

JULY 1970

WORLDWIDE

LETTERS

From Our Readers

Call for Life?

Does God's call to a person to enter the ministry necessarily mean that His plan is for the individual to continue to serve as pastor of a church for his entire life or could it sometimes be only a step toward the ultimate plan that He has for the individual? Could it be that what we call "leaving the ministry" is really following God's leadership as He reveals it—a step at a time? Having served as a pastor, would he not be better qualified to serve in the profession he enters and could it be God leading him in this step just as surely as it was God who led him into the ministry? With public opinion such as it is, I am of the opinion that it is a person with a strong faith in God and an assurance that he is following God's leadership who will take such a step.

We seem willing enough to accept the fact that God calls pastors to the mission fields to serve in a position other than that of pastor, e.g., teacher or pharmacist, that he calls pastors to become teachers in our denominational colleges and seminaries, to serve as editors of our denominational papers, or to serve in various agencies of our SBC such as the Radio and TV Commission, but we are unwilling to accept the fact that God also calls ministers to become teachers in our public schools or to serve in other positions in the secular field. Where is there a greater need for ministering to the needs of the people and a better opportunity of meeting that need? Are these people really leaving the ministry or actually following God's leadership as He leads them to extend the ministry beyond our limited idea of what it means to be called to the ministry. Is it possible that those who question the actions of these persons are really the ones who are misinterpreting God's call?

C. E. Johnson
Blytheville, Ark.

Disturbed and Concerned:

It was our intention not to renew the subscription to the . . . magazine. We have been very disturbed about many articles that appeared, many seemed to have little Christian connection.

Much of my life has been involved with news media and I am a firm believer in reporting, but writing and reporting in an endorsing fashion on some things tends to hurt the cause of Christ. Many in our church no longer receive the magazine. Some have said "We can not support HOME MISSIONS as long as we have unchristian and apparent socialist-leaning publications."

After working for years in Northern areas we are well aware of home mission needs throughout the states. We want very much to have Christian work continued everywhere.

With these concerns and anxieties in

mind we renew the subscription and ask you to please keep Christ and his work in the center of your publication.

O. Bennie Qualls
Carlsbad, N. M.

Cancellation:

Because of your far left articles on changing America I do not plan at this time to renew my subscription. . . .

Should you see fit to change your present policies and get back to a down to earth story of home missions, then I will again consider renewing your magazine.

After having spent several years as a layman on the mission fields in Wyoming and Montana I am of the opinion that there are more relevant stories of home missions than those of the leisure crisis, birth control, planned cities, race relations, the sexual revolution, and the plight of the Mexican-Americans.

Burford A. Riley
Anthony, N. M.

Discussion Material:

In our attempts at curriculum improvement at the church, we have decided to explore the use of HOME MISSIONS as the primary source for discussion material during one of our two Sunday morning sessions of the School of Christian Education. (We are organized after the "Eldorado Plan"). . . .

Robert L. McKinney
Liberty, Mo.

Abidingly Relevant:

Please accept my appreciation for what you are trying to do by way of ministry in and through the . . . magazine. I feel it is of utmost urgency that you continue publishing the kind of articles and insights which are abidingly relevant to calling the church to minister to the "world." I feel that your publication is the most dynamic and relevant publication which Southern Baptists now have. . . .

H. Leroy Fenton
Pasadena, Tex. 77503

Appreciation:

Thank you for an informative and instructive magazine. I usually read it from cover to cover. It's challenging to meet the issues of our day. Keep up the good ministry. I am a former church secretary for more than 25 years, and am a retired 75-year-old widow still trying to serve the Lord.

Mrs. Julia Lee Roberts
Macon, Ga.

Cooperation with Others:

I want to commend you on your editorial entitled "Speaking of Trends" in the April, 1970, issue of HOME MISSIONS. In my judgment you outlined something which is very basic to Christianity.

I recall that it was a common interest in a common missionary task which brought Baptists together to form the old Triennial Convention. And if I understand what I read in the New Testament, the New Testament Christians were trying to carry out a task which they felt was theirs and they were using such forms and methods as seemed to get the job done and which were consistent with the faith. Frequently, it seems to me that most ecumenical-type movements have involved things in the wrong order. There seems to be more concern about structure and the power base than about getting a common Christian task done. Christians have worked together best and have accomplished most when their primary concern has been doing the work of Christ, letting methods, power bases and structures develop naturally but never coming to be the dominant factors.

Meeler Markham
Atlanta, Ga.

The modern emphasis upon the search for an "Authentic Life," or for identity, or self-fulfillment, or justification of existence, or by whatever name it may be called, is a great mistake in modern day Christianity. It emphasizes self exclusively, and becomes a contradiction by defeating its own purpose.

The psychology and philosophy of authenticity and identity promise much. The results are tragic, as any observer of their end products can see. The test of any doctrine is its products, not its theories.

There is always tension and a sense of inadequacy in human life. The successful Christian is not the one who relieves the tension by achieving authenticity and identity, but who relieves it by a studied application of the demands which the indwelling Christ makes upon us in dealing with the problems of daily life.

In other words, authenticity and identity (like happiness), set up as a conscious goal of life, are self-defeating. I think this is part of what Christ meant when he said, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

John Bowles
Manteo, N. C.

We have committed an unpardonable sin by allowing our subscription to HOME MISSIONS expire. We certainly can not do without it! I want to take this opportunity to thank you personally for such relevant and stimulating Christian magazine. We have been conducting our own mission awareness campaign by encouraging church members to subscribe to HOME MISSIONS and THE COMMISSION.

Barbara McCoy
Edgewood Arsenal, Md.



HULLUM ELECTED ASSOCIATE EDITOR

In its June Board of Directors meeting, the Home Mission Board elected Everett Hullum assistant secretary of the

Department of Editorial Service and associate editor of HOME MISSIONS Magazine.

Hullum replaces Dallas Lee who resigned recently to complete a book on the late Clarence Jordan, founder of Koinonia Farm, an interracial community in South Georgia.

He comes to this position from the editorial staff of the Brotherhood Commission. He is editor of PROBE Magazine and previously edited AM-BASSADOR LIFE.

Speaking of his new associate, HOME MISSIONS Editor Walker Knight said: "Hullum brings a professional journalist's skills and a committed Christian's insight into missions. These uniquely equip him for a leadership role in communications with the Home Mission Board."

A native of Vicksburg, Miss., 28-year-old Hullum is a graduate of the University of Texas and is now working toward completion of a masters degree in journalism at Syracuse University.

He joined the Brotherhood Commission in 1965. He has also been a reporter for the Waco "News-Tribune" and the Austin, Tex. "American-Statesman."

WAR

War is a funny thing.
It does not accomplish a thing
But people getting killed and
Land being ruined.

When they do not come home
It is grief
But when they do
It is a relief.

There's been a war in every
Generation since 1776
Is not that enough for
One nation?

—Rebecca Brumley

Ten-year-old Rebecca feels strongly about war, because her brother Chet was in Vietnam for more than two years. When her teacher asked the class to write a poem, this was the way she responded.

HOME MISSIONS

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INDEX

LETTERS	2
EXECUTIVE'S WORD	4
EDITORIALS	4
THE SUBURBAN CHURCH How to find mission amid affluent secularism	6
by Russell Bennett	
SUBURBAN'S WHITENESS COMPANION TO INNER CITY'S BLACKNESS	10
by Floyd Craig	
SEARCH FOR AUTHENTIC MISSION	14
by Steve Wall	
THE BIBLE ON THE BACKSIDE	18
by A. D. Dawson	
FOLK RELIGION OR CHRISTIANITY?	22
by Leon McBeth	
CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER CALENDAR	25
TOWARD CREATIVE URBAN STRATEGY TOWARD ECUMENOPOLIS	26
by Francis M. DuBose	
LEADERSHIP SECTION	33
LATE NEWS	40

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HOME MISSIONS

July, 1970

THE EXECUTIVE'S WORD

I Believe in the Church

Years ago during a Texas pastorate a young mother said to me, "I believe in Christianity, but I don't believe in the institutional church." That kind of remark was rare in those days; it is common in these days.

As one who has been related to a church almost as long as he can remember, I think I am aware of some of the problems and weaknesses of churches. In some cases there are serious problems. Nevertheless, I believe in the church, love the church, and rejoice in the privilege of being a member of a church.

The best things that have ever happened to me occurred because of the church.

Growing up in a home where church attendance was encouraged—to the extent that we were present just about every time the doors opened, and were among the last to leave—I was exposed early to the Bible, to Christian teachers, and to a fellowship which was very meaningful to most of the members of this small, city church.

It was through the church that I was introduced to Christ as personal Savior and Lord, professed Him in baptism, and found opportunities of Christian growth and service even during youth.

It was through the church that I sensed the call of God to a Christian vocation. In church related and supported schools I had favorable opportunities of training for the ministry. Small churches gave me the opportunity to serve them as pastor when I had very little or no experience. Doubtless I grew more because of them than they grew because of me.

It was in a church, actually my first pastorate, that I met the young school teacher who later became my wife. The church has continued to be a source of strength to our lives, and to our family.

And now, for almost 40 years, Baptist churches have opened to me doors of challenging service to fellow men in the name of Christ. I am grateful for the church, and all that it means to my life and to those I know

and love best.

Others could write of what the church means to them personally. Volumes would be needed to state what the church has meant for good to the human family since our Lord began to build his church almost two thousand years ago. I limit my comments to personal experience in this column.

I am writing about the church as an institution. As such, the church is exposed to all the dangers which any institution faces. An institution may become so encrusted with tradition, that it loses its ability to adjust to changed and changing conditions. An institution may accumulate organizational patterns that become a burden to it. An institution may become so preoccupied with its own survival that it overlooks the reason for its existence.

The church in our time has been accused of all of these. To some degree the charges are true—to a greater degree in some cases and to a lesser degree in others.

By Arthur B. Rutledge Executive Secretary-Treasurer, HMB

shall we therefore follow the counsel of our critics? Shall we discontinue the church as an institution? If so, what form will Christianity take?

It is worth noting that people of similar interests have a way of getting together—and organizing! Ever hear of a flying club, or a stamp collectors club, or a gardening club, or a literary club? Why do people with these interests organize and meet? For the reason expressed by an avid coin collector who traveled 80 miles round trip, twice a month, to attend a coin club: "If you're going to keep up your interest in coin collecting you have to keep in touch with others who have the same interest."

Does it seem unreasonable that people who are committed to Christ would desire to gather together, and even organize? If we are going to maintain a living faith and grow in understanding, love and service, most of us need the fellowship of others of like purpose. If we are going to try to lead others to know Christ, we must have a group into which to bring

them.

Therefore, if those who clamor for the demise of the organized church should get their wish, it wouldn't take a week for some form of organization to emerge to take its place. Composed of people committed to Christ, this would be a church, or certainly it would resemble a church—organized, active, with purpose, and seeking recruits. In time this too would encounter the hazards common to all institutions.

We are living in a time when the national mood is one of criticism and suspicion. Despite the admitted limitations and weaknesses which appear in any organization composed of human beings, in thousands of places across the nation and the world, the churches are involved in exciting, thoroughly Christian, and extremely significant ministries. Would it not be helpful to observe what the church is doing, as well as what it is not doing?

We are living in a period of such sharp and widespread change that every institution—government,

school, family, church—is subjected to unusual tensions. In all these areas there are differences of opinion as to how to handle the issues of today, and sometimes there is disagreement as to what the issues are.

In the face of tremendous changes, this is a time for humble confession within the churches that we too are sometimes puzzled. It is a time to pray for guidance. It is a time to pray for love for those who may differ from us, both within the church and without. It is a time to seek to understand the will of our Lord.

The church is not ours—it is Christ's! He "loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). We honor Christ when we try to help the church represent Him worthily in today's situation, loving and serving people and pointing men to Christ.

I love the church—as somebody said, "warts and all"—and want to help it fulfill its mission in today's world. How about you?

by Walker L. Knight

EDITORIALS

The Cement of Missions

If Southern Baptists are held together by the cement of missions, that adhesive received a good test at Denver. The pull and tug of upset messengers ripped at the fraying fabric which is the Southern Baptist Convention. Amazingly only one tear was visible when the sessions ended. The Sunday School Board has been instructed to recall Vol. 1 of the Broadman Bible Commentary because of "liberal" interpretations on Genesis.

Only the popularity of President W. A. Criswell and the intervention of other leaders enabled the Christian Life Commission to escape censure of one type or another, after nearly a half

dozen resolutions and motions hit the floor in a flood of discontent over the morality seminar in Atlanta.

Most of the discontent came from those holding the more conservative views, either toward the scriptures or toward social involvement. Speeches in Denver and pre-convention writings pointed to "trends" toward what some view as a liberal take-over in the SBC. However, most have had difficulty with specifics, that is until the publication of the commentary on Genesis and the holding of the Christian Life Commission's morality seminar. Consequently, a floodtide of pentup emotion was unleashed toward these.

The anger and harshness of many messengers was indicative of the depth of their frustration. At one point President Criswell closed a session by suggesting that messengers go to their hotel rooms and pray "that God will take the meanness out of your hearts." Some were even upset with the presiding officers, and one pastor called them "rude and unkind to some of those who spoke."

Viewing such actions and hearing such verbiage forces one to look for the cohesive factors which hold Southern Baptists together in their very loose confederation. Probably a split was avoided this year only because no well

known leader (one who has held active office) was advocating it, but to the contrary, all leadership worked to derate the frustration of angry messengers. Former presidents joined to table four resolutions directed at the Christian Life Commission. Selection of Carl Bates of Charlotte,

was a search for a strong man in middle who might unify and heal warring divisions.

The cohesive factors which formed SBC in the first place were missions, neglect of the South as a mission field, and the right to appoint slave

incorrectness of the racial position, but so far that has been done without the loss of the concern for missions. In Denver the cement of missions was much in evidence, and Baker James Cauthen of the Foreign Mission Board told messengers that missions is the key to convention unity.

"Do we want this convention never to fragment? Let us join ourselves around the mandate of Christ, and the world cannot divide us. No matter how much we debate—all one body we," Cauthen said.

His comments came during a show of unity by mission agencies, as the Home Mission Board, the Foreign Mission

Board, Brotherhood Commission, Woman's Missionary Union, state and associational missions joined for a massive 125th anniversary multi-media presentation which wove together speeches by Cauthen, Arthur B. Rutledge of the HMB, music, recorded missionary testimonies, and recognition of newly-appointed missionaries.

The wounds and scars of this convention and the past year will fester and erupt again unless Southern Baptists in love seek the purpose for which Christ came into the world. Unity at the expense of the world is unchristian, but unity for the sake of the world reflects God's love for it. ■

The Suburban Church:

How to find mission amid affluent secularists

by RUSSELL BENNETT

Some years ago a city-bred youth went to pastor a rural church. Intrigued by the new environment he asked a farmer, Mr. Dunlap, how he knew what to do. Farmer Dunlap replied, "I do what I did this time last year—and watch my neighbor." Too many Baptist churches are run like that. For example, First Baptist Church will buy a bus—after the Methodist church does. Or, the new pastor will interpret his urban congregation in terms of his former rural student pastorate. We tend to do what we did last year—and watch our neighbor. This is especially true in suburbia.

Currently there are about 70 million suburbanites in the United States. This represents a 28 per cent increase since 1960. One out of four Americans reside in suburbia. The increase of suburban—and exurban—population will continue to accelerate for the immediate future. Suburbia, consequently, constitutes a significant home mission field. A church tends to reflect the characteristics of its socio-economic environment. The constant influx of population has given the suburban church a unique characterization; however, to delineate these characteristics, we must first define suburbia.

In 1954 *Fortune* magazine defined a suburb as any census tract in a metropolitan area in which two-thirds of the families owned their own homes and had more income as well as a larger number of children than the national average. But this technical definition misses some of the more significant features. Suburbia tends to be a process more than a place. It is a reaction to inner-city—a mind-set. Geographically, suburbia is a residential district separated from the central city and characterized by dwelling

units of homogeneous price. Sociologically, suburbia is homogeneous in culture. Social conformity tends to make the suburban community exclusive. It may be blue-collar or white-collar, but the community will tend to have one dominant socio-economic class, which will generally be of the middle class level.

Suburbia is a commuterized community. The bread-winner leaves the community each working morning and does not return until evening. Eight hours of employment per day is coupled with one or two hours of commuting. Residence is isolated from office, shop and factory.

A final but major mark of suburbia is that it is populated by persons who can be described as achievers. Suburbia is a family-oriented, developing residential area. The men who bring their families there are climbing the ladder of social and economic achievement. The drive for achievement colors their relationships—business, educational, social and religious. (It is not uncommon for a man to be elected chairman of the board of deacons only a year or two before his promotion to being department head at the office or factory.) Actually, one suburban area may be only a temporary residence as the family moves to a higher income bracket and, consequently, to a more affluent suburban neighborhood.

A study group on the suburban church was convened at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly in 1969. The report of that group defined a suburb as "a residential area lying outside of, but within commuting distance of, the inner core of a major city and characterized by a high degree of homogeneity or sameness with regard to housing, economic status, and life style." The group defined a suburban

church as "a congregation located within a certain suburban area and made up generally of people who share the prevailing characteristics of that particular suburb."¹ These two definitions will be used here.

The Ridgecrest study group listed the problems within the suburban church as self-centeredness, spiritual emptiness, and irrelevance. These might be summarized under the heading of secularization. The average suburban church tends to be more of a product of the socio-economic community than a producer of renewed community. Frequently, the building of a suburban church is a trophy of achievement. It is a symbol of the status of the neighborhood. Gibson Winter asks why the churches rather than the clubs or schools were used as the fulcrum for establishing community in a new suburban area.² Perhaps the family-orientation of suburbia is the answer. The church is the only urban institution that involves the whole family at the same time and place in relation to the wider community. Man is normally gregarious, not isolationistic. Unconsciously the suburbanite will use the church to demonstrate the progress and solidarity of his community. At times the church will reflect secular affluence more than moral influence. The church degenerates to a means of identifying with the new neighborhood rather than with the wider Christian fellowship. Consequently, many suburban churches belong more to the world than to the Kingdom of God. They tend to perpetuate the secular values of the neighborhood rather than to judge their con-

CONTINUED

Bennett is associate secretary of the Department of Metropolitan Missions.

temporary society. Such a church fails its Christian mission.

The suburban setting presents the local church with another problem—the rise and decline of neighborhoods. It is so long-range in nature that it is seldom acknowledged, and few suburban churches prepare for the problem.

For example, a small rural church was located near a southern city in 1948; the area experienced a housing boom and annexation. The church grew rapidly, and by 1958 had added two-story brick educational facilities, a youth building and a new sanctuary which seated about 1,000 persons. As post-war married couples prospered and their families grew, they moved from the frame houses surrounding that church to more affluent houses

At Cedarmore Baptist Assembly in Kentucky, participants will share in 12 study groups which will produce position papers for publication. This is a unique attempt at preventive mission planning. Too often Baptists wait until the church is dying to speak about her mission.

What is the mission of the church? Hugo Culpepper, director of the Division of Missions, says:

The mission of the church is to glorify God by leading men to know him through faith in Jesus Christ. Our mission is the mission of our Lord. The reason for being is to live for the glory of God. This is true for the individual Christian and for the church. To glorify God is to reveal or to manifest his true character—to make him known as he is.¹

The suburban church must establish and adapt programs to meet needs, not to conform to denominational patterns

further out of the city. (It just happened that there was a new suburban church nearby whose pastor was approximately their age. That church was building an educational unit and needed their help.) One neighborhood adjacent to the first church became predominantly Negro. Another changed into a Mexican American community. The houses in the immediate vicinity of the church house became rental property. By 1968 the church attendance had declined approximately to its 1948 level. The pastor had been credited with the numerical growth of the church. Guess who was blamed for the decline? In 20 years the church changed from rural to suburban to inner-city.

Today's suburb is tomorrow's transitional community. Every suburban church faces the prospect of ministering to a transitional community, but few of them prepare. Lack of preparation causes many suburban churches to fail their Christian mission when confronting a changed environment.

To help churches prepare for the onslaught of secularism and future urban decay, the Department of Metropolitan Missions has called for and planned a national consultation on the mission of the suburban church.

Each church that is the body of Christ shares in the mission of Christ. A church in a specific time and place without a mission is dead as a church of Jesus Christ. As Emil Brunner says, "The church exists by mission, just as a fire exists by burning. Where there is no mission, there is no church; and where there is neither church nor mission, there is no faith."² The basic problem confronting the suburban church is how to fulfill her mission in such a setting.

So much for problems. What about assets? For a church to fulfill her mission there must be sufficient strength. A growing church can better fulfill her mission than a dying one. What are the marks of a growing church? Much research remains to be done in this area, but the Department of Survey and Special Studies has statistically distinguished three factors. First, a growing church has a program that involves the whole family. Its meetings are designed so that the family can travel to and from the church house as a unit. Too many meetings that separate family members tends to work against the growth rate of a church.

Secondly, churches that are growing have a visitation and a prospecting program that is blessed by the leadership as "successful." The

respondents to the study did not define that term. At any rate, a growing congregation is attracting members from the community.

Third, the growing church tends to be indigenous to its community. That is, the church attracts people who express the value system of the dominant culture.³ Language is more vocabulary. It is a matter of culture that a church that communicates with a specific public reflects its culture.

A growing church will tend to possess the above three aspects, but what motivates people to join a church? Why does a new family in an area choose one church over another? The major link in communication with the public is the pastor. A special study by the Sunday School Board's Department of Research and Statistics reported that the major factor influencing the decision of 40 to 60 per cent of those who joined was the pastor. A second important factor was the youth program. Third, people join a church in which they feel comfortable and which is conveniently located within driving distance of their residence. Leonard Irwin of the Department of Survey and Special Studies reports that a man tends to drive not more than 20 minutes one way to a church house, even though he will drive an hour or more to work. Finally, the music program of the church influences the decision of people to join a church. People are attracted by an extensive and well-organized music program. Music reflects culture more effectively than any other medium. In a culturally fragmented society, music is an accessible instrument of social contact and communication.

Studies by O. D. Morris, Department of Survey and Special Studies, indicate that factors contributing to church growth are not tangible. Neither geographic location, buildings, income nor organization can be proved to cause growth. Donald Metz, in a study of nine suburban churches entitled *New Congregations*, indicates that the main factor for growth is *esprit de corps*. The spirit or attitude of the congregation largely determines whether or not a church will grow. Morale tends to be high when a significant portion of the congregation have confidence in the organization and in themselves and have a sense of personal responsibility.

For the church.

How can the suburban church retain her assets to problems? Unfortunately the average church emphasizes survival goals.⁴ The natural influx of members to a suburban church causes the exaltation of methods.

The first problem—they think—how to locate people but how to house and organize them. Rapid growth causes the leadership to attend to means rather than ends. They become more concerned with how many people attend than with what kind of people attend. Theology becomes secondary to technology. The growth pattern of the average suburban church will reveal attention focused on things rather than thoughts. During the first five years the suburban church tends to emphasize basic housing facilities, especially nursery and educational space. Sixty to eighty percent of the new members join by letter. During the next five years, emphasis is shifted to elementary school age work. A second building and possibly a second staff member is added. The rate of baptisms increases as the primaries grow to be juniors. Numbers of adults join as their chil-

often that one could almost state as law: "One preacher puts up the building, but the next one pays for it." When the building is complete, the congregation gives an almost audible sigh of relief. Enthusiasm tends to decline. Some pastors interpret this and the decline in number of baptisms as a sign that their work is finished, even though it might be just beginning. If buildings, organizations, or programs become primary, the congregation disintegrates when they are completed. A church focused on terminal means soon degenerates.

The rapidly growing suburban church which concentrates on means will be self-centered. When the community stops growing, so will the church. When the neighborhood declines, so will that church. For example, a visitation report to one methods-centered pastor read: "This family is a good prospect. We need them." This meant that the family were active Baptists, titheers, etc. If the father had been alcoholic, the mother ill, and the children delinquent, would the report have read, "This is a good prospect. They need us"? A church that builds itself in a prospering neighborhood will be

Excessive indebtedness hampers the adaptability of a church to mission.

children come forward for baptism. Between the tenth and fifteenth years attention shifts to youth work and the building of a permanent sanctuary. At this point the church tends to make a major blunder.

After 15 years most of the subdivisions will be filled. In-migration declines. Since the growth rate of a church tends to trail the growth rate of the community (it takes about 15 years to get tired of driving back to the former church), the church membership will level off. Many of the youth will begin to leave for colleges, placing added financial strain on parents. To plan an auditorium for growth rates is suicidal. Income will level off and indebtedness become an increasing problem. When the church builds a new unit sanctuary, the pastor weakens both ministry and the church if he allows the building to become the primary concern. This happens so

ignored when the community begins to die. A church that has not developed a ministering spirit during its prospering days can not change easily during decay. The time to design a serving church is during its formation, not after it has become established and rigid.

The suburban church with a solid future puts emphasis on its mission. All programs and buildings are designed with mission in view. Such a stance is not imposed but evoked from the congregation. Guidelines for developing a ministering church are set forth in the Home Mission Board pamphlet, "The Church in the Transitional Community." The fundamental task is to define objective. Unless the object of the church is a product of the group process, the definition will not be meaningful. Unless the mission of the church is stated in terms of her particular situation, i. e. unless her mission is specifically

cally defined, it will be too vague to follow. The rapidly growing suburban church which does not define its mission early makes a serious mistake.

The suburban church must establish and adapt programs to meet needs not to conform to denominational patterns. The fulfillment of mission requires creativity and adjustment to a changing society. While all church fields have some factors in common, each field is unique. Programs which do not meet needs waste energy and ultimately dissipate morale. The mission of the church is to the field of today, not to a memory of the past. As Cal Guy, missions professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, says, "Don't attach to methods of work the same reverence given to doctrine."

Perhaps it is appropriate to conclude with a practical warning. The church that is concerned with her mission will keep her indebtedness low. The interest on indebtedness of Southern Baptist churches annually is equivalent to Cooperative Program receipts. Excessive indebtedness hampers the adaptability of a church to mission. A big debt prompts the membership to give undue consideration to a member's financial position rather than his spiritual need. One suburban church assumed a half-million-dollar debt for a new sanctuary. Within nine months its all-white community became predominantly Negro and its mailing list population dropped from 1600 to 500. Who will pay the debt? A highly mobile society and rapidly changing communities call for churches of considerable versatility. Our mission is to glorify God, not ourselves—even in suburbia.

Footnotes

1. "The Church in the Suburban Community," a pamphlet published by the Home Mission Board, 1969, p. 3.
2. Gibson Winter, *The Suburban Captivity of the Church*, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962) p. 87.
3. Hugo Culpepper, "On Mission in the 70's," a paper distributed by the Home Mission Board, 1970, p. 3.
4. Emil Brunner, *The Word and the World*, 2nd ed. (London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 108.
5. C. I. O. D. Morris, "Factors of Church Growth in Selected Metropolitan Areas," a paper used by Metropolitan Missions Department, H.M.B.
6. Donald Metz, *New Congregations* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 133-148.



Suburbia's Whiteness Companion To Inner City's Blackness

photos and interview by FLOYD CRAIG

Can the (suburban) church break through the "Crabgrass Curtain"? How can an interracial program have the full support of the church without the support of every member? Does the motivation stem from guilt or from a genuine understanding of the nature of the church? Is it 'they need us' or 'we need them'? What happens when joint efforts only highlight conscious and unconscious racism? Can a suburban church have a stake in the welfare of the inner city? How do you avoid the danger of paternalism? Is there anything evangelistic about a Companion Church?

For two years two churches—a black church in inner city Washington, D. C. and a white church in a Virginia suburb—have been exploring closer relationships through joint worship, a cooperative tutorial project, and dialogue among members.

Ernest Gibson, Washington native and pastor of First Rising Mount Zion Baptist Church since 1952, is a leader in the Baptist Convention of the District of Columbia and of projects and committees of the area council of churches. Nathan Siler, Jr., of Knoxville, Tenn., pastor of Ravensworth Baptist Church in Annandale, Va., is a graduate of Vanderbilt University; while earning his doctorate at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, he served with several churches in Louisville, Ky.

In an interview with Floyd Craig, Gibson and Siler discuss various aspects of their venture, including its effectiveness and the problems encountered by their churches and individual members in what they call a **Companion Church** relationship.

THE BEGINNING

Craig: . . . the church by its very nature has a responsibility to and a concern for the total metropolitan area. This sense of responsibility, and concern for the plight of the people in the core city, were the prime movers which

started two formerly isolated churches, one black and one white, on the road to a working relationship that we call Companion Church.

From (an) initial contact leaders from the two churches began to work out a strategy for a cooperative ministry. Women's organizations . . . planned free clothes parties held at the inner city church . . . It was not long before we began asking the question, "What can our churches do together?" The answer was a proposal from First Rising Mt. Zion for a Study Hall, Tutoring Program with a paid director and volunteer help from both churches. The purpose of the Study Hall was to provide a quiet setting conducive to study . . . The white suburban church was to pay the director's salary; the black inner city church would provide the space, furniture, and the director. This would not be a paternalistic relationship. . . . The danger of white paternalism and control was dealt with on the theological and organizational levels. The board of directors . . . has a black majority.

Although the Study Hall meets a real need, it was never viewed as an end in itself. . . . The regular meeting breaks down stereotypes, develops trust and mutual respect, and produces the climate for creative thinking about other things the two churches can do together. . . . joint worship . . . black and white couples visiting each other's home . . . discussions dealing with current issues . . . a summer program . . . providing food and clothing for (riot) victims.

Siler: Then in the spring of 1969, as a part of the Crusade of the Americas, Ernest (Gibson) and choir from his church led worship services for one week. He addressed himself to issues related to interracial problems, such as the meaning of black power and the concept of the black church. Discussion followed each worship service. For those who came and exposed themselves this was a very good experience. We dealt with some information and feelings that we had not dealt with before.

The exchange of worship has been mutual. We have been invited to lead worship in their church a couple of times.

The last experiences together have included a joint Dinner-Communion Service during Race Relations month.

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Craig is director of public relations, Christian Life Commission, Nashville, Tenn.

July, 1970

and an all day retreat involving twelve members from each congregation.

THEOLOGICAL BASIS

Gibson: The theological basis for the Companion Church program is our oneness in Christ and the deciding that this oneness had not been acted out. The program attempts to bring together churches which are naturally separated—with one in the city and one in suburbia.

Siler: I understand God to be at work bringing about reconciliation between man and God, and man and man. Thus, the church ought to be looking for those places in the church and world where this community is broken down or where there still exists dividing walls of hostility and misunderstanding. Then I see the church called to spend its energy in being an instrument of God's grace and love, in bringing healing into these cleavages. So as we have attempted to be an instrument of God's work in the world, it has thrust us into some involvement with this particular geographical, cultural, and racial cleavage.

IDENTITY

Gibson: I said to my people, "Now, o.k., you're not going over there to try to be white, you are going to be who you are, black people. This forces them to deal with who they are, and it also gives them courage to be who they are. . . . The black man does not compromise his blackness or the white man his whiteness."

Siler: . . . our relationship with First Rising Mount Zion does have a lot to say about . . . our identity as a church. We raised the question of priority in this phase of our outreach: "Is this to be a marginal interest for a few people . . . or do you see our involvement with the racial tension of our day as germane to our mission as a church?" The deacons discussed this honestly and openly. Most felt that this was at the heart of our calling. While the racial problem is not so visible here in suburbia, it is obviously a pressing problem in our day. As a church, we are attempting to open some doors so that the racial tensions can be seen and addressed.

"BLACK POWER" ON THE BOARD

Gibson: We structured the board of directors for study hall-tutoring ministry so we would have three blacks and two whites. This is a compromise—(a) shift in power which forces white members to deal with . . . superior (feelings) . . . It forces blacks to deal with their natural inferior (feelings), to assume responsibility in a black/white situation (in which) under normal circumstances, they would not.

Siler: The church's willingness to trust the financial resources to the leadership of this board which has the balance of power slanted in the black direction was a very important step. It helped some of us realize that money was just one resource of many. The resources—such as buildings, experience, and knowledge of the neighborhood—they contributed. So in light of all the resources we felt that the majority of the board should be from their church. The process revealed some of the paternalistic attitudes we tend to direct toward blacks.

Siler: I need Ernest to help me realize, not only some of my hangups, but some of my potential. We offer each other friendship and a context in which we can honestly reach for the oneness in Christ that affirms our separate, unique

racial identities. And what has happened in our relationship has happened among other members from our churches.

When Ernest Gibson and leaders of First Rising Mount Zion (first spoke) of their concerns, I said to myself "They need us!" Now . . . I find myself saying with deep conviction: "We need them!" We need them to help us deal with our persistent racial prejudice . . . help us relate to some urban central city needs . . . help us to understand the growing suspicion and fear between races . . . and help us be church in a visible, cooperative way, not otherwise possible by remaining isolated.

Siler: And now I see more clearly that we can contribute to their lives. The blacks have had experiences with whites who have been unloving and manipulative, and thus they are very suspicious. We serve them if we can approximate an accepting, caring, love that can handle their hostility and move toward an authentic communion with them in Christ.

EVANGELISM

Gibson: I see that it is very significant in terms of Christian growth. If this continuing evangelism, (the companion church) does have a bearing on evangelism.

Siler: (Evangelism) is the church being, doing and saying the good news that through the love shown in Jesus Christ, the walls that divide . . . are broken down. We are simply trying to provide the context where the love of God can chip away at this particular wall. . . . It also provides an occasion for us to be equipped as agents of change and understanding in our suburban area where interracial fear and suspicion seem to be mounting.

Gibson: The companion church program forces individuals to begin dealing with how they really see one another—what their real attitudes are.

Siler: Our growing relationship with this inner city, black congregation is enabling us to be something we cannot be by ourselves. With these believers we can be church in a more complete and visible way.

White participants in a discussion group including black member were surprised to find prejudiced feelings and attitudes yet unconquered by their ideals.

EFFECT ON LARGER COMMUNITY

Siler: I can see that this might affect the openness of a non-Christian. If a non-Christian can see how the resources of faith and love and trust can help heal . . . it may encourage him to be open to what this power can do in all areas of . . . life. Whereas, if he sees the church as divided as other institutions are, it would discourage his openness to this meaning.

THOSE NOT READY

Siler: I think by lack of participation, many have said "We're not ready for this now;" or "We disapprove." But we have not made them feel badly for feeling this. I think it was important to so structure the involvement that people do not feel pressured into close relationship with

either blacks or whites. Yet those who participate need to feel that they represent the church at that point of ministry. Perhaps the reason this relationship has not caused a great change in our congregation is this voluntary nature of the involvement.

Gibson: It is just as important to the program to guide those who are not ready for it away from it as it is to get those who are ready into it.

ONES INVOLVED

Gibson: (The program) gave them a creative point to . . . be able to accept one another for who they really are . . . deal with the complex view of the natural suspicion and hostility that they have for whites, and to move away from that and see those who are there . . . as brothers in Christ. A group that has gotten to know one another and has overcome the emotional . . . about black/white . . . will ask, "What else can we do together?" and then structure other things that they can do together on the same level.

Siler: It has increased both the anxiety and understanding of the ones involved. Most of us who went into the deeper encounters with Mt. Zion felt that we had resolved racial prejudices, and we have been forced to see that it is more complicated than we thought. With the expressions of hope and love have also come outbursts of anger, frustration, and resentment. Particularly within the discussion groups and retreats, both the agony and ecstasy of reconciliation have been felt.

"CRABGRASS CURTAIN"

Siler: Obviously a major reason for suburbia's existence is to have the economic and cultural advantages of a metropolitan area while enjoying separation from the more acute urban problems. Personal pressures, family and church concerns, and social distance all work together to camouflage this separation. In short, the "Crabgrass Curtain" is seldom noticed. This relationship has helped us notice it and do a little something about it.

SEPARATION

Gibson: We are separated. Graphic separation . . . is a fact. The problem is how to overcome the separation which maintains and perpetuates the problem of identity both black and white. The difference (in this and the old segregated pattern) is that it tries to use the program as a means to the end of getting people together who, because of the history of the country, have been separated. The old pattern . . . led for compromise in terms of the black man . . . who had to deny his own style of worship, his own style of living. In this situation, it calls for doing things that are new. We join together to worship as we understand worship. We take our worship over there to share, and when they come to us, they share. There are differences but we respect each of the differences.

Siler: This is the time in which the black needs time to re-emerge as man. The black community is struggling with lack of awareness. They are reaching for the realization of their uniqueness as a people. This kind of relationship allows the freedom for each church to continue to explore and to express its own sense of worship, its own gifts as a

people, without any false compromising. Along with respect for differences and basic shared power in terms of decision-making, it accents the underlying unity that we have. With its stress on diversity within unity, I regard it as a viable form for two races to use at this stage in history.

OTHER CHURCHES

Gibson: I think there are a number of churches . . . ready for this type of activity. Recently, we have had evidence of (many) who want to develop a relationship with another church—black and white. Many are planning and have moved to establish a relationship . . . I think there are plenty of churches who, if you mentioned the idea, would be happy to establish something like this. I sense though that they don't understand the implications.

Siler: I am cautiously optimistic. I think there is a growing awareness and a need for this kind of exposure and joint service. More and more churches are exploring some form of companionship. But the major hurdles, as I see them, are the sharing of control, honest communication of feelings, and the real commitment of resources.

COMPANION CHURCH

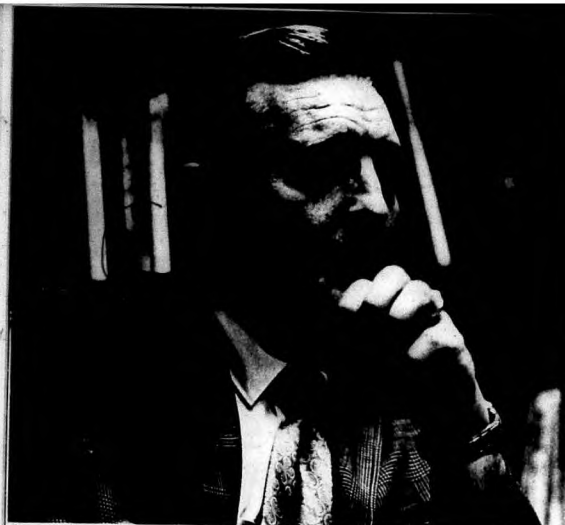
Gibson: I don't think every church, black or white, is at a point in their own development where they can enter into a companion church relationship. It isn't something you can just sort of look at and say, "Well, o.k., all who want to develop a companion church program, let me know." I think that the church and the pastor should arrive at a certain point in their own development.

Siler: A companion church relationship should not come across as the program to be superimposed on every situation. I think the chief question is for each church to struggle with what it means to be church. If, in the struggle, the churches come to feel the compulsion to address racial barriers, then the appropriate forms for expressing this concern will emerge. The companion church idea is one form that is workable for us.

THE FUTURE

Gibson: We have been in a very creative type of situation. The only thing that was actually planned was to have the program and set up the board of directors. There was not a years' program planning. If Mahan gets an idea, he calls me; if I get an idea, I call him. For the future—I think it would be this continued openness. I can anticipate more retreats and discussion groups where we can bring our members together.

Siler: As I see the future of the relationship, it would involve more of the small group intensive encounters and service opportunities. . . . It does provide hope. We are overwhelmed, certainly in our area, with the mammoth cleavage between the races. Here are members of two congregations who first acknowledge the seriousness of the problem and the depth of our prejudices and, yet, also acknowledge that we have some resources in our common faith and devotion to God which will help us address these problems and move to new levels of Christian community.



Earning the right to speak . . . Ratliff

When "just visiting" is more than a social call . . . Barnett with "adopted" children

When things like milk make a difference, "we try to help" . . . Mrs. Kelly, (right in far right photo) mission action program director.



Suburban Search for Mission

story and photos by Steve Wall

"Sunday living and weekday ties are one piece of pipe," said Jere Rush, a member of University Church, Hattiesburg, Miss. who makes his living in a hardware store. With these words, suburban missions shake hands.

Suburban mission outreach begins with people and those people must be concerned Christians ready to become involved with strangers and their needs. Craig Ratliff, pastor of University Baptist Church, states, "We hope our church can be a filling station where we come to get fellowship and then go out to serve people where they are."

"While our church has been moving toward community involvement," Ratliff continued, "in many ways we are a typical Southern Baptist church. Though our emphasis might vary, we

run a rather conventional program within the walls of the building. Much of our outside involvement is carried on by a relative few."

Further, Ratliff states, "Until we have been able to become a fellowship, and until such time as we have earned the right to speak by involvement with people and their needs, it is doubtful that we have an authentic word of witness that will be heard."

We are fortunate in that the two senior pastors of the church—Harold Kitchens and Graham Hales—worked tirelessly in building up the fellowship and openness of the congregation during the first ten years of our life. What is taking place now is the fruit of the cooperative effort of the former pastors and the people. I'm a Johnny-come-lately to the scene; I've only been here since September of

1969. Then there is the steady influence of J. M. Garner, a retired Baptist preacher, (University's assistant pastor) who has been in University Church from the beginning."

As programs and ideas develop in reaching out into the community in Hattiesburg, vital decisions are being made. One deals with capital investments, Ratliff adds. "We hope our capital investments will stay small. In this manner there will be no conflict between survival goals and morality. Decisions can be based on what Christ would want us to do and not on what we have to collect to keep alive."

Trying hard to keep back the tears, Roger Fowler explains to the small group of Christians that no one, until now, cared enough to have communion with him in his home. "The very

first time that I talked with Roger," said Ratliff, "he said, 'I guess you know that I have terminal cancer and the doctor has given me four months to live.'"

Fowler was the youngest man to be appointed "captain" in the U. S. Navy. In October, 1969, doctors discovered cancer in one of his legs; it spread so rapidly that they gave him only a short life expectancy. Fowler, 40, then moved his family back to Hattiesburg so that his wife could be near her family.

Although he has never been in University Church and is not a Baptist, he is an associate member under

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Wall is a free lance photographer and Baptist layman from Chattanooga, Tenn.





"Outreach begins with people" . . . church member serves Lord's Supper in the home of terminal cancer patient.

Finding alternatives to dropping out . . . Hank Guest, student body president and youth director.



one of the church's pioneering programs of outreach. The program is similar to the watchcare program familiar to many congregations, but with a difference. Anyone of the evangelical persuasion and a member of a Protestant church who feels his baptism is valid can join the church, although he cannot vote on church issues or be elected deacon. When Mrs. Fowler, a Baptist, joined the church, Fowler was accepted as an associate member.

Through its Mission Action Program, (MAP), the church learns, from the welfare agency, of families which are being affected by terminal cancer. Members of the church visit immediately and learn of needs with which the church might help.

"Is the milk still coming?" Mrs. Art Kelly, director of MAP, questions an elderly lady who has just lost her daughter because of cancer. (Providing milk is one of several ways the church has tried to help). The reply is "Yes."

The daughter died after weeks of hospitalization, leaving a son of eight

and a daughter of ten. The elderly lady has the granddaughter in her two-room house; the father has the son.

Mrs. Kelly states, "The granddaughter goes to a nearby church every Sunday; (she went) even when the mother was so sick. Now the grandmother tries to get out with her. They do not go to our church, although they are welcome—it is some distance and they prefer to walk. We are not trying to recruit members; we are striving to minister to people."

"We learned of this family through the welfare agency. Visitation began at once. The family needed many things which were supplied. The church is still supplying milk."

Throughout the sickness, the church kept a close vigil—rent was paid, clothes were supplied, and food was prepared. Eventually the young mother became so ill she had to be placed in a Jackson hospital, more than 100 miles away. Some church members were with the family in Hattiesburg while others stayed up nights at the Jackson hospital. Finally,

the night came when the young mother died," said Mrs. Kelly. "Still the church was there and continued to minister."

When someone is in need or death comes, it is such a blessing to have someone there to help carry the burden," the grandmother said of the concerned Christians.

Our men naturally were reluctant to get involved in the Woman's Missionary Union, so we changed the name to the Mission Action Program," said Mrs. Kelly. "We are now working through individual Sunday School classes. Wherever our people are, we want them to know about and be concerned with other people's needs."

The Eaton school project is another facet of MAP. The purpose is to get young people through college age involved with families living in the low income level near Eaton school. The project is designed so that young people go into the community in pairs and "adopt" a family of children. Once or twice a week they take the children to ball games, fishing, shopping or visit at their home.

Phil Barnett, a student at William Carey College who has been involved in the Eaton school project, said, "I believe I have learned more and been affected to a greater degree than the kids."

Barnett was paired with Judi Thornhill, a fellow student at William Carey. He and Miss Thornhill became so interested in the kids that they discovered a greater value in life than just getting an education in college. It was no surprise when they decided to be married. Mr. and Mrs. Barnett continue their activities with their "adopted" children.

Our adults are adopting families and sharing activities with them," said Mrs. Kelly. "When we learn of needy out families or, through the welfare agency, of needy cases, needy people, or people needing transportation to the food stamp office, we try to help."

An openness of heart and mind in the direction the church has been taking. New programs are frequently initiated. "As we learn of a different outreach," said Ratliff, "if our people need to change, we often try to change. I'll never forget a prayer by Brother Garner once prayed: 'Help

us to see that things are changing, and that we can't do things just like we always did.'"

Jess Hughes, business manager for a local newspaper and deacon at University Church, states, "our philosophy of openness is attracting students who said the old approach deserved a long, close look—not theology but method. We started looking for something new. It may be rock music or a New Year's Eve Lord's Supper. We are not afraid of change. Our Sunday School classes have become seeking and searching sessions, realizing that there is a man-to-man responsibility not just God and man."

Out of the changes have come frequent dialogue sessions on Sunday evenings, Hughes said, "when a man preaches, all of one's background and environment starts operating. One imagines that the preacher says one thing, but he may be saying something else. In the dialogue sessions one learns what the preacher actually said. This is development of communications between minister and membership."

"The members (of our church) are facing up to issues and not hiding our heads in the sand hoping the problems will go away—they will not. It is for this reason that our impression to the youth is that we do not know everything there is to know."

Hughes continues: "At this time we are talking about extending an invitation to a Nigerian who seeks to come from Africa to attend William Carey College. In order to receive ministerial assistance through the Southern Baptist Convention, he must be a member of a local Southern Baptist church. If he comes to Hattiesburg we hope he will be able to worship with us. I believe it will take churches like University Baptist to set the tone of the situation."

"Everyday is Sunday to us. The disciples did not live the Christian life from nine to nine on Sunday. The Christian life is a daily life."

"We try what we search out of the Scripture," Hughes adds "It is not just learning what is wrong, not just learning the answer, but . . . it is deciding we are determined to do something about it."

"This is the country I love," Hughes concluded, "but I will not be around 30 years from now. It will be the country of today's youth tomorrow."

My responsibility is to listen to the youth."

Loving the neighbor is a major goal of the University Baptist Church. "The age-old identification of Southern tradition and Christian values is not necessarily the same or equal," said Ratliff. "We are studying cultural and social problems as they relate to us so that we can deal with our problems and proclaim Christ as effectively as possible."

"Our goal is to proclaim the eternal Christ to contemporary man. We are militant Christians."

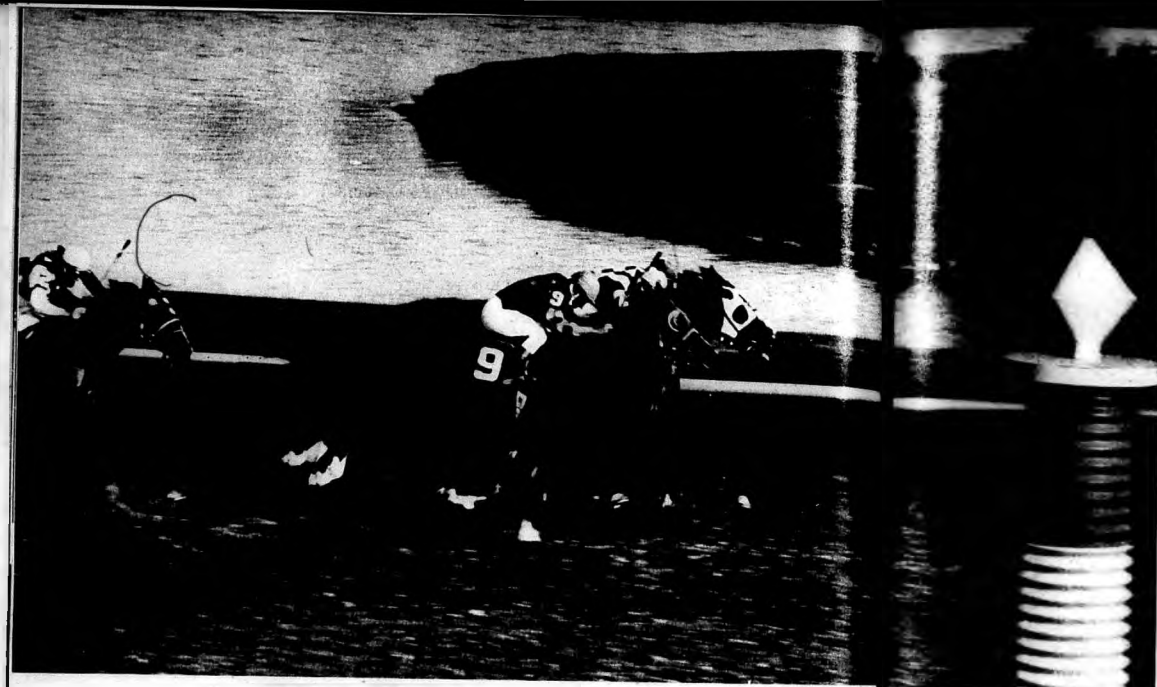
In the near future the church plans to begin a program of juvenile rehabilitation. The plan is to provide adult guidance in the form of volunteer youth counselors with the youth court.

Mrs. Kelly looks forward to the implementation of a new concept in Sunday School classes. She hopes the young people can be taken out of traditional classrooms into areas of low income families. Once in the area, she plans for the youth to play games and conduct out-of-doors Sunday School classes with singing (Christian folk music probably) and a lesson.

Hank Guest, a member of University Church and president of the student body of William Carey College, was asked to criticize the church. Surprisingly, his statements were all in favor of the church. "I was becoming a Christian drop-out before becoming part of University Baptist. No church is perfect and our church is no exception, but I cannot criticize because it has done so much for me." Guest is youth director of the church and participates in the Eaton school project.

Ratliff says of Guest, "Hank is sincere, honest and seeking the truth . . . If he had felt strong or large weaknesses he would have stated them."

University Baptist Church makes no claim to perfection or of having all the answers. "Like most churches," said Ratliff, "there are differences of opinion and not everyone sees things the same way. Yet the church is trying to face things as they are and is working toward being a servant of Christ in the community." The church's motto—"Proclaiming the Eternal Christ to Contemporary Man"—is the goal of University Baptist Church.



The Bible on the Backside

by A. D. DAWSON

Florida's gold coast horseracing has not been a part of the conversation of Florida Baptists until recently. Now the churches of Gulf Stream Association, Fort Lauderdale, are asking how the backside ministry is going. "The backside" is the name designated for the stable area of a racetrack. The frontside is the grandstand and all the color, wagering, and excitement that goes with it. The backside stable area is another world.

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Dawson is superintendent of missions for the Gulfstream Baptist Association, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.



HOME MISSIONS

July, 1970

photos by STEVE WALL

"They're off! at Gulfstream with the Gospel."

The excitement over, the work done, workers on the "backside" at Gulfstream spend long, dull hours. (below) Dawson visits during a lull.



Workers get ready for service (above) in the paint and sign shop, which is overlooked by jockey's statue (left)



Dawson joins a hot-walker on the job.

At Gulfstream Race Track, Hallandale, Fla., some 800 hot-walkers, grooms, and exercise boys work and live. Their life and their love is horses. Early morning workouts and late afternoon races keep them busy all day, but the evening in the stable area is dull living.

"Salty" Roberts, exercise boy (lightweight man) of considerable ability, one day found Jesus as his Saviour. This resulted in a complete change in his life. His concern for his buddies on the backside glowed like a single, bright star amid the void of our (the church's) disinterest in these unreached unknowns. "Salty" called inquiring "could anything be done?" The reply, "Let's have a look," resulted in an interview with the management of Gulfstream Racing Association, and the Horsemen's Association. Consequently, an area of the paint and sign shop was cleared; chairs were brought in; announcements were mimeographed and distributed. Weekly visits were made from stable to stable distributing "Good News for Modern Man" and inviting the men to the service. The

day of the first service, the public address system barked several times: "Gospel services at 7:30 tonight in the paint and sign shop by the quarter pole." As the time for services drew near, a choir arrived, along with a truck carrying their piano. Assembling among the painted paddock poles, indicating various stable colors, the choir began to sing to the empty chairs. "Salty" whispered to one of the security officers, "They're off at Gulfstream with the Gospel." By ones and twos, in their stable clothes, the men came drifting through the dimly lighted rows of stables into the bright lights of the sign shop, and the Lord blessed us in our first meeting.

As the weeks went by, we soon got acquainted with our "regulars" and one could see the revival of spiritual interest in lives long removed from the warmth of Christian fellowship. At first, some would sit outside in the darkness, looking in through the open, double garage doors. But soon, curious interest, soft-drinks, and donuts broke down their resistance.

During the racing season, 13 differ-

ent youth groups and choirs came to present their programs of testimony and music. Not the least among the blessings experienced through these services was the impact on those making up the singing groups through being a part of a mission action.

Meanwhile, we have been working with Lowell F. Sodeman of the HMB Industrial Chaplaincy Department seeking to arrange for a full time chaplain for the South Florida Tracks.

Now, the season is over. The men have gone with their thoroughbreds to Chicago, New Jersey, Maryland, and Kentucky. Will they find a ministry for them at these tracks? And, when they return to Florida, will they find a ministry at Gulfstream? Yes! - but! Oops! Sure they will!

Countless lonely, little jobs by hundreds of men behind the scenes are never seen in the glitter of the track and the grandstands.

MOME MISSIONS



Folk Religion or Christianity?

by LEON MCBETH

Does the Negro church represent authentic Christianity, or is it merely a bundle of superstitions and folk culture from Africa? Is it rooted in Jerusalem or the West African folk cults?

If this sounds like a presumptuous question, let me hasten to say that it is not I, or any white man, who asks. Some outstanding black churchmen in America have raised the question and are presently debating it.

A similar question might well be raised about white churches, including Southern Baptists. Do our churches more nearly express the patterns of the New Testament, or the social and cultural values of the American frontier? But that is a question for another article.

For a religious group to be influenced by its historic background is to be expected. Irish and Dutch Catholics are different, though both are Catholic. They differ because Ireland and Holland differ. It should not be thought strange that Baptists from Africa should differ somewhat from those who come from England or Europe. This article raises the question: To what extent, if any, has the African fatherland modified the Negro church in America?

Divergent Views

Black churchmen themselves do not agree on the extent of African influence upon the church nor the extent to which the Negro church represents authentic Christianity.

W.E.B. DuBois, an outstanding black scholar and one of the founders of NAACP, regarded the Negro church as the last surviving element

of African tribal culture, and the black minister as simply the ancient voodoo priest in a new setting.¹

Joseph R. Washington, Jr., prominent black churchman and Dean of the Chapel of Albion College, describes the Negro church as a corruption of Christianity. He calls it merely a collection of folk religion and, in effect, a substitute for true Christianity.² But Carter G. Woodson, an earlier historian of Negro life in America, says that not only is the Negro church authentic, but in its suffering and humility it has preserved enough true Christianity to redeem the wealthy and secularized white churches.³

One could hardly find more differing interpretations of the Negro church. Let us look at each viewpoint briefly.

African Tribalism

Every ethnic or national group which has settled in America has brought distinctive customs and culture from the old country. The Irish, Italians, Poles, English all have leavened their American church life with remnants of European background. One cannot understand American Catholicism apart from Ireland, or American Lutheranism apart from Germany and Sweden, or Baptists apart from England.

But what of the millions of Africans who came to this country? Do not they also bring language, customs, and culture—including religious ideas? Modern scholarship has demonstrated that West Africa, where most of the slaves came from, had a highly developed culture and reli-

gious system. The idea that Africa had no culture or social development has been buried. True, their culture differed from the European but it was a rather well structured society nevertheless.

The question is, how much of this culture survived? Some scholars, such as Frazier and Woodson, think the harshness of plantation slavery stripped the slave of his African heritage. Like a squeezed out sponge, he later absorbed the white man's language, culture, and religion. Frazier says "they were practically stripped of their social heritage,"⁴ and retained only "scraps of memories" of Africa. One reason for this, he says, is that young males were most often sought as slaves, while women are the primary culture transmitters. "In the New World the process by which the Negro was stripped of his social heritage, and thereby, in a sense, dehumanized was completed."⁵

One of the first to challenge this view was W.E.B. DuBois, who in 1903 described the Negro church as a continuation of African cultural patterns.

From such (African) beginnings arose and spread with marvelous rapidity the Negro Church. . . . It was not at first by any means a Christian Church, but a mere adaptation of those heathen rites which we roughly designate by the term Obe Worship, or 'Voodooism.' . . . Association and missionary effort soon gave these rites a veneer of Christianity. . . . It is the historic fact that the Negro Church of today bases itself upon the sole surviving social institution of the African fatherland, that accounts for its extraordinary growth and vitality.⁶

In another place DuBois says, "The

church really represented all that was left of African tribal life. . . . the sole remaining element of their former tribal system."⁷

Probably the most quoted advocate of this viewpoint is Melville J. Herskovits, who in 1941 published *The Myth of the Negro Past*.⁸ This was an effort to refute the idea that the Negro was totally stripped of all former ideas upon entering this country.

Herskovits traces African carryover in certain Negro music, dances, vocabulary, family structure, folk mores, superstition, and religion. His view is that the Negro, like the American Indian, accepted Christianity but brought in and baptized much of his older ancestral beliefs with it. Herskovits seeks to show that Negro concepts of God, Satan, the after-life, morality, and other religious concepts are significantly affected by Africanisms.⁹

Doubtlessly, in much of this he is on solid ground, but at times his argument seems weakened by trying to prove too much. For example, Herskovits seeks to account for the emotionalism of Southern white Christianity as an influence absorbed from frenzied Negro worship of an African pattern. He also notes the obvious fact that most Negro Christians are Baptists, and says the Baptist church appealed to blacks because its free-wheeling worship and baptism by immersion most resembled the immersionist West African cults out of which the slaves had so recently come.¹⁰

This seems highly artificial. It also overlooks other valid historical reasons to explain these factors. The

impact of the Great Awakening, not Negro Africanisms, determined the emotional tone of Southern Christianity. The freedom, democracy, lack of educational qualifications for ministers, spontaneous worship patterns, and common-folk appeal of the Baptists probably more accurately explain the appeal of Baptists to the Negro than any supposed similarity to West African river cults.

But even after discounting some of Herskovits' excesses, it seems unavoidable that some distinctive marks of the Negro church are of African origin. This is probably of more interest to black believers in a day of rising interest in African heritage, as seen in black studies and Afro (or pseudo-Afro) hair, clothing, and cultural styles. We are a long way from Phyllis Wheatley's nonchalant question, "Africa, what is Africa to me?" To today's American Negro and church member, Africa is very much indeed.

The writer recently attended a three-day conference on the black church held at Howard University in Washington. The African heritage was a major emphasis, with one speaker emphasizing that the black church must "get back behind the white Jesus," break free from European backgrounds, and go back to the native African religions to develop an authentic black theology. To a white observer this appears as too much

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emphasis on Africa. It could only lead to a tragic compromising of the historical roots of the authentic Christian revelation in Jesus of Nazareth.

Substitute for Christianity

A slightly different approach is taken by Joseph R. Washington, Jr., in *Black Religion*. In what is probably the harshest judgment of the Negro church of this century, Washington says "There is no Negro Protestantism, Negro Christianity, or Negro Church. There are (only) Negro religious institutions which developed out of the folk religion."¹¹

Unlike DuBois and Herskovits, Washington does not attempt to trace the Negro church back to Africa. Instead, he regards it as originating out of the frustrations of slavery in this country. He says that during slavery the Negro appropriated the outward form, but not the inward content, of Christianity. He charges that Negro congregations became "amusement centers for the disengaged," "arenas for power politics," and "organs for recognition." These churches, he says, have done what the white man intended them to do, namely, to help the Negro come to terms and accept his subordinate place in society.

Washington calls Negro religion "dysfunctional," in that it no longer fulfills the role intended by its founders. He insists that "black religion is the Negro substitute for authentic faith and church life," and that "Negro Christians have a Christianity divorced from the mainstream of the Christian faith."¹²

It would be fair to say that Washington, who has never been a pastor, has since modified his views somewhat. Perhaps he tended to identify authentic Christianity too closely with one theological movement, Neo-orthodoxy. Finding little Neo-orthodoxy among Negro believers, Washington too hastily pronounced a pox on black religion.

Another twist to the substitution theme is the view of some contemporary black churchmen that Christianity is itself a substitute for older African religious heritage. At the Washington conference mentioned above, several black spokesmen insisted that the typical concerns of white churchmen did not interest blacks. "Our real heritage is not European-Christian, much less Jewish,"

said one. "The fact that someone named Luther nailed some of the church door in Germany in 1517 is of no concern to blacks." Such European heritage as Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment are substitutes for the Negro's religious heritage, according to some militant

Authentic Christianity

An entirely different view is taken by Carter G. Woodson, in his excellent book *The History of the Negro Church*. He believes that the Negro churches have largely sold out to secularism and racism, but that black churches in their suffering and humility have maintained true and authentic Christian religion.

Woodson's criticism of the white church is a backdrop for his view of black church purity.

The white people in this country are not interested in the real mission of Christ. . . the church has surrendered to the capitalistic system. . . the white churches have degenerated into perfunctory machines engaged in the service of deceiving the multitudes with the doctrine that the Anglo-Saxon, being superior to other races by divine ordination, may justly oppress them to maintain its supremacy.¹³

Woodson also accuses the white church of racism. "The same churches," he says, "which prior to emancipation, championed racial distinctions."¹⁴

Against this dismal view of white Christianity, Woodson has an optimistic view of the black church. He says, "The Negro church must play the role of keeping the fire burning on the altar until the day when men again become reverent."¹⁵ He believes the Negro has enough authentic Christianity to redeem even the secularized and wealthy white churches.

This is in keeping with the Christ-like self-image which many Negro believers developed during slavery and after. Because the slave was humble and obedient, he regarded himself as more like Christ than the proud and lordly white man. Perhaps it was essential to the emotional survival of the Negro that he regard his humble bearing not as servility, but as conformity to the example of Christ. In more recent years some Negroes have rejected this idea of the Negro being more Christlike than other races. They regard this as a

stereotype and not essentially accurate, and besides harmful to the freedom and aspirations of the Negro race.

Conclusion

The Negro church is different. No thoughtful observer of any color would deny that. The typical black worship pattern, style and tone of preaching, church organization, place of function of the minister, and other concerns often differ widely from those of white congregations. It can all be class distinction, though it is true that worship among the poor differs significantly from worship among the affluent. However, middle and upper class black churches continue to be different in some ways.

Why should this be thought strange? Why should anyone jump to the conclusion that these churches, because they differ, do not represent authentic Christianity. Such a hasty judgment seems highly presumptuous and even arrogant.

It seems to me that churches which receive and preach Jesus Christ as the Savior represent authentic Christianity. Let them differ in other ways however they will.

Footnotes

1. W.E.B. DuBois, *The Negro Church* (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1903), p. 6.
2. Joseph R. Washington, Jr., *Black Religion: The Negro and Christianity in the United States* (Boston: Beacon, 1964), p. 111.
3. Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church* (Washington, D.C.: The Associated Publishers, 1921 and 1945), p. 301.
4. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), p. 1.
5. DuBois, *The Negro Church*, p. 5.
6. W.E.B. DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (New York: Schocken Books, 1967 reprinting), p. 197.
7. This was first published in 1941, but was republished in paperback by Boston's Beacon Press in 1958.
8. See especially Herskovits' chapter VII on "Africanisms in Religious Life." Herskovits, p. 232.
9. Washington, p. 30.
10. DuBois, p. xv, xvi.
11. Woodson, p. 306.
12. DuBois, p. 307.
13. DuBois, p. 301.
14. P. Fullinwider, *The Mind and Mood of Black America* (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1969). See especially chapter 2 on "Racial Christianity."

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From polis to metropolis to megalopolis—these have been the major urban developments. Today we look beyond megalopolis (the great city) to two ultimate possibilities of an urban age: nekropolis (the city of death, the uninhabitable city) or ecumenopolis (the city of life, the livable city, the inhabitable city).

The megalopolitan society which has brought the physical proximity and the social interdependence characteristic of traditional urbanism has not brought the psychological and spiritual inter-relationship necessary for meaningful and purposeful living.

The fault is not with the city or urban life itself, however (our agrarian mysticism tempts us to this kind of simplistic analysis!). Rather, the shift from metropolis to megalopolis has been so much more rapid and so much more drastic in its social implications than the shift from polis to metropolis that the cultural trauma has been much more pronounced and critical. The industrial revolution created the metropolis but did not have the cataclysmic proportions of the technological revolution which has created the megalopolis.

THE NECESSITY FOR COOPERATION

The polis began in antiquity, paralleled the emergence of civilization and lasted until the fall of Rome. Except for urban giants such as Rome, the era of the polis produced a type of city much like our traditional town. The earliest cities of antiquity were built around a single myth—an ideology which usually was inseparably religious and political. When new ideas

were introduced, there was inevitable conflict, the nature of urban life. Physical proximity and social interdependence, the basic stuff out of urbanism, make it physically and socially impossible for opposing ideas to exist without conflict. As the city developed, becoming more and more cosmopolitan, it became increasingly the storm center of conflict in the long struggle of civilization to find itself.

Metropolis developed from the Renaissance city which emerged out of the ruralism which followed the fall of Rome, but its character was ultimately shaped by the Industrial Revolution. As urban centers swelled to accommodate the people who flocked to the factories, cities developed to unprecedented size. Industrial cities enveloped the surrounding villages, and this was the beginning of suburbia. Thus emerged the metropolis, the mother city: the large central city surrounded by suburban satellite communities.

In this urban context, the city church emerged. As long as America was essentially rural, most town churches were simple elaborations of the village congregation.

With the emergence of metropolitan society, however, the Christian congregation became an inextricable part of a larger community which contained other religious bodies within a network of interrelated institutional life.

The modern city congregation, therefore, is unique in church development. It is compelled to function institutionally within the framework

of the larger urban structure, and it is especially compelled to relate to other institutions of similar and related interests. For example, two Protestant congregations of related history and theology, which seek to minister to the same community, not only must relate to civil structures in terms of zoning regulations, code standards, building permits, community acceptance and other matters—but they also must relate to each other in terms of service to the same community. This makes church cooperation not only desirable but virtually mandatory. To phrase it differently, Christian congregations serving the same residential community either are cooperative or they are consciously uncooperative. The uniqueness of the city church as an inescapably related entity of an interdependent society poses the question not whether but how. In civil relationships, the question is legal. It is cooperative or capitulate. In church relationships, the question is moral. It is before more subtle; however, it is the less binding. Each urban congregation is compelled to a conscious decision. It may not be overt; it may not be vocal; but it is conscious.

The current urban revolution is marked by at least three social features unique in urbanization: (1) the total urbanization of the total culture and the consequent destruction of traditional ruralism; (2) the creation of a new urban expression, shift of the American social dichotomy from urban-rural to urban-suburban, and containing that social cleavage

within a new giant form we call megalopolis; (3) the intensification of urban social alienation through an unprecedented social awareness caused by the converging of the technological and sociological revolutions within the context of the emerging megalopolis.

In the urban context man is brought together. Though there is always the tendency toward social isolation, there is an unavoidable interdependence. . . . Whereas in the past physical closeness and social alienation could exist peacefully in an interdependent urban society, such a situation seems impossible today because modern urban man cannot avoid the implication of the issues which are kept alive in his mind each day by the media.

The problems of the current urban crisis have been made more acute by the very rapidity with which we have been thrust into megalopolis. Without plan and with little warning, suddenly megalopolis was here. All of the problems of the past, heretofore essentially obscured by the sheer fact of physical and social isolation, are in the modern city before the clear view of us all. The pains of our past have suddenly rushed in upon us in such concentrated form as to cause our ills to come to head and erupt into the open sore which is inner city, U.S.A. Our era of instantism—of which instant urbanism is a vital aspect—has brought us an instantism of ills for which we were totally unprepared and with which we are woefully ill-equipped to deal. However, we can retreat neither to the physical

isolation of our rural past nor to the social isolation of our urban past. There are before us only two alternatives: ruin or renewal.

In the modern urban context, Christian groups find themselves thrown together as never before. The question is not whether they will relate but how. Will the relationship be negative or positive, indifferent or sympathetic, antagonistic or cooperative? The physical, togetherness, the aliveness of the issues, and the critical urgency of human need compel a vital common concern and suggest a meaningful cooperative involvement.

MOTIVATION FOR COOPERATION

The Calvary Baptist Church of Detroit in the early 1960's found itself inescapably involved with other churches before the common threat of the federal bulldozer. Soon the pastor found himself in a new role—appearing before the governor appealing not only for the life of his inner city congregation but for the welfare of the poor and elderly who were being abused at the expense of an ambitious urban renewal program. In seeking to minister to the needs of his community, this pastor found himself unavoidably related to the crucial problems which confronted their lives.

It is not simply the threat of the demise of the institutional congregation in the inner city which should

CONTINUED

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motivate cooperative concern, but genuine Christian love for men in their total needs. When the Baptist State Convention of Michigan faced the matter of becoming a part of the Citizens Sponsoring Committee, a leading community organization in Detroit composed of religious and related groups united in the interest of common human values in the inner city, the matter of motivation became an item of primary concern. Conscious of the fact that over 50 mainline Protestant groups had moved from Detroit's central city over a 15 year period, the young convention was determined to have a vital witness in the heart of this great and strategic city. As a part of this effort a sizable real estate investment was made.

Because this investment was in an area destined for urban renewal, and because the experience with the Calvary Church had revealed how religious institutions could be crushed by ambitious city fathers aware only of physical renewal—it was not difficult to convince the state leadership of the need to join forces with like-minded inner city groups.

As the leaders met to discuss the matter, it was clear that a strong motivating force for considering membership in this organization was the protection of real estate interest. No amount of rationalization concerning the missionary motivation behind the real estate investment could free this group of Christian leaders from the feeling there had to be a higher motivation than the protection of institutions. It was a beautiful experience to see this group come to the consensus that a greater motivating factor must be a genuine concern for the people of Detroit's inner city. Important also was the possession of a platform within this group from which to speak to and be heard on the crucial moral and social issues.

Even though sheer institutional survival, especially the inner city, virtually demands cooperative endeavor, there must be a higher motivating force.

Beyond a genuine concern for people, Christians should be motivated by a desire to see a united Christian witness in a world filled with hate and torn with strife. The social revolution, like the urban revolution, has emerged so rapidly and

now has developed to such heights of intensity as to cause an unavoidable polarization.

In the midst of this polarization stand the churches possessing the vital stuff out of which to effect reconciliation. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself . . . and has given to us (his church, his people, the community of the reconciled) the ministry of reconciliation" (II. Cor. 5). This theological fact must be lifted from the cold isolation of our stained glass ghettos and placed in the hearts of the reconciling community of faith commissioned to serve in the suffering city.

Paul sees the church as the new humanity, a vital and dynamic community of faith gathered from the broken factions of life and made one under the headship of the New Adam (Eph. 2; I. Cor. 15). But if the church refuses to be the church—if it continues to countenance these divisions of race and class—if indeed its congregations continue to function like the carnal factions of unredeemed society, in terms of class identity rather than in terms of the faith and fellowship of all classes united in Christ—if the church fails at this crucial hour, for what can we hope in the broken megalopolis?

Motivation for cooperation, then, stems from the twin truths of the genuine concern for the people to whom we are sent and radical obedience to the one who sends us.

There is finally the ultimate motivating power which places the Christian mission in the vital area of spiritual impulse—that overflow of living love which has its source in the crowning quality of the God we know in Christ. Paul says, "the love of Christ constrains us" (II. Cor. 5:14). He is not saying, "I am constrained by my love for Christ"—but "I am constrained by Christ's love for me." In other words, it was the moving power of the dynamic love of the Gospel which turned Paul to the beautiful fanaticism of unabating service which made him beside himself.

A similar situation is seen in the account of Peter and John before the authorities which demanded a reason for their actions. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts

4:19,20). In other words, Peter was saying: we cannot help what we are doing; we are possessed of a power beyond ourselves—a power released in our lives and in the lives of those we touch—we cannot avoid giving witness to what the living Christ is doing in our midst. This is motivation in the sublimest sense!

OCCASION FOR COOPERATION

What started this whole affair with Peter and John and the urban power structure? It was the healing of the lame beggar—the meeting of the physical need of a poor man. The immediate result was an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel before "all the people". There was no dichotomy between social action and evangelism in the primitive Christian community. Indeed, the meeting of basic human needs was a part of the larger evangelism of the New Testament Church. How free the early church was from this dilemma which plagues the evangelical community today!

Another crucial point is inescapable: the Spirit of God never lets us escape the fact of the poor. Somehow, wherever the action of God is—there is the vital concern for the poor! It was true in the classical era of the great prophets. It was true in the life of Jesus whose ministry was characterized by a special concern for the poor in his preaching, teaching, and healing. It was true in this significant post-pentecost event where the Gospel is proclaimed in the context of a ministry to the poor.

Nothing is clearer than the fact that the God of the Bible is the champion of the cause of the poor. It is always some kind of social favoritism which misses the little man who is a part of the "all" and "every" of the Gospel mission. It is the poor, the outcast, the dispossessed, the disenfranchised, the deprived who get knocked around and ultimately left out. And the Spirit of God will not let us forget it. The reason this issue is inescapably before us today is that we have been guilty of the very thing against which the Spirit of God has tried to warn us. This is the reason for the panic which grips the downtown and inner city church when it loses its white, middle class environment. Thus one of the scandals of twentieth century Ameri-

c. Protestantism—the wholesale exit from the central city.

The needs only to be close to the problems of the inner city to see how the poor are victimized, even by such well-intentioned programs as urban renewal. To be inspired to champion the causes of these hurt ones of the inner city, the Christian needs no greater example than the ministry of the Lord himself.

Let every Christian do all within his power in meaningful personal relationships with the forsaken and forgotten, and let every individual congregation do all it can in a ministry to the poor within and without its fold. However, the cold, hard fact is that if anything significant and enduring is to be done about the ills which dehumanize and destroy people in the ghettos, it will be done through the cooperative and concerted effort of those who really care. When it was discovered that poor families and elderly persons of modest means were literally being put in the streets through an urban renewal program designed to improve the physical appearance of a certain section of Detroit, the concerned people, mostly churchmen, through the combined effort of a community organization, demonstrated the strength of their concern before the city council, and brought this process to a halt until a complete investigation and evaluation could be made. This united effort achieved what no single religious group alone could have achieved.

Because the churches by their very nature should lead society in the concern for basic human values and rights, and because the poor, especially the minorities, are the surest victims of social injustice—to minister to their needs becomes a meaningful beginning point of cooperative Christian effort.

FORMS OF COOPERATION

It is not our purpose here to provide an apologetic for ecumenism, either in terms of theological idealism or in terms of the present struggle of the organized ecumenical movement, but simply to try to illustrate both the necessity and desirability of a more meaningful Christian cooperation in the mission of the church in an urban area.

There are numerous forms which

this cooperative endeavor may assume. First there are the traditional ecumenical structures which provide the context for meaningful cooperation in Christian work in urban centers. The Council of Churches in most cities has urban departments that constantly struggle with both the problems of the inner city and the problems of the larger urban community. Most of the mainline Protestant groups are already involved. There is usually opportunity for city mission administrators who belong to non-ecumenical communities to relate to these programs as associates or even on a totally non-official basis. Such relationships need not jeopardize one's theological convictions and usually create both a greater Christian understanding in the religious community and a more effective witness impact in the general community.

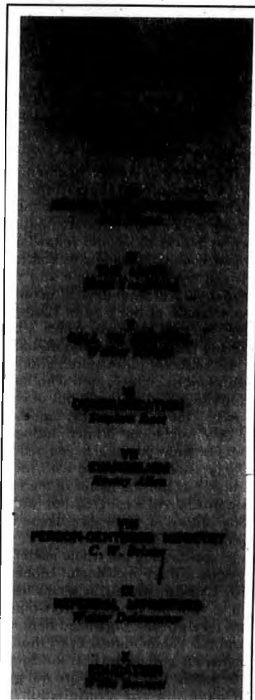
It is especially desirable for Christian groups to work together in the relocation of churches in urban renewal areas, and in a planned strategy for planting adequate congregations in the developing areas of the sprawling megalopolis.

Other ecumenical structures also provide opportunities for a cooperative witness. In the San Francisco Bay area is the effective Release Time ministry sponsored by the National Association of Evangelicals in the Oakland-Berkeley area. It seems wise both in the interest of understanding potential and ultimate effectiveness to take the fullest advantage possible of cooperative Christian structures which already exist and which are especially designed to serve the desired end.

However, the rapidity of the changes and the intensity of the issues, especially in the inner city, have proved the need for creative innovation in the cooperative Christian witness.

In Detroit, for example, as effective and as meaningful as the urban programs of the local council had been, they proved too slow and too establishment-oriented to meet the most pressing needs. Thus, some of the urban church specialists who were already involved in this traditionally structured cooperative ministry, joined others who took the lead in helping to form the Citizens Spon-

CONTINUED



XI
COOPERATION
Francis DuBois



ing committee, composed of a larger religious and civic community. This committee related to the aggressive and often controversial West Central Organization which was unusually action-oriented and thus designed to move in rapidly to meet emergencies and to attend to crucial inner city problems.

The fact that newer ecumenical and community organizations are constantly springing up, from those strong enough to constitute political power blocks to smaller fellowship-oriented units, is witness to both the crucial needs of our time and the inadequacy of traditional structures. An example of the type of cooperative Christian endeavor which is becoming both necessary and desirable is the relatively unstructured effort of San Francisco clergymen who have come together recently out of vital concern for the inner city, especially in the tenderloin district. Included are not only the liberal and radical clergy usually associated with social action, but also the pastor of the First Baptist Church, a congregation with a long history of theological conservatism.

In approaching the whole matter of seeking a more meaningful cooperative Christian witness, it seems helpful to view the prospects from different levels of the organized denominational communities. Even though numerous groups, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, are not participating in the Consultation on Christian Union or any other proposed ecumenical venture, there are nevertheless numerous meaningful ways in which such a denomination can relate to others at the leadership level in a common vital concern for the effectiveness of the Christian mission in an urban society. There could be joint studies and significant dialogue in connection with such common research. The expertise of seminary and university communities as well as denominational departments could greatly enhance this type of endeavor. Also at this level, fellowship-oriented general discussion type meetings could be held where concerned leaders could explore possibilities of joint urban effort at all possible levels. This type of relationship could be planned at the level of state as well as national leadership.

A number of significant innovations

have emerged in theological education to make a meaningful interdenominational approach to specialized urban training in order to achieve a greater understanding of urban life and a more significant ministry to an urban society (See June issue).

At the local level, there are numerous exciting and promising areas of cooperative possibilities. In terms of city-wide efforts, interdenominational ministerial groups provide excellent opportunity for cooperation. Churchmen concerned about crucial urban problems could take the initiative in seeking to inspire this potentially powerful group to a more vitally meaningful urban ministry.

An example of Christian cooperation may be seen in the Greater Detroit Religious Survey of the mid 1960's. Some 25 denominations—ecumenical and non-ecumenical alike—participated; and the effort won the public published backing of the Council of Churches, the National Association of Evangelicals, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese, and the Metropolitan Jewish Organization. The excellent interdenominational relationships and the increased mutual understanding and appreciation among church leaders and people were worth every hour of the many months of hard work which went into this project—to say nothing of the value of the material findings.

At the community level, pastors should seek to lead their churches in working with other churches in ministry to the neighborhood. A number of significant interdenominational parish approaches have developed in crucial urban areas with a considerable degree of effectiveness. Perhaps the best known of these is the East Harlem Protestant Parish of New York. Another significant group effort is that of the West St. Louis Ecumenical Parish.¹ For spiritually imaginative pastors, there is almost no end to the possibilities of creative cooperative ministry in the urban community.

Another type of cooperation in urban ministry is represented by an intercongregational effort in a large urban community. An illustration of this is the ministry of the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association through the Home Mission Board with 40 black churches representing seven denominations in Central Harlem.

PROBLEMS OF COOPERATION

It is easy to theorize about cooperation in urban work. It is not so easy to put it into practice. A number of factors militate against meaningful cooperative effort.

Perhaps the most serious and persistent hindrance to the type of cooperation needed in our critical urban age is what might be called parochial interest. This can be denominational, institutional or personal. Any type of pattern which causes Christians or Christian groups to become captive to narrow interests makes it very difficult for them to experience cooperative concern and participate in cooperative action. As the urban crisis intensifies, these parochial interests are threatened. There is no way to avoid their being challenged.

In all due respect, Christian groups traditionally unaccustomed to ecumenical involvement often quite conscientiously find themselves ill at ease in an extremely liberal environment. This must be recognized by all involved groups, and the most meaningful steps taken in consideration of all religious backgrounds and orientations.

The confusion which often faces religious groups which for the first time may be seeking cooperative involvement is both ideological and tactical. It is not simply liberal ideas which cause concern but radical action. In this regard every effort should be made to explain thoroughly the ideology with which the issues are being confronted. Moreover, the tactical matters should be earnestly worked through to insure the most conscientious support of as many of the different participants as possible.

It should always be kept in mind that conflict is a characteristic of a cosmopolitan urban culture. This conflict is unavoidably carried over into the cooperative religious community. The religious community faces the unique opportunity of setting the example in a meaningful management of its own conflict.

The premium on time constraints cooperative effort. The pastor needs to rethink his whole ministry in terms of the priority demands of a crucial urban era. Moreover, urban specialists, especially men employed by denominations or community organizations to give full time to commu-

nity work, must be considerate of the pastor and his problems of priority. Despite the reality of the obstruction in the path of cooperation, the demand of the Gospel is too great, the bravery of the issues are too urgent, and the acuteness of the crisis is too threatening to succumb to the reactionary forces. The fact that there is a growing cooperative concern and effort in the general religious community indicates that the problems are not insurmountable.

IDEOLOGY FOR COOPERATION: ECUMENOPOLIS

One of the by-products of rapid social change is a serious identity crisis. What is most apparent in the minorities (especially the blacks) and the youth (especially rebels) is more general than is usually admitted. Modern Americans do not know who they are.

One aspect of this search is the reach for the rural yesterday. The recency and rapidity of the urban revolution has left the American people in cultural shock. The result has been a kind of mass nostalgia which comes dangerously close to a national neurosis. There has been no national search for identity so apparent as this effort to discover identity from the rural past. The reason is that in the modern megalopolis suburbanism tends to be the norm of American middle class living. The typical American today is neither the farmer of the past nor the small town man of yesterday—but the suburbanite.

This ruralism (all but deified in suburbia) has not proved a meaningful base on which to rebuild the American image in the megalopolis, not simply because it is superficial and nostalgic, but because it only sharpens the line between those who can afford it and those who cannot. We are not only plagued by our lack of identity, but the direction of our search has only accentuated our loss.

The modern American's search for identity, for a meaningful self and ideal image, is one side of the identity crisis. The other side is his search for an urban image—that is, his effort to understand himself in terms of his environment in the megalopolis. What is needed in the megalopolis is an ideology which offers equal

opportunity to all—one which tackles with realism the tough problems of an imposing new urbia in the common interest of all and not one which retreats from reality to the periphery of the megalopolis and artificially creates a bit of yesterday for the special advantage of some.

Americans need an urban ideology which will form the basis of a truly livable community. How can megalopolis, the great city, truly become great? How can it find an integrative force which will give meaning to its mass of complication and confusion? How can this convulsing giant, so filled with good, so controlled by evil, so divided against itself—how can it become a truly inhabitable city, a truly livable city?

Some feel it is too late; that beyond megalopolis is nekropolis, the city of death. Lewis Mumford, taking his cue from his mentor Patrick Geddes, views the culture of cities from a cycle of several developmental stages: Eopolis (village community), Polis (town), Metropolis (mother city), Megalopolis (great city), Tyrannopolis (tyrant city), Nekropolis (dead city). Geddes included an extra stage of Pathopolis (sick city) before the final stage of Nekropolis. Although this pattern is seen most consistently in the great capital cities of the past and the cultures they epitomized, Mumford sees parallels in the development of urban life in America. For example, he feels that America reached Megalopolis (the great city, the great civilization) in Emersonian Boston; and now has reached the stage of Nekropolis (the dead city, the culturally dead city) in contemporary New York.²

C. A. Doxiadis, the renowned Greek architect-planner, though less philosophical, sees a similar pattern of urban development in the past. However, his preoccupation is with the city of the future which he calls Ecumenopolis, the universal city. In the steps preceding the Ecumenopolis, he describes urban development in terms of Eopolis (the village), the Polis (the city), Dynapolis (the growing city), Metropolis (the large city), Dynametropolis (the growing large city), Megalopolis (vast conurbations, strip cities), Dymamegalopolis (vastly expanding conurbations). The Dymamegalopolis will develop into Ecumenopolis (the universal city).

Doxiadis envisions the Ecumenopolis, the universal city, as the static city of the future when the world's population will have leveled off and civilization will have become totally urbanized and therefore beyond the crucial stages of dynamic urban development and revolutionary social change. He sees the universal city as inevitable but does not assume that it will automatically become a truly livable city. In fact, he sees the possibility of ecumenopolis as the "city of death" as well as the "city of life." He pleads for the kind of meaningful urban planning which will ensure the development of the future universal city as the city of life.

The word "ecumenical" comes from the Greek *oikoumene*, the participial form of the verb *oikein*, which means "to dwell in." The noun *oikos* means "house," that is "an inhabited house," in distinction from the building. The basic idea is "the inhabited place," with the implication of "meaningful habitation," as in a family relationship. Only later did the word *oikoumene* (especially in its Latin form *oecumenicus*) come to mean the whole inhabited earth, thus universal.

Therefore, the concept of Ecumenopolis, viewed not simply from the physical aspect of "universal" but also from the social aspect of "livable" constitutes a meaningful urban ideology from which base the churches together with other life-supporting forces of society shall be able to build toward a more meaningful life in an urban world.

Christianity began as an urban movement. Jerusalem was the first center. From the second Christian center, Antioch of Syria, the faith spread to the principal cities of the Mediterranean world. Paul operated upon a strategy of outreach from urban centers. The Christian faith thrived in its early urban setting and was at home in the city for the succeeding centuries.

American Christianity, however, all but lost the urban image of its primitive Asian counterpart. Christianity grew up in America in a culture which was predominately rural until near the middle of this century. Three centuries of dominant village and country life gave the American Protestant church such a pronounced

CONTINUED

rural character that three decades of revolutionary urban development have not been able to change it. Generations of rural inbreeding, enhanced by the anti-urban influence of such American types as Jefferson and Thoreau, contributed to the development of a rural mystique which still haunts modern Americans, Christians and non-Christians alike. With these deep rural roots, the American Protestant Christian finds himself ill-situated in the city and usually reflects the typical American disdain for urban life. Unable to free his Christian theology from a rural mysticism, he tends to see the country as good and the city as evil.

As a reaction to this agrarian theology which has greatly hindered the church in its new urban setting, modern theologians have sought to recover the urban values of our Biblical tradition. One of the most articulate of the new theologians is Harvey Cox whose controversial *Secular City* has become one of the celebrated works of the 1960's. Cox does a masterful job of restoring to the church some of its lost Biblical values which have profound implication for witness in an urban age. Moreover, with needed optimism he calls the church to realism in its mission to technopolis. Despite the numerous excellent aspects of his book, however, Cox overreacts and therefore obscures the Biblical faith in an attempt to create a mystique of technopolis. In equating the coming of the kingdom with the coming of age of modern man (a la Bonhoeffer) in the secular city, he both weakens the Biblical concept of the kingdom and obscures the facts about the secular technopolis. Though he has done us a great service in trying to lead us out of the bondage of our rural idolatry, he has brought us close to a new idolatry in his technopolitan messianism.¹

To find the happy medium, the Bible itself will lead the way. It is incredible how the urban motif of the Biblical message is obscured in Protestant literature in general and litany (oral and written) and hymnody in particular. There is almost a complete preoccupation with the pastoral imagery of the Bible. It is true that the Bible presents the city as evil—it is equally true that it presents the city as good. The Bible is a book of realism. It tells it like it is. Therefore, the

city as the habitat of man, may be good or evil, depending upon what man chooses to make it. However, because we have neglected the positive urban image of the Bible and because the church in urbia needs a meaningful spiritual language with which to express its faith in an urban age, a rediscovery of the rich urban theme of the Biblical message should prove especially helpful.

It is significant for the church in an urban age to realize that the ultimate imagery of the Bible gathers about the urban theme. The Apocalypse pictures Rome, the supreme power of the day and the persecutor of the people of God, in terms of ultimate evil. As Old Jerusalem had symbolized the presence of God, the summum bonum of Israel; so now the New Jerusalem symbolizes the fullness of the divine life, the summum bonum of humanity.

The modern Christian therefore is not without an urban ideology. Although he is a part of the city of man which has all the potential of the evil of a Babylon or a Rome, he also lives in prospect of life in the city of God.

As the Christian seeks to understand his role as a citizen of two cities, how shall he view his immediate urban environment? The only answer there can be is that he desires for it the greatest possible likeness to the City of God, despite its potential for and persistent tendency toward Babylon. Consequently, the most natural and meaningful attitude of the Christian as he seeks his identity in an urban world is to desire for his city the highest and best consistent with his Christian understanding. Moreover, it is unthinkable from a sound theological perspective that this attitude be an end within itself. To have the mind of Christ demands the performance of the servant role in life (Phil. 2:5ff). It is ethical incredulity from a Christian perspective for the Christian to be possessed of a desire to see good in his city and yet not turn his finger to put this attitude into action.

It is more than passing strange that the Christian reactionary who howls the loudest against any church relationship to social action against human injustice often is the one who complains the loudest about the "undesirability" of a neighborhood and is quickest to move his family out of

such an "unpleasant" environment. The sheer demand of Christ compels the Christian, and therefore the church, to a loving concern for all men in their total need.

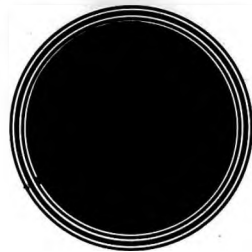
In seeking an urban ideology, the church should be able to find in the concept of Ecumenopolis a realistic approach to actual life relationships in an urban world. Both Christian insight and worldly wisdom should free us from the naive dream of utopia in the city of man.

The concept of Ecumenopolis constitutes a workable urban image for the Christian which seeks to overcome the evil of the city of man but which at the same time must accept an image short of the City of God, no matter how strongly he is influenced by and how diligently he strives toward this ideal. The Ecumenopolis, viewed from a Christian perspective, is the livable city. It is not the City of God. It is not utopia. It is the livable city. It is the kind of city every Christian man wishes for his family and therefore for his neighbor's family. It is the kind of city that is possible in our kind of world, not one free of conflict or problem but one in which conflict is controllable and problems are solvable. It is the kind of city that all humanitarian interests could wish to establish. It is the kind of city that self-interest urban establishments would accept if the united effort of humanitarian interests demanded it. Thus the absolute necessity for cooperative endeavor—if we are to prevent megalopolis from becoming nekropolis. If cooperative endeavor which strives toward the livable city is possible (and it has been demonstrated in numerous instances in recent years, though not in truly significant proportions), then cooperative Christian endeavor, inspired by the ideal of the City of God, should play a leading and creative role toward the realization of this Ecumenopolis.

Footnotes

1. Duane L. Day, *Urban Church Breakthrough* (New York: Publisher, 1966), pp. 143-145.
2. Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1961). (Based upon *The City of Man*, 1938).
3. C. A. Doxiadis, *Urban Renewal and the Future of the American City* (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1960).
4. Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965).

HOME MISSIONS



Now and next pioneer missions

by M. WENDELL BELEW

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

In light of the fact that Pioneer Missions is less than fifteen years old in most of its operation at the present time (excluding Alaska and Hawaii where the work is older than this), it may be interesting to note the number of churches which are now in these fields.

The present number of churches and church-type missions and the total membership which has been established in these areas are:

	Number of Churches	Number of Missions	Total Membership
Alaska	37	18	10,479
Delaware	6	2	3,000
Hawaii	30	16	9,472
Idaho	21	7	3,358
Iowa	14	19	4,211
Minnesota	12	7	1,378
Nebraska	22	8	4,517
Nevada (Arizona Convention)	17	8	4,650
Nevada (California Convention)	19	11	2,450
New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)	25	17	3,947
New York (Northern New Jersey and New York)	70	27	10,494
Northern Plains (Montana, North and South Dakota, Wyoming)	77	26	11,281
South New Jersey-Pennsylvania Fellowship Unit	47	34	7,500
Virginia	42	14	5,070
Wisconsin	48	12	12,900
Wyoming	17	5	2,845
Puerto Rico	12	22	1,780
Totals	516	253*	99,332

*Does not include the many home fellowships and other extension services.

33

recreate "you all clubs," these people were products of a great Christian evangelistic movement which was concerned about missions and evangelism.

The very existence of such groups in diverse cultural settings created a threat to extant Christian denominations. This threat was seen as a possibility that Southern Baptists who had moved to the areas and had joined other denominations might suddenly be pulled from those churches, thereby diminishing the effect of churches which were already there and which desperately needed the missionary and evangelistic enthusiasm of the Southern Baptists.

Additionally, there was some implication in the very presence of the Southern Baptist cultural group, which was interpreted as an isolationist or a "holier than thou" attitude, which seemed to say to the indigenous community that the Southerner felt his religion to be superior to theirs.

As time passed, however, many of the fears were allayed as Southern Baptists became more ingested into their cultural environments and their churches became more indigenous to their settings. It is true that the effort toward indigenization was made difficult by the fact that Southern Baptist churches were often established as cultural relocations. But since our churches were endowed with a spirit of missions and evangelism, they set about to break down this handicap, although the process was never easy.

The period of the folk church is rapidly passing. Most pockets of Southern Baptists in pioneer areas have been reached and are presently situated with churches. The more recent effort toward the establishment of indigenous churches in strategic areas where there are few, if any, Southern Baptists has occupied much of the concern of pioneer missions administrators. A strategy which is utilized may be loosely defined as that of *multiple ministry*. Multiple ministry implies that strategies for church growth will be performed by the use of multiple ministering probes into a community, rather than a few selected ones, as, for instance, gathering a few Southern Baptists together in a chapel, in a Sunday School, or in a church.

The concept relies upon the utilization of the abilities of individual Christians to work for the building of Christ's church in the ways best suited to them. Multiple ministry may take the form of music groups, dramatics, recreational programs, weekday programs, day-care programs, language ministries, home fellowship Bible classes, forums for students, retreats, inner-city involvements, ministries in high rise apartments, ministries in resort areas, coffeehouses, youth centers, youth hostels, and, in fact, any means whereby the attention of a lost world may be called to the redemptive presence of Christ.

In a few months of use the multiple ministry concept has produced exciting results. The Department of Pioneer Missions has selected some strategic areas for experimentation with the multiple ministry philosophy. It has requested and received cooperation from other departments of the Missions Division and of the Evangelism, Communications and Church Loans Divisions in providing resources to carry on the multiple ministry approach.

Some of the multiple ministry centers which have been

in operation but a few months are touching the lives of hundreds of people every week. Not only are they "touching the lives" of people, but they are producing converts to Christianity. The baptismal ratio in pioneer areas is approximately one to four in comparison to the Southern Baptist average of about one to thirty. Bible classes are conducted in Minnesota and Wisconsin resulting in nearly seven thousand young people enrolled in the classes, and nearly two thousand professions of faith. A Project 500 church in Johnstown, Penn., has 160 professions of faith in a few months time. A program, which began with a group using contemporary folk music in shopping centers and in rented facilities, followed with one of Christian counseling and individual witnessing. A church in Massachusetts, again using a music-oriented form of revivalism and involvement in a coffeehouse ministry, saw over 80 professions of faith in a three-month period.

With the utilization of multiple ministries and church growth strategies, the energies of our missionizing efforts can be carried to the inner-city and to areas of national crises. We have joined hands with other Christian groups wherever possible in inner-cities to help bring about conditions which will permit the hopeless to find hope in Christ.

Although the concept of multiple ministries often finds it impossible to carry out traditional forms of organizational activity within the church, there are many churches in suburban areas and particularly in military establishments which are realizing good growth out of traditional organization-oriented programs. In spite of the fact that church program organizations are often hard put to find a traditional expression, in many pioneer areas a continuing emphasis is placed upon the importance of the church as an organism and institution for the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that organization should be designed to meet the needs of the church and that it is not always necessary to find the same expression in different places.

We do believe, however, that the church in a local setting is a visible reflection of the body of Christ and as such has singular importance to the proclamation of his gospel, and that it must never be minimized.

Remarkable church growth in pioneer fields calls for unbelievable financial support. Although we have placed the major emphasis upon building the church rather than the house, we recognize that houses are necessary in most instances and that persons and programs are most important. These cost money. With an emphasis upon the importance of extension, a church newly established in a pioneer area will most likely establish at least one new mission in the next year that will become a church. In the third year there are two churches, each of them quite likely establishing another church. This multiplication of local units calls for an unbelievable amount of support. We are always financially desperate and the crises mounts moment by moment as God opens doors. In a way, success is our greatest problem.

WHAT NEXT?

We are now in a period of the organization of state and regional conventions made up of the newly estab-

lished pioneer churches. In very recent years we have seen the organization of the Northern Plains convention, the New York convention, and this year the Pennsylvania-South New Jersey convention and the West Virginia convention. Not far behind will be the organization of the New England convention and Nevada, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa conventions. All have organizational state fellowship meetings which will ultimately culminate in some state or regional organizations.

These state or regional organizations come into being, there is developed a greater sense of unity and fellowship and common concern for the work. In the initial stages of the organization there is a leveling out of church growth as the attention seems to be given mostly to the process of organization.

Shortly after this period is passed, the churches move into a new area of growth. The new state or regional organization, which will likely place a state missions director in office, will draw some of the paper work and administrative responsibility from the area missionaries and permit them a greater involvement in work of the field. They will produce more churches that, in turn, will call for fragmentation of the area offices and the employment of associational superintendents of missions (which, of course, calls for larger financial resources from the Home Mission Board, as well as from the state conventions).

In looking ahead, we will continue to emphasize the church, coupled with the dynamic of the Holy Spirit, as the nucleus of energy for church growth. We will continue an effort to prevent churches from becoming cultural or sociological entities, thus being deprived of the creative tensions produced by multi-cultural communities of believers.

We anticipate new and enlarged areas of work in the new cities that are being built in the pioneer areas, and in the cooperative high rises that are being built, such as the one in the Bronx area of New York City which houses over 180,000 people.

We will endeavor to maintain approaches of flexibility whereby we are able to meet the people where they are and to win them to Christ.

We will expect results. This statement is not made in a spirit of piety, but with understanding that God couples us with himself and with his great process of searching for lost mankind in the fields of the world. Not only does he expect us to search, but he expects we will find. Fields of labor will not only be ones which we sow, but fields in which we expect to reap. We expect the harvest to be crying for workers as well as for materials, and we anticipate that in the coming months great demands will be placed upon finding personnel, called of God to work in the pioneer fields. Many of these workers will come from our older areas. Many will be and are being produced by the new churches themselves.

Our walk with God in these new areas has challenged us with the need and the response. We are frightened by the question as to how we will act responsibly but armed with the portent of discovering his answers.

Howell is secretary of the Department of Pioneer Missions.

July, 1970

HOME MISSIONS



What will your church do?

When the neighborhood around your church starts to change, to run down at the heels, to become mostly poor and black, what will your church do — sell out and run to the suburbs? become a "light-white" island with members commuting from the outside? or stay and minister to the surrounding community, even as it changes?

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case study

Designing a Metropolitan Strategy for Mission

The land we seek to win for Christ is no longer as it was. Southern Baptist frontiers have extended both west and north. Now we confront a culture that is mobile, pluralistic, and above all urban. How can this land be won for Christ? How can Baptist churches in the city fulfill most effectively their mission to glorify God by leading men to know him through faith in Jesus Christ?

A mission field of particular challenge is the American metropolis. A metropolis is an urban area with a total population in excess of 50,000 such as San Francisco, St. Louis, or Miami. Such metropolitan areas tend to function as a whole. Residents will live, work, shop and play in different sections of the metropolitan area so that all segments are interrelated. What happens in the inner city affects the suburbs and so on. Rapid growth of metropolitan areas in past decades has strained civil government to keep abreast of the population. Note Los Angeles, as an illustration, which has been characterized as one-hundred and twenty-eight suburbs in search of a city. It has been difficult in most metropolises to make government fit the reality of the situation.

Churches, because of their inherent conservatism, have faced the same difficulty. Religious ruralism has tended to make local congregations more Jeffersonian in their independence than Christian in their community. Baptists are naturally weak at this point. Fear of human control makes Baptists guard their independence jealously. But the average Baptist church can not minister to the total metropolis. Each church tends to minister to one major sociological group or one segment of the city and assume that they stand or fall alone. This attitude has been taught us by many years of experience—in the country. The city can not be won like that.

Southern Baptists tend to reach white, middle-class, rural-oriented, family-centered Protestants. Unfortunately we have sometimes missed

great segments of the urban population. The religious recession, that has been especially evident in the organized life of our churches, since 1958 has made us more aware of the need for improved mission activity in our cities. The deterioration of the inner city and transitional neighborhoods has sent multitudes of our churches to the suburbs. The Southern Baptist witness has not been taken effectively to many communities in our metropolitan areas.

Moreover, Baptists have had difficulty in relating their recent affluence to the depressed areas of the cities. Many churches have given funds to Baptist centers but have not yet given themselves to the social needs of the disadvantaged near them. Others, insulated by their suburban prosperity, have been unaware of the grave needs in adjacent transitional communities and of the imminent change facing their own neighborhood.

Such mission problems can not be solved by the solitary congregation. Nor can they be solved by some single agency or convention or association. The interrelated nature of the metropolis demands that Baptist churches cooperate more closely in their mission efforts in the city. The fraternal watchcare of our associations is more needed than ever before in our cities. Facing these issues in 1968, staff of the Home Mission Board, led by the Department of Metropolitan Missions, studied possible approaches for intensifying our mission penetration of the metropolitan areas. Discussion revealed that an effective response must meet three requirements:

1. A comprehensive approach: Mission penetration of a metropolis requires plans for the whole rather than just for segments. For example, if Baptists were going to renew their thrust into San Francisco, it would take a program designed for the entire Bay Area, not for just one of the six associations represented in that metropolis.

2. Factual knowledge of the cir-

cumstances: Missionary planning must be built on as reliable a foundation as possible. There must be some knowledge of the field for a mission to be most effective. Jesus advised us to be "as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves." Some call this the art of "serpentine and dovesmanship." Too often the world is not as we think it is. We get so involved in the life of our single parish that we do not recognize the forces that are at work in the total metropolitan area. A strategy, a comprehensive plan, for mission in metropolises requires a knowledge of the most pressing needs as well as the available resources. For example, Detroit is not identical to San Francisco. What is needed in one may not be so needed in the other. The cities have not the same problems nor do Baptists have the same resources in each place. Strategy for Detroit can not be constructed in Atlanta nor in San Francisco. It must be done for Detroit itself. Therefore, there had to be a thorough study as possible of Detroit before there could be any strategy planned.

3. Cooperative planning: Mission strategy must be the product of the cooperative planning by all leaders involved as equal partners. This is not easy for independent Baptists but it is essential for coping with the city. While the loner may thrive, the city may die. And the leader who would alone design a strategy for his brethren to follow may face grave disappointment. "No man is lazy except in the pursuit of another man's flesh." That which you construct, you will defend. For example, a mission strategy for Miami can not be laid out by the Home Mission Board alone nor by some state office. It requires the participation of all those who can offer Baptist resources for that metropolitan mission field: the Home Mission Board, the Florida Baptist Convention, and the Miami Baptist Association.

In light of these guidelines, an experimental project was established

to design a total mission strategy for four metropolitan areas each year for three years. The objective of each experimental project was "to provide for an intensive study of a specific metropolitan area and for possible consequent actions, such as

(1) restructuring associational organization, (2) extending social ministries, (3) intensifying mission outreach, and (4) strengthening the total life of the local churches." The procedure to achieve this objective was designed as follows:

Continued	Action and Purpose	Personnel
-24 months	Proposal Conference: to examine suggested procedure and to discuss implications of participation by association(s) and state convention.	HMB, state convention, and associational leadership
-18 months	Commitment to study and design a metropolitan mission strategy: to agree on objective, adopt procedure and schedule, appoint steering committee, and note areas for survey specialization	HMB, state convention, and association by written statement
(Following the official commitment to the experiment by the organizations involved, a thorough demographic survey was made of the total metropolitan area by the Department of Survey and Special Studies of the Home Mission Board.)		
-10 months	Survey Study Group: to study survey data, identify needs, suggest possible strategies, and review procedure to develop strategy	HMB staff, state convention staff, and associational staff and officers
-9 months	Data Distribution: to inform all the churches involved of significant findings and needs	Dept. of Survey and Special Studies via the association(s)
-8 months	Strategy Task Force: to design a strategy for relating needs to resources in the total metropolitan area	HMB staff, state convention staff, and associational leadership
-7 months	Associational meeting: to adopt Task Force report	Called session of the association with Task Force representative
-6 months	Church Missions Leadership Assembly: to present the strategy, enlist support thereof, and secure commitment of committees to specific responses	Church missions committees and others concerned for home missions
-5 months	Report by Missions Committees to local churches: to recommend participation in total strategy	Local church business session
-4 months	Enlistment of lay support and involvement in new mission ministries: to motivate local church members to participate in the strategy, beginning with one clinic of the Equipping Conference	Associational leadership, church mission committees, and pastors
-3 months	Equipping Conference: to present in concert HMB ministries relevant to the specific metropolitan area needs	HMB staff, state convention staff, and associational leaders

by RUSSELL BENNETT



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CONTINUED

happenings

The twelve areas selected for the experiment represented varied sections of the nation: (1968) Chicago, San Francisco, Greenville, Baltimore, (1969) Miami, Toledo, Portland, Detroit, (1970) Knoxville, Kansas City, Phoenix, and Orlando. The west coast and Florida were stressed because of their tremendous population growth by in-migration. Pioneer areas were omitted. As anticipated in an experiment, two of the projects aborted for various reasons. The others are in varying stages of completion. Even at this point some important things have been learned. First, the association is still the basic unit of mission planning for the metropolitan area. Second, cooperative planning is an exceptionally difficult process for Southern Baptists. It is easier to talk about the past than it is to think about the future. It is also easier to work alone than to labor with your brothers, although it is far less productive in the long run. Third, Baptists can plan a program of mission response of their specific metropolis if they are encouraged to do so. Fourth, study and planning can not be separated. In later experiments we have had to merge the study group and task force. Also this group had to be taken outside of the immediate metropolitan environment to some retreat setting where they could give their uninterrupted attention for two days to the report. Fifth, our people are not yet ready for an equipping conference. Before any training clinics in special ministries could be scheduled, it became apparent that there needed to be orientation and education of the people to the nature of the metropolitan mission field. Consequently, mission awareness conferences were substituted for the equipping conferences. Two different agendas have been used with the Task Force meetings. Six of the areas, led by George Torney, associate secretary of the Department of Metropolitan Missions, followed this pattern: (1) exposure to the city via dialogue with city leaders, et al.; (2) group reflection on the experience; (3) input of HMB expertise; and (4) group planning of the

remaining cities, led by the other associate. Russell Bennett, of the Department of Metropolitan Missions, used this approach: (1) analysis of the needs, both internal and external, confronting Southern Baptists in the area; (2) arranging the major needs according to priority; (3) determining responses to begin (or to curtail) to meet the needs as ordered; and (4) deciding how the Task Force could influence the association(s) to make the suggested responses.

The experiments indicate that any Baptist association can act to develop its own strategy without waiting for denominational assistance. The design of mission strategy is essentially a local responsibility. A recommended approach is as follows:

1. Lead the association(s) to make an official decision to design a mission strategy for their area. (Involve the leadership of the state convention so far as possible.)

2. Make a thorough study of the total metropolitan area. Secure information on the development of the metropolitan area from the urban planning commissions, the news papers, etc. Compile and analyze the data from the reports in the associational minutes. Involve the leaders of city government in speaking to you concerning the nature of your area.

3. Publish the results of the study as widely as possible. Involve the laity but keep the pastors in the position of leadership.

4. In a retreat setting let the associational and state convention leadership determine the needs according to priority and recommend appropriate responses.

5. Lead each church to study their situation and respond to the recommendations of the associational and state leadership task force.

6. Sponsor clinics to orient the members to the changes proposed. Follow up with clinics to train members in new forms of witness and ministry.

For additional help, write J. N. Evans, secretary of the Department of Metropolitan Missions of the Home Mission Board.

WITH OUR MISSIONARIES:

Recent appointees from the Department of Language Missions include:

Mr. and Mrs. Eduardo Hernandez, Colesville Baptist Church, Silver Spring, Md.; Spanish

Jo Ann Fisher, Colorado Springs, Colorado; US-2; Spanish

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Prickett, Cerillos Indian Center, Santa Fe, N. M.; Indians

Mr. and Mrs. Jose Correa, Hackensack, N. J.; Spanish

Mr. and Mrs. Duane Pratt, Cooper Memorial Church, McCloud, Okla.; Indians

FROM OUR CHURCHES:

W. D. Jansen, Project 500 pastor at Couer d'Alene, Idaho, has been asked to teach a course in Old Testament history at a local junior college. The dean of the college gave full permission to use the facilities for a Bible fellowship on campus.

Calkins Road Church in Rochester, N. Y. is scheduled to begin construction on the first unit of a new building, in the near future. Pastor **Joe Oliver** said the unit will cost about \$50,000 and will measure 4,500 sq. ft. Fifteen members have been added to the church this year.

Calvary Church of Ayer, Mass. began a bus ministry recently to a nearby military post. The result has been an increasing number of military personnel attending services. Pastor **Allen Norris** reports 27 professions of faith by soldiers and additions to the church.

"The Whale's Belly" a coffee house in Ledyard, Conn. has been led to capacity every night for several months. During the last month the house has seen eleven professions of faith. Weekly activities include Bible study and a Sunday School. **Leonard Arthur** is working at the "Belly" during his two-year ministry.

The first **Northern Plains Indian Baptist Youth Camp** will be held this

summer at Big Foot Guest Ranch near Porcupine, South Dakota. About 100 Indian young people from South Dakota, North Dakota, and Montana are expected to attend the camp on August 17-20. It is a joint mission project of the Home Mission Board and the Northern Plains Baptist Convention. John Baker, the convention's executive secretary, and the missionaries to the Indians in the four-state convention will plan and direct the camp activities.

It has been said that the gift is unimportant; it's the thought that counts. When considering the finances of a struggling young church, this adage should be amended. The thought behind it counts even more.

When the \$10 check arrived, payable to **Gateway Baptist Church,** Pittsburgh, Pa., it appeared to be literally a drop in the bucket of financial need. But it joined a number of other small gifts to form an amount which looked somewhat adequate. What made this check different was the thought behind it.

The money was sent by a man named Gus. He is a prisoner in the state penitentiary. Gus worked for three weeks, eight hours a day, five days a week, for 75¢ a day to earn \$10. He expressed a desire to share in our ministry and also apologized for the smallness of his gift. In God's way of reckoning, it must have been the biggest gift of all.

Chaplains Prayer Calendar:

G. 1: Dallas G. Roscoe, La., Army; Neil Shirey, Ala., Navy. AUG. 2: G. Donathan, Okla., Army; David R. Smith, N. C., Air Force; Leonard Arthur, Jr., Tex., Army; Jack R. Peters, Okla., Army. AUG. 3: Lewis G. Burnett, Tex., Army; Thomas W. Black Jr., Miss., Air Force; Clayton F. Day, Tex., Army. AUG. 4: Kenneth H. Edmiston, La., Army; Calvin

H. Garner, Ark., Army; Charles R. Parker Sr., Ga., Navy; James S. Parks, Tex., hospital.

AUG. 5: Lyndel C. Barnes, Ill., Army; Howard A. Easley, Ala., Army; James R. Perdew, Mo., Navy; Parker C. Thompson, Mo., Army; James E. Dillard, Ga., hospital. AUG. 6: Ray N. Cooley, Ky., hospital; Jack L. Welch, Tex., Air Force; Donald Mimbs, Fla., Navy. AUG. 7: Lester T. Buckalew, Ga., Air Force; Wallace M. Hale, Tex., Army; Frederick J. Kevetter, Mo., Air Force.

AUG. 8: John D. Ford, Jr., Calif., Army; Robert Wilson, La., hospital; Charles H. Wolcott, Tex., Army; Clarence Martin Brooks, N. C., Army; Joe Frank Weber, Tenn., hospital. AUG. 9: Robert F. Cullum, Tex., hospital; Harry C. Hand, N. J., industrial. AUG. 11: Bobby C. Allen, Miss., Army; Kirtley R. Cook, Ky., Air Force; Ronald M. Stephenson, Ky., hospital. AUG. 12: Harold Jordan, Miss., industrial; Francis A. Knight, Fla., Army. AUG. 13: William R. Eaton, Ariz., hospital; Dean L. Minton, N. C., Air Force; John F. Wakefield, La., Army.

AUG. 14: Jack E. Coward, Tex., Army; John J. Gleason Jr., Ga., hospital; Herbert R. Farley, Tex., institutional. AUG. 15: Paul N. Mitchell, Ark., Army. AUG. 16: Edwin R. Andrews, Ky., Army; Wesley E. Brett, N. C., hospital. AUG. 17: Paul Coleman Lawson, Ky., Navy; Elvin B. Norris, Tex., Army; Jefferson D. Norman III, Ala., Air Force; Billie H. Pate, Calif., institutional.

AUG. 18: W. T. Permenter, Tex., Army; Kenneth R. Speer, Tex., Army; Sam C. Rusing, La., hospital. AUG. 19: Ray E. Woodall, Miss., Army. AUG. 20: Jack R. Bradshaw, Ga., Navy; George W. Pettigrew Jr., N. C., Navy; Charles L. Phipps, Ga., institutional. AUG. 22: William G. Justice, Tenn., hospital. AUG. 23: James E. Doffin Jr., N. C., Navy; Leslie M. Lefell, Tex., Navy; Elden H. Luffman, Fla., Navy; Ronald G. Mills, Ala., Army; Earl W. Minor, Mo., Air Force.

AUG. 24: Robert L. Browning, Miss., Air Force; Wilford C. Kimble, La., Navy. AUG. 25: Alfred W. Meeks, Fla., Air Force; Hugh D. Smith, Tex., Navy; Clyde J. Wood, Ala., Army. AUG. 26: George M. Hinderer, Pa., Navy; Charles A. Tyson, Tenn., Army. AUG. 27: Ralph McDonald, Ga., Air Force; J. Q. Williams, Ark., Army. AUG. 28: William K. Bagnal Jr., S. C., Army.

AUG. 29: Paul B. Cassibry, Ala., Army; Phillip J. Cassibry, Ala., Army; Cary E. Pen-ton, La., Air Force. AUG. 30: Marvin D. Keenen, Colo., Army; B. J. Williamson, Minn., hospital; Robert J. Paciocco, Pa., Navy. AUG. 31: Alfred C. Hart, Tenn., institutional; Charles F. Hill, Tenn., Army; Benjamin F. Kelley, Ark., Air Force; Norman L. Redding, Fla., institutional; Douglas A. Venters, N. C., Air Force.

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LATE NEWS

PENNSYLVANIA AND SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY SOUTHERN BAPTISTS paving the way for a state convention by 1971, have elected Joseph Waltz, a Home Mission Board appointee, as executive secretary. Waltz, an Indiana native has been in Pittsburgh for 11 years. During that time Southern Baptists have established 19 churches and 10 chapels in the western Pennsylvania area.....HMB MISSIONARIES DON AND GOLDIE RHYMES have moved from Lefrak City, N.Y. to Atlanta to direct a youth center in the city's hippie district. According to the latest estimates the Rhymeses can expect the hippie population to reach 10,000 with the expected influx of flower children this summer; the missionary couple will work in cooperation with the First Baptist Church of Atlanta; the Georgia Baptist Convention; the Atlanta Baptist Association and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.....KENT PHILPOTT, A LONG HAIREP MINSTER TO SAN FRANCISCO'S HIP COMMUNITY was featured on the CBS television series "Lamp Unto My Feet" in an examination of the "Jesus Freaks." Philpott and other "turned on" Christians with exotic backgrounds, including drug usage, were examined on the 30-minute telecast, aired June 28. Filmed in the San Francisco Bay area, the program reported on some of the more than 100 Christian houses where young people from the street who have been converted to Christ now devote their lives to meditation, Bible study and fellowship in sharp contrast to their former leanings.....THE KANSAS CONVENTION OF SOUTHERN BAPTISTS announced that the A.B. Culbertson Company, a church bond firm in Fort Worth, Tex., will no longer have liability to the Kansas Convention's Church Loan Association and the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists. The Culbertson Company will pay \$197,500 in remuneration for this settlement. The Culbertson Company had served as trustee for the Kansas Convention's Church Loan Association, which was declared insolvent in 1968. The Securities Commissioner of the State of Kansas suspended the trading of the Association's bonds in January, 1969.....SOUTHERN BAPTISTS PLANNING TO VISIT YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK THIS SUMMER will find the Highland Baptist Church of Cody, Wyoming ready to serve them. The church, located in the community nearest the park's East Gate, is conducting "come as you are" worship services for the millions of tourists visiting the park. Services will be held through August 16.....THE NEVADA BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP, meeting recently at Tonopah, Nev., set 1980 as a target date for constituting a state convention to be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. The Fellowship currently including 37 churches and about 8,000 members hopes to become a state convention by meeting minimum requirements of 50 churches with 12,000 members or 70 churches with 10,000 members.