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Boat on Ganges River in Bangladesh introduces this month's emphasis on Baptist work in Bangladesh, especially village evangelism. Articles begin on this page. Photo by Leland Webb.

CREDITS

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In Bangladesh, open your eyes - there are the people!



a 'nothing plan'

“Y

ou come out here from a graduate school and suggest the simplest little nothing of a plan for us to follow,” said the missionary to the seminary professor.

With a bewildered shake of his head the missionary added, “The remarkable thing about it is that it looks like it might work.”

The visitor was R. Cal Guy, Bottoms Professor of Missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Tex. The setting was Bangladesh. That “little nothing of a plan” has led to the current thrust in village evangelism in Bangladesh. Don’t let the adjectives fool you. Simple often is best.

First, consider the problem.

“In Bangladesh 94 percent of the people live in villages,” states Missionary Thomas E. (Tom) Thurman, stationed at Faridpur. “There’s no way missionaries can reach all the villages,” he declares.

Daniel R. (Danny) Hill, missionary stationed in Dacca, the capital, maintains, “The Board could appoint 100 couples and still not go to all the places that have asked for us to come teach the Bible.”

Part of the answer is to enlist Bengalis to reach out to their own people.

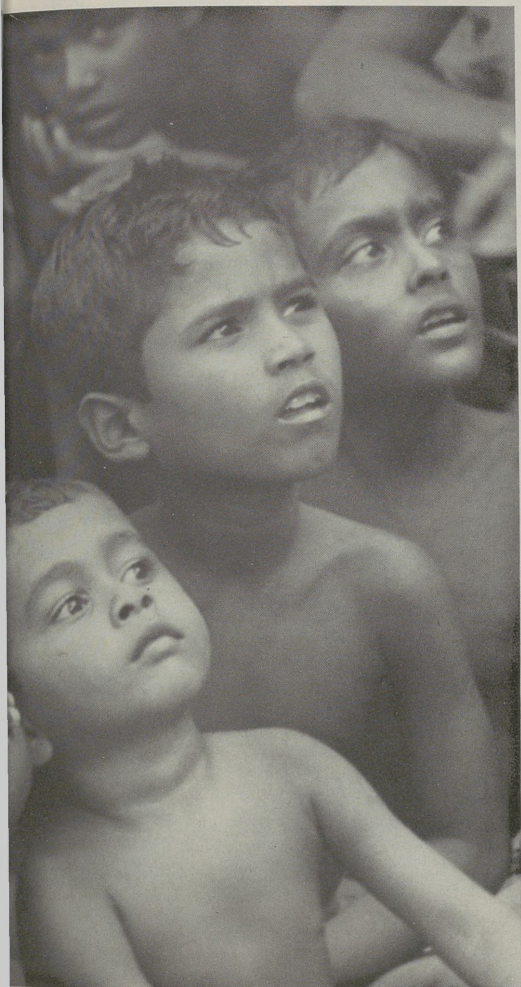
“I look on my work as a catalyst, helping national Christians to hear the call, to see their own people,” says Thurman. “I tell my national friends that a trained, consecrated Bengali would equal ten missionaries. Because of the culture, there are many things we’ll never understand about the way they think, the way they do things.”

Suggests Thurman, “I hope that in the forward thrust of missions, it won’t all be focused on urban missions. In Bangladesh we don’t have much choice, for most people live in villages.”

Mission work in Bangladesh is hard, says Missionary James E. Young, stationed at Feni. He cites the residue of an older type of mission approach that put heavy dependence on the missionary, the low economic conditions in the country, and the masses of people. Bangladesh, only slightly larger than Arkansas, has a population around 78 million. “The area near Feni,” says Young, “is the most densely populated rural area in the world.”

Village evangelism is what’s happening in Baptist missions in Bangladesh today. People are omnipresent—along the road, driving cattle, washing clothes, bathing, harvesting rice, fishing, pedaling rickshas, carrying loads, jammed into buses, clambering aboard ferries, clustered in villages.

Attention, mission strategists! Open your eyes—here are the



as turn intently toward Bible teacher at Malay Nagar, Bangladesh.

appeals to villagers



Above: Clapping hands to the beat, children in village of Malay Nagar line up to learn Christian songs.

Left: Pedestrians and vehicles scurry off small ferry, a typical river-crossing necessity in Bangladesh. **Facing page, top:** Two men listen to Bible teacher at service in village. Fifteen Bible-reading groups were represented at the service.

Bottom: Rising river level on Ganges eats at banks and threatens homes, an annual crisis.

people! They are anywhere you wish to look. Now give them the gospel!

Facing that kind of challenge, the Bangladesh Baptist Mission, when not compelled by emergencies to emphasize relief work, continues the search for the most far-reaching strategy. In that search the Mission invited Professor Guy to the field. On sabbatical leave from the seminary, Guy spent six weeks in Bangladesh in 1975, one week at each mission station. Then he offered a proposal.

The missionaries modified the plan as needed. In 1976 Guy returned to Bangladesh for further consultation.

taking the 'holybook'

That "simple little nothing of a plan" involves taking God's Word to the villages and letting people study it for themselves. We'll get to Guy's version a little later. First, let some missionaries tell how it works.

Recognize that mission outreach in Bangladesh, a Hindu and Muslim culture, takes time. "We build friendships," explains Missionary James McKinley, Jr. Perhaps you'll recognize his name, since he was one of the missionaries who stayed in Bangladesh through the nation's bloody struggle for independence in late 1971.

"Missionaries—gurus in the local terminology—and a Bengali will go to a village," McKinley begins. "There always ought to be a Bengali," he advises. "A white man alone is suspect."

"They ask for the leader of the village. Go through channels," he cautions; "stay with them. You might think someone can do it better, but forget it—stay with the leader."

The Christian visitors carry copies of *The Man Who Gave His Life*, a summary in simple Bengali of the accounts by the four Gospel writers.

The visitors begin, "We want to leave a copy of our holy book. We want you to read it. It is a holy book, so you must keep it clean."

"If you understand something, discuss it among yourselves. You will find that the more you discuss what you understand, the more you will understand."

Continue the visiting Christians, "If you like, we will never come again. Or we'll keep coming back forever if you want us to come back. Or one of our friends will come."

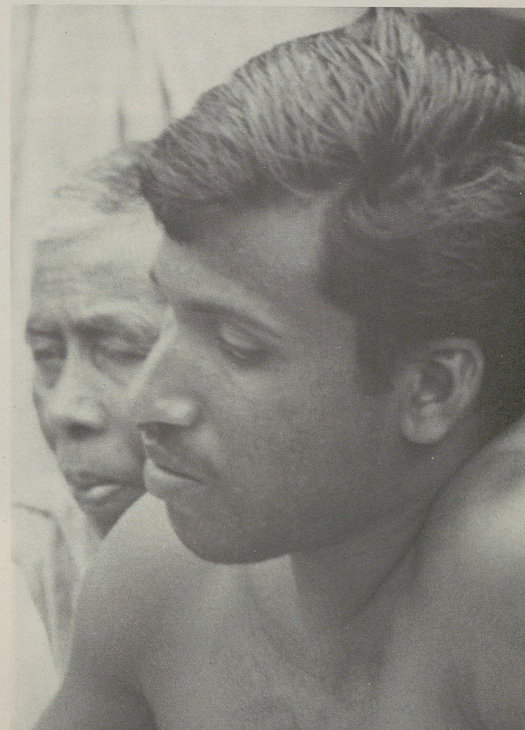
Relates McKinley, "The leader either reads, or arranges for someone to read, from the book. You build up the leader's role,

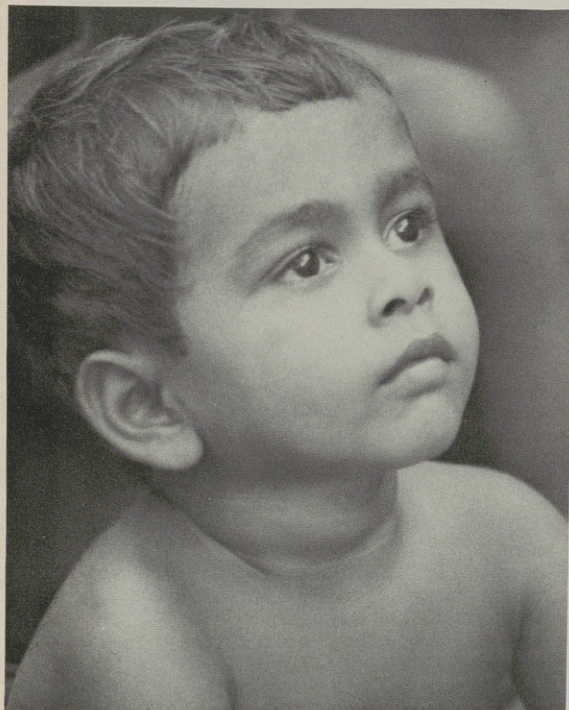
make him more important than before.

"We tell those in a new village, 'We left a book at X village; talk with them—see what they feel about it.'"

That's the basic approach. "We are told no sometimes," says McKinley. "We keep a record of visits."

"There is nothing secret. We keep the matter open. We don't talk about becoming Christians unless asked. We use simple theology—just keep Jesus in it all."





"It's tough work," he goes on. "You sleep on the ground and eat poorly—you can't take food, but must eat what is there. You walk 15 miles a day and say the same simple things over and over."

Thurman notes, "The places where the people are responsive are the hardest to get to. We found several places that were easy to get to, but they didn't work out."

A village may be one house or 30, points out Hill. "We tell the natural leader, 'This is God's Word. We're not selling it—we're giving it to those who agree to read it.'"

The leader either serves as reader or enlists someone. "He stays in charge," Hill emphasizes. "He tells the reader when to read."

"We try to get them to read once a day. Sometimes no one reads; sometimes just one. Sometimes they will call the whole group together for the reading."

"The response varies," Hill continues. "Some have read only a few pages. In one place they had read the whole book four times."

When one young man in a village claimed to have read the book four times, the Bengali with Hill seemed skeptical. Challenged the villager: "Just ask me any question you want out of that book, and see if I can't answer it!"

Hill told of one Hindu teacher who used the story of the Prodigal Son to help a Hindu family whose son had gone astray.

The reading approach does not mean that missionaries and Bengali Christians have stopped holding services in villages.

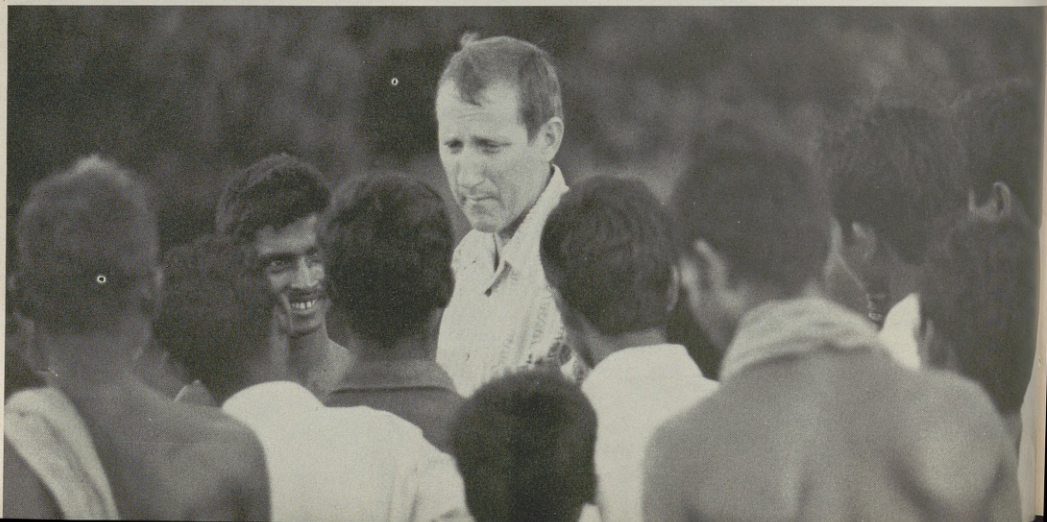
"We make biweekly trips to the villages and spend some time with them," Thurman relates, "to answer questions and to have a gospel service. We try to get over the presence of an outsider as being the big thing to them."

"We try to find out who the leaders are," he also emphasizes. The actual readers are usually young people, he notes. "You can always get the young people, but if you baptize them alone, you will isolate them from the group," he warns. That means they probably will leave the village and move to the nearest city.

For the best work, advises Thurman, "Go to a village at night. First the children go home; then the curious leave. About 9:30 or 10:00 P.M. those who really are interested begin to ask questions. They are hesitant to ask in the group. They don't want to be ostracized."

Professor Guy left Bangladesh in August 1975. In November the men of the Mission surveyed Baliakandi Thana (a unit similar

Top: In Dacca, the capital, or elsewhere in Bangladesh, rickshaws offer transportation. **Left:** Bengali boy pays rapt attention to Bible story in village. **Below:** Engulfed by villagers after service at Moulay Nagar, Missionary Tom Thurman listens to questions and problems.





Above: Bengali Christian worker, Bible in hand, teaches attentive villagers beside host's home in Malay Nagar. **Right:** Near the village, man riding on a cart smiles warmly.

to a county) in Faridpur District.

"We visited each village in six of the unions (like a beat)," reports Thurman. "We gave the book, *The Man Who Gave His Life*, to anyone who promised he would read publicly daily."

By May of last year 360 reading groups were in progress in 52 different villages. All of the work is among Hindus, and mostly among lower castes.

progress and potential

"It is still an experiment," said McKinley last July. "Now about 600 books have been placed. There is a potential of 300 churches."

When McKinley went on local leave last year, he left a list of villages for Thurman to cover in his absence. Some of the notes Thurman made reveal something of the process:

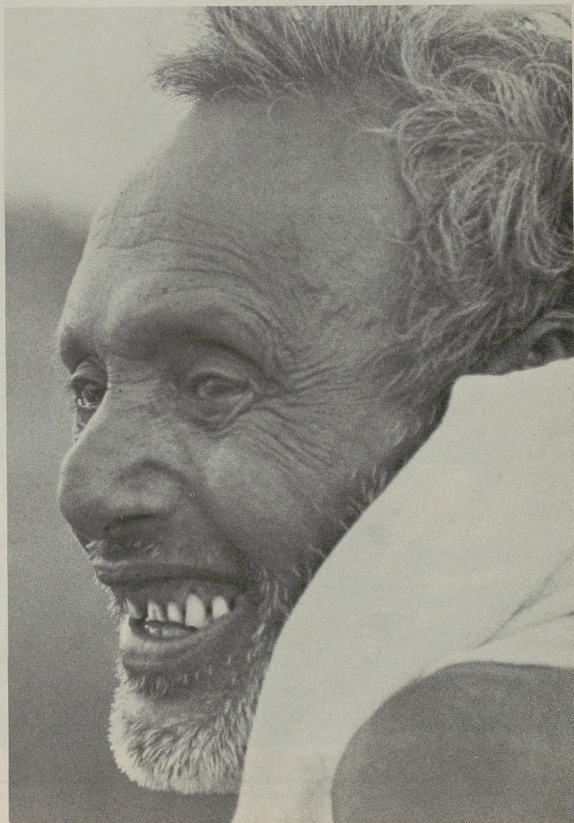
"Beruli—We had an A.M. service. They are still reading and asking questions. . . . Carpenters—Six with books. Interested; gave us *dah* (a coconut drink); want us to come more often. . . . Trilokchandpur—Interested; one is reading regularly."

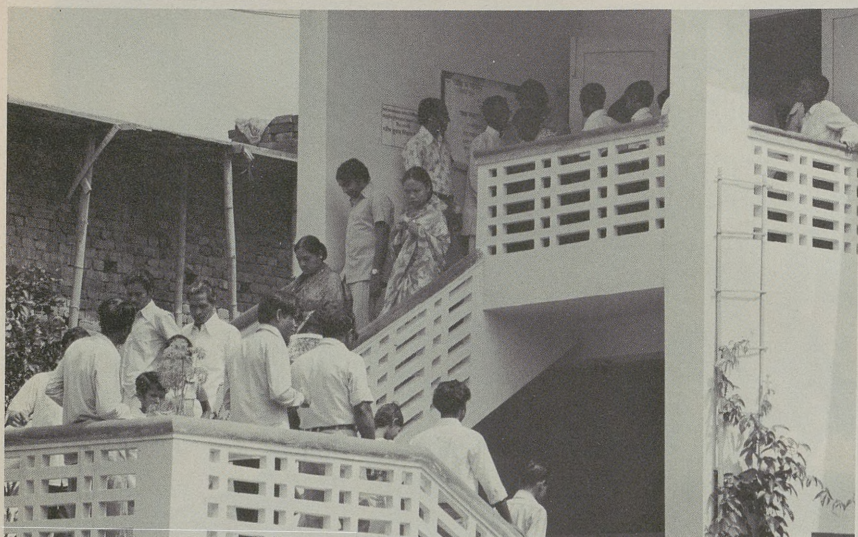
Predicts Hill, "Once this thing starts rolling, it will be like a snowball. It's a matter of just when; we must keep putting in the seed and waiting for God to work."

Of the prospects for evangelism, Hill says, "I think it's not going to be a matter of people being saved one by one; it's going to be whole villages."

Admits Thurman, "I'm in the dialectic between group decisions and a lifelong belief in individual decisions for salvation." He told of a man in one village who, being ill, was urged to go to a hospital. "I'll have to think on it," he responded. The process

(Continued on page 8.)





Dacca Surprise

Above: Worshipers stream down the stairs from the second-floor auditorium of Immanuel Baptist Church in Dacca, Bangladesh. **Below:** Congregation fills the auditorium on a Sunday morning. Styles of dress include both traditional and Western.





Above and right: Mother and child and woman listen intently during worship service. **Top, right:** Filing out of the auditorium after service, women pause to peer through window.

Perhaps it is because crisis reports are more easily remembered than stories of Baptist progress in Bangladesh. Whatever the reason, to the first-time visitor to Dacca, Immanuel Baptist Church comes as a surprise. Here in the midst of the capital ministers a thriving Baptist church. The second-floor auditorium as usual is packed for Sunday-morning worship, with well over 200 worshippers.

The room is clean and bright. Light streams from windows on either side. A simple, tasteful cross dominates the wall behind the wide pulpit stand. Pastor Simon Sarka presides.

The congregation contains a mixture of people and dress—Bengali women in traditional garb, but some wearing Western-

style apparel; a smattering of Westerners, some of the women having chosen Bangladesh-style dress.

Bangladesh Baptist Union includes seven churches, all self-supporting, with a total of more than 500 members.

In September more than 140 representatives of the Bangladesh Baptist Union, the Bangladesh Baptist Association, and the Garo Baptist Union met at Faridpur Baptist Church as part of the Baptist World Alliance-sponsored emphasis on reconciliation in Jesus Christ. Each group shared its history. The organizations were challenged to closer fellowship through additional meetings and to a thrust toward bringing the country to Christ.

took four days. He called in all the relatives, even to the fringes. Then he decided to go. "A personal decision became a group decision," points out Thurman. "The Lord showed me that."

It's time to take a look at some parts of the proposal made by Cal Guy, the suggestion that has led to the wave of village evangelism through Scripture reading.

First, Guy noted some basic problems facing missionaries, not only in Bangladesh, but also in many other fields. As you read the list, you will recognize how the village evangelism plan the missionaries have described overcomes these obstacles. The problems include:

"1. How do we get the Word of God in the ears and minds and hearts of a massive number of people?

"2. How do we extend the time of the missionary so that with the limited number of missionaries we still have unlimited outreach with plans and processes that share the good news and God's love broadly with every nation?

"3. How do we give enough attention to people who do not know the love of God and the Word of God that they hear about it over a long period of time in such fashion that any decision for Christ is automatically bound up with a community of like-minded people who can encourage them toward decision for Christ and facilitate a growth in Christian fellowship?

"4. How do you spread the gospel with limited funds to an unlimited number of people?

"5. How do you provide for an ongoing Christian community which together learns more of the love and the grace of God and gives mutual encouragement toward walking in the Christian faith . . . ?

"6. How do you make the gospel 'audible and visible' to the multitudes of people by one simple effort and one redeemed community, which, by its loyalty to Christ and its transformed life-style makes impact upon its neighbors?

"7. How do you give ample opportunity for men to grow at

Right and below:
By cart or by boat,
people of Bangladesh
travel by whatever
means possible.



Facing page, top:
Mother listens while
child snoozes during
service at Immanuel
Church, Dacca.
Bottom: In village,
women cluster at
edge of crowd.

whatever pace their spiritual appetite, aptitude, and commitment elicit, being careful not to corrupt spiritual motives with material inducements?"

'read every day'

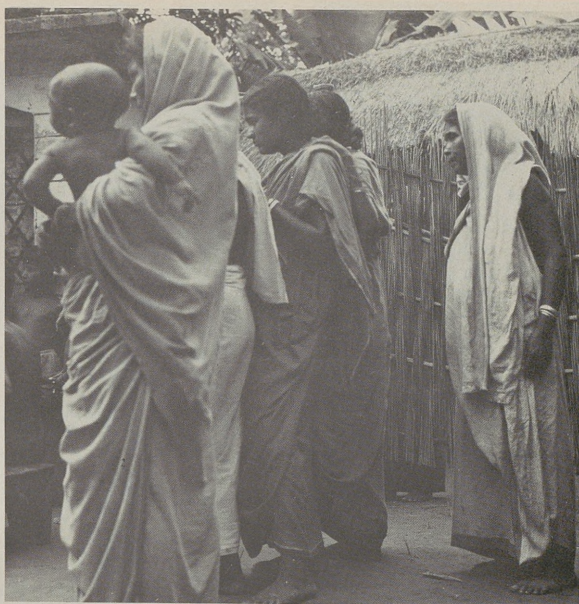
Guy's plan of Scripture reading in the villages is designed to surpass these barriers. In his proposal, Guy emphasizes several key features. Some have already been echoed by the missionaries' accounts.

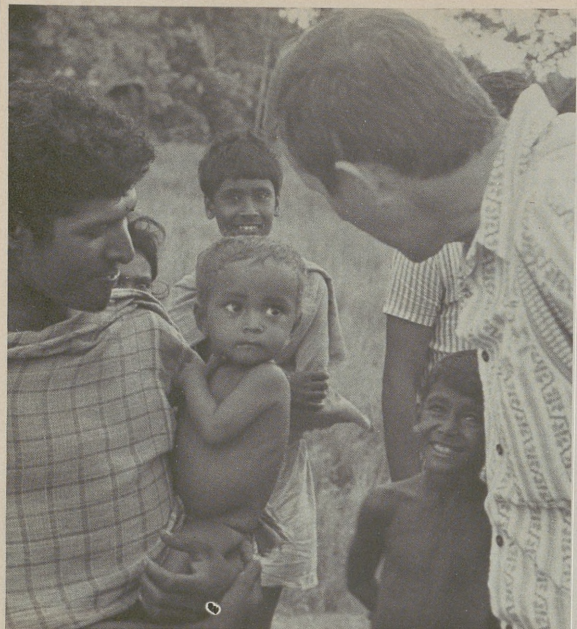
"Read every day," the professor advises. "Most villagers cannot read. Encourage reading to them until they can memorize the total book. Read it 50 or 100 times.

"It is to be reading just to let the Word of the great God speak from him to my heart. No one is to be able to answer all the questions. Keep away from questions as far as possible."

Continues Guy, "The group should, from the start, incorporate the idea of being most successful when they gather every day to read and discuss the Word and when they show their neighbors and relatives how it can be done and get them started in their own locations. . . . Probably eight or ten adults is an ideal number, and then someone down the path 500 feet should be encouraged to start another one.

"The missionary or Bengali leader who starts this should never be the leader," Guy warns. "Lead the man in the commun-





ity to be the natural leader and never shove him aside and reduce his dignity by 'showing him how it ought to be done.'"

What most people think of when they hear "Bangladesh" concerns relief needs. In one portion of his plan, Guy deals with the relationship of physical needs to the more basic spiritual need.

"Much of the conditions calling for relief represent the accumulation of force of neglect and man's inhumanity to man generated for generations by the prevailing religions and social patterns," suggests Guy. "We will only cooperate with those forces which can build up greater disasters for tomorrow if we fail to deal with causes at their root because we are too involved in mopping up the effects of those causes.

"Much of this is 'unmoppable,' but preventative measures of a spiritual nature can stop the flood of destroyed human beings," declares Guy. "And following hard on the heels of a spiritual foundation, we can then express Christian compassion creatively by using our knowledge to help them help themselves on a permanent basis."

The approach offered by Guy contains many more details and nuances than those presented here, of course. He also offers several suggestions concerning programs of development in

Left: Thurman admires villager's young child. **Below:** The attention of both children and adults remains riveted on Bible-teaching visitor. **Facing page:** Woman sits in solitude on river bank in Bangladesh.





Bengali Christian worker leads line of children in singing gospel songs during service in village of Malay Nagar.



Barely keeping your head above water is not a cliché for Bangladesh. It's a way of life. The country has attracted attention and sympathy in recent years because of national agonies—civil war, destructive massive floods, a murderous tidal bore.

Location bears directly on the problem. Almost every year the melting snows of the Himalaya Mountains and monsoon rains have combined to raise the water level of the rivers in Bangladesh.

For a countryside almost at sea level, that spells trouble, with a capital T. During ferry rides on the Ganges River two days apart last July, the rising water level could easily be noticed.

Low-lying fields along the river were lushly green with rice. But as the Ganges rose relentlessly, only a portion of the crop would be harvested. The simple mud-and-pole homes in the flats along the river would disappear, to be rebuilt in the same spots after flooding subsided.

Ferries find it harder to ply their routes as the river swells and the current increases. Water laps at low-lying roads. It's like the year before, and the year before that, and all those other years—except for the years when conditions have been worse.

Along the road from Dacca to the Ganges the flatness of the countryside is memorable. Homes sometimes perch on mounds raised from the wetness. The inhabited mounds are people-

practical matters, such as food supply and better health for the people of Bangladesh.

trust and expectation

Professor Guy also offers some personal advice for the missionaries.

"Find such personal freedom in the loving presence of the Holy Spirit that you can trust yourself to him—and then trust him to lead you day by day to those he has prepared," he proposes.

"Introduce them to the Word of God and trust the working of the Holy Spirit to teach them, with you as his helper—not his boss—what they need to know as Bengali Christians in their beginning stage.

"Do not try to become guardians of their doctrine," he cautions. "Our task is not to introduce people to doctrine but to the living Lord."

Suggests Guy further, "Expect God to do today something he did in the New Testament."

A close-up look at what it's like in a village and how missionaries and Bengalis minister there is provided this visitor by Tom Thurman one July afternoon, after a considerable drive and a ferry ride from Thurman's home in Faridpur.

From the spot where the missionary stops his vehicle next to a canal, the village of Malay Nagar lies only a short walk across the canal and down a foot-hardened path. Bengalis, their curiosity transparent and persistent, especially among the young ones, gather close to the visitors.

A crowd of children and adults assembles next to the host's home. Among those attending the service, 15 reading groups who have received *The Man Who Gave His Life* are represented.

A small Hindu temple sits next to the home. The temple serves the host family and the next-door neighbors. Just in front of the temple, mats are spread for the visitors. Today the temple's doors are closed and latched; on previous visits they have been open. Thurman muses later that perhaps the doors were closed to prevent contamination of the temple by the preaching of the gospel outside.

made, men, women, and children having hauled the dirt by cart, or, more likely, on their heads. At points where the ground level does rise, the jungle closes in.

Yet conditions are improving, maintains Dilip Data, secretary of the Bangladesh Council of Churches. The harvest the last two years has been excellent, he said in a recent interview in Richmond, Va.

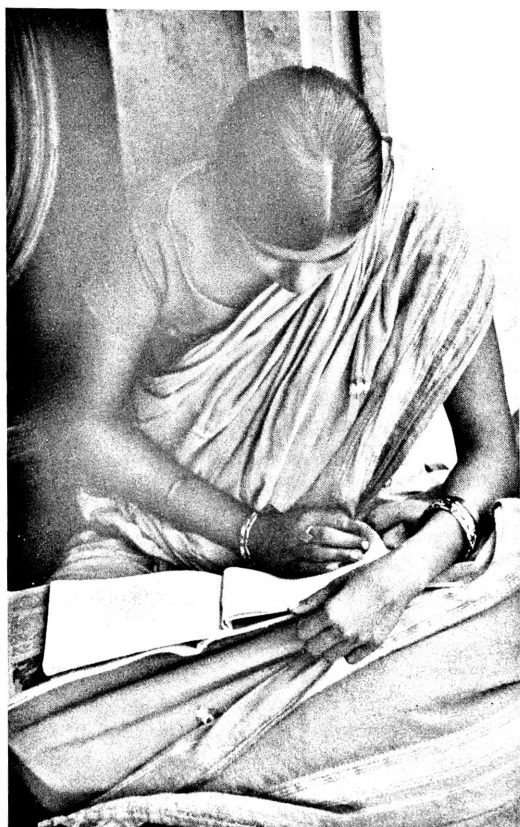
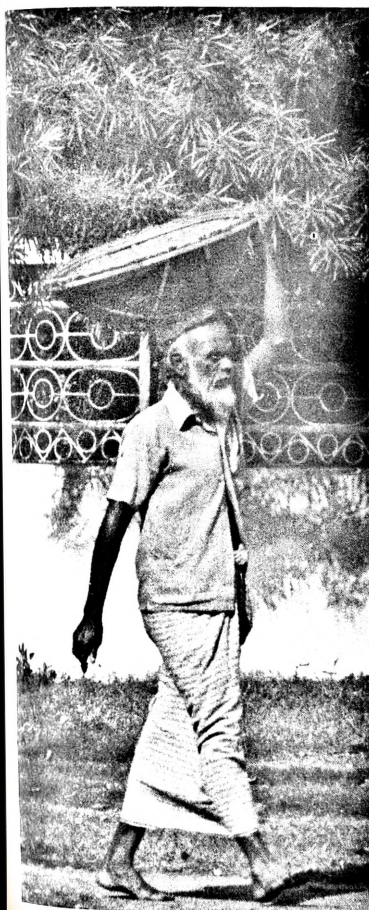
"Christian people are pioneering in the field of working to overcome the problems of nature," he reports. Because of the Muslim culture, there has been much fatalism evident among the people.

The period of January to May is a relatively safe time, he states, free from natural calamity. If crops can be harvested during this span, the country's food supply can be maintained.

Dilip Data is a Baptist and comes from a Baptist family. His training includes attendance at Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, Baguio.

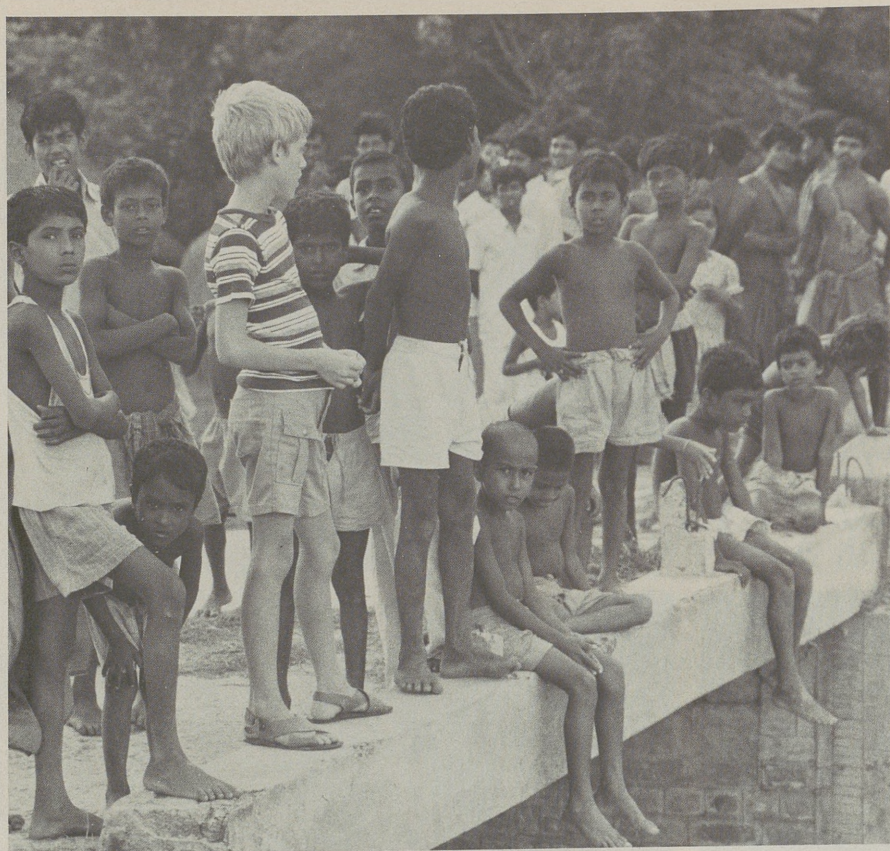
From both a personal perspective and a Christian overview, he is thankful for the presence of Southern Baptist missionaries. They came, he says, at "a critical time." He cites three fields in which these missionaries have met great needs: initiation of evangelistic effort, missing in other groups; provision of Christian literature; and the endeavor to train national Baptist leaders.

Boy peers through window mesh at Christian Industrial Center, Faridpur.

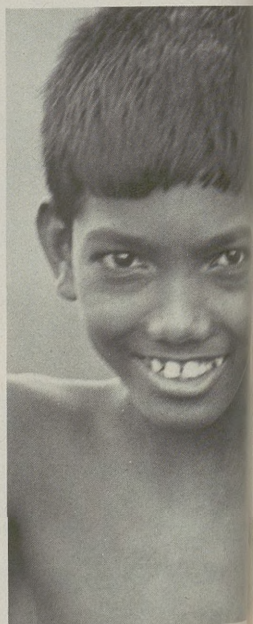


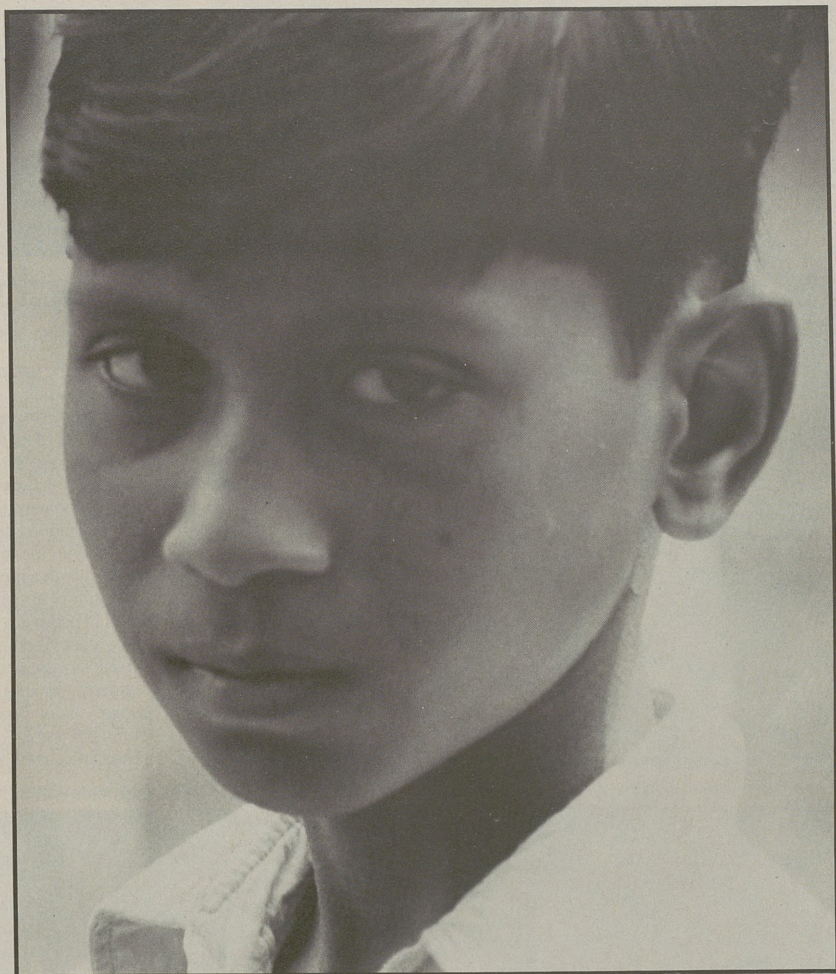
SAVE FOR
GRADED SERIES
1978

Left: Filled basket rides atop man's head in Dacca. **Above:** Woman at church in Dacca looks over study material.



Top: At canal bridge near village, curious and friendly Bengali children surround Phillip Thurman (just turned ten years old), son of the Tom Thurmans. **Above:** Crowded ferry nears landing.





For the Bible-teaching session, one picture is used from a flip chart illustrating events in the life of Christ. The biblical scene is hung from a pole extending from the front of the temple. It seems as good a place as any to position a Bible-story picture.

Thurman sits on the mat throughout the service, occasionally stirring a breeze with a fan provided for his comfort. The Bengali Christians lead the service. With the missionary today are John D. Halдар, once a full-time evangelistic worker, now a volunteer; Paul Goswami, a student at the Christian Industrial Center in Faridpur; and James Sircar. Thurman deliberately becomes a listener, not a leader.

Halдар lines up the children and teaches them Christian songs. A little later both Halдар and Sircar preach and teach from the Bible. Thurman is called on to lead the closing prayer.

Before leaving the village, Thurman learns that the man at

whose home the meeting is held has faced ostracism because of his contact with the Christians. The pressure has come not from within his own village but from nearby villages. The challenge put to him: "Why have you given these people the right to come and preach another religion?" Before he leaves, Thurman tries to reassure the villager in his interest to read from the holy book.

For Thurman, he is where he feels he belongs. "We've asked the Mission to locate us in a village when we return in 1979 after furlough," he says. "I'm doing now what I surrendered to do in 1959. I'm happy doing this work."

And so it goes, from day to day, from village to village, from one reading group to another. The process is slow, but the potential for response to the gospel is almost unimaginable. Not bad for a "little nothing of a plan."

TC

**Volunteer service
by U.S. physicians
enables this Baptist
clinic in Bangladesh
to offer medical
help to a community.**



'Good Medicine within Reach'

The building was once a chicken house, part of a Baptist agricultural project.

Now it's a temporary rural health center in Alhadipur, a farming village in Bangladesh.

"We are trying to bring some good medicine within the reach of the people," states Missionary Thomas E. Thurman.

"It is loving the people," explains Missionary Thomas D. Kirkpatrick, who, with other missionaries, designed the conversion to clinic facilities. Both Thurman and Kirkpatrick are stationed at Faridpur, 12 miles from the clinic.

The building's roof is galvanized metal. Walls are partly of bricks and partly of woven bamboo. The floor is cement. Bamboo mats form partitions.

"Each morning begins with an evangelistic

service for the patients at 7:30 A.M.," reports Kirkpatrick.

"We divide the crowd into lines: those returning for more medicine, those coming for lab tests, those with malnourished babies on the feeding program, those with skin diseases who need to be scrubbed and have medicine applied, those with cuts and broken bones for emergency, those who need to talk to a nurse or doctor."

The staff of about a dozen persons sees some 150 patients a day. The clinic is open daily except Wednesday and Saturday.

Physicians serving the center have been volunteers from the U.S., going under the Foreign Mission Board's Medical/Dental Volunteer Program.

The clinic, a temporary medical-relief

At Baptist clinic in Alhadipur, Bangladesh, Missionary Thomas D. Kirkpatrick listens to patients waiting for treatment.





project, is to be discontinued next spring, just before the Kirkpatrick's return to the U.S. on furlough.

"The five original personnel are Bengali Christian young people, four of whom came from Faridpur Baptist Church," points out Jim Carpenter, physician from Seneca, S.C., who served as a volunteer at Alhadipur clinic last April.

"All five are highly motivated Christians with an exemplary compassion for the people's plight," he says.

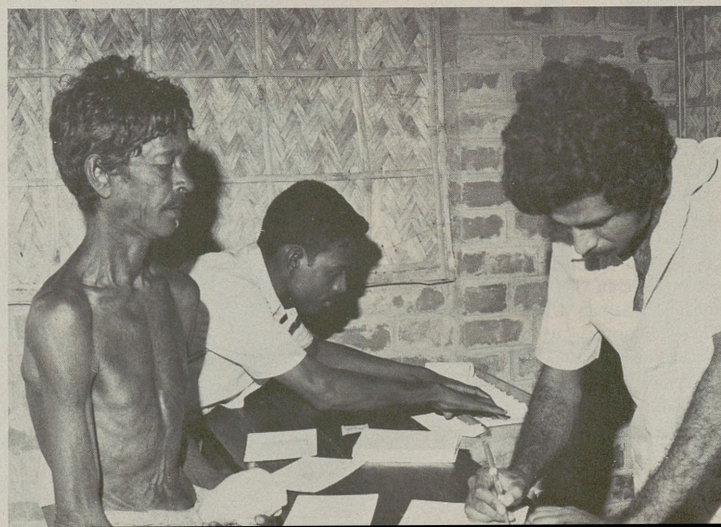
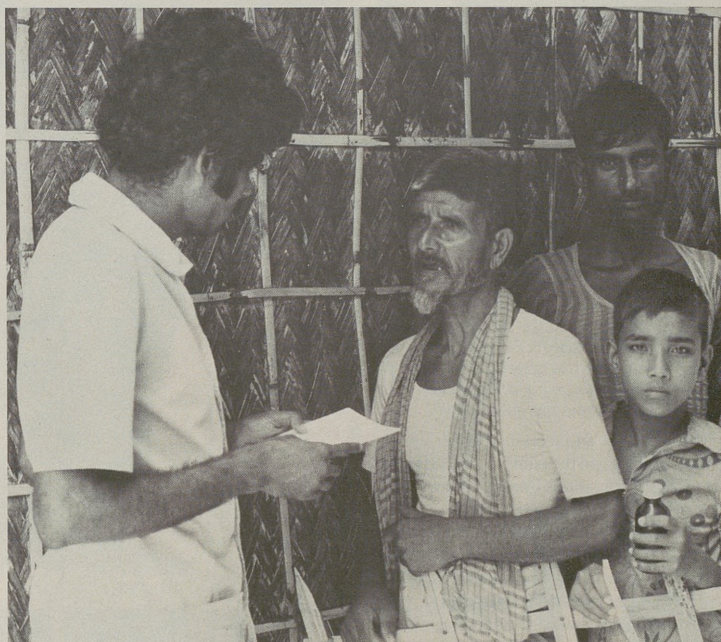
Sterilizing of instruments "is done by using a pressure cooker borrowed from Beverly Kirkpatrick," Carpenter relates. "Tongue blades are hand-carved from bamboo. The patients bring bottles for any liquid medications they receive from the pharmacy. Tablets and capsules are dispensed in hand-folded paper packets."

But, as Carpenter emphasizes, "This medical project was designed to be kept at an inexpensive level, so that it might be run as long as possible on the available funds."

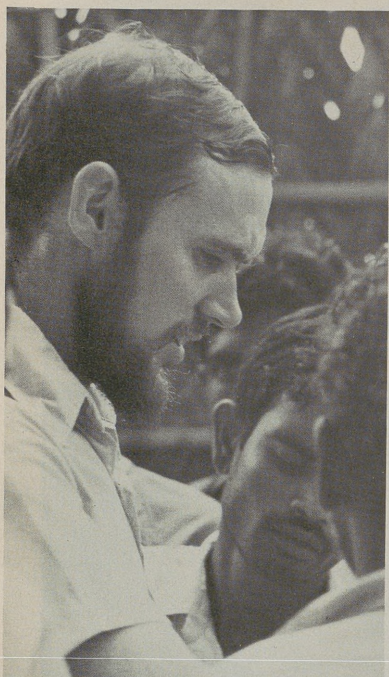
Patients at the clinic come mainly from two groups: workers of all levels from the textile plant across the road; the larger group, those from among farming people in the surrounding area.

Patients pay a registration fee of one taka (about six cents) for a month. The charge for medication is even more nominal. Patients must promise to return to the clinic regularly; this is to encourage patients who need continued treatment not to stop after one visit.

Carpenter pays tribute to the missionaries involved in the project. He points to Gloria Thurman, who has been "instrumental in helping Tom Kirkpatrick with the task of procuring medications, setting up the



Top: Patients line up to await treatment at Alhadipur clinic. **Center:** Clinic attendant interviews patient to determine type of treatment needed. **Right:** Patient is registered.



Above: Kirkpatrick talks to those waiting for clinic help. **Right:** Experienced male nurse administers treatment when no volunteer physician is on hand. **Below:** Woman attendant interviews patient at clinic.

clinical facility, and securing the personnel necessary to begin the clinic." Mrs. Thurman dispenses medications from her home in Faridpur one afternoon each week.

"Beverly Kirkpatrick serves as hostess to the visiting volunteer physicians and keeps the inventories of medical supplies stored at their home," continues Carpenter.

"Barbara (Mrs. Louis) O'Conner, a missionary associate nurse in Dacca, gave valuable technical and professional assistance and advice." He adds that to some degree, "the whole Mission became involved with an active interest in setting up this volunteer clinic project."

Beginning last April, volunteer doctors from the U.S. have been scheduled at Alhadipur for two or more weeks at a time on a regular basis. Besides Carpenter, physicians who have taken part include: W. W. Walley, Waynesboro, Miss.; David Van-Landingham, Jackson, Miss.; Benton E. Hewitt, Summit, Miss.; Ohlen R. Wilson, Alma, Ga.; Nathan Wright, Texarkana, Tex.; T. Edwin Cook and Raymond E. Flake, both of Lake Jackson, Tex.; and G. Leroy Howell, Starkville, Miss.

At least two of the physicians are slated to return to Bangladesh this year.

In the gaps when volunteer physicians

are not available at the clinic the remaining staff does what it can. Joining the staff last year were a woman with clinical experience and Nurse Andrew Mondal, a man with considerable medical experience.

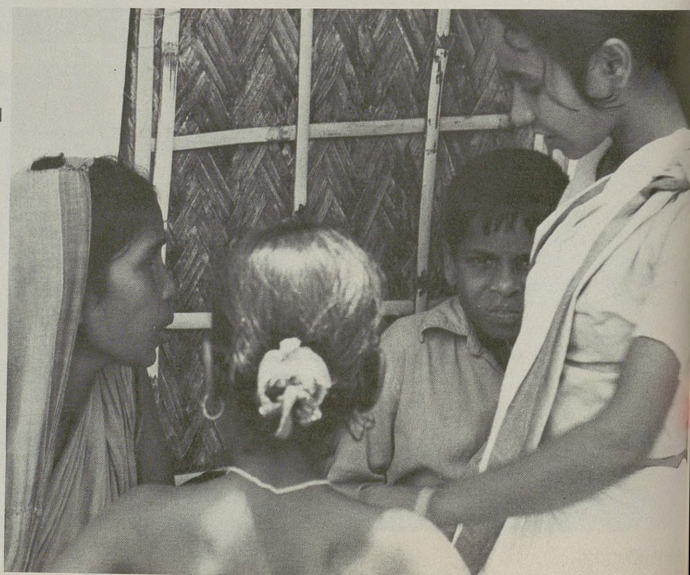
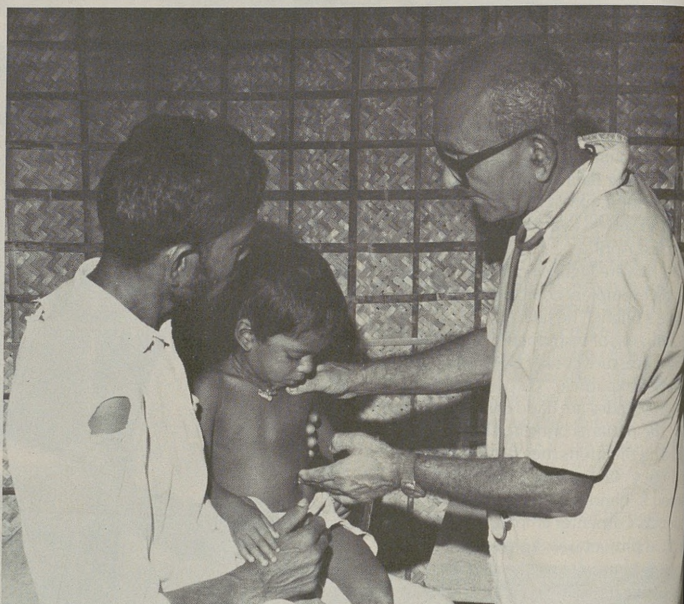
"I personally found this clinic a fulfillment of my feeling about medical missions in general," declares Carpenter; "that is, that it offers an opportunity for general and personal witness and proclaiming salvation in Jesus Christ to a poor and destitute people.

"If an American physician can bring himself to work patiently in an admittedly

incomplete facility, forgetting what he cannot do and what the limitations are and majoring on what he can do and what the opportunities are, I believe it can be quite fulfilling, and in a sense even more personal than a sophisticated medical setting," adds Carpenter.

States Kirkpatrick: "The basic thrust of the clinic is to teach people about Jesus Christ and his love for them."

He hopes to expand the program to nine villages in the area and that response to the gospel will lead to the opening of churches. **TC**





Above: Tropical trees frame entrance to Christian Industrial Center, Baptist project at Faridpur, Bangladesh. Below: Student prepares to crank gasoline engine in CIC shop while others watch.

CIC: Living up to a Dual Task

The Christian Industrial Center, housed in a cluster of buildings at Faridpur, Bangladesh, serves a dual purpose as a Baptist project: evangelism and relief.

The center "is an evangelistic tool of our Mission," says Thomas E. Thurman, missionary at Faridpur. But he also characterizes it as "probably the best relief effort our Mission has for the good of the country. It puts people into the earning stream."

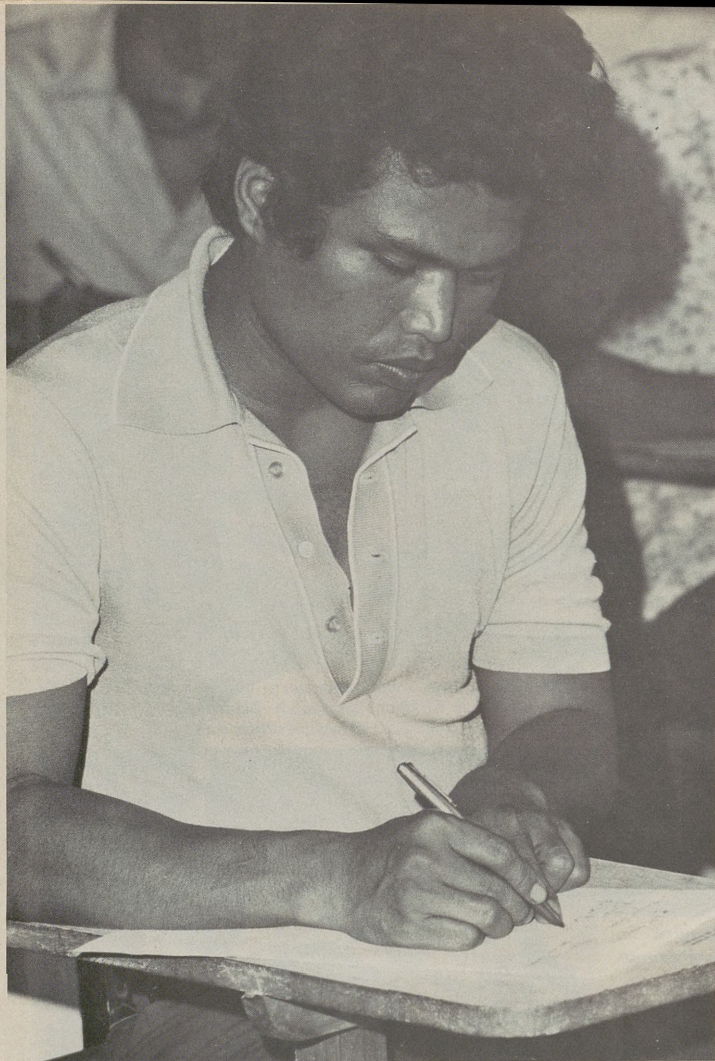
"As have most of the other men of the Mission, Thurman served as superintendent of CIC for three years, but Bengali Christians now administer the center. The Mission contributes about \$6,000 a year to the operation of CIC.

D. P. Deori, now director of training, exhibits satisfaction at what the center offers in practical learning. Concerning work on gasoline engines, for example, Deori points out that students actually handle the parts, learning by experience. This is not always true of industrial schools in the country. At the center, says Deori, learning is 20 percent theoretical, 80 percent practical. The center provides on-the-job training. Students even take on outside work, such as repairing an outboard motor.

The 50 young men, ages 16 to 23, currently enrolled at CIC include Hindus, Muslims, and Christians. Those who live in the hostels (dormitories) at the center are divided by religious backgrounds because of their differing eating habits.

Text and photos by Leland Webb

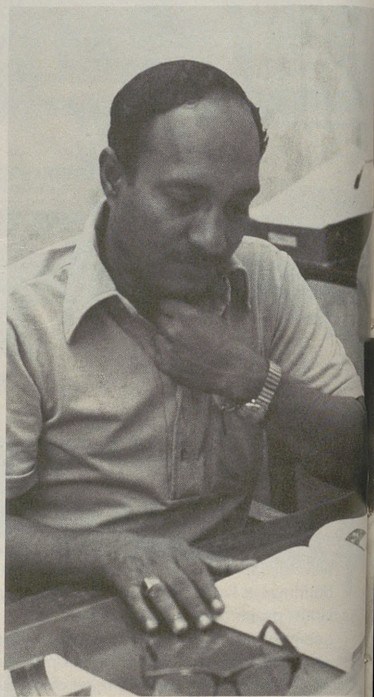




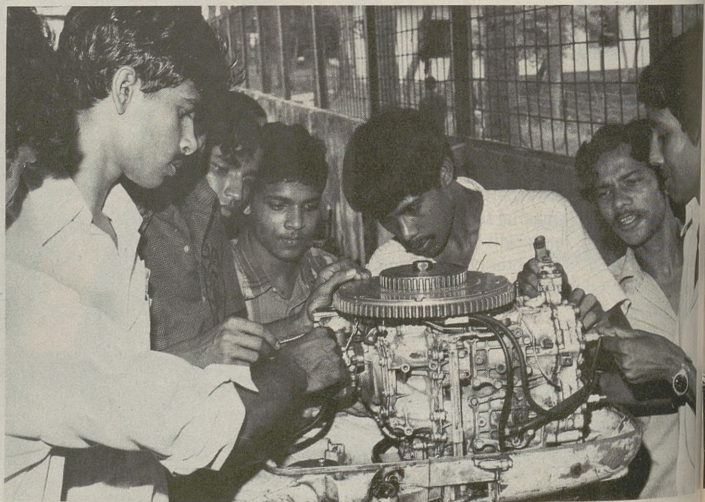
"We have daily Bible study in the chapel, with nightly prayer meetings in the hostels," Thurman reports.

Two-year courses are offered in welding, machine shop, lathe, diesel, and gasoline engine repairs. At one time equipment was available for the slaughter of cattle, but soldiers destroyed this during the war in which Bangladesh became independent.

Today at the center young men both learn about the Bible and gain practical skills to help them earn a living. **TC**

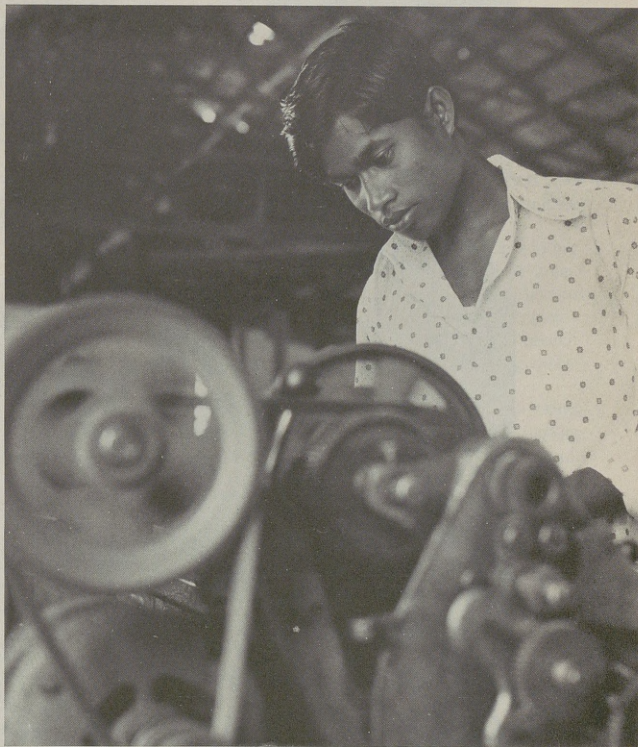
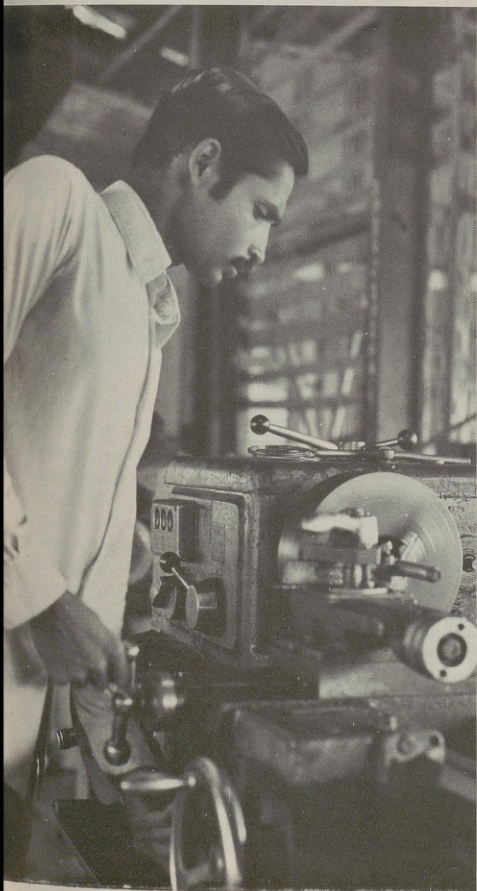


Above: Student concentrates on written exam at Christian Industrial Center. **Above, right:** D. P. Deori, CIC director of training, at his desk. He says the center's training program is 80 percent practical, 20 percent theoretical. **Right:** At the center, students get first-hand contact with various types of engines and equipment.





While one student tends the fire, two others carefully position container over flames in foundry.



Practical experience gained with various types of machines helps prepare young Bengalis to move "into the earning stream."





Members of the Baptist church in Neltume, Chile, aid in unloading relief food into their building.

Tightening Their Belts

By Jane Robison

"For a period of about six months, they were left without pay and were given minimum rations, which included almost no meat and very few of the essentials. They were living practically on potatoes," reports Missionary William (Bill) Andrews, missionary to Chile since 1952.

The 3,000 people of Neltume, a community in the Andes Mountains of southern Chile, were not the only ones left bankrupt by President Salvador Allende's Socialist-Marxist government, according to Andrews. But their plight was the first discovered by him.

For a period of 15 years, Andrews had made regular visits to a group of Baptist believers who had organized a church in the Neltume community. "The livelihood of these people has always been rather meager," says Andrews. "By that I mean they have always more or less been content with just food and clothing and the bare necessities of life."

Neltume is one of five large lumber mill and farming communities bordering Lake Panguipulli. According to Andrews, a total of about 7,000 people in these communities have lived and worked there most of their lives. Their housing and food were supplied by the companies for which they worked, and a small salary was paid in addition.

During the Allende regime when the socialist government was in power, the farms were confiscated. "The people in this area were given increased wages," says Andrews, "the money coming from the government's treasury, we later learned, under the guise that production was up and, therefore, the new government was better able to provide their needs than the previous government."

For almost three years the people received "more wages than they had ever received before." "However, they did not have any-

thing in which to invest their money because the products were in such scarce supply," reveals Andrews. "Political meetings were the order of the day. Production was at a standstill."

When the military government took over, "The people found that the government no longer had money to support this area," says Andrews. "There was no market for the lumber that had been stocked in large supply, and no way to get it out. The original owners were not interested in taking over a bankrupt company with back payrolls for some 3,000 families. There was nowhere for these people to go and no work for them."

The citizens of Neltume were permitted to continue working, reports Andrews. They were provided with firewood for cooking, and each family was given a small plot of land where they could plant potatoes. "Some were fortunate enough to have a few animals, ducks, geese, chickens, or a pig," he states.

But without money and rations, the food supply started running out.

"We began to notice that the countenance of the people reflected lack of food," Andrews continues. "For the first time since I had been visiting them, they sat me down to a cup of herb tea with no bread on the table."

"For these people to live without bread means they have no food."

Andrews began investigating their situation. He found that their ducks and chickens had either been eaten or had died from lack of grain. The people were without meat and had been so deprived for several months. They had received no salaries and only minimum rations, mainly potatoes. They did not have enough money to buy soap, or the very essentials of life, according to Andrews.



Missionary William Andrews helps deliver badly needed supplies to grateful Neltume Baptists.

But the people of Neltume did not ask for help. They just tightened their belts, declares Andrews.

"I went back and began to talk with some of the people of other Baptist churches, and began to ask what we could do for our Baptist brothers of Neltume," he says. "They responded immediately."

Andrews was asked to write some of the largest churches to see "if they could help immediately so that we could get flour and sugar and some of the essentials to the people."

The pastor of one of the churches Andrews wrote was president of the Chile Baptist Convention. "Our letter struck such a responsive chord to him that he felt led to sit down and write a letter to all of the churches of Chile and ask for immediate response of money in order that we might be able to meet the needs of these people as soon as possible," relates Andrews.

Within a period of a month, the equivalent of over \$1,000 in money, products, and clothing had been collected, a very generous gift since, according to Andrews, the salaries of the people who gave averaged less than \$100 a month. Another \$3,000 was received from Baptist individuals in the States.

When the money started coming in, so did the food. Approximately three tons of flour, sugar, cereal, soap, and animal fat to give some substance and flavor to the soup were purchased, the missionary reports.

Then Andrews, Grundy and Jean Janes, missionary director of the Baptist School in Temuco and his wife, along with Clara Brincefield, missionary working at the Temuco school, loaded the supplies and took them to Neltume.

"It is impossible to convey to you the complete joy and overwhelming response of the people as we drove up with the food in front of their church building," says Andrews. "The help was unsolicited by them, and they did not know a relief effort was

taking place."

The food was distributed to the church members and their families, about 150 persons, and to the people who had been attending the church. Since there was not enough food to go around for the whole community, only those outside of the church who were known to have specific needs received food, according to Andrews.

The Foreign Mission Board also responded with \$5,000 to meet these needs. As more money came in, other communities, such as Panguipulli and Malahue, were aided.

"We were able to make three trips to provide their (Neltume's) needs and they were distributed on the same basis," reveals Andrews, "until the winter rains set in and seven bridges were washed out. Then distribution was delayed until the barges coming across the lake could receive the supplies and take them back into the area for the people.

"By the time the money and the food were exhausted, we learned that the government had gone in and changed the destination of this area," he continues. "A minimum wage program, similar to what we in the U.S. had many years ago, had been put into effect, and their basic needs for food were being supplied."

The people of Neltume are not out of the woods yet, but they are beginning to see a little light, declares Andrews. "There will be need in the future for these people to relocate in other parts of Chile where they can find a livelihood on farms or in some other way," he relates. "But in the meantime, we are assured by the people who are still in Chile that these families are receiving a minimum wage and that they are able to carry on their livelihood. (Andrews is currently on furlough in the U.S.)

"All of us who are privileged to participate in this relief program are deeply grateful for the generous help given by Southern Baptists." 

Needed Now

Requests for missionary personnel come to the Foreign Mission Board from Baptist Missions on the fields. Shared here are but a few among top-priority requests.

Requests for new missionary personnel have come to the Foreign Mission Board from the Missions overseas. The greatest needs are for persons to work in general evangelism—preaching, teaching Bible classes, serving as church development advisors and associational missionaries, working in urban evangelism, and the like. Qualified personnel have been requested in 44 other categories of service, but some of the most urgent requests are listed here.

Okinawa: Career couple is needed to work with 24 Okinawan churches and missions in a variety of roles—pastor, evangelist, church developer, trainer—and to interpret the work of the Convention to English-language churches.

Hong Kong: Missionary needed to work with Evangelism Board of Hong Kong Convention, to assist present chapels and sponsoring churches, to do survey work, to develop plans for new chapels, and to provide in-service training in church administration.

Japan: Eight church developers are needed. Would work with existing churches in strengthening their evangelism programs and aid in developing new mission points. Need experience in urban ministries. Eight cities of 200,000-plus population are untouched by Baptist witness. Opportunities are unlimited.

Taiwan: Variety of needs—personal evangelism, beginning new work, developing established chapels, aiding local churches, serving as urban evangelism consultant. A variety of locations. Ten missionaries needed.

Hong Kong/Macao: Career couple to work with Macao young people, to work through Macao Baptist Association Youth Center and to train youth leaders. Musical and athletic abilities useful.

Korea: Six church developers needed to lead association work for 30 churches, to lead in church development and growth, to aid in beginning new work, to direct evangelism, and to preach.

Thailand: Eleven church planters needed. Would plant house churches, coordinate lay training, train national leaders, work in a variety of settings. Sociology or anthropology helpful.

Philippines: Seventeen church planters requested for a variety of opportunities: pioneer, associational, urban, rural, leadership training, church development. Many areas are untouched. People are responsive. Opportunities unlimited.

Indonesia: Four general evangelists are needed. They will seek to establish small

study groups, preach in combined services of these small groups; both urban and rural work needed. Some teaching responsibilities included.

Senegal: Four urban evangelists are needed to work through Baptist centers in a variety of outreach ministries and to aid centers in becoming churches. Some outreach to surrounding villages.

Ivory Coast: Three evangelists needed for pioneer work, to begin preaching points in town and surrounding area.

Upper Volta: Four couples needed to supervise growth of young churches, train potential leaders, nurture present pastors, and begin new churches; both rural and urban ministry included; some Theological Education by Extension work.

Benin: Two preachers are needed. Baptist work in the country is new; most people have yet to hear the gospel. Work will consist of presenting basic Christian message, winning individuals, forming study groups; many opportunities.

Liberia: Three preachers are needed to work with existing churches, establish new churches, guide associations in evangelistic outreach, possibly teach at Baptist training school.

Ghana: Three general evangelists are needed. Would work in advisory capacity for existing churches, aid in developing new churches. Knowledge of music or teaching religious education helpful.

This list of requests is by no means exhaustive. Requests for general evangelists have also come from Eastern South America; Western South America; Eastern and Southern Africa; Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia; and Middle America and the Caribbean.

Other top priorities include requests for 36 physicians, 34 nurses, 9 dentists, 16 secondary teachers, and 14 college teachers.

For more information about these and numerous other opportunities for career missionary service abroad, contact: Louis R. Cobbs, secretary, Department of Missionary Personnel, Foreign Mission Board, Box 6597, Richmond, Va. 23230.

LETTERS

Study Supplement

Enclosed is my request for the annual index for *The Commission*. I find these indexes invaluable and want to thank you for making them available.

We have just recently completed our study preceding the Week of Prayer and offering for foreign missions. For many years I have either been in charge of our study or have assisted in it for our local church and often for the association.

I want to compliment you on the material in *The Commission* each year and also wish to say that I think the supplementary material available in *The Commission* this October was the best that we have ever had. . . .

We worked up a panel covering the article "Ministry to Students" . . . and also used special

reports on three of the other articles. One thing I liked this year was that there was little or no repetition of the material in the text or resource guide. Thank you again for a wonderful magazine.

Mrs. William L. Reed
Sedalia, Mo.

Sharing with Refugees

How I do appreciate *The Commission*! Thanks for keeping us well informed about our mission work around the world. Especially did I appreciate receiving the November issue. . . . I am one of those that have had their lives richly blessed and horizons lengthened by having shared in the lives of some of our Southeast Asian refugees—first the Vietnamese and more recently some Cambodians and Laotians who have arrived from Thailand.

[I want to share the issue] with these friends, especially two Cambodian young men, one who learned of Jesus through the ministry of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., when he was in the U.S. a few months during the war; the other one, a young school teacher who had escaped Cambodia and arrived in the U.S. via Thailand. He told me, "I know Jesus by Baptist missionary. I am baptized in Thailand."

Mrs. Don Noble
Ada, Okla.

Reporting on Baptists

Shortly after Jimmy Carter's election as president, I received a phone call from a reporter for *Manchete*, Brazil's largest weekly news magazine. He explained that he was preparing an article about the new president as a Baptist and wanted further information, especially with regard to Baptists in Brazil.

An interview was given, and on the following Sunday a photographer went to both the International Baptist Church (English-speaking) and the First Baptist Church in Rio. The result is a four-page spread in the November 27 issue of *Manchete*—three pages of color photographs and one page for an article which tells something of Baptist history, beliefs, polity, and current statistics. This is unusual publicity of its kind for the work in Brazil.

Interestingly, the reporter is an ex-Baptist, assigned by the magazine to cover Carter in case he won the election. Although [the reporter is] no longer on a Baptist church roll, God used him, as well as Carter's election, to open doors for furtherance of the gospel.

Edward G. Berry (missionary)
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

On the Rack

We visited the new quarters of the Cape Fear Technical Institute Library yesterday. Their magazine room is excellent. There was on the rack a magazine from The Witches organization. We were surprised. [The librarian] said he would like some of the magazines from the church. . . . He has been picking up *Home Life* [at church]. We asked him what else he wanted; he said *The Commission* in particular.

(Explanation with order for a gift subscription to CFTI library.)

Vera P. Milton
(director, library services, Winter Park Church)
Wilmington, N.C.

Some few years ago I was a regular subscriber to *The Commission*; found it very helpful. I let my subscription expire, but now I feel a need and want to renew it. . . . Please enter my subscription at once.

Mrs. Gladys Pounds
Jesup, Ga.



Filipino Minister Leo Salazar officiates at baptismal service of M'lang Baptist church in M'lang River in the Philippines.

Gospel Boom on Mindanao

By James B. Slack

Something astounding has dawned on Baptist church leaders and missionaries on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines. Mindanao is perhaps the most responsive of all the islands in the world where Southern Baptists now have work. In fact, it is one of the most responsive, if not the most responsive, island in the world where any evangelical Christians carry on mission work.

This fact came to light because of increased interest in church growth and a more intense and accurate accounting of the churches and Baptist believers by leaders and missionaries alike.

And the response is increasing. The surface seemingly has only been scratched.

Mindanao has always been the most responsive island for Philippine Baptists and for all evangelical groups with nationwide work in the Philippines. But response is exceeding earlier expectations. Evangelistic excitement is infecting all areas of church life and mission work.

"Labor on, young people, for that which many of us dreamed about for 25 years is now a reality," Vicente Onggao, a Filipino Baptist pioneer on Mindanao, told a sharing conference of pastors, lay leaders, and missionaries. "It has been worth all the sacrifices to see this day of harvest."

The author was appointed a missionary to the Philippines in 1964. He is stationed in Davao City.

Evidence of growth abounds in almost every Baptist association on the island. In 1969 there were 82 churches in Mindanao related to Southern Baptist mission work; in 1974 there were 149; by December 1975 there were 246; by May 1976 unofficial counts tabulated at least 262.

Even more encouraging is growth in preaching points or missions established. These include regular home Bible studies that eventually should grow into churches. In 1969 the annual report listed 77 preaching points or outstations. In 1974 churches reported 82. In 1975 there were 780!

All of these points will not become churches, of course, nor are all expected to do so. All do have the potential of becoming churches. If at least 20 percent of these become churches in the next year or two, another 156 churches will be added. If churches, associations, the Mindanao Baptist Convention, and missionaries continue to marshal their forces and attend to the planting of churches and the opening of outstations, the possibilities are thrilling!

The number of baptisms is equally as encouraging. In the history of the Philippine Baptist Mission and the churches to which it is related, baptism totals have varied from year to year by as much as 1,000. But the line of growth has been constantly upward. Now the growth line on Mindanao is greater than ever. In 1969

there were 765 baptisms reported. In 1974 the report listed 1,230. In 1975 the total expanded to 4,091! This figure is more than the total baptized by Southern Baptist-related churches in the entire country in any previous year.

Membership has increased yearly. Church membership in Mindanao in 1969 was 6,302. This grew to 12,924 by 1974 and in 1975 to 15,000. With a report from every church on the island, the total would be even higher.

Evangelistic crusades were held throughout Mindanao September through November of 1976. From 150 to 200 churches scheduled evangelistic meetings. Early trends indicated that decisions would range from 4,500 to 6,000.

Filipino pastors, laymen, and missionaries served as preachers for these meetings. Crusade evangelism has always been fruitful in the Philippines, especially on Mindanao. Now it seems even more productive. Rural areas prove very responsive. Larger towns follow close behind.

Baptist associations have kept pace. Their motto seems to be: "Divide and multiply." In 1966 there were two associations on the island; by 1972 there were five; now there are eight. Each of the two largest ones have about 55 churches. The smallest association, little more than a year old, has 12 churches.

Challenges result from such rapid response; some might call them problems. Follow-up becomes a major concern. Pastoral leadership and training demands increase as churches multiply and grow. Theological education becomes very im-

portant amid such growth.

Filipino leaders in the churches and Convention, leaders such as Romeo Faldas, Leo Salazar, and Jessie Jemina, echo the need for more Filipino pastors, as well as for missionary church planters from the Foreign Mission Board. These are needed to maintain the evangelistic thrust and to help conserve results.

Possibility of developing new Baptist work exists in many places on Mindanao. Some provinces still lack a Southern Baptist-related gospel witness. In addition, need for church development and continuing evangelism exists in areas of established work.

"Why is there such an openness and response on Mindanao?" many ask. No single, simple answer suffices. The response should be understood in relation to the culture, history, and geography of the area, as well as to the island's present sociological situation. The response grows out of several interdependent factors.

1) Growing hunger for and interest in spiritual matters exist, the result of the Holy Spirit's working. This is seen in a widespread awareness or feeling of emptiness in the spiritual life. Religion abounds; spiritual satisfaction does not.

2) Mindanao is the Philippines' frontier. Residents have migrated, the Muslim and tribal peoples being the exceptions. The bulk of the island's population migrated from the Visayas (central islands); a number came from northern Luzon. The people have been uprooted and made mobile; this creates an openness to new friends, ideas, and religions. Much, though not all, of what bound them to the past has been left behind or shifted in priority. Many of the sociological factors parallel the American westward movement.

3) Current crises have shaken the people's foundations. Peace and order are major concerns; the island's situation is still not stable. As a result, residents are unsettled; not a few have been refugees from various types of conflict once or twice. The recent earthquake and tidal wave brought about concern for basic physical and spiritual issues. A discontent with things as they have been can be sensed among people all over the island. They show a hunger for a new society, both physical and spiritual.

4) A mature Filipino leadership committed to the sharing of Christ with others has emerged in pulpit and pew. Leo Salazar, a minister, has often said, "I do not care if I do not see many of the members during the Sunday worship service, as long as they are serving in extension points beyond the church's reach."

The current emphasis on evangelism has a new group consciousness or orientation.

"Win One and Begin One" has become the theme of Baptists in the Philippines. Enough of a heritage exists to produce a number of committed, talented, visionary Filipino leaders that see Christ as each person's only spiritual hope.

5) Increasing Mission and missionary interest and emphasis has been placed on basic evangelism, centering on the starting of new groups, such as home Bible studies. This resulted from a Church Growth Survey in 1972 among missionaries and nationals.

6) Tribal areas are quite responsive. The tribes, or minority groups, are slowly being

buildings during evangelistic meetings. One pastor remarked that his church was the only evangelical church in his city holding night meetings. That church building was filled most nights during the recent evangelistic effort.

10) Lay involvement in leadership and outreach has grown. The person in the pew has found himself in the pulpit and in the forefront of home Bible studies. Lay involvement extends to the planning, promotion, visitation, witnessing, and follow-up in churches, extension points, and crusades, as well as lay witnessing. Young people take



Ben Vergara (r), who is a deacon in M'lang Church, a college professor, and a municipal official aids in organization of Malayan Church on Mindanao. Organized in late 1975, the church baptized 22 persons during the 1976 crusade.

absorbed into the mainstream of Filipino society. Their tribal solidarity and uniqueness is being eclipsed by advancements of industry, commerce, education, and technology. Some tribal areas have reported as many as 1,000 baptisms a year. New churches are appearing regularly.

7) A conservative theological base exists among churches that have retained evangelism as the central target, while other groups have stressed other aims. Evidence indicates negligible response among other Baptist and evangelical groups that once were theologically conservative and openly evangelistic, but which lost both as number-one priority.

8) During the present growth era there has been an underlying commitment to the effectiveness of home Bible studies and evangelistic crusades. Home Bible study, now becoming a widespread method, has resulted in the increased number of outstations and preaching points. The social system, rural orientation, and openness of the people make crusade evangelism and home Bible studies effective.

Even amid crisis—to a degree because of the crises—people still fill the church

part actively in church programs. Many churches now use trained lay counsellors in follow-up of those who make decisions.

11) Evangelism begets evangelism. As response increases, the consciousness of response and the possibility of greater response has drawn and focused the attention of many pastors, lay persons, and missionaries on the opportunity and need for evangelism.

12) Mission-sponsored institutions have maintained an evangelistic witness that has prepared the area for response. They also have provided a nucleus of leaders for the churches. These institutions often have become the hub for evangelism, church planting, and development in surrounding areas. This has been true of Mati Baptist Hospital, Rural Life Center, Davao Bible School, and Southern Baptist College, M'lang. Institutions on Luzon, such as the seminary and Baptist Center, have been supportive.

All these factors indicate that this is God's day on Mindanao. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send more laborers—Filipinos and American missionaries—into the harvest. TC

OASIS

in the desert

By Zenobia M. Johnson

Deep in Islamic territory, on a picturesque hill in Teheran, Iran, a Baptist congregation gathers for worship in a beautiful church building belonging to the Iranian Evangelical (Presbyterian) Church. The pastor of the Baptist church, Loren C. Turnage, is a dynamic Southern Baptist missionary.

But finding the building is another story. To a group of U.S. travelers in the Middle East for the first time, the area looked strange, but fascinating. In Teheran, known throughout the world for its open-door hospitality, we felt certain that Christian churches would prosper.

The guide on our tour bus was a university professor and a devout Muslim. He was well-versed in the history of Persia, formerly Iran's name from biblical times. He talked about his country's contributions in admirable terms. Pride showed in his eyes and voice as he praised Persian art, museums, palaces, natural history, people, and mosques.

The author is currently an elementary school principal at Joseph A. Hardin Elementary School in New Orleans, La. She has received various civic awards and honors and is a member of the Tulane Memorial Baptist Church in New Orleans.

Being Christians, we kept waiting for one hint of the work of the Christian churches.

Finally, in the middle of the tour the question was asked: "Are we going to pass a Baptist church?" (The travel agent and hotel information guide had already assured us there probably was none.)

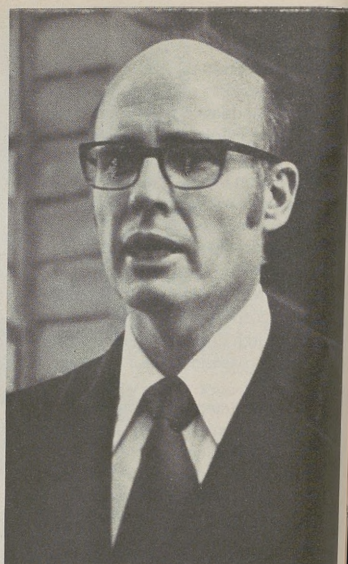
The tour guide scratched his head. "That's a question no tourist has ever asked before," he said. "I don't know if there is a Baptist church in Teheran."

Stopping at the travel office, he picked up a book and began rapidly turning the pages. Finally he told us, "There is no Baptist church listed here."

The tour included numerous magnificent mosques, the Shah's palace, the crown jewels, the museum where America's gift of moon rocks were on display, and, of course, the bazaar.

As we rode through the city, the call for prayers from the minarets could be heard five times daily as is Muslim religious custom. People along the street knelt on their prayer mats and prayed.

The tour ended as it started—much praise and glory for Persian life, culture,



Loren C. Turnage, pastor in Teheran.

history, but not one word about Christian activity.

Back at the hotel, the Baptist group decided to run down every lead until they found a Baptist church.

Quite by accident a hotel attendant told us of the hotel-operated special telephone service. We tipped the attendant, and he showed us where the group of select telephone operators were sequestered. It took two hours of patience and refusal to yield until operators located the pastor of a Baptist church.

When the operator reached the pastor by phone and told him that visitors from the U.S. wanted to see Teheran Baptist Church, he was delighted. I spoke with him, and to my surprise his voice sounded like an American from the South. The cordiality in his voice was stimulating. He assured us he would be right over.

When we met Missionary Loren Turnage, the warmth of his welcome brought alive our Christian spirit. He led us to the church's mission bus. The ride to the church gave us a chance to get another heartwarming view and perspective of Teheran. During the ride the pastor gave a little insight into the church's character. The uniqueness of Teheran Baptist Church seems to stem from three things: a dynamic pastor, remarkable history, and unusual membership.

The dynamic force behind the church's success is the pastor. He is a man with a noble vision of what Christianity is, its process and function. He offered friendly assurances that if you have faith as big as a mustard seed you can move mountains.

Worship service at Baptist church in Teheran, Iran.



The church's history and program indicate that his assertions are valid. There are examples of what Christians can achieve through faith and work.

The Teheran Church was begun four years ago as a home Bible study fellowship of three Southern Baptists: one woman, a registered nurse, and two men, all in the U.S. Air Force.

In October 1972 they asked the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to send a missionary to help them get started. Dwight and Emma Baker, missionaries in Israel, came for three months. In January 1973 the church was formally organized; George McClelland, a retired pastor, served as pastor from January to September 1973. Turnage and family came as pastor in October 1973.

The church used the building of the Persian Evangelical Church on Niloo Street off Vanak. The building was completed in 1973 after both groups had met for several months in the basement.

The membership of Teheran Church consists mostly of working-age people. There are few retired persons in Iran who speak English. The members work in the military, embassy, oil, and private companies of all kinds.

Presently there are 160 members, and the church has about 155 in Sunday School.

The main worship service is held on Friday, the Muslim holiday. Thursday and Friday are the "weekend" in Iran. On Sunday night the church conducts its midweek, or prayer and Bible study, service.

Many Americans in Iran do not have cars, so the church maintains eight bus routes, using the 18-passenger bus to pick up people all over town on Friday mornings.

On Sunday nights, only one bus runs, because traffic is so bad that it would take the buses one-and-a-half hours to pick up 12 or 15 people each and deliver them to the church. As a result, attendance on Sunday night is low, around 20.

A ministry is beginning among national Iranians. The church has baptized two Iranian women; both husbands are foreigners. Young college-age Muslim students are present in Sunday School classes and participate in the youth activities.

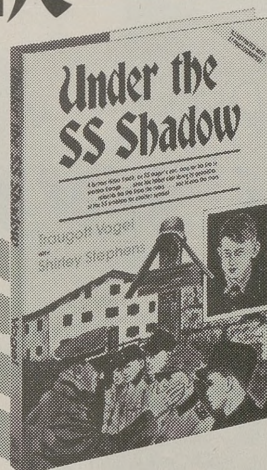
The pastor believes there will be a large American and British presence in Iran for at least the next 20 years, so the church is projecting its future for that long, and hopes to leave behind an Iranian Baptist Church.

Teheran Baptist Church is a citadel of hope for many. It meets the needs, erases fears, and plants the seed of Christian faith in the hearts of men, women, and children. For these weary American tourists, it was an oasis in the desert. TC

the odyssey of a Hitler Youth...

Under the SS Shadow

by
Traugott Vogel
with Shirley Stephens



Adults and youth alike will be inspired by the true story of this unusual Christian's conversion.

From the privileged position as son of an SS major to the life-threatening risks of being a refugee in the aftermath of World War II, young Traugott Vogel's life is fascinating reading.

- at fifteen he fought for Germany at the Battle of the Bulge
- he was a loyal member of Hitler Youth
- he witnessed his father's murder
- he was separated from his family

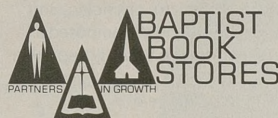
February 24, 1944. "The young boy stood before the charred remains of his once proud home and shouted "I hate everyone who caused this to happen!"

Read UNDER THE SS SHADOW to learn how Christianity touched this young life. Illustrated with 27 photographs.

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The author in his Hitler Youth uniform at age 12



Vogel's father in front of his SS staff car



To a Disaster

Response

By
Teresa K. Shields

When the winds and damaging floods of Hurricane Liza hit in early October, they left about 500 dead, 500 missing, 1,400 injured, and 15,000 or more homeless in La Paz and other parts of Mexico.

The Foreign Mission Board appropriated \$41,000 for relief efforts to assist the stricken hurricane victims.

Part of the money was used for heavy plastic and corrugated tar paper for shelter for over 1,000 families in La Paz, Los Mochis, and Navajoa. The materials were distributed by Baptist church members to those most affected by the storm.

Ninety-eight blocks of homes were swept away in La Paz when a river diversion dike broke, spilling a 17-foot wall of water on the city, according to Missionary Dr. Lee Baggett.

Baggett, along with Mexican Baptist doctors Yolanda Lobato, physician, and Gloria Rodriguez, dentist, composed a medical team from the Baptist hospital in

The author is a staff writer in the press office at Foreign Mission Board offices, Richmond, Va.



Mexican Baptist doctor examines children after hurricane.



Woman makes shanty Coke-house do after floods destroy homes in Los Mochis, Mexico.
Below: Many families were buried in their cars. This family was more fortunate.



Guadalajara. They surveyed needs and administered medical aid in La Paz and the remote southern tip of the Baja Peninsula by invitation of the Mexican public health officials.

On a five-day trip across the desert south of La Paz, the team worked in 14 villages and towns and treated 256 patients, including 25 dental patients, according to Missionary Robert L. Perry, press representative in Mexico.

A Baptist layman, José Crespo, served as their guide to the villages. Most of the patients seen, Baggett said, had respiratory infections, diarrhea, skin infections, parasitosis, or heart disease.

"In Las Cuevas," Baggett said, "an unusually dry river had crested six to seven feet deep through the town, emptying houses in exchange for several feet of silt. In La Rivera an entire fishing fleet was destroyed in the surf."

Immediately after the disaster in La Paz, Francisco Marin, a Baptist layman, began providing 220 pounds of tortillas daily from his factory.

"When Southern Baptists decided that relief funds from the Board could best be used to buy food, Marin's contacts became invaluable," Baggett continued.

Relief funds were also used to provide heavy plastic for shelter for some 500 families, according to Charles W. Bryan, area secretary for Middle America and the Caribbean.

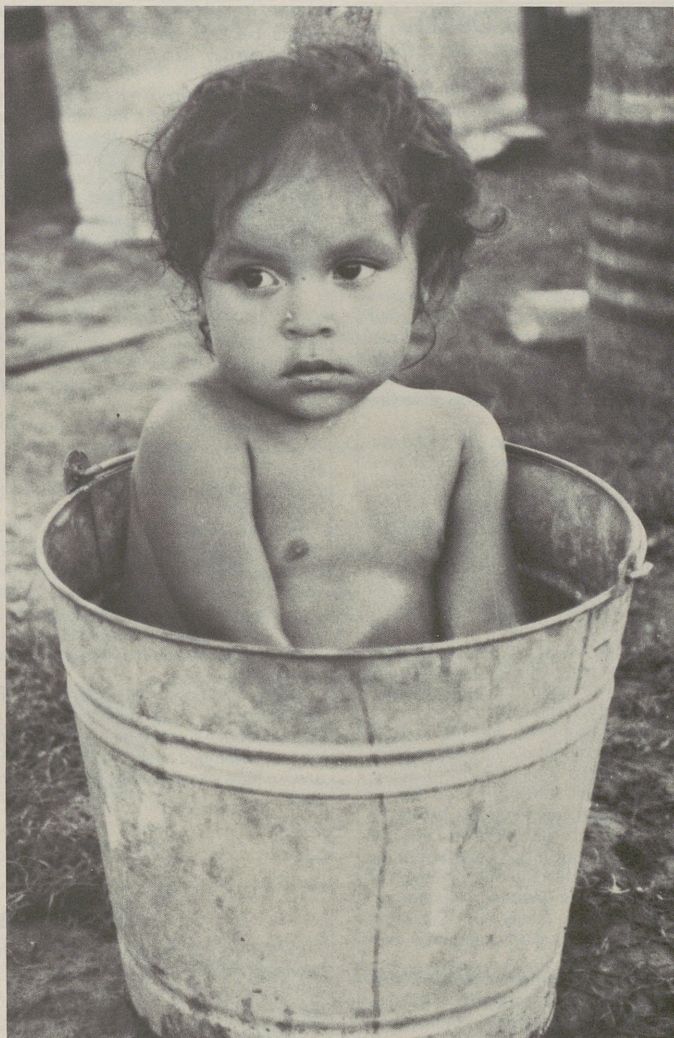
After a week, La Paz was "saturated with food, medicine, building supplies, and clothing," Baggett said. Prefabricated homes were rapidly rising. So, as the pressing material needs in La Paz had been met, Baptists turned their energies more to evangelism in the city and plans for a return trip to the south.

Missionary Wyatt W. Lee, also stationed in Guadalajara, directed relief efforts in Los Mochis, Baggett said: "When I arrived in Los Mochis, Lee and other Baptists were actively engaged in administering relief funds to help those who had lost their homes.

They interviewed each homeowner and inspected the damage to the homes, then gave corrugated tar paper for roofs, as they saw the need. In Los Mochis, 250 families were helped. In Navajoa, 300 families were helped."

Immediate response in Los Mochis consisted of food distribution, according to Perry. A local businessman, Josue Castro, gave away large quantities of food from his company's wholesale stock. Over 150 families received food.

"Local Baptists witnessed throughout the area," Baggett said. "As they distributed



Beating the heat.

food and materials they explained that this help was available because Baptists cared.

"People continue, even now, requesting tracts and gospels to find out what made the Baptists actually do the things they talked about. They are also requesting a government donation of land to build a chapel," Baggett added.

Bryan explained, "The Baptist work, even though small, has ministered in an outstanding way in this time of disaster.

Despite the fact that the closest Southern Baptist representatives, Baggett and Lee, do not reside in the area, they were still able to encourage the churches in La Paz and the Los Mochis area during a time when encouragement was needed."

Baggett said he and Lee had to return to Guadalajara to carry on their work, but Baptists in La Paz and Los Mochis continued to minister to those around them.

TC

EPiSTLES

Faithful in Death

"*Sungguh, sungguh, Keristus hidup* (Truly, truly, Christ lives)." These words were heard in song, in testimony, and in message on Easter weekend last year as Christians gathered in Kediri, Indonesia, to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. Christ lives in the life of one who had been a recent patient of Baptist Hospital.

Pak Djoko was one of three men in a ward who were suffering from serious illnesses. Within a few days Pak Djoko saw the other two men die.

The first to die was an old man, a Muslim. Family members came during the hospitalization and were present at the time of death.



Crying, moaning, and groanings were heard, as the family seemed to express a feeling of no hope.

In two days Pak Djoko witnessed another death. This experience was vastly different, because Pak Tumirah, suffering from cancer, was a radiant Christian leader. He had been sick for about nine months. When he was first seen, his wife was three months pregnant. At the time of his surgery, it did not appear that he would live long because of the extent of the tumor's spread. He prayed that he would survive long enough to see his new child. This God granted, and Pak Tumirah was readmitted to the hospital when his child was three months old.

The family assembled, and his co-workers came to be present during the last hours of his life. He was sometimes lucid, sometimes incoherent, drifting in and out of consciousness. A few moments before he died, he regained full consciousness and said to those about him, "Keep preaching the Word. Keep spreading the good news of Jesus Christ to our Indonesian brethren." Then he died. His family and colleagues gathered about for a time of prayer and Bible reading.

The contrast of the manner of death and family reaction was so great that Pak Djoko had to reflect upon his own physical and spiritual condition. The Holy Spirit convicted him to ask, "What was the difference in the deaths of my ward mates. Is there any hope for me?"

He was ready to understand the difference and thus to learn the secret to life. Missionary Jim McAtee was able to present Jesus Christ to Pak Djoko. Through the Holy Spirit's working, Pak Djoko accepted Christ as Savior.

The difference in Pak Djoko was evident at once. No longer was he despondent; instead, he became radiant in the assurance that God loves him.

Donald G. Duvall
Kediri, Indonesia

Sequel at the Mine

After reading "Harvest Diary" in the May 1976 issue of *The Commission*, a mini-sequel to the story on mission work at the Santo Niño Mine seems in order, in light of God's blessings there.

After regular Bible studies were begun in the bunkhouse of this mining camp in September 1975, we met difficulty from some third-shift workers who had to sleep during the day. As a result, we were prohibited from holding Bible study inside the bunkhouses.

For a few Sundays we met outside in the hot sun, uncertain of the future, sitting on benches brought out from the bunkhouses. We prayed that God would lead us to a meeting place. He did. We met with the mine's resident manager and found to our surprise that he was a Protestant; he had wanted many years ago to become a Baptist but could not locate a Baptist church in his area. He offered the Open Pit Field office for meetings, and in December 1975 we began holding Sunday services there regularly.



During December and January about 20 adults made professions of faith in Christ. A regular offering was taken each Sunday, the money to be kept for use by the group.

As rainy season approached, we prayed again for guidance. The Open Pit Field office would become almost inaccessible, particularly for young mothers with babies, due to heavy mud during rainy season. We had noticed a new building under construction, and at a Sunday meeting the resident manager voluntarily suggested that this building, the new safety office, might be better for our services. Another prayer had been answered.

Attendance grew in Sunday School (50 to 80 children, 12 to 20 adults). A Vacation Bible School in April enrolled more than 100 children. Primary emphasis during these services was put on the church and its meaning and the power and love of God in the world today, with his leadership to individuals and to the church body through the Holy Spirit.

Before we left on furlough (June 1976) nine persons had been baptized at Santo Niño Mine: a supervisory engineer of the motor pool and his wife; the supervisor of the Open Pit Field office and his two teenage sons; an underground worker and his wife; another underground worker; and the wife of an underground worker.

As we left for furlough, we were confident that God would continue to lead at Santo Niño. His Spirit is available for guidance as the believers there call on him. A church in Baguio has helped sponsor much of the work and agreed to continue to give support.

We left a part of ourselves at Santo Niño. The work was hard at times, but we feel God spoke to us to go there as a part of our witness in the Philippines. In going, we learned more fully and more deeply the meaning of God's personal love for all men, we were reminded anew of the overwhelming joy that is ours with Christ as our Lord, and we have witnessed again the phenomenon of God's gift to us—Christian fellowship.

Robert J. Page
Missionary to the Philippines

More than English

For two years Miriam and I passed each other in the neighborhood. We exchanged "shalom" (traditional greeting meaning "peace") and went our separate ways. Then one day she rang my doorbell and with downcast eyes said in a whisper, "You will teach me English, no?"

I replied, "I will teach you English, yes!" I invited her in for a cup of tea.

Her first question was, "How much will it cost?" She could not believe it when I told her she would not have to pay anything. I asked when she could come, and I could not believe it when she said she could come every morning.



We worked hard for several days. One morning before she came I knelt before the chair where she sits and prayed, "Dear Lord Jesus, please create a way today for me to mention your name and to bring glory and honor to you."

That morning Miriam read a story to me about a man who worked with wood because he liked to create things with his hands. She stopped. "I do not know this word, *create*," she said. With praise in my heart, I told her simply how God created man in his image. As she understood the word, we talked about the power of the Holy Spirit to create a new heart within us.

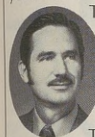
Miriam has learned more than English.

Jeannine (Mrs. G. Wayne) Buck
Missionary associate, Jerusalem, Israel

Standing Alone

The priest stood before the students and in his usual brusque manner demanded that all the Protestants rise. Marcus Bascuñan, 15, was frightened, but he felt he could not deny his faith. He stood—alone!

Then the priest said gruffly, "Let me shake your hand. I'm glad to have you in this class."



To the rest of the group he continued, "I am proud of this young man because of his courage, and I want the rest of you to know that the evangelicos are an example for us.

They are a dedicated, honest, hardworking people; we can learn from them."

This scene took place in a religion class that is taught in all public schools in Chile. Marcus is one of our church members. It is not easy to be the only evangelical in a group, sometimes in a whole school. But what happened in that classroom is indicative of the revival among young people in Chile.

It seems that the youth are expressing an unprecedented interest in spiritual matters and are willing to take a firm stand for the Lord. Pray for Marcus and others like him.

R. Frank Coy
Santiago, Chile

Student Samples

It is a thrill to see how God is reaching many for Christ through the study of his Word in the Bible Way Correspondence School.

These statements are samples of those that come from our students:

"When I went through this course, I felt Jesus in my heart. My life has been changed."—Joyce Magama, age 21.



"This course has meant me to believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior, my judge, my light, and my way to enter the kingdom of heaven. I was not believing in Jesus Christ, but because of this course Jesus is in me, and I am in him."—Jethro Machigere, 17.

"This course has changed my mind into the ways of a good Christian. Jesus is my Savior and my king."—Michael, 15.

"I was doing my fourth year in high school in 1973 when, due to bad company, I started drinking and any evil you might think of. But I'm glad that last year . . . I found Jesus, so really I'm only a year old. The course has helped me to know some truths about Jesus and some of the things which used to puzzle me."—Comfort, 19.

Logan C. Atnip
Bulawayo, Rhodesia

Finding a Way To Step Aside

A part of missions is stepping aside and letting a national Baptist assume the leadership role. Before returning to Rhodesia after furlough, I knew that it was God's will for me to return, but just as certain that it was not his will for me again to take the position of director of nurses at Sanyati Hospital. I wrote to the administrative staff to let them know of my decision; they began to look for an African for the post.

Shortly after my arrival, however, it became evident that the hospital was financially unable to employ a director. The acting director of nurses would be at the hospital for only one more year, and I was the only other qualified person on the staff. I reluctantly agreed to take the job until we could employ a national.



Gone was the peace that we as Christians have when we are obedient and committed to his way. I faced a dilemma. The position must be filled. I had the qualifications but did not feel it was God's will for me.

I again told the administrator that I felt the Holy Spirit restraining me from taking the post. I did not have the answer for the problem; I only knew that I was not the answer. We committed our ways to God and prayed daily that his will be done.

It is marvelous to sit back and watch the Lord at work. Within two months the Rhodesian dollar was devalued. This meant the money received from the Foreign Mission Board would be worth more. Within another two months, we received word from the FMB that, because of the faithful and generous support of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, money was available to care for hospital deficits. This paved the way for employing a director of nurses; Mrs. Majah, an African, came to fill that responsibility.

Mary L. Clark, Gatooma, Rhodesia

Morning Exchange

The morning was bright as I hurried toward my seminary class from the apartment building where we live in Madrid. The wife of the building caretaker, Carmen Merino, was on hands and knees to clean the rug on the steps that led to the lobby door. After an exchange of greetings and comments on the weather, I was about to open the heavy front door.



"Wait a moment," said Carmen, with considerable hesitation. She straightened up and pushed back an unruly strand of hair from her face. "You have given us things to read, and we have been noticing how you act toward us," she said. "You invited me to go to your 'mass' some Sunday. I want to go this coming Sunday. You haven't forgotten, have you?"

"Oh no," I replied, almost overwhelmed by the sudden change in roles. Carmen was taking the initiative about going to church. "I surely hadn't forgotten."

To be honest, I can't remember whether I stepped out onto a gray sidewalk or onto Cloud Nine.

Indy (Mrs. Charles W.) Whitten, Madrid, Spain

Whirlwind Orientation

My orientation to Honduras was a whirlwind. Two days after arriving on the field from language school in Costa Rica, I rode to the other side of the country for the meeting of the national Baptist convention. After hearing a solid week of Spanish, with hundreds of new names and faces, we returned to Tegucigalpa, the capital.



A few days later, the field missionary in the south took me to six or seven churches and missions, from the border with El Salvador to the border with Nicaragua, all in four days. I will never again try to keep up with a field missionary. After five days my Spanish, physical endurance, and mandolin-pickin' fingers were all worn out.

But there was more—we went from there to the semiannual Mission meeting at the Baptist camp. I had been in Honduras three and a half weeks before seeing the inside of my house. But I had met and been accepted by these wonderful people—nationals and missionaries. I had also gained much information about Baptist work here. All told, except for the times my head was spinning from it all, the orientation plan wasn't a bad one.

Marina E. Menzies, Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Missions Update...

For the second year in a row the Foreign Mission Board during 1976 added a record number of new missionary personnel. Additions of overseas personnel totaled 18 in December, bringing the year's total to 268, an all-time high. In 1975 a total of 265 missionary personnel were added, topping the previous high of 261 in 1969. The 1976 figure included 128 career missionaries, 32 missionary associates, 94 missionary journeymen, 10 reappointments, and 4 special project workers.

Appropriation of \$515,423 by the Foreign Mission Board in December for world relief causes brought the total of such appropriations in 1976 to \$1,571,396. That is the highest since emergency relief efforts following World War II. Appropriations in December included: \$217,000 for reconstruction in GUATEMALA; \$100,000 for a famine prevention project in ETHIOPIA; \$47,000 for a two-year nutrition rehabilitation project in BANGALORE, INDIA; \$35,000 for reconstruction in the wake of earthquake in ITALY; \$25,597 to aid evacuees in GUADELOUPE; and \$25,200 for a famine relief project in KENYA. FMB Executive Director BAKER J. CAUTHEN told the Board in December that about \$300,000 remained available for appropriation for emergency relief needs.

Special evangelistic projects in ZAMBIA were aided by December FMB action in the appropriation of \$66,670. Of that amount, \$26,670 is to finance an evangelistic crusade there next September, \$35,000 will purchase Bibles for distribution during the campaign, and \$5,000 will be used to print copies of the Book of Acts for distribution.

Missionary personnel were assigned to two new fields by FMB action in December. MR. and MRS. ROBERT L. CULLEN of the THAILAND Mission were temporarily reassigned to SRI LANKA, formerly CEYLON, a large island off the southeastern coast of India. The couple will aid the Baptist Union in Sri Lanka in church development and training for six months. This service will be evaluated with a view to possible permanent transfer to Sri Lanka. . . . Transferred from TRINIDAD to SCOTLAND, at the request of, and under the direction of the Baptist Union of Scotland, were MR. and MRS. JAMES E. SPAULDING. They will endeavor to establish a church made up of Americans and Scots that will be fully integrated in the Baptist Union, said Area Secretary J. D. HUGHEY.

The KOREA Baptist Theological Seminary board of trustees assumed full responsibility for operating the school as of January. It also recommended that financial support from the Baptist Mission be decreased gradually over the next ten years. . . . ROBERT L. STANLEY, former missionary to the PHILIPPINES, was elected by the FMB to the new post of director of news and information services as of Jan. 1.

In spite of renewed fighting and absence of Southern Baptist missionaries in ANGOLA, Baptist work there is continuing, according to Missionary CURTIS DIXON after a recent visit. The Dixons await reentry. . . . The Baptist Center in ALCOBENDAS, SPAIN, was recently completed and dedicated. It houses offices for the seminary, the Spanish Baptist Union, the Baptist Mission, and the correspondence course.

More than 2,700 Baptist pastors and lay persons from the U.S. and other countries will be taking part during the next two years in at least 38 different evangelistic emphases in 21 countries, reports JAMES W. CECIL, currently assigned to the FMB evangelism and church development department. Most will come from Southern Baptist churches in the U.S. and will pay their own transportation to and from the fields to work alongside missionaries and national Baptists for from one to four weeks.

The first Baptist-sponsored simultaneous evangelistic campaigns to be held in ABIDJAN, IVORY COAST, resulted in 461 professions of faith, with 285 presenting themselves for baptism. The crusades in 16 Yoruba-language churches were led by local pastors and visiting pastors from NIGERIA.