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Glen A. Pierce

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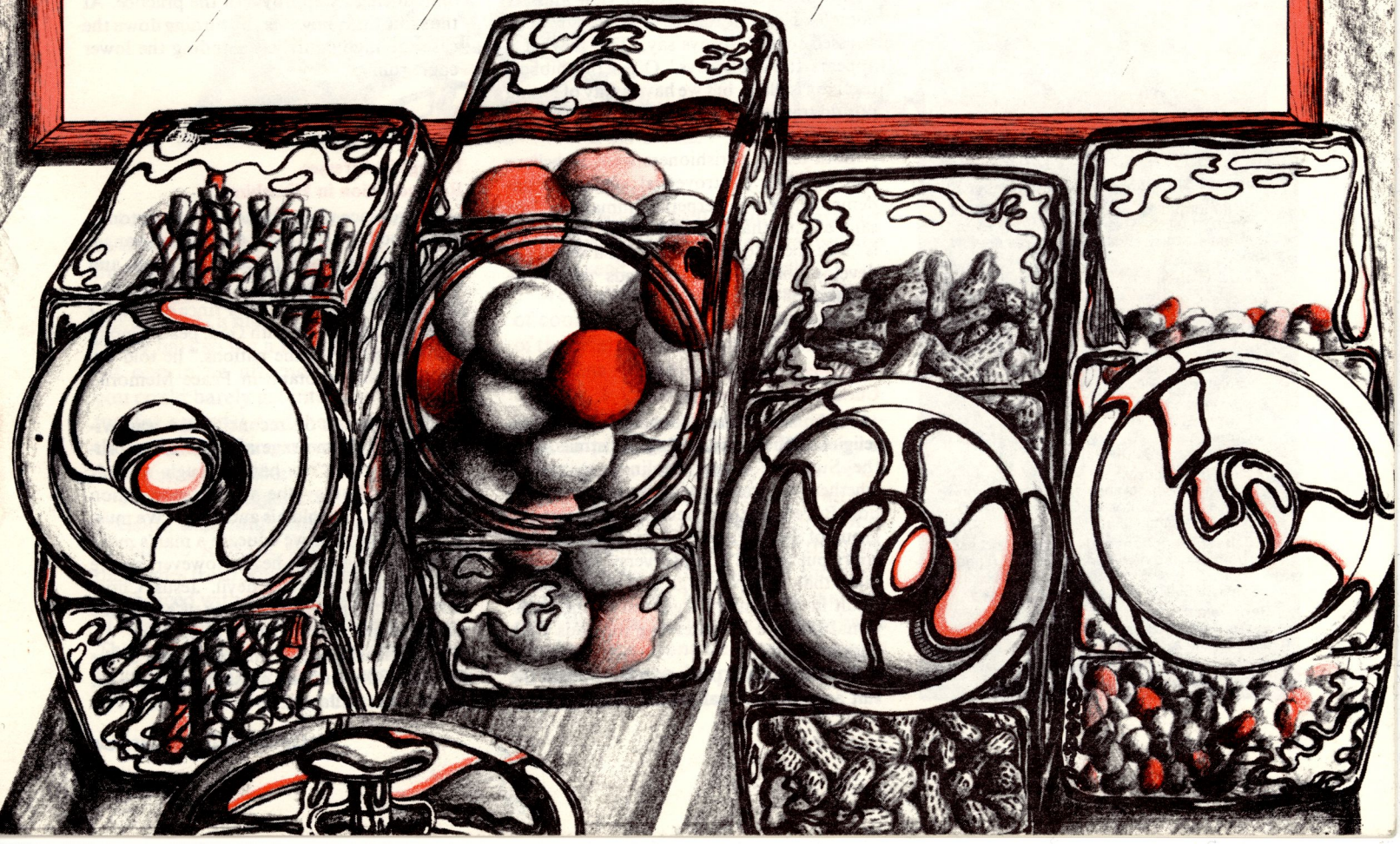
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Evangelical VISITOR

December 10, 1980



options in the Theological Marketplace



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Stott Says Christianity in U.S. Being Confused with Nationalism

Too much civil religion has reduced the church to the status of a "sociological phenomenon" in England and the United States, a noted British evangelical leader said in Washington recently.

Dr. John R. W. Stott, vicar emeritus of London's All Souls Church, said upon arriving for an American lecture tour that "what we are seeing, both in your country and mine, is a resurgence of nationalism rather than a resurgence of Christianity." He declared that for a Christian, "the lordship of Jesus should permeate the whole of life and make him critical of every other loyalty."

Dr. Stott cautiously criticized both the Christian left and Christian right extremes, one of which he felt was possibly too critical and the other not sufficiently so. He defined nationalism as "my country right or wrong" and patriotism as "a critical love of country." He warned that "if you love Christ and you love your country, you should not be so involved as an American citizen that you are not able to stand back and look at it objectively. You mustn't withdraw. You must permeate your community, but in a way that is distinctively Christian."

The role of the church's leaders in their teaching should be one of a delicate balance "between the authoritative and the tentative, between the dogmatic and the agnostic, between the biblical point of view and the complex issues of today," he said. Dr. Stott stressed that "I always say, 'This is what it appears the Bible says.' Often the biblical teaching is plain, but we have a way of letting our dogmatism, our enthusiasm, creep into things."

Both telling parishioners what to believe and avoiding controversial subjects "condemn believers to perpetual immaturity," he said, adding that what the pastor should do is "lead them to pasture in such a way as to develop their Christian minds under the lordship of Christ."

Supreme Court Action Leaves Christmas Programs in Place

Public schools may continue to observe religious holidays, including Christmas, after the Supreme Court declined to review whether the practice violates the Constitution. By refusing to review the complaint of a group of Sioux Falls, S.D., parents, the high court put to rest a controversy that began more than two years ago and threatened to result in a landmark legal test of the traditional practice of observing religious holidays in schools.

The Sioux Falls parents, who brought the suit against the local school board for per-

mitting the observances, argued throughout the lengthy appeals process that presentation of religious music, drama, literature and symbols violates the "no establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment. They argued further the school board guidelines favored religion over non-religion and favored Christianity over other religions.

Holidays specified as acceptable for public school observance by the guidelines were Christmas, Easter, Passover, Hannukah, St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Thanksgiving and Halloween. These may be observed, the guidelines stated, "if presented in a prudent and objective manner and as a traditional part of the culture and religious heritage of the particular holiday."

Attorneys for the school board argued that the designated holidays were being observed in Sioux Falls in a manner that respects the neutrality toward religion prescribed by the Constitution. "It was never the purpose or intent of the school district to authorize or promote a program with religious effect," the board argued in a written legal brief. Further, to eliminate observance of all holidays with religious content "would lead public schools to assume a position of hostility toward religion," a position also held unconstitutional in previous court decisions, the school board maintained. By declining to review the lower decisions, the Supreme Court technically stopped short of announcing its approval of the practice. At the same time, however, by turning down the case the high court left standing the lower court rulings.

Evangelist Stresses Reconciliation in Hiroshima

At the place where explosion of an atomic bomb took 200,000 lives, Canadian Evangelist Leighton Ford placed a wreath and called for reconciliation. "I believe that, as a servant of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, I must proclaim peace with God, peace among men and peace to the nations," he told the group at the cenotaph in Peace Memorial Park.

The emphasis on reconciliation was evident in Ford's message at the evening crusade meeting. "We have enough nuclear bombs to destroy the world's population many times," he told his audience. "We must work to stop it. If we educate a man's mind without changing his heart, however, we are only creating a smart devil. Jesus Christ alone has the power to change us and make us the people God wants us to be."

The Hiroshima meetings were part of the October Billy Graham crusade involving six major cities in Japan.

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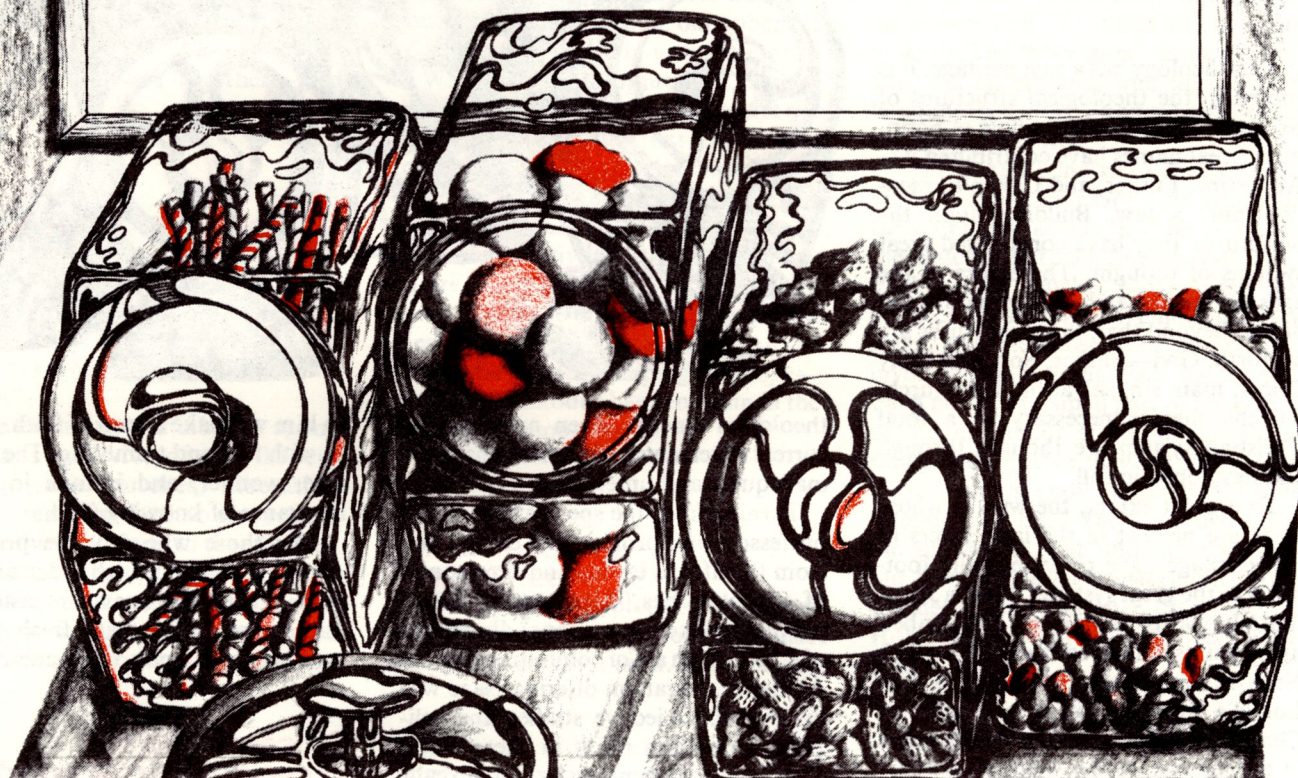
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options in the Theological Marketplace

by Owen Alderfer



I can remember it today—the luxury of the weekly trip to Moore's Market, the "little store" we affectionately called it. My allowance was five cents a week, but oh, what a nickel would buy! Nickel candy bars so big a first grader couldn't eat one in an afternoon. Jawbreakers you could barely get into your mouth—two for a penny! And there I was with all those riches before me, with the beautiful agony of decision.

That store suggests a more weighty decision that confronts all of us today. When we look at the wide range of theologies from which we have to choose, we're faced with difficult decisions. Some of these theologies reflect current design. They are clearly recent arrivals. Others have a more traditional look. They've been around a while but seem to be

moving pretty well. Still others are shopworn and a little picked over because they haven't been moving well.

We can't spend time at every counter, of course, but I'd like to examine a few of the offerings with you and point some directions in making a choice.

Now, I know that theology is not candy, but still it should be made palatable to potential "takers." Theology is the language and ideas by which we try to convey a knowledge of God to an age, so if you have any interest at all in God, you're into theology. Any truly thoughtful person seeks to deal with the question of God. We are called to examine everything carefully, to hold fast what is good. Any reasonable Christian wants to communicate defensible concepts about God—and to do so clearly.

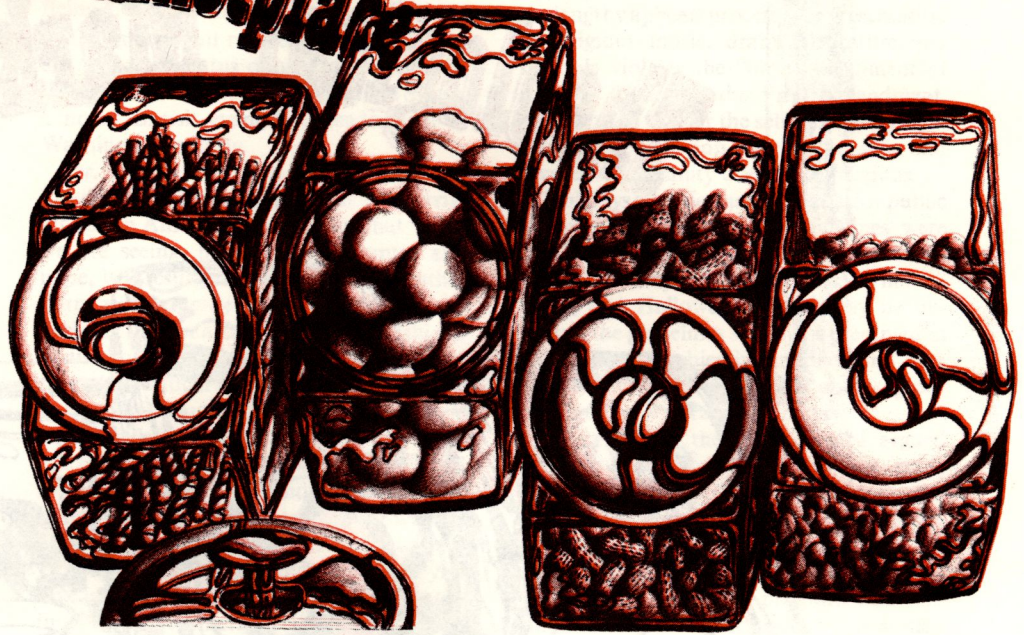
So, what are our choices? What are some of the options in the theological marketplace? Let's look at them according to age—i.e., how long they have been in the marketplace.

Conservative Orthodox Theology (Thinking Theology)

Here is a theology having every evidence of venerability. It is packaged with dignity in quiet beauty and good taste. It has about it the aura of old gold. It has stood the test of time and stands forth yet as an attractive option. This is Conservative Orthodox Theology—evangelical theology, if you will allow. It expresses itself as "thinking theology."

options in the

Theological Marketplace



This theology has a rich heritage. It is rooted in the theological structures of St. Paul—indeed in the whole of Scripture. Great names have contributed it—Augustine, Luther, and Calvin to mention only a few. Building upon the Scriptures, they have constructed great systems of thought. The errors of the ages are refuted and the heresiarchs put down. Beyond that, the great truths are set forth: God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, man, sin, salvation, the church. All the themes necessary to a total Christian system are thought through and developed in full.

To a great extent, the writers whose ideas are present in the later layers of this package have provided only footnotes to the great systems. True, a Jonathan Edwards elaborates and embellishes points of faith for a world in which Newtonian science is standard and Locke's philosophy is in vogue. A Charles Hodge or a B. B. Warfield arises to the defense of the "faith once delivered" in times when it is threatened by historical and literary criticism.

But by and large, this theology has been worked out—majors and minors, point by point. There are few surprises, few mysteries. Little wonder, then, that it continues to be attractive: it furnishes answers in this uncertain age.

Existentialist Theology (Theology as Feeling)

In a time when theologians looked for God at the end of lengthy and complex arguments and profound philosophical statements, a Danish thinker named Soren Kierkegaard bravely cried, "Folly!" The speculations of the doctors of theology led only to sterile formulas and dead orthodoxy, he sensed. A crucial element in theological construction was missing. (Let me insert an aside: New

theologies emerge when and because current statements and expressions prove inadequate and untenable.)

Turning from the speculations of the professors and professional clergy, and from the lifeless creeds and ceremonies of the churches, Kierkegaard called people back to the personal dimension of faith—to an act of commitment to the Almighty. Abraham offering Isaac was his model. Objective studies and religious formalities result in cheap faith. The God with whom we have to do calls us to abandon ourselves. Because he is completely "Other," we can know God only dimly, Kierkegaard said. To come

**Theology is
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and ideas
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to an age.**

to him we make a leap of faith. And do so with fear and trembling. The result is awe, wonder, and infinite joy in the assurance of knowing God.

For those who pay the price—i.e., make the leap—it is thunder and lightning. Life takes on new dimensions. The Bible comes alive with fresh meaning and becomes God's voice anew.

Process Theology (Theology as Inference)

Here, in a tidy package, is another choice. It's called Process Theology—theology by inference. Process theology takes a page from ancient Greek thought, in the philosophy of Heraclitus who said, "All is becoming." However, modern science is its chief inspiration.

In the complex world of relativity and quantum physics, the old predictability of Newtonian physics will no longer do. Under the microscope and through the telescope—in microcosm and macrocosm—it is evident that unexplainable changes are occurring. The universe is involved in a process which reaches toward infinity past and future. The predictable God of deism who created a clock-work universe and set it moving in perfect cause-effect designs cannot meet the needs of today's knowledge. Likewise, the infinite God of orthodoxy is questionable in a world that seems

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incomplete, yet in creation.

Inferences from scientific data clearly call for a new word about God. The universe is still aborning and the footprints and fingermarks of God in it suggest his nature. He is God in the process. He grows with the universe, learning and developing with that process. If, in the world-process, I can infer the activity of God; if, through the insights of religion and philosophy, I can explain his relation and operation as one who struggles along with me in perfecting his great purpose; if I can infer his relation to our being and struggle, then surely I have found a view of God with which I can live in assurance and hope. We are in this grand process together—God and us.

Liberation Theology (Doing Theology)

Liberation Theology is one of the more striking choices in the marketplace. We might call this "action theology"; to be involved in it is to be "doing theology."

Where the oppressed labor in agony and struggle to survive, often in the very shadow of the churches, Liberation Theology has come forth to give release to the captives and food to the starving. In lands where theology is but the empty rhetoric of a small and privileged upper class, this new expression emerged to declare that one discovers the mind and

purpose of God by doing the acts of God as seen in Jesus Christ. Theology is action rather than ivory tower concepts and classroom reflection.

Starting from the human situation, Liberation Theology emerged first in Latin America, a continent that is both nominally Christian and broadly poor. Here Christian theologians and modern activists, confronted with gross poverty and long standing injustice, came to identify the cause of the poor with the message of the gospel. These people of deep commitment began to address the situations of need in whatever way they could. Out of their action, old principles of theology emerged in new patterns.

Wherever there is oppression, Liberation Theology enters the scene to act out theology and to confront the hollow forms and empty systems. Where the poor are oppressed by rich minorities, where blacks are downtrodden by rich and self-protective factions, where women are victims of sexist discrimination, there is work for Liberation Theology. Here the committed person can be vitally involved in shaping theology—making the Exodus happen again in the lives of people today.

Which Theology Shall I Choose?

Each of these theologies (and many others) has some attraction. Each has emerged to satisfy a need. But each, by

itself, has limitations. Each has been proven inadequate for the tests of living. Orthodoxy becomes cold and formal. Though it may have all the answers, it tends to neglect heart and hands and to dwell in ivory towers and cold churches. Existentialism becomes hot and shapeless in emotional ecstasy or intellectual irresponsibility. Focusing on individual commitment, it becomes individualistic and even schismatic. The God of Process Theology is limited and impersonal. The comfort of his immanence and involvement gives way in the face of his helplessness. Liberation, full of involvement and fire, turns to hate and violence. The "liberators" come to play god, taking property and life in their hands as they make Exodus happen and set the captives free.

Which shall I choose? I choose them all—and more. Our God rises above all the statements about him and above all the systems that seek to elaborate him. Each option touches but a facet: the intellectual aspect, the emotional nuances, the inferences from science, the involvements of doing. Each has its role. Each points to a small part of the being, nature, and action of the Almighty, but singly and together they fall short.

God stands above our thought and statement of him. Yes, we must make the statements, but ultimately we can but bow before the mystery, awe, and wonder of God and utter, "Holy, Holy, Holy." If your God is less than this, your God is too small.

"Options in the Theological Marketplace" is the address given by Owen H. Alderfer at Messiah College on Oct. 17, following his investiture as C. N. Hostetter, Jr. Professor of Theology. Joining the faculty in 1980, Dr. Alderfer chairs the Department of Religion and Philosophy.

Prior to joining the Messiah faculty, Dr. Alderfer was Professor of Church History at Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio, where he served for fifteen years. His ministry in the church has been broad and varied—pastor, teacher, administrator, author, board and committee member.

In inaugurating the Chair of Theology, Dwight Bert, chairman of the College's trustee board noted that "the teaching field of C. N. Hostetter, Jr. and the nature of his services makes the theological distinction an appropriate one. It is also becoming that the first endowed chair of the College be in the area traditionally titled 'queen of the sciences'."

Dr. Alderfer (left) receives the certificate of his investiture as C. N. Hostetter, Jr. Professor of Theology from Dwight Bert, chairman of the Board of Trustees. President D. Ray Hostetter (center) looks on.



thirsty

and you gave me water

Anything you did for one of my brothers here,
however humble, you did for me. (Matt. 25:40)

In São Caetano, Brazil,
MCC-assisted teams build cisterns to
gather water during the three months of
annual rainfall, and conserve it for drinking
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Construction of cement rainwater cisterns, São Caetano, Brazil.

World Food Situation Tenuous

by Paul Longacre



MCCer Laura Litwiller and young Kenyan examine plants on self-help farm.

"Feeding the world next year will be like walking on a tightrope without a net," says an article in the November 4, 1980, *Wall Street Journal*. "A single misstep, such as another summer's bad weather in the U.S., would be enough to unbalance the act, plunging the whole world into a grain shortage and some poor nations to the brink of starvation."

Edouard Sasuma, director-general of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), told an October U.N. conference, "We are in a situation of global alert."

Reasons for the tenuous food situation are several: There has been drought in several of the world's largest food-producing regions. Food demands continue to rise and a number of poor countries are unable to keep their food production up. Their food needs demand larger imports of food.

Food stocks are adequate for the coming year but are expected to drop to a five-year low. World food grain production has been up 12 percent during the five-year period, reports the *Wall Street Journal* article, but consumption has been up 15 percent.

Though drought affected feed grain production in the United States and Canada, total world wheat and rice production appears to be slightly higher than last year. This, along with sizeable reserves in the United States, has helped keep world grain prices from escalating as they had in the early 1970s. World grain prices have increased by approximately one-third nonetheless. But another dry year in the United States,

south Asia, or another large food-producing area and the world food situation will be described as a "crisis" rather than as "tenuous."

To the benefit of the United States and Canada, food deficit countries are importing more and more food. A recently signed agreement between China and the United States which calls for annual shipments of between six and nine million tons is one example of the growing demand. Shipments to famine-stricken Africa is another. Another large and growing clientele for U.S. food exports is the oil-rich countries of the Middle East and north Africa. A sizeable portion of this year's U.S. food exports is expected to go to this region.

But bottlenecks already occur in many ports in the United States as it tries to ship out its 80 million tons. This shipping problem might make it difficult to greatly increase food exports even if production were no problem. Ultimately the food countries themselves must produce more of their own food rather than increase imports. Mennonite Central Committee programs are designed particularly to help farmers in needy countries produce their own food.

Developing countries are increasing their food imports year by year. Population growth is a major cause, but balance of payment deficits due to oil costs, military expenditures and cash requirements for the import needs of the elites are forcing more countries to expand cash cropping for export. Recently MCC personnel in Africa heard a rumor that sizeable acreages in Kenya are to be

given over to multinational corporations for tobacco production. Kenya normally has been self-sufficient in agricultural production but now needs to import food from abroad.

The rumor might be false, but it illustrates the trend in many poor countries. Many of them are giving land for local production of food over to the growing of crops for export in order to earn foreign exchange. That practice would not be serious if poor countries were assured of a reliable supply of food at affordable prices from abroad and if people who are being displaced off the land would be getting the benefit of those cash crops. Neither can be guaranteed.

Agricultural economists express concern as to whether the United States and other grain exporting countries will be able to meet the import demands of the food deficit countries in the next decade. The FAO estimates that the developing countries alone will import 80 million metric tons this year and the needs for next year and the years following are certain to increase. Don Paarlberg, noted agricultural economist, writing in his most recent book *Farm and Food Policy Issues of the 1980's*, is optimistic that the needs can be met. But other agricultural economists are not so optimistic. Clearly a series of dry years or a large oil price increase could tip the balance of the tightrope walker and throw the world crop situation into crisis.

Paul Longacre is coordinator for MCC food and hunger concerns.

By faith—a cl

by Charl

some from as far away as Managua, about 250 kilometers, and from all the Brethren in Christ preaching points in Zelaya. It was indeed a time of Christian fellowship.

* * * * *

Ruben Ebanks, lay leader of the Bello Horizonte Brethren in Christ Church in Managua, is part of a Christian music group, Mahanaim. The group, composed of seven men from various denominations, is well known throughout the great Managua area and is much in demand by evangelical churches.

"Hermano Carlos, (Brother Charles) I would like to offer Mahanaim to play for the church dedication in Huapi," Ruben told me in conversation some months earlier.

"Thanks for your offer—I'm sure the church would like to have you, but there is no electricity in Huapi," I replied, knowing that Mahanaim's electric guitars and amplifiers would be of no use in this underdeveloped area.

"Oh, but that is no problem. All we have to do is take a small gasoline generator along with us," he insisted.

"Yes, but the transportation is very difficult," I tried to explain, not knowing how they could possibly take sound equipment, electric guitars, trumpet, flute and an assortment of other percussion instruments on a four hour canoe ride up the Siguia and Huapi Rivers.

"Oh, but we want to do it. It will be a good experience for our group," persisted Ruben, not about to be put off by my negative arguments. "Everyone in the group is willing to ask off work Saturday through Monday in order to make the trip."



Persons came by horse, canoe and foot to attend the dedication.

"Are you from Huapi?" I asked a thin, older-looking lady, one of a number of women working in a smoke-filled kitchen preparing food for the gathering crowd.

"No, I'm from another community east of here," she replied, smiling.

"Did you come by boat or horse?" I continued, knowing these were the only means of transportation in this rugged area.

"Neither. I came by foot," she answered, not bothered that my questions were distracting her from her work. By foot!

"And how long did it take you to walk here?" I was wondering how far this older woman was willing to walk for the occasion.

"Well," she replied, still smiling, "I left home this morning at six and arrived this afternoon at four."

"Ten hours!" I replied in disbelief. Without comment she proceeded to fry rice.

The event that motivated this woman to walk ten hours in rain and over paths, hardly more than mud holes, was an all-night church service to dedicate the new Brethren in Christ Church at Huapi, a small town in the frontier department of Zelaya, Nicaragua. In Nicaragua these all-night worship services are customary. (People don't travel inconveniently for hours, only to go home after an hour or two of service.) For Christians, the watch night services are spiritual, as well as social, events (similar to love feasts of an earlier era in the Brethren in Christ Church in North America).

Between 400-500 members and friends of the church attended the dedication. Persons came by horse, canoe and foot,



Part of the Huapi congregation and the new church building.

Church at Huapi

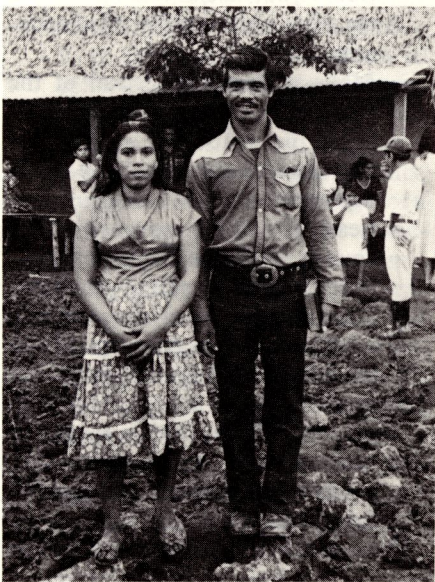
Musser

What more could I say? If they are willing to risk their equipment on such a trip and were disposed to put up with mud and rain, why not? For Huapi, having a live music group would be a first-time event; for the church it would add much meaning to the services and would attract the attention of unsaved persons in the community.

Mahanaim did add joy to the dedication. They were an instrument of blessing to all who attended. Members of the group found themselves blessed in return for their act of faith and service to the Lord.

* * * * *

After a full night of services there was no Sunday morning worship service. In the morning everyone that did not have a house to go to rested on hammocks or on the church benches to prepare for the baptismal service that afternoon in the Huapi River.



Pastor Reymundo and Francisca Castillo in front of their home in Huapi.



The afternoon baptismal service in the Huapi River.

One of those baptized was the town's only schoolteacher. Auxiliadora Aragon, because of her position in Huapi, is a natural community leader. Being a *profesora*, she is highly respected and her life is always being observed. So, it was of no little significance when Auxiliadora gave public testimony of faith in Jesus Christ through the ordinance of baptism.

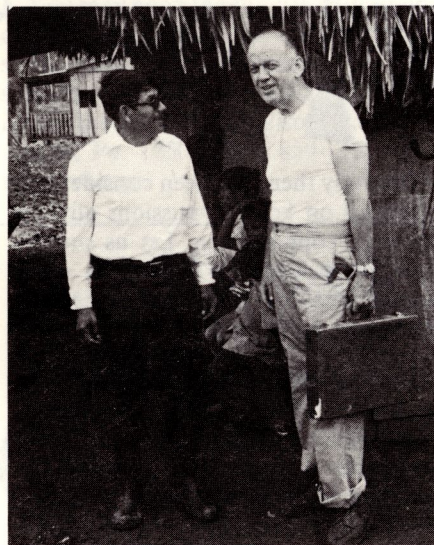
"This afternoon I want to give a word of testimony to life and joy I have found in Jesus Christ," stated the radiant schoolteacher, moments before her baptism. "Jesus Christ is man's only solution to his most desperate problems."

These words, said in the presence of unbelievers and Christians, and the continuing testimony of a new Auxiliadora in her community will mean much to the growth of the Brethren in Christ Church in Huapi.

* * * * *

Perhaps the weekend activities at Huapi had the most special significance and joy for José Leon Herrera.* Hermano José was the key man in organizing the Brethren in Christ works in Zelaya and the principal dreamer of a church building in Huapi. He had started his witnessing in Huapi when it was a settlement of only three houses, a long way from the present sixty dwellings.

"Hermano José, what feelings did you have during the weekend of the dedication of the Huapi church?" I asked him



Church planter and evangelist José Leon Herrera with missionary Eugene Madeira.

some days later when he was at my house for a visit.

"For me it was the fulfillment of something I had seen through faith a long time before," he responded joyfully. "The Lord has given me the faith to see many such churches throughout the wilds of Zelaya."

"Anything else?" I inquired.

"Yes, I was much impressed with all the dedicated Christian men who were present from the congregation. The Lord has a reservoir of Christian men who will bring my other faith churches to reality. Glory to God!"

Charles and Cara Musser have been serving in a missions assignment in Nicaragua since 1970. The Musser family lives in the capital city of Managua.

*See "Missionary to the Awakening Giant," September 10, 1980, *Evangelical Visitor*.



We can promote missions in our homes



by H. Frank Kipe

Recently there has been considerable emphasis on keeping missions alive in the local congregation. Let us supplement these ideas by looking at some suggestions for promoting missions interest in our homes.

Starting with attitudes. Attitudes of the parents toward missions are basic. Conversations should be positive and constructive. Issues should be openly discussed in the family circle. What we say (and how we say it) about the church and her leaders, the Board for Missions and its administrators, leaves lasting impressions on our children.

Attitudes toward missionaries are important. Missionaries don't want to be glorified, they're too human. Missionaries don't want to be pitied and fussed over. Don't make an issue of their sacrifices. Rather, discuss practical ways the family can make suitable sacrifices for the cause of missions.

Build constructive attitudes about adjustments to conditions for the education of missionary children. Avoid saying, "I would *never* do that." Be positive about the benefits that may accrue to MK's (missionary kids) who have to live in hostels or away from their parents for long months at a time.

Before and after a missions conference, be sure to emit wholesome, enthusiastic attitudes about those coming and speaking, the time they take from your interests, their clothing, their accent, their interest in "new" toys and products, their political views.

Parents, be positive in your attitude toward the place of children and teenagers in the missions conferences. This begins in the home. Be sure that in planning for missions conferences, plans are made to include your children.

Experiencing missions in the home. Admittedly, there are many pressures at work in Western culture—working demands, artificial entertainment, early independence, individualism—making united, sustained family interest in missions difficult. I have gathered, from many deputation contacts, some ideas for joint family activities for first-hand, missions-related experiences. Let me share a few to get your creative minds working. You can add many more:

- Invite furloughing missionaries into your home.
- Become birthday and anniversary sharers with a missionary family, particularly with children the ages of yours.
- Have regular prayer in your family altar for specific missionaries.* Use the Missions Prayer Fellowship's *Challenge*.
- Use the camera. Share photos of workers and children, learn them by name and by their pictures. Use the Brethren in Christ Missions Photo Album.

*Look for expanded ideas about prayer for missionaries in a future issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*.

- Offer storage space in your home for a missionary family's possessions while they are on the field.
- If you adopt a specific missionary family, periodically do a systematic study of their field, its people, their customs, the geography, history, political problems and successes, and the economy.
- Make a family scrapbook about the field. Include pictures, current events news, newspaper and magazine clippings, reports about leaders, social changes, growth of churches, attitudes toward missionaries, etc.
- Make a stamp collection of the country.
- Solicit items to erect a curio display in the corner of the guest bedroom.
- Learn about the currency of the country. Collect a display of coins.
- Prepare a family skit or play to be given in your local congregation using costumes, greetings in the vernacular and characteristic cultural values, all being held in high respect. (These are always valid to each culture.)
- Study foods, recipes, marriage and funeral customs.

These and many more activities can grow out of a genuine family interest in missions and can help that interest grow. One church couple has taken a

special interest in Japan's "rapid" train system to enhance their children's closeness to a missionary family in Japan with children their own age.

Participating in missions in the home.

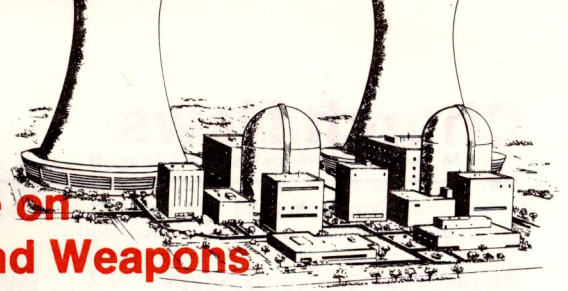
Family interest in missions will grow at the family altar, around the meal table, in the rec room, at the writing desk, in the music room around the piano, at the mailbox, from the book and tape and library, and, indeed, wherever family life goes on. It should only be natural, then, for members of the family to sooner or later become involved in missions in its many and varied forms. Again, let's look at ideas I have seen used and working:

- Dad takes a few days to assist construction in a disaster area or helps to harvest an injured neighbor's crop.
- Dad talks to his son or daughter about missions as a career option.
- Mother and daughter prepare covered dish for a carry-in lunch on Missions Sunday.
- Daughter takes flowers and a fresh pie to a new family in the neighborhood.
- Teenagers are informed of and encouraged to share in summer service projects.
- Voluntary service is held in higher esteem than high salary, low performance jobs.
- Sacrificial giving to missions and special projects is a family matter. Teenagers should know and share in these issues.
- Lifestyle in pleasures, recreation and possessions should be determined in light of missions needs.
- Pray the Lord of the harvest to call laborers, even if He calls your own children. Then release them with your blessing and support.
- When opportunity calls, parents, consider a mid-career change for a stint of sacrificial service somewhere. You will never be the same.
- Carry your missions interest, experiences and participation right into your local congregational life. Multiplication of resource and effort is God's way to get the task done.

If these suggestions have been helpful, use them, share them, add to them, and let's promote missions in our homes.

Frank Kipe, veteran missionary, teaches part-time at Messiah College.

December 10, 1980



Filmstrip Available on Nuclear Energy and Weapons

"Acceptable Risk? The Nuclear Age in the United States" is a new information program now available from the Mennonite Central Committee audio-visuals library in Akron, Pa.

The program gives a step-by-step look at the nuclear fuel cycle, from uranium mining to commercial power generation, from weapons production to the transportation and storage of radioactive wastes. It highlights the corporations which manage the nuclear industry.

At every point on the fuel chain it considers the human impact—by interviewing Navajo people living near bomb test sites, and a Hiroshima survivor.

Many corporate, Pentagon and government officials have decided that nuclear

power is the answer to America's energy and defense needs. This show takes a hard look at the mechanics, costs and alternatives involved, and challenges all of us to ask if the risks of atomic power are acceptable.

Mennonite and Brethren in Christ audiences viewing "Acceptable Risk?" have been favorably impressed with the information presented.

You may book the show in a filmstrip or slide set version. A cassette tape soundtrack, script documentation and study/action guide are included. Order it from the MCC Audio-Visuals Library, Akron, Pa. 17501 (717) 859-1151. No rental charge.

New Directory Planned

A third Mennonite Your Way Travel Directory will be published in May 1981, report Leon and Nancy Stauffer, Salunga, PA, originators of the two previous MYW travel directories.

"It was not an easy decision for us," said Nancy, "because I know of the many hours I will need to commit to this project. This is a kitchen table operation, you know, and in a few months when we receive 50 or more applications each day, there will be some frustration in keeping both Mennonite Your Way and our own household running smoothly," concluded Nancy. Her husband, Leon, offered, "we all try to pitch in and help with this project, even the children are now able to stuff envelopes. We keep hearing such good reports of fellowship and lasting relationships resulting from Mennonite Your Way contacts, it's hard for us to stop the project now."

The Mennonite Your Way Travel Directory, first begun in 1976, lists nearly 2,000 host families throughout North America who have agreed to host travelers coming through their area. Travelers are asked to give their host several days advance notice of arrival as well as leave a small donation. Hosts are asked only to provide lodging; they, of course, may refuse visitors if there are schedule conflicts with their personal plans.



"From the very beginning we were interested in promoting two things," commented Leon, "fellowship and economical travel. Our world seems to be tearing apart at the seams, so surely the *fellowship* aspect still applies. The need to continue to *economize* is quite self-evident."

With the cost of travel increasing, Mennonite Disaster Service is hoping Mennonite Your Way host families will assist by providing fellowship and encouragement as MDS workers travel through enroute to a disaster area.

The New MYW III directory, which will cover 1981, 1982, and 1983, will primarily be used by Mennonite, Brethren in Christ, Church of the Brethren, and related groups. Anyone of kindred spirit wishing to become part of this hospitality network should request an application form immediately from: Mennonite Your Way III, Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538. Registration closes January, 1981.

Church News

Messiah College

Dr. Joseph S. Wang, Taiwan native and New Testament Professor at Asbury Theological Seminary, was the speaker at the 4th annual Roxbury Holiness Lectureship on November 11-13, sponsored jointly by Messiah College and Roxbury Holiness Camp. Dr. Wang gave his life's story at the main rally in the college church, addressed the area ministers the next day, and spoke in college chapel services and various classes.

Dr. Wang ministers extensively among the Chinese in North America, and has lectured in South America and Asia. He is an ordained elder in the Free Methodist Church.



Dr. Royce Saltzman, recipient of the 1980 Distinguished Alumnus Award at Messiah College, rehearses the Concert Choir, which he guest-directed at Homecoming. Dr. Saltzman is Associate Dean, School of Music, University of Oregon.



Mrs. Frances Smith Burkholder was awarded the Alumni Appreciation Award. For many years the director of the Ladies Chorus at Messiah, she directed a volunteer choir of former members at the Homecoming program.

Roger Charman Ordained

Roger Charman, pastor of the Cross Roads Memorial Church near Kitchener, Ontario, was ordained to the Christian ministry on October 19, 1980, by Bishop Harvey R. Sider. The Bond of Love, a music group from Wainfleet, and Ellis Lageer, president of Emmanuel Bible College, shared in the service.

Born in Hagersville and attending the Springvale church as a youth, Roger spent three years with a Christian youth group in Vancouver, Toronto, Puerto Rico and Venezuela. He then attended Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener, graduating in 1977.

Following graduation, he served as assistant pastor in the Wainfleet congregation for nearly two years. In addition to his current pastoral assignment at Puslinch, he is pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology at the University of Waterloo.

He and his wife Gail were married in 1974 and have two sons, Mark and David.

Conference News

Allegheny

The Chambersburg congregation hosted the Allegheny Conference Male Chorus on Sunday evening, Oct. 26. An offering was received for the Fine Arts Building of Messiah College. • Bishop Alvin Book was in charge of the Installation of Rev. and Mrs. Jesse Bawel as the pastoral couple for the Colyer congregation on Sunday evening, Oct. 26. Three men were baptized in September.

A "Family Finance Seminar" was held by the Dillsburg congregation on Sunday morning and evening, Oct. 26. Al Glenn conducted the seminar. • The Montgomery congregation reports increased attendance with a recent high of 275 for Sunday school. The average for the month of October was 204. • On Sunday, Sept. 28, a farewell ice cream social was held by the Pleasant View congregation



to honor Rev. and Mrs. Samuel Lady prior to their move to Messiah Village. Rev. Lady began the congregation and was its pastor from 1960-70.

Atlantic

A Pre-Thanksgiving Service was held on Wednesday evening, Nov. 19, by the Free Grace congregation. All were encouraged to give sacrificially for a Thanksgiving project and then write the reason for their giving. • The Lancaster congregation reports sponsoring a Family Life Conference, with Rev. Paul Unruh as the resource person.

A Bible Prophecy Conference was held by the Manor congregation on Nov. 9-13. The speaker was Dr. Nathan Meyer. • On Oct. 28, the Pequea congregation hosted a music seminar-workshop sponsored by the music committee. Emerson Frey led the seminar.

Canadian

The film, "The Truth Abideth Still," was viewed by the Heise Hill congregation on Sunday evening, Oct. 12. • Rev. Henry Ginder held a week of special services for the Houghton congregation during the month of October. The Rosebank congregation held a series of spiritual growth meetings on Nov. 2-9. Rev. James Sider, a former pastor of the congregation, was the speaker. The Church Board acted to continue to support their refugee family. • A chalk and music presentation was given to the Sherkston congregation on Sunday evening, Oct. 12, by the Randy White family. The Whites are from the Wainfleet Church.

Central

Sunday, Oct. 19, was designated as Family Sunday by the Amherst congregation. Testimonies of family blessings were given during the morning service. • The Beulah Chapel congregation held homecoming on Sunday, Oct. 26. A fellowship meal was held following the morning service and a drama about the Sunday school was presented in the evening.

Rev. Charles Norman held a series of meetings at the Fairview Church from Oct. 25-29. A dinner meeting opened the "Nites to Grow By" on Saturday night. • The orchestra of the Lakeview congregation presented a concert on Sunday evening, Oct. 26. Refreshments were served following the program. • The Morrison congregation reports holding a Singspiration Service on Sunday, Nov. 2. A carry-in meal was also held.

The Northridge congregation held its first Sunday morning service on Sunday, Nov. 2. Rev. Devon Bontrager is the pastor. • The Western Hills congregation hosted a Lay Witness Mission on Nov. 14-16.

Midwest

The Dallas Center congregation held an all-church hayride on Friday evening, Oct. 24. • A Sunday school retreat was held by the Rosebank congregation on Nov. 7 and 8. The retreat was held at Rock Springs 4-H Ranch.

Pacific

A Missionary Conference was held by the Labish congregation on Nov. 8-12. Missionary guests represented the following missions: Wings of Peace, World Gospel Mission, Wycliff Bible Translators, and Salem Union Gospel Missions.

For The Record . . .

Births

Clippinger: Cooper, J. D. A., born in Sept. to Abraham and Annette Clippinger, Shermans Valley congregation, Pa.

Cober: Benjamin Lee, born Aug. 14, to Mr. and Mrs. Keith Cober, Zambia. The Cobers are members of the Westheights congregation, Ont.

Engle: Jessica Burkholder, born Oct. 22, to Millard and Sharon Engle, Mt. Rock congregation, Pa.

Fluke: Melissa Dawn, born Oct. 10, to David and Betty Fluke, Shermans Valley congregation, Pa.

Gearhart: Margaret Elizabeth, born Oct. 17, to Dennis and Dawn Gearhart, Fairland congregation, Pa.

Giles: Benjamin Clarence, born Oct. 11, to Tim and Martha (Lehman) Giles, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

Henry: Zachary Michael, born Oct. 6, to Kevin and Marilyn Henry, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Horst: Monica Lynn and Melissa Joy, born Oct. 20, to James and Jean Horst, Lancaster congregation, Pa.

Knowles: David Michael, born Oct. 19, to Mike and June Knowles, Cedar Heights congregation, Pa.

Moyer: Mark Phares, born Oct. 17, to Marlin and Phyllis Phares, Manheim congregation, Pa.

Paraiso: Suzanne Sue, born Aug. 24, to Cesar and Eunice (Fohringer) Paraiso, Gaithersburg, Md.

Popp: Jeremy David, born Oct. 13, to Gary and Kathy Popp, Hummelstown congregation, Pa.

Rebman: Steven Allen, born Oct. 4, to Steve and Peggy Rebman, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Rogers: Thomas Alexander, born Oct. 1, to Tom and Joyce Rogers, Waynesboro congregation, Pa.

Turner: Jessica Beth, born Oct. 5, to Bruce and Rita Turner, Pomeroy Chapel congregation, Tn.

Warner: Laralee Bryn, born Oct. 2, to Larry and Bonnie Warner, Highland congregation, Oh.

Webb: Catherine Francis, born Sept. 22, to Fred and Sandy Webb, Bridlewood congregation, Ont.

Wenger: Jeffrey Craig, born Oct. 24, to Larry and Karen (Miller) Wenger, Fairview congregation, Oh.

Wolfe: Michelle Larissa, born Oct. 26, to Cliff and Margie Wolfe, Manor congregation, Pa.

Weddings

Brandt-Kern: Clare Kern, and Alfred R. Brandt, both of Lebanon, Pa., Oct. 12, in the Kenbrook Retreat Center with Rev. Albert Kline and Rev. Earl Musser officiating.

Charles-Erb: Sheri Ann, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert R. Erb, Willow St., Pa., and Marvin L., son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Harold Charles, New Providence, Pa., June 27, in the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Hess-Severino: Elaine, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Severino, Willow Street, Pa., and Christ Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Christ Hess, Pequea, Pa., Aug. 16, in the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Keith Ulery and Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Hoffman-Gutshall: Darlene Louise, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Asa Gutshall, and Joseph Lester, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Hoffman, Oct. 10, in the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church.

Mylin-Eidemiller: Sandra Jean, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Kenneth Eidemiller, and Jay Donald, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mylin, both of Willow St., Pa., Sept. 6, in the Pequea Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Rissinger-Kershaw: Jeanne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John R. Kershaw, Upland, Ca., and Bruce, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. Lamar Rissinger, West Milton, Oh., Aug. 29, in the Upland Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Robert Hempy officiating.

Summers-Byers: Carol, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Milton Byers, Lancaster, Pa., and John, son of Roy and Lorraine Summers, Sept. 10, at the home of the bride with Rev. Gerald Wingert officiating.

Thompson-Ruegg: Leila Mae, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lorene Ruegg, Stevensville, Ont., and Burton Ralph, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Thompson, Trenton, Ont., Aug. 29, in Oakes Garden, Niagara Falls, with brother-in-law of the groom, Rev. Mike Kerchuk, and Rev. H. Frank Kipe officiating.

Zimmerman-Gasswint: Cindi, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kay Gasswint, and Mark, son of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Zimmerman, Oct. 25, in the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Robert Keller Sr., officiating.

Obituaries

Brillinger: Mrs. Ida Mae Steckley Brillinger, Gormley, Ont., born July 16, 1894, died Oct. 5, 1980. In 1916, she was married to Roy A. Brillinger who survives. Also surviving are four daughters: Vera, Velma, Jean and Mrs. Mildred Sider; two sons: Walter and Eldon; nine grandchildren; two sisters; and a brother. She was preceded in death by a son, Ross. She was a member of the Heise Hill Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral service was conducted by Revs. James Cober, Andrew McNiven, Roy Nigh and Bishop E. J. Swalm. Interment was in the Heise Hill Cemetery.

Costello: Albert Daniel Costello, born July 16, 1920, died Sept. 15, 1980 in the Hamilton General Hospital, Ont. He is survived by his wife, Marion; four sons: Dan, Philip, Ralph, and Roger; two daughters: Mrs. Elly Putman and Muriel; and a grandchild. The funeral service was held in the Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church by Rev. Roy J. Peterman. Interment was in the Maple Lawn Cemetery.

Draper: C. Wesley Draper, Kitchener, Ont., died Oct. 19, 1980 at the age of 59 years. He is survived by his wife, Viola Roberts Draper; six children: Charles, Walter, Wayne, Warren, William and Wenda; a brother, William; and 12 grandchildren. He was a member of the Westheights Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Philip D. Keefer. Interment was in the Woodland Cemetery.

Grabill: Mrs. Elma A. Mishler Grabill, born May 5, 1886 near Middlebury, In., died Oct. 19, 1980 in Goshen, In. She was married to Francis N. Grabill who preceded her in death Jan. 10, 1954. She is survived by four daughters: Mrs. Delight Yoder, Mrs. Gladys Adair, Mrs. Grace Mast, and Mrs. Lois Mann; two sons: Gladwin and Lester; seven grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren. She was a member of the Union Grove Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Carl Stump and Rev. Gilbert Gomez.

Krause: Michael Horvath Krause, born in Hungary, died Sept. 10, 1980 in the Chambersburg Hospital, Pa., at the age of 85. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Eleanor M. Ferguson Krause; a daughter, Mrs. Miriam Berry; and two grandsons. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Richard M. Morris. Interment was in the Norland Cemetery, Chambersburg.

Landis: Mary F. Landis, Upland, Ca., born Sept. 5, 1980, died Oct. 15, 1980. She was the daughter of David and Elizabeth Wenger. She was married to Sylvanus Landis who preceded her in death in 1965. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Earl Musser; two sons: Paul and Rev. Henry. She and her husband served the Des Moines Brethren in Christ Church, Ia., for 40 years. At the time of her death she was a member of the Chino Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Alvin C. Burkholder and Rev. Herb Anderson. Interment was in the Bellevue Mausoleum.

Marr: John Wesley Marr, born Nov. 12, 1910, died Oct. 12, 1980 in Wainfleet. He is survived by his wife, Bertha; three children: Sherwood, Donald, and Mrs. Rita Logan; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Rev. Roy J. Peterman conducted the funeral service in the Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in the Zion Cemetery.

Wenger: Mrs. Alma E. Wenger, died Oct. 20, 1980 in the Messiah Village at the age of 81. She was married to Milton R. Wenger who preceded her in death. She is survived by nine children: Alfred, Abbey Oswald, Doris Horst, J. Ralph, Margaret Leshner, Sarah Sasse, Joel, Gladys Gorman, and Ray; 12 grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren. She is also survived by a sister and three brothers. She was a member of the Five Forks Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral service was conducted in the Air Hill Church by Rev. Rupert Turman and Rev. Frank Kipe. Interment was in the Air Hill Cemetery.

Readers Respond

To be considered for publication, letters must be signed and should be 300 words or less.

Kind Words

I just want to thank you for this very interesting and vital issue of the *Visitor* (August 25). So many interesting articles about Brethren in Christ individuals, and such personal missions news. And photographs of people I know, or would like to know!

Dwight Paine
Grantham, PA

We are appreciating the *Visitor*, especially the way the issues, debate and emotions of General Conference came to life. It was a real help as I tried to share Conference with Connie as I returned home. The accounts of "unknown" believers gave concretion and sincerity to the oft-made, but less often demonstrated, affirmation that the life of Jesus is fruitfully manifest in all of us, great and small. We appreciate the quality and significance of the lead articles by Roger Sider and Don Shafer as well. Keep up the good work.

Warren Hoffman
Oklahoma City, OK

About our subscription . . .

Please stop the *Evangelical Visitor* at once and use the unexpired subscription for missions or General Fund. I like the Brethren in Christ but the paper is all statistics, what transpires at conventions, churches, etc. To members of this church this is all right, but to me at 85 years old I need encouragement and instructions as to balance of life. Since I have donated the unused subscription price to missions as you wish, your obligations to me cease.

Mr. Elmo Hutchison
Blanchester, OH

Evidently at least one person did not like the Conference reporting issues!

Enclosed is the renewal for our subscription. Also enclosed is a lifetime subscription for each of our two married sons, and a gift subscription for our youngest son, at Messiah College. . . . Thanks for the good job on the *Visitor*.
Ray and Fern Musser
Upland, CA

On TV and ERA

I note with appreciation your publication of recent articles relating Christianity to contemporary issues. I believe this is a worthwhile trend. I refer to recent articles suggesting abstention from television ("Is the Enemy in Your House?", July 25) and to the Equal Rights Amendment ("Evangelicals and Feminism," July 10). In both cases the evil of the situations was understated.

Television as it is currently programmed presents all the problems stated in the article, plus the problem of openly advocating gross immorality, lesbianism, homosexuality, humanistic anti-religion, and more.

All that the Bubnas said ("Evangelicals and Feminism") against ERA is true, and more. The movement also strongly presses for the so-called "right" of abortion, which any real Christian knows is murder of unborn children. The amendment is not about equal rights under the law for women. Women already have that through labor laws, economic laws, and others. What the amendment is aimed at is exaltation of

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Draft Registration— What Has Changed?

by John K. Stoner

It is said that the historic position of the Brethren in Christ Church supports alternative service as a form of conscientious objection to war, but not draft resistance. Is that all that needs to be said to silence those who say that today we should also support draft resistance?

I don't think so.

Here is why.

The dimensions of war have changed.

The historic position of the Brethren in Christ Church was not formulated as a response to national policy and legislative statute designed to mobilize the nation to annihilate tens of millions of people. Indeed, a national policy which threatens whole nations with nuclear death.

"But," you say, "war has always been murderous, evil and atrocious."

Yes, but look at it this way. Do you also say that the state has a right to wage war? Have you ever said, or thought, that war is indeed wrong for Christians,

but the state has a different role under God's appointment, and it has a right to enforce justice by the sword?

If you make a distinction between God's mandate to the Christian and his mandate to the state in the matter of war, then you are bound to make a distinction between just and unjust wars, or else abandon all pretense of moral obligation on the part of the state.

If you conclude that because the state has a right to fight *some* kind of war therefore it has the right to fight *any* kind of war, you have put the state absolutely beyond the reach of God's judgment, not to mention human criticism. This is something which the Bible never does. But then, of course, you might choose to do it anyway.

Do you?

Or would you prefer to say that it is wrong for the state to threaten nuclear war and to plan for nuclear war? Jesus taught us that lust precedes adultery, the

thought precedes the deed, the threat comes before the act. If you would like to say that it is wrong for the state to threaten nuclear war, how would you do it? And, a question perhaps even more important, when would you do it?

There is no easy answer to these questions. But I submit that for those who are being asked to register for the draft, now is the time to say no to nuclear war. That is, to say no to threats and plans for nuclear war by refusing to register for the draft.

There is no reason why Christians should register to fight World War III. There is every reason why they should not. We have no obligation to take even the first step toward nuclear war.

The acquiescence of Christian people in draft registration is a tacit endorsement of the nation's militarist policies. The face of war has changed. The shape of conscientious objection must change with it.

John K. Stoner is a member of Lancaster, PA Brethren in Christ church, a husband and father. He believes that nuclear war and threats of nuclear war are wrong.

perverted life-styles, such as "rights" for homosexuals and lesbians, and the degradation and destruction of the traditional family unit and Biblical moral values. No Christian should acquiesce to, much less work for, this amendment. The Scriptures still warn against being "partakers of other men's sins." (See I Timothy 5:22, II John 11).

Of course, women as well as men should be free to use their talents, both in and out of the church, with responsibility. This does not necessarily mean rushing to the front of everything. Support personnel are also a necessity. More good can always be accomplished if there is less concern about who gets the credit.

Shirley Craghead
Roanoke, VA

United we what?

After reading Stan Mooneyham's article "United We Fall" in the current *Visitor* (October 25), one might wonder whose side Brethren in Christ are on.

The fact is, this nation has been going downhill for a long time, dating back to the early sixties when the Supreme Court took prayer and Bible reading out of our schools. Since that time, the "Pride of our Power" has been broken as a nation throughout the world, we've been subject to all sorts of humiliation, and our schools have been infested with drugs, violence, and a general breakdown of solid education. Homosexuality, abortion, and just about every other form of wickedness is being pushed at us as "the accepted thing."

Thank God for the Moral Majority, the Christian Right, and all other Christians who have enough courage to get up and say *we want this nation returned to the God of our forefathers*. Praise God for the Jerry Falwells, the James Robisons, etc., we need millions of 'em. Perhaps it just might be enough to stave off, for a bit longer, the Almighty's reckoning for our national wickedness. Maranatha!

Charles and Pearl Poorman
Telford, PA

"Giving and receiving counsel" has been very important in our being truly "brethren in Christ." READERS RESPOND is one opportunity for persons to evaluate past *Visitor* articles, share insights and express concerns from their point of view.

December 10, 1980

Editorial

Thoughts while opening the mail

I sit here wondering what Paul would have done with all the fund-raising letters I am receiving. He certainly believed in giving:

Just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving . . .

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 8:7; 9:6-7, NIV)

But how to give wisely, as well as liberally and joyfully? Shall I mail a check to this well-known organization which writes "this is the most urgent announcement we have ever made," a four-page printed letter (red underlining and a "handwritten" postscript) with two pictures of the poor people they're helping? They mailed out millions of these letters. Or should I respond to this other letter warning "unless you send me a special gift as soon as possible, the Indian radio station XXXX may be forced to go off the air." I know nothing about this ministry, nor that of the fellow who begins, "I've been searching my heart for the answer. Why? . . . why haven't I heard from you?"

I'll be the first to say that many of these organizations have an effective Christian ministry. I also note most have large supporting constituencies. Unfortunately there are other groups not deserving a dime but raking in hundreds of thousands of dollars. Some are outright frauds, some are cults, still others promote a strange blend of religion and personality. But on the air or in the four-color brochure, the "ministry" looks so spiritual, so effective, so worthy of support.

I am still trying to understand why some of us so easily send money to groups we know little about, yet find it difficult to whole-heartedly support Brethren in Christ programs. Through our local congregations and church agencies we are active in evangelism and church planting . . . relief and development projects . . . work among children, teens, adults, the elderly . . . leadership training and Christian higher education . . . the list goes on and on of ministries in North America and around the world. And certainly the financial pressures are just as real as those depicted in the slick promotional letters in our mailbox.

In addition, as we give to our local congregation and various brotherhood ministries, we can know that our funds are being used with care and discretion, in the support of persons we know as brothers and sisters, in programs which are under the oversight of General Conference. (That is a sense of involvement and accountability not possible with the organizations sending me mail.)

The people competing for my charitable contributions—by mail, radio or TV—have employed professional fund-raisers and are "working" constituencies often running into the millions of households. The continued ministries of our brotherhood, on the other hand, depend upon the liberal, joyful giving of some 15,000 Brethren in Christ across North America.

If you and I don't support Brethren in Christ ministries, who will?

G

RICHARD E THUMA 1-87/92
R 1 BOX 87
MARIETTA PA 17547

When a child discovers Christmas

by Mary Bailey

It was a quiet Wednesday evening late in November. Ray and I decided that this was a good time to begin preparations for celebrating Christmas. Up till now Laura's only comments had been that Christmas was coming and (in a small whisper) "Santa Claus is coming too."

We started the evening by playing some Christmas music on the stereo, and discussed the idea of how many baskets and varieties of cookies should be made. From there Laura and I took a trip to the garage to see just how many boxes of decorations could easily be reached without Daddy's help. Much to our disappointment we only found one box that was handy. I knew at a glance just what was in that box, and quickly realized that particular box was perfect for the first peep at things which were to come.

I carried the box to the fireplace and began to open it. Soon at my side was a small figure with big brown eyes. It should be Laura's experience to discover the treasures of the box, so I turned it over to her. With a little help from Mommy the biggest piece was removed. It was a stable, hand carved several years earlier, which had become my pride and joy. Next came all the little bundles. One at a time Laura unwrapped figure after figure. Her expressions of discovery were priceless, but sad to say these figures had little meaning to her. We unwrapped them all, Mary, Joseph, shepherds, wisemen, angels, camels, cows, donkies, sheep, and last but not least Baby Jesus. Each one had a place in the stable, but didn't mean much to Laura.

I became keenly aware that if we were to have a true Christmas celebration, and if Laura was going to be playing with these "folks," we had better get some meaning into this stable. We hunted up her *Bible Picture Book* which she had received as a gift that summer. Sure enough, it has just what we needed to make those "people in that house" important.



As we started through the stories Laura's comments made that stable seem very twentieth century. Did you know that Baby Jesus had dry pampers, and that the angels went zoom, zoom, or that the wisemen at Jesus' house "built their house upon a rock"?

How totally untraditional, but how wonderfully real a little one like Laura can make Christmas. The next few weeks should prove to be interesting and delightful as Laura, now nearly four, makes this a "Christmas of Remembrance."

For three years Ray and Mary Bailey have been resident managers of Mile High Pines Camp in Southern California.