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Glen A. Pierce

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# VISITOR

February 1987





# Worthy Worship

## to the Worthy God

by Ken Letner

*In the first article on this subject (November 1986), Ken Letner explored worship by looking at it in terms of God's holiness, truth, beauty, love, and purpose. In this issue he explores our understanding of worship further by focusing on how we go about worshipping.*

In January 1977, a letter appeared in the "Dear Abby" column. The writer had been a professional singer and had sung in a wide variety of churches. He said that he knew what kind of people attended church, but he did not understand why they attended. He decided to take a personal survey with one question: "Why do you attend church?" The response was revealing and surprising. From more than 300 churches, over 50 percent answered, "Because it is the thing to do." Less than one percent said anything about worshipping.

Although we can question the scientific validity of such a survey, it still makes us wonder about some people's reasons for worship. Why do we worship? What does it mean to worship? What are the proper attitudes for worship, and how do we prepare them? Who is worship for? Consider these questions with me.

### Why worship?

Have you ever asked yourself why you worship? There are many responses. "Because the Lord blesses those who bless him." "Because I enjoy hearing the message." "Because it gives me strength for the rest of the

week." "Because I need the hour before God." "Because God is there." "Because God commands it." Such responses are good to hear. Unfortunately there are many who, whether they admit it or not, are only playing at worship or watching it happen. Worship is not a spectator sport. God wants all his people to give praise and glory to him. Spiritual worship involves presenting our bodies as living sacrifices.

Worship does not occur by transfer from the few who are worshipping to the rest who are present. For worship to take place, you must get in the game. You cannot watch from the sidelines or stands or sofa. The area in front of the sanctuary is not a stage where worship happens. It is a platform for worship leaders who guide each of us in worship to God. The congregation is not the audience. The only audience is God himself.

I know that many are aware of these things, but we need to have the truth within us reaffirmed. Maybe some need to have such truth awakened. Perhaps these words speak

Worthy worship, the kind Jesus talks about, requires a spirit that is right with God as well as a great deal of concentration.

God's Word to some for the first time. "The true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

### What is worship?

Worship means to ascribe to God supreme worth. In the Old Testament two words were used for worship. The one means literally "a bowing down." This word emphasized the way an Israelite approached the Holy God. The second word is translated "service," and it comes from the same root as the word "servant." The Israelites delighted in calling themselves God's servants and in expressing joy in his private and corporate praise and prayer. For the Hebrew, being God's servant was a privilege and honor. With this background, we can understand Paul better in Romans 1:9 when he refers to God as the One whom he serves with his whole heart. This type of worshiper does not have to get all hyped-up or emotionally charged in order to worship. Rather the worshiper exalts God, the One whose servants we are, the one who makes relationship with him possible.

Albert Edward Day in his book *Existence Under God* described worship this way:

*It is not merely a flash of Godward desire, but the passionate fervor of a whole self that pants to know God and his will above all other knowing. It is not a hurried visit to the window of a religious drive-in restaurant for a moral sandwich or a cup of spiritual stimulants, but an unhurried communion with God, who is never in*

*Ken Letner is executive director of the Board for Congregational Life, with offices in Mount Joy, Pa.*



*a hurry. It is not merely the expression of a transient mood of dependence or loneliness, but the consistent cry of one who seeks to perceive and express the ultimate beauty. It is the antithesis of dillydally devotions, drowsy murmurs from a pillow where sleep lies in wait, the lazy lisping of familiar phrases that should shake one to the core of one's being. It is the find-or-die outreach of the soul for God.*

*"The true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth."*

**Prepared to worship**

Jesus says that we must worship in spirit and in truth. Such worship has a spirit of adoration, of reverence, of awe. It has a spirit of gratitude, expressed by thanksgiving for God's redemptive love. It has a spirit of humility as one realizes the mercy of God. Such worship requires dependence, for the one who is self-sufficient will never see the need for God. It requires submission, so that a person will desire to give in to God's will. Such worship is impossible without commitment. Adoration, gratitude, humility, dependence, submission, commitment—with such attitudes we can worship in spirit.

Jesus says that we must worship in truth as well. When we come to worship we cannot disengage our minds. God wants us to think and concentrate as we worship him. We often wonder what parts our emotion and intellect play in the worship experience. To worship in truth means that there must be balance. Emphasizing the intellect at the expense of emotion is just as bad as sacrificing intellect to emotion. Hearing the truths of Jesus proclaimed and feeling no joy or sadness is no better than softly whispering the name of Jesus, stirring up all kinds of emotion without knowing any biblical truth about him.

Worthy worship, the kind Jesus talks about, requires a spirit that is right with God as well as a great deal of concentration. Therefore we prepare ourselves spiritually and mentally for worship. Consider what the

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agenda of a worshipping person might look like.

Pray. Do away with idle talk.

Concentrate on the symbols of Christ in the sanctuary.

Meditate during the prelude. Read the Scripture. Read the words of the hymns.

Affirm the prayers of those who lead in prayer, whether you do so silently or aloud.

Enter into the readings wholeheartedly.

When it comes to singing—SING. Remember, you are singing to God.

Let your offering be a symbol of thanksgiving, dedication, and sacrifice.

Bring your Bible and take notes on the sermon. Write down what the Lord wants you to do. "Lord, this I will do . . . ." "Lord, help me to do . . . ."

Affirm and awaken ideas given by God's spirit.

Worship is more than we have thought it to be. To worship is to bow in the presence of the living,

personal God and express adoration, kinship, and gratitude. To worship is to shut out all distractions and commune with the Divine Father, heart to heart, mind with mind, spirit with spirit. To worship is to gather as children of our heavenly Father into his family circle, where we listen to his thoughts and purposes. To worship is to open our minds to the still, small voice communicating through symbols, liturgy, Scriptures, and the spoken word. To worship is to celebrate the great acts of God's love and our redemption.

#### **Worthy worship to the worthy God**

We need to give a caution that we do not want to be worship-centered, preacher-centered, music-centered, or building-centered. We want to be God-centered. After a church service we want to exclaim not how great a worship experience we have had, but how great it was to meet God.

At the peak of Dr. Henry Ward Beecher's career in Brooklyn, two midwest businessmen were in New York over a weekend. Together they went to Brooklyn to hear the famous pulpiteer. They were overawed and deeply moved by his eloquence. That

evening they met for dinner, during which one of them said, "Well, I am going to hear Dr. Beecher again tonight. Will you join me?" The other replied, "No. I read in the paper that Dr. T. DeWitt Talmage is a pulpit guest in a church not far from here. I believe I will go hear him." Each went his separate way.

The next morning they met for breakfast. The Beecher enthusiast said, "Beecher was just magnificent. What a pulpiteer! Such eloquence. How did you like Talmage?" His friend responded quietly, "I do not remember much about the man or the sermon. All I know is that there was a profound reality. I met God as never before in my life. I came back to my hotel room, dropped to my knees and prayed, 'O God, forgive me for my sins and make me a Christ-like man.'"

This kind of worship finds us before God, exalting him with our whole heart, mind, and strength. As a result we find forgiveness, encouragement, comfort, hope, joy, and purpose. "The time is come when the true worshippers worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks."

## A letter to Joanne

*In the November Visitor, the lead article told about Joanne Hollinger, a blind volunteer who types letters for Malia Santoro, a resident at Messiah Village, who has multiple sclerosis and cannot write. Following is one of the replies Joanne has received in response to that article, submitted by C. W. Boyer.*

Dear friend in Christ:

My name is Lee Miller, and I am a senior citizen of the Manor Brethren in Christ Church, Mountville, Pa. I would like to thank you for making my day. God has certainly blessed us all with [the story of] you, and Malia and her mother.

Three years ago I suffered a stroke, which left me with little more than a right hand. I thank God for leading me into a writing ministry. I can get along fairly well with a quad cane. I just enjoy writing to those less fortunate than me. I buy no greeting cards of any kind. Instead, I just write to the sick, shut-ins, prisoners, missionaries, etc.

I got this thought from a fellow senior citizen at

the Columbia Center and have used it many times, which has brought many positive responses:

*Give of yourself; there is always someone in life who needs what we have to share:*

*A loving word, a thoughtful deed, a bit of loving care.*

*There's always a need for compassion, more friendliness, more giving,*

*More folks who will lend a helping hand, with love in our daily living.*

*And whenever sadness engulfs us, and sorrow darkens our days,*

*The love that we give will come back again to console us in so many ways.*

*Anonymous*

God can certainly use what we have, no matter how little. He has blessed me, and I know He will bless you, Malia, and your mother each day. Just ask Him. He has blessed me this day with you.

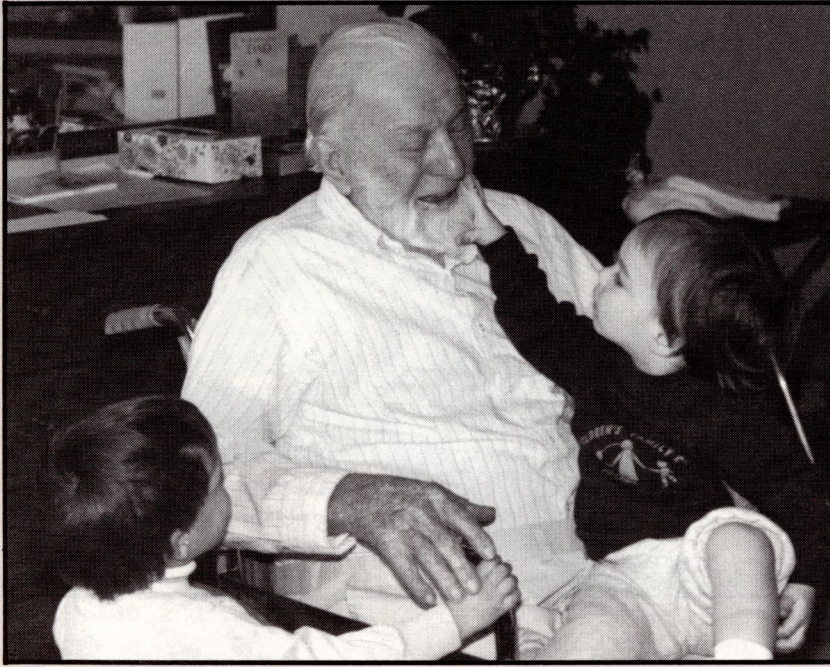
In His name,

Lee Miller

R.R. 1

Columbia, PA 17512





# The power of love

by Mary G. Eshelman

The power of love—a kiss, a hug, or a happy smile of a child to a lonely, discouraged, sick, lame, hurting, or any person in the retirement center—is surprising and unbelievable until witnessed. Thus it enriches the quality of life for both the young and the old.

Together, the young and the old are able to dispel some of the myths that separate them, and recognize that every individual has a worthwhile contribution to make. They prove love is powerful in an intergenerational program or in any circumstance of life.

An experiment which brought three-year-olds into the lives of the aged nine years ago in the Messiah Village Retirement Center has proven so successful it has to be witnessed to be believed.

The founding director, Barbara Bert, now of Montana, and her sister-in-law, Donna Bert, asked me to join them in the project. This needed some thought and prayer. I thought, "is this my next step?"

Suddenly I remembered how my

husband's eyes smiled when the nurses who cared for him in a retirement center in Carlisle brought their children to see him on their free days. They knew he loved the children. The debilitating effects of disease and illness kept him virtually motionless, but I recalled the look of his eyes and the almost imperceptible lift of the corners of his mouth. This told me how much he enjoyed the children's visits.

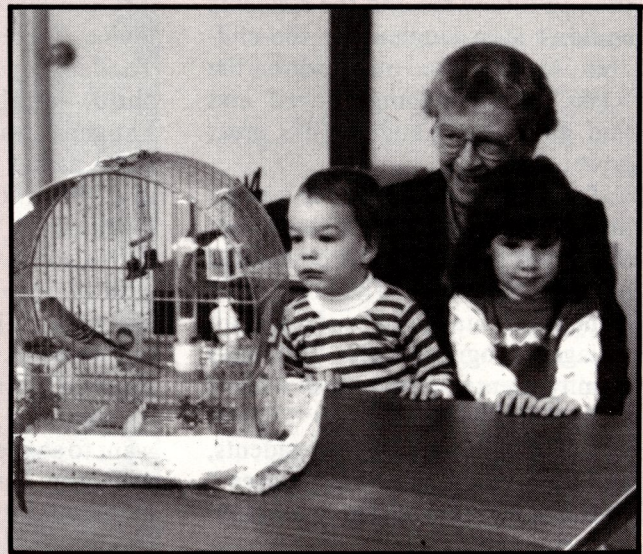
I also recalled October 21, 1966, in Wales when an 806 foot high mound gave way, releasing a two million ton torrent of rock, coal and mud which cascaded onto the Junior and Infant school building, crushing to death or burying alive 116 children. It caused George Thomas, Minister of Wales, to lament, "A whole generation has been wiped out. A world without children." Messiah Village without children? I couldn't face it. To

help explain and convince the residents of the value of the children and the intergenerational program, I needed to be a resident of the Village myself. That was all it took to make me decide to join them, move in, and get right to work. Now support from residents and their families has been enthusiastic.

Two at a time, I take the children for walks. This gives eye-to-eye contact with those they visit. Thus opportunities are provided for both older people and children to give and receive love, which gives self-esteem and self-confidence to both. Together it means strength and pow-

*Mary G. Eshelman is a resident of Messiah Village and a valued contributor to the Children's Family Center program as a board member, staff member, and liaison with Village residents and the Brethren in Christ Church. She is also a respected advocate of intergenerational programming.*

**Monroe Dourte, above, and the author, right, with several of the children.**





er. With this strength and power, miracles are performed every day.

Recently a lady suddenly lost her husband. Knowing her anxiety about meeting the child without her husband, who usually had been with them, I went to her room after the child entered. I knocked on the partly open door, but they were too involved with each other to hear my knock. I wish you could have seen what I saw. The child had buried herself in the arms and heart of the new widow. They were both hugging each other, tears rolling down their cheeks. The widow and the child were drawing strength and the power of healing from each other—the power of love again very visible.

The children are taught to wish the older adult a happy day when we go for our walks. Two 20-month-old boys can hardly say, "Have a happy day" so they say, "Ha Da." They might say "Bye," but always add "Da." Can you imagine them on a walk down the halls here at the Village, one on each side of me, holding my hand while waving the other hand, saying to those they meet, "Da" or "Have Day"? The older adults understand their language and love it.

Last week two 20-month children and I were walking past the lounge where the residents were waiting to have exercise class. The teacher wasn't there yet so I said, "Let's go in and have exercise class." With one on each side of me we started exercise. The serious-minded children tried to follow me and the residents couldn't stop laughing at the children. As we walked out the door, the "class," still laughing, waved and said good-bye. Laughter has great power, too!

Tears were in the eyes of a withdrawn resident as he talked about the Children's Center. He composed himself and said, "The most outstanding, fantastic part of Messiah Village's program is the Children's Family Center connection with it and what the children do. I mean that. The children love the residents, and we love and need the children." This is a two-way teaching and loving program.



A classmate of mine from Cornell, now a professor there, said to me, "Your sponsors should know this program is a two-way teaching program. Children and elders are helping each other there at Children's Family Center."

Picture a lady sitting bent over in her wheelchair, looking at the floor or her feet; another lady, also in a wheelchair next to her, holding a teddy bear; and three or four more lined up in a row, backs against the wall. They noticed nothing around them, and several were asleep. One child looked at the first lady, so stooped and sad. The child bent over, looked up into the lady's face and said, "Hello." No response. The child pulled at her sleeve, looked into the lady's face again and in a loving, louder voice said, "Hello." The lady opened her eyes, saw the child, laughed and said, "Hi." Laughter and sunshine filled the room as the persons along the wall saw the smiles and joined in the laughter.

We stopped at the bedside of a lady who looked so sad—not asleep and perhaps in pain. The 18-month-old child held out his hand and touched her hand. The lady looked up and saw him and asked, "You want to shake hands?" The child said "no" and put his hand up near the lady's mouth. She said, "Oh, you want a kiss?" She kissed the little soft

hand, smiled, and said to her roommate, "He wanted a kiss," and she kissed him again and again.

The other day a lady sitting in a wheelchair, tears in her eyes, held out her hand to stop me. She asked, "Please take me to the children. I want to see them." I replied, "I am sorry, but this is Saturday and the children are not here today." "Can I go to see them tomorrow?" she asked. I told her they would be here on Monday and we would see that she could visit them then.

Another lady said, "I am rejuvenated after I am with the children."

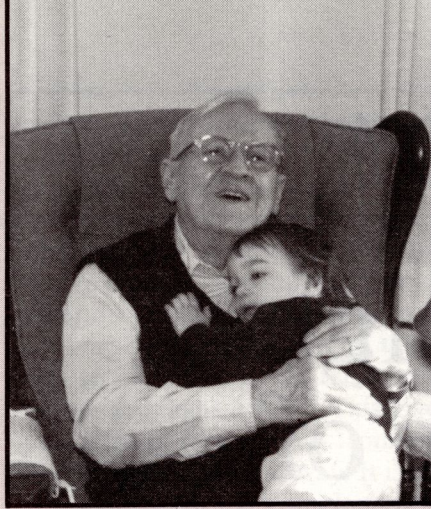
My brother, Paul Lenhert, suffered from Alzheimer's disease and lived here for sometime. He was often lost, and at times, not happy. But when he was with the children in the Children's Family Center, he was the happiest and most contented.

One day two of us watched him as he came down the hall towards the children with arms outstretched. As the children ran toward him calling, "Here comes Paul. Here comes Paul," the lady who was with me turned her back. As she started to walk away, I walked with her. She said, "I just can't watch that touching scene and see how much happiness they bring to each other without tears. They are so happy together."

Dr. Nancy Mase, a former assistant in psychiatry at Johns Hopkins



With the children are Mrs. Earl Engle, Sr. (left), Vance Nailor (right), and Mrs. C. W. Boyer (below).



University School of Medicine, co-authored the book *The Thirty-Six Hour Day*, designed as a source of reference for families of patients suffering from Alzheimer's disease. Now a researcher commissioned by the U.S. Congress to report extensively on the cure of persons with dementing illness, she recently reported after researching Alzheimer's patients, "There is a tremendous improvement of the dementic patients during and after visits of children. They are more calm and happy and contented."

Some visitors came to me privately, asking me to be sure I take the children to a member of their family suffering secretly from Alzheimer's. The children and I had been visiting such older adults before, and they noticed the changes. They reported they saw improvement after the children's visits. This is so visible—the power of love.

Recently a visitor of the Children's Family Center wrote the following: "After visiting your program and seeing the reactions among the young and the older, I wanted to

have a part in this project so am enclosing a check." It was \$500.

After our meeting with 30 national leaders at the Children's Defense Fund Conference in 1981, we received over 100 requests for information or visits from universities, churches, senators, national leaders and associations, and the letters and visitors keep coming.

Research by Dr. Marvin S. Sussman, University of Delaware, states the following after studying our program, "Reports indicate that children can reach the most withdrawn, physically and mentally impaired older adult. . . . The child gives the older adult permission to be a child, accepts more readily than the staff the behavioral responses of the older person. The relationship is more trusting and innocent, uninhib-

ited by cultural values, rules and regulations."

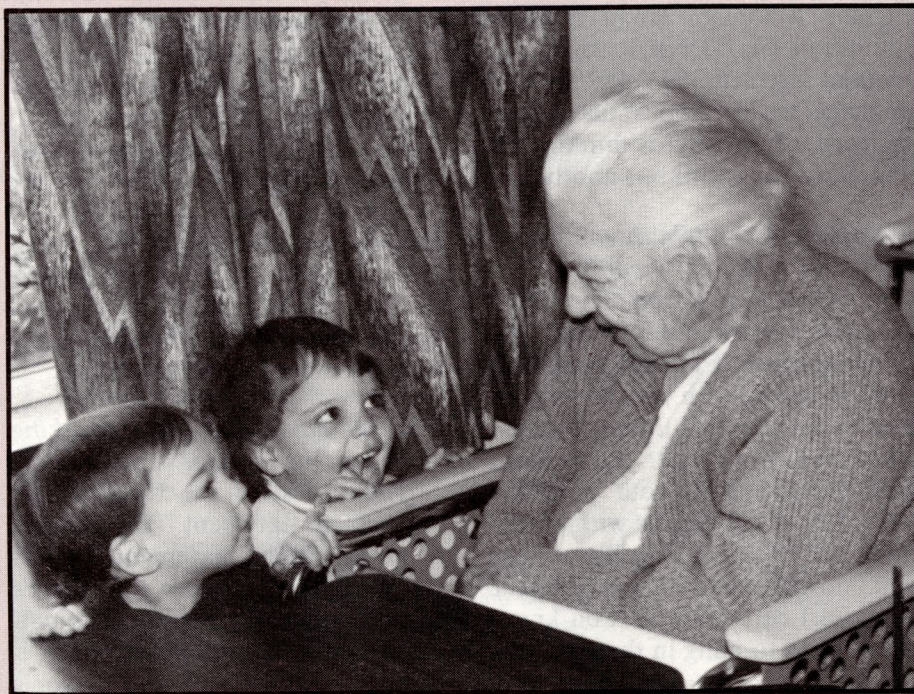
The children and the elders form a team which means strength and power. With this combined strength and power, they show and share love stronger than death. They change sad atmospheres into God's love and sunshine.

Today, many parents and grandparents and their children or grandchildren are separated from each other by distance. Older adults have increasingly fewer opportunities to pass down to their children knowledge and experience. This is a concern to many of us. You who have parents and grandparents here now are especially concerned, and you will have also to think about this.

Please look at these pictures on these pages. See the little hands of the children lovingly trying to touch the older adult, the happy smiles, their bright eyes shining with joy and happiness and love. The power of this love shines in the eyes of the loved one, your loved one. It *never* fails, 18-month-old children or older.

A happier world to live in is the result of the strong friendships and wonderful relationships that exist between the children and the older adult.

When these children become adults and I am old, I look forward to a continued, happy, wonderful world together, full of the power of love and children. Please God, may it be so. ■



*Children's Family Center was founded in 1978 and located in Apartment 101 and a storage room. In 1984, the center moved to its present quarters in the lower level of the Chapel wing. Licensed to give care to 60 children, ages 18 months to 10 years, it has a staff of 20 persons, including several residents of the village. Additionally, residents serve as volunteers and as Special Friends (foster grandparents) to the children.*

*Closely related to Messiah Village, but separate financially and governmentally, the child care program is supported exclusively by parent fees. The intergenerational component—the walks, Special Friends, special activities, shared meals—is supported solely by contributions from people who, like Mary Eshelman, see the power of love in the Children's Family Center intergenerational program.*



***Conflict: we can get better  
at dealing with it***

# The Foreign Language of Caring

by David Brubaker

In the January issue of the *Visitor*, we looked at common responses to conflict among individuals and churches. Under the stress of conflict, many persons tend to either force their will upon others or withdraw completely from their opponents. We promised that we would look at a third way, a more skillful way of dealing with conflict.

One person who has been developing and teaching such skills is Barbara Daté, a member of the Church of the Brethren who works for the church's General Board in Elgin, Ill. Barbara lives in Eugene, Ore., and is a consultant for conflict intervention and interpersonal peacemaking training. Barbara and her colleagues have developed the term "Foreign Language of Caring" to describe a new method of communication that stresses collaboration rather than competition. I recently asked Barbara to explain this new language of caring.

**Barbara:** In our society, we learn certain attitudes, behaviors, and language from what is around us in our environment. What I notice is that there is a lot of competition, ag-

gression, and violence in our society. We hear it on the radio, we see it in the streets, and on television, and we read it in the newspapers. It is not surprising to me that this is how we would learn to relate to one another, and that it is our primary mode for relating.

One of the things that I think is different from the norm in our society is a new approach that we've been developing over the last decade. We call it the "Foreign Language of Caring." It is a "foreign" language because it is not our native language. It is a language of opportunity to be helpful and caring and cooperative with one another. But it is just like learning a foreign language, like Spanish or German or Russian. As we take instruction in this foreign language, we learn vocabulary, and we learn a new way of thinking in communicating with one another.

**David:** *How might these skills be useful in a situation of conflict?*

In a conflict situation, these skills would be even more helpful than in a calm situation. If I could be skillful in my language with you, I would be able to convey to you that I understood what you were trying to share with me and what your purposes were. I might not agree with everything that you are saying. But at least you know that as a person I respect you and I care for you. You know that I want to hang in there to find out what it is that you want, and

perhaps even collaborate on a solution.

*Can anyone learn these new skills, or do you have to have a master's degree in communication?*

Anyone who is at least three or four years old can learn these skills. I want to be speaking this kind of language around an infant so it becomes familiar. And then, as soon as children become verbal, you begin to coach them in this "Foreign Language of Caring."

*What are the specific skills which make up this "foreign language"?*

There are four skills. The first skill conveys understanding and support by listening, and is called "paraphrasing." The other three involve learning to speak with a loving tongue, and are "agreement stating," "preference stating," and "purpose stating."

*Could you begin by explaining what paraphrasing is?*

"Paraphrasing" is a fancy term for conveying to another person what you understand. The purpose is to provide support and encouragement to the other person, and to communicate that you are comprehending what he or she is saying. The point is to encourage me as the speaker to say more, and to help me feel like you really did understand what I said. And the shorter you can make the paraphrase, the more likely it is that I won't feel afraid that you are going to steal the floor from me.

An additional value of paraphrasing is that it gives me as the speaker an opportunity to correct a misperception that you might have had. Even if you didn't grasp the thought the first time around, as long as you're saying what you did understand, it invites me to say more.

*What about the three speaking skills you mentioned?*

The easiest of the three is an "agreement statement." The purpose of an agreement statement is to let the other person know that there's some commonality, a common foundation that you both share. Even if you don't agree with the person's

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*This article was compiled by Dave Brubaker, staff associate of Mennonite Conciliation Service, and member of the Lancaster, Pa., Brethren in Christ Church. Barbara's colleagues are George Parsons and Joanna Hoskins of the Oregon Caring Skills Project. Barbara also credits Susan K. Gilmore as the mentor of this group.*



main idea, you can often find some point of agreement.

*And the second speaking skill, what you call "preference stating"?*

The second skill is probably the most difficult for many people. A preference statement is a statement again—not a question—in which you wish to convey something to another person about your choice, or your wishes. When I make a preference statement, I am willing to make the risk be my own, by letting you know something private about me. If I give you good solid information, then you can also share what your choices or preferences are, and we can discuss that.

*You're saying that this is really an invitation to the other person to*

*respond with his or her own preferences. What about the last of the speaking skills, what you call "purpose statements"?*

The reason for making a purpose statement is to convey an action that you're trying to accomplish. Let me give you an example. "My purpose is to wrap up this interview so that I can go pack and get to the airport before my flight leaves." This gives you a lot of information from me, and it is said in a clear way. It is not combative; I'm not complaining to you, nor wanting to make you feel bad about anything. I'm giving you information about something.

Unfortunately, most of the time we make purpose statements when someone challenges us or makes an inquiry of us. But I'm suggesting giving over information to the other

person so he or she doesn't have to read your mind, or be baffled by your behavior.

*Do you have any words of encouragement for those of us who are just beginning to learn these skills?*

Many people have told me that this language is very strange. They say that we don't talk this way. That's my point. Most people do not talk this way, because they have not been taught these kinds of skills. It's like learning any language. It will feel awkward at the beginning. When you are first starting to learn German, it sounds funny and it feels funny, and it is embarrassing. But with practice, it becomes part of your natural repertoire.

I believe that most people would like to have an alternative. People

## Interpersonal Communication Skills

### I. Listening Skill

**Paraphrasing:** Stating in your own words what the other said

- A. Focus on the speaker ("You . . .")
- B. Fact/Feeling (show you know what they're talking about)
- C. Be brief

E.g.: "You were really scared."  
"You'd rather stay home tonight."  
"You're frustrated."

*Paraphrasing* lets the other person know you are at least trying to understand; it clarifies the communication; it slows the pace of interaction; and it reduces the intensity of the conflict.

- A *statement* allows the story to go on.
- A *question* stops the story for an answer, or changes the direction of the story.
- One can buy time with a paraphrase.
- Paraphrasing helps you get more information.
- Just opening your mouth will allow you the chance to paraphrase.
- Paraphrasing proves that you understand or are at least trying.
- Save questions and support for the end.

### II. Speaking Skills

**A. Agreement Statements:** Stating what you do agree with as a *preface* or "prefix" to your opinion.

*Agreement statement stems:*

- "I agree . . . ."
- "Yes, . . . ."
- "I can see that . . . ."
- "You're right that . . . ."
- "Yes, there's no doubt in my mind that . . . ."
- "You've got a good point when you say that . . . ."
- "I can sure go along with you when you say . . . ."

*Agreement stating* offers moral support (content) and/or *common ground* as a foundation to continue dialogue. It helps to avoid confrontation/conflict or adversarial position at the outset.

**B. Preference Stating:** Making a clear statement about your choices and desires.

*Preference stating stems:*

- "I prefer . . . ."
- "It would please me if . . . ."
- "I would like . . . ."
- "I want . . . ."
- "If I had a magic wand . . . ."
- "It may not be possible, but I would like . . . ."
- "I would rather . . . ."
- "It would be helpful to me if . . . ."

*Preference stating* is a way of offering yourself to another by giving clear information about yourself. It eliminates assumption and guesswork, and opens the way for negotiation.

**C. Purpose Stating:** Making a clear statement about an intended action.

**Purpose:** To make your *intention* clear.  
To make your *action* known.

**Sentence Stems:** "My purpose is . . . ."  
"What I'm trying to accomplish is . . . ."  
"My intention is . . . ."  
"I'm hoping to . . . ."  
"I intend to . . . ."  
"I'm trying to . . . ."

*Purpose stating* is a way of making known your intentions so that others are not unknowingly operating at cross purposes with you. It enables others to respond more readily and to determine what they can or cannot do to help you achieve your purposes.



want to be multi-lingual or bi-lingual in our society, instead of just having a language of competition, violence, and aggression. We need some alternative ways to speak more lovingly, caringly, and compassionately with one another.

In the article in last month's *Visitor*, we observed that "to act in ways different from [our] familiar styles requires both skill and will." Will is required to keep us from falling back into reliance on our familiar patterns of dealing with conflict. The skills come as we attempt to respond in caring ways to other persons in conflict situations. The outline in the box, titled "Interpersonal Communication Skills," summarizes the four skills reviewed in this article.

In the next issue of the *Visitor*, we will look at one specific process for resolving disputes—mediation—that has proven remarkably successful in recent years.

### **Cassette tape series on handling conflict**

Like most new skills, the "Foreign Language of Caring" requires considerable practice for a person to become comfortable in using it. There are many resources available to help persons and groups develop these skills, and a variety of organizations which offer workshops to train persons in using these resources.

The Mennonite Conciliation Service (MCS) has just released a 10-unit cassette tape series on dealing with conflict, which provides instructions for personal and group exercises. The above article was adapted from one of the units in this series, which was designed especially for use by adult Sunday school classes during a quarter.

You may purchase the series, complete with written instructional material and group exercises, for \$45 postpaid. For more information, or to request a free loan of the introduction tape to this series, call or write Mennonite Conciliation Service at: 21 S. 12th Street, Akron, PA 17501. Phone (717) 859-1151.

**I**F IT IS TRUE that thousands of people groups still have not heard the gospel and that God has commanded us to make disciples of all of them, what should we be doing about it? What can we as individuals possibly do that will make a difference in the whole picture of world missions? Lots!

1. *We can learn about the nations.* Now that you know a little about them, you have a handle to learn more. There is so much material available that there is no excuse for ignorance. Newspapers and magazines have general information every day, and mission researchers keep preparing materials to help us know which peoples are without churches and where they are.

Let me mention just a few resources. *The Hidden Half* by Wilson and Aeschleman sheds more light on the unreached peoples. *Operation World* by Patrick Johnstone gives the countries of the world and some people groups within them. The *Global Prayer Digest* presents an unreached people to be prayed for each day. *World Christian* magazine features some of "the nations" each month. The *Frontier Missions* paper offers findings of the U.S. Center for World Mission as it seeks to coordinate and encourage the work of missions to unreached peoples. Then there is a whole series of *Unreached Peoples* books from 1979 to 1985 which describe many groups and their needs and the steps being taken to reach them. Perhaps the most challenging book to study is *In the Gap* by David Bryant, which offers inspiration and know-how to personally make a difference for God's heart for the nations each day. Write to the William Carey Library, 1705 Sierra Bonita Ave., Pasadena, CA 91104, for information about these materials and a listing of many more.

Begin today to look for God's concern for the nations as you read your Bible. You will be surprised at

*The fourth in Grace Holland's series on the nations, this article suggests ways in which we each can become involved with world missions.*

**God and the nations—**

# What

how this theme permeates God's Word. Then read all you can about the state of these nations today. Determine to be a World Christian with Christ's global cause at the center of your life.

2. *We can pray.* As Brethren in Christ we have ready access to well-prepared and vital prayer requests. Write to Nancy Kreider, Messiah Village, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, for the daily *Prayer Challenge* for your church, and to the missions office, P.O. Box 390, Mt. Joy, PA 17552, for World Christian Intercessors material for yourself. Pray especially for people where churches are being planted. Pray for the Board for World Missions and for the brotherhood—that the resources, plans, and personnel will be forthcoming for still other people groups.

David Bryant suggests in *In the Gap* that those just starting to be concerned for unreached peoples begin by devoting 15 minutes a day to missions. First, spend *five minutes* finding something the Bible says about God's plan for the nations. Then spend *four minutes* reading something current about our world and its needs. Take *three minutes* to intercede for some part of the world relative to what you have just read. In *two minutes* tell someone what God gave you in the 12 minutes spent on world Christian concerns. Finally, as you go to bed, give God another *full minute* of quiet to talk to you about what he wants you to be as a result of what you are learning.

Soon, fifteen minutes a day will not be enough, and already you will be changing and seeing God's view



# can we do?



by Grace Holland

of things. Pray also in groups established to pray for renewal and evangelism throughout the world. You will find that prayer meetings or "concerts of prayer" are effective means of "doing something" for the nations.

3. *We can reach out to those around us.* These days we don't need to go far away to see "strange" peoples. We just need to open our eyes. A growing concern for people beyond cultural barriers far away should make us more sensitive to such people near us. Our natural reaction is to avoid people who are different from us, but nothing can broaden us quite so well as interaction with people of another culture. They are trying to learn thousands of words and behaviors in order to talk with you; make an effort to learn "hello" and "thank you" in Spanish or Arabic or Japanese. Take the trouble to learn what your ethnic friend thinks about clothes, foods, respectfulness, and prayer. Be a friend and share a meal in your home with someone who needs to know what a real, live Christian is like. Pray for your friend and share your faith. Who knows how far-reaching the effects may be! Did you know that many of the evangelical churches in Spain today were started by people who accepted Christ in Chicago and then returned home to Spain and won their families to him?

"Strangers" around us may be here for different reasons. Some are visitors impressed by our technology. What about showing them our faith? Others have migrated but are isolated by lack of knowledge of our language and customs. What about

learning how to teach them English? Others have come to study in universities. Do they feel interested or welcome to visit your home or church? For ideas on entertaining international students, contact the Mt. Joy missions office for an audio-visual on this subject. Making such efforts to reach out will be difficult, but will give you a new view of life. You might even end up keeping in touch with your friend as he returns home, and you might one day visit his people!

4. *We can pass on our vision.* As you allow God to open your eyes and use you to touch his world, you will grow. You can become a quiet example of someone with a heart for the world. As you talk you will be able to share what you have read. You will share your excitement, fulfillment, and challenge. You can help people realize that missions is not something on the edge of the church program or some specialized activity for a few. Instead, they can

see it as something "out front," paving the way for greater growth, meaning, and depth in the church.

You may be able to help plan missions exposures for others. Perhaps you can give short reports during services. You may encourage your pastor to make missions a vital part of your church's message. You may be able to stimulate the missions committee to more regular activity. If there is no mission committee, you may help organize one. Perhaps you can maintain a missions bulletin board or donate mission books for the library or even teach a Sunday school elective on God's plan for the nations using one of the books you have read.

5. *We can go.* It is clear that it takes more than missionaries to reach the nations. All God's people are to be involved. He wants all his children to share his heart for the world. Yet some must go. They must cross the physical and cultural barriers that keep so many from hearing the gospel. Though it is good to care and pray and give and send and support, the fact that there are still 17,000 people groups without witnessing churches indicates that God is calling a whole lot more people than are willing to go!

Why should it be so hard for us Christians? North Americans are already on the go. More than four million U.S. citizens now live and work outside their country. What if several hundred Brethren in Christ got cross-cultural training and went to work overseas, deeply committing themselves to share their faith with the friends they make there? Could you do that? Would you be

What can we as individuals do that will make a difference in the whole picture of missions?

Lots!



Nothing can  
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willing? Many countries today are calling for construction workers, teachers, and medical people to help them.

But full-time missionaries are still needed, too. A visit with Alvin and Thata Book in Cagua, Venezuela, would convince you that there is no way they could learn to know the city, deepen their knowledge of Spanish, continue to study Venezuelan culture, view the work of other churches, get acquainted with neighbors, lead Bible studies, disciple church workers, scout out meeting places, deal with legal arrangements, and keep in touch with supporters at home if they were working full time to support themselves. How many more of us would God like to call overseas? Sometimes it is helpful for me to visualize what it will be like to stand before God and have him judge my works. Will I wish that I had had other priorities? What will I say when he asks me about those other nations which were also included in his command?

6. *We can send.* God will make it clear to some of us that we are to stay where we are. But we should be parts of teams that are sending others. The question is: Are we sending with a zeal that is appropriate to the great need and the great command? It's true that our small denomination cannot reach all the nations, but we can let our mission leaders know that we support them in their efforts to reach as many as possible. We must encourage them to coordinate

our work with that of other groups who care about the unreached nations. We can examine our priorities and ask whether 10.35 percent of our total church giving is really all God wants us to commit to reaching the nations. We can give sacrificially so that more missionaries can be sent.

The U. S. Center for World Mission suggests that since we are in a cosmic struggle, we need to be living a wartime lifestyle. They suggest two ways to help ourselves give and pray constantly for God's dearest cause. Burmese Christians, living below the poverty line, collect a handful of rice each time they cook a meal. The rice is sold and the money is used to support their own missionaries sent to other tribes. What could we collect? What about the loose change we have in our pockets and purses? As we put it into a jar marked for the unreached peoples each night, we could pray for them with sincerity. Then the money could be sent to our own mission board to support outreach to nations with no evangelizing churches.

The second suggestion is for supporting Christians to live with the same degree of sacrifice as missionaries. The average missionary salary is estimated to be about two-thirds of that of a normal wage-earner. What if concerned Christians were to live on the two-thirds and contribute the other third to missions? The result would be thousands of dollars for reaching the nations—and committed lives constantly reminded of God's heart for the unreached.

Sending must also involve praying for potential missionaries in the congregation. The command to pray for laborers to go into the harvest is one of Jesus' clearest. Those who are called to stay can encourage those whom God calls to go. We should see our congregations as sending centers. We can give moral support, counsel, and prayer support to young people and others whom God is calling and can covenant to be in the battle with them as they go.

Are you sincerely asking, "What can I do?" Let God call you to a vital part in his plan for the nations. ■

## God at work

### Progress and concern in Cuba

*Ross Nigh—Ontario, Canada*

Going back to Cuba for the third time in 10 years was a joyful experience. This was not a trip into the unknown as in 1976, but a renewing of old and wonderful friendships. It was exciting to meet, in the home and at church, young people who 10 years ago were in their early teens and younger, as they came to introduce their husbands and show us their babies.

The people of Cuba are well-fed and healthy. Education and health facilities are free, and have vastly improved since the revolution. The lot of the people is much better than in other Caribbean countries. Churches are operating openly. Walking down the main street in Cuatro Caminos with our Christian friends and with our Bibles under our arms, then sitting in our own Brethren in Christ Church enjoying the enthusiastic singing with the windows open—it was hard to realize we were in Marxist country.

We visited the church at Nazareno with Pastor Moises Hernandez. The little church was filled with people excited about their plans for a new church.

It was also encouraging to see the enthusiasm with which our people introduced those who were converted since our last visit. It was very evident that God has been working during these years. But here as elsewhere there is always the heartache of erosion.

We are concerned about Juana Garcia's age. She has remarkable energy and is in perpetual motion, but there is the question of how long she can continue at such a pace. She is aware of this, and shared her concerns for the future of the church. We tried to assure her that the Lord who stood by her during many dark days is still Lord of the church, and will be with her and his people until Jesus comes. Juana Garcia is one of God's great servants.

Two young pastors, Moises and José, are dedicated young men and show considerable promise. We visited in Moises Hernandez' home and were impressed by his sincerity and by his wife and little family. We need to remember him in

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prayer. Juana is concerned about José and Lourdes Rodríguez' efforts to leave Cuba to join her family in Venezuela. I talked at some length with José about the need in Cuatro Caminos. He replied that he is willing to minister where God wants him. If the door to Venezuela is closed, he will feel it is God's will for him to remain in Cuba and help the church there.

This visit was an enjoyable experience. We are thankful we have had this opportunity to again visit our church in Cuba.

## We appreciate "short-termers"

*Esther Spurrier—Zambia*

The hospital is incredible. With early rain, malaria season has also begun early. We have been thankful for the people from North America who have come at their own expense to help out when others are on furlough. I have been saved over and over again by the three-months' service that Everett and Adela Byer have been giving in between maintenance supervision. Though well past retirement age, these folks have energy and good health that puts some of the rest of us to shame. They left the best corn crop for a long time behind in Kansas for someone else to harvest—that's trust. They have lived in Thuma's house and have been host and hostess to an unending flow of visitors—last week Everett had counted 76 people/nights with more to come. It has been a life-saver for me. Everett has also been "water commissioner"—a pretty thankless task. I know God will richly reward them, but I wish we had a Hall of Fame for such service-minded people.

The Rich McCoy family arrived a week ago to fill in for lab technician Marilyn Ebersole. Parasitology is pretty far from the kind of lab work Rich has been doing in the States, but his hard work and commitment make him more than equal to the task. He has a great caring and sensitivity for the patients that is very apparent. Debbie's buoyant spirit has been an encouragement to me already. And the boys are entering into

Macha life with great zest—kids really don't mind not having water for baths (the pump had recently burned up).

Lester and Leota Mann from Freeport, Illinois, are here for two months. Les is a pediatrician with emergency room experience. It gives him a broad range of experience to draw upon. Lee wants to be helpful wherever she can, so she is filing OPD cards and doing typing for both hospital and nursing school. Les reminds me so much of one of my uncles; it's almost like having family here. We appreciate our short-term people!

## Planting a church

*Gordon and Susie Gilmore—Venezuela*

We arrived here four and a half years ago and set about making friends, learning their language, eating their food, and being faithful in planting the "seeds" of God's goodness, love, and forgiveness. Patience grew weak at times as we waited to see if God's seed would actually germinate, and eventually take root and grow. We began services one year later as we watched some small seeds showing signs of spiritual growth. From those seeds have grown some very strong, deeply rooted Christians—of course not without difficulties and growing pains—but nevertheless standing firm. Our hearts are truly overflowing as we witness firsthand some of our first "seeds" come to maturity and begin to sow their own seed. You Brethren in Christ in the north would be proud of your brothers and sisters here, even as we are. Thanks be to God!

## Canadian Thanksgiving in Venezuela

*Susie Gilmore*

Sometimes it's difficult and even a little complicated for a missionary family to decide whether to observe the special holidays that are celebrated in their country of service, or to remember and try to celebrate those of their home country. Well, since we are Canadians at heart, the month of October means

Thanksgiving for us regardless of where we are living. Venezuela does not have a Thanksgiving holiday. Thus our Thanksgiving celebrations became a private family affair, enjoying each other and concentrating on the blessings of our Lord. We also tried to make this year a bit more "Canadian." On Thanksgiving Sunday we had roast turkey and mashed potatoes. We shared our meal with fellow missionaries and close Venezuelan friends. So even though our conversation was in Spanish and our food Canadian style, our thankfulness came straight from our hearts—the language that God understands! Enter his gates with thanksgiving!

## Return to India

*Erma Sider, wife of Bishop Harvey Sider*

As the golden moon rose over Banmankhi, 70 Santal and Uraon women, plus numerous babies and companions, gathered for the annual women's meeting. As guest speaker, I enjoyed teaching women whom I had first taught in the Banmankhi Homemakers Course from 1965 to 1974. A highlight of the one-day and two-night meeting was a drama depicting the difference between the Christian and non-Christian woman. The closing candlelight dedication service left a deep impression on all.

The Brethren in Christ Development Society was chief sponsor for a weekend conference attended by 150 church leaders from Purnea, Banmankhi, Saharsa, and Barjora Districts. Indian speakers from Calcutta and West Bihar addressed the group as well as Roy Sider, Overseas Secretary for Brethren in Christ Missions, and Harvey Sider. They encouraged the work of physical, spiritual, and social development. Tapas Karmakar, director of the development society (a joint MCC and Brethren in Christ venture) described the progress of the program as it provides assistance to villagers in setting up cottage industries, crop improvement, irrigation, etc. Attendees were required to pay a registration fee of 5 rupees (50¢) and, in addition, a number of Brethren in Christ leaders provided extra sponsorship funds.



## Moderators and Secretaries meet, propose joint study conferences

The Council of Moderators and Secretaries, made up of leaders of the Brethren in Christ and three Mennonite denominations, held their annual meeting near Chicago on December 16. Prominent in their discussions were plans for a four-group assembly at Normal, Ill., in 1989.

The General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church are scheduled to meet jointly at that in a manner similar to their assemblies at Bethlehem, Pa., in 1983. It is proposed that the Brethren in Christ and the Mennonite Brethren hold study conferences at the same time and place in order to promote acquaintance and fellowship among members of these four Anabaptist denominations. It was agreed that if possible, there should be a common theme and common schedule for the study, so that representatives of all four can share this common experience.

In addition to this general planning for 1989 (subject to confirmation by the various groups), the CMS shared reports on how it goes within the individual churches and met with the Council of International Ministries, an inter-Mennonite program group. The problems they shared with one another sounded familiar to anyone in touch with church work today: the increase in cost of overseas mission work caused by a weaker dollar, concern for church growth in North America, stewardship and finances. Several potential inter-Mennonite activities were reviewed: (1) Mennonite Marriage Encounter, and (2) the possibility of updating the Kauffman-Harder study of five Anabaptist denominations. This study was published by Herald Press in 1975 as *Anabaptists Four Centuries Later*.

The scope of CMS interests grows out of the fact that within the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ organizational family, no other group is in a position to take responsibility for planning and coordination. This group "of final review" is made up of two persons (the moderator and the secretary) from each of the four denominations. In the spirit of this ultimate responsibility, the CMS held a session with the Council of International Ministries—one of a sequence of meetings CMS is holding with

similar groups. (Last year CMS met with presidents of Mennonite colleges.) Some of the purposes of the joint meeting were described as communication and burden-bearing, learning, and cooperation.

The topic that most engaged the attention of this combined meeting was a request from the Mennonite churches of Indonesia for church-to-church contact instead of meeting with only mission and service workers. One person observed that the Indonesian leaders want to discuss problems of ethical decision making—not famine relief or mission strategy, the kinds of issues they would address to service workers and missionaries. How does one national Mennonite church address another national Mennonite church with questions of this sort?

It was recognized that the number of Mennonite denominations and organizations in North America makes it hard to deliver at this level. But John A. Lapp, executive secretary of Mennonite Central Committee, said, "I think the voice of the Indonesian brothers is the voice of God. We're organized for church planting and for service ministries, but we are not organized for congregational life." (See the article on the CIM meeting elsewhere in this issue.)

Finally, as part of this yearly meeting, the CMS sponsored a two-day consultation on Ron Sider's proposal for Christian Peacemaker Teams, an idea first delivered in his address to Mennonite World Conference in 1984. I asked CMS chairman James Lapp about the CPT consultation: why should the executives of the four denominations call such a meeting?

He replied that the idea was brought to their attention two years ago. It was suggested that if Sider's idea was to be given a hearing, this was the group to do it. Indeed, where else in our sprawling church structure could it be considered? There being no North American Mennonite bishop board or any other sort of comprehensive Mennonite/Brethren in Christ entity, the CMS will have to do. As can be seen from Steve Shenk's report on the CPT consultation, it was given an extensive review. —*Daniel Hertzler for Meetinghouse.*

## "Christian Peacemaker Team" proposal, revised, approved

Mennonite and Brethren in Christ representatives approved the proposal for Christian Peacemaker Teams—in revised form—during a major consultation Dec. 16-18 in the Chicago suburb of Techny, Ill. Most significantly, nonviolent direct action—including civil disobedience—is officially recognized by those denominations as part of a "strengthened biblical peace witness."

In a statement drafted and approved at the end of the consultation, the participants expressed the belief that "a renewed commitment to the gospel of peace calls us to new forms of public witness which may include nonviolent direct action" and said the establishment of Christian Peacemaker Teams is "an important new dimension for our ongoing peace and justice ministries."

The proposal grew out of American activist theologian Ron Sider's call at the 1984 assembly of Mennonite World Conference for trained volunteers to stand between hostile groups in areas of conflict around the world. The idea was then formally presented to the Council of Moderators and Secretaries of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America.

The council liked the idea and asked Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section to draft a proposal for presentation at the council's October 1985 meeting. The call for the creation of "Christian Peacemaker Teams" (CPT) was then approved in principle, and an ad hoc committee was appointed to oversee a year-long process of discussion in the churches.

The six-member committee, chaired by Brethren in Christ general secretary Don Shafer, included Sider and representatives of the Mennonite, General Conference Mennonite, and Mennonite Brethren churches. It prepared a 20-page study document for use in a variety of settings.

Some 6,000 copies of the document were requested by congregations, church-wide agencies, and individuals, and over 220 responses were submitted to the committee. Most of the responses were

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positive, although the most frequently mentioned concern was that CPT was another example of North Americans offering solutions to the world's problems. It is too "imperialistic," said some, and "insensitive to other cultures."

But committee members expressed amazement at the "enormous interest" in CPT and found most of their invitations to the consultation accepted eagerly. The invitees included denominational leaders, churchwide agency representatives, MCC workers, peace activists, and what the committee called "wise people" in the churches. Over 130 of them gathered at Divine Word International—a Catholic conference center north of Chicago.

The CPT proposal as presented called for placing "a body of praying, well-

trained Christians in the midst of warring parties or groups in order to foster shalom." This would include documenting and reporting atrocities and human rights violations. It called for starting with 100 volunteers and an annual budget of \$800,000. The volunteers would get five months of intensive training and serve two years in such tension spots as Central America, as well as in North America in such efforts as nuclear arms protests. The volunteers would be supported spiritually and financially by "faithful witness groups" in their home congregations.

Although the *spirit* of CPT was affirmed, the specifics were set aside as participants tackled the "imperialism" question, the meaning of "nonviolent direct action," the theological under-

pinnings, the practical implications, and the need to keep CPT congregationally based. Much of the discussion went on in small groups and in denominational caucuses.

Ron Sider, an Eastern Baptist Seminary professor who is a member of both the Brethren in Christ and Mennonite Churches, stayed in the background while the idea he originated was debated. But he was asked early in the consultation to give his definition of "nonviolent direct action," a term which had quickly become the focus of attention.

It is a "peaceful, loving, direct challenge of evil that goes beyond normal channels for resolving conflict," he said. It is more forceful than general peaceful ways of resolving conflict and some-

## CPT and the Brethren in Christ

Nine Brethren in Christ participated in the Chicago consultation to explore implications of the concept of Christian Peacemaking Teams (CPT) and whether to proceed with implementation.

The context for the discussions and presentations shared by the 130 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ became apparent very quickly:

1. A serious commitment to hear and respond to Christ's call regarding the realities of this Kingdom.
2. A desire to express our peacemaking in the spirit of Jesus—even while being painfully aware of the violence and evil in the world.
3. A concern that primary peace expressions should be well-rooted in local congregations.

As Brethren in Christ, it is natural to affirm these convictions. It is also natural, with our broad base of witness lodged *both* in evangelistic zeal *and* social concern, to raise questions about the meaning of the "nonviolent direct action" included in the CPT proposal. Brethren in Christ do indeed affirm that we need to actively respond to the evil and injustice around us. And we are agreed that our action *must* be nonviolent to cor-



Muriel T. Stackley

Discussing a Brethren in Christ response to the CPT proposal are (clockwise from far end of table) Glenn Ginder, Eber Dourte, Wilmer Heisey, John Stoner, Ron Sider, Sider, Don Shafer, Arthur Climenhaga, and Nancy Heisey Longacre.

respond to the Spirit of Jesus. As we reflected together on the implications of nonviolent *direct* action, Brethren in Christ and others voiced concern that our action against evil grows out of a deep sense of humility and needs to be expressed with great sensitivity toward the people involved.

Further, it is essential for us to be aware that we are living in a new day; the world is smaller and the oppressed are often our neighbors. Often our involvements in our complex society implicate us in the causes of oppression. So it becomes apparent that carefully developed, non-passive responses to evil and injustice (i.e., CPT) need to be included in our "peace repertoire." Certainly we do well to reflect on the meaning of the

words "seek peace and pursue it . . ." (Ps. 34:14) so that we may truly lift up the Prince of Peace.

Getting together with other brothers and sisters in Chicago to focus on how we can express the Spirit of Christ in this present evil world was a valuable exercise. We are reminded again that ours must always be a commitment to the Good News of redemption through the cross of Christ. We certainly dare not turn away from the injustices. In fact, it is essential that we grapple with evil and that our response be against the evil itself, while compassionately and redemptively we reach out to the people involved, whether evil-doers or victims. —Glenn Ginder, moderator of the Brethren in Christ Church.



times includes civil disobedience—the breaking of the law through such tactics as sit-ins.

Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi and American civil rights leader Martin Luther King were mentioned as proponents of nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience. Also mentioned as people who broke the law for conscience' sake were the Anabaptist forebears of the Mennonites and Brethren in Christ as well as members of those groups who refused to fight in World War I.

Most participants seemed to agree that nonviolent direct action is sometimes necessary, but worried that the term will raise “red flags” in their churches. They also made it clear that not all CPT work will be nonviolent direct action and that not all nonviolent direct action is civil disobedience.

Nevertheless, several people noted

that the emerging consensus at the consultation represented a change in their denominations. “We have made a remarkable shift in the last 40 years from non-resistance to more active peacemaking,” said Ted Koontz of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries. Others agreed that passive nonresistance to violence and traditional withdrawal from the world's problems are inadequate—especially in the late 20th century.

Partly in response to the concern that CPT must be sensitive to the views of people in other countries, about a dozen international representatives were invited to the consultation. Their responses ranged from enthusiastic (European Mennonite Peace Committee leader Maarten Van der Werf) to a qualified “yes” as long as CPT works closely with local churches and organizations (Guatemalan Mennonite leader Cesar del Aguila) and skepticism about whether

North Americans really know what suffering people need (Tanzanian Mennonite student Freddie Kisare).

Another segment of opinion that was solicited was that of Mennonites who are currently involved in nonviolent direct action. An example was Hedy Sawatzky, who is part of a Christian peace witness at a nuclear arms plant in Texas. She has been arrested and jailed for trespassing after entering the plant to pray and sing. Acknowledging that civil disobedience is not for everyone, she said she entered this type of witness after much struggle, study, prayer, and fasting.

In an attempt to root the consultation in the Bible and in worship, the event also included prayer times, theological reflection, and singing led by local Mennonite musician-activist Chuck Neufeld. Added at the end of the consultation was a time of confession for complicity in the violence of North America and “the violence within us.”

The participants divided into denominational caucuses to help determine how each of the four sponsoring groups felt about CPT. The Mennonite Church caucus came back without a formal statement but with support for the spirit of CPT. The General Conference Mennonites offered a “new improved” CPT—grassroots-oriented and focused at first on North American issues. The Mennonite Brethren offered an eloquent statement of qualified support for CPT, including—to many participants' surprise—nonviolent direct action. The Brethren in Christ agreed that new ways are needed to confront evil but could not reach consensus on CPT.

“Now what?” asked Mennonite Church moderator James Lapp, who led the final sessions. Some people, impressed with the GC and MB statements, suggested that those two be combined as a general statement growing out of the consultation. It was finally agreed, however, to ask the CPT ad hoc committee to take all the responses and draft a statement for approval before the consultation adjourned.

The committee did so, and the statement was eagerly dissected. Some thought it was too hesitant in endorsing the spirit of CPT, while others warned that it was too radical for many Mennonites and Brethren in Christ back home. For awhile it looked as though the statement would fall victim to the clock while many participants clamored to offer changes. As time was running out, Ron Sider stood up and said, “As some-

## ***A message from the consultation on Christian Peacemaker Teams***

A body of North American Mennonites and Brethren in Christ people met at Techny, Illinois, December 16-18, 1986, to consider the proposal for establishing Christian Peacemaker Teams. We were enriched by the presence of international participants. We send this message to our denominations, congregations, and churchwide agencies.

1. We believe the mandate to proclaim the gospel of repentance, salvation, and reconciliation includes a strengthened biblical peace witness.
2. We believe that faithfulness to what Jesus taught, and modeled calls us to more active peacemaking.
3. We believe a renewed commitment to the gospel of peace calls us to new forms of public witness which may include nonviolent direct action.
4. We believe the establishment of Christian Peacemaker Teams is an important new dimension for our ongoing peace and justice ministries.

We ask our denominations and congregations to envision Christian Peacemaker Teams as a witness to Jesus Christ by identifying with suffering people, reducing violence, mediating conflicts, and fostering justice through the peaceful, caring, direct challenge of evil. This may include biblical study and reflection, documenting and reporting on injustice and violation of human rights, nonviolent direct action, education, mediation, and advocacy. To be authentic such peacemaking should be rooted in and supported by congregations and churchwide agencies. We will begin in North America but will be open to invitations to support initiatives in other places.

It is understood that in a growing emphasis on peacemaking, the Christian Peacemaker Teams vision is only one means of providing an opportunity for God's people to express a faithful witness to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

We want to acknowledge our complicity in violence and oppression. Peacemaking is most of all the work of God. The Spirit of God will nurture this work within us.



one who would like to see something stronger, I plead for acceptance of the carefully worked out compromise." The statement was then approved.

Adding momentum to the final moments was a declaration by Church of the Brethren representative Charles Walker that his denomination would like to join CPT.

In regards to implementing CPT, the

mood seemed to be that a new organization should *not* be created to administer it, nor should the effort be turned over to an existing agency like MCC. Instead, participants said again, CPT should grow out of local congregations and coordination should be provided by the group that called the consultation—the Council of Moderators and Secretaries.

That group met after adjournment to

figure out the next steps for getting CPT started. The council decided to set up an eight-member steering committee composed of representatives appointed by each of the sponsoring denominations plus three appointed by the council. Each denomination will also be asked to begin soliciting contributions to help get CPT underway. —*Steve Shenk for Meetinghouse*

## Council of International Ministries looks at development, church relationships

Some 30 persons, representing 15 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ-related missions and service organizations, met in Techny, Ill., December 16 for the semi-annual meeting of the Council of International Ministries. Major items on the agenda included a joint meeting with the Council of Moderators and Secretaries and a discussion of economic development overseas.

What normally would have been a one-and-one-half day meeting was compressed into an afternoon and evening session, so that CIM members could share in the Christian Peacemaker Team consultation, which had been scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday. (See separate article by Steve Shenk.) The abbreviated schedule meant, among other adjustments, that the Asia and Europe committees, which met all day Monday and Tuesday morning, could not report to the full council. Nor were representatives of the various missions and service agencies able to share news of their activities or identify items of concern for counsel, as is normally the case with CIM meetings.

Several issues, however, were discussed by the council. Ron Mathies, (Conrad Grebel College), sought counsel from the group on a service/education program proposed by a consortium made up of Mennonite Central Committee Canada and five Canadian Mennonite colleges. A program of study and service internship would precede a regular missions or service assignment, followed by an enhanced debriefing period after completion of the assignment. Although other education/service programs currently are in operation, council members recognized several distinctives in this approach and affirmed further development of the program.

Reg Toews (MCC Akron) reported for a committee reviewing the major

medical pool, which provides self-insurance coverage for the cooperating CIM agencies. Plans are progressing for building up reserves within the pool which would be available—together with reinsurance coverage—to cover any catastrophic medical claims which might be experienced. Toews also reported that the Church of the Brethren has expressed interest in enrolling its overseas workers in the major medical pool.

A major part of the afternoon session was given over to a joint meeting with the Council of Moderators and Secretaries (CMS), which was also meeting at Techny. (See separate article by Daniel Hertzler). Vern Preheim, secretary of CMS, focused the reason for the joint session by asking, "How can the conference structures, which we represent, be helpfully involved in the work of overseas missions?" The need to develop a broad-based common vision for mission was one immediate response. As one missions administrator noted, "mission agencies shouldn't have to 'sell' the idea of mission; it ought to grow out of the leadership of the church."

Discussion also focused on the changing relationships between the church in North America and the churches which have been started through missions activity. A case in point was the request from Indonesian Mennonites which had been discussed by CIM earlier in the day. The Indonesians have expressed interest in broadening their ties with the North American and other international Mennonite churches. "While they want to continue programmatic relationships with service agencies like MCC, they want to develop church-to-church relationships," observed Earl Martin (MCC co-secretary for Asia).

Participants acknowledged that creating and maintaining such church-to-church links will be complicated due to

the number of Mennonite groups in North America. Paul Kraybill (executive secretary of Mennonite World Conference) noted that this type of request may help to focus agenda for North American Mennonites in the 21st century by highlighting such concerns as the institutionalizing of the church in North America, and whether we can sustain the multiplicity of our conferences and agency structures.

The role which economic development plays in overseas missions was a major topic addressed in the evening session. Neil Janzen, Ron Braun, and Wally Kroeker of Mennonite Economic Development Associates—a CIM member agency—outlined MEDA's strategy and program for economic development overseas. Although discussion was limited due to the press of time, council members talked about the nature of MEDA's accountability and the ways in which MEDA makes decisions to sponsor specific projects.

In other business, the council approved a 1987 budget of \$50,500, and elected as its new chairman Erwin Rempel (General Conference Commission Mission). Responding to an invitation from European Mennonites, the council asked retiring CIM chairman Peter Hamm (Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services) to represent North America at joint meetings of IMO (Internationale Mennonitische Organisation) and EMEK (Europaisches Mennonitisches Evangelisations Komitee) as these groups meet annually to discuss Mennonite mission activity in Europe.

The next meeting of CIM will be held in conjunction with a major consultation it is convening in Minneapolis May 19-20, 1987. Planners expect the consultation, which has as its theme "Missions/Services in Global Perspective: Relationship and Reconceptualization," to provide material for a new statement on inter-agency program relationships, which will replace a statement on the same topic the council developed in 1965. —*Glen Pierce for Meetinghouse.*



# '86 Religion In Review

by Doug Trouten

"Kenneth, what is the frequency?" In October, two well-dressed men accosted CBS News anchorman Dan Rather on a New York street, and demanded an answer to this question. Disappointed with his answer, they beat him and left him running for his life. In some ways, 1986 was like that: It snuck up on us, whacked us over the head, and left us wondering what it was all about.

It was the year of the pornography commission, the anti-drug campaign, AIDS, and the exploding space shuttle. A year of bombings in Libya, people power in the Philippines, an unproductive summit conference in Iceland, and continuing crises in South Africa and Nicaragua. It was a year that saw Lutherans battling over their desire to merge, and Catholics battling over their right to dissent. In 1986 Pat Robertson announced his plans to run for the Republican presidential nomination, while American voters announced their plans to elect Democrats.

What is the frequency? It may have been in Al Capone's vault, but Geraldo Rivera couldn't find it. Oliver North probably knows, but he's not saying.

## **Pornography**

In 1986 America discovered pornography. The Attorney General's Commission on Pornography drew the na-

tion's attention to the growing porn industry and sharply divided public opinion. Some condemned pornography as the nation's leading moral evil, while others acted as though *Hustler* magazine should replace the American eagle as a symbol of the freedoms we hold dear.

Christian author and family counselor James Dobson served on the Commission on Pornography, and called it "the most difficult responsibility I've faced in years." Dobson said, "Words cannot describe the degradation of human misery that surrounds this industry; it preys on children, debases women, destroys families and mocks everything holy and clean."

The Commission's report helped rally supporters for the battle against pornography. Attorney General Edwin Meese announced that a special team would be formed to ensure that pornographers were "pursued with a vengeance and prosecuted to the hilt." The National Coalition Against Pornography and the Religious Alliance Against Pornography fired up church leadership to battle sexually-explicit material. In response to growing concern over pornography, several large chains of convenience stores, including 7-Eleven stores, decided to stop carrying magazines like *Playboy* and *Penthouse*.

Even before the commission's report was issued, pro-pornography forces were working to focus the debate. The commission's report dealt primarily with child pornography, violent pornography, and other materials that the Supreme Court has ruled are not protected by the First Amendment. But media reports

quickly pegged the commission as prudish constitution-bashers, while civil libertarians battled non-existent efforts to outlaw *Playboy* magazine. Pornographers hired the largest public relations firm in the nation's capital to orchestrate criticism of the Attorney General's report, and to portray pornography foes as "religious extremists."

## **Drugs**

When we weren't worrying about pornography, we were worrying about drugs. Like pornography, illegal narcotics were not a new problem, but earned a spot on the agenda when the nation's leadership decided to get involved in the battle.

The death of college basketball star Len Bias from an overdose of cocaine sent his mother—who believes someone slipped it into his drink—on the road to speak against drugs. "God lifted Len up to let everyone see him and took him away to focus attention on the most prevalent problem in America today: drugs. God did this to say: like Len, you can be on top of the world one minute and the next minute you can be snatched away," she says.

Evangelist Billy Graham challenged churches to get involved in the battle against drugs. "I think it is the greatest problem facing America today," he said. "Unless we can solve this problem, our country can be destroyed from within, rather than from without."

## **AIDS**

Drugs and pornography weren't the only things threatening to destroy society from within during 1986. Concern over

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Doug Trouten is director of EP News Service, editor of the Twin Cities Christian newspaper, and founder of the Christian Newspaper Association. Copyright Dec. 19, 1986, EP News.



AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), a 100 percent fatal disease affecting mainly homosexuals and drug users, grew in 1986.

AIDS affected the homosexual lifestyle: a Los Angeles study showed that 80 percent of homosexuals had become celibate or monogamous over fear of AIDS. But AIDS also affected the church, as Christians tried to formulate a biblical response to the disease. A Gallup Poll showed that more than one in five Americans (21 percent) felt that AIDS was a judgment from God, and 35 percent felt the church's response to AIDS victims had been "poor."

Surgeon General C. Everett Koop called for public education about the spread of AIDS, and said churches have a tremendous obligation to educate children and young people about sexual behaviors and other practices that spread the disease. "We must approach our young people with education on sexual matters on a level of frankness we've never had before," Koop said. "The qualitative differences with AIDS is that one mistake can kill you."

Concern about AIDS forced the public to view "gay rights" with increased suspicion, and civil rights laws sponsored by gay activists were shot down in various areas, including Chicago and Louisiana, where they encountered opposition from the religious community. However, New York City passed a gay rights ordinance. And the Evangelical Women's Caucus passed a resolution in support of homosexual civil rights, fueling criticism that the organization had become "a lesbian support group."

### Catholics

The Roman Catholic Church took a hard line on homosexuality, with a Vatican statement calling homosexuality an "objective disorder," and something that "may seriously threaten the lives and well-being of a large number of people."

The Vatican took a hard line on a number of other issues in 1986 as well, surprising a few Catholic priests and professors with the notion that joining the Catholic church meant supporting Catholic doctrine. The Vatican disciplined the Rev. Charles Curran, a prominent theologian who taught Catholic Moral Theology at Catholic University in Washington D.C. Curran, who supports divorce, abortion, homosexuality, premarital sex, and contraception, was outraged when told he could no longer represent the church and vowed to fight the decision.

The Curran affair was just part of a growing rift between current American Catholic practice and traditional Roman Catholic teaching. A CBS News/New York Times poll showed that a majority of American Catholics disagree with official church doctrine on issues such as ordination of women, birth control, celibacy for priests, and remarriage for divorced Catholics.

When he wasn't fighting to control dissenting Catholics in the U.S., or priests espousing "liberation theology" in Central America, Pope John Paul II was jetting around the world, visiting various countries, including a history-making visit to a Jewish synagogue—a first for a pope.

Back in the U.S., America's Catholic bishops issued their pastoral letter "Economic Justice For All," condemning international debt and the World Bank, and calling for increased state-directed economic activism. But while the bishops had answers for the world's economic problems, they seemed less able to cope with their own growing economic crisis: a staggering debt of \$2.5 billion in the retirement fund for members of Catholic orders. The retirement fund crisis and the prospect of elderly nuns living on food stamps led Illinois priest Robert Reynolds to begin the BACON project (Buy A Catholic Old Nun), with parishes "adopting" a retired church worker.

### Lutherans

As the Catholic Church battled with pressures pulling it apart, Lutherans were fighting to come together. The Lutheran merger—which will blend the American Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Church in America, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches into a new 5.3-million member Lutheran body—was approved at three separate Lutheran conventions Aug. 29, and is set to take place in 1988.

The Commission on the New Lutheran Church initially selected Milwaukee as the headquarters for the merger church, but that decision met with great resistance, and Chicago was later proposed as the headquarters site. The name for the merger church—the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—met with greater approval, but ran into another snag: it was already in use. A tiny Norwegian-heritage synod in Minnesota, headed by a genuine Norwegian bachelor farmer, has already been using that name. "I've been thinking I should have gotten hold of somebody and

reminded them," said Truman Larson, president of the 50-member synod. "I don't suppose it's any use, I guess."

Lutherans disagreeing with the merger formed an alternative group: the Association of American Lutheran Churches (AALC). The AALC is expected to attract Lutherans who appreciate a firm stand in biblical inerrancy, and who support conservative religious values.

### Southern Baptists

Inerrancy and conservative religious values were part of a continuing battle in the nation's largest Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

The Rev. Adrian Rogers, a fundamentalist, was elected June 10 as president of the SBC, winning with 54.2 percent of the ballots counted. Rogers was president in 1979, when fundamentalists first took control in response to their fear that the SBC was drifting toward theological and social liberalism. Rogers' appointment will allow him to make appointments to fill vacancies on trustee boards, giving fundamentalists control of some church agencies.

That control is the object of a lawsuit against the SBC by some of its members, which challenges rulings made on church bylaws in an earlier convention. Every court that has heard the lawsuit, brought by Robert and Julia Crowder and others, has refused to rule, noting that secular courts have no business intervening in ecclesiastical controversies or matters of church polity. But at the end of 1986, the case was still being appealed.

The SBC also praised itself for its racial inclusiveness after an article in the *National Christian Reporter*, a Methodist newspaper, showed that the SBC is the fastest-growing denomination in ethnic membership. Still, just over four percent of the church's 14.5 million members are from "ethnic" backgrounds. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary hired its first black faculty member in 1986.

### Methodists

The United Methodist Church was in the news occasionally during 1986, as its Hymnal Revision Committee tried to come up with a song book that would please all of the people all of the time. The futility of this effort was made clear in a poll that found two hymns "How Great Thou Art" and "The Old Rugged Cross" topped both the most-loved and most-hated hymn list.

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"Am I a Soldier of the Cross" was voted as too militaristic, prompting one church member to write "When that illustrious day shall rise, and all the armies shine in robes of victory through the skies . . . where will the United Methodists be? In a blind battle to change the language."

### Denominations

In other denominational news, the Presbyterian Church (USA) elected as moderator the Rev. Benjamin Weir, a former missionary to Lebanon who had been held hostage there for 16 months. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod reaffirmed its opposition to ordination of women. Australian Eva Burrows was elected 13th General of the world-wide Salvation Army, the world's largest religious and social organization. And the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), known as America's first Pentecostal denomination, observed its centennial during its 61st General Assembly, held in Atlanta.

### Anniversaries

1986 was a year of other anniversaries as well. Moody Bible Institute in Chicago marked the 100th anniversary of its founding. Ebenezer Baptist Church in

Atlanta, where the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., his father, and grandfather preached, also marked its centennial.

The American Bible Society noted its 170th anniversary, the King James Version of the Bible saw its 375th birthday, and the 20-year mark was reached by "Good News for Modern Man," and by the Spanish "Version Popular" of the Bible.

Sparrow Records noted its 10 year anniversary. Ben Armstrong completed 20 years with National Religious Broadcasters, and Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network celebrated its 25th anniversary with a live 90-minute broadcast featuring celebrity speakers and singers and fireworks.

### Pat Robertson

CBN founder Pat Robertson did more than just celebrate an anniversary in 1986. He threw his hat—well, not really into the ring, but just outside the ring—by announcing that he might run for the presidency in 1988. Robertson's decision to seek Republican endorsement for the nation's highest office is contingent on the ability of his followers to gather petition signatures from three million registered voters by Sept. 17,

1987. Since his program "The 700 Club" has an estimated 4.5 million daily viewers, Robertson is expected to run.

Robertson's probable candidacy drew support from a number of Christian leaders, including Beverly LaHaye, former SBC President Jimmy Draper, Oral Roberts, and Jimmy Swaggart. It also drew criticism and scrutiny of his war record, his personal finances, and his ministry's handling of donated funds. Robertson is expected to act as a power broker during the coming campaign, helping to mold the agenda, and controlling a bloc of voters to be swung to the candidate of his choice.

Robertson's potential candidacy arrives after some observers believe the "Christians in politics" movement has peaked. Heavy losses suffered by conservative Christian candidates on a national level, and the burden placed on President Reagan's credibility during the emerging Iran arms affair raise serious questions about how popular any Republican is going to be in 1988, especially one with close ties to Christian conservatives.

### Jim and Tammy Bakker

While Robertson was gearing up for the presidency, former employees Jim

## The "brightest event" in 1986 . . .

### Amsterdam '86

Certainly the brightest event in world religious news was Amsterdam '86, a 10-day conference for itinerant evangelists sponsored by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. More than 8,000 evangelists from 173 countries and territories came together in Amsterdam's cavernous RAI Convention Center to sharpen their skills and learn how to better "do the work of the evangelist"—the conference's theme.

Participants heard 21 plenary addresses, attended five conference-wide seminars, and selected seven of 141 workshops covering nearly every imaginable aspect of evangelism, from fundraising to working with teens in the Middle East. The \$21 million conference marked what United Nations officials agreed was the most widely representative international meeting in history.

In a no-nonsense message to his fel-

low evangelists, Argentine-born Luis Palau told them to quit fooling around with other women, to give up obsessions with raising money, to get rid of bitterness against other evangelistic teams, and to quit letting media attention "go to their heads." Palau, who held successful crusades in various places during 1986 including Singapore, Argentina and California, said, "You mustn't confuse loudness and gesticulations with being filled with the Holy Spirit."

Conference proceedings were translated into as many as 25 different languages by a team of 122 interpreters. Evangelists were housed in a huge exhibition hall, which was turned into a temporary dormitory for more than 4,000 men. Samaritan's Purse, run by Billy Graham's son Franklin, distributed more than 100,000 items of clothing to needy evangelists, as well as other tools to help their outreach efforts. Billy Graham said his prayer is that the con-

ference will spark "a fire of revival" that will spread around the globe.

### World missions

The revival is currently being spread by fewer and fewer evangelists, according to missions researcher Dave Barrett. Barrett found that the world's population explosion is outstripping evangelism efforts in the world's urban areas.

Still, there are success stories around the globe. Tanzania is reportedly experiencing revival. The Far Eastern Broadcasting Company reported an increase in response to its religious programs. India has seen mass baptisms. Dr. Paul Y. Cho's Korean church passed the 500,000 mark for membership. The Hope of Bangkok Church in Thailand has grown from five members to over 800 in the last five years.

The Bible continues to be translated into new languages to reach new groups of people. In 1986 Bibles were completed in Navajo, Haitian, Yakan (used in parts of the Philippines), and other languages.



and Tammy Bakker, now leaders of the competing PTL Television Network, weren't just sitting on their hands.

The Bakkers, who changed the name of their program this year to "Jim and Tammy," were lambasted by the *Charlotte Observer*, which charged that ministry funds were used for extravagant personal purchases. *Observer* articles charged that a mink coat, a Corvette, and a houseboat were purchased with ministry funds, and also called attention to other symbols of an affluent lifestyle, such as a \$500,000 vacation home in Palm Springs.

Bakkers fought back, mounting an "Enough is Enough" campaign on their program, in which they insisted that they were not mishandling funds, but were in fact good stewards of God's money who were being persecuted by an unsympathetic press. They also announced plans for a \$10 million water park at their vacation-land retreat center, and later for a \$1.5 billion project which will include condos and an 18-hole golf course.

### Popoff

Television evangelist Peter Popoff had an even harder year than the media-battered Bakkers. On national television, magician James Randi accused Popoff of using a hidden radio transmitter to receive his "word of knowledge" during healing crusades. Randi intercepted the radio transmissions during a crusade and recorded Popoff's wife feeding him names, addresses and ailments of people needing healing. "The voice of God . . . sounds like Popoff's wife," concluded Randi.

Popoff's office issued a statement denying any deception, but took some time before coming up with a response that addressed specific charges. Popoff claims the device in his ear is merely an audio-prompter used in television tapings, and says he never meant his practice of calling out a person's name and ailment to be taken as divine revelation.

### Rajneesh

Indian guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh had a chance to see the world in 1986. Rajneesh, who left the United States after pleading guilty to charges of immigration fraud, announced that he would spend his time traveling around the world, visiting his followers.

That turned out to be a good idea, as Rajneesh—who advocates free sex and abolition of traditional religion—was unable to find a country that would let

him establish residency. During the year he visited and was kicked out of Greece, Ireland, Spain, and Uruguay. He eventually returned to his native India, which he had left earlier, saying he didn't want to live in a poverty-stricken nation.

The Rajneesh newspaper announced plans to "bring the whole world circus back together" by founding a new Rajneesh center in Europe, but didn't mention how they'd find a place to pitch the big top tent.

### Other cults

Rajneesh wasn't the only fringe religious group having problems during 1986. Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard died of a stroke at age 74. Scientology continued to battle former members in the courts, with ex-scientologists seeking large judgments for fraud. Former members have been successful in court: former convert Larry Wollersheim was awarded \$30 million in his case.

Herbert W. Armstrong, head of the Worldwide Church of God, died at age 93, leaving his 80,000-member church to successor Joseph K. Tkach. Armstrong's church teaches a blend of Christian fundamentalist, non-trinitarianism, and Seventh-day Adventist doctrine, with an emphasis on Anglo-Israelism, the belief that England and the U.S. are populated by Israel's "lost tribes."

### Deaths in the family

The Christian community probably won't miss Armstrong and Hubbard very much, but other people died during 1986 whose absence is more likely to be felt.

Author Joseph Bayly, whose column appeared in *Eternity* magazine for 25 years, died at 66, following open-heart surgery. Bayly wrote a number of books, including *View from a Hearse* (now *The Last Thing We Talk About*), in which he said, "Death for the Christian should be a shout of triumph, through sorrow and tears, bringing glory to God."

Other people giving Bayly's "shout of triumph" during 1986 included: Dr. Oswald J. Smith, founder of People's Church in Toronto and a leader in world evangelization; prominent Christian publisher Harold Shaw; Dr. Bernard Zylstra, president of the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto; Ben Weiss, who served on boards of many Christian organizations; German Lutheran theologian and author Helmut Thielicke; missionary radio pioneer and HCJB radio founder Dr. Clarence Wesley Jones; Frank Bateman Stanger, presi-

dent emeritus of Asbury Theological Seminary; Scientist-preacher Dr. Irwin Moon, known as the host of the famous Moody science films and founder of the Moody Institute of Science; the Rev. Vance H. Havner, recognized as "The Dean of American Bible Preachers"; and Winola Wirt, author and wife of *Decision* magazine editor emeritus Sherwood Wirt.

The phrase " 'til death do us part" was given new meaning in Tallahassee, Florida, where the Rev. Rayburn Blair performed a graveside wedding ceremony for a young couple that had pledged their lives to serving Christ at a Billy Graham crusade, but had died in a plane crash five months before their planned marriage. "I felt that it would be acceptable as a token symbol, not to have any official or civil meaning," said Blair of the unusual wedding. "In heaven God will balance things out as He chooses."

### Supreme court

In heaven God balances things out, but in the United States that job belongs to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court had a busy year, settling some religion-related issues, and agreeing to consider others.

The Court ruled that a Jewish military chaplain's constitutional right to wear the yarmulke required by his faith was less important than the military's right to maintain a uniform dress code. The Court also ruled that an American Indian's religious objection to the use of social security numbers was superceded by the government's interest in using the number for administration of welfare benefits.

On the other hand, the Court ruled for blind ministerial student Larry Witters, who had been denied state aid because he attended a religious school. A challenge brought by a student religious group that had been denied to use public school facilities for their meetings was also decided in favor of "equal access" for the Christians bringing the challenge, but both cases were decided on narrow grounds, making their value as precedent negligible.

The Court upheld a Georgia sodomy law, ruling that the U.S. Constitution contained no guarantee of a right to homosexual activity, but refused to rule on the sodomy law as it applied to heterosexual couples. The sodomy ruling calmed fears that the Court would "discover" a right to sodomy the same place it found the right to abortion.

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In the abortion battle, the Court continued its policy of placing the right to an abortion ahead of any other concern, including the right of a patient to have access to valid medical data. The Court struck down a Pennsylvania law which required doctors to provide women seeking abortions with detailed information about risks and alternatives, ruling that providing even accurate medical information about abortion could discourage the practice, thereby limiting a woman's right to abortion. In another life-related case, the Court ruled that federal civil rights laws do not apply to questions of medical treatment for handicapped infants, freeing doctors to let deformed or retarded babies starve to death without federal intervention.

Although the Pennsylvania decision was a defeat for pro-life forces, the 5-4 vote on the case was hailed as a sign that the Court was drifting closer to pro-life positions, and pro-lifers rejoiced in the hope that one more appointment to the Supreme Court could turn the abortion issue around.

That chance for an appointment came, but didn't make an immediate difference. Chief Justice Warren Burger, who was part of the original pro-abortion majority in 1973's *Roe v. Wade* but had begun dissenting from pro-abortion decisions, decided to step down as Chief Justice. President Ronald Reagan chose Justice William Rehnquist to succeed Burger as Chief Justice, and appointed Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Antonin Scalia to fill the vacancy created by Rehnquist's elevation.

Questioning of Rehnquist by the Senate Judiciary Committee was harsh enough that it became known as "The Rehnquisition," but opposition to the staunchly conservative jurist turned out to be merely sword rattling before his inevitable confirmation. The Rehnquist Court, with the addition of Scalia, still has a pro-abortion majority, but the pro-life minority has been strengthened.

The Rehnquist Court has its share of religion-related cases in the current session. The court has heard arguments for and against a Louisiana law requiring public schools to give creation-science balanced treatment if evolution is presented. The Court will examine whether government-run airports can prohibit distribution of literature in terminals by religious and political courts. The right of a Seventh-day Adventist to stay home from work on the Sabbath will be pondered, as will the civil rights of persons

suffering with contagious diseases—a case likely to affect the rights of AIDS victims.

### Other courts

In cases before lower courts, the nation's judiciary ruled on a variety of issues that concern Christians.

A Kansas judge ruled that a fetus was a human being, in a manslaughter case involving the injury of a pregnant woman and death of her unborn child.

Washington state courts dismissed lawsuits charging that Seattle Pacific University, a Christian school, had discriminated in employment policies based on religious belief. A New Jersey judge ruled that requiring a "moment of silence" at the beginning of school was an impermissible establishment of religion, since some children might use the time to pray. An Oregon court ruled against an invocation and benediction during a high school's commencement exercises.

A Minnesota court decided—and the Supreme Court confirmed—that Christian businessman Arthur Owens could not apply his faith to his business if that meant refusing to hire homosexuals and fornicators, and sharing management responsibilities only with other Christians.

And a Chicago judge ruled that municipal officials may display a privately-owned nativity scene, writing, "The truth is that America's origins are Christian and that our founding fathers intended and achieved full religious freedom for all within the context of a Christian nation in the First Amendment as it was adopted rather than as we have rewritten it."

### Sanctuary movement

A trial of Sanctuary Movement activists resulted in church workers being convicted of smuggling illegal aliens into the U.S., but those involved received suspended sentences. A suit brought against the government by churches who said U.S. agents secretly taped church meetings to gather evidence against Sanctuary workers was thrown out by a judge who ruled that the churches lacked standing to bring the suit, but observed, "It frankly offends me that the government is snooping into people's churches."

### Textbooks

School textbooks were on trial as well. Studies by the Department of Education, Americans United for Separation

of Church and State, and People for the American Way all found that public school texts tend to ignore or trivialize the role of religion in American life, adding fuel to a fire already raging over public school curriculum.

An Alabama case seeking to remove secular humanism from public school texts is being heard by Judge Brevard Hand, who is expected to side with fundamentalist parents bringing the suit.

A Tennessee case involving textbooks was decided in favor of parents, who had sought to have substitute readers used for their children, since they found references to feminism and the occult, and the treatment of religious themes troubling. A judge who had previously dismissed the parents' claims without a trial, found that the readers in use at the Tennessee school push a clear ideological agenda that clashes with the parents' values, and ordered school officials to allow certain children to "opt out" of reading class if their parents would make up the work at home.

### Athens Three

Courts overseas were busy hearing cases involving religious liberty as well. A Greek court had found American missionary Don Stephens and his two associates, Alan Williams and Costas Macris, guilty of proselytism for giving a Bible to a young man, who later gave his life to Christ.

The "Athens Three" appealed their case to the nation's Supreme Court, which ruled that since the boy involved had not changed his church membership, and the men had not taught "anything different from that advocated by the Greek Orthodox Church," the charge of proselytism should be dropped.

The decision was hailed as "a major breakthrough on behalf of religious freedom for minority religious groups in Greece," by Macris.

### Elsewhere

Christians elsewhere did not fare as well.

A delegation of U.S. and British officials found evidence that Christians in Nepal are subjected to persecution and torture. The Peace and Hope Commission of Peru's National Evangelical Council documented the killings of 90 evangelical Christians from 1983-1985 in Peru.

Malaysia began to enforce a rule that makes it a crime to offend a Muslim's religious beliefs, making it nearly impossible to witness to adherents of Islam.



Kenya's president Daniel Arap Moi attacked the country's churches after a religious conference issued a statement criticizing Moi's plan to eliminate secret ballots in an upcoming election. And the Indian state of Tamil Nadu announced plans to outlaw "mass religious conversions," such as the types taking place at Christian crusades and rallies.

The Rev. John Wilson, an African evangelical leader, was brutally murdered by two gunmen while returning to his home in Kenya from a week of special religious meetings in Kampala, Uganda. And Southern Baptist missionary Libby Senter and her 10-year-old daughter Rachel were found stabbed to death in their home in Liberia. Police arrested a Liberian seminary graduate who had worked for the Senters, who confessed to the crime.

The Soviet Union released, rearrested, and re-released Christian rock singer Valeri Barinov, who had been held on charges of trying to leave the country illegally. The USSR also allowed the importation of a new Russian-language Bible commentary. But lest we think the country was getting soft on religion, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov called for a "decisive and uncompromising struggle" with religion, and an improvement of atheist work. The world's worst nuclear disaster took place at the Soviet Union's Chernobyl reactor, which caused a stir among Christians when it was learned that Chernobyl is the Soviet word for Wormwood, mentioned in Revelation 8:10-11: "A great star fell from heaven, burning as it were a lamp . . . and the name of the star is called Wormwood . . . and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter."

President Reagan's decision to launch a bombing raid against Libya in retaliation for terrorist acts drew criticism from the National Council of Churches, which expressed "profound distress." The American Jewish Committee supported the raid, calling it "fully justified." Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi has called for a "Holy War" against Christians.

China allowed importation of a printing press, which will give priority to Bible production. The Chinese government also decided to allow foreign aid to churches in China, and stopped jamming evangelistic broadcasts from Christian short wave stations. Chinese government officials have assured the Christian church in Hong Kong that they have nothing to fear when Hong Kong comes

under Chinese control toward the end of this century, but Hong Kong church leaders continue to leave the country in droves.

In Cameroon lethal gases from a volcanic lake killed an estimated 1500 people, half of whom were Christians, according to missionaries at the scene. Christian agencies rushed relief there, as well as to victims of storms in the Solomon Islands, and earthquakes in El Salvador.

Egypt arrested but later released 10 Christians, who had been held without charges throughout most of the year. The Christians were accused of "despising Islam," which is the usual charge made when a person converts from Islam to Christianity. The prisoners were reportedly offered their freedom if they would renounce their conversion to Christianity.

Israel spent the better part of the year battling the construction of a Mormon study center planned for the Mount of Olives, but eventually determined it had no legal right to halt the construction, as long as Mormon officials agreed not to use the site as a missionary base. Israel's officials were not as generous to the Narkis Street Baptist Church, which was destroyed by arson, and has had difficulty getting permission to rebuild. Israeli courts have urged the church to seek property in another part of the city, rather than remain in its conservative Jewish neighborhood. And Israel's rabbis announced their desire to do some building of their own, on the Temple Mount. Though observant Jews are forbidden to enter the sites of previous temples on the Mount, rabbis believe they have found a location for a new temple in keeping with Jewish law. Arabs who now control the Mount have said a Jewish presence on the Mount would bring bloodshed.

In South Africa, things continued pretty much the way they had the previous year, with some church leaders calling for economic sanctions as a means of reform, and others calling for economic investment as a means of reform. Bishop Desmond Tutu, a symbol of anti-apartheid activism, was elected Archbishop of Cape Town, making him titular head of the South African Church, and the first black to hold the position.

Political upheaval in the Philippines resulted in Corazon Aquino rising to power. Ferdinand Marcos and his wife fled the country, taking along the nation's treasury, but leaving a lot of shoes and underwear behind.

## Assorted people news

The cause of world missions is being helped by men like R. Stanley Tam, a businessman who supports missionary and Christian work with 100 percent of his company's profits. Tam was named "Layperson of the Year" by the National Association of Evangelicals.

Evangelist Jimmy Swaggart received the "Two Hungers" award from Bread for the World for his commitment to hunger relief and evangelism. John Stott, founder of England's Institute for Contemporary Christianity, was awarded the Templeton United Kingdom Project Award, for someone who acts on spiritual motives to improve the well-being of the United Kingdom.

Evangelist Jerry Falwell decided to move out of the political arena and concentrate on ministry. A court awarded Falwell \$200,000 in his libel suit against *Hustler* magazine, even though it found *Hustler* had not actually libeled Falwell.

Singers Amy Grant, Larnelle Harris, and Sandi Patti received top honors at the Gospel Music Association's Dove Awards presentation. Grant stunned the Christian music world by "crossing over" with "Unguarded," a Christian album that received heavy secular airplay, which she followed up with a duet with a secular rock singer that climbed to the top of the "Top 40" rock music charts. Patti also got mass media attention when her version of "The Star Spangled Banner" was used during the centennial celebration for the Statue of Liberty—exposure that led to appearances on Johnny Carson's "The Tonight Show," and an invitation to the White House.

Christ didn't appear at the White House or on Johnny Carson's show, but He did appear on the side of a soybean oil storage tank. At least that's what some folks in Fostoria, Ohio, say. Thousands flocked to see the image, which the faithful say is a miraculous theophany and the skeptical say is a rust spot.

## Conclusion

So what was 1986 all about? Like meaning of the cryptic question posed by Dan Rather's assailants, the world may never know. But as Corrie ten Boom said, "Every experience God gives us, every person he puts in our lives, is the perfect preparation for the future that only He can see."

Welcome to 1987. ■



# Church News

## Allegheny Conference



A 50th wedding anniversary celebration was held recently for Ray and Mary Gibble of the **Antrim** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa. The party was hosted by their children, Darrel, Vernice Eshleman, Donna Martin, and a foster son, Martin Gingerich. The Gibbles are founders of Nibble with Gibbles, Inc. Snack Foods, and Mrs. Gibble's Candies and Restaurant. They have filled numerous posts in the church, including deacon, Sunday school superintendent, youth leader, Bible school superintendent, and Sunday school teacher.

"The New Dimensions" from Camp Joy-el planned their opening concert for Jan. 4 at the **Antrim** church. • The drama, "The Silent Church," representing the power of the gospel behind the Iron Curtain, was given Dec. 28 by persons in the **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa. • The **Canoe Creek** congregation, Hollidaysburg, Pa., presented "A Modern Christmas Carol" on Dec. 21.

Mike Martinelli, Director of Youth/Young Adults at the **Carlisle**, Pa., church, presented a seminar, "Should a Christian Rock?" on Jan. 11. The church's annual spaghetti supper/auction was planned for Jan. 16. • Seven persons were received by confession of faith into the **Cedar Heights** congregation, Mill Hall, Pa., on Dec. 28. Rev. George and Ethel Bundy shared news of the Navajo Mis-

sion with the congregation in December. • Several youth from the **Chambersburg**, Pa., congregation went to Camp Freedom, Fla., Dec. 26 to Jan. 2, for work and relaxation.

The Pioneer Girls of the **Clarence Center**, N. Y., congregation recently held a baby shower for the Navajo Mission. • The **Dillsburg**, Pa., congregation had a food shower in December for Rev. David and Margaret Croxford, church planters at the White Marsh church near Baltimore, Md. The play, "Christmas in the Cobbler's Shop," was presented Dec. 14. • The senior highs of the **Fairview Avenue** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., held a 15-hour lock-in to usher in the new year.

A new copy machine, a gift in memory of Frank Cordell, was dedicated recently at the **Five Forks** church, Waynesboro, Pa. • On Dec. 14 the **Granatham**, Pa., congregation's youth drama group presented "Gift . . . Without Price," an adaptation of the O. Henry story, "The Gift of the Magi." • Eight persons were received in December as members of the **Hanover**, Pa., congregation. The congregation instituted a new children's church program in 1987.

The **Marsh Creek** congregation, Howard, Pa., recently welcomed Ralph and Lois Hock as their new pastoral couple. Five new members were received in December. Attendance at the Dec. 21 Christmas program was 220. • Pastor James and Gladys Esh of the **Morning Hour Chapel**, East Berlin, Pa., traveled to Zambia in December. The play, "Women at the Well," was part of the Dec. 14 Christmas program. • Peter Edwards spoke on "How Did We Get the Bible?" on Bible Sunday, Dec. 7, at the **Mt. Rock** church, Shippensburg, Pa.

The December 14 evening Christmas program for the **Wesley** congregation, Mt. Holly Springs, Pa., included a "gift of the heart or time" exchange. Pat Hannigan, Sherkston, Ont., presented a musical package in the Dec. 21 morning service. • Arthur Climenhaga spoke to the **West Shore** con-

gregation, Enola, Pa., on Dec. 7. A love offering was received for missionaries Amos and Sally Kitner, Africa, and Dana and Judy Crider, India. • Groundbreaking ceremonies for the **West Side** church, Chambersburg, took place on Dec. 14.

## Atlantic Conference

Mrs. Jerri Pickel of the Christian Action Council of Lancaster met on Dec. 9 with the Ladies Fellowship of the **Conoy** congregation, Elizabethtown, Pa. She works with the support group, HOPE (Helping Overcome Past Experiences). • The **Cross Roads** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., sponsored a retreat for prayer and spiritual renewal, Jan. 9-11, at Kenbrook Conference Center. • A love offering of needed items was collected in December for COBYS (Church of the Brethren Youth Services) by the **Elizabethtown**, Pa., congregation. Thirteen members were received on Dec. 28. Evie Dehney began a winter discussion group on Jan. 13 on "Being a Woman of God."

The youth of the **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa., presented "A Gift Goes On," Dec. 21 • The **Holden Park** congregation, Orlando, Fla., initiated Sunday evening meetings on Jan. 4 as a study and training time on the theme, "Preparing for Growth." • On Dec. 14, the young adults of the **Lancaster**, Pa., congregation went on a "Christmas Peace Pilgrimage," a 10-mile walk from Nazareth to Bethlehem, Pa. • The **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa., received 23 new members on Dec. 7. Seven were baptized.

Bishop Glenn Ginder spoke to the **Mt. Pleasant** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., Dec. 7, on "Learning to Live with the Lord of Life." The play, "The Carpenter's Christmas," was presented on Dec. 21. • The Women's Fellowship of the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregation sponsored a Japanese dinner on Jan. 17. • The Christmas eve service offering at the **Pequea** church, Lancaster, Pa., was for the Summit View church planting building fund.

Ed Brainerd was guest teacher at the **Refton**, Pa., congregation's young adult retreat, Jan. 23-25 at Blue Mountain Retreat Center. • Ray Hunsberger spoke on Dec. 7 to the **Silverdale**, Pa., congregation about MCC hunger projects and programs. Former Bishop Henry Ginder spoke Dec. 14. • The **Skyline View** congregation, Harrisburg, Pa., enjoyed a family games and movies night on Dec. 28. • Ken Letner of the Board for Congregational Life led several sessions for the **Stowe**, Pa., congregation on Leadership Day, Jan. 31.

## Canadian Conference

The **Bertie** congregation, Stevensville, Ont., recently heard from Bishop and Mrs. Harvey Sider and their daughter and son-in-law concerning their trip to India. • On Dec. 19, the seniors of the **Bridlewood** congregation, Agincourt, Ont., met for lunch and a visit to Christian Blind Mission near Stouffville. • The "Rosebank Brass" participated in a Christmas eve candlelighting service at the **Cross Roads Memorial** church, Guelph, Ont.

The children of the **Falls View** congregation, Niagara Falls, Ont., presented the musical, "Aga-

## Denominational Retreat

# ACCENT '87

## Messiah College, July 6-10, 1987

On the eve of July 6, between 200-250 pastoral couples will converge at Messiah College for our quadrennial retreat.

**Accent '87** is designed to bring personal, family, and denominational renewal. **Accent '87** moves leadership to serve with excellence and integrity. Intentional prayer times, fellowship circles, and workshops are geared to assist the focus of renewal.

Dr. Donald Jacobs, former missionary and Mennonite bishop, anthropologist, and world-wide convention speaker, will be the primary resource person. He comes to share out of his wealth of personal experience.

**Accent '87** is geared to move the denomination forward. Come prepared to be renewed for ministry with excellence.

H. R. Sider, chairman



paopolis," on Dec. 14. Ninety-one ladies enjoyed a Christmas luncheon in December. • Martha Lockwood became Youth Director in January for the **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont. Three members were received in late 1986. • The youth of the **North East Community** congregation, Calgary, Alb., had a Christmas mystery dinner on Dec. 12. "Caring and Sharing" gift boxes were distributed in December.

On Feb. 22, the **Sherkston**, Ont., congregation plans to begin the Chapel of the Air spiritual adventure, "50 Days to Open My Home to Christ." • The **Springvale** congregation, Hagersville, Ont., recently hosted Kevin and Margaret Oates who shared about their missions experiences in Haiti. Parsonage dedication and open house were Dec. 7. • The **Wainfleet**, Ont., congregation's family retreat at Camp Kahquah was planned for Jan. 30, 31, and Feb. 1.

The eighth anniversary of the **Westheights** congregation, Kitchener, Ont., was celebrated recently. The congregation broke ground for a new building in the fall. • Seven construction units suitable for boys' housing have been provided for the Timber Bay Children's Home following the destruction by fire in November of the boys' dormitory.

### Central Conference

Brandon Lehman, newest baby boy in the **Amherst** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, was a participant in the live nativity scene on Dec. 24 while a 20-voice children's choir presented a mini-musical. • The **Beulah Chapel** musicians, Springfield, Ohio, sang the cantata, "Home for Christmas," on three consecutive nights, Dec. 12-14. General Secretary Don Shafer was guest of the congregation Jan. 4. • The **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind., planned a "Let the Church Grow" workshop with Ken Gibson, Feb. 6-8.

Fifty-two people attended the **Dayton**, Ohio, congregation's watch night communion service. Two members were received on Awards Day, Jan. 4. Perfect attendance recognition went to 28 persons. • The **Fairview** congregation, Englewood, Ohio, planned a men's fellowship breakfast and family skating for Jan. 10. • In December the **Mooretown** congregation, Sandusky, Mich., started a "new parents" class for newlyweds, expectant parents, and parents of young children.

A VCR and monitor have been donated to the **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, congregation. The Nashville United Church of Christ Bell Choir participated in A Christmas service, Dec. 14. Pastor Tim Herr led an evening discussion Jan. 4 entitled "Some Facts about Suicide." • The **Sippo Valley** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, received a new member in December. • The **Union Grove** congregation, New Paris, Ind., viewed the film "Empires in the Dust" at their watch night service.

First place winners of the October "Oldly-wed Game" at **Valley Chapel**, Canton, Ohio, were Bishop and Ardis Alderfer. They collected their prize on Nov. 30: a trip to Paris by chauffeur-driven limousine, candlelight dinner in a native Parisienne home, and a tour of historic places including the "awful tower." (Paris, Ohio, is 10 miles from Valley Chapel.) "Hark the Herald Angel" was presented on Dec. 21. • The **Western Hills** congregation, Cincinnati, Ohio, received two members on Dec. 21. The congregation planned a teachers' workshop Feb. 7 with Ken Letner as resource person. Western Hills has initiated Sunday evening services, junior church, and a youth group as of January 1987.

### Midwest Conference

The **Abilene**, Ks., congregation's Sunday school program in December was entitled "Mary Had a Little Lamb." A fellowship hour followed. • The Christmas offering of the ladies' fellowship of the **Bethany**, Okla., congregation was applied toward gift magazine subscriptions for missionaries in Venezuela and Colombia. The children of the congregation presented "Psalty's Christmas Calamity" on Dec. 21. • The **Oklahoma City**, Okla., congregation has purchased five acres of land in the northwest part of the city. Called by Pastor Warren Hoffman "a miracle of patience," the land is paid for in full.

The teens of the **Red Star** congregation, Leedey, Okla., took a pleasure trip to Oklahoma City on Dec. 20. The congregation recently received an offering for the purchase of a copier for Macha

Mission, Zambia. • In December, the **Rosebank** congregation, Hope, Ks., contributed layette items to Fellowship Chapel in New York. Bishop Glenn Ginder planned to visit Rosebank on Jan. 11. • Five new members were greeted by the **Zion** congregation, Abilene, Ks., in late November. On the evening of Dec. 28, Louis Bellon shared about his experience at the Prison Invasion in Kansas City.

### Pacific Conference

The **Ontario**, Calif., congregation had a media presentation on prison outreach on Jan. 14. A Spiritual Gifts and Ministries Seminar was planned for Feb. 7. Gospel artists Ken and Tiiu Washington blessed the congregation with their mix of country and classical music on Feb. 8. • Twelve children and youth, and two adults were

# Witnesses

# of a Third Way



Henry J. Schmidt,  
Editor

A unique evangelism event, "Alive . . . '85" brought together 1500 church leaders from six denominations to boldly proclaim new life in Christ. Rather than simply affirm traditional evangelism approaches, the conference charted a "third way" of Christian witness and proclamation which links the personal and social message of the Bible.

This anthology contains addresses from the "Alive . . . '85" event.

Contributors include:

Myron Augsburger  
James Myers  
Frank Tillapaugh  
John Neufeld  
Don Yoder  
Don Jacobs  
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baptized in late November at the **Pacific Highway** congregation, Salem, Ore. A busy season of Christmas programs included: a day-care center program, Dec. 7; a youth play, "Barren Tree—Barren Me," Dec. 14; a Sunday school program, "The First Christmas Gift," Dec. 21; and an adult program, "If Christ Had Not Come," Dec. 21, by the three adult classes.

After two years of thought, preparation, revised plans, and waiting for city approval, the **Riverside**, Calif., congregation began digging footers for its meetinghouse in late November. Plans were to pour the foundation on Dec. 8 and proceed toward a finished building by June 1987. • The combined choirs of the **Upland**, Calif., congregation and the Mennonite churches of Pomona Valley presented Handel's "Messiah" Dec. 13 and 14, directed by Carl Walters.

## For the Record

### Births

**Anderson:** Kristin, Nov. 25; Janet and David Anderson, West Shore congregation, Pa.

**Book:** Kendra Susanne, Aug. 3; Christopher and Marlys (Schoneweis) Book, Cumberland Valley congregation, Pa.

**Bornemann:** Cecelia Marie, Dec. 18; Jim and Harriet Bornemann, Palmyra congregation, Pa.

**Christophel:** Krystle Jeanette, Dec. 18; Jay and Deb Christophel, Hollowell congregation, Pa.

**Climenhaga:** Nevin Ray, Nov. 26; Daryl and Lois (Heise) Climenhaga, Speedwell Heights congregation, Pa.

**Ebersole:** Jonathan Alan, Dec. 1; John and Mary Ebersole, Speedwell Heights congregation, Pa.

**Ehrisman:** Jordan Raymond, Nov. 16; John and Lori Ehrisman, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

**Fretz:** Adam Earl, Dec. 17; Glenn and Lillie Fretz, Silverdale congregation, Pa.

**Hackman:** Amanda Leigh, Nov. 24; Jerry and Candy Hackman, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.

**Hall-Baker:** Tiffany Melissa, Nov. 26; Winfield and Tina Hall-Baker, Jr., Manor congregation, Pa.

**Hoerr:** Rebecca Sofia, Nov. 16; Jeff and Rocio Hoerr, Amherst congregation, Ohio.

**Hunt:** Angel Alexandria, Nov. 25; Morris and Natalie Hunt, Hanover congregation, Pa.

**Johns:** Emily Elizabeth, Dec. 27; Darel and



One way to contribute to the "Double in a Decade" effort of the Brethren in Christ is apparently being tried by the Green Spring congregation, Newville, Pa. Their Christian education department will have its hands full nurturing the following "baby boomers" and bringing them to the point of their second birth. In fact, the congregation was already so busy that they forgot to send the report of the births to the *Visitor*. To quote their letter, "Maybe you would consider a 'feature' news report and bend the rules for deadlines for news items." So, at the risk of setting a dangerous precedent, here they are (not in the order pictured):

**Coy:** Derek Andrew, Nov. 5; Daniel and Kathy (Alleman) Coy.

**Coy:** Wilbur Thomas II, Mar. 7; Wilbur I and Vivian (Watson) Coy.

**Gamble:** Ariann Elisabeth, June 28; Edward and Christine (Rice) Gamble.

Elizabeth (Wolgemuth) Johns, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

**Keefer:** David LeRoy, Dec. 15; Bob and Tina Keefer, Hanover congregation, Pa.

**Keim:** Joshua David, Nov. 19; Paul and Debbie (Kuhn) Keim, Fairland congregation, Pa.

**Kelchner:** Cory Lee, Dec. 17; Robert and Brenda Kelchner, Elizabethtown congregation, Pa.

**Knepper:** Scott Eric, Dec. 10; Carl and Winnie (Herr) Knepper, Pleasant Hill congregation, Ohio.

**Maresberger:** Hanna Brooke, Dec. 12; David and Pamela (Mackie) Maresberger, Stowe congregation, Pa.

**May:** Danielle Marie, Oct. 26; Jeff and Ava May, Grantham congregation, Pa.

**Miller:** Alan Keith, Dec. 18; Don and Alisa Miller, Hollowell congregation, Pa.

**Oberholzer:** Stacy Ray, Nov. 7; Ray and Carol Ann (Bowers) Oberholzer, Paramount congregation, Pa.

**Patterson:** Dabe Lynn, Oct. 30; David and

**Hock:** David Eugene, Dec. 20, 1985; Maynard and Sharon (Eckenrode) Hock.

**Hock:** Laura Beth, Feb. 14; Douglas and Kathy (Swartz) Hock.

**Hock:** Tyler Ray, Dec. 10, 1985; Randy and Loriann (Swartz) Hock.

**McElwee:** Felicia Marie, July 10; William and Diane (Bradnick) McElwee.

**Redcay:** Daniel James, Feb. 18; Jay and Linda (Mason) Redcay.

**Redcay:** Rhonda Macreth, June 28; Glenn and Linda (Haring) Redcay.

**Rice:** Reuben Nathanael, Jan. 22; Rodney and Sandra (Kelly) Rice.

**Stum:** Brenton Foust, Nov. 27; Lee and Kimberly (Alleman) Stum.

Beverly Patterson, Canoe Creek congregation, Pa.

**Patterson:** Daniel Charles, Nov. 15; Robert and Daryl Patterson, Canoe Creek congregation, Pa.

**Radcliff:** Jonathan David, Dec. 1; David and Lisa (Gerhart) Radcliff, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Ruhl:** Kimberly Noel, Dec. 29; Jeff and Shirl (Spickler) Ruhl, Mt. Pleasant congregation, Pa.

**Shafer:** Kyle Evan, Sept. 6; Dan and Kathy Shafer, Upland congregation, Calif.

**Shirley:** Stephanie Cherie, Oct. 20; Carl and Donna Jean (Warren) Shirley, Knifley Chapel congregation, Ky.

**Sims:** Brittany Leann, Dec. 17; Ken and Doreen Sims, Union Grove congregation, Ind.

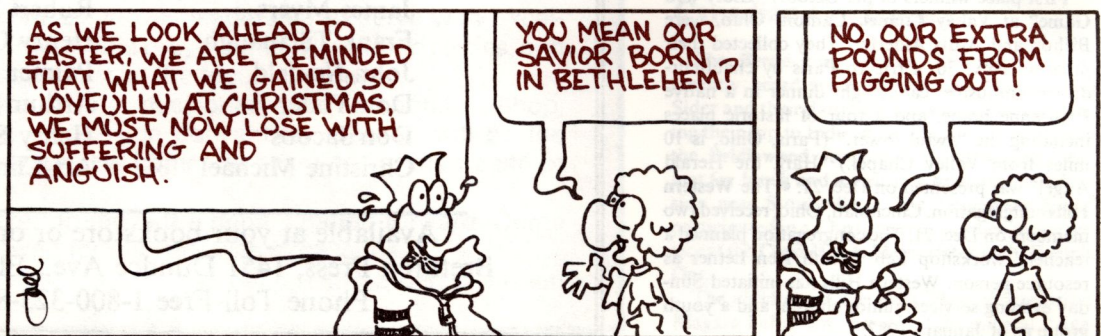
**Smiley:** Lisa Michelle, Dec. 1; Jim and Jodie Smiley, Grantham congregation, Pa.

**Stewart:** Bradley Michael, May 18; Michael and Laura Stewart, Upland congregation, Calif.

**Weatherby:** Ruth Ivy, Nov. 3; Keith and Pat Weatherby, Westheights congregation, Ont.



Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius' Puddle" from the *Visitor* must pay \$5 for each use to Joel Kauffman, 1014 South Seventh, Goshen, IN 46526.





**Wolgemuth:** Michael Benjamin, Nov. 15; Eric and Susan Wolgemuth, Cross Roads congregation, Pa.

**Zimmerman:** Tessa Lanae, Dec. 11; Keith and Cindy Zimmerman, Mechanicsburg congregation, Pa.

## Weddings

**Aldinger-Julian:** Susan, daughter of Glenn and Pat Henry, Washington Boro, Pa., and Anthony, son of Stan and Linda Aldinger, Elizabethtown, Pa., Dec. 20 at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John B. Hawbaker officiating.

**Booker-Carver:** Mary Dianne, daughter of John and Mary Ann Carver, and Craig William, son of Gordon and Doris Booker, Oct. 11 in the Brethren in Christ Church with Pastor Greg Funk officiating.

**Claveau-Lynch:** Marc Claveau, Jr., and Valerie Lynch, Nov. 21 at the Sherston Brethren in Christ Church, Ont., with Rev. John Day and Rev. Phil Keefer officiating.

**Davis-Hess:** Jana Faye, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jay M. Hess, Sr., West Chester, Pa., and Richard Allen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Davis, West Chester, Sept. 20 at the Goshen Baptist Church, West Chester, with Rev. William White-man and Rev. Howard Ruth officiating.

**Hoke-Burkholder:** Linda A., daughter of Alvin and Mary Stake, Shippensburg, Pa., and Leon R., son of Frank and Elizabeth Ann Hoke, Newville, Pa., Nov. 28 at Mt. Rock Brethren in Christ Church, Shippensburg.

**Latham-Nicklis:** Autumn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Nicklis, and William, son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Myers, Dec. 27 at the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church.

**Miller-Myers:** Angie Myers, and Travis, son of Russell and Martha Miller, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 1 at the Paramount Brethren in Christ Church, Hagerstown, with Rev. Jim Stauffer officiating.

**Rhoads-Greenawalt:** Lois, daughter of Frances and the late Ralph Greenawalt, Conestoga, Pa., and Charles D., son of Mr. and Mrs. James L. Rhoads, Lancaster, Pa., Oct. 18 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lancaster, with Rev. Gerald Wingert and Rev. Richard Geib officiating.

**Ryan-Wingert:** Doneta, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elwood Wingert, Greencastle, Pa., and Scott, son of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Ryan, Hagerstown, Pa., Dec. 6 in the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church, Greencastle, with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner officiating.

**Strouse-Kurtz:** Cathy D., daughter of Marlin Kurtz, Williamsport, Pa., and Judith Kurtz, Lock Haven, Pa., and Timothy L., son of Roy Strouse, Mill Hall, Pa., and Dorothy Strouse, Lock Haven, Pa., Dec. 20 in Lock Haven with Rev. John L. Bundy officiating.

**Warren-Eicher:** Kimberly, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Eicher, Springfield, Ga., and Steven Ray, son of Harold and Audrey Warren of Columbia, Ky., Nov. 8, in a lawn wedding at the home of the bride's parents with Rev. Danny McCain officiating.

**Winger-Pike:** MaryJane Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pike, Harriston, Ont., and Douglas Robert, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Winger, Kitchener, Ont., Nov. 28 at the Palmerston Missionary Church, Palmerston, Ont., with

Rev. Claran Martin and Rev. D. E. Illman officiating.

## Obituaries:

**Buckwalter:** M. Lillian Winger Buckwalter, born August 23, 1923, in Ontario, Canada, died Oct. 12 in Conestoga, Pa. Surviving are her husband, Clayton H. Buckwalter, and three sisters. Mrs. Buckwalter was a member of the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church. She served from 1964 to 1968 with a VS unit in Bronx, N.Y., under Brethren in Christ Missions. She also worked for 12 years at the Christian Light Bookstore in Elizabethtown. The funeral took place in Colemanville, Pa., with Rev. W. Dale Allison assisting. Interment was in the Colemanville United Methodist Church Cemetery.

**Dutton:** William G. Dutton, 73, of Mill Hall, Pa., died Nov. 19 in Lock Haven, Pa. Born March 23, 1913, in Jersey Shore, he was the son of Gabriel and Elsie Eck Dutton. Surviving are his wife, Mabel (DeHaas); two stepdaughters; one grandchild; five sisters; and five brothers. Rev. John L. Bundy conducted the funeral service. Interment was in Cedar Hill Cemetery.

**Fernberg:** Harry Clarence Fernberg, 52, of Salona, Pa., died on Dec. 7 in Lock Haven. Born on Sept. 8, 1934, he was the son of Kenneth C. and Lydia C. Butler Fernberg. Surviving are his wife, Evelyn (Whitsel); his father; three daughters, Cathie Rote, Nadine Gorham, and Sherrie M. Fernberg; two brothers; two sisters; and two grandchildren. Rev. John L. Bundy conducted the funeral service from the Yost-Gedon Funeral Home in Lock Haven. Interment was in Rest Haven Memorial Park, Woolrich, Pa.

**Graber:** Fannie V. Graber, 65, born Sept. 22, 1921, died Dec. 20 in South Bend, Ind. She is survived by three daughters: Mary Kauffman, Vera Brewer, and Karen Graber; two sons, Herbert and Ervin; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; three brothers, Raymond, Harvey, and Herbert Kauffman; and two sisters. She was preceded in death by two sons, four brothers, and a sister. Fannie was a member of the Nappanee Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral was held with Rev. Jay Sisco officiating. Interment was in Union Center Cemetery.

**Kipp:** Ezra B. Kipp, 79, born April 21, 1907, the son of the late Abram H. and Ellen Bricker Kipp, died Nov. 15 in Elizabethtown, Pa. Surviving are his wife, Sophie (Strickler); 3 sons, Earl A., Ray M., and Eugene E.; 2 daughters, Betty A. and Janet Ace; 11 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; and a sister. The funeral service was held at the Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church where he was a member. Interment was in the Cross Roads Cemetery.

**Koppenhaver:** Charles A. Koppenhaver, 78, of Millersburg, Pa., died Dec. 12. He was a retired tool maker and a faithful member of the Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church. Surviving are his wife, Christine; 2 daughters, Catherine Bowers and Ada Hanlon; 2 sons, Robert S. and David F.; a sister, Mary Goodling; 14 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren; and 2 stepgreat-grandchildren. Services were held in the Free Grace Church with Revs. C. R. Burgard, Luke Keefer, and Edgar Keefer officiating. Interment was in the Free Grace Cemetery.

**Lindenberger:** Sara M. Lindenberger, 65, born in Brandtsburg, Iowa, died Dec. 16 at Columbia, Pa. Surviving are her husband, George; two sisters; and two brothers. She was a member of the Manor Brethren in Christ Church where services

were held with Rev. John B. Hawbaker officiating. Interment was in Concordia Cemetery, Columbia.

**Mellinger:** Henry M. Mellinger, 95, formerly of Mt. Joy, Pa., died Nov. 18. He was born Nov. 13, 1891. Surviving are eight children: Mary Gish; John H.; Anna Grove; Alvin; Dorothy Byers; Esther Musser; Harold H.; and Glenn. Also surviving are 29 grandchildren, 36 great-grandchildren, and one brother, Daniel M. Funeral services were conducted at Cross Roads Brethren in Christ Church where Henry was a member, with Rev. Dale H. Engle and Rev. Ben E. Thuma officiating. Interment was in Cross Roads Cemetery.

**Neiman:** Donald L. Neiman, 60, died Dec. 1. Surviving are his wife, Ruth N. (Hock); his mother, Alice Neiman; and a brother, William E. of Middletown, Pa. Services were held at the Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church where he was a member, with Rev. Kenneth Hepner officiating.

**Rosenberry:** Rev. William L. Rosenberry, born Sept. 13, 1912, died Dec. 8. He was the son of William and Frances Rosenberry. Surviving are his wife Anna (Timmski); a son, William; two daughters, Roslie Fredrick and Pearl Parks; six grandchildren; three brothers; and one sister. William served as Executive Director of the Calvary Holiness Churches. The funeral service was held at the Calvary Holiness Church in Philadelphia, Pa., with Rev. John L. Rosenberry and Dr. Henry Ginder officiating. Tributes were given by William D. Holtry, Rev. Wesley Howe, and Rev. Daniel Elick. Interment was at Whitmarsh Memorial Park.

**Shreckengast:** Charles M. Shreckengast, 72, of Castanea, Pa., died Dec. 19 in Lock Haven. Born on Nov. 25, 1914, in Tylersville, Pa., he was the son of the late Charles and Mae Moyer Shreckengast. He married Tillie Miller who survives along with one son, Charles E.; three daughters, Sharon Duck, Alice Maffett, and Helen Hoover; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and four sisters. Rev. John L. Bundy of the Cedar Heights Brethren in Christ Church conducted the funeral service. Interment was in Summit Hill Cemetery, Marsh Creek, Pa.

**Shutt:** Norman Elwood "Shorty" Shutt, 76, of Lock Haven, Pa., died Nov. 30. Born in Bellefonte, July 20, 1910, he was the son of Maurice and Hanna Fetzer Shutt. Surviving are his wife, Goldie; 3 sons; 4 daughters; 5 stepsons; 2 stepdaughters; 24 grandchildren; 20 stepgrandchildren; 3 great-great-grandchildren; and 14 stepgreat-grandchildren. Rev. John L. Bundy conducted the funeral service from the Yost-Gedon Funeral Home. Interment was in the Hayes-Fearon Cemetery, Beech Creek.

**Thompson:** Mary Jane Thompson, born Nov. 5, 1950, in Brantford, Ont., died Nov. 27 at Calgary, Alberta. She was the wife of Larry Thompson and a member of the North East Community Church, Calgary. The funeral service was held at McInnis and Holloway Chapel of the Bells Funeral Home with Rev. Allan Hopper and Rev. John Zuck officiating. Interment was in Rockyview Garden of Peace.

**Woodcock:** Gertrude Woodcock, Stevensville, Ont., born Dec. 28, 1916, died Nov. 29. She is survived by her husband, Russell; four children; seven stepchildren; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her first husband and one daughter. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Greg Funk and Rev. Arthur Heise of the Bertie Brethren in Christ Church, Stevensville. Interment was in the Ridgeway Cemetery.



## First came the dream . . .

Six years ago several Brethren in Christ families living near New Holland, Pa., had a dream. In their vision they saw a new congregation in eastern Lancaster County, small at first, but growing.

With the backing of the Atlantic Conference, a home Bible study group was formed in January 1981. By 1982, with financial help by the conference, the group committed itself to the part-time support of a pastor and moved the services to a large basement apartment in a rural home. That small fellowship grew and was established as the Summit View Brethren in Christ Church in mid-1984 when 21 people became charter members.

That fall they once again took a big step forward when they invited a full-time pastor. Rev. Michael R. Blouse and his family arrived in early 1985. His strong ministry has resulted in both numerical growth and increased activities.

Last June I was invited to meet with the Summit View church board to discuss a possible building program. After conducting a feasibility study, I recommended, with some hesitation, that they have a fund drive with a goal to raise \$40,000. What happened after that is recounted here. I have a feeling that you will be humbled, challenged, and convicted to give more generously, even sacrificially, upon reading Pastor Blouse's account of their "miracle." It affected me that way.

by Paul Hostetler



. . . then came

On Monday evening, September 29, 1986, the Summit View Brethren in Christ Church experienced the power of God in a way and to an extent that no human being could have anticipated. We had come together for the fund raising fellowship dinner that was the final step in the fund drive conducted for us under the direction of Paul Hostetler, from the stewardship office. Pastor Dale Allison of the Elizabethtown Brethren Church inspired us with his message entitled "Good Feeling Giving."

We then came to a point in the program when each family was invited to make a faith commitment toward our congregational goal of \$48,000. As I scanned the crowd in the silence that followed, I could sense the presence of the Holy Spirit in a powerful way. I knew that these 17 or 20 families had spent considerable time in prayer, shed many tears, and made significant sacrifices in order to fill out those faith commitment cards. I then closed our evening together by saying, "Miracle Monday has ended, but the miracle will continue."

(The miracle had its beginning several weeks earlier, when our church reached a decision to set a congregational goal of \$48,000. This goal was \$8,000 higher than what the stewardship consultant had recommended. We realized that by all human reason this goal was impos-

sible to reach, and if we would attain this goal, it would be a true miracle of God.)

One week later, on Sunday, October 5th, I was privileged to announce to the congregation that we had significantly surpassed our goal and that God had accomplished a miracle at Summit View. On Miracle Monday the families and friends of Summit View had committed a total of \$82,820 toward our building project. There was surprise, joy, praise, and thanks to God on that Victory Sunday.

Many significant things have come to the surface since that day, but I will share only two. In our small congregation we have about six young people between the ages of 11 and 14. I was impressed that every one of them made a faith commitment toward our goal. Their gifts were not among the largest, but like the widow's mite, they will be some of the most significant and lasting.

Secondly, Summit View had, just six months before, questioned its own existence. We knew that by December 1986 we would either be moving forward or closing our doors. God has moved with great power to bring us the new families we needed and to confirm, by this miracle of sacrificial giving, that God wants a church in eastern Lancaster County.

We are moving forward! By the



# Messiah College News

## Anti-apartheid figures to speak

The Rev. Allan Boesak, one of South Africa's leading opponents of apartheid and president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, has been chosen as the speaker for Messiah College Annual Lectures on Religion and Society. He will be on Messiah's Grantham Campus March 5 and 6.

Boesak, 39, was recently elected to head South Africa's mixed-race Reformed Church, winning the election over incumbent Isaac Mentor. He charges that if white children were being killed in his country instead of black children, President Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher would have done something to stop it long ago.

Boesak will speak at 9:45 a.m. Thursday, March 5, in the college's chapel service to be held in Brubaker Auditorium, and will also give a free, public lecture at 8 o'clock Thursday evening. The following day, he will address students in a Modern Issues and Christian Values class, and have lunch with the International Students Fellowship at Messiah.

The Messiah College Annual Lectures on Religion and Society were inaugurated last February by former President Jimmy Carter, and initiated in April by Dr. Martin E. Marty, a senior editor of *The Christian Century*. The lectures seek to introduce people, issues, and ideas that are involved in the interrelation of religion and society.

Speaking on a similar issue February 13 as part of the Susquehanna Valley Lyceum at Messiah is former South African journalist Donald Woods, who was forced to flee across the border of his country in 1977 when he was arrested and punished without legal process for publishing details of the killing of his friend, young black leader Steve Biko.

Now living in London, Woods has written four books on South Africa, most recently *South African Dispatches*. His altercations with the South African government concerning Biko will be the subject of a Universal Studios film to be released late this year entitled "Cry Freedom," starring Kevin Kline as

Woods and Denzil Washington as Biko. Shot in Kenya, it is being directed by Sir Richard Attenborough, of "Ghandi" fame.

Woods' 8:00 p.m. lecture on Friday, February 13 in Brubaker Auditorium titled "Apartheid and the Tragedy of South Africa," will cost \$5 and \$7.50. Woods is the third speaker in the 1986-87 Lyceum. The last speaker of the season will be NBC "Today" Co-Host Bryant Gumbel, appearing at 8:00 p.m. Friday, March 27.

## College offers speakers bureau

Messiah offers area churches, schools, and civic organizations the use of its speakers bureau, a service provided by members of its faculty and administration.

For a small fee plus mileage reimbursement, persons may obtain a speaker from more than 35 persons and 100 topics to choose from. Organizers of monthly or annual meetings, banquets, conferences, and other functions are encouraged to call or write the Messiah College Communications Office, Grantham, PA 17027, phone (717) 766-2511, extension 227. You may request a free brochure outlining the speakers and topics available, or request a speaker on a specific topic. In either case, requests should be made at least two months in advance of your event.

## Class officers, winter sports athletes from denomination

Steven D. Allison, a freshman premed. major from Elizabethtown, Pa. (Elizabethtown congregation), is the president of the class of 1990.

Two other Brethren in Christ students are serving a class office this year. Winnie Brubaker, an elementary education major from Arcanum, Ohio, (Fairview congregation) is the junior class justice, while Eric Mann, a math major from Elizabethtown, Pa. (Elizabethtown congregation), is the senior class justice.

A pair of freshmen have been on Messiah's intercollegiate wrestling team this season. They are religion major Dallas Baer, Bethel, Pa. (Fairland congregation) and accounting major Duane Hess, Manheim, Pa. (Manheim congregation). Seeing a lot of action with the women's basketball team has been junior chemistry major Becky Kreider, Lancaster, Pa. (Lancaster congregation).

## "Miracle Monday"

by Michael Blouse, Pastor

grace of God we will be in the new church building a few miles south of New Holland this spring. Our miracle is only part of the \$235,000 cost, but God has provided and he will continue to bless us with his presence and his resources.

Our theme for the fund drive—in fact, the theme for our entire ministry—is "Together with God We Can!" It is true: together with God's presence and power, his church can and does accomplish miracles. Praise God!

*"Miracle Monday" came about in spite of the fact that the Summit View people already had heavy commitments to the 1986 operational budget, which included \$3,000 for Cooperative Ministries. And even though the operational load will be heavier when they move into the new building, and their total giving has greatly increased because of capital fund faith promises, these committed people have enlarged their 1987 budget for Cooperative Ministries by 20 percent! This is in keeping with MISSIONS 87. With such a generous spirit, miracles will continue to happen at Summit View.—ph*



# Phoebe's Journal

## "Contentment"

In a Sunday school discussion of covetousness, someone noted that if we could learn to be content with what we have, we would not have a problem with covetousness. That's fairly obvious, but it probably bears repeating once in awhile. The reason it struck me was that I had already been thinking about issues related to "contentment." That brief mention in Sunday school class triggered some additional thoughts.

In the context of thanking the Philipians for supporting him materially, Paul says, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances" (Phil. 4:11), and, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation" (v. 12). Those are strong words. I can't honestly say them all the time. The dictionary definition of contentment refers to being satisfied with and not desiring more than what one has. It also can mean being resigned to circumstances as they are. Satisfaction is good, but I have trouble with resignation. That implies more passivity than I like.

Most people would agree that being constantly dissatisfied is unhealthy and wrong. The classic example is the child who always wants just one more toy, but who is quickly bored with it because there's always something else to want. Such children (and their adult counterparts) need to learn Paul's lesson of contentment and to resist our natural inclinations to acquire more and bigger and better.

But while a state of genuine contentment is something to be desired (and something I need to work on), I think it is possible to use the biblical injunction

to be content as a justification for acquiescing to circumstances which are not good for us or for the world in which we live. The trick lies in being able to distinguish contentment that is real, appropriate, and the result of being willing to settle for less than perfection, from contentment that is passive and unwilling to act to change things that are not right.

Discontent is often a catalyst for necessary change. Most of the great societal reforms were brought about by individuals who were discontent with the way things were and who actively worked for change. Slavery is a good example of a wrong that was righted because of people who weren't content with the status quo. In our day, injustices like apartheid in South Africa, economic oppression in the Philippines, religious and political persecution in the Soviet Union, or hunger in many parts of the world, call for people to be dissatisfied with the way things are and to work for change.

In our personal lives as well, some discontent is appropriate and necessary. I don't mean the discontent that makes us try to measure up to impossible standards or that doesn't allow us to make mistakes. Instead, I mean the discontent that spurs us to give up a bad habit, to learn new things, and to set new goals for personal achievement.

Even the church is a good place for discontent sometimes. It's easy to be too comfortable in our faith and ways of doing things, and to resist change. Sometimes the traditionalists' cry, "but we've always done it this way," is one to heed because the old ways are biblical or work better. But it's also important to

keep our minds open to new possibilities. For example, many Brethren in Christ resist the Cooperative Ministries method of funding denominational ministries, yet it fits the nature of the body of Christ where every part has equal concern for the other parts.

In this journal I don't always sound content; I'm frequently up on one soapbox or another, asking questions and calling for change. Some people react negatively to that, either because they don't agree with me, or because they are uncomfortable with the issues I raise or the feelings I express. I know that there are many in the church who are content with the way things are, or who at least

## Onesimus

Dear Paul,

I just made an amazing discovery. While going through some of your published letters, I was impressed with the way you present your message. Nearly all of your letters begin with a reminder of who you are. For instance, in your first letter to Timothy, you start, "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope. . . ." This kind of opening is many times followed with a note of thanksgiving to God for the person or group you are addressing, and a reminder that they are always in your prayers: "We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers" (1 Thes. 1:2).

The message and admonition you present following your introduction is quite heavy sometimes and often a little hard to accept. But knowing you have the best interest of your reader at heart and knowing the message is from God as revealed to you (Gal. 1:12) makes it easier to accept. The benedictions at the conclusion of your letters remind us of your love and care.

This has been a lesson for me. Many times, as a parent, I am so intent on correcting or disciplining that I forget that my most important responsibility is to love and be thankful for the child God has given me . . . and let him know and feel it. This may account for the uneasy, guilty feelings I have so often experienced after I delivered what I thought was the right message to my children. Then I wondered why it was so badly misunderstood, if it was heard at

## Position Open

Wanted: Director of Stewardship for the Brethren in Christ Church. The Board of Administration is open to receiving applications for this responsibility. It is a full-time assignment to lead in teaching stewardship, encouraging generosity, promoting Cooperative Ministries, and working with fundraising for ministries.

Please send resumes by Feb. 28 to:

Don Shafer, General Secretary  
P.O. Box 245  
Upland, CA 91785

For more information, you may phone him at (714) 946-0088.



don't feel compelled to change anything. I'm not sure what makes the difference between those persons and me. Whatever it is, I believe that we all need each other. Just as I need to be challenged by those who are far more patient and serene and content than I, perhaps there are people who need to be prodded out of their contentment sometimes. The key is balance: developing within ourselves a deep-seated contentment of the sort Paul describes in Philippians, yet having the courage to keep our minds and hearts open to truth in different than usual forms.

Phoebe

all. More than likely, the impression I conveyed was that I felt what I had to say was more important than the person to whom I was speaking. (I sort of felt like that gong and clanging cymbal you spoke of in 1 Cor. 13.)

When we meet people outside the home in business, school, or other social encounters, sometimes we feel it is more important to stand up for our own rights than to risk appearing less "manly" if we act in the spirit of love. It is encouraging to know that you say in Romans 12:10 to "be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves." I don't think many people who knew you and your way of life, both before and after your dramatic encounter with Christ, would consider your affection a sign of weakness.

In 1 Corinthians 13, you tell us that even spiritual attributes, while commendable in themselves, are worthless when performed without love. Your instructions about the importance of doing all things in the spirit of God's love is well summarized in that chapter. The example you show by beginning and ending all your writings of encouragement, admonition, or instruction with words of affection and encouragement make all your writings an example for us to follow.

You probably never meant your epistles to be lessons in letter writing or public relations, but I feel they are good guides to follow.

Onesimus

February 1987

## Editorial

### Thoughts on opening the door

"Brethren in Christ churches surely aren't what they used to be. We've got people with all kinds of names and backgrounds and conditions—and sins! Look how many people we have now with divorce and remarriage histories! Look at the habits and practices some of our members have. You open the door a little and you're flooded!"

Have you heard comments like that? I hear them every now and then—and think them myself sometimes. In my better moments, though, I thank God for this reality, even though it causes some pain and anguish. I weigh this scene against a picture of required perfection. Yes, maybe we are too tolerant in times and places. Probably we should demand more of people in our congregations, be tougher in our requirements for membership. But then, who are we to minister to, the sick or the whole? the righteousness or sinners? (Jesus said some strange things, didn't he?)

A couple of months ago, I was in conversation with a professor who felt called to leave the classroom to minister in a church that was in trouble. A very caring and effective person, this pastor soon had a church filled with people, but they were a nondescript lot. They didn't measure up to the requirements and expectations of the leadership of the holiness church he was serving. These new people didn't dress right, they had unclean habits, their lifestyles didn't measure up. And so, they were not acceptable in that church.

The professor/pastor was in a quandary. He was dealing with people at the point of their needs. They were wrestling with issues such as: Is there really a God? Why is Jesus Christ important? How can I find some meaning for my shattered life? What grounds are there for ethical decision? Here were people who were trying to cross the line from unfaith to a little faith—and he was reaching them where they hurt. The "perfect people" leading his congregation had little time for such "Christians."

The point of my story is that there are fewer and fewer "ideal people" out there who are going to be interested in the gospel. The people who show interest are those who are all messed up—and who have come to realize that fact. The rest don't need God—or us and our religion.

If we are going to evangelize, we will have to take people at their point of need—and sit where they sit and be of some help.

Owen H. Alderfer

*Owen Alderfer is bishop of the Central Conference. These remarks first appeared in the Central Conference Star.*



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# MOVING THE MOUNTAIN

by Wesley Duewel

*Abridged by OMS International, Inc., from Touch the World through Prayer, by Dr. Wesley Duewel, Zondervan Publishing House, 1986. Used by permission.*

Mountains are used in scripture to symbolize strength and stability. They are also used to represent massive difficulties and seeming impossibilities. God promises to move or overcome mountains for his children. There are some mountains which God commands you to move. He will not move them until you give the command. Thus there are two types of "mountains" in scripture.

Some mountains of difficulty are meant by God to bless you. "I will turn all my mountains into roads" (Isaiah 49:11). He leads you in a direction that leads to them. They are for your spiritual good. They may slow down your progress until God's perfect time for answering your prayer comes. They may develop your spiritual muscle, strengthen your faith, and develop your skill in prayer as you learn to prevail until God's answer comes. Some are so massive, so difficult, that they are moved only when several believers unite with you.

These are God's mountains. He will teach you deep spiritual secrets as you face them persevering in prayer. At times you may grow weary as you pray, but at the proper time—God's perfect time—you will reap if you faint not (Galatians 6:9).

But there is a very different kind of mountain also pictured in scripture. Satan often erects roadblocks which become mountains barring your way. The longer you pray about them, the more convinced you

become that the delay is not of God. The more you pray, the more certain you become that you are involved in a spiritual conflict with the demon powers of darkness. This kind of mountain often hinders the work of God and dishonors the name of Jesus.

These are not God's mountains about to become God's roadway. These are demonic hindrances threatening to stop the work of God. You can almost hear Satan taunting you, mocking you; you can almost see him opposing you. But can Satan stop a child of God? Yes, sometimes for a time. Repeatedly he stopped Paul from reaching Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 2:18). But eventually Paul got back to Thessalonica (Acts 20:1-2).

God may permit Satan to delay you in order to work out some higher purpose. But God does not want Satan to stop you. He wants you to move the mountain.

There are many things which happen only through prayer (Mark 9:29). Prayer is undoubtedly included, but in this kind of situation that is not what Jesus emphasizes. He says: "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matthew 17:20, NIV).

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If you would like to purchase a copy of *Touch the World through Prayer* at below-retail costs, please send \$2.00 to Brethren in Christ World Missions, P.O. Box 390, Mt. Joy, PA 17552.

