged the use of individual offering "missionary" boxes in which each child would make voluntary contribution in support of a worthy project.

Missionary to Brazil, Ken Bayer, who visited the Church, spoke to the primary, junior, and junior high Sunday School classes. Bayer shared with the youth by way of a scavenger hunt the items a street child in Brazil needed for survival: a black T-shirt, sandals, matches, knife, and plastic bag.

To raise money for the CHAIN of Love ministry in Brazil, a three month fundraiser began using an old-fashioned balance scale with two tin cans as containers, one for the girls and one for the boys. The goal was to raise \$300 to sponsor one street child for a year.

"Not only did we reach our goal of \$300, but we exceeded it by an additional \$641.90 over and above the original \$32.50 that the children contributed through their "missionary" banks when Ken Bayer was here," reports Betty Fritzke. The Rev. Robert Sandford is the pastor.

## Oakbank Baptist Church

invites all former members and friends to join in celebrating its

**100TH ANNIVERSARY**  
**June 30-July 2, 1995**

Special events include:  
Guest speaker: Dr. Herman Effa  
**Great music! Pancake breakfast!**  
**Games! Banquet! and much more.**

For banquet reservations,  
please reply by May 31, 1995.

Rev. Doug Bittle, pastor  
Rev. Jim Zurbriggen, associate  
Box 4003, RR #1, Oakbank, MB  
R0E 1J3 • Phone: (204) 444-3348

## VOLHYNIA

July 8 - 25, 1995

An opportunity to visit your place of birth (or your relative's), as well as other historical Ukrainian, Polish, and Russian cities, collective farms, villages, and relatives.

This tour will be organized to accommodate tour participants' wishes within this overall area, and may include Kiev, Zhitomir, Korosten, Heimthal, Kulischi, Barashew, Slobidka, Pulin, Novograd Volinski (Zwehl), Lvov, Rovna, Zaporozje, and locations in between.

**OPTIONAL (1): side tour of St. Petersburg and Moscow (minimum 15). (2): Germany stopover.**

**MEL BERGSTRESSER'S PREVIOUS TRAVEL EXPERIENCES TO RUSSIA (five) is your assurance of well-organized tours and memorable experiences.**



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R3G 0V3. Phone: (204) 775-0271  
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# Making Charitable Gifts

## during lifetime or at death

If North American Baptist Conference will not have the use of assets until after I die, why should I consider a charitable trust during my lifetime? Wouldn't it be better to give a percentage of my estate at the time of death?

The answer to this question is different for each individual. But there are advantages to making a lifetime transfer.

■ **You can receive an income tax charitable deduction today**, though you retain the right to use your property for life.

This is a unique section of the tax code. Why would the government allow you an income tax deduction today, if North American Baptist Conference cannot use the property until your death?

Tax law allows you to deduct the present value of your future gift, because it is guaranteed through an irrevocable agreement.

■ **You can avoid capital gains tax.** Many individuals own property that has increased substantially in value. If they sold that property, they would have to pay a tax on the appreciation. The cost to the individual is not only the actual tax, but also, they forfeit the right to use that money for their lifetime.

If it were possible to create a way to sell appreciated property, avoid the tax, and have use of the full value of the property for your lifetime, would that not be a significant advantage? A charitable gift agreement allows you that advantage.

■ **You can avoid probate.** Many individuals have established estate plans that include a revocable living trust for the avoidance of probate. But if this is not the case, then making a transfer of property to North American Baptist Conference dur-

ing your lifetime, of the amount you wish for them to receive at your death, will mean that the property will not be subject to the costs or delays of probate, though you maintain the right to use the property.

### Negative aspects to delayed transfers

There are at least some perceived disadvantages.

■ **The loss of control.** This is more perception than fact. In many charitable agreements, you can reserve the right to serve as your own trustee. The property is not distributed outright to the charitable organization at the time of transfer but is held in trust for your benefit. However, you must be comfortable with the fact that the terms of the trust control some aspects of investment and distribution, rather than your individual desires at any given time during the trust term.

■ **Lack of ability to consume.** This may or may not be a disadvantage, based upon the size of your estate. If your estate is not large and there is a possibility that you would need consumable assets for nursing care or final medical expenses, then this must be factored into your decision.

This might be perceived as a disadvantage or as an advantage. If extensive medical expenses are incurred and you survive that illness, then you will still need income for living expenses. The trust or charitable agreement will be available to provide that income for you. However, the assets transferred to the agreement cannot be consumed.

■ **Future inflation.** You must take care in designing your charitable gift agreement to make sure that

you are protected in case of increased interest or inflation rates. Your charitable agreement can be designed to compensate for these factors. But if not properly designed, this could become a negative factor.

### Personal Counsel

For these reasons, it is very important that you seek personal counsel to determine how best to design your charitable giving program. Our staff has prepared a special planning report, **Design Your Own Charitable Gift**. We believe you will find it to be a valuable source of information, and it will help you gather the data needed to design your personal gift plan.

Please write for your free copy today. There is no cost or obligation.

*(Neither the Development Department nor the N.A.B. Conference is engaged in rendering legal or tax advice. For advice or assistance in specific cases, the services of an attorney should be obtained. The purpose of this article is to provide information of a general character only.)*

☐ **YES!** Please send me the special planning report, **Design Your Own Charitable Gift.**

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State/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

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North American Baptist Conference  
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Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181-3994  
Phone: (708) 495-2000  
Fax: (708) 495-3301



## "You've got to come and help me!"

by Ernie Falk



**Y**ou've got to come and help me! There are three people at the front desk who want to pray, and I'm not sure what to do next."

Her name was Iksana, one of the interpreters on our JESUS film project to Ukraine, Oct. 14-30, 1994. She had told us she'd been a Christian for only a year and that her husband was not at all supportive of her faith.

My wife, Mary, and I went with her to the front desk that night. After answering a lot of questions, three more souls prayed to receive Christ and entered His Kingdom.

We were all rejoicing, especially Iksana. "Now I understand why you people get so excited."

The next morning during our team devotional and prayer time, she prayed a simple, humble prayer for Yana, the only unsaved member of our interpreter team. Later that day, Yana approached Mary and indicated that she also wanted to trust Jesus as her personal Savior. After the end of the project, Iksana went home and introduced her husband to Christ, also.

The opportunities for ministry seemed to be everywhere, whether it was meeting with hotel staff, or meetings with school teachers, or a group of business people, or television stations agreeing to air the film.

Jesus said in Matthew 9: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few."

Night after night, people came to see the JESUS film. Hundreds

### An Opportunity to Serve in Russia

Join with the Samara Bible School students to show the JESUS film in various areas around Samara in Russia, May 20-June 4, 1995. It is hoped that with those who respond to the invitation following the film showing, that the Bible school students will disciple these new Christians and eventually plant churches.

*If you wish to be a part of the team, contact Ken Priebe, Box 300, Vancouver, BC V6C 2X3 or fax him at (604) 588-7582.*

responded to the invitations. Often well over half of those present indicated they had prayed to invite Jesus into their lives. Every new convert was given a New Testament or Christian literature. People said, "Spaceba. Spaceba. Thank you for coming." Please come back tomorrow. We'll invite our friends and neighbors, and they'll come, too."

The doors are still wide open, but for how long? This was our ninth international project; the response is always great but never to this degree. □

*Ernie Falk is the owner/president of Kelowna Chrysler Dodge, Ltd., and a member of Trinity Baptist Church, Kelowna, BC.*

### How Are You Organized?

(continued from page 21)

3) Has the number of these cohesive forces increased in recent years? What are the implications of those changes?

4) Is denominational loyalty a stronger or weaker cohesive force in your congregation than it was 20 years ago? Why? What are the implications of that change?

5) Which of the most influential organizing principles in your congregation reinforce and undergird other cohesive forces? Which ones appear to be divisive?

6) Which of the most influential cohesive forces on this list will tend to attract newcomers and encourage them to return? (*Numbers 12, 14, 15, 22, 26, 28, 30, and 36 are eight common examples.*) Which of the most common cohesive forces on that list may discourage first-time visitors from returning? (*Numbers 2, 4, 16, 19, 24, 38, 39, and 40 are eight common examples.*) Next, add at least four other cohesive forces to each of these two lists. Which of these two sets of cohesive forces (attractive or repelling) are at the top of the list of the central organizing principles in your congregation?

As you plan for the next five years in the life and ministry of your congregation, which of these central organizing principles should be added or strengthened or moved to a higher and more influential position? What new ones can and should be added? □

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### News . . .

(continued from page 2)

Gospel and culture; a tremendous amount of prayer; and a manifestation of miracles, signs, and wonders.

The special needs of women were also highlighted.

This international conference was the second on the unevangelized people led by the Division of Evangelism and Education and its director, Tony Cupit.

### Celebrating God and the Gospel at work in Moncton

The first in a series of eight EFCA consultations taking place across Canada took place in Moncton, NB, in January. These consultations mark the half-way point of **Vision 2000**, Canada's mandate to equip and motivate the Canadian church for evangelism in the final decade of the 20th century.

Despite the proliferation of church growth books in recent years, "we have not had the proportional growth" in church attendance, notes Laurel Buckingham, pastor of Moncton Wesleyan. "We can have all the mechanics and all the ideas, but it takes a passion for a vision to bring the plans alive and set them on fire."

Attendees returned home with a number of ideas to share with their congregations . . . good helps for equipping leadership. (EFCA) □

### HILLCREST BAPTIST CHURCH

(formerly Northside)

invites you to attend its  
**50th anniversary**  
**April 29-30, 1995**

For more information contact:  
Rev. Harold Kelm, pastor  
Bert Itterman, anniversary chair  
4301 East 26th St.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57103  
Phone: (605) 371-0546

### Ministerial Changes

■ **The Rev. Etan Pelzer** from pastor, Apple Valley Baptist Church, Apple Valley, MN, effective August 1 to begin the Chaplains' Residency program, Sept. 5, 1995, at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis.

■ **The Rev. Al Tuley** from associate pastor, Apple Valley Baptist Church, Apple Valley, MN, effective March 31, 1995.

■ **R. Lee Boleyn**, a senior chaplain, has been promoted in the U.S. Air Force to the rank of lieutenant colonel, at Mountain Home Air Force Base, Mountain Home, ID. He earned a master's degree in 1974 from N.A.B. Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD, and is an endorsed N.A.B. Conference chaplain.

■ **Mr. Rod Enger** to interim pastor, Grace Baptist Church, West Fargo, ND, effective September 1994.

■ **Pastor Harvey Motis** closed his ministry at New Leipzig Baptist Church on January 29. After a noon meal, members and friends said farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Motis. The chair of each of the Church departments expressed thanks for their seven and one half years of caring service. A Love Offering was given to them. He is now pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Gackle, ND.

—Darlene Kallis

### Ordination

■ **Pastor Randy Radke** was ordained on Sunday, Nov. 27, 1994, by the First Baptist Church, Leduc, AB, following a challenge by Dr. Bill Muller and dedication prayers led by Deacon Board Chair of First Baptist, Leduc, AB, and by the Rev. Ron Berg, area minister. Pastor Radke, with his wife Joy Lynn, have served at First Baptist Church, Leduc, since graduating from N.A.B. College and Edmonton Baptist Seminary in 1988.

—Rev. Loren Stark



### BWA responds to Chechnya refugee needs

by Wendy Ryan

**B**aptist World Aid, the relief and development ministry of the Baptist World Alliance, has sent \$5,000 to Russia to help feed and care for thousands of refugees from Chechnya.

News reports say more than 400,000 Chechnya refugees fled the fighting between their own and Russia's military forces.

Refugees are housed in barracks, schools, rest houses, and even parked railway carriages. Chechnya residents continue to flee as the heavy Russian shelling continues. Thousands of people have been killed in the fighting.

"The situation is tragic, and we are appealing for further funds to help," said Paul Montacute, BWAid director. The money will be used for food parcels of flour, sugar, spaghetti, rice, and sausage. As the food is distributed, the gospel is shared with the refugees by giving them Christian literature. Some Chechens, when they discover this help is coming from Christians (whom they think are against them in the war), start praying to God. □

*To contribute to the Chechnya Relief project, make your check payable to North American Baptist Conference and mail it to N.A.B. Conference, 1 So. 210 Summit Ave., Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181-3994 and designate the funds for Chechnya Relief.*



## On Prayer

When our Constitution was established, no other nation provided so carefully to prevent the combination of the power of religion with the power of the national government. According to Professor Malone of the University of Virginia, the pre-eminent scholar of Jefferson who has authored a six-volume study on the third president titled *Jefferson and His Time*, the intolerance of religious leaders when they obtain political power was a driving force behind the First Amendment. And history has proven Jefferson to be correct. Where government sponsors, initiates, and dominates in matters of religion, there is stagna-

tion, monolithic church institutions and little creativity. Where government stays neutral and benevolently accommodates the religious expressions of all, religion flourishes, and a vitality is evident in the healthy diversity of religious practices. In my view, there is nothing wrong with the First Amendment as it is presently written. Let us abstain from enacting wholesale alterations in its language that could do serious damage to the religious liberties that we all hold so dear.

And I am not asking the schools to do something for my children that I am not willing to do at home.

I had one lady that spoke to me on my last visit to Oregon. She was very irate because she found out that I did not support the school prayer amendment. She said, "I believe my child should have the

right to start every day with prayer." I said, "I do, too, and you ought to start him right at home before he leaves for school."

That is where you start the student day with prayer, in the home, and if the child wants to start his day in school with a classroom prayer, that is still his right. The Supreme Court did not rule voluntary prayer out of the school. It only spoke to the question of prescribed prayer, and the Supreme Court was absolutely right. On the idea that somehow in order to pray we have to go through some form of formality, prayer is of the heart and not of the mouth to begin with. One can even pray standing in the center of the U.S. Senate, without kneeling, without folding your hands, without closing your eyes or breathing a word. You pray out of your heart. That is what every student can do every day in the schools in America. There is no way to enforce any other system.

*Above are excerpts of remarks delivered March 8, 1984, by Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-OR. Hatfield, a Baptist, was the primary Senate sponsor of the Equal Access Act, a measure approved by Congress later that year. That law protects the rights of student religious groups in public secondary schools. Reprinted from "Report from the Capitol" Volume 50, Number 2. Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.*

### ACCOMMODATIONS

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Atlanta, Georgia

Are you planning to attend?  
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## BUILDING CHURCHES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

### CEIF Investors Help Church Help Drug Addicted

During his years of drinking and drug abuse, Robby Robertson never felt like he belonged anywhere. That feeling disappeared after he found God and quit drinking.

"When I submitted to Him, my life was changed," he said.

As an alcoholic, Bobby Utter thought he had to get cleaned up and restored before he could face God. But he found he couldn't do it; it had to be the other way around.

Neither of them forgets where they came from. They are core members of Christian-centered chemical dependency ministries offered through Valley Community Baptist Church.

The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Ministry — ADAM — meets every night for support and fellowship, though both say the holidays are when ADAM is in high demand.

Because of ADAM's success, Utter and Robertson take the message of resurrection and recovery to high risk youth. Every Tuesday the Ministry of Saving the Lost Youth — MOSTLY — goes to Peterson Juvenile Hall.

Both groups are completely confidential. Both Utter and Robertson don't hide the fact they are recovering alcoholics. They are living testimonials of the power of God in their lives. "I'm not ashamed of my life,"

**"We wouldn't be impacting these people if it weren't for CEIF's support. Sunday, May 1, Jim, a participant in ADAM walked forward during the invitation and surrendered his life to Christ," says Dennis Dearmin, pastor of Valley Community Baptist Church, Tracy, CA.**

Robertson said. "I'm forgiven."

ADAM was founded five years ago by Bobby Utter. He had achieved sobriety through Alcoholics Anonymous and began attending Valley Community Baptist. Utter saw a need for the group and put together a synthesis of ideas that worked.

ADAM follows the 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous but adds scriptural passages to each step. "It started to grow as people were restored to their jobs and their family," Utter said. He believes the key to individual recovery is applying God's Word to their life. Robertson became part of the group three years ago.

MOSTLY began about three years ago. To work with the youth, Utter and Robertson condensed the 12 steps down to seven, with scriptural passages for each.

In working with youth in juvenile hall, members of MOSTLY don't just make weekly visits, they

get personally involved with the youth. They send cards of encouragement, hook them up with youth groups in their own community, and more importantly, MOSTLY tries to heal the wounds of the past. "We try to restore and reconcile relationship with parents," said Utter.

The ministry educates youth about AIDS, the effects of drugs and alcohol, and offers solutions to problems. "We're in the restoration business," Robertson said. "God forgives all." □

*Taken with permission from "Ministry reaches out to drug addicted," by Amy Swanson, Tracy Press, Apr. 29, 1994.*

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After graduating from Edmonton Baptist Seminary in 1991, Tom began his pastoral ministry as the associate pastor of Greenfield Baptist Church in Edmonton, AB. In 1994 he became the senior pastor of Nepean Baptist Church in Nepean, ON, where his strong preaching and teaching, together with his very personable visitation and pastoral care ministry, are bringing renewed life and vision to the church. We're proud of you, Tom, and pray for God's continued blessing on your life and ministry.

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Valley Community Baptist Church, Tracy, CA, dedicated its new facility May 15, 1994. It was funded in part by a CEIF loan.



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