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Glen A. Pierce

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evangelical

VISITOR

September 1988



The Lord leads
me beside
quiet waters,
he restores
my soul.

The curse that works

by Audie Gaddis

It's been a hard week for Bob. Finishing projects, meeting deadlines, and too many long meetings have taken their toll. As he leaves his office he notices just how late it is. Another 12-hour day. His children haven't seen him since Monday and it's now Thursday. They'll be asleep when he gets home.

And for what? As he drives home on dark streets the lighted billboards and hurried radio commercials remind him of his plight. "Is this all there is?" he questions. "I put in all these hours just to buy the best coffee, live in the best neighborhood, and dress the kids in the best clothes?"

In addition to this, there's more hard news for Bob. If the commercials and billboards don't make him seem like a pawn, then maybe realizing the federal government will spend more in a minute than he could earn in a lifetime will. Or knowing that, like most other workers, he can easily be replaced by someone willing to make the sacrifices on the altar of White Collar Avenue or Factory Lane.

Vanity of work

Bob is not alone. Even King Solomon bemoaned the vanity of our working lives. "What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun?" he asked (Eccles. 2:22, NIV).

What do we get? On the average we will put in over 90,000 hours of "income-producing work" in our lifetime. This equals over 10 years of

round-the-clock labor. Add to this our work at home, at church, and in the community, and we discover we are working creatures. We will give more time to our job than we do to talking with our spouse, playing with our children, or praying to our Lord.

And for many, we work when our body is at the maximum capacity for output—the typical first shift. So when we get home, we're drained and not able to give the same amount of energy to those we love so dearly. Others will work while their families sleep, and sleep when their families are awake—the "graveyard shift."

So what do we show for it when it's all over? Some will go for all the gusto. They'll make a name for themselves. And, if fortunate, their name may wind up in the history books. Maybe they'll be credited with improving the social order, advancing the economy, or they'll be another American success story. They may attain fame and fortune while millions go unnoticed and even millions more starve.

Yet most of us will work a long and sometimes hard life, then die and eventually be forgotten. If the Lord tarries, who will care 100 years from now about the labor I put in to write this article?

God's intention

Is this God's design? Am I only here to put in my 90,000 hours, retire, be replaced, and die only to be forgotten?

In one way it is God's design. In another way it isn't. Back in the garden, God's first command to his fresh-out-of-the-dirt humans was, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill

the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground" (Gen. 1:28).

Or, in my paraphrase, "Get busy, meet my production quotas. Manage the earth, supervise the creatures." God not only created Adam and Eve, he hired them. They were molded to be his employees.

It was an ideal working environment. There were daily meetings with a wonderful boss and A-1 working conditions. And Adam never had to endure rush hour.

Then, to ruin everything, the first labor dispute. Not only were the employees challenged to disobey company policy, they were also led to believe in so doing they would be just like the boss.

Yet God is not one for labor negotiations. In fact, he drew up a new labor contract without bargaining and changed the working conditions forever. No longer would work be simply an act of fellowship with God and his creation. No longer would humans enjoy the perfect job. Instead God told the man, "By the sweat of

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Evangelical Visitor

Audie Gaddis pastors the Dayspring congregation, a new Brethren in Christ Church in Harrisonburg, Va. This article was first printed in the Gospel Herald.

Is fatigue next to godliness?

by Robert J. Douglass

Are you ready for a little quiz? Don't worry, it's not a tough test. In fact you won't even need a pen for this one. Here it goes:

1. In what chapter of Proverbs did Solomon say: "All work and no play makes Christians very happy people"?
2. Where in the Old Testament did God lengthen days from 12 to 24 hours so more work could be done?
3. Is it true that God commanded the Hebrews not to work on the Sabbath in order to punish them with boredom?
4. In what chapter of John's Gospel do we read: "And you shall know they are Christians by their long work days."?
5. Is it true that God pays time-and-a-half on holidays?

I hope you got a chuckle out of this little satire—but don't laugh too hard. As silly as it sounds, many of us live as if we believed these things to be true. We push ourselves to the point of exhaustion "to the glory of God."

Believe it or not God isn't a bit glorified by our exhaustion. Weary, worn-out Christians never have been much use to God. When we're tired, we're grumpy and short-fused. We feel unappreciated, unexcited, and unpleasant. We fail to spend adequate time with our families and our God. In short, when people are tired, they are more susceptible to sin than at any other point in their lives.

What's the cure? One word says it all—*rest*. The need for rest is taught throughout the Bible, from Genesis 2 to Revelation 14. This concept was so important to Christ that he taught it to his disciples. One occasion of this teaching is found in Mark 6:30-32:

The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. (Bold-face added)

The disciples needed a break. They had been going hard all day. A few verses back (6:7-9) we read that Christ had sent the disciples on a

very rigorous field trip. Their mission was to cast demons out of possessed people. On top of that he told them not to take along any food, money, extra clothing—nothing that would give any comfort on the journey.

The disciples had spent the day doing spiritual battle while relying on God for their next meal. They needed to rest. They needed a lesson on restoration. The disciples aren't the only ones. In our hustle and bustle world we could all use a refresher course. Why? Let me give you two reasons.

Rest is following the example of Christ.

If you follow the chain of events through Mark 6, you'll find that the disciples never did take the opportunity to rest. But Christ did. He knew that rest had to be a top priority in his life. In verses 46 and 47 we read:

And after bidding them farewell, he departed to the mountain to pray . . . and he was alone on the land.

If you read on further, you'll find that the disciples fell flat on their collective spiritual face before the day was done. Their tired bodies and minds gave in to hysteria when faced with a storm on the sea they were crossing by boat. The outcome would have been very different if they had followed the example of Christ.

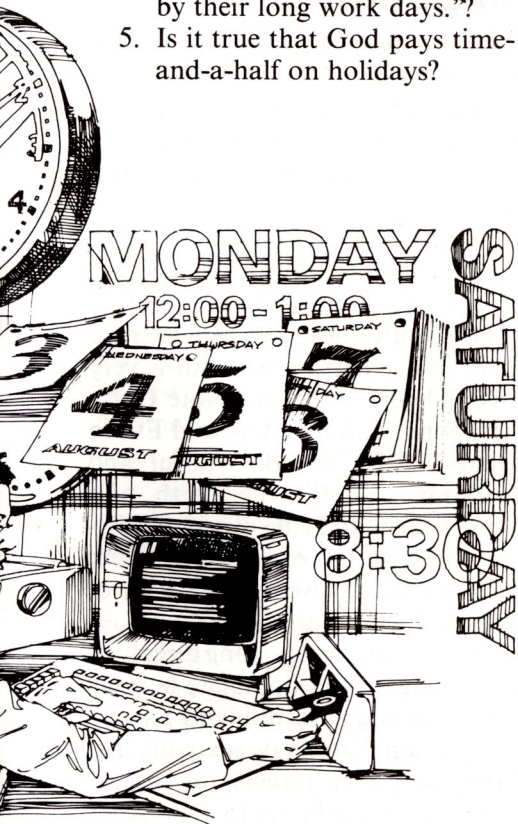
Rest creates a proper perspective on work.

Remember what we read in verse 31? "Because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them . . . get some rest." Was Christ's work all done? No! The people were everywhere. Every time Christ turned around, someone would pop up with a new need, a new problem, a new question. Christ's work wasn't finished—but he brought it to a finish.

Work is one thing that's never done. There's always the next business deal, the next pile of ironing, the

Bob Douglass is a Brethren in Christ church-planting pastor in Cedar Hill, Texas.

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The curse that works . . .

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your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground" (Gen. 3:19).

So immediately work would not just *give*; it would also *take*. Our bodies would agonize and waste away because of it. Throughout history millions would sacrifice their lives to work. And our great tributes to man's ingenuity would bear the blood of the worker. Buried in the Great Wall of China are the many who gave their last breath on the job site. The pyramids, the vast cities, the mines, and the farms are the graveyards of the workers.

Curse and blessing

It's not fair. Why must I spend more time behind the desk rather

Is fatigue next to godliness?

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next class at school. There's no end to it—but somewhere we must bring it to an end. If we don't, our work will control us instead of us controlling our work.

Why do we have so much trouble keeping labor in proper perspective. The answer is found in the creation account of Genesis 1. There we read that God created man with a very strong 'work directive.' Note God's first command to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:26-28: "Be fruitful and multiply . . . fill the earth and dominate it, and rule over every living thing on the earth." God's first two commands were "have a lot of kids and work hard."

At the Fall, these strong directives to propagate and dominate became confused and susceptible to Satan's temptation. Satan saw sexuality and labor as prime targets for attack. After all, where better to plant seeds

than on the floor with my children? Why must I work five days (often six) to get two days off? Why do we work so hard for so little? It's the curse. It's the curse that creates the agony in the labor. Yet work is not the curse, although the curse of work is drudgery, work itself is a blessing.

Somehow God designed us to be incomplete without it. To know God on the Sabbath, the Israelites had to discover God during the other six days—"Six days you shall labor and do all your work" (Exod. 20:9). There was no Sabbath apart from prolonged periods of work.

And in the New Testament I don't find God in the temple or in the desert monastery, but in the workplace. There in the bondage of labor I taste the liberation of Christ. For on the job I can possess a unique relationship with my Lord. On the clock I can sweat for Christ and not for the foreman (Col. 3:23-24). In the midst of a curse I find life.

Likewise, our carpenter-Savior called his disciples from the workplace. Some were fishermen, blue-collar workers; another was a tax-collector, a white-collar worker. Still others were political activists. They were indeed a working lot.

During those 90,000 hours I, too, have a choice. I can curse the toil of my efforts or I can respond to Christ's call for faithful discipleship. I can watch a clock, gripe about the ladder. Or I can, as Brother Lawrence in *Practicing the Presence of God*, see every act of labor as an opportunity to discover God's nearness. Rather than 90,000 hours of monotony I can silently pray as I labor, listen to my co-workers, and approach each task as a chance to create something beautiful for God, my real boss.

It's a curse that works. Work can be an act that robs us of the life we try to enjoy or it can be the means by which we discover life. It's a tool that provides for the needs of my family.

But above all, it's an opportunity to know our Lord who dwelt among the workers and now seeks to meet with us on the job.

Perhaps if we see the workplace as another place to meet with God, we'll also be sensitive to his voice. If all the Bobs of the working world will open their ears to their true supervisor then they may hear a voice saying, "Go home. Cease worshiping your job. Spend time with your family." For our true supervisor, Jesus Christ, has hired us for other tasks as well. And in these various tasks we meet with Christ in new and exciting ways.

We'll also see that we don't work to obey the demands of the billboards and commercials. Rather we work to respond to the call of God who desires to meet with us. It's a curse that works. ■

of evil influence than where man's impulses are the strongest?

Satan didn't waste time finding ways to use labor to draw man away from God. Nearly every sin mentioned in the next 10 chapters of Genesis are work related. Cain's sin was rooted in the difference between his labor and Abel's (4:2). Noah gets drunk after working in his vineyard (9:20-21). The tower of Babel, Nimrod the great hunter of men, the list goes on.

In Mark 6 Christ helps his disciples refocus on a proper perception of rest. Remember what he said? "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." In this verse Christ makes four statements which outline his philosophy of rest. Let's look at each one.

First, "come away."

Christ's advice to his disciples was, "break away from the routine and take a recess." This was a hard thing for the disciples to do. For the first time, this band of fisherman had felt real value in their labor. They

were freeing people from Satanic bondage. They were ready to take on the world. They didn't want to break for a breather. But Christ knew better. He knew that failure to rest would ultimately lead to a failure in faith. The first point in Christ's philosophy of rest is *recess*.

Second, "by yourselves."

The Greek word here means "privately." Christ's advice was, "Get away from the daily restraints and learn to relax." Get away from the people and events making demands on your life. Develop a lifestyle of rest separate from your lifestyle of work. The second point in Christ's philosophy of rest is *relaxation*.

Third, "to a quiet place."

Here the Greek word means "deserted," "abandoned." Christ's advice was, "get away by yourselves for some private reflection." Find some place where you can talk to yourself and no one will hear you but God. Find time for some self-consideration and self-evaluation. Christ's third point is *reflection*.

Fourth, "get some rest."

Slow down—forget all concept of time. When you rest, don't go, think, or even feel anything in a hurry. Let the power of rest renew and recharge you for the work ahead. The fourth point in Christ's philosophy is, "*replenish* your strength through rest."

I believe that there are five leisureless sins: (1) a poor sense of humor; (2) focusing more on what we don't have than what we do have; (3) unrealistic expectations for ourselves and others; (4) failure to spend quality time with those we love; (5) failure to reflect on God and his goodness to us.

What causes these sins? A failure to rest—a failure to recess, relax, reflect, and replenish our strength. Follow the example of Christ and make rest a top priority in your life. Everyone in your life will benefit from it. ■



Paul Schrock

On your own

by Joe Sherer

True freedom is not necessarily being able to do whatever we want to do, but being able to do what we know we ought to do. Jesus Christ came to the earth to set people free. In the very beginning of his ministry he stood in the synagogue in his own town. He began to read words from Isaiah 61:1-2 which had been prophesied about him: "The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Jesus was talking about giving people freedom to rise above their circumstances—freedom to really be what they ought to be. He said, "I came that they might have life and that they might have it abundantly" (John 10:10). In other words, he came to free people to live lives of fullness. Jesus wants us to be free, to be what we were created to be.

Adapted from a speech given at the Annual Singles' banquet at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church. The author pastors the Mount Joy (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

But right there is where disagreements arise, where the arguments begin. The disagreement is over what we ought to be. It's interesting to notice that those people in Luke only minutes before were saying, "Such a nice young man. Isn't it wonderful that he could come home and read the Scripture?" Minutes later, after Jesus read those verses from Isaiah, those very same people rose up, grabbed him, dragged him out of the city, and attempted to kill him.

What brought about that sudden change in attitude? As Jesus commented on those words that he read from Isaiah, he made it very clear what he thought God wanted those Jewish people to be. But what they thought God wanted them to be was a very different thing. It seems there is always disagreement among people over what ought to be. If there are five people, there are probably six opinions. What I think is right for you is probably very different from what someone else may think is right for you, and you would probably disagree with both of us.

So we're all different! Let's recognize that being different often can be

very painful, especially when you hear most other people around saying that they are right and you are wrong. It's not easy. For example, I am left-handed. Being left-handed in a right-handed world is not easy. Using an overhead projector, for example, just doesn't work well for me. No sooner do I write something, than I smear my hand right through it. Knobs on radios and televisions always turn the wrong way. Scissors work backwards. I have to shift gears with the wrong hand.

Well, being different often is not easy at all. But I believe that Jesus came to free us so that people can be what they ought to be even if that happens to be different from what most other people are. God, you see, is the one who determines the "ought to"—not other people.

The singles' plight

For example, not everyone thinks the same way about singleness as a lifestyle. Experiences and expectations differ as to what ought to be. And, of course, Mom and Dad want grandkids. Family members put pressure on us. Or we see friendships

deteriorate simply because someone has been married, or divorced, or widowed. Suddenly, it seems as though there is a wall between us and the people who have been our friends for years.

What effect does all of this have on the single person? After a while it is very easy to begin to wonder whether God has forgotten us, cut us off, or abandoned us. Why does he ignore our pleas for help? Doesn't he know the loneliness that we sometimes feel? Can't God understand the rejection that we feel in a society which caters to pairs rather than singles? Can we trust God? Sometimes we singles may feel as though we are living in exile, like strangers who don't really belong. We may ask, "What is God's plan for me? Is this it? Will things never change?"

To complicate things further, some married folks around us wonder, what is wrong with them that they haven't been married? Do they have some kind of weird personality trait? Are they too set in their ways—headstrong, if you will—to yield to the desires of a companion? Are they running from responsibility? Are they just selfish? They must have all sorts of free time, and that burns me up! Why does she look at my husband that way? Why don't singles get married the way God wants them to? That's what runs through the minds of at least some married people. And we don't have to hear those kinds of comments for very long until we begin thinking, what's wrong with me and where is God in all of this?

Now it's true that some single people never feel any of this, and most singles hardly ever do. But it happens. It's not easy to be different. And the world has been giving us singles the message that we are different, even though today 49 percent of the adult population of our country is single. Yet society still looks askance at those of us who eat our cereal solo.

God's response

How does God respond to people who are feeling the kinds of things that you and I sometimes feel about our singleness? What word does the Bible have for those who may feel at times as though they are living in exile? I would like to remind you of God's response to a group of people who were doing just that—living in exile—not just in the exile of social stigma, but in actual physical exile.

For some reason Jeremiah the prophet was allowed to remain in Jerusalem when all of the upper crust of the Jews was carted off by the Babylonians. So Jeremiah, who was prodded and prompted by the Lord, wrote a letter to all of his good friends who had been forced to leave and were carried off. We get to read their mail in Jeremiah 29.

Here was the situation. Jerusalem was in ruins; it had been ransacked and reduced to nothing but ashes and rubble, including the sacred Jewish temple. For all realistic purposes, there was no longer a Jewish homeland. These people had lost

their sense of identity. Other people around them had robbed them of their freedom to be what they knew they ought to be. Does that sound at all familiar to those of us who are single? The Jewish people weren't where they wanted to be, but they couldn't do a thing about it. They were alienated from their families and split from their friends.

As far as God was concerned, as they thought about him, I'm sure it seemed to these people that he had, indeed, cut them off and forgotten about them. Why was he ignoring their pleas for mercy? Then, too, in the midst of the Jews there were false prophets who offered their own ideas, but claimed to speak in the name of the Lord. Instead of helping, these false prophets only made matters worse.

The Jews didn't realize that God did have a plan for their lives. From their perspective, life was hopeless with virtually no reason to continue. Sometimes the pain which singles feel is just as real and brutal as the experiences of these exiles.

Like a true prophet, Jeremiah started his letter with "thus saith the Lord." Through Jeremiah, God said, "I know what you are going through, but here is what I want your response to be." God didn't dwell very long at all on the problems that they were facing. He focused on what their response would be to their problems. The people who received that letter had a choice to make. What would it be, self-pity or commitment to going forward and making the very best of things?

God's message was, "I want you to get on with life and make the most of what you have. Build houses and move into them. Quit moping. Plant some radishes and tomatoes. Put out a peach tree. Instead of being negative, try to see just how positive you can be. Be the kind of person that other people like to be around." Furthermore, God said, "I want you to pray for the welfare of the city in which you live—even though those people carted you off and treated you very unfairly. Pray for them and return good for evil.

"When false prophets try to give

Even though 49 percent of the adult population of our country today is single, society still looks askance at those of us who eat our cereal solo.

you a different story than what I am saying, to make you discontented with what you have, just ignore them. I have not cut you off or forgotten you. I am not playing games with your life. I am still your loving heavenly Father. I have very good things planned for you. You have every reason to live in hope. As you continue to live each moment to the fullest, and call upon and seek me, I will listen to you and become closer to you than I have ever been before. I love you."

And my friends, that is God's message to those of us who are single. The sad truth, however, is that many Christians don't believe that.

The singles' response

In Luke 11:27, Jesus is teaching and preaching. He stopped to catch

his breath. A woman in the crowd spoke up and said, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breast at which you nursed." In that woman's understanding, Jesus' mother Mary was blessed simply because of her biological function as a woman.

Let's stop viewing our singleness as the prelude, interlude, or postlude of our lives.

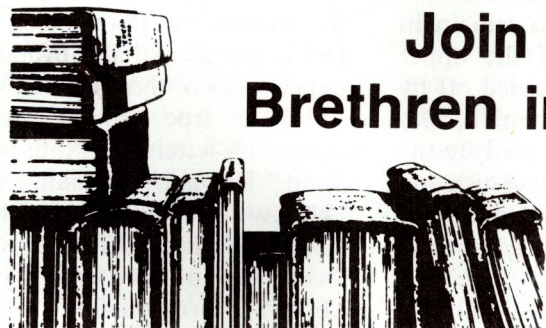
It is interesting to notice how Jesus replied, "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it." In other words, blessedness in the kingdom of God springs from a living relationship with God. Instead of focusing on whether we are single or married, our focus ought to be on godliness.

I believe that marriage is a gift from God. Singleness is also a gift from God, and no less a gift. The Apostle Paul tells us that there are a variety of gifts. Different people have different gifts. According to 1 Corinthians 7:7, that includes the gift of singleness. In fact, I think that Paul is saying that it is a greater gift than marriage.

Have you ever stopped to consider the fact that the better someone knows you, the greater the likelihood that if they give you a gift, it will be an appropriate one? Who knows you better than God? God does not give shabby gifts. It is God's will for many people to be single.

I hope the people who criticize the unmarried realize what they are doing. They are encouraging you and me to be discontented with God's will for our lives. Perhaps they are, in a sense, our false prophets. People shouldn't assume that all singles want to be married, or that all of us who are single are single by choice. God is the one who orchestrates the plans for our lives. If we are obedient to him, then the timing and everything else is up to him.

My message to spry, spirited, springy, special "springles" is let's stop viewing our singleness as the prelude, interlude, or the postlude to our lives. It's not the warm-up before the race. It *is* the race! It's the talent which God has given us to invest for his kingdom. At least for now. Others may not always understand us. Believe me, some people will never understand us, but they are the ones who are handicapped, not us. You see, God's message is this: "I want you to live, to get on with life, and to make the most of what you have." What project have you been waiting to start until you get married? Whatever it is, start it today. Why wait?



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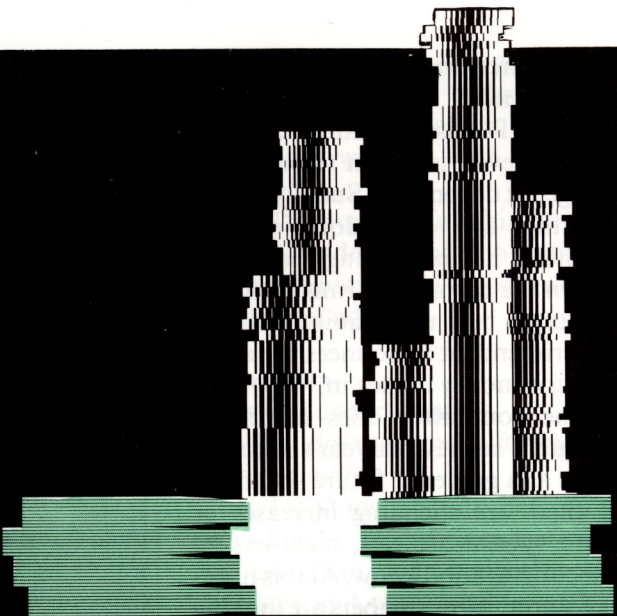
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Christian Education:

How will you budget for next year?

by Anne Neufeld Rupp



Come with me for a few moments. We are going to visit several churches. It is budget-setting time, and some of the education committees are in session.

Curriculum costs more at Pleasantville

At Pleasantville, the three-member committee is meeting for the first time this fall. This church of about 60 adult members, most of them over fifty, has two adult classes and one children's class. The committee is part of the general budget, but when special projects come up, it relies on additional donations.

The older classes study the Uniform Series, which keeps budget expense relatively low. In the children's class, teachers usually pay for resources, films, and supplies, but the committee pays for all curriculum. The church pays the children's camp fees and summer Bible school expenses. Thus the budget of this committee is mostly curriculum, camp, and equipment. Because of a budget crunch, the committee has been asked to keep the budget at last year's level.

At this meeting, the superintendent has a concern. "I just got a letter saying that the curriculum for chil-

dren is going to cost 6 percent more next year. What do you think we should do?" she asks.

"It's good material," says one of the members. "Let's not change because of the cost. Instead of buying the new record player for the children, let's use the money to pay for the curriculum."

"I don't think we should short change the children," says the third member. "Let's tell the trustees what's happening. If they won't increase the budget, let's just ask church members. I know they'll give us extra to cover it."

Problem: This committee does not

—Set goals.

—Plan for growth.

—Assess needs.

—Look at other education options besides Sunday school.

Junior high room needs paint in Rock Plains

At Rock Plains, a committee of six is meeting. In addition to the superintendents, and a secretary-treasurer, a youth sponsor is present. The librarian attends occasionally to hear and express needs.

Rock Plains is a young congregation. It has about 120 members, most of them under 40. There are about 75 children in the elementary department. A strong education program has been developed for both children and adults, which tends to draw new members. At present, it offers adults a Uniform Series class and three elective courses which change each quarter. In addition to Sunday morning, the committee also plans and pays for some other educational events, most of them planned for Sunday afternoons.

This committee has set up a well-stocked resource center and pays for all curriculum, resources, and films. Adults who attend the elective classes pay for their own books and keep them. The library receives its budget from the education committee.

Quarterly teacher training sessions for elementary teachers are also paid for by the committee. In addition to this, it pays for half of all camp costs

Four different approaches to building a budget for Christian education. Are any like yours?

Anne Neufeld Rupp is currently director of Christian education in the First United Presbyterian Church, Newton, Kansas.

for children and all summer Bible school costs.

Rock Plains education committee, however, is not in the church's budget. It depends on Sunday school offerings and extra donations for running its expanding program. When the committee runs short, or wants to buy new equipment, the superintendent announces the need, and the money comes in.

The committee does not set a budget. The previous year's expenses serve as a guide for future spending. If there are spending increases or some special projects, members let the congregation know. At this meeting, committee members are looking at last year's expenses, and the present balance.

"Looks like we're in good shape," the superintendent says.

"If we've got all that money, couldn't we paint the junior high classroom?" says the elementary superintendent.

"That's such a large class," says the assistant superintendent, "Let's do something special for them!"

Problem: This committee does not

—Set goals.

—Make long range plans.

—Assess future needs. (Junior highs will be in the youth class next year, but youth program is weak.)

—Evaluate its ministry in relation to budget.

Looking at a VCR at First Church

At First Church, five education committee members are meeting. This 300-member congregation has 60 children. About 200 adults and youth attend Sunday school. Occasionally, a class may decide on a book study, but most classes use the denominational material. The committee covers the cost of the latter. Youth select their own material, and the committee pays for it. Children use the denominational curriculum. Facilities and equipment for children are adequate. Resources are often limited, so teachers may supplement some of these. In addition to Sunday school expenses, the committee pays for summer Bible school.

This committee is part of a unified



church budget. The superintendent has worked out an effective cost per student across the board, allowing for annual increases in cost. This makes annual budget setting a simple procedure. Usually, the superintendent presents this budget to the committee, members evaluate it and make a few minor changes. This year, however, the elementary superintendent who has just come back from a workshop, is making the work harder.

"We haven't bought any new equipment for three years," she says. "Why don't we budget for a VCR? There are so many things we could do with it. That's what they said at the workshop."

"I don't think that's necessary," says the secretary-treasurer. "Children watch far too much TV as it is!"

"That would be a big budget increase," says the adult superintendent. "Can we afford that?"

Problem: This committee does not

—Set new goals, relative to present situations.

—Plan for growth or expanded ministry.

—Allow itself to try new things which could involve increased budget.

—Think through long-range ways of meeting major budget items. (They could have planned to buy a VCR later after budgeting for one and rent one as needed until then.)

Who pays for films at Trinity?

At Trinity Church, a twelve-member education committee is meeting. Trinity has 750 members, including youth, and 80 children. It has numerous adult classes. Some are grouped by ages and some are not. Most of them study either the Uniform Series or denominational materials. In recent years, the education committee has begun expanding its program. Three or four elective classes are now offered each quarter for those interested in more variety. Class members may pay for and keep the books in these classes, but are not required to do so. The education committee pays for all adult curriculum and books.

Several youth classes study denominational materials, and these are paid for by the committee. In addition to this, the committee pays for all curriculum materials for children for both Sunday morning and midweek classes, which run from October to March. A cradle roll program is covered by the committee, as well as special events such as Children's Day programs and Teacher Appreciation Night. In addition to this, the committee covers summer Bible school costs and half of all church camp expenses.

Trinity is expanding its present program. Costs for quarterly teacher training are covered by the commit-

Take time to assess your programs and ministries. Are they doing what they're supposed to be doing? Are they necessary? Do they need to be adapted or changed? What would it cost? Never run a program just because it's always been done.

tee. A youth superintendent elected a year ago coordinates all youth and college-age programs and classes. This includes two annual teacher/sponsor training events and leader resources. (Training events for adults twice a year are also pending). The committee covers all these costs. A superintendent for family life ministries has also been added during the past year. As needs emerge, the committee gives financial support. In addition to this, the committee has begun sponsoring the development of a nursery care program.

This education committee is not part of the church budget. It depends on offerings from the various classes to cover its costs, and two congregational worship offerings per year. (Children's offerings go toward mission and service projects.) The chairperson uses bulletin inserts to keep the congregation aware of what it costs to keep the educational program running.

Supplies in general are adequate. The committee tends to be more program-oriented than equipment-oriented. Its greatest limitation for expansion at present is lack of physical space.

At tonight's meeting, the chairperson has presented the budget to the committee. The budget includes an estimate of some of the fixed costs such as curriculum, camp, and

summer Bible school. All other areas are lumped under the heading "General."

The midweek superintendent is asking a question. "I never know whether there is money to rent films or something like that. Are the teachers supposed to pay for these?"

"That comes out of the general fund," says the chairperson. "Tell them to give the bill to our treasurer."

"But how much can they have? Can we pay \$50 for film rental for a class of eight?"

Problem: This committee does not

- Assess ministry needs prior to budget planning.
- Give various department superintendents responsibility for setting their own budgets.
- Invest in adequate equipment because the programs emerging are using up the finances available.
- Plan for future budget needs, not only in relating to programs now emerging, but also other expansion areas.

A vision to include all persons

Well, we're back from our visit. What do these four visits say to you?

1. Churches come in many shapes, sizes, and ways of doing things. (Your education committee may fit into one of the illustrations, or somewhere in between.)

2. Not all education committees are part of a unified budget.

3. The vision of committees may determine whether new ministries emerge.

4. The concern for children may at times undercut the importance of strong educational programs for youth and adults.

A line item for every department

What does this mean for budget-setting time?

1. Don't just assume that you set your budget according to last year's budget. Plan your budget around ministry, not your ministry around the budget. Earlier in the year, pray with your committee and look toward the future, anticipating the new areas of growth and ministry that may occur. Set goals for what may be accomplished within the next year. When budget-setting time comes, make this a line item in your budget.

2. Give each superintendent, adult, elementary, and others the responsibility of planning a budget for his or her specific department. If each department has a line item in the budget, the superintendents know what and where they may spend their budget during the coming year.

3. Make sure you budget for adequate equipment and resources for teachers. Ministry can be only as effective as the tools we offer the teachers and leaders. Plan an ongoing line item around equipment needs, so that you don't incur several major expenses within one given year.

4. Take time to assess your programs and ministries. Are they doing what they're supposed to be doing? Are they necessary? Helpful? Do they need to be adapted or changed? What would it cost? Never run a program just because it's always been done.

Yes, it's time to plan for next year's budget. I've given you a few things to think about before you begin the process. Now I'll stop talking, and give you time to reflect and meditate.

Leadership qualities in church planters

by Coe Neil Cabe

Double in a decade! What a vision for the people of the Brethren in Christ! In order for doubling to occur, we will need not only more people in our churches, but also more churches. The role of the Board for Evangelism and Church Planting is the establishment of those new churches, as well as the renewal of existing ones.

And, the people required to build commitment in our existing churches must have the same sort of qualifications as the ones uniquely called to plant new churches.

What are the qualities of leadership required of church-planting pastors? What kind of persons must they be? And what does the Bible say about who they are?

I did a survey recently of existing church plantings, and one of the questions I asked was this one: "What personality traits, qualities, and qualifications must a church-planting pastor have?"

Fifteen different traits emerged from the questionnaire, and six of them were repeated by many of the respondents. Each of the six is firmly based in biblical truth, and each applies not only to church-planting pastors, but to all pastors—in fact, to all Christians, as we grow to be more like Christ.

1. *Calling of God.* Peter was called from his nets, Matthew from his counting table, Paul from a life of persecution. Christ has called us all to his side, to serve him, to love him, to be guided by him. Jesus taught us that we are called to present the gospel to all the world (Matt. 28:19-20), and the office of pastor is but one vehicle for that presentation. There is no louder proclamation of the name and work of Jesus Christ than the life of an individual believer. The church-planting pastor, beset continually by financial problems, relocation, family adjustments,

and the entrepreneurial aspects of his or her ministry, must be confidently sure of a calling from God. This leadership qualification was mentioned more often in the survey than any other.

2. *Sacrificial commitment.* Lucien-Carol Proulx, from the Centre de Fraternelle Chrétienne in Loretteville, Quebec, put it this way: "Ne pas avoir peur de s'impliquer dans la vie des gens at dans leurs problèmes; avoir une transparence devant les autres et le Seigneur." Translating roughly, Carol says the church-planting pastor must not be afraid to involve himself in the life of the people and in their problems, and must be transparent before the others and before God. It is impossible, Carol continues, to love others and to protect oneself at the same time. We must be vulnerable, we must sacrifice our sense of self, and commit ourselves to those we are called to serve. When Jesus says, "My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives . . ." (John 14:27), the original languages may give the sense of "relinquish"—that is, I relinquish my own peace for your sake. The successful church planter, the successful pastor, and the committed Christian, will make themselves vulnerable, transparent before God and the others, and will willingly relinquish their own peace for the ones they are called to serve.

3. *Patience.* The old joke—that we all want patience, and we want it right now—is not really so funny. Consistently, church planters told me patience was a key to any successful ministry. It is also one key to the Christian life. Growth in both ourselves and our churches is laboriously slow, and that is as it should be. Patience is a fundamental requirement. The writer of the Book of Hebrews teaches us clearly that we need patience, so that after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise (Heb. 10:36), and further that we all must ". . . run with patience the race that is set before us. (Hebrews 12:1 KJV)" Without patience, no ministry

will prosper, no church planting succeed, no Christian really ever mature.

4. *Christian love.* Jesus said, "My commandment is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:12-13). The church-planting pastor is called to lay down his life, for friends he has yet to meet. As Christians, we too are called to lay our lives before the others. It is only out of this deep agape love that ministry may grow and prosper, and no church planting can endure without it. So many of the new friends we make in churches have been hurt by churches, by "religion"; and each new friend must be gently loved back into the arms of a waiting Savior. Without love, Paul teaches us, we are nothing. Without love, our churches are nothing.

5. *Vision.* Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) is probably the most quoted verse of them all in church-planting circles—indeed, in all churches concerned with growth. "Where there is no vision, the people perish!" Someone in a leadership position must be able to envision a church where there is no church, to see with godly eyes a congregation where there is none, to smile within himself or herself at an altar filled with hearts reaching out to God where no altar exists. And, within any growing congregation there must be those whose vision includes Sunday schools, mission boards, sewing auxiliaries, youth groups, Bible quiz groups, and on and on. Where there is no vision, the people—and the congregation and the church planting—perish!

6. *Courage.* Some called this "spiritual maturity"; others said perseverance. Ultimately, I think it boils down to a deep sense of the abiding presence of God, knowing that tribulation works patience in us, that God will never leave us nor forsake us, that he is with us always. Joshua 1:9 speaks clearly to the church-planting pastor, to the Christian, and to all church leaders: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Without the maturity to realize that trials are not catastrophes, that setbacks are not failures, that crises are not final, no church planting, no church, no Christian, will ever become all that God intends them to be.

Qualities for leadership in church planting are the same qualities needed for both church leaders and growing Christians: a sense of the calling of God,

Coe Neil Cabe is the pastor of Peace Chapel, Ravenna, Ohio.

Christian love, spiritual maturity, vision, and the willingness to reach for sacrificial commitment.

David and Patti Miller, pastoral couple at La Communion Chretienne Nouvelle-Vie (New Life Christian Church) in Quebec are fulfilling their commitment as church planters, and they have great news to report!

David reports a 50 percent increase in attendance at services over last year, averaging 38 persons each week in a highly Roman Catholic community.

Dave has begun a part-time teaching position in Quebec, teaching Greek, which provides wonderful community

outreach for the kingdom of God. And, their church represents the first set of solidly evangelical Christian leaders in Quebec City!

As the Millers have become more deeply involved in the life of their own community, the joys of watching young Christians grow, of witnessing reconciliation, of sharing in the joy of new life in others, have filled their lives. David's ministry continues to include a great deal of one-on-one discipleship.

In that, he has found one idea that really works! Spending time with and staying close to those who are young in the faith, and taking time to answer questions which are often repeated, brings solid ministry to the church.

When I asked Dave about needs for

the ministry, he lamented the lack of high-quality, French-language, evangelical materials, and mentioned that an IBM-PC and printer would make it much easier for them to prepare their own!

And their vision? More years in Quebec, and a larger facility in the near future fill their prayers. David said, "I have learned to look at the heart" of those with whom he comes in contact. Heart to heart, they move on for the kingdom of God.

And here is one piece of news from the Quebec church planting—the Millers are expecting a Thanksgiving baby! Patti is well, and both Lauri and Jesse are looking forward to a baby sister—or brother! ■

From truck driver to trail blazer

by Stuart Kelly

In 1956, Orvin White was driving a tractor trailer for Burlington Industries. Since then he's been truckin' for Jesus. He retires July 31, 1988, leaving behind 28 years of pastoral ministry and several new churches.

Rev. White had first sensed a call to preach six years earlier, shortly after his conversion. He'd accepted Christ during a Sylvatus, Va., tent meeting organized by Pastor Paul Wolgemuth and preached by Rev. Hess Brubaker. Later Bishop C. N. Hostetter baptized Orvin and Colleene in Big Creek near the Farris Mines Brethren in Christ Church.

Like Jonah, however, Orvin fled from full surrender to God's travel agenda. Finally, during a Burlington run into Ohio, his truck cab turned into a fish's belly. Fumes, leaking up through the floor, overcame him. Barely conscious, he staggered from the tractor. Local police saw him and thought he had been drinking, until they finally realized what had happened.

Rushed to a local hospital, Orvin lay on an emergency room bed and prayed.

Rev. Stuart Kelly is the pastor of the Highland Park Community Church, Dublin, Va.

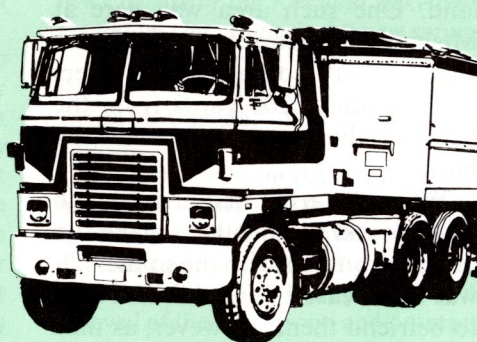
"Lord, if you'll just let me live to see Virginia and my family again, I'll serve you wherever you want."

Orvin kept his word, trucking family and belongings off to Messiah College in 1957 for ministerial training. Two years later, they landed in Massillon, Ohio, where he took the last remains of a dying downtown congregation and established the Amherst Community Church.

Husband, wife, and two children hit the road again in '63, back to their southwest Virginia roots. There Pastor Orvin pioneered Valley View Brethren in Christ Church in Roanoke, driving a truck again for three years while he visited prospective families and waited for water and sewer lines to reach church property.

An hour's haul down Interstate 81 led to yet another church planting, and in 1974 Highland Park Community Church was born in Dublin, Va. That congregation has grown steadily and recently expanded their facilities.

In 1980, the veteran truck driver broke new ground again, this time at Blue Ridge near Roanoke. And in 1984, this blossoming group merged with the



Valley View congregation, making him pastor of the newly named Ridge View Brethren in Christ Church.

After 28 years, the numbers—churches, conversions, baptisms, weddings, etc.—pile up, except for one. This preacher's had only one wife. For 42½ years, Colleene Richardson White has followed him from truck to truck and pulpit to pulpit, through a total of 20 moves.

Their two daughters—Ina and Katrina, and five grandchildren, Kimberly, Kristal and Kevin Bushong, and Dustin and Alicia Cole—live near them in the Roanoke Valley.

One of Orvin's proudest accomplishments is his "planting" of preachers. Present pastors Calvin Hamblin, James DeBoe, Woody Dalton, and Stuart Kelly all felt significant influence from him in their decisions to enter the Brethren in Christ ministry.

The retiring reverend hasn't renegeed on his '56 promise. "I may be leaving the pastorate," he assures, "but I'll never stop ministering."

Or, one supposes, driving trucks.

Learning an unnatural love

by Deeve Boyd

Jan recently berated herself for being a poor example of a missionary. I was taken aback by her statement, but her perception was indeed correct, and applied to more than just herself.

You have probably read or heard of the tragic late November killings of 16 whites in Zimbabwe, an incident which occurred about 35 miles northwest of Mtshabezi. The whole country was put on edge; as a result, the government deployed the army into key areas throughout Matabeleland. One such area was here at Mtshabezi Mission. Accordingly, we have a small company of soldiers camped about 200 yards from the back of the house in the nearby bush.

When the army first arrived, Jan and I found it difficult to make significant contacts with the soldiers. It was much easier to avoid them than to befriend them. However, as time went on and contacts continued, we learned that these also were men for whom Christ died; they needed to know our Lord as much as do the Ndebele people with whom we work—

as much as we ourselves do, for that matter. Jesus' words in Luke 6:31ff hit us hard:

You must practice dealing with others as you would like them to deal with you. Now if you practice loving only those who love you, what credit do you get for that? Why, even notorious sinners practice loving those who love them. And if you practice doing good only to those who do good to you, what credit do you get for that? But you must practice loving your enemies, doing good to them, and lending to them, despairing of nothing . . . continue to be merciful . . . stop criticizing others . . . stop condemning others . . . practice forgiving others. . . .

We find it easy to love the Ndebele, but we find it difficult to love others who are, for one reason or another, different. Jan became tearfully aware of this great deficiency in her life, and I too was made to recognize my inadequacy. This set me to thinking that such an attitude not

only characterized my life here, but similarly existed in the United States. I readily loved and gave to and witnessed to the loveable. But what about that neighbor who was always irritating, that overly demanding patient, that selfish relative, that egotistical acquaintance, that social-climbing friend? It is unnatural for us to openly love others who as individuals are different from us. It is unnatural for us to love others as Christ has loved us; but then, do we allow the Spirit to correct our habits? What kind of missionaries, what kind of disciples, what kind of followers of the Master are we anyway?

Four years have now passed since our arrival at Mtshabezi, and one thing I now know for certain: I still have so much more to learn. And Jesus still desires to teach! I have only scratched the surface of being one who can truly be called by his name—a Christian, Christ's one. The opening lines of an Ndebele hymn states, "*Ngiguhambi, ngigumfokazi*, meaning, "I am a pilgrim, I am a witness." A lifetime of learning lies ahead for those who desire the Way.

Deeve and Janice Boyd and their four children have returned for their second term of service in Zimbabwe, where Deeve is medical director at Mtshabezi Mission Hospital.

Two fall institutes focus on conciliation

The Mennonite Conciliation Service is sponsoring two fall training institutes at its headquarters in Akron, PA in October. The first of the institutes, Interpersonal Conflict Skills, is scheduled for Oct. 10-12, 1988. This institute will be an introduction to conflict management and mediation skills, with a focus on the mediation of interpersonal conflicts. The second institute, Group Conflict Skills, is scheduled for Oct. 13-14, 1988. This institute will focus on group facilitation and mediation of group conflicts, and is designed for persons who already have a basic introduction to mediation skills. The institutes are scheduled within the same week, so that participants may attend them as a unit. Trainers for the institutes will be Ron

Kraybill, director of Mennonite Conciliation Service, and John Paul Lederach and Alice M. Price, staff associates with Mennonite Conciliation Service. Ron is an internationally known mediator and trainer, and is the author of *Repairing the Breach* (Herald Press). John Paul recently returned from a year and a half in Central America, where he was involved in mediation training and has continued to be instrumental in negotiations between the Sandinista government and the Miskito Indians. Alice joined the Akron staff this spring, following several years of practice as a mediator and attorney in Colorado.

The registration fee for the Interpersonal Conflict Skills Institute is \$225.00 and the registration fee for the Group

Conflict Skills Institute is \$150.00. Combined tuition for the two institutes is \$350.00. On-site housing and meals are available for institute participants, at minimal cost, and some tuition scholarships are also provided. In addition, college credit through Eastern Mennonite College can be requested. Similar arrangements with other higher education institutions may be pursued, as desired.

Registration is limited to approximately 30 people, so early registration is encouraged. For registration forms or additional information, call or write: Alice M. Price, Mennonite Conciliation Service, 21 So. 12th St., Akron, PA 17501 (717) 859-1151.

God at work in our world

London ministry snapshot

Curt Byers—London, England

Our Friday night evangelism team consists of a Zimbabwean, an American, and a Malaysian couple who are ethnic Chinese. Kenny speaks Cantonese and a Malaysian language; Anna speaks Mandarin Chinese. Their common language is English. One night Kenny and Elias McMoyo knocked on a door, and it was opened by a Chinese woman. She looked at Elias and then at Kenny standing behind him. She looked over Elias and asked Kenny in Cantonese what it was that Elias wanted. Then began a witnessing encounter which lasted almost two hours.

Later, Kenny and Anna asked a friend of theirs, who was traveling to Singapore, to buy this new Chinese friend a devotional book written in Cantonese. I went with them when they visited her to deliver it. She was so surprised and pleased that anyone would have had a book brought from Singapore just for her. She asked us in, and I drank tea while listening to a conversation which was totally incomprehensible to me.

A teenage daughter of the family entered the room and said, "Excuse me," in London-accented English. When I expressed my relief at finding someone else who spoke English, she responded, "You're American?" and she asked why we were there. Over the Cantonese conversation in the background, I shared the gospel. On a later visit, she became a Christian. Since that time, she has begun bringing two Christian friends from school to our Bible studies.

A panorama of church growth

Pramod Roul—Orissa, India

Bringing greetings to the 1988 General Conference body from the church in Orissa, Lowell Mann explained that Bijoy and Pramod Roul were students at Allahabad Bible Seminary when Bill and Mary Hoke were teaching there. Now they are active in evangelism among the animistic Khondo people. Pramod is director of the work; the Board for World Missions supports six of the nine

evangelists who were under his leadership in this state. Their living situations are simple; officials are militantly Hindu. But the church is growing in both numbers and maturity in this seemingly hostile environment.

We praise God because we are living in a promising world which is not an illusion, but is real. God is constantly reminding us to be holy as he is holy. He also commands us to reach the unreached, as his day is at hand. We thank you for your prayer support for our ministry. This newsletter will give answers to your prayers and will make your burden greater for his Church.

Gudari is one of the three regions into which we have divided our work. Brother Abraham Lima is supervising this area of eight villages. He lives with his family in Gummi village, which has the oldest established church in this region. There are 64 members who are growing well in faith, in the Word of God and in prayer life. Many young boys and girls sing to the Lord with new songs and have taken up the challenge to witness in surrounding areas. Through the adult literacy program, 10 young people have learned to read the Bible.

In Buripader village, 15 families are living. Three of these families are new believers, five are taking baptismal classes and much prayer is needed for the rest.

Brother Ashok Pradhan is staying in the Bokagudi community. Of the 30 families who live here, all but two have accepted Christ. Twenty persons are taking the special Bible classes for baptism. Others are taking literacy classes. But these people are encountering great opposition. Prayer is greatly needed.

The Nuagado region is supervised by Brother Daniel Naik. Here there is a Brethren in Christ church center and a health center. One evening while Brother Daniel was passing through the forest he came face to face with a tiger at a distance of only five or six feet. The Lord saved him from its mouth. Thank the Lord for his hand of protection.

The work is growing well in this region of six villages. In Gunjiguda village every one of the 12 families has accepted Christ, but only one has been baptized. Brother Solomon Mali is lead-

ing a special Bible class in preparation for baptism.

In the Nayagarh region, Brother Prakash Nayak is looking after seven villages. The work is going more slowly here. Brother Nayak needs to find a place to live near to his work in these villages. Prayer is needed for contact persons and for new believers.

God has shown himself powerful in miracles of protection, miracles of healing and other signs. One night the Nudruguda villagers heard the church bell ringing, but they could not explain it from human causes. After that incident, they gave more time to worship.

Reciprocity in ministry

The following is excerpted from a news release of the Kirkland Lake congregation, Ont., Canada this past spring.

We have heard it said, "Some day they will be sending missionaries from Africa to Canada." Now it is about to happen.

Rev. Moses Munsaka, a product of missionary work in Zambia, will be holding one week of revival services at the Brethren in Christ Church. The week of May 1-8 will emphasize both renewal of the local group and outreach for those who are interested in learning about the Christian life.

Rev. Munsaka has been attending Emmanuel Bible College since September 1986. His wife Elisah and their two daughters, Fannie and Dumisa, joined him in November 1987, sponsored by some Canadian friends. They will accompany him to Kirkland Lake, where he will serve as guest evangelist before returning to Zambia.

Several years ago, Rev. Munsaka spent a year in the U.S. on a visitor exchange sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee. This program required that he serve in two different six-month living and working assignments.

Between his visit to the States and his study in Canada, Brother Munsaka served as an evangelist for the Brethren in Christ Church in Zambia. His ministry has been influential in bringing people to the Lord. He has been deeply appreciated by the various congregations to whom he has ministered.

The Moses Munsaka family returned to Zambia soon after this week of ministry at Kirkland Lake. They have been assigned to pastor the Chilenje South congregation in Zambia's capital city of Lusaka. ■

Tentmaking missions:

Using the international job market for the glory of Christ

by John A. Holzmann

Richard Matthews, a former missionary to Korea, tells of asking his four-year-old son what he wanted for his birthday.

"I want a wallet!" said his son.

"A wallet? Why would you want a wallet?" Mr. Matthews asked.

"Because that's where money comes from!"

Says Matthew: "Too often, nationals look at missionaries much as my son looked at a wallet. A missionary is a source of material blessings. Having a missionary in your community means having money. Missionaries give the local economy a wonderful boost."

Matthew suggests that there is a problem with the traditional Protestant approach to missionary support. Missionaries who receive support from "back home" have a difficult time providing a good model of Christian stewardship.

National Christians never see a Christian leader work a "normal" job to earn his keep. They never find out where all the money comes from, and so they never learn what their own responsibility is in the missionary enterprise.

The effects are devastating to indigenous ("native-run") missions.

There is another problem faced by traditional missionaries. Forty coun-

tries of the world are "closed" to missionary work. Forty countries—some even in the so-called "free world"—refuse to grant missionary visas. These countries account for almost half the world's population.

How are these people to be reached? The national Christians can't do the job on their own. They need help from outside. But how can outsiders get in?

Determined to open the doors and provide better models of stewardship, a growing number of mission leaders have determined to promote the use of a different support structure than that used by most Protestant missionaries during the past 200 years. They are recommending self-support.

From Abraham the herdsman to Paul the tentmaker—and on down through the ages—self-supporting missionaries have made their mark on the world in which we live.

Though the Apostle Paul welcomed the prayers of the churches with whom he was in contact (Rom. 15:30ff; Eph. 6:19f; Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:3; etc.), he accepted "support" in only a few special circumstances (Phil. 2:25, 30; 4:10-18). He met most of his needs himself by making tents (Acts 18:3; 1 Cor. 9:6, 12-15; 1 Thess. 2:9).

Today there is not as large a market for tents as for other goods and services. Yet a missionary who supports himself is called a "tentmaker" in remembrance of the example given by Paul.

The potential for self-support is fantastic.

Working for large, multi-national corporations and for themselves, for the U.S. government and for the governments of the countries in which they work, teaching school or pursuing studies they could not afford in the U.S.—at any one time, over four million Americans are employed outside the U.S.

Many of these people are found in the 40 countries where conventional missionaries cannot work!

But while well over a million Americans hold jobs right where the church needs to be planted, most of them have nothing to do with planting churches.

Even among the estimated 200 to 400 thousand evangelical Christians in "closed" countries, fewer than one percent are doing anything at all to spread the gospel.

Yet the idea of using the international job market for the glory of Christ is catching on. Christians are being encouraged and coached and counseled and trained to seek God's

From Abraham the herdsman to Paul the tentmaker, self-supporting missionaries have made their mark on the world in which we live.

Reprinted from Mission Frontiers, April/May/June 1985. Used by permission. For more information about tentmaking opportunities, write or call: Brethren in Christ World Missions, P.O. Box 390, Mount Joy, PA 17552, (717) 653-8067 or 2519 Stevensville Road, Stevensville, ONT L0S 1S0 (416) 382-3144.

kingdom while working in distant countries.

An executive with an electric power utility who was a leader in a Baptist church in Detroit went to Taiwan for six months. He and 40 other power executives from America had been asked to project the future power needs of Taiwan.

Mr. D. H. worked diligently on the power survey during the day. Every night after work, he took a Chinese executive from the Taiwanese power utility out to dinner.

There in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, he was able to share in-depth concerning things he was able merely to hint at during the work day. Without knowing Chinese, having only six months to work in Taiwan, Mr. D. H. made an impact that was still being felt 10 years after he left.

Says Ruth Siemens, one of the premier advocates of tentmaking missions and founder of the two largest counseling and job referral services for tentmaker missionaries:

A lot of people have the idea that any Christian working to support himself overseas is a tentmaker. This couldn't be further from the truth.

A tentmaker doesn't merely hold a job overseas. He has the same motivation Paul had. He is consciously involved in doing all things in such a way that by some means some may be won to Christ (1 Cor. 9:22).

With that kind of motivation, opportunities for witness will be found.

Personal motivation is by far the most important ingredient in the make-up of a successful tentmaker, yet there are other attributes that lead to success.

The first thing one needs is a job. That's basic. And to find such a job, a referral agency is almost indispensable. Few people know where to look or have the time to do the research necessary to find their own positions.

On the other hand, agencies like Global Opportunities and Overseas Counseling Service have job listings in thousands of categories.

The possibilities are almost beyond imagination. Jobs have been found for teachers, violinists, engineers, photographers, tennis players, mechanics, carpenters . . . you name it.

"Besides providing job location services, we guide potential tentmakers into the kind of educational opportunities and skill-building experiences here at home that will prepare them for effective service overseas," says Siemens.

According to her, a tentmaker needs Bible and mission training "as good as, and perhaps better than, that of the average missionary."

More importantly, a tentmaker needs to develop and use ministry skills at home. "Friendship evangelism and home Bible studies are the building blocks of effective church planting."

Siemens believes people are misinformed about the kinds of opportunities a tentmaker can expect. "People have the idea that a tentmaker doesn't have the time to witness, that there's no time for effective evangelistic work.

"Well, it's true you're not like traditional missionaries. Your time isn't going to be spent in the same manner. But the time is there nonetheless.

"We're talking about lifestyle evangelism, evangelism in all of life. The way you conduct yourself at work; your dealings with people; your personal relationships—they all have an impact.

"And of course, you must speak up. But people are interested in what you have to say. They will ask you

questions—and they will listen when you talk."

Don Hamilton, Director of Research for Overseas Counseling Service, tells the story of a man in a "closed" country who was accosted one afternoon by three fellow employees. "We've been watching you," they said, "and we're wondering why you're so different. . . ."

"He didn't answer their question on the spot," says Hamilton, "but he invited them to his home and had a wonderful time sharing with them the gospel of Jesus Christ. . . ."

There's another crucial element in equipping Christians for effective witness in other cultures.

"A tentmaker should not plan to 'go it alone,'" says Siemens. "He needs the support and encouragement a group can offer.

"We encourage people to work as 'field partners' with a mission agency already at work in the area where they intend to settle, or else to team up with a local national church, or become a member of a fellowship of tentmakers."

There are other services from which a tentmaker can benefit.

Says Siemens: "A lot of Christians go overseas neither expecting nor receiving adequate prayer support for carrying on an effective Christian witness. We coach tentmakers in ways to develop a prayer team.

"Then, too, it's helpful to receive a little inside information on what to expect when you reach the country to which you are going. We can provide that kind of data." ■

39 Brethren in Christ women in resource listing

The 1988 *Resource Listing of Menonite and Brethren in Christ Women* is now available from MCC. This directory includes the names and brief résumés of more than 500 women in the United States and Canada (including 39 Brethren in Christ women) who are willing to offer their services and gifts to the service of the church and larger com-

munity. Program planners, administrators, and nominating committees will find the list useful for locating women to serve as speakers, resource people, and members of boards and committees.

The listing is available for \$2 to individuals, and free to institutions. Write to MCC, 21 S. 12th St., Box M, Akron, PA 17501.

The past speaks to the present

by Donald R. Zook

Brethren in Christ missions efforts in the past have been exciting and, for the most part, very successful. God has proven himself faithful, and the Lord Jesus Christ has changed lives as people have committed themselves to him. God has enabled the Brethren in Christ as a denomination to accomplish her stated purpose in establishing fellowships of worshipping believers and to proclaim the gospel to all people.

God has been good. At the end of 1980, after eight decades of missionary endeavor, there were 8,255 Brethren in Christ members overseas who could be identified as members in local congregations. At the end of 1987, this number exceeded 20,000. According to the summary totals of members in various countries, there are now more Brethren in Christ Church members overseas than there are in the United States and Canada. What a great cause for rejoicing! The Lord has given the church in North America a great opportunity to assist, equip, and train national church members who are zealous and eager to evangelize.

As we look back with gratitude at our great missionary heritage, we can benefit from the examples that have been set and the lessons that have been learned. We can move forward with new resolve and understanding. In the following sections we will explore some of the characteristics that have marked those who have worked with Brethren in Christ World Missions.

Passion for souls

The word *passion* has different connotations in our modern era, but there is no mistaking its meaning as

Donald Zook is executive director of the Board for World Missions.

we remember its primacy in our missions efforts. It was passion that gripped Rhoda Lee as she made those initial pleas to reach the lost at two successive General Conferences. It was passion that gripped the hearts of Bishop Jacob Engle, Sister Frances Davidson, and the other members of that first team who left North America for the continent of Africa. Down through the years, missionaries with a passion for souls left family and friends to serve overseas. And that passion today motivates national Christians in at least 12 countries to witness to family, friends, and neighbors as they evangelize.

Intercessory prayer

Nathan Strong states, "By prayer the hand of God is moved, the hearts of kings are changed, immovable doors are swung open, hearts of stone are softened to receive the gospel, and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ goes on."

Prayer is promoted and practiced in the Missions Prayer Fellowship (MPF) meetings in local congregations. Each day hundreds of World Christian Intercessors pray for specific requests as they intercede for missionaries and national Christians. And they praise God for answers to requests made in previous months.

As we look back at our great missionary heritage, we can benefit from the examples set and the lessons learned.

Intercessory prayer is one of the reasons the Brethren in Christ have grown so remarkably in overseas countries. Prayer changes conditions and increases the effectiveness of both missionaries and national believers.

Nearly 2,000 years ago our great master said, "Ask and it shall be given you." "Ye have not, because ye ask not." "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." We must persevere in specific, earnest prayer to see the work go forward, obstacles removed, and the lost brought to Christ.

Surrendered sacrifice

During the first seven decades of our denominational missions effort, our missionaries in Africa and elsewhere served overseas at great financial sacrifice. They received missionary allowances designed to provide a standard of living on the subsistence level. Even today all our missionaries during their first term of service receive an allowance and not a salary. Today many of our missionaries and full-time national church leaders receive stipends much lower than they could earn in the professions for which they are qualified.

Many of these testify their ministry is a privilege and not a sacrifice. As we lay our *all* on the altar as living sacrifices, we are prepared to rejoice in deprivations as we serve our living Savior.

Generosity

Perhaps partly because of the fact that our denominational missionaries serving both in North America and overseas were serving cheerfully and enthusiastically on small incomes, the Brethren in Christ over the years have contributed generously to our mission programs. The Brethren in Christ have maintained a missions program far beyond the size which would be expected in light of the size of our North American constituency. Much of this giving has come from family members and missionaries who served sacrificially in their earlier years.

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The embraceable bond

by Amy DeGraff

It was Monday. Fourteen American cross-cultural students were waiting anxiously beside a white, sturdy van in Zimbabwe, Africa. The sun was pressing its warmth upon our pale backs as we made light conversation. The van doors were opening. We were ready to begin an adventure that would not only change our lives, but the lives of those around us.

Questions invaded my inquisitive mind as we began our journey out of the city and into bush country. What would Matopo Brethren in Christ Secondary School be like? How would I get along with my African counterpart? I looked out the back window of the van and saw dwarfed bushes pass by. The countryside was green, quite a contrast to the dirt road upon which we were travelling. The steady metallic rattle of the van doors kept rhythm to the beat of the bumps as the van surrendered to road potholes.

The sun was making its westerly descent when we arrived at Matopo Secondary School. My eyes travelled the barren, vacant scenes around me: dirt roads, tall grass, sloping mountains and a single row of homes. My eyes settled on one home in particular. This was the home of an American family who had lived at Matopo one year. It was here, they informed us, that we could come for refuge and bathroom use.

Our adventure continued as we travelled the dusty road to the girls' dormitories. The night was still as we got off the van. I looked up into the African sky, amazed by the numerous stars which lit up the charcoal sky. We walked a few steps to the metal gate which separated the girls' dormitories from the rest of the

campus. Inside this enclosure American life would end for me and African life would begin. I anxiously walked straight ahead. To my right was the brick dormitory where I was to stay eight days. I swallowed hard and walked into the room. There to greet me was Patricia Nzana, my African roommate.

We smiled shyly at each other. She took my suitcase, placed it upon a scratched wooden table, and offered me a seat on her bed. My eyes toured the room in intense curiosity. Four beds placed beside each wall bordered the small confinement. A white, torn piece of material hung over the one window, looking like a mast. In the left corner was a wooden closet without doors and a few dresses filling the single metal rack. Insects paraded the dim light bulb hanging from the apex of the roof. Observing the cement floor and smudged blue walls, I couldn't conceive of eight days here. Patricia's woebegone room reminded me of a basement cellar as did the other student dormitories which we toured next.

The first night I laid atop my sleeping bag and gazed up at the roof which came alive at night with buzzing insects. Covering my feet was a fine film of dirt. Smoke penetrated my lungs as the lit insect coil exhaled fumes of intoxication. A moth the size of a butterfly circled the dim light. I pulled my sheet closer around my head and tried to fall asleep as attacking insects infiltrated my tense thoughts.

Those first few days at Matopo were filled with different and challenging experiences. Early morning I watched as the African students came streaming out of their dormitories, carrying orange and blue buckets to a roofless metal outdoor shack. Draping their clothes over the side of the shack, they took a sponge bath, serenaded by the jangle of cow bells

and whinnying goats. It was a surprise to me that the students acted so nonchalant about bathing outdoors. You are not going to catch me out there, I told myself.

Patricia and I parted ways in the morning, she to her classes and I to join my co-students for days of working and touring. We did not see each other often those first few days except for evenings. It was then that I got to know Patricia and her culture. One evening Patricia was dissecting a grasshopper for her biology class. As I walked into the room, her petite body was bent over the wooden table in intense concentration. Her only light was the dim light bulb placed up high on the triangular roof. I gave her my flashlight to use. Carefully and dexterously she probed the insect's body, neatly setting aside removed body parts. In her soft voice, she asked me which part was the heart. With heads together, we probed further, never finding it. The only dissecting I was accustomed to took place in a lab setting. Direction books were always provided which not only pictured the body parts, but gave step-by-step directions on how to dissect.

Our relationship continued to grow as Patricia and the rest of the African students went on day trips with our group. Patricia and I stuck together as we climbed up rocky mountains to view cave drawings. We both admired the colorful lichens on the rocks which resembled round blotches of paint. Another day we visited an African village whose backyard consisted of a 12-acre garden amply supplied with sugar cane. We laughed together when she handed me a stalk and I attempted to take off the outer skin sliver by sliver. Patricia made it seem so simple when she took it from my hand, bit off the top layer of skin with her teeth, revealing a pencil-thick cream colored filling. My taste buds were filled with delight as I chewed on this sugary middle. It was the next best things to licorice.

Patricia was constantly exposing me to different aspects of her culture which were unfamiliar to me. One day we visited an outdoor crafts

Amy DeGraff, from Painesville, Ohio, graduated this spring from Messiah College with a B.A. degree in Behavioral Science.

shop. As Patricia and I walked from table to table, she delighted in showing me the many straw baskets, wooden carvings, and kinds of jewelry. When we came to a table colorfully adorned with grass bracelets, Patricia asked me to choose one of my liking. Picking up a red and green one, I held it up for her to see. She nodded her head in approval and took a coin out of her wallet to pay for it. This deed of kindness honored me, for I knew her money supply was limited. To show my appreciation, I tried to wear the bracelet whenever we were together.

Patricia gave of herself in other ways. One evening I came into our dorm room late at night and noticed the insect coil lit. Each of us students had been given an insect coil that we could burn at night. Detesting the

insects in our room, every evening I would faithfully light the coil which would burn until morning. This particular night, however, the coil was not burning on the floor as usual, but attached to a piece of chewed gum on the wall. I laughed aloud upon seeing this piece of coil so creatively affixed. Patricia must have caught on that I abhorred insects, especially the monster-like spiders which seemed glued to every wall. Their legs resembled spikes that might reach out and grab a helpless victim.

As it was nearing our time to leave Matopo, I was growing accustomed to this challenging lifestyle. It was exciting to wake up early in the morning as orange was coloring the sky and walk outside in the refreshing coolness to wash my hair under

the spigot. I even mustered up the courage to take a bucket bath in the outdoor enclosure. It wasn't as bad as I had imagined. Day by day I was beginning to treasure my relationship with Patricia, particularly when I attended classes with her for a day. Patricia seemed to enjoy learning. As we sat in chemistry class, I observed her neatly copying experiments from the blackboard. When the American teacher asked questions to the class, Patricia raised her hand, answering correctly in her soft British accent. We sat in a study room together after class. She took out her thick biology book and we discussed her favorite section. I quizzed her on book questions and we laughed together when she could not remember an answer, and I would give her verbal hints. I was

The past speaks . . .

continued from page 18

We are living in a changing world. Missionaries now understand that God challenges all his people to consider the benefits of generous giving. These truths should not be limited only to missionaries and their close family members. In this age of affluence and extravagance, we are called to a higher spiritual ministry of purposeful, generous, and cheerful giving.

Leadership training

In Zambia and Zimbabwe, national church leaders utilize the opportunity to prepare for spiritual ministries both as church-sponsored and lay leaders. In each country the Brethren in Christ also send both students and staff to evangelical interdenominational Bible colleges. Some are also preparing for higher leadership positions by obtaining Messiah College degrees both in Kenya and Pennsylvania. Nearly one-third of Brethren in Christ pastors in Nicaragua are presently engaged in full-time study in order to minister more effectively. Most of our full-time church servants in India have taken residential Bible Institute or seminary programs.

Some of the most enthusiastic evangelism is accomplished by students sent out to evangelize while they are still in school.

Nationals, when properly equipped, can often reach their own people more efficiently than overseas missionaries. In several cases, it appears that the program is more effective when a team of national workers and missionaries is involved.

In a time when governments in many parts of the world are unpredictable, leadership training of nationals must be carried on with increased vigor. National churches are being encouraged to develop their own constitutions and organizations. They must be prepared not only to survive but also to grow, even if missionary visas are not renewed.

Conclusion

As we look back on 90-plus years of missionary activity, what can we learn in order to be more effective today? Our experiences, representative of thousands of missionaries and national workers, show us the keys to successful work in the present. A passion for souls, intercessory prayer, surrendered sacrifice, generosity, and leadership training have

been keys to successful ministry both overseas and in North America.

As we review these characteristics and apply them to our present ministries, we will be driven once again to the end of our own resources and will again realize that our sufficiency is in our Lord alone. And Jesus, our Lord, who has promised to build his Church, will continue to work through the Brethren in Christ. We will then be able to greet him with joy at his coming.

I overheard one of our missionaries, recently returned from Zimbabwe, make the following statement as he taught a Sunday school lesson in his home congregation. He said, "God loves us the way he finds us. But he loves us too much to leave us that way." He wants us to know and sow and go and grow.

During my first missionary furlough, as I attended a literature workshop at Moody Bible Institute, I heard Harold Street say, "If your Christian literature methods and programs worked well last year, they are not good enough for today." We can learn from the past. But we dare not lean on our past efforts or our past successes. We make our commitment to a risen and living Savior. ■

glad she was doing the learning and not me.

My last night at Matopo came upon me like a heavy weight. I entered the dorm room and emptiness greeted me; not a sound pervaded the atmosphere. I went over to my suitcase and there lying on top was a purple envelope with my name printed neatly in the middle. Written at the top of the envelope was "Keep me always." I hastily tore open the envelope and began reading, "I know that it was due to God's will that we met in this country, I will be missing you always. If God wills we will meet somewhere in the world." Tears welled up in my eyes. I was touched that our friendship had meant so much to her.

As we lay in bed that night, neither of us could sleep. I closed my eyes as scenes of the last eight days produced melodic strains of pleasant memories. I remembered my apprehension the first night. I had wondered if I could last eight days. Patricia interrupted my reflections as she began to pray aloud for my safe journey home; her words reflected her perception of God's goodness in bringing us together. Silence. Patricia's voice again emanated from the darkness. "Please sing that chorus you sang in church the other day." My voice chimed with the other American student in the dorm in a chipper chorus. Silence. My voice: "Patricia, please sing us an African chorus." As the Zimbabwean students' sweet voices softly sang a lullaby, I felt at peace. When the song ended my calmness suddenly turned to sorrow. I might never see Patricia again. Would we still be friends many years from now.

The next morning, Patricia insisted on lugging my stuffed suitcase the quarter mile to the van. We had our picture taken one last time and then it was over—those eight days filled with challenge, amusement, and a precious friendship. We hugged each other. Then she turned to walk back down the dusty road to class, and I turned to get on the van. Our physical lives parted, but our spirits were meshed together in an embraceable bond that would last for eternity. ■

September 1988

Growing through garbage

by Lori Burmaster

"Buenos dias!" the dirt-crusting man calls out, stretching a fingerless hand upward for donations. I smile, drop a few coins into his palm, and wish I could do more.

The stench fills my lungs as I walk past the growing mountains of garbage smouldering in the heat. Vultures, rats, and wild dogs search through the refuse, constant companions to the many people who call this "home."

Situated within Guatemala City, one of the large garbage dumps becomes the place of both disposal for the rich and acquisition for the poor. Huge yellow trucks empty themselves many times a day, while dozens of people swarm like flies to discover the truck's contents.

Sixty of us, from Youth With A Mission in Ontario, Canada, were in Guatemala for a month to present the drama "Toymaker and Son." Wanting to experience every aspect of the Guatemalan culture, we decided to spend time with the people living in the confines of the city's garbage dump. Having seen many poverty pictures in magazines, I thought I was prepared for what we'd see. However, with this visit, I caught a glimpse of the reality and humanness of people living in a "garden of garbage."

As I step carefully to avoid deep puddles of mud, movement catches my eye. A tiny woman crawls from a pile of tin cans, old newspapers, and rotting food, clutching a cracked mirror. Three young boys, wearing mismatched shoes, chew orange peels as they curiously, yet shyly, watch us tromp past. A young dark-eyed girl sits on a mound of rags as if guarding precious jewels. Beside her lies a child, his legs crippled and bent. He tells me he is sixteen years old, though he looks ten years younger. I see children sniffing old bottles of glue—their way of escaping the poverty they live in.

Huts constructed of old store signs,

cardboard boxes, and plastic bags provide some refuge from the chilly evenings, the rain, and the blistering heat. Food is cooked on cement blocks, with the fires kept burning all day long—the smoke blending with the smell of trash.

I see people struggling just for survival. The children—the future generation of Guatemala and the world—growing up in garbage. Many will never be able to leave their home in the dump, as they possess no job skills. They seem content to stay this way.

Yet I recognize the humanness and uniqueness displayed here. A bright "Merry Christmas" sign decorates a cardboard hut; a young girl sits by her mother, drawing on newspaper with a broken crayon; and three old men sit on crates by a fire, laughing and enjoying one another's company. Proudly collecting old milk jugs, a young man in a yellow shirt greets us. He will clean and sell the jugs to store owners to gain a little money for a bottle of Coca-Cola or a pair of shoelaces. All around, the inhabitants perform their daily tasks proudly and seemingly glad to be alive.

I raise my eyes to the azure sky—the sun drying my tears. This same sky, this same sun I can see in my own Canadian backyard. These people and I share a common bond of humanness—a Father in heaven who loves each of us as individuals. As I look back at the mountains of growing trash, and the perseverant folk who make this their home, I grow in the knowledge of the unique and special people we are created to be, and the life of joy we can have through Jesus—whether we live in a mansion or a garbage dump.

Lori Burmaster, of Cambridge, Ontario, is a member of the Crossroads Memorial Brethren in Christ Church. She is planning to begin studies this fall at the Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.

“My desire is to serve . . .”

by Barbara Sides

Being a young adult and a member of the Brethren in Christ Church, it is not difficult for me to recall various ways in which the church as a whole and my local congregation have helped me. Through my experiences at summer camp, Messiah College, and local congregational life, I was the recipient of countless benefits which resulted from many long hours of dedicated service by committed leaders and planning committees.

I cherish the memories and friends I gained from more than five summers at Camp Lakeview. I appreciate being introduced to a camp experience where cooperation, responsibility, and biblical principles of life were taught. I remember wanting to go back as a camper year after year. Later I continued in a counseling position for as many years as I could. My desire was to support the camp as I was able, to show appreciation for the many ways it had blessed me so richly.

I'm confident that the sacrifices of time and money given to Lakeview also helped hundreds of others. We had many weeks of fun, enjoying nature, vesper services, and hikes (although we came home with annoying insect bites). We experienced personal relationship with God, the Creator of the camp's beauty.

Although my personal goals led me away from Messiah College to Purdue University after my second year, I was fortunate to have had a firm foundation established at Messiah for my beliefs. In Purdue's more secular atmosphere, I was often challenged to explain my "brand" of Christianity.

My position as a pacifist was espe-

cially questioned. It was at Messiah that I made a firm decision to agree with the denominational doctrine of non-resistance. Through discussions with friends and in the classrooms there, I was made aware of the theological aspects and biblical passages relating to the denomination's position. It was very important for me to verbalize my beliefs, as this is such a controversial issue in the world today.

Neither Camp Lakeview nor Messiah College would be so special to me if it had not been for the 22 years I spent in Brethren in Christ congregations. There I found ways to express my faith, serve the Lord, and fellowship with believers. I was both a student and a teacher in the Sunday school and Bible school programs. I had the opportunity to help young people read and learn from the Bible, and to teach them what I saw to be important factors in the Christian life.

Bible quizzing helped me into the Bible regularly and glean very important truths. The local congregations also showed me God's love by example. Through serving, caring, sharing, and encouraging, I saw the difference made by loving sacrifice among believers.

I cannot recall the number of missions weekends or special services I've attended, but I can see the result of the messages heard and pictures seen. My current desire is to serve in a cross-cultural setting, utilizing my professional training to help express God's love to people from a different country or ethnic background.

Barbara is a member of the Nappanee, Ind., congregation.

Publishers meet in Scottdale, Pa.

How to serve bookstores better was a major concern of the five Anabaptist publishers who met in Scottdale, Pa. recently. Though all five have cooperated on projects such as The Foundation Series, each has its own system for book selling. So, when bookstores want to stock books related to Anabaptism, where do they go? The answer is that some titles published by these groups just do not get the attention they deserve and print quantities are too low for competitive pricing.

Currently none of the distribution systems owned by members of this group is large enough to handle all the books from the others. Even with its new warehouse, where these leaders posed, Mennonite Publishing House felt it would not be able to handle the whole load. It was decided, however,

that extending cooperation on a limited, experimental level would be explored in the coming year. Following the model set up several years ago between Kindred and Herald Presses, Evangel Press has turned distribution of several titles over to Herald Press, and will have those books listed in the next Herald Press Catalog.

Mennonite Publishing House's J. Robert Ramer (middle back row), the newest addition to the group, hosted the meeting, along with Ben Cutrell (front right), who is now retired. Other persons in the photo (and the groups they represent) include: Dick Rempel (front left, Faith and Life Press, Newton, KS), Roger Williams (back left, Evangel Press, Nappanee, IN), Bob Durnbaugh (back right, The Brethren Press, Elgin, IL), and Gil Brandt (front center, Kindred



David Hiebert

Press, Hillsboro, KS and Winnipeg, MB).

Joint farm conferences planned Dec. 4-6 in Nebraska, Pennsylvania

"Horizons of Hope: The Goal and Soul of Agriculture" is the theme of two Faith and Farming conferences to be held simultaneously and joined with a telecommunications hookup December 4-6, 1988, in Nebraska and Pennsylvania.

Heartland Faith and Farming I, to be held at the Nebraska Youth Leadership Development Center, Aurora, NE, will coincide with Laurelville Faith and Farming V at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, PA.

Keynote addresses will be shared by Leon Neher, a Church of the Brethren farmer from Quinter, KS, on "The Goal of Agriculture," and Calvin W. Redekop, professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario, on the topics "The Soul of Agriculture" and "Caring for the Garden." Each conference will have opportunity to hear both speakers via a telecommunications hookup linking Laurelville and Aurora.

The Sunday evening through Tuesday noon conference formats will also include worship, enrichment, workshop and recreation sessions. Charles Rickel, pastor of the Bethany Brethren in Christ Church in Thomas, Okla., will lead a workshop at the Heartland conference on the topic "Rural Churches Today, Tomorrow."

Both conferences are open to everyone interested in rural issues and their effect on our faith, churches and communities today.

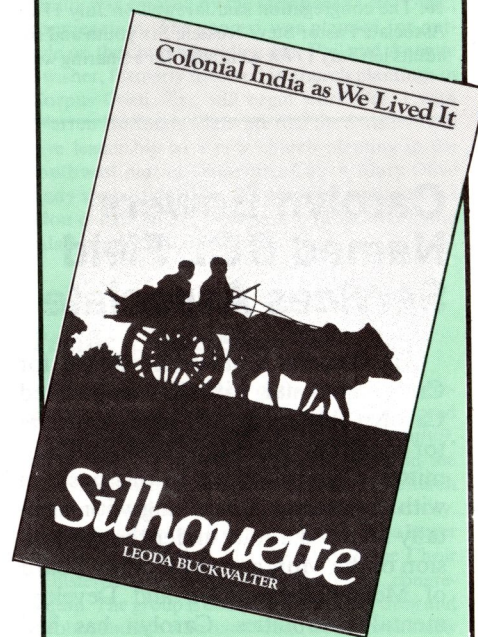
Local planning committees are involved for each conference. The Laurelville committee includes Clare and Catherine Schlegel, Ken Martin, Don Steinman, Larry and Pat Wagler, Gordon Hunsburger and representatives from the Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario Mennonite community. The Heartland committee consists of Mark Epp, Robert Hull, Lester and Winifred Ewy and Ron Braun. Levi Miller from Laurelville is involved with both planning groups. Sponsorship is shared by various Mennonite and Brethren in Christ church conferences, Mennonite Central Committee Central States, Prairie View, and Schowalter Foundation.

Plan now to attend. For more information contact:

Heartland Faith and Farming I
c/o MCC Central States
P.O. Box 235
North Newton, KS 67117
Ph (316) 283-2720

Laurelville Faith and Farming V
c/o Laurelville Mennonite Church Center
Route 5
Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666
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Church News

If you don't see news from your congregation in this section of the *Visitor*, it may be that you need to appoint a correspondent to send in bulletins, items of interest, and "For the Record" news. Please see that news items arrive in our office by the deadline of the 25th of each month. Items of interest to your group which you would like to recommend for publication should be highlighted in the bulletins, or written out in brief paragraph form. The latter is preferred.

Allegheny Conference

The Pioneer girls and leaders of the **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., had a work day at Messiah Village on July 11. The church had a food shower July 31 for the Criders, on furlough from India • The Continental Singers were in concert July 23 at the **Antrim** church, Chambersburg. • John and Faithe Kefer and family shared in the Aug. 3 MPF service of the **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa. • Average attendance recently at the **Canoe Creek** Bible school, Holidaysburg, Pa., was 94. Clara Leedom was storyteller. • Mary Olive Lady and Bob and Carol Geiger were scheduled missionary speakers in August for the **Carlisle**, Pa., congregation.

The **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., held a round-the-clock prayer vigil, July 10-16. The congregation said farewell on July 17 to Associate Pastor Steve Russell. Six youth and six adults left July 17 for Kentucky for a Sharing with

Appalachian People (SWAP) work week. • Among the July speakers for the **Cumberland Valley** congregation, Dillsburg, Pa., were Roland Stock on "The 'Umph' behind Renewal"; Carl Middletown on being single in a family-oriented world; Mayor Patrick Flaggel on "How to be a politically responsible Christian"; and John Spurrier on AIDS. • On the evening of July 24, the Wingert Family shared music and the Word with the **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa.

At a retirement dinner on June 25 for Rev. and Mrs. Rupert Turman, the **Five Forks** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa., presented them with an engraved silver tray and a love offering. • Corrie Hess from the **Grantham**, Pa., congregation was a member of the Allegheny Conference all-star quiz team which won the World Quiz Tournament in July. Eleven youth plus Dick Kershner and Dave Zercher traveled to Miami in July for a service project. • The **Hanover**, Pa., congregation had a missions conference on July 17 with emphasis on how to pray for missionaries. A concert of prayer followed the noon fellowship meal, with the film "The Wait of the World" shown at 2:30.

The **Hollowell** congregation, Waynesboro, sent a VBS offering of \$2,337 to Gordon and Susie Gilmore in Caracas, Venezuela, for help in sponsoring a Bible school there as an outreach ministry. • Sixty-eight children had perfect attendance July 18-22 at the VBS of the **Marsh Creek** congregation, Howard, Pa. • Wilmer Heisey, representing MCC as Executive Secretary, U.S., spoke Aug. 3 to the men's fellowship of the **Martinsburg**, Pa., congregation. • Pastor Ken Hepner of the **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., church was one of five

Brethren in Christ to present workshops on evangelism at Congress '88, held Aug. 5-6 in Rosemont, Ill.

Music by adults and children, words of testimony, a money tree, and fellowship meal were farewell activities at the **Montgomery** church, near Upton, Pa., for Rev. and Mrs. Lorne Lichty. • The **Morning Hour Chapel**, East Berlin, Pa., had a missions emphasis July 10 with Marshall and Eleanor Poe. • Donald and Shirley Frymire of the **Mt. Rock** congregation, Shippensburg, Pa., left the congregation on June 28 to serve for three years at Phumula Mission Hospital, Zimbabwe. • On July 3, the **New Guilford** congregation, Chambersburg, viewed the Chuck Colson film, "Released by Love."

Seventy-seven people of the **Paramount** congregation, Hagerstown, Md., attended a poolside baptism service July 31 for seven persons at the home of Frank and Mary Kipe. Officiating in the baptism of their children and grandchildren were Pastor Jim Stauffer and Bishop Frank Kipe. • The film "Treasures of the Snow" was shown July 17 to the **Roseglen** congregation, Duncannon, Pa. • Attendance at the closing VBS program of the **Uniontown**, Pa., congregation was 83. • A surprise retirement luncheon was hosted recently at the **Wesley** church, Mt. Holly Springs, Pa., for Rev. and Mrs. Ernest U. Dohner, honoring his 20 years of service to the congregation. Rev. William Baublitz and his wife Glenda were installed on June 19.

On July 24, the Curt Byers family from London spoke to the **West Shore** congregation, Enola, Pa. The children of the congregation visited a pretzel

Carolyn Bowers Named BCL Field Services Associate

The General Conference Board for Congregational Life has appointed Carolyn Bowers as half-time Associate for Field Services to the Central Committee. Carolyn comes to this position with experience in working with mentally retarded adults under the supervision of the Montgomery County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. Carolyn has had experience in camp counseling, program directing, and children's ministries director. Carolyn uses some of her creative energies by being actively involved in the ministry of the Highland Brethren in Christ Church in West Milton, Ohio.

Carolyn received her B.A. from Mount Vernon Nazarene College, Mount Vernon, Ohio, graduating in 1984 with honors. Her major area of study was



psychology with specialization in Christian Education. Carolyn and her husband, Carlton, reside in Dayton, Ohio. In addition to serving the board and churches of the Central Conference half-time, Carolyn is enrolled at Sinclair Community College where she is working towards her degree in interpreting

for the deaf. Her other ministry interests and involvements include Central Conference Board for Brotherhood Concerns, camping for the handicapped, youth ministry, drama, and clowning.

Carolyn's responsibilities with the Board for Congregational Life include being a resource to local congregations for planning, training, and evaluating congregational life programs such as Christian education, music, worship, youth, and Sunday school. She will also work closely with the Central Conference BCL in providing services to assist in congregational development on a region-wide basis.

The General Conference board is working toward placing associates for field services in all regional conferences. Presently there are associates in the Atlantic, Canadian, and now, Central Conferences. The ministry of the Board for Congregational Life, as with the other General Conference agencies of the church, is made possible by your gifts through Cooperative Ministries.

factory and an Amish farm on July 28. • An open house was hosted Sunday, June 26, by the children and their spouses of Rev. and Mrs. Bruce Grove in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary. The Groves were married June 25, 1938. Brother Grove pastors both the **Ferguson Valley** and **Newton Hamilton** congregations, McVeytown, Pa.



Atlantic Conference

The Weaver family brought their country gospel music to the **Community Bible** congregation, Sarasota, Fla., on July 17. • The **Cross Roads** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa., recently received six new members. In July and August, the Frank Tillapaugh videos, "The Church Unleashed," were shown on Wednesday nights. • On July 24, the **Elizabethtown**, Pa., congregation had outdoor worship including a concert by "Rosie" and a picnic at Erbs Pavilion. • On July 17, combined adult and teen Sunday school classes of the **Fairland** congregation, Cleona, Pa., viewed the film "Witness for Jehovah." • The youth of the **Free Grace** congregation, Millersburg, Pa., were in retreat at Roxbury Camp, Aug. 19-21. The theme was "No! The Positive Answer."

Fifty dollars of "seed money" was planted by the **Hershey**, Pa., congregation on Easter Sunday. The harvest on June 26 yielded \$1,400 to go toward land purchase. • The **Holden Park** congregation, Orlando, Fla., celebrated their 20th anniversary at their present site on July 24 with participation by the community and their Spanish congregation, a video message about the past by Bertha Monn, music, and refreshments. • Music on July 17 for the worship service of the **Hummelstown**, Pa., congregation featured taped songs by the Warren Hoffman family from General Conference. This was part of the Conference report given by Jay and Marion Sisco. • Ken Letner gave the morning message on July 17 for the **Lancaster**, Pa., congregation on "sowing the seeds of growth and change."

Russian emigrant and MCC worker for many years, Peter Dyck, spoke July 3 to the **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa., on "The Christian and the flag." July 24 was farewell Sunday for church administrator Elmer Berkebile, and Director of Music Ministries Bruce Gerlach. • Allon Dourte was guest speaker July 3 for the **Master-sonville**, Pa., congregation. • Average VBS attendance recently at the **Mt. Pleasant** church, Mt. Joy, Pa., was 139. Glenn Hensel spoke on July 10. • Joe Hyatt was installed recently as pastor of the **New Covenant** extension church, Quakertown, Pa. • Carolyn Pertusio recently turned over the editorship of the **Palmyra**, Pa., congregational newsletter to Dan Houck. The congregation is offering a two-year Navigator 2:7 Discipleship Program. It involves a one and a half hour meeting and two hours of homework weekly.

The music group Simply Free from Greencastle, Pa., sang in a July 17 evening service at the **Pequea** church, Lancaster, Pa. • The **Refton**, Pa.,

congregation had an all-day fellowship at Black Rock Retreat Center on July 31, beginning with 10:00 worship and including a 4:00 melon party. • The July 25-29 VBS of the **Shenks** congregation, Elizabethtown, Pa., had impressive statistics: average attendance, 108; seven decisions for Christ; and \$500 raised for the Heifer Project. • "Prison Ain't That Bad" was guest speaker Jeff Hollenbach's sermon title July 10 for the **Silverdale**, Pa., congregation. • The 25th anniversary celebration committee of the **Skyline View** congregation, Harrisburg, Pa., initiated publication of a pictorial directory. Pictures were taken July 15-16. • The **Stowe**, Pa., congregation enjoyed a bowling "fun night" on July 19.

Canadian Conference

On July 17, the **Cheapside** congregation, Nanticoke, Ont., held a baptismal service for four persons and followed it with a Sunday school picnic. • E. J. Swalm, Lamar Fretz, and Don Miller were guest speakers in July for the **Falls View** congregation, Niagara Falls, Ont. A family barbeque was Aug. 7. • The July 3 morning service of the **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont., was replaced by a community service at Stouffville Park. Maurice Farqeharsen represented the Gideons in the July 24 service. • In August, Rev. and Mrs. Sider began a series of messages on the home for the **Massey Place** congregation, Saskatoon, Sask. The film series "Love Is a Decision" was planned for Sunday evenings in September.

The **North East Community** congregation, Calgary, Alb., planned a leadership/Christian education workshop with Sandi Hannigan on Sept. 12-13. • The **Oak Ridges**, Ont., congregation held VBS on Aug. 22-28 with Clara Leedom as resource person. • Bob Geiger, missionary to Colombia, was scheduled to speak Aug. 7 at the **Rosebank** church, Petersburg, Ont. • The youth of the **Sherkston**, Ont., congregation led a Galilean service on July 17. • The **Springvale** congregation, Hagersville, Ont., had a farewell dinner on July 17 for Pastor Gooderham and family who are going to pastor the **Port Colborne**, Ont., congregation. • The **Wainfleet**, Ont., church recently said farewell to Paul and Gloria Main, leaving for two years at Timber Bay Children's Home. • The **Welland**, Ont., congregation had three young people in summer service: Danalyn Arnott and Missy Kelly, Costa Rica; and Jessica Leadley, Alaska.

Central Conference

A committee of the **Amherst** church, Massillon, Ohio, planned to solicit response from the congregation regarding attitudes toward growth as a first step in developing a philosophy of ministry. • Terry Priest resigned as pastor of the **Beulah Chapel** congregation, Springfield, Ohio, effective the end of August. • Rich and Kathy Steubing, missionaries from Zambia, shared in the July 17 service of the **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind. • As their report on Conference in Azusa, the **Fairview** church, Englewood, Ohio, conducted a mini-General Conference. With a Moderator and General Secretary presiding, pertinent reports were given with sponsorship from the floor, and a roving reporter conducted interviews. Meanwhile, an overhead projector kept a running flow of Conference information.

On July 31, the **Highland** congregation, West Milton, Ohio, had a fellowship breakfast. It was

the first Sunday of complete services after two weeks at camp meeting. • The **Lakeview** congregation, Goodrich, Mich., planned an outdoor baptism and communion service for Aug. 21 at Camp Lakeview. • Pastor Cabe of the **Peace Chapel** congregation, Ravenna, Ohio, planned a sermon series for September on women of the Bible. The sewing circle began work on hospital gowns for Africa in September. • The youth of the **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, church planned a trip to Kings Island on July 14.

On July 10, the **Sippo Valley** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, had a Singspiration Sunday with games, supper, a contemporary youth sing, and hymn sing. • Pastor McGarvey of the **Union Grove** congregation, New Paris, Ind., survived as camp pastor for Lakeview teen camp, July 31-Aug. 5. July 17 was family camping weekend for the congregation at Chain-O-Lakes State Park. • Dr. Walter Swatsky, Soviet evangelist since World War II and MCC director of the Canadian East-West program, spoke in late July to the **Valley Chapel** congregation, Canton, Ohio.

Midwest Conference

Henry and Faithe Landis will begin pastoral ministry at the **Abilene**, Ks., church in September. • Michelle Thompson of the **Bethany** congregation, Thomas, Okla., accompanied a Midwest Teen Mission service group to Mexico on July 25-Aug. 13. • The **Oak Park** congregation, Des Moines, Iowa, planned to follow up their recent program of phone outreach with mailings to express the excitement and message of the church.

On Aug. 12, the gospel music of the Jim Kenes family was enjoyed by the **Oklahoma City**, Okla., congregation. The concert was planned for outside on the church building site. Phil and Annette Swisher, formerly involved in church plantings in Corpus Cristi, Tx., will begin work Oct. 1 with Warren Hoffman. Plans are that the Swishers will give leadership to a new church planting in the southwest part of Oklahoma City. • Mary Olive Lady spoke July 17 in the morning service to the **Zion** congregation, Abilene, Ks. A sandwich and salad luncheon followed.

Pacific Conference

The Pathway Pioneers of the **Moreno** congregation, Moreno Valley, Calif., recently sponsored a barbeque and raffle at J.F.K. Park. • On July 9, more than 125 people attended a Movie in the Park sponsored by the **New Community** church (Upland daughter church) as an outreach activity. The church planting is considering finding a larger facility in the Fall. • The Teen Challenge Choir ministered July 31 to the **Ontario**, Calif., congregation. The group is composed of former drug and alcohol abusers who have found freedom and new life in Christ.

The **Pacific Highway** congregation, Salem, Ore., participated in the July 30 service of the Salem Union Gospel Mission. Rosetta Brinlee brought a General Conference report to the congregation on July 17. • Ten persons of the **Riverside**, Calif., congregation have agreed to be prayer supporters of high school youth. During the 1987-88 school year, 3 students accepted Christ and 28 attended SEARCH meetings one or more times. • On Aug. 7, the **Upland**, Calif., congregation had opportunity to view the film "The Calling" about a couple's missionary endeavor in Peru.



Sunday morning, July 31, 1988, the Souderton Brethren in Christ Church hosted the Mennonite Central Committee's "International Visitor Exchange Program." Ninety young people from 28 countries who had participated in this program the past year joined in a special concluding service. The IVEP includes persons from 19 to 30 from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America who engage in a cultural exchange with North Americans. For the past year the young people had been engaged full time in vocations in business, social services, medical institutions, churches and private homes. The trainees have now returned to their home countries and will assimilate back into their cultures. On August 1 MCC welcomed one hundred new participants who have begun their year's program here.

For the Record

Births

Arters: Timothy Daniel, July 5; Rob and Donna Arters, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Brubaker: Halden Grant, May 25; Donald and LuAnn Brubaker, Refton congregation, Pa.

Costarella: Chelsi Jane, July 11; John and Kristine (Mull) Costarella, Manor congregation, Pa.

Gingrich: Reuben Geoffrey, May 15; Jon and Rita (Leichty) Gingrich, Winchester congregation, Va.

Gochnauer: Leah Jean, July 20; Eugene and Donna Gochnauer, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Greiser: Elijah Quinn, July 9; Teri and Karen (Garis) Greiser, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Helfrick: Erica Brittany, July 17; Rodney and Mary Helfrick, Montgomery congregation, Pa.

Henry: Dane Michael, June 24; Haines and Sandra (Engle) Henry, Maytown congregation, Pa.

Hess: Allison Jenae, July 20; Parke and Diana Hess, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Hess: Eric Lane, July 11; Dean and Jean Hess, Montgomery congregation, Pa.

Kreiser: Nicole Marie, July 7; Dan and Dawn Kreiser, Shenks congregation, Pa.

Leedy: Ashley Kaye, July 9; Richard and Sonya (Ebersole) Leedy, Fairland congregation, Pa.

McBeth: Christina Jade, July 2; Stanley and Teresa (Gift) McBeth, Chambersburg congregation, Pa.

McNulty: Brenton Scott, July 11; Kevin and Debbie (Hawbaker) McNulty, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Meduri: Jeremy David, May 28; Paul and Joyce Meduri, Morrison congregation, Ill.

Mellinger: Dylan Anthony, July 7; Anthony and Alison (Mervin) Mellinger, Manor congregation, Pa.

Miller: Amanda Lee, June 20; Robert and Nancy Miller, Martinsburg congregation, Pa.

Miller: Dustin Keith, July 10; Bradley and Judith (Keller) Miller, Hanover congregation, Pa.

Myers: Corey Wayne, June 22; Wayne and Lorraine Myers, Cumberland Valley congregation, Pa.

Potteiger: Mindy Elaine, July 10; Michael and Karen (Brubaker) Potteiger, Roseglen congregation, Pa.

Priddle: Seaira Ida May, May 23; David and Tracy Priddle, Houghton congregation, Ont.

Proulx: Stephanie, July 8; Lucien-Carol and Helene Proulx, Centre de Fraternite Chretienne, Quebec.

Rush: Asher Scott, May 7; Marc and Debbie (Garis) Rush, Souderton congregation, Pa.

Wertz: Brandi Lee, June 19; Floyd, Jr., (Dusty) and Debra (Engle) Wertz, Manor and Maytown congregations, Pa.

Yamchuk: Nicole Katherine, June 9; Perry and Karen Yamchuk, Massey Place congregation, Sask.

Yu: Rita, July 11; Tai and Margaretha Yu, Mt. Rock congregation, Pa.

Zook: Katherine Anne, June 17; Lester and Robin Zook, New Covenant congregation, Quakertown, Pa.

Weddings

Bendia-Burnie: Barbara Jean, daughter of Ross and Dora Burnie, Fort Erie, Ont., and David George Bendia, son of Clyde and Esther Bendia, Port Colborne, Ont., July 9, in the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Leonard Chester officiating.

Bullen-Boctor: Lillie, daughter of Badie and Margaret Boctor, Unionville, Ont., and Brian, son of Dennis and Alice Bullen, Vancouver, B.C., July 1, at the Bridlewood Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Elwood Flewelling officiating.

Engle-Wilkins: Kelly, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Wilkins, Hummelstown, Pa., and Jeffrey, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Engle, Marietta, Pa., May 21, at Union Deposit Lutheran Church, Hershey, Pa., with Rev. Jeffrey Compton officiating.

Erisman-Budesheim: Dawn A., daughter of William and Pam Budesheim, Mountville, Pa., and Jeffrey G., son of C. Gordon and Ann Erisman, Columbia, Pa., June 25, at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Hawbaker officiating.

Greco-Cober: Beth Yvonne, daughter of Roger and Miriam Cober, Kitchener, Ont., and Anthony Dominic, son of John and Shirley Greco, Port Colborne, Ont., May 28, at the Westheights Brethren in Christ Church.

Harris-Peifer: Loreen Renae, daughter of Elvin and Janet Peifer, Willow Street, Pa., and Kevin J., son of Esther Harris, Toledo, Ohio, June 11, at the Refton Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Arthur Brubaker and Rev. Mike Crum officiating.

Hey-Thrush: Bernice Eileen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Thrush, Jr., Chambersburg, Pa., and Bryan Lynn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Boyd Hey, Shippensburg, Pa., July 16, at the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner officiating.

Holzbauer-Thomas: Sheryl A., daughter of Marlin and Doris Thomas, Lancaster, Pa., and Blaise R., son of Joan Holzbauer and the late Joseph Holzbauer, June 26, at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. John Hawbaker and Bishop David Thomas officiating.

Keefer-Pereira: Linda Maria, daughter of Albino and Maria Pereira, Sherkston, Ont., and Philip Daniel, son of Philip and Judith Keefer, Dillsburg, Pa., June 25, in the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Philip D. Keefer officiating.

McKissick-Alleman: Cheryl Ann, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Alleman, Chambersburg, Pa., and Guy Allen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Terrance McKissick, Chambersburg, June 25, at the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner and Rev. Maurice Bender officiating.

Ovalle-Henniger: Martha Alice, daughter of

Marlin and Janet Henniger, Jr., Elizabethtown, Pa., and Sergio, son of Eustolio and Consuelo Ovalle, Mexico, June 3, at the Free Grace Brethren in Christ Church.

Peters-Rudy: Sharon Lee, daughter of Kenneth and Zana Rudy, Refton, Pa., and Ray Aldus, son of Aldus and Nora Peters, Quarryville, Pa., May 28, near Drumore, Pa., with Rev. John Arthur Brubaker officiating.

Rhoades-Paulus: Lori Lee, daughter of Denver and Jean Paulus, West Milton, Ohio, and Tery Adam, son of Nevin and Pat Rhoades, Lake St., Louis, Mo., May 21, at the Highland Brethren in Christ Church.

Ryder-Horton: Anissa Charlene, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Horton, McConnellsburg, Pa., and Mr. and Mrs. Glen Baer, Chambersburg, Pa.; and Rick Allan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ryder, Greencastle, Pa., May 7, at the United Methodist Church, McConnellsburg, with Rev. David B. Reams officiating.

Thrush-Hege: Cheryl Ann, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Amos Hege, Greencastle, Pa., and Dwight Eldon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Thrush, Jr., Chambersburg, Pa., June 18, at the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Wilbur W. Benner officiating.

Wolgemuth-Williams: Anna Williams and Jan Wolgemuth, May 28, at the Caledonia State Park, Fayetteville, Pa., with Rev. Paul Wolgemuth officiating.

Obituaries

Detwiler: Ernest S. Detwiler, born Apr. 30, 1911, the son of Jacob D. and Lizzie A. (Swartley) Detwiler, died June 18. Surviving are his wife, Florence; two sons, Gerald L. and Glenn D.; three grandchildren; a sister, Pearl Detwiler; and a brother, Earl. Ernest had been employed for 28 years by the A. Steiert and Son Inc. Broom Works of Hatfield, Pa. He was a member of the Souderton congregation where he had been custodian for 10 years. Services were held at the church with Rev. Kevin Ryan officiating. Interment was in the Silverdale Brethren in Christ cemetery.

Bergey: Sarah F. Bergey, born Feb. 21, 1916, the daughter of Eliab and Minnie (Carmack) Wenger, died Feb. 10. Surviving are her husband, Walton H. Bergey; two sons, Robert and Harry; four grandchildren; five sisters: Edith Bumbaugh, Emma Wenger, Bertha Beltz, Rachel Bumbaugh, and Minnie Belle Ruth; and a brother, Eliab Wenger. Sarah was a member of the Souderton, Pa., congregation where services were held Feb. 14 with Rev. Kevin Ryan, Rev. Omer King, and Rev. Charlie B. Byers officiating. Interment was in Franconia Mennonite Cemetery, Souderton.

Sibley: Lloyd Ray Sibley, born Sept. 30, 1912, died June 21. Surviving are his wife, Jean; three children, Geraldine Brillinger, Bruce, and Douglas; and eight grandchildren. He faithfully attended the Heise Hill congregation, Ont., where the memorial service was held with Rev. Marlin Ressler officiating. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Gerhold: Mabel C. Gerhold, born Sept. 27, 1909, the daughter of Jacob and Catherine (Weaver) Shriver, died July 14. Her husband, Harvey M. Gerhold, died in 1972. Surviving are 3 sons: Harvey M., Jr., G. Walter, and Frank W.; 2 daughters, Anna M. Gerhold and Gloria Sollenberger; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; 4 great-great-grandchildren; and one sister, Rhoda

Meyer. She was a member of the Air Hill congregation, Pa. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. William R. Baublitz in the Robert G. Sellers Funeral Home, Chambersburg. Interment was in the Air Hill cemetery.

Winger: Vincent Ross Winger, born Mar. 2, 1914, died July 10. Surviving are his wife, Gladys; three children, Ralph, Bev Frayle, and Janet; three sisters, Rose Bearss, Orpha Riegle, and Helen Saylor; and five grandchildren. He was a member of the Sherkston, Ont., congregation where he had directed the children's choir. The funeral service was held at the church with Rev. Leonard Chester and Rev. John Day officiating. Interment was in the Sherkston church cemetery.

Engle: Treva I. Engle, born June 28, 1906, the daughter of Edward and Minerva (Hershey) Engle, died June 12. She is survived by a brother, Walter Engle, and nieces and nephews. She had been a resident of Messiah Village and was a member of the Highland congregation, Ohio. Services were held at the Hale and Sarver Funeral Home in West Milton, Ohio, with Rev. Robert Brown officiating, and at Messiah Village with Rev. J. Robert Lehman officiating. Interment was in the Highland church cemetery.

Gramm: Clarence E. Gramm, born June 27, 1910, died June 2. He is survived by his wife Elsie (Paulus); 2 sons, Eugene R. and Ivan W.; 2 daughters, Eva Marie Brubaker and Eleanor E. Beane; a foster daughter, Linda Davidson; 10 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren; 3 brothers, Hershey, Samuel, and James; and 6 sisters, Hazel Etter, Alma Cober, Esther George, Ellen Wiles, Martha Rohrer, and Isabelle Franklin. He was preceded in death by a grandson and one sister, Rachel Book. He had been a member of the Mt. Carmel Home Board and a deacon in the Morrison, Ill., congregation, for many years. Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Russell Whitener at the Rock River Church of God. Interment was in Oak Knoll Memorial Park, Sterling, Ill.

Cassel: Percy Cassel, born Mar. 9, 1908, died May 28. He is survived by his wife Catherine; two sons, Wayne and Doug; a daughter, Norma Cassel; and four grandchildren. Services were held at the Nappanee, Ind., church where Percy had pastored for five years and remained a member following his retirement from the pastorate. Rev. Richard Mailloux officiated. Interment was in South Union Cemetery, Nappanee.

Tribute

The ministry of Percy Cassel was associated with Ontario, Canada, and Nappanee, Indiana. Much of his ministry was bivocational in nature as he served the church and provided for the material needs of his family.

Rev. Cassel was early associated with the Heise Hill congregation, Gormley, Ont. He was ordained to the Christian ministry as he served as a part of the multiple ministry staff there. Brother Cassel was called to the pastorate of the Rosebank congregation, near Kitchener, Ont., in 1942. He served effectively in this church, building the work substantially.

In 1956, Brother Cassel was called to pastor the Nappanee congregation. While serving there he completed a college degree at Goshen College and earned an elementary teaching credential. From then until his retirement he gave his full time to teaching in elementary school while a faithful and considerate supporter of the work in Nappanee.

Percy was known as a caring brother and a successful pastor. He served frequently in evangelism in Canada and the United States during the decades of the 1940s and '50s. Brother Cassel was

among our transitional ministers in the period between the bivocational time and the present, one who willingly helped in a process of change in the life of the church.

Owen H. Alderfer, Bishop
For the Board of Bishops

Giles: Edgar Giles, 74, the son of Milton G. and Mary (Bottoms) Giles, died July 23. He is survived by his wife, Anna (Roberts); three sons, Hershey, Hansford, and Harold; a daughter, Lois Brawner; two brothers, Charlie and Elby; and six grandchildren. The funeral service was held at the Stotts-Phelps-McQueary Funeral Home with Rev. Elam Dohner and Bishop Owen Alderfer officiating. Interment was in the Caldwell Chapel Cemetery, Knifley, Ky.

Tribute

For more than 50 years the name of Edgar Giles has been the representative type of the Brethren in Christ witness in the South. Most specifically associated with Kentucky, he has been one of the few preachers raised up from the South to provide leadership among the Brethren there. He, along with his wife Anna, was pastor of churches in Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee.

Edgar was called to ministry early in life; before he was 20 years old he was preaching the Word in various places in South Central Kentucky. His preaching in churches and school houses finally led to a call to pastoral ministry. His first pastorate was in a school house in the Spout Springs area. In due time, the congregation built the Spout Springs church, a Brethren in Christ congregation. At one time or another, Brother Edgar served as pastor of most of the presently existing Brethren in Christ churches in Kentucky. Other building projects followed in Edgar's ministry as he served in these congregations. Toward the end of his life, he aspired to accomplish another church planting in the Somerset area. He was eager to set up a preaching site in that city to the glory of God as soon as possible.

During his entire life, Edgar was a bivocational pastor. He preached on Sundays and provided for his family during the week by farming, carpentering, maintenance work, and other types of manual labor. He was not afraid of work; indeed, he was restless unless he had his hand into some worthwhile labor. Possibly this contributed to his passing at this time.

Brother Giles had a way with words and put ideas together in such a manner that they powerfully impacted the listener. His was a special ability for presenting ideas concretely so they formed vivid images of the concepts he wanted to share. Many persons today regard him as their spiritual father since they have come to know Christ through his ministry.

Brother Giles had been pastor at Bloomington Chapel near Columbia for the past five years. He repeatedly noted that this had been his happiest pastoral ministry. The church experienced growth spiritually and numerically with the blessings of the Lord frequently falling upon the worshippers in the little chapel. With the support of strong leaders in the congregation, the work moved forward as the people affirmed the leadership of their elderly pastor.

The Brethren in Christ Church in Kentucky—indeed, the entire Central Conference—will miss the presence and leadership of this saint of God and elder statesman in the church in these parts. May the Lord raise up others to carry on the work that Edgar Giles has left to be done.

Owen H. Alderfer, Bishop
For the Board of Bishops

Messiah College News

Students applaud concerts of prayer

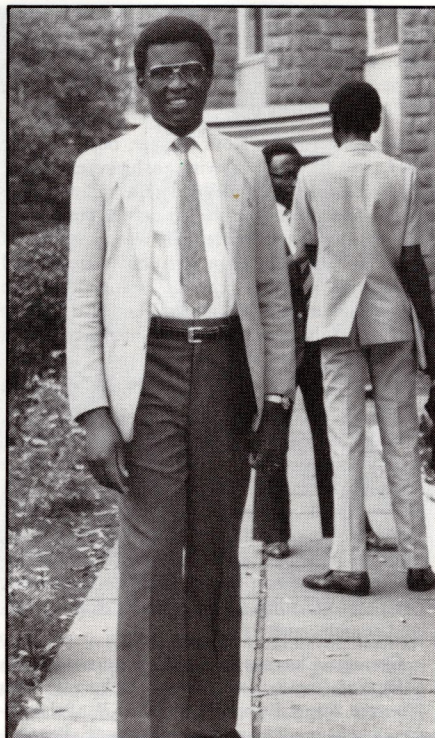
Although the concept has been around since the 1700s, the few churches that do have Concerts of Prayer don't let themselves enjoy the experience like college students do, according to Messiah College Campus Ministries Associate Dave Hershberger.

A Concert of Prayer is Christians uniting and praying together—"in concert"—on a regular basis. One source of the idea is found in Zechariah 8:20-23, where the prophet describes people from many cities coming together to pray. There are usually two major aims: to pray for Christ's *fullness* to be revealed to the point of an awakening in the church, and to pray for *fulfillment*, or an evangelization among the nations through this revitalized church.

"We try to make fulfillment a call to action," said Hershberger, who has led weekly or monthly concerts at Messiah since 1985. Attendance at the concerts, usually held in the Grantham Church at 9:00 p.m. on Sundays, has ranged anywhere from 100-450 students.

"If we pray for India," continued Hershberger, "and ask God to feed hungry people and then we don't help do anything about it, what good is it? We need to sacrifice ourselves."

Hershberger has been asked to lead Concerts of Prayer in area churches as well, and while he doesn't doubt the sincerity of the people attending, he said it's hard for them to have an experience



as spiritually meaningful as the college students seem to have.

"I've found that in church, people don't like to pray together as openly as students on campus do. People are hesitant to make themselves vulnerable. But college students don't think that way—they don't worry about how they sound to each other. They believe that they can make a difference, and they're not in a setting where methodology matters."

Concerts of Prayer were begun at Messiah after about 100 students, returning from Urbana '84 held at the University of Illinois, wanted their campus to unite and pray for worldwide concerns.

Since 1981, a growing number of people in Madison, Wisc., have put aside denominational differences to meet

Messiah's African connection, Daystar University College, Nairobi, Kenya, held its commencement ceremonies on June 25, 1988. Danisa Ndlovu, the first Brethren in Christ student to graduate from Daystar, received a B.A. in Communication and Bible.

in prayer. That city is now home to the Concert of Prayer Project of the National Prayer committee. The group may be contacted at 233 Langdon St., Madison, WI 53703.

Fall chapels to study characteristics of God

Eldon Fry, Messiah's Campus Ministries Director and Chaplain, has announced a variety of fall semester chapels, centering on the theme of "The God of His People."

Under the first subtitle, "Discovering God," the Rev. Eric Delve will be featured during Spiritual Life Emphasis Days, Sept. 20-22. Other subtitles cover the wholeness of God and the family of God. Featured under "The Character of God" will be the Iowa Christian Theatre on October 25.

The chapel series concludes with the theme "The Visitation of God" during Advent. Scheduled for Dec. 1 are the "Joybells," from the Melmark Home.

Plan to visit campus on a Preview Day

All high school juniors, seniors, and other prospective students and their families are encouraged to plan a visit to Messiah's Grantham campus for a Preview Day or a Department Day this fall.

Preview Days, covering all majors, will be held on *Monday, Oct. 10* (Columbus Day) and on *Saturday, Oct. 29*. The program, beginning with registration in the Eisenhower Campus Center at 9:00 a.m., includes a tour of campus, a question-and-answer session about college life, a free lunch with faculty, and advice from financial aid counselors.

Department Days, for students interested in certain areas of study, are on three dates. *Monday, Oct. 17*, is the Department of Education and Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Day. *Friday, Oct. 21*, is the Department of Behavioral Science, Department of Biblical & Religious Studies, and Department of History & Political Science Day. *Friday, Nov. 4*, is the Department of Music and Department of Language, Literature & Fine Arts

Messiah student wins oratory contest

Katrina J. Hunsberger, of Ulster, Pa., a student at Messiah College's Philadelphia campus, received \$250 for placing first in this year's C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest.

Hunsberger's winning essay, titled "A Christian Response to Racism," argued that peace is more than the absence of war. She believes that racism in the United States is a form of warfare and challenges Christians to confront the evils of racism in today's world.

Mark Richard, a Bluffton (Ohio) College student, received \$150 for his second place piece titled, "International Students at Bluffton College."

Named for a Mennonite historian and Goshen (Ind.) and Bluffton College professor, the C. Henry Smith Contest was begun in 1974 to encourage thought on peace issues. The contest is sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Peace Section.

Day. The program is similar to the general Preview Day, except that students meet with faculty in the specific majors.

Incoming students awarded Dean's, President's Scholarships

Messiah awards a number of worthy incoming students with a Dean's Scholarship, a President's Scholarship, or perhaps both.

Dean's Scholarships of up to \$1,750 for the 1988-89 academic year are awarded to students who have excelled in their high school course work. The award may be renewed the next year if the recipient maintains a GPA for the year of at least 3.0.

President's Scholarships of up to \$1,250 for the 1988-89 academic year are awarded to new students who have distinguished themselves in academic, co-curricular, church, and community endeavors. They are renewable if a student demonstrates a continuing student lead-

ership role at the College and maintains at least a 2.5 GPA for the year.

The following Brethren in Christ freshmen (with declared majors, if known) have received these scholarships:

Gregg L. Bowman (biology-secondary education), Lititz, Pa. (Speedwell Heights congregation), Dean's Scholarship.

Timothy W. Engle, Elizabethtown, Pa. (Elizabethtown cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Shawn L. Eyster (computer science), East Berlin, Pa. (Morning Hour Chapel), Dean's Scholarship.

Susan L. Fullerton (marketing), Elizabethtown, Pa. (Elizabethtown cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Joseph M. Garber, Marietta, Pa. (Elizabethtown cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Rodney L. Gayman, Pleasant Hill, Pa. (Air Hill cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Sheryl A. Hawbaker, Columbia, Pa. (Manor cong.) Dean's Scholarship.

Corrine D. Hess, Dillsburg, Pa. (Grantham cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Deborah L. Kreider, Elizabethtown, Pa. (Elizabethtown cong.) Dean's Scholarship.

Cheryl A. Langley, Carlisle, Pa. (Carlisle cong.), President's Scholarship.

Susan M. Michajluk (elementary education), Greencastle, Pa. (Antrim cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Yung T. Nguyen (psychology), Millersburg, Pa. (Free Grace cong.) Dean's Scholarship.

Tamara J. Paul (behavioral science), Souderton, Pa. (Silverdale cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Eric A. Seibert, East Berlin, Pa. (Morning Hour Chapel), Dean's Scholarship.

Curtis R. Sisco (theatre), Nappanee, Ind. (Nappanee cong.), Dean's Scholarship.

Tonya L. Starnier (chemistry), Millers-town, Pa. (Saville cong.), Dean's Scholarship. ■

Onesimus

Onesimus, freed by the truth of the gospel for service to our Lord Jesus Christ; to Paul, a true ambassador of God's kingdom. May God's grace abound to you, dear brother.

Honesty is the topic of concern for me as I write to you today, my friend. Recently I was with a group of brethren who gathered to discuss the progress of the work here and to discern new directions for ministry. Much of the conversation was full of encouragement and faith, but I noticed within the group (and felt it within myself as well) a strong temptation to be less than fully honest. I brought this up with a few others and they attempted to allay my fears with justifications that pointed out the difficulty of "full disclosure" within a group. That means that selective disclosure is an acceptable means to the desired end of those giving the group information to discuss and pray about.

The danger in all this is that it becomes easy to select details to share that will slant the discussion in the direction we deem best. The desired end becomes not necessarily the will of God as discerned by the body, but the good chosen by those giving out the information. It is

not that this is terrible. Those who are serving in the work know well the needs of their ministries and the dreams they receive from God. It is well and good to tell the group of these. But we must resist the temptation to even slightly bias the group's opinion by selecting acceptable details to share. We must hold firmly to honesty.

Paul, I remember so well your insistence on sincerity and truth. You wrote of these things to the Ephesians (4:15) and much to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 6:7). None of the brethren would advocate open deceit and I am not accusing anyone of this. This temptation is far more subtle than that. That is why all this is troubling to me. The ends do not justify the means for followers of Jesus. Our aim must be purity even in our "business." When we gather to discern together the will of God, we must listen carefully to our brothers and sisters. We must discern *together*. How I have appreciated this practice among the brethren! I want to protect it from a culture that chants loudly in our ears that power and influence should only be wielded by the talented who accomplish the most, most quickly.

If we believe that our God speaks to us through his body, then we must give the body honest information and trust God to move among us for his ends. If we who care deeply about the "business" of the church inch toward a stance that allows us to "sell" our point of view to the body, highlighting only the information that reinforces our previous opinions, and happens to omit other information, then we are casting aside our belief that the Lord's will can be discerned in the body. There are Christian groups who believe this, but I had hoped our brethren would not move to their position. The Scripture consistently verifies the importance of Christ's body working together.

Take time, please, my brother to send me word as to how to handle this matter. We are growing in number by God's grace, but this has not made communication simpler. Decisions must be made. I do not want to slow the work of the Spirit, but I want to preserve our integrity. May the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ continue to make you free and give you joy.

—Onesimus

Communication

Earlier in the afternoon my son David came to me and asked if he could do something. We discussed it briefly, including a couple of compromise ideas, but didn't entirely settle the issue right then. Several hours later, he came again. "Well?" he asked. "Well what?" I responded, feeling frustrated because he seemed to expect me to know what he was talking about. In fact, I thought he was referring to another request he had made.

At least two lessons occur to me from what happened between David and me. First, I should have been more direct in my responses to him. It's not the first time I haven't clearly stated my point of view; instead I've waffled and sometimes postponed making a decision. That's frustrating for a child.

Second, David needs to learn to be more direct in communicating his wants and not expect a "Well?" on his part to be instantly translated in *my* mind to exactly what's in *his* mind. Perhaps he fears a negative answer, or perhaps he really does think that I'm able to read his mind. Whatever the case, one of my tasks as a parent is to help him learn to

communicate clearly what's on his mind. Since I have trouble with that too, we have to work at it together.

Just as families need to be able to talk to each other, so do people in the church. I know that a lot of the conflict we have in our family ultimately stems either from inadequate communication or none at all. In the same way, I think that much conflict in the church happens either because people aren't able to talk to each other when they disagree, or they feel that major decisions have been made by a few people in power without adequate input from the rest of the congregation. When there is little or no communication, in families or churches, the results are *miscommunication*, *misunderstanding*, *mistrust*, and feelings of anger, hurt, fear, loss of control, powerlessness. Rumors, innuendos, false accusations, and misrepresentations of the facts abound. It's not a pretty picture!

Communication in the church means several things. On a rather simple level, it means adequate and attractive advertising and publicity. People can't attend or support programs and ministries if they don't know about them. And once is not enough—the publicity has to be repeated several times in several forms. We're bombarded every day by radio, television, newspapers, magazines, billboards, etc. with attractively packaged information of all sorts. Yet there are those in the church who seem to think that one little poorly designed poster on an obscure church bulletin board will attract attention.

Communication also means that the decision-making process needs to be as open as possible so that when decisions affecting the total church family are made everyone will feel that they have been part of the process. This is difficult: it's not always the most efficient way to do things and it's generally impossible for one congregation to do everything that everyone wants. Inevitably there will be those who, because the decision made was not what they wanted, will feel that they have been left out of the process. But they will likely feel less left out if they have known all along what was happening and have had opportunity to express their opinions.

A third thing, then, that communication in the church means is that oppos-

ing points of view are welcomed and not stifled. Unfortunately, we seem to fear that disagreement, especially if it's significant disagreement, means disunity and may result in a situation which we can't control. I know from personal experience, however, that if I am able to express my contradictory point of view, in an atmosphere of caring and genuine openness to all ideas, I feel much better even if the ultimate decision goes against my personal preference. At least I have been heard. The responsibility is double-edged, of course: church leaders need to allow diverse opinions to be expressed without threat of risk expressing a point of view which contradicts prevailing opinion.

These and other communication skills don't always come naturally. Sometimes we need help from trained professionals, and sometimes we need to make intentional choices to change our patterns of communication. Whatever it takes, family and church health depend to a large extent on our ability to communicate clearly with one another.

Phoebe

Readers may correspond with both Phoebe and Onesimus by writing to them c/o the Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Napanee, IN 46550.

Persons contributing to *Readers Respond* (letters to the editor) are encouraged to be concise. Letters may be shortened. All letters must be signed. Occasionally we may decide to withhold names due to special circumstances.

Longer contributions are welcomed for *Dialogue*, a forum for readers to express their opinions on a broad range of topics relevant to the mission of the church and to living the Christian life.

Since each article or letter represents the view of the writer, they do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Brethren in Christ Church.

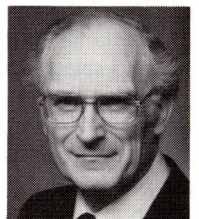
Bishops' Column...

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Our ministry of serving begins from the base of agape love—not from that of selfish power. As Christians we seek to serve regardless of the political situation, knowing that this is the way of the Master.

Conclusion. We may respond variously to voting, sitting on an election board, or running for office. If we are being responsible Christians, however, we *will* be accountable in the ministries noted: discernment, prayer, and serving. Only as we fulfill these callings will we truly be good Christian citizens—in whatever land we live.

Owen Alderfer is bishop of the Central Conference. He and his wife Ardys live next to Memorial Holiness Camp, West Milton, Ohio.



Evangelical Visitor

A hollow victory?

Don Ratzlaff

I was hoping to write with firsthand knowledge about Martin Scorsese's controversial motion picture, *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Given the torrent of outrage the movie had generated in the Christian community prior to its release, I thought it might be a refreshing change for someone to critique the movie after actually having seen it. However, things such as they are, that may not be possible, at least not in the immediate future. To my knowledge, there is not a theater in my entire home state which has agreed to show the film. Theater owners who had originally scheduled it decided otherwise when they monitored the rumblings of discontent on the economic Richter scale.

There are many Christians who would consider this a moral victory, a direct hit in defense of the faith. It may well be. I am quite confident that based on what I have read about the film in the secular and religious press I would not have agreed with Scorsese's portrayal of Christ. I even might have considered it blasphemous. But I cannot know that for sure, because the movie was made inaccessible to me through the economic persuasion of those who disagreed with its content. Without having seen it.

If this is a moral victory, it rings hollow in my ears.

Yes, I was bothered by blasts in the press and the orchestration of protest campaigns based on what was, at best, incomplete information about the movie's content. I realize Universal Studios played fast and loose with the Christian community by organizing and then canceling pre-release screenings of the film. But we did ourselves no good by hyping offensive scenes and lines from early scripts of the movie which may not have appeared in the final version.

Certainly, Universal's handling of the affair was manipulative and exploitive. But we played right into their hands. Because of the intensity of the protest, we may have turned what many critics now say is a mediocre film into a box office blockbuster. Instead of "protecting" the public from it, we may have drawn them to it.

More troublesome, by working for the cancellation of the film, we walked precariously into the minefield of constitutional guarantees of free speech. Those who formally protested *The Last Temptation of Christ* have exercised their constitu-

tional right to do so. But to what extent should we strive to suppress the free speech of others? If today the church can muzzle the expression of the world, who's to say that tomorrow the world won't muzzle the expression of the church? The price we pay to freely preach and publish the claims of Christ in this society is that we respect the rights of others to preach and publish opinions contrary to ours, even if we find their ideas offensive. We propagate the gospel by persuasion, not by censorship.

Couldn't we have been more creative in confronting the problematic scenes in this movie? The theme of the movie, as I understand it, centers on the identity and mission of Christ. Rather than trying to ban the movie or blast the producers of it, what if groups of Christians had quietly distributed materials to patrons of the movie that would have calmly and logically addressed the questions the film raises about Christ? Perhaps "the devil's work" could have been used to the kingdom's advantage.

Finally, do we really think the movement of God will be derailed by one Hollywood movie? Is not the One who is in us greater than the one who is in the world? For that matter, do we really think unbelievers who view this movie are gullible enough to believe that Hollywood has produced the consummate representation of Christ?

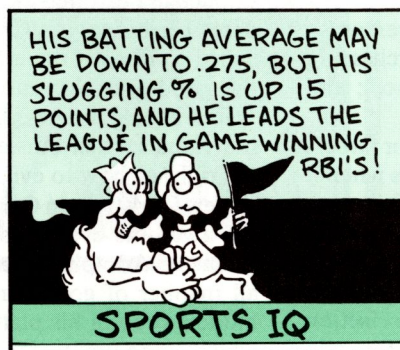
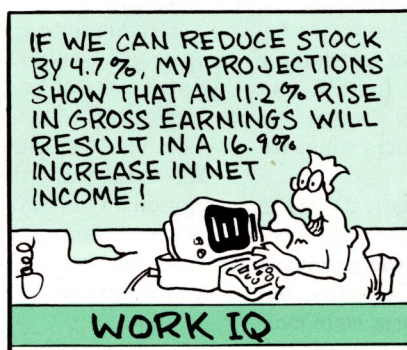
I am increasingly fascinated by how little attention Jesus paid in his day to those who scorned the faith. He didn't spend a lot of time lambasting the humanist philosophers who ridiculed the concept of God or confronting their misconceptions about religion. Rather, he was much more concerned about how those within the faith—those who claimed to be in fellowship with the Almighty—proclaimed God to the world.

Despite having serious reservations about it, I will not say Christians were wrong to protest the release of *The Last Temptation of Christ*, or even that it was a waste of time and energy. But I do believe we in the church have a more significant priority: to reveal Christ as he truly is through word and deed.

Don Ratzlaff is the editor of The Christian Leader, a sister "Meetinghouse" magazine, from which this editorial is reprinted by permission.

Pontius' Puddle

Bulletins and newsletters reprinting "Pontius' Puddle" from the Visitor must pay \$10 for each use to Joel Kauffmann, 111 Carter Road, Goshen, IN 46526.



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Bishops' Column

Brethren in Christ in an election year

by Owen Alderfer

Historically, an election year was little different from any other year for the Brethren in Christ in U.S. and Canada. Maybe the Brethren were a bit more fervent in prayer for governments than otherwise, but we have no records to show this. As people who identified only with "that kingdom which is not of this world," the fathers maintained that consistency kept one away from the polls—or from political involvements of any sort.

For most of us, things have changed. I remember back to 1928 when, as far as I know, my father first cast his vote for a president of United States. Al Smith, a Democrat, was running against Herbert Hoover, a Republican, for president of United States. The main issue that convinced Dad to step out and vote was not political; it was religious. Al Smith was Catholic: the risk of a Catholic president was just too great.

A lot of Brethren in Christ in Canada and the U.S. have changed their policies on voting in national elections since 1928. In fact, some of us have gotten involved in affairs of government much more deeply than casting ballots. Now, we encourage one another to write letters to our elected representatives; we sit on election boards; our churches are sometimes used as polling places; and we hold offices.

The policies and actions of our fathers were certainly *clearer* than ours when it comes to dealing with election year activities. Today we respond variously to options relative to the state. Is there yet any common ground that gives us guidelines on our activity in an election year? I think there is, and I would

address that concern under three heads:

Ministry of discernment: The church and the individual members constituting it are called to deal responsibly with "principalities and powers" underlying and expressing government under which we all live (Eph. 1:20-22; 6:12; Col. 2:15). Walter Wink writes, "Every Power tends to have a visible pole, an outer form—be it a church, a nation, or an economy—and an invisible pole, an inner spirit or driving force that animates, legitimates, and regulates its physical manifestation in the world." (Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 5, quoted by Richard Foster, *Money, Sex, and Power* [New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1985], p. 182.) Reflecting on this, Richard Foster declares, "Amazing as it may seem, it is the church's awesome responsibility to discern these spiritual powers. Among the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives to the people of God is the discernment of spirits (1 Cor. 12:8-10). We are given the ability to recognize the powers for what they are and to understand their hostility to the way of Christ" (Foster, p. 183).

What righteous values are evident in the actions and statements of political leaders and candidates? Where are peace, justice, and equity promulgated? What demonic forces are set free in their programs in our land? What evils are implied in the stated platforms of candidates for office? As Christians, we are called to discern these and to promote the good and withstand the evil. Our voices should be heard as church and individuals when our leaders stand for the right or bow to evil.

Few Christians in Germany discerned the awesome evils present in the programs of Adolph Hitler. He promised all manner of good for Germany, but hidden away in his platform were evils which led to unimaginably wicked acts.

Ministry of submission and prayer:

Probably the clearest mandate relative to government the Christian has is the call to submission and prayer (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:1-4; 1 Pet. 3:13-22, cf. Lk. 6:28). The call is to both a spirit or attitude and an action. God is the source of all authority; the Christian is called to respect those to whom authority is entrusted—even though they abuse it. This submission is not passive acceptance of whatever is; rather, it is standing for righteousness and justice and accepting the consequences.

The call to prayer is a call to active participation with God in his Lordship over the earth. Christ has already taken control of "the powers" (Col. 2:15); believing this and trusting in him we join forces with him, engaging in spiritual battles (Eph. 6:10-20).

Only for those who believe that God is a living, acting force in the world does this make sense. That excludes hosts of people—including many in churches who believe that only ballots and bullets alter the course of events. On the contrary, we are assured that the prayers of God's people affect the direction of human affairs.

Ministry of serving: Jesus made clear the fact that serving is the way of those who follow him. "Even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mk. 10:45). The service motivation should regulate our attitudes and actions at election time as well as any other time. A people who seek to follow Jesus in his pattern-act of footwashing should have a clear idea of how serving finds application here. Candidates and parties generally seek to rise by putting down their opponents. They usually hope to gain acclaim which leads to power in the process. The servant-spirit is often contrary to the election mood.

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