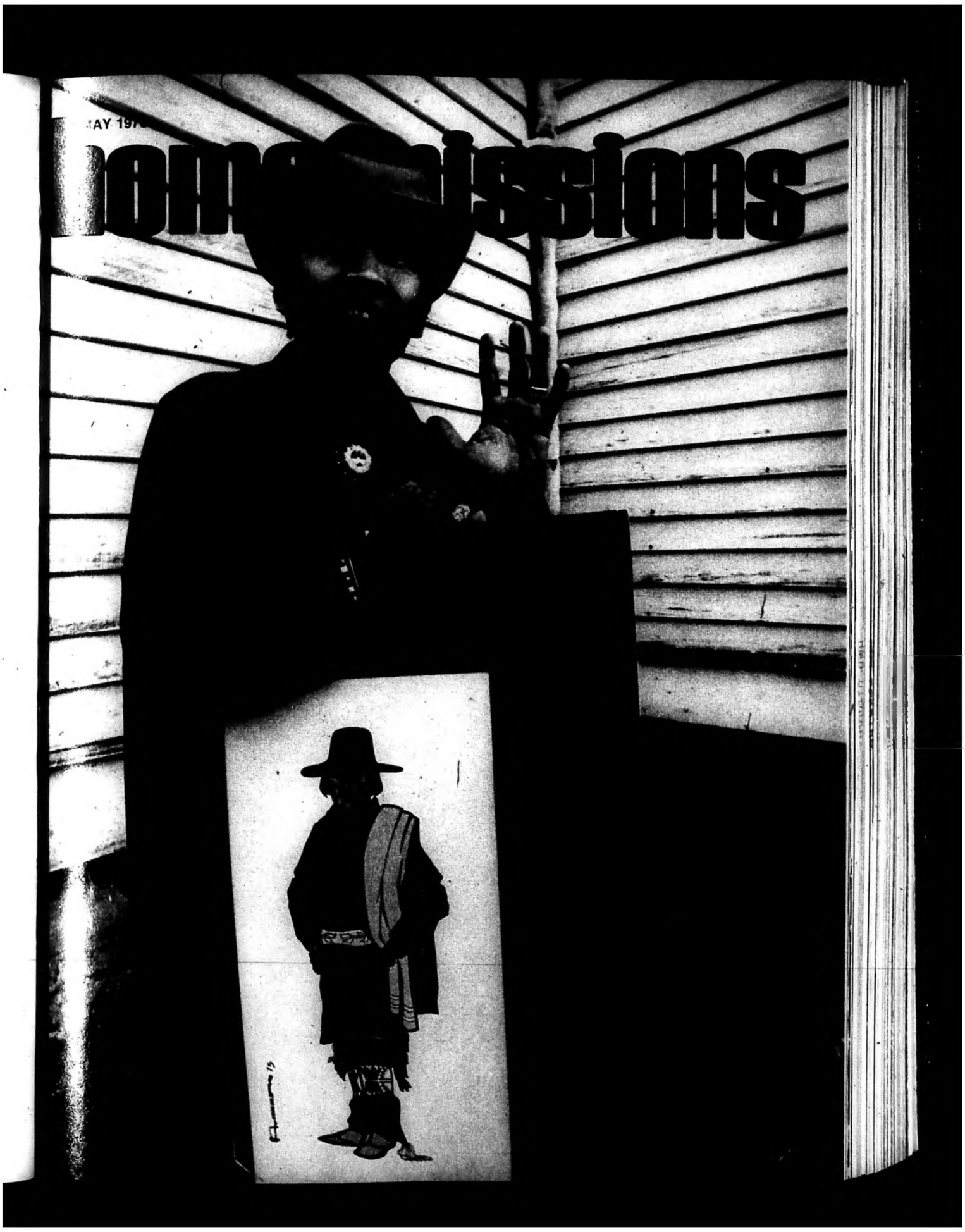
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Cover story: Missionary Jimmy Anderson, a Creek Indian who works with Creeks in Oklahoma, is an accomplished artist—among other things. His story begins on page 40. Don Rutledge Photo

Opposite: Four examples of boldness in missions are, from left: new life in Milwaukee's cold religious climate; developing community spirit in the Bronx; giving vision to a weak association; trusting an Indian to reach Indians.

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MAY PREVIEW

Reaching beyond traditional definitions

bold / 'bold / *adj* 1: Fearless before danger . . . 2: impudent, presumptuous . . . 5: adventurous, daring

mission / 'mish-en / *n* 1: a ministry commissioned by a religious organization to propagate its faith or carry on humanitarian work . . . 3: a task or function assigned or undertaken.

Dictionaries, we are told, give us definitions, not meanings. Meanings are the special property of each individual, the accumulation of varied and singular reactions to hundreds of unique, personal experiences.

And so the combination of letters spelling "bold mission" has, likely, as many meanings as readers: a civic auditorium, Billy Graham-style crusade; a Bible study of chorus girls in a Las Vegas casino backroom; a campfire worship beside a quiet Ozark lake; a fellowship for former mental patients reentering society; a renovation project for ghetto housing; a TV show for community deaf . . .

All are bold mission efforts that look beyond tradition to a new kind of daring outreach . . . all illustrate the HMB's new program, "Bold Mission Thrust."

Bold Mission Thrust, an SBC-coordinated effort to extend the boundaries of Christian mission, urges Baptists to get involved, to stretch beyond conventional concepts and past perennial parameters.

Its awesome goal: to give every person in the United States an opportunity . . .

- to hear and accept, or reject, the Good News;
- to share in the witness and ministry of a New Testament fellowship of believers.

(More information on this can be found beginning on page 25.)

This issue deals with four examples of Bold Missions. Baptists who dared to experiment, to walk beyond self-subscribed limits, to test Christ's strength in areas where few Christians live and work.

But if Christ is to permeate the nation's actions as well as its rhetoric, it will depend on the Bold-Mission-Thrust-thinking of all Southern Baptists—on your willingness, in fact, to fearlessly, impudently carry Christ's message of hope and love and light into all the dark, unexplored, dangerous corridors of our world.

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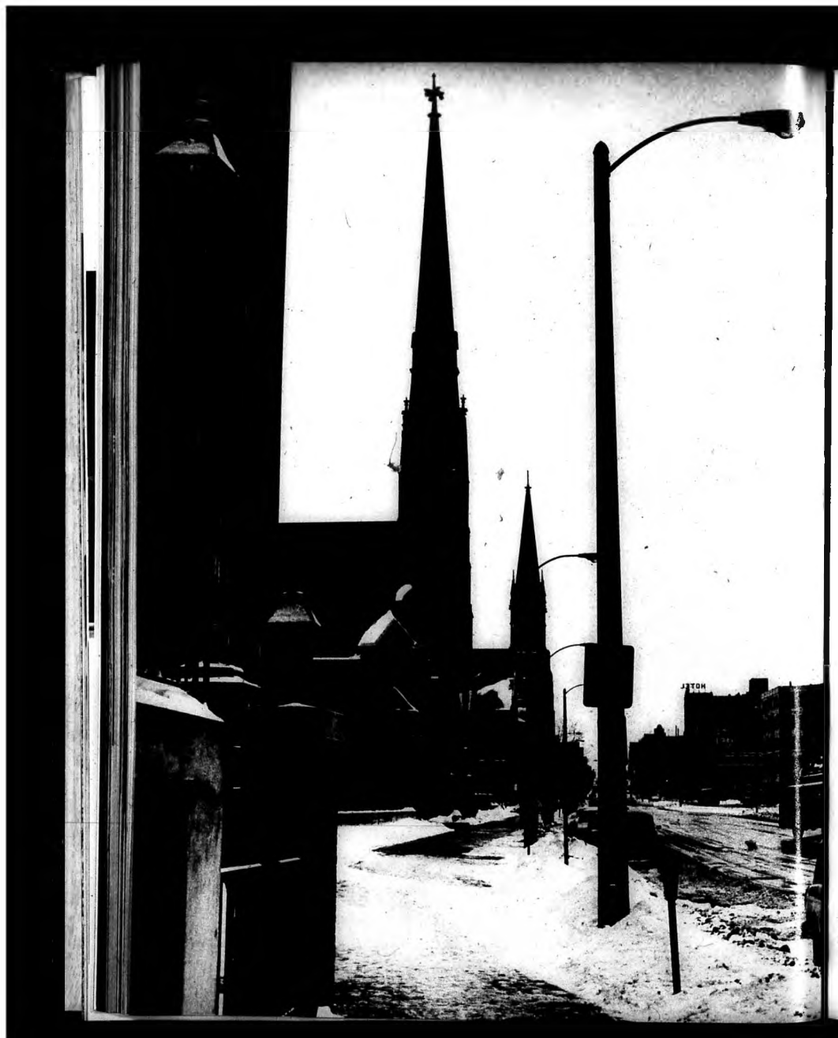


From unexpected sources,
a fresh new outlook
has swept "Brewtown" Baptists

movin'in milwaukee

By Dan Martin
Photos by the author

Milwaukee, a city of churches, is known for its cold reception of evangelists.

Milwaukee, like a child's kaleidoscope, presents a constantly shifting panorama, its variations dazzling in their incongruity.

Milwaukee is one of the most religious communities in America; its many stately and beautiful buildings attest to the influence of the church in the founding and building of the city.

Yet Milwaukee has been known for generations—since D.L. Moody's time—as "the graveyard of evangelism." Many otherwise successful evangelists have left the city in defeat.

Milwaukee is "Beertown U.S.A.," a city renowned nationally for its numerous brands of brew: in 1975, the three major breweries in the city produced a whopping 51,810,000 barrels—more than 1.6 billion gallons—of beer.

Yet many residents and boosters cringe when reference is made to Beertown. Even many evangelical Christians consider the breweries "just another industry...like any other."

Milwaukee considers itself a friendly city; salesclerks for years have greeted customers with a cheery: "Have a good day."

Yet even officials who have lived in the Wisconsin city for 10 years call themselves "carpetbaggers" who still are not yet totally accepted.

Milwaukee, once tagged the "fish fry capital of the world" because of its Friday night festivities in taverns, churches and restaurants, has an image of being common, dull, pot-bellied and Polish.

Continued

A man with a sore hand... and gloves to hide it

Yet Milwaukee is a city of culture, featuring a well-known performing arts center, museum, a famous art gallery, a zoo and a nationally known botanical garden.

Milwaukee is beset with the urban problems which go with its ranking as 18th largest city in America. It could trade problems with any big city and only the names, faces and some specifics would be different.

Yet despite big-league problems, Milwaukee exists as an "overgrown small town."

Milwaukee prides itself on its "wonderful mosaic" of ethnic groups; its international Folk Fair each year shows off the customs, crafts, foods, dances and traditions of some 45 groups.

Yet alongside this Old World charm lie racial tensions which erupted into burning, rioting and killing less than 10 years ago; some believe school desegregation issues could re-ignite the conflict.

Into this milieu Southern Baptists moved 22 years ago this summer.

The work began simply enough. When a group of Mississippians migrated to work in the American Motors Assembly plant in Kenosha, just south of Milwaukee, they brought their "churches" with them.

"Until the late 1940s, the whole Southern Baptist Convention took for granted that other evangelicals were working in the North as we were working in the South," says Preston Denton, Southern Baptist missionary in Milwaukee.

"It was only through the movement of military personnel and factory workers that we realized few evangelical efforts were in the north. It came as a shock to most of us."

Three years ago this June, Denton moved his family from Chicago to become the director of missions in Milwaukee. Milwaukee had been coordinated from the Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptist Fellowship office in Madison. The association is part of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Fellowship, which relates directly to the Texas Baptist Convention. HMB work in the two states is coordinated through Texas.

Denton left behind a successful work as director of missions for the Chicago Baptist Association.

"The work in Milwaukee was at least 25 years behind where Chicago was when I moved there 10-and-a-half years before," Denton recalls. There were only 11 Southern Baptist churches serving the sprawling and populous seven-county area of Southeastern Wisconsin.

"Before I served in Chicago, I worked in Rockford, Ill., along the Illinois-Wisconsin line. I had contact with Wisconsin people and thought I had a pretty good understanding of the differences between the two states."

But Denton, who fought problems of customs and cultures, resentment, rebellion and rejection in Chicago, wasn't totally prepared for Milwaukee.

"There was such a vast difference between the two cities. It was so pronounced. I don't know how best to explain it. The difference was so strong it was in the atmosphere all around you...."

In his first year in Milwaukee, Denton settled his family in a small town to the south. While living there they faced problems they'd never faced before: anonymous telephone calls in the night, shots fired at their house, vandalism, harassment, threats.

The persecution may not have been because Denton is a Baptist minister; it may have had no religious base at all, but resulted from any of a dozen unknown reasons.

But who knows? The police were disinterested in finding out.

Denton moved to a new neighborhood.

Today he is reluctant to talk about his experiences and the experiences of his family, but they color his opinion of the overall makeup of Milwaukee and of the challenges that face Baptists.

That first year, Denton worked to establish his office and to orient himself and those with whom he would work; his philosophy of church planting needed the support and involvement of Baptist people in the city.

Just as Baptists are new and strange to Milwaukee, Milwaukee is new and strange to many Southern Baptists.

Initially, most members of Southern Baptist congregations in Milwaukee were former Southerners. They were "you-all" clubs, predominantly, with a small mixture of indigenous people.

The city has a strong ethnic identity, a predominant Catholic and Lutheran background, and a history of failure in cooperation among evangelicals of all persuasions.

"Milwaukee generally has not been receptive to change," Denton says. "It has not readily accepted new ideas or new people. The people are deeply steeped in tradition ... they are very much closed by their cultures and customs."

The ethnic closeness of Milwaukee presents problems to evangelicals, but is regarded as "delightful" by Fred S. Daiger, executive director of the Milwaukee Convention and Visitors Bureau. And as a "wonderful mosaic culture ... a beautiful stained-glass window of people" by Grace Falbo, associate director of the International Institute of Milwaukee County.

The melange can become bewildering: Serbs, Croats, Latvians, Finns, Czechs, Poles, Germans, Italians, Irish, Russians, Greeks and Asians of many origins.

"We have identified 70 ethnic groups here," Mrs. Falbo says. Many observe national holidays, and otherwise perpetuate the heritage of their old home country.

Previously, neighborhoods were ethnically identified, in many cases clustering around a Catholic, Lutheran or Orthodox church.

"You might apply the term religious to this," Denton believes. "The people are very religious, but for many of them the tie is with the church, the culture, the tradition and the ethnic origin more than with Christ."

"This is a very religious city," says Paul Becker, pastor of Northwest Baptist Church. "It is one of the most highly churched areas of the county with about 80 percent of the people claiming some active local church affiliation or relationship.

"For most of the people, the church is an identification far stronger than anything you would find in the South. If people break with the church, generally they have to break with their family, their whole group, their whole tradition."

Becker tells of a woman in his congregation who became a Baptist several years ago. "Her family will have nothing to do with her. She is separated from them ... it is this ethnic thing."

Milwaukee's religions are strongly conservative, according to veteran religion editor James Johnston of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, despite changes of recent years, that, "for Milwaukee, have been revolutionary."

According to census estimates, Milwaukee has slightly more than a million people within the county. Of those, 372,603 are Roman Catholic; 5,580 are Orthodox church members and 294,041 are Protestants, of which 152,092 are Lutherans.

"One of the interesting things is that no religion in Milwaukee or in Wisconsin is a majority religion. They are all minorities. Of course, some are more minor than others," Johnston adds.

One of the minorities is Southern Baptist. The census—taken in 1973—shows 800 Southern Baptists in Milwaukee. Denton's latest figures—from October, 1975—show 3,805 Southern Baptists in the churches of the seven-county Lakeland Association.

The conservatism in religion, Johnston says, infects most Protestant denominations.

"Milwaukee is the headquarters of the ultra-conservative Wisconsin Synod Lutherans. There are almost 100,000 of them in Milwaukee. They're a solid bloc of conservatives—the 'Ve haf-always-done-it-this-vay-ve-are-not-going-to-change' Lutherans," he explains.

The conservatism also is reflected in evangelicals, according to John M. Fisco Jr., executive director of the Christian Business Men's Committee of Milwaukee.

From the time of Moody, Milwaukee has had a reputation of being an impossible audience for evangelism. Nothing could be done here. Crusades were tried and were total flops," Fisco points out.

Fisco, a member of the Evangelical Free Church, attended Bible college in Miami.

"Down south the evangelical churches are pretty open. They're liberal in the friendliness of the people. When you walk in a church down there you are welcome. But up here you've got to find the church, knock down the door and when you get in they look at you and wonder what you are doing there."

That attitude, he says, carries over into relationships between churches and denominations.

"You could take Catholics and Lutherans out of the picture altogether and still have a problem of getting the evangelicals together. There has been a history of coldness."

Southern Baptist pastor Becker characterizes relationships between some evanglicals as "like a porcupine convention. You've got a lot in common but if you get too close you're sure to get stuck."

He notes, "Southern Baptists shake them up. As a result of us being there, they've had to reevaluate totally what they were thinking and what they were doing.

"I've been to meetings where some evangelical pastors wouldn't come in because there was a bar in the other side of the building, or where some of them wouldn't eat with us because I was a Southern Baptist."

Becker, who is involved in civic affairs and serves as fire department chaplain in the suburb where he lives—Wauwatosa—has been active in ministerial associations in his area.

As such, he has an opportunity to speak to Catholic, Lutheran, liberal and evangelical.

Continued

Paul Becker, pastor of Northwest Baptist Church, talks to director of missions Preston Denton (right) about a missions site.

Peter Wang , pastor of Chinese Evangelical Gospel Church, conducts a planning meeting.

So effective has been his ministry that he has been president of a conservative evangelical group and a liberal socially oriented ministerial association that wanted to "add something along spiritual lines" to their meetings.

In his revival services, Becker also has had garbed Catholic nuns sing and give testimonies.

"As a result of working with the Catholics, I've had chances to speak to a catechism class from Corpus Christi church—30 to 50 kids—and go over the plan of salvation with them. This year the priest told me I didn't have to give them copies of *Good News*. He said he already had given them *The Way*," Becker says.

"There are probably more people active in Lutheran, Catholic and other churches because of Southern Baptist ministry, than we have been able to get involved in our own churches," Becker believes. "Because of the cultural thing, many times people are led to Christ and they go back into their own churches and influence others to do more."

Becker says Southern Baptists have an influence among evangelicals and non-evangelicals "and receive a respect we didn't have five years ago. We have done it by being open to people. We haven't compromised our convictions.

"But where some other Baptists are always ready for a fight, always excluding, damning and downing, always cutting off their relationship with others, we have been open. We have taken the attitude that if Christ is your Savior, you have been born again and you are our brother or sister."

After years of inertia, Fisco believes evangelicals are beginning to move. He points to two things as giving him hope. One was the successful Leighton Ford Reach Out campaign in November, 1973; the other was the Bi-Racial Revival sponsored by Lakeland Baptists and a coalition of black pastors in October, 1975.

Becker chaired the Leighton Ford crusade, which filled the same auditorium each night and on the final night—with Billy Graham in attendance—swelled to an estimated 18,000 people.

"There was a better than five percent response," remembers Becker. "For America that is phenomenal. The largest number of people who came forward were Lutherans from one synod or another. The second largest group were Catholics.

"I saw several nuns I know from the renewal movement—they were counseling and using the same materials as everybody else. They were talking about being saved and receiving Christ into the heart as Savior and Lord.

"I led one Catholic family to the Lord. They really were converted. A nun and a priest were nearby as I counseled the family. The nun and priest were thrilled to death."

A history of coldness... "like a porcupine convention"

"We did not see the number of decisions I would have liked," says revival co-chairman Paul Dann, pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Kenosha. "But it did bring the blacks and whites together and helped us see there was a common ground on which we could stand and worship."

F.J. Purdy, pastor of New Light Baptist Church, a black American Baptist church in the inner-city, comments: "I think it showed this city that the religion of Jesus Christ is not restricted by cultural or racial or ethnic boundaries or backgrounds. It showed us that the Spirit of God touches men regardless of race, color or creed.

"It also showed us that fire will burn a philosopher as fast as it burns a fool. This was a fiery experience for a lot of us."

For many of the black pastors, participation in anything with Southern Baptists was unthinkable.

Ken Bowen pastors Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, also an American Baptist-affiliated congregation. A native of Massachusetts and graduate of Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, Bowen was the Bi-Racial Revival's other co-chairman.

"I think it is fair to say that the only really meaningful relationship with white pastors that black pastors in Milwaukee have had, has been since Southern Baptists came," he says.

Bowen admits readily that he hasn't always been open to Southern Baptists, or to white southern Christians of any persuasion.

"I wrote my thesis that Southern Baptists/fundamentalists in general have used the church to maintain white supremacy. It has been the greatest depository of the maintenance of racism," Bowen explains.

The success of the Ford crusade has brought talk of a Billy Graham crusade in Milwaukee, perhaps in 1977.

Another event which has been indicative of success—in several areas—was last year's Bi-Racial Revival, the outgrowth of an idea of a black Southern Baptist pastor, Olee Sutton of Monumental Baptist Church.

"It has followed me for a long time," Sutton says. "It started when I was just a young fellow. My momma always told me God's people were the same, but I grew up in a small community and saw people go to different churches and associations, getting out at different times to make sure they didn't speak to each other's path.

"I had to drive a cab to make ends meet and saw people—black and white—sharing the same bottle or the same dope. It struggled me that Christians couldn't come together and work together. It was my dream that we black and white Christians bury the hatchet and work together trying to save the lost people out there."

Sutton's dream was unveiled at a black-white fellowship dinner. A group of four or five blacks and four or five whites got together to see if it could be done. The Lakeland Association—led by Denton—voted to back it financially and physically.

The revival was held in October, 1975, in Greater Galilee Baptist Church, which meets in a former Jewish synagogue in the predominantly black area near downtown.

With the kind of examples white fundamentalists have demonstrated, Bowen adds, "it's a wonder that black people are Christians at all. I don't see how a man can talk about Christianity if he is prejudiced."

Bowen says many whites and blacks make identical mistakes, however.

"Whites talk about the black community, as if it is all the same. You have as many differences—political, social, moral—as in the white community. There are a lot of black people I wouldn't invite to my house.

"We stereotype, all of us. But we have to deal with people as we find them. I am sure some Southern Baptist ministers still feel about blacks as they always have. But I would miss the great blessing of fellowship with Brother Preston (Denton) if I wouldn't meet him just because he is a Southern Baptist.

"In my mind I've seen the Southern Baptist Convention as a racist group, and I've tried to classify all Southern Baptists as unchristian, just because they belong to the Southern Baptist Convention.

From the Bi-Racial Revival and its result, Bowen sees "the dawning of a new day. Men like me have become open-minded... I have had fellowship with Southern Baptist pastors. I don't care what convention they belong to, I care only that they are Christians. I see the individual and know his heart. The label is not important."

In the past two years, Southern Baptists have added four black congregations to their association. One of the pastors is Leo Champion of Fellowship Missionary Baptist Freedom

Continued

Mike Brown of Milwaukee Baptist Center: "We're trying to help people grow" through care and love.

Church, who works by day for the City of Milwaukee as an urban relocation specialist.

The church started in a funeral parlor with two members—Champion and his wife. He struggled during its formative years, often paying rent and utilities and helping members in need out of his own pocket.

"When somebody mentioned Southern Baptist to me, I thought of bigots. I hated whites," Champion remembers.

Champion was chairman of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) during school integration picketing in Milwaukee in the early 1960s. As an activist in the civil rights battle, he and his wife participated in the Selma to Montgomery march.

"I've had some bad experiences in regards to whites," Champion says. "I saw black people shot and victimized. But you know, love will always outlast hate. When a person really gets Christ on the inside, everything falls into perspective.

"No law can legislate love. I don't care what the Supreme Court may say, they can't force me to love you. No law can make me do that. But Jesus can. And that's right," Champion says.

Champion "heard by the grapevine" that Southern Baptists could give assistance to struggling churches.

"I had gone to my limit of service. I needed help," he says, noting his need for hymnals, literature, materials for building.

Some of his church members are unemployed and others are on welfare. At one point Champion was receiving only $15 in the collection and he was putting in $10 of that himself.

"I decided to call Brother Denton. That was the hardest call I ever made. I looked at the telephone for a long time before I called. When I did, he was kind and very congenial and I knew he was a guy who really cares ... a guy I could *really* trust," Champion says.

Champion has received some assistance for his church: supplies, money and manpower through summer groups who work in Vacation Bible Schools and revivals.

But, according to Champion, one of the biggest blessings has been Denton himself.

"I've had him come down here to preach and the people really love to hear him. He is a devoted man, very devout. I don't see him as an old villain," Champion says. "I see him as an individual, a man of God, a man to love, a man with whom race doesn't make any difference. He doesn't have any 'picks and chooses.' He's just old Denton. All the time, day or night. He's always available."

Baptists have been involved in training leadership for black churches through the Milwaukee Institute of Theology (MIT), which began in 1968.

Fred Harper, one of MIT's founders and also pastor of King Solomon Baptist Church, another Lakeland Association-affiliate, asked Carl Camp to teach at MIT. Camp, pastor of Brown Deer Baptist Church, gradually drew in other Baptists, including Denton; Becker; Mike Brown, director of the Milwaukee Baptist Center and pastor of Center Baptist Church; and layman Joseph A. Huddleston.

"From that start I've launched out," Camp says. "I've preached in black churches and invited black pastors to preach in Brown Deer. A fellowship relationship has been established."

MIT was started by Harper and Leonard McDonald, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, because of their experiences com-

Continued

Photo by Ken Touchton

muting to Chicago to get a ministerial education in the early 1960s.

"We got the idea there were others desiring more Christian education who couldn't afford to go to one of the bigger schools or who didn't have the scholastic background," McDonald says.

The school, which has endured its ups and downs, now operates with a limited number of students.

"Southern Baptists are giving to those who need it," says McDonald, whose church is affiliated with the Progressive National Baptists. "They have extended their knowledge, their fellowship and friendship to the black community."

Each of the black ministers talks of frustrations in the black community in Milwaukee. Of particular concern is a school desegregation ruling which "has all the potential of another Boston or Louisville, or Charlotte."

Each feels Milwaukee is prejudiced.

Explains McDonald: "Prejudice is like a man with a sore hand. In the South, the man just admitted he had a sore hand and went on. Here, he wears a glove and hides it. In the South you knew there were restaurants you couldn't go into. Here you can go in and sit and sit and you'll still be sitting."

McDonald, who has preached in Korea and Haiti, adds, however, that "when you go to those places over there you sure can appreciate America."

In addition to blacks, Lakeland Association also is involved in ministering to the Chinese community.

Almost a year ago, a small congregation—the Chinese Evangelical Gospel Church—affiliated with the association. The decision was difficult for the leaders of that congregation, as well.

"We started out determined to never affiliate with any denomination," says Philip Hung, chairman of the church board. "In China, denominations had a very bad reputation. One would say it had 1,000 lambs, and another say it had 1,000 lambs, but they were just exchanging people. That is why denominations had a bad reputation.

"But we knew we weren't gaining. We knew we needed ministers to guide us so we studied the denominations and figured to join the one which would help us in the future development of our ministry. Southern Baptists offered the best all-around ministry."

The church now has a full-time pastor, Peter Wang, a graduate of Wheaton College and a product of Southern Baptist foreign missions and a HMB missionary.

Southern Baptists currently have no organized work in Milwaukee among the Spanish-speaking, although Denton wants to establish a ministry. Some work has been attempted, but it did not succeed.

The opportunity is ripe, with an estimated 35,000 Spanish-speaking people, primarily Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, in the area.

"I think more can be done," say Jaime Davila, pastor of Evangelical Baptist Church, a Spanish-speaking congregation. "I think we need to be more aggressive not only in providing for the spiritual needs but also social services for the people. I think we could do more in reaching them.

"It is very hard to reach the Spanish-speaking people here," adds Davila who is a member of the American Baptist general board, its executive committee, and the board of national ministries. Most are traditionally tied to the Catholic Church.

Southern Baptists have had little impact on the Spanish-speaking community in Milwaukee, but they have had strong influence on inner-city Milwaukee through the activities of Mike Brown of Milwaukee Baptist Center.

Brown, a smiling, bearded man, fills a demanding role as both pastor of Center Baptist Church and director of the center.

"Actually, I feel rather good about that," says Brown. "I like it that way. The needs of the people in hurting situations claim priority. Jesus said to minister to people. I want both the pastorate and the center. It's not an either-or, but a both-and situation."

Brown is aware, however, of the problems of attracting stable, responsible people to a church meeting in a three-storefront building on State Street, near downtown Milwaukee.

"If we had a building," Brown sighs, "what we could do would be unlimited. You can say what you want, but people just won't join in, in a storefront.

"The question is where can we reach the most people the most effectively?" he adds. "We are struggling with it. I feel like we could grow a church, reaching people who are mentally and psychologically and emotionally stable, plus minister to them in the areas where they live and have need."

"This is an educational experience," he explains. "It is not that some of our people don't feel free to worship in a church but that they haven't been brought to a place where they can think in terms of beauty and dignity and grace.

"When a person is on welfare it's hard for that person to feel any dignity at all. When someone comes out of a home where there are dogs and cats and rats and stink and garbage and insects and bugs, it's hard for him or her to feel at home to feel comfortable with carpet and nice pews and beautiful stained-glass windows."

Brown shakes his head in wonderment: "I have found some fouled up situations. Sometimes it's hard for me to believe . . . hard for me to reconcile that people can allow such things to happen in their lives. . . ."

Brown adds, however that he has "been concentrating on helping the church build families. I have been trying to help people grow. It's wrong to bring them into the salvation experience and then drop them. I feel a commitment as a spiritual parent to grow them and help them grow and nurture to feed and encourage them."

Brown's work, like many others, faces financial problems. "We are at rock bottom," he says.

Money is a serious problem, but a more severe one is that "the people lack knowledge of Southern Baptist principles and beliefs. They don't come to business meetings. They don't understand what the offering goes for . . . don't understand the importance of tithing because the churches they are accustomed to, don't depend on the tithes of welfare people to support them," Brown says.

Lack of knowledge often provides humor. One pastor relates that a member of his church wanted to know more about Annie Armstrong, the WMU leader for whom the Easter offering for home missions is named.

A search for a strong base, with pegs driven deep and solid

Is [illegible] any kin to Herbert W. Armstrong?" the woman asked, a worried frown on her face.

[illegible] Brown, the pastors of Lakeland association churches describe their work as challenging, frustrating, exciting, disappointing, discouraging, lonely.

Says Bill Webb, pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Kenosha and also president of the Two-State Fellowship: "The work is exciting because of the challenge of seeing a church grow from 20 members to 151. But it is frustrating because you know that as you grow, you have a lot of new Christians with a lot of immaturity.

"It also is frustrating because it is so slow. . . ."

Webb adds that the point at which he is most often discouraged is the "lack of adequate, trained leadership in the churches."

Jay Humphrey, pastor of Parkside Baptist Church in Kenosha, notes that because SBC work has not yet had time to grow indigenous church leadership/pastors, most Baptist pastors in Milwaukee are "actually farther away from our homes than are the foreign missionaries who live in Mexico. There is a separation that occurs when we leave and come to this area. . . .

"There is a tendency to feel isolated," echoes Webb.

Traditional Deep-South problems—splits, arguments and disharmony—occur, too. Dann has spent most of his 18-month Wisconsin ministry trying to heal a charismatic split in Temple Baptist Church in Kenosha.

"Trying to reach and develop people, to heal some old wounds and to help get the proper perspective on doctrine has been a major part of my ministry," he says.

Denton says one of his "greatest disappointments" is that when people come from the "Bible belt" they do not affiliate with struggling churches.

"Since they don't find big buildings, comfortable sanctuaries and enough people, they don't become involved in small situations, storefronts or little buildings.

"I wish we could lay it on the heart of the mainstream of denomination that when they come to a new area, they set themselves missionaries, forerunners. They should ready to take their place and go to work."

[illegible]se people would provide a great bank of leadership for [illegible]rn Baptists in Milwaukee, Denton believes.

[illegible]lated problem, but one with which many pastors cope [illegible] is the problem of losing leadership and membership [illegible] missions and new church situations.

[illegible]y of the churches have sponsored missions. When a [illegible]ission develops, some of our prime leadership goes [illegible]," says Parkside's Humphrey. "That puts us back at [illegible]vel and we have to develop new leadership again. [illegible] they get to where they can lead, a new mission comes [illegible]nd. . . ."

[illegible]ton has doubled the number of churches and missions [illegible] Lakeland Association since he has been on the field. [illegible]here are 19 churches and three missions.

[illegible] of his methods has been to use secular-employed pastors [illegible] help begin new work, before moving to full-time semi-[illegible]rained people when the church develops.

[illegible]y Milwaukee pastors are learning to modify their approaches, too.

"As a general rule, revivals do not work as well here as they have in other places," says Don Cone, pastor of Southeast Baptist Church. "People don't readily recognize what you are doing. When they have been born into a church, many of them cannot see the need for Christ in a personal way."

Camp, who has been on home mission fields 17 years, also notes, "We aren't in Texas. We're in Brown Deer, Wis. You tell people to come to a revival and they ask you, 'What's a revival?' Try to explain that one.

While some pastors are sticking with traditional revivals, Camp has found the Lay Renewal Weekend is the most effective tool in stimulating church growth.

Ron Coon just moved to Cedarburg Baptist Church from Miami, Fla. He discovered differences other than weather.

"One of the biggest shocks to me was that many of the other pastors in town think we are intruding, invading. One minister is a city councilman and his attitude was that another church is not needed.

"I also found that most of the stuff—methods—I brought in simply don't work. You don't flip out your Four Spiritual Laws and go after it. I found that you go and have coffee with someone, and if you can just barely touch on faith, you have made a big step."

Coon quickly points out that Milwaukee-area Southern Baptists have not scrapped everything traditional: "we still emphasize Bible study, Sunday School, mission education, mission involvement, church training. We don't want to change or do away with these things. We just need to adapt them to our area."

Churches in areas of new work often are like teen-age children, says Yeaman Smith, pastor of Layton Avenue Baptist Church. They want to grow up too fast, to reach out before they have strength.

Layton Avenue church is a case in point. Its history has been filled with financial crises. When Smith came to the church a year ago, he came with the idea of "standing on our own feet."

"A church must have a strong base before it can reach into new things. That can get frustrating because when you don't have money you can't initiate some programs you would like to see started. So you have to wait.

Smith notes, "Many pastors don't know beans, or don't care, or don't think it is spiritual to be concerned about the organization of the church.

"There is a tendency in new work areas to draw men who are 'church hoppers,' who run from one thing to another and from one church to another. Often, when they are in a church, they jump from one program to another because it looks good. But they generally don't stay with it very long.

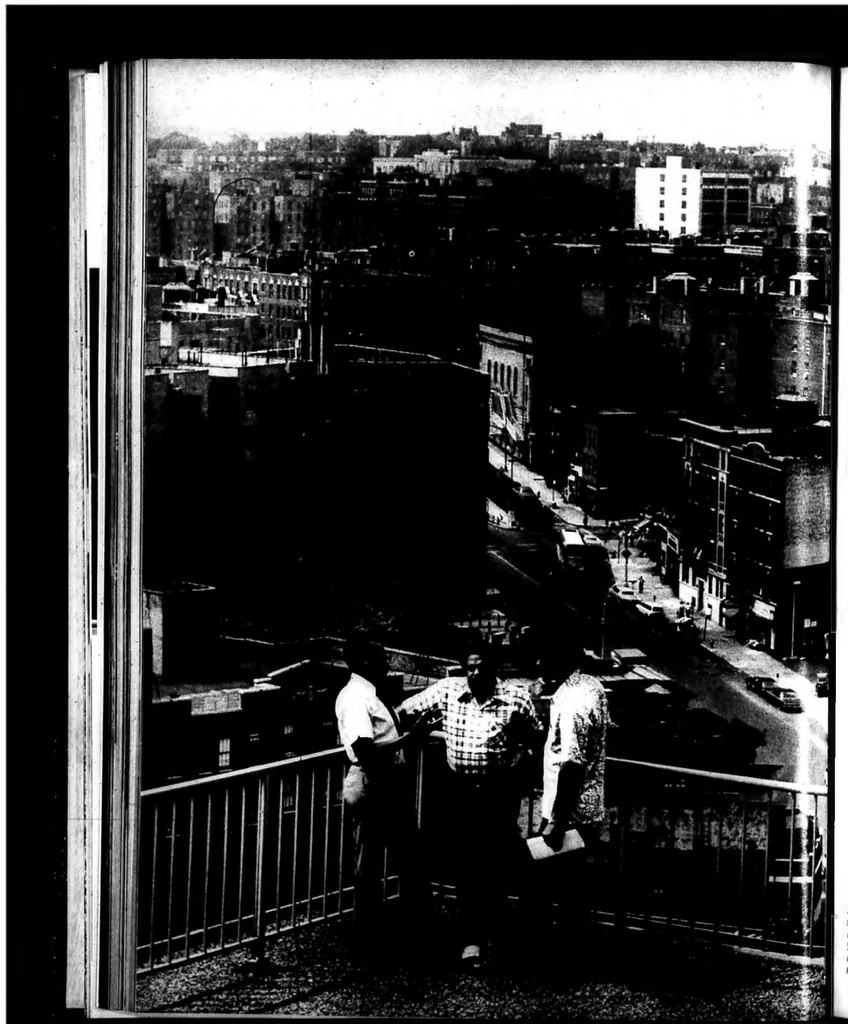
"In these areas of new work we need men with their feet on the ground, who know what they are doing and are content to build and develop. They have to be content to know they are not going to be Mr. Big-Wig in the SBC.

"Nobody knows where you are when you're up here. If you expect to be president of the SBC, or even serve on any of the boards and agencies, don't come here.

"But the man who comes to pastor will spend his life in one of the best ways I can imagine. There's a joy to it . . . a satisfaction. I'm not worried about going any place. I'm not concerned about getting a bigger church.

"I'm at peace with myself . . . happy here. No question about it, my wife and I are the happiest we have ever been.

"And way up here in Wisconsin, too." •



Almost engulfed by the [illegible]s of rooftops, Bronx Baptist Church's Sam Simpson, an HMB missionary (left), talks to church leaders.

Amid compacted millions,
Sam Simpson builds churches—
and a sense of community.

battle for the bronx

By Walker L. Knight
Photography by Ken Touchton

Sam Simpson was trying hard to concentrate. The day's activities and problems surged through his mind. He had moved from one crisis or demand to another and now in his small cloistered study deep within the Wake-Eden Baptist Chapel, he needed to think about what he would say later today. Simpson checked his watch: 1:30 a.m. He would be preaching his first sermon at 9 a.m. Then he would travel to the heart of the Bronx business district for the 11 a.m. service at Bronx Baptist Church.

A murmur, low and rumbling, tugged at his attention, at first doing no more than triggering another set of thoughts: a crowd on the beach back home in Jamaica; images of Kingston, his parents and their farm.

He turned back to his writing.

The murmur intensified, piercing the brown brick and glass fronted building, once the home of a Lutheran congregation. Recognizing voices, he stepped to the glass-encased foyer of the chapel. Fifteen to 20 teenagers were passing. The yellowish street lights flickered on knives, chains, sticks with razor blade ends, bottles and rocks.

From the group of young Italians, Puerto Ricans and West Indians, Simpson picked out a familiar face or two. Though Simpson had lived in the area for more than five years, there were many he did not know.

As the vocal, loosely knit band passed, some lights in the two-story dwellings flicked on. "Someone will

Continued

Simpson (right), a member of the Bronx Council of Churches, has been active in community affairs.

be calling the police," Sam said to himself. "Before they get here someone will be dead."

He jumped into his maroon Buick quickly and circled the block to approach the youths head on. Stopping about 50 feet ahead of the leaders, he lowered the window and shouted, "Leroy, Jerrie—this is Rev. Simpson—what's this all about?"

"Don't get in the way, Rev. Simpson. We done took all we're goin' to from those Italians. They drove through here today tossing stuff, and they gave Harry a roughing. We're not going to take any more."

The kids swarmed around Simpson's car.

"If you have a gripe, you should let the police handle it," he suggested, knowing that the idea might be rejected.

"Police!" two or three yelled. "They got too many Italians to give us a fair shake."

As they talked he noticed most allowed an older Italian named Al to answer first. Simpson turned to Al.

"Al, you ready to die?" he asked.

"Whatcha mean, die?"

"If anyone's ready to fight with the weapons you have, he should also be ready to die. I buried three youth leaders two years ago. It's a fact."

Simpson had hit home, for Al paused and the kids around him ducked their heads or looked away. Al started to respond just as three police cars, lights flashing, converged from the darkness.

A lieutenant from the 46th Precinct, a man Simpson knew, demanded a reason for the gathering. He was white but at least he wasn't Italian.

"Lt. Williams," Simpson took the lead, "we've been having trouble with the Italian young people in the next school district, and these boys are about to take matters into their own hands."

"We're not having any fights here tonight, even if I have to lock up the entire lot," the lieutenant yelled.

"We've just been talking," Simpson added, "and I want to make a proposal. Let's get both groups together—face-to-face at the Wake-Eden Chapel next . . ."

"You'll never get them guys to face us there," Al interrupted.

"You agree to be there, and I'll get them there," Simpson answered.

Al glanced about him, got a go-ahead sign from two or three other youths. None said no.

"Okay, provided the same number of each shows up. You moderate."

Through such risks and involvements Sam Simpson at 43 has earned the respect inherent in the title coworkers affectionately confer on him: Baptist Bishop of the Bronx. His official title is pastor-director of church extension, appointed by the Church Extension Department of the Home Mission Board and the New York Baptist Convention.

Simpson's appearance conveys both warmth and sophistication. He is at home in any situation, at ease with those in power or out. Heavy, framed glasses guard open, brown eyes, and a closely clipped mustache accents the quickly formed smile.

In the decade Simpson has lived and ministered among the compacted millions within this New York City borough, he has been instrumental in establishing four congregations. He expects to start or bring into the Baptist fold three others soon.

Simpson's field, the Bronx, is a huge, sprawling concrete complex of apartments, shops and industry that is caught in the vise grip of change, change that squeezes lives dry of hope.

But hope is Simpson's forte.

The Bronx was once the home of Jews, Italians, Germans, Swiss and others of European background. As these moved out, blacks and Spanish moved in.

Population density increases each year. Families get larger and apartments get smaller, as landlords break them up for cheaper rentals and more income. The older and the poorer of the departing groups are left behind; they live in fear of the criminals who prey upon them. With the failure of locks and burglar alarms, residents have turned to watch dogs. On every street, owners walk huge dogs.

The strain of a weakened economy adds its heavy load. Garbage litters streets. As deterioration sets in, frustration

Bronx Baptist grew quickly during its first two years.

levels rise. The escape routes are flight, withdrawal, alcohol or drugs.

Kenneth Lyle, director of missions for Metropolitan New York Baptist Association and former pastor in the city, says the way to avoid getting overwhelmed is by taking only "a little bite at a time."

The overwhelming need can wipe you out. What you have to do is see people as individuals; the beauty of the city is in terms of people. There are times when you love the city and times when you hate it.

You hate what it does to people. So many human beings are so far away from God, so confused, so lost, so needy. In this very complex situation, if you can, like Paul, become all things to all men, then some might be saved. But you have to have a 'save some' philosophy."

Almost as though turning upon themselves, some residents of the south Bronx have burned buildings. Hundreds of fire-gutted shells stand like war-ravaged monuments to the emptiness of lives forced to live under such conditions.

No one knows who does the burnings. Some say the landlords do it to escape taxes and collect insurance. Others say the tenants themselves, since the city relocates any family burned out and provides funds to replace furniture lost.

Simpson grieves over the loss of many fine buildings. He knows that residents must double up with others.

He also grieves over the loss of churches, hurting each time he passes a large sanctuary empty of a congregation or holding on weakly with 15-20 people while thousands live within a few blocks. Most churches are unable to survive the cultural change. Only Catholics, Pentecostals and Baptists are growing, Simpson says. He has rescued a Jewish synagogue, a Lutheran and a United Congregational building from disuse.

The Pentecostals grow, according to Lyle, because they use storefront buildings and become one with the people. The Catholics survive because they place priests of ethnic background in changing neighborhoods, or they simply assign their priests to live there.

Lyle is impressed with the work of the Catholics. "I believe that within the next decade we may find that the Catholics will be among our strongest allies in the inner city," he says, "because they will stay and some of them are committed. If we are open we can learn from each other."

Baptists are growing because of men like Lyle and Sam Simpson. Simpson reached the Bronx along a circuitous route that took him from a small Jamaican district called Retirement, through Kingston, Chicago and New York City. The English had given to the Jamaicans a profound reverence for education, Simpson thinks, and also a sense of not being inferior to anybody. Both traits Simpson absorbed well.

He does not remember 1959, his first year in the U.S., with much pleasure. While attending a Brethren college in Chicago he first encountered racial prejudice. In one evangelism class he and three other blacks were asked to make special written reports instead of taking part in a door-by-door visitation in an all-white neighborhood.

"I was becoming totally confused," Simpson remembers. He decided he would not become a minister, but would study photography and return to Jamaica. He came to the New York Institute of Photography, where he stayed long enough to receive a professional certificate.

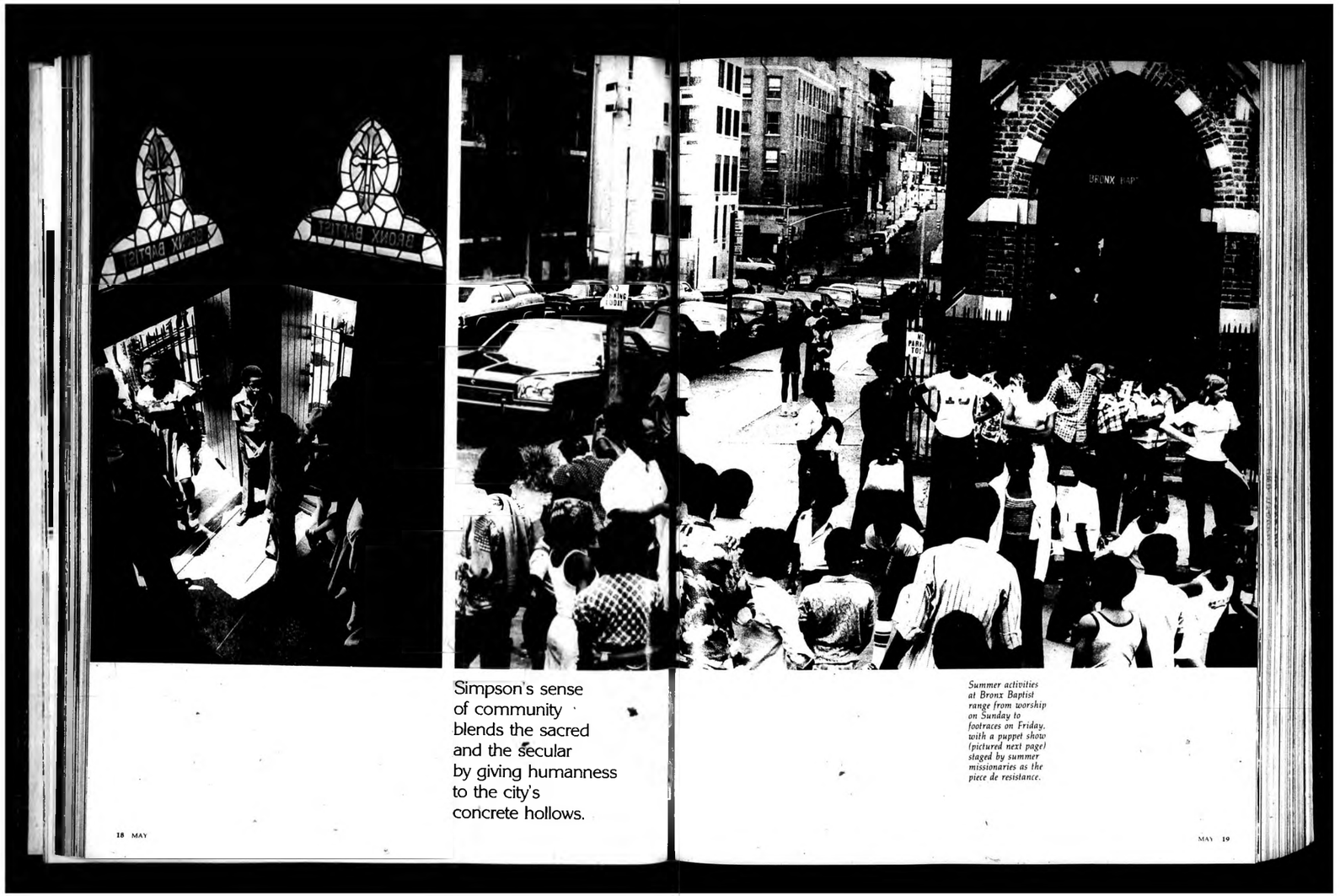
In New York he visited the Calvary Baptist Church, whose Sunday radio broadcasts he had found exciting in Jamaica. The pastor, who also shared a Brethren background, understood Simpson's confusion; he encouraged Simpson to enroll in the Northeastern Bible College at Essex Falls in New Jersey. Simpson continued to attend Calvary Baptist Church until a fellow Jamaican, David Morgan, spoke one Sunday.

Morgan, a pastor in Panama with Southern Baptists, had moved to Brooklyn to start the First Baptist Church, ministering primarily to West Indians. The church was meeting in the YMCA when Simpson started attending, and he stayed with the congregation until his graduation.

Meanwhile, he had met Lola Campbell, an attractive girl from Jamaica who worked as head secretary in the Department of Human Rights of the United Nations. They married in 1963.

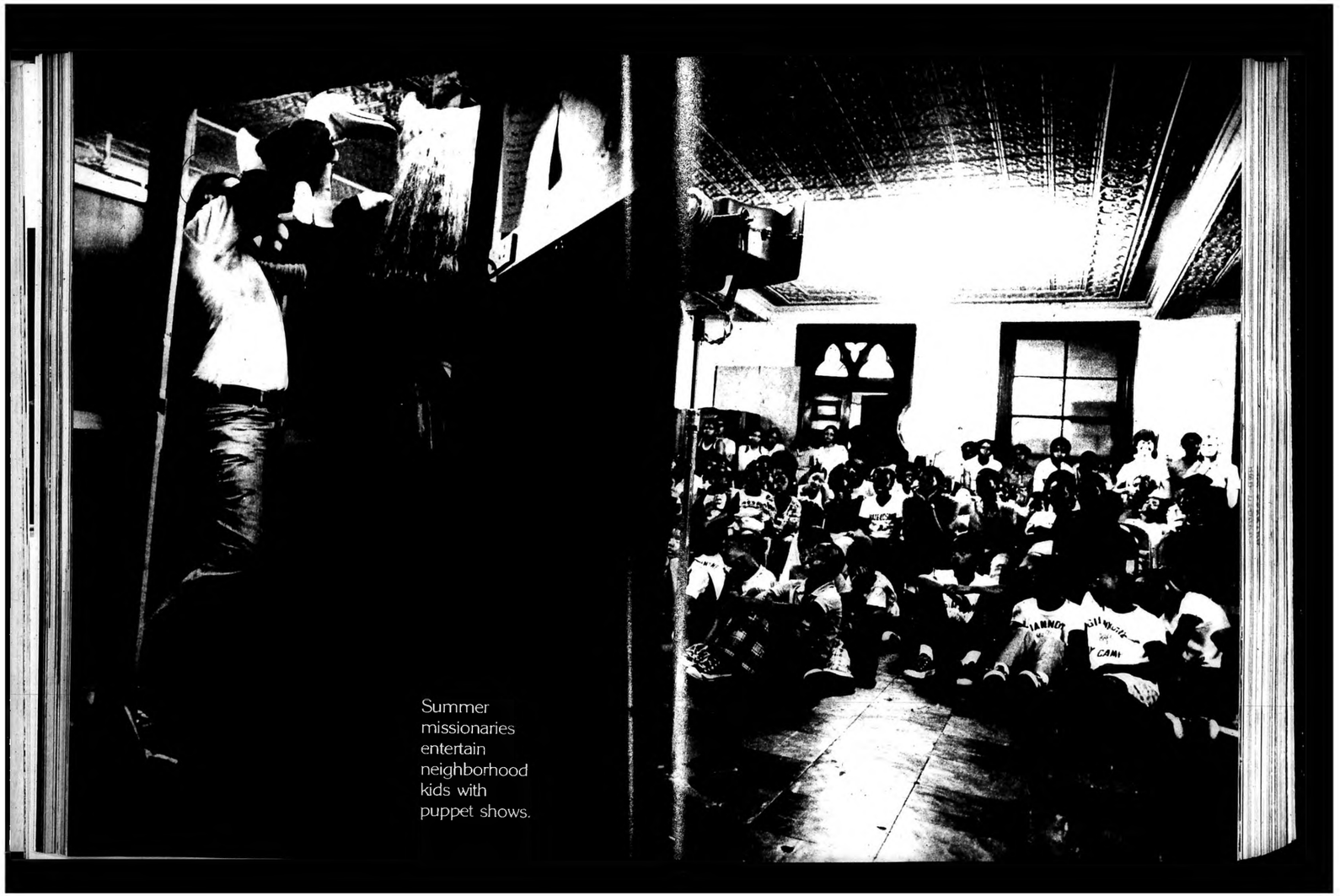
The next year Simpson was asked by David Morgan and by Paul S. James, director of Southern Baptist work in New York, to start a Baptist congregation in Manhattan.

Volleyball is part of Bronx Baptists' summer recreation program.

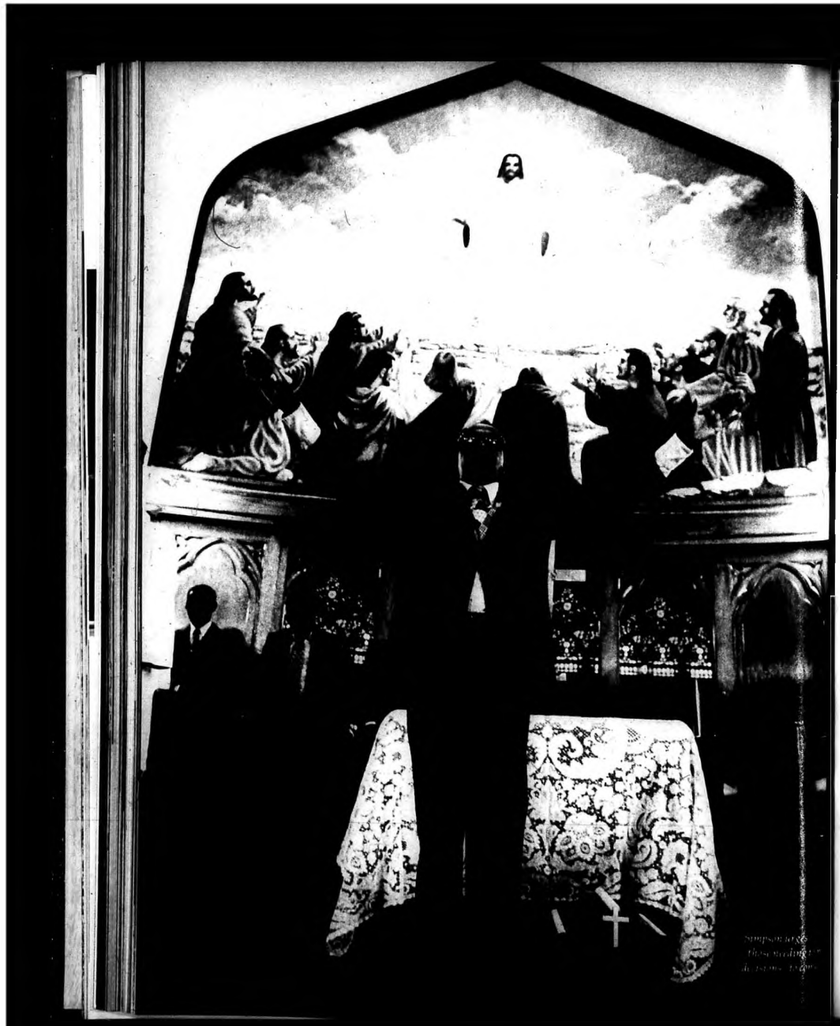


Simpson's sense of community blends the sacred and the secular by giving humanness to the city's concrete hollows.

Summer activities at Bronx Baptist range from worship on Sunday to footraces on Friday, with a puppet show (pictured next page) staged by summer missionaries as the piece de resistance.



Summer missionaries entertain neighborhood kids with puppet shows.



Simpson's earned his title of 'Baptist Bishop of the Bronx.'

Sam and Lola began looking for an apartment in the Bronx, an area where many Jamaican people were moving. An apartment manager invited them to hold services in her apartment. So began Bronx Baptist Church. Simpson was appointed HMB missionary in church extension.

In August, 1964 Simpson discovered a small, two-story Jewish synagogue pressed between two old four-story apartment buildings. The Home Mission Board purchased the aging building, a worn-and-weathered structure. But it was beautiful to Simpson and his 16-member congregation that first Sunday. He moved his family into the six rooms upstairs. By the next week, the group had almost doubled. In less than two years, they constituted as Bronx Baptist Church, and the 100-plus attendance exceeded the building's capacity.

For the next few years Simpson had everyone looking for a building. Nothing turned up.

Meanwhile he joined with ministers of other denominations in forming the Twin Parks Association. Disturbed at the rapid deterioration of much of the city, they incorporated and assumed ownership of buildings sold them by the city for $1. Financing was secured to rebuild the apartments, and tenant associations were formed to set rules and enforce them. Eventually new buildings were also erected.

Under the association, the buildings went from 60 percent occupancy to 95 percent and rental collection from 20 percent to 97 percent. Facilities vastly improved.

Finally, after several years' search, Bronx Baptist purchased, with Home Mission Board help, a former Congregational church building for $85,000.

Today, the English-heritage, Jamaican influence permeates Bronx Baptists' service, from stately hymns to long, articulate prayers, creating cultural identity with the island, a sense of transcending time and space, broken only by the roar of jets from LaGuardia.

At one service a visitor told the others, "I'm from Montego Bay. I enjoy the other churches here but this is so much better because we speak the same way and I understand so much better."

Although sensitive to this cultural need, Simpson doesn't really want the church to be seen as a Jamaican church. "You can't build a Jamaican church in American society. If you do that, whenever the Jamaicans move out of the community, you have nothing to hold to. That happened to the Germans at Wake-Eden. They built a little kingdom around Scottish people.

"The same thing has happened to some Southern Baptist churches in the North. You don't watch license plates and bring people together and not reach into the community."

Nevertheless, most of those reached by Bronx Baptist Church and by Wake-Eden Chapel have a Jamaican background.

One occasion of Jamaican emphasis is the Bronx Baptist Church's annual picnic, an all-day outing for many who seldom leave the oppressive compaction of the city.

The picnic, at an upstate park some 70 miles from the Bronx, is a family affair; tables are spread with Jamaican delicacies: fried plantain, rice and beans, avocadoes, fish, ginger beer, collard greens. Some talk of the papayas and breadfruit they would have if this were Jamaica.

The youth swim, play volleyball and badminton.

Adults enjoy four-handed dominoes; the game is a national one in Jamaica.

Simpson works to give Bronx children a summer program with more than the usual Vacation Bible School fare. With the New York Neighborhood Youth Corps, the 46th Police Precinct, the Council of Churches, and the West Bronx Neighborhood Association, he involves more than 300 children at three locations, taxing facilities and workers.

Summer climaxes at an all-day meeting at the Bronx Baptist Church. Children from Wake-Eden and Honeywell come by the old VW bus that Leroy Sterling drives and by subway. They are accustomed to the subway; workers have been taking them on field trips all summer—to the museum, the Statue of Liberty and other tourist attractions.

In addition to Bible study, singing and crafts, the summer has included heavy doses of math and reading for the 5-12 year olds.

In its total outreach, the Bronx Baptist work is one of the most creative things we have," says Ken Lyle. "Sam has done as good a job as anyone, and he is quite well-known throughout the community."

Lyle feels that Simpson's actions fit well with Baptists' overall efforts. He says, "Our philosophy has been to try to work through church-type units rather than centers or institutions.

"We have felt that we needed to build a base upon which ministry can be erected, and to build ministry into churches as much as possible.

"Sam is providing a catalytic leadership, and also developing good lay leaders," Lyle adds.

One example of Simpson's catalytic role comes from his service on the Council of Churches for the Bronx division; he also represented the Bronx on the New York Council.

The council was sponsoring a Protestant chapel in Co-op City, a mammoth Bronx housing project holding 64,000 people. The 20- and 30-story buildings rise over nearly 100 acres like match sticks stuck in a huge lawn.

A small congregation, meeting in the community center, struggled for direction and thrust. The executive secretary of the Council asked Simpson if Southern Baptists would be interested in providing leadership.

Simpson immediately replied they would.

The group affiliated as a mission of the Bronx Baptist Church and in the two years 30 candidates have been baptized. The congregation, now numbering more than 200, has outgrown the community center.

Experiences at Co-op City have encouraged Simpson to try a similar approach at another huge apartment community known as the Stevenson Commons.

The future also includes a mission fellowship for the Chinese and Japanese living in the Bronx.

Another plan is to emphasize small groups and lay leadership.

"The thing that came to me from my training at New York

Continued

"At times you love the city, at times you hate what it does to people..."

Theological Seminary was the small group concept. I suggested to the church that we not have a revival for a year. Let's see if by small groups we could become more of a united group within, and when we are strong within, then we will start evangelizing," Simpson says.

Simpson expects these cells to be the outreach arm of the church, and a means of developing the lay leadership.

Such growth of the laity will free Simpson to explore creatively the opportunities he sees, to work with the growing number of mission points, and to continue to be active in community life, as he was with the street gang from the Wake-Eden section.

When this group responded to Simpson's invitation to meet the Italians at the church building, more than 30 showed up.

After a heated session, during which many expressed themselves, Simpson asked each group to select four leaders to meet with him and the police captain in another room.

Decisions came:

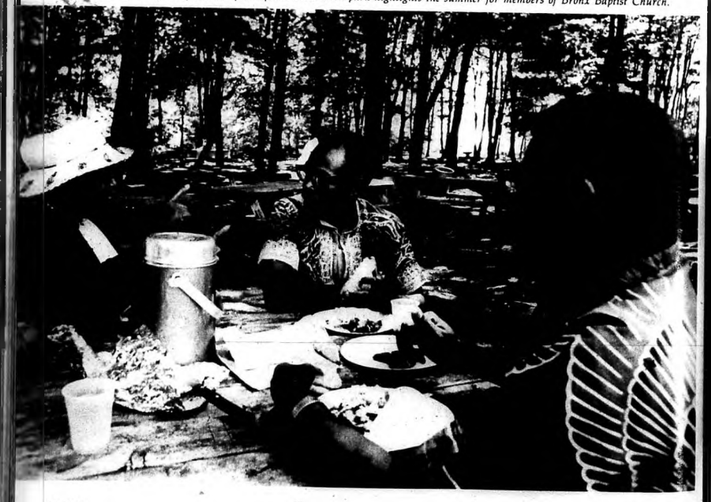
First, each group would recognize the territory of t[he] other; second, neither group wanted a fight, and in fact, th[ey] were open to communication between the groups; third, they would each organize basketball teams and compete with each other.

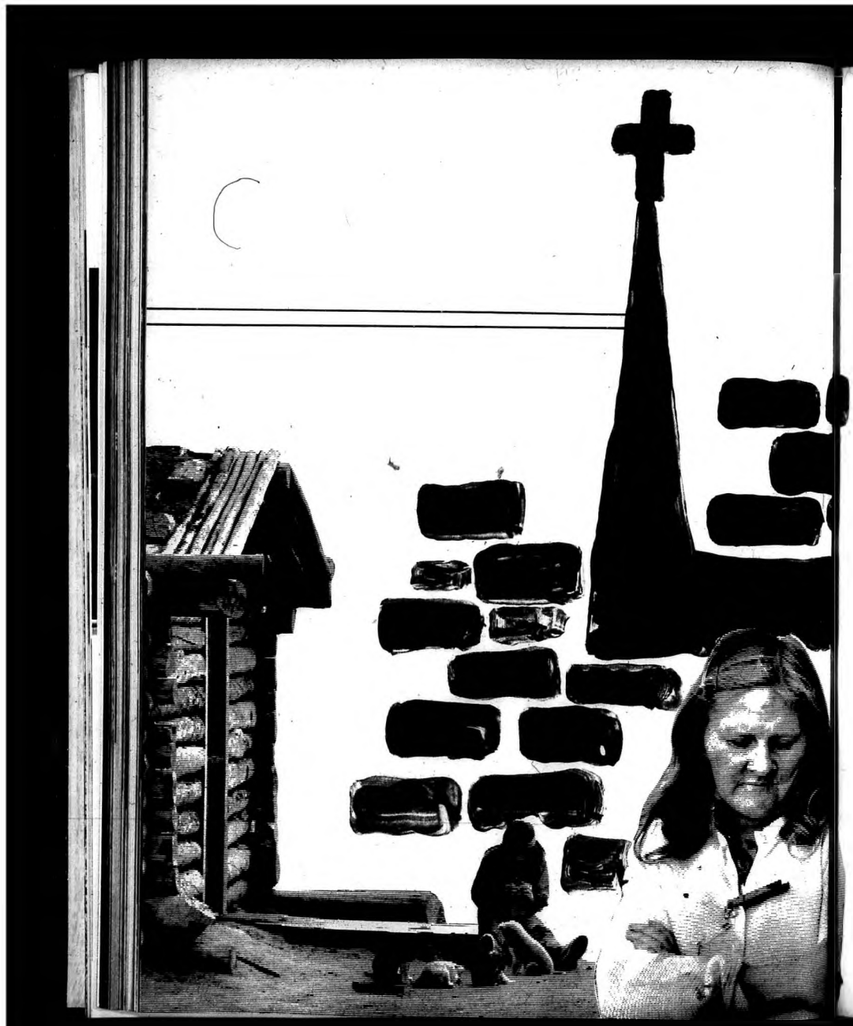
Simpson and the police captain promised to get the ba[ll] lifted from the school playground for afternoon and night play. They were also to try to get the basketball area lighted.

So once again Simpson was late getting home, but good things were happening, and he was in better touch with the community. As Simpson says, "My concept of the church is community. If we can draw the people in the community, not only will there be a church, but it will be concerned about the community—and each other." •

Condensed from *Seen Beginnings: The Human Touch in Church Extension*, the second volume in the Home Mission Board's "The Human Touch" series of photo-text books on the work of HMB missionaries. © copyright 1976 by the Home Mission Board. Used by permission. (Readers interested in subscribing to "The Human Touch" series should see information on the back cover of this issue of HMJ.)

A trip to the greenery and fresh air of an upstate New York park highlights the summer for members of Bronx Baptist Church.





Amid the wonder and excitement of her two-hundredth birthday, the United States seems to be hiding her people's growing sense of separation....

But it exists.

In inner-city ghettos.

In rural communities.

The culture burns up, throws away, worries and forgets, push-pulls, ignores... commands its citizens to "Walk-Don't-Run" and "Go-Directly-To-Jail/Do-Not-Pass-Go."

Men and women are drained of creativity, insight; robbed of dignity, worth, their inherent God-given value.

From the national cacophony emerges two questions: what directions for the future? what sacrifices for the present?

The nation's coins answer, "In God We Trust." Her pledge calls her people to be "One nation under God."

But who hears?

For in the United States in the year of her bicentennial celebration, God is seldom trusted or remembered.

The cold, frightening statistic: more than half the nation's people work, love, play without any concern for, or awareness of, the person of Jesus Christ.

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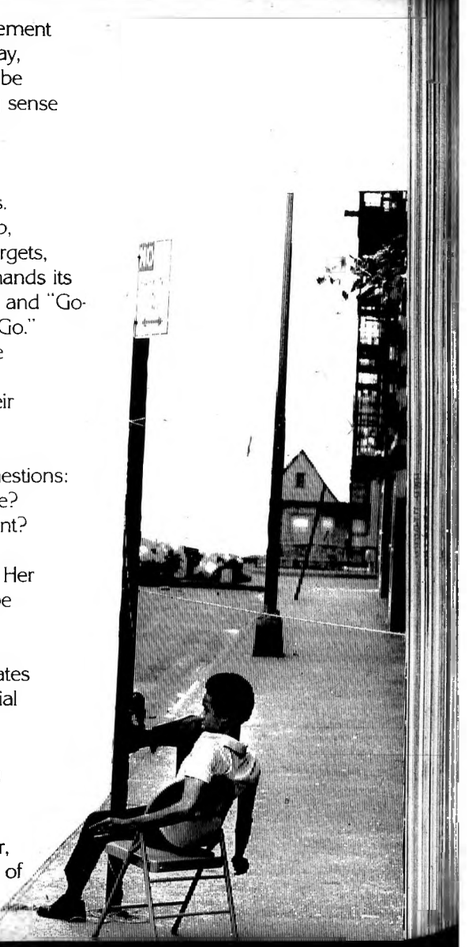

In cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention's four-year emphasis, the Home Mission Board is gearing up for a fresh, concerted effort: to help churches and individuals change these trends.

The plan is Bold Mission Thrust. Its timespan: 1976-1979.

Its objectives:

***Let every person in our land have an opportunity to hear and accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

***Let every person in our land have an opportunity to share in the witness and ministry of a New Testament fellowship of believers.**

To describe these objectives, Home Mission Board strategists and planners are using—and shaping—two words:

evangelize

congregationalize.

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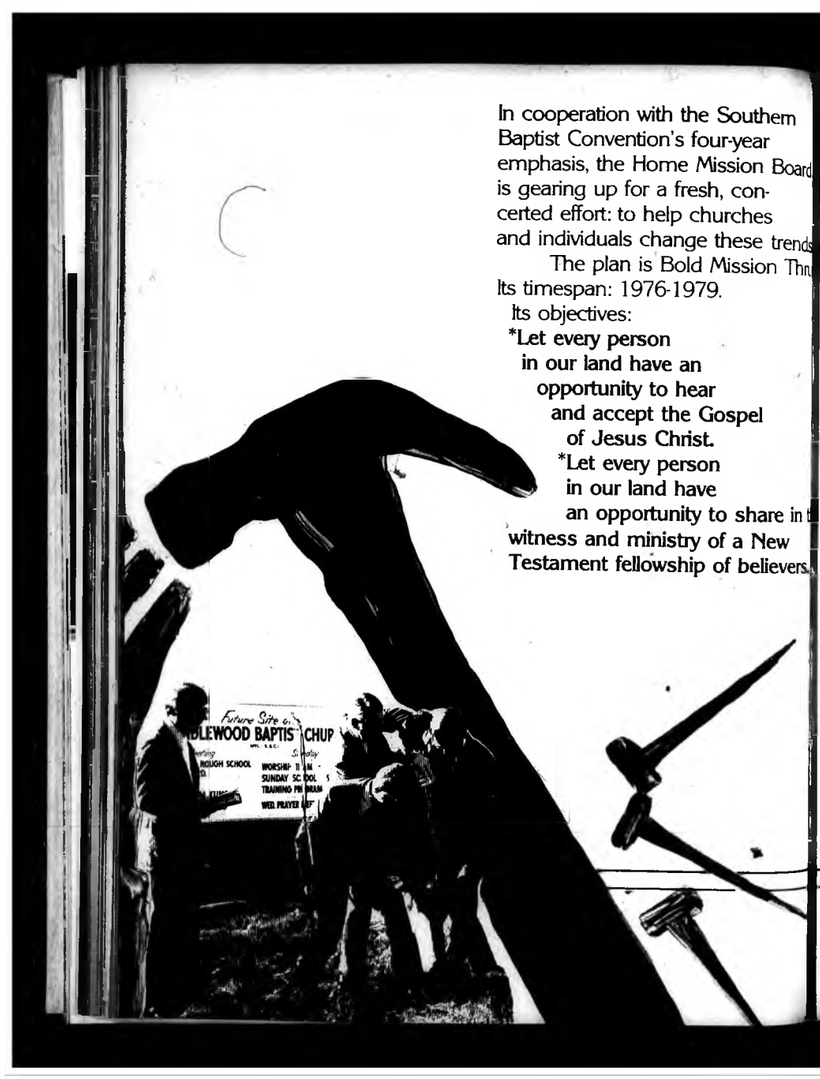
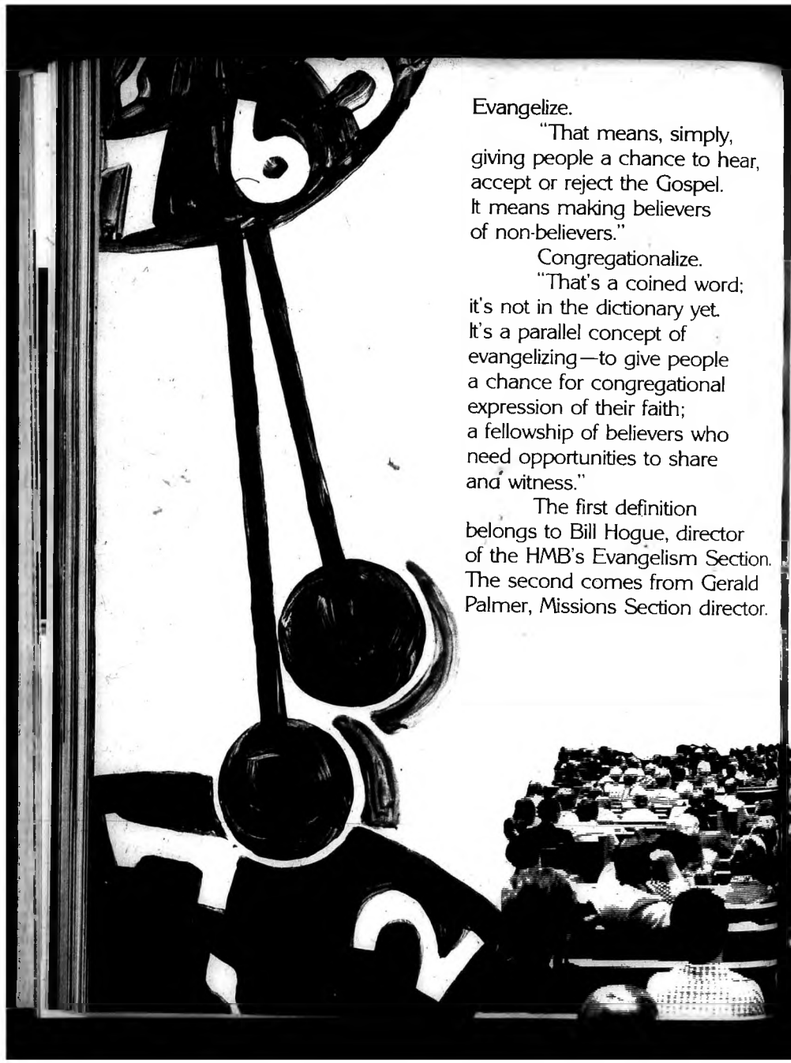




Evangelize.

"That means, simply, giving people a chance to hear, accept or reject the Gospel. It means making believers of non-believers."

Congregationalize.

"That's a coined word; it's not in the dictionary yet. It's a parallel concept of evangelizing—to give people a chance for congregational expression of their faith; a fellowship of believers who need opportunities to share and witness."

The first definition belongs to Bill Hogue, director of the HMB's Evangelism Section. The second comes from Gerald Palmer, Missions Section director.

The two men are deeply involved in Bold Mission planning. More of their ideas follow:

HOGUE: We've believed these concepts for a long time; they've been part of our work. But now we're moving beyond any periferal concerns to the heart of our business as an agency and as people of God.

PALMER: We're saying, perhaps for the first time, that evangelizing and congregationalizing are possible nationwide. We're not drawing little circles around us. This demands the total resources of the HMB and the states.

HOGUE: Other groups of Christians have these same goals. We're not assuming their responsibilities. We're undergirding and supporting them.

PALMER: This is a correlated program. Every one at the HMB will participate through his or her program, ministry, giving total attention to these objectives of evangelizing and congregationalizing.

We've never had this kind of commitment before.

HOGUE: This isn't a business-as-usual program. It calls forth boldness in methods, boldness in objectives.

Our concerns cross geographical, cultural, linguistic boundaries. Within and outside traditional SBC territory.

Continued

Biblically, Bold Mission Thrust expresses a twentieth-century Acts. In boldness of concept, method, action, says: "Reaching America for Christ is not unreasonable or impossible."

"The early followers of Christ refused to be tied to 'culture traps,'" writes an HMB theologian. "They felt no need to be identified with the establishment; they were men and women with a single objective: to preach the word and establish churches.

"In Acts, Christ's disciples cross barriers. Jerusalem represents the barrier to the city; Judea, the barrier of religion; Samaria, the barrier of race. The 'uttermost parts' represent the barrier of scarce resources, both people and money.

"The missionary is not one who leaves home to evangelize and congregationalize. But one bold enough to cross barriers."

Gerald Palmer believes "one of the most exciting things about BMT is that it urges increased involvement by lay persons."

Adds Bill Hogue: "Bold Mission Thrust's potential comes from a vision of lay persons willing to sacrifice."

Bold Mission Thrust calls, in fact, for cooperation on all levels of SBC life.

But it calls, most of all, for renewed individual commitment by all Baptists.

For, ultimately, Bold Mission Thrust must be a personal venture.

Bold Mission Thrust is you.

Design by Deborah Petticord

Home Mission Board photos

For more information on Bold Mission Thrust and its implications for all Southern Baptists, please write Bold Mission Thrust, Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St., NW, Atlanta, GA 30309

Can a moribund association find new life? Perhaps, with the right approach...

the peninsula plan

By Celeste Loucks

For years, a stagnant Olympic Baptist Association has maintained a handful of churches clinging to the hillsides and coasts of northwest Washington State.

Geographically, the association's territory covers the water-isolated, sparsely populated Olympic Peninsula, which reaches like a gnarled hand into Puget Sound. Rimming huge Olympic National Park, most of its churches are rooted on the eastern edge of the peninsula, across from the heavily populated Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan area. The rest are bound by the Pacific Ocean and adjoining Juan De Fuca Strait.

"You go into that area on purpose," verifies W.C. Carpenter, director of missions for the Northwest Convention.

In the past 20 years, only one church in the phlegmatic 10-church association has grown strong enough to support a full-time pastor. Slowly shrinking congregations consist of 20 to 30 regular members. Pastors support themselves with outside jobs five days a week. Church membership has risen and fallen—hitting 850 members in 1968, for example, dropping to 630 in 1971; resident members now total about 1,000, with regular attendance perhaps half that number.

Most of the tiny churches, preoccupied with survival, have failed to offer surrounding communities more than twice-weekly worship and Sunday school.

Previous programs for expansion—often detailed instructions unrelated to local situations—have rarely

Continued

A confrontation and a challenge

been workable, according to several pastors. And if a church pushed for higher attendance, it provoked jealousy among others.

So, in the past two decades the churches have been locked into status quo or worse, watching part-time pastors come and go, and attracting mostly transplanted Southern Baptist members.

But recently, consecutive waves of challenge have jolted the association.

Part came from the subtle stimulus of a pending flood of population. The Trident Submarine Base near Bangor, with its nuclear powered submarines, will bring thousands of new faces. And Port Angeles, located across the strait from Victoria, B.C., Canada, is expected to become a "super port": most ships bearing Alaskan oil are expected to unload there—or at one of the other pe in the association. The number of peop needed for the dock-side operation wil augmented by employees of relat petrochemical companies.

The anticipated population gr th has caused the area's SBC pastors t look at their churches in the context a surrounding sea of need.

Last September, Carpenter, al g with James Nelson, director of rur urban missions at the Home Missio Board, arrived at the Olympic asso ational meeting equipped with a fistful statis tics and a tough challenge t begin "Bold Missions," a two-year HMB and SBC emphasis that stresses local church association evangelization and growth.

"It wasn't long," comments one pastor wh through the session, "before I rea this wasn't just another conven tio gram."

I d the others were informed that th of Washington ranks third in a lis unchurched states. Only Hawaii an regon have populations with sm church affiliations.

Seventy-five percent of your people are unchurched," Carpenter said, bringing the problem closer to home. "We found one county in the association with 89.76 percent unchurched population."

After dropping the statistics, the two men waited for reactions. "When people are confronted with this, eyeball to eyeball, they begin praying about it, weeping about it, asking, 'What can we do?'" comments Nelson.

But rather than hand the pastors a prepackaged solution—complete with church paper blurbs, offering envelopes and printed timetables for boosting membership and spawning new churches—Nelson threw the responsibility for change back on the pastors and their congregations. The Northwest Convention, HMB and other SBC agencies would cooperate as they were called on, and try to help with resources, Nelson told the pastors. But the actual solution for change would be left up to the individuals in the association.

Digging into Southern Baptist history, Nelson reminded the pastors that the preacher/plowman moved west without funding from a central agency, depending on local subsistance. "Traditionally, God has provided the resources when the people are responsive." He encouraged the pastors to use available and capable lay leaders. "It is time," he said, "to tap these resources—or they are going to wither."

"We were not putting dollar marks in their eyes," Nelson recalls. Instead, he and Carpenter urged Olympic Peninsula churches to become part of a team to reach uncommitted people through a relatively unstructured plan that in-

Continued

Jim Nelson of the HMB (right) discusses possible new-work sites with leaders of the Olympic Association: pastors Edwin Fielder and Jeff Ware and director of missions Weldon Stevens.

Photo by Knolan Benfield

cluded: analysis of local needs, establishment of priorities, and resulting action.

To the surprise of many leaders, this hard-nosed approach has taken hold. A pastor from another Northwest association reports he walked away from a similar meeting feeling spiritually revived.

"It carries with it a real sense of emergency—something must be done now," explains Weldon Stevens, new director of missions for the Olympic Association. "We have 185,000 lost people here. And the population is beginning to boom right out from under us."

"If I could boil it down," Stevens continues; "the exciting thing about it is our association, our churches and pastors were asked to work together to win the peninsula for Christ. And the time is short."

Stevens' Olympic Association hasn't been the only one to feel such stirrings recently, either.

In some places, the reawakening movement to expand church memberships and begin new missions has developed entirely at the grassroots level, ahead of any Convention-directed push. "There is an atmosphere and a climate in the Northwest that we have not seen in 10 or 15 years," Carpenter thinks. "We have to say it's of God."

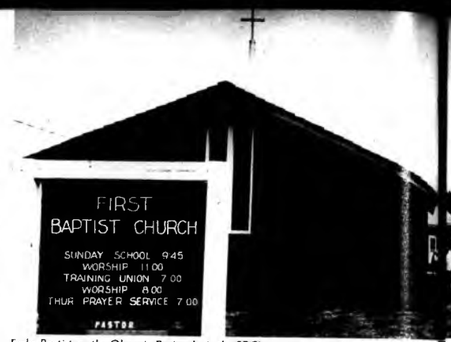
Because of its spontaneity, the movement has not occurred in particularly orderly or ordered fashion, but at the pace of individual churches and associations. Already, Nelson admits, this has created tension among various levels of local, state and national SBC administration.

"Some associations have moved so quickly, they've run off and left the rest of the state," Nelson says. But instead of backing off from inherent conflicts, he insists, "This excites me.

"The associations are saying, 'We're going to move.' Not only are they free people—they know they are free.

"What this can do," he continues, "is break us out of our own shell. As leaders, we will have to deal with a whole new set of dynamics."

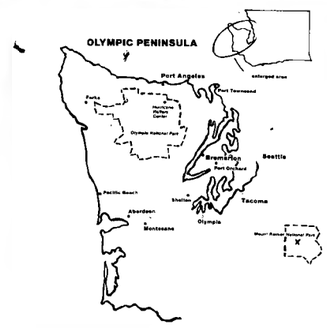
As an example, he recalls that when a certain program was handed down to an association recently, the association committee kicked it back. "'That's not what we need now,' was their response," Nelson says, "'but bring it back at such and such a date . . .'"



Forks Baptist on the Olympic Peninsula is the SBC's most western church in the continental

Photo by Knolan Benfield

Nelson and W.C. Carpenter of the Northwest Convention (right) plot Bold Mission strategy.



Instead of being dictated plans, the HMB's roughly sketched church-growth blueprints "give churches the opportunity to plug into the right program and resources," Nelson insists. To administrators, and various agencies of the SBC, this may seem like a mutiny. But, he says, "This is an exciting kind of proposal: can the association begin to flex its muscle? Why, it's already happening!"

For the Olympic association and others, Bold Mission programing works on the premise that the best planning has to be done locally.

But Nelson emphasizes the importance of individual groups also recognizing their role within SBC structures. "They need to see themselves as team members, as well as leaders," he says.

For example, strong churches fr n the South may send ministers of edu tion associational directors or colleg pro- fessors to conduct short-term t ning institutes for pastors and lay lea rs in areas like the Olympic association Nel- son suggests. Then, as these chur in weak SBC areas gain strength an mo- mentum, they will be able to reach nore persons in their own communiti and establish missions in others.

"What we're involved in here, is ome- thing that can shake the rest of th cen- tury," maintains Nelson, "seeing our- selves as a national missions team."

Giving others that vision may be ome Nelson's most difficult task.

A dream becomes a realistic goal

fewer than 20 percent of the peninsula's 240,000 people were members of any church.

"We were ashamed to face where we are," comments Ware. "If you want to come right down to it, our church was finding out we didn't have much to offer."

Compared to many former programs, Nelson's "Bold Mission" challenge met positive reactions. "The majority of our churches are small," offers one Olympic Association pastor. "Before, we have had a feeling the general programs were designed for the large churches."

Because each pastor is expected to devise his own plan for action to be carried out with the assistance of other agencies, "there is something in this that says it's ours," comments another pastor.

Stevens adds, "Our Bold Mission plans are not bogged down in mechanics."

Former projects, he says, outlined down to the very day what needed to occur in each church. "On such and such a date, you get so many people," Stevens laughs. "But if you forget to mail that letter on the right date . . ."

"'I'm behind,'" Ware joins in, "'so, I guess I'll drop this program . . .'"

Stevens believes part of the appeal of Bold Missions stems from Baptists' basic love of independence. "We don't like anyone telling us what to do."

In the Olympic association, pastors have scrutinized their own communities, then looked for ways to respond. Ed Fielder, pastor of Kitsap Lake Baptist Church in Bremerton, saw his area needed a day-care center. Instead of supporting himself with an outside job—since his congregation couldn't afford a full-time pastor's salary—he organized a center at the church. In this way, he has additional contacts with his community and fulfills its need for a day-care program. Since becoming involved in Bold Missions, he hopes to steer his people into volunteer work with local nursing homes.

Fielder, who has pastored his church for only two years, also delved into church archives and examined old programs. He says Bold Missions has "helped us look again at our churches. We realized we are not reaching the people."

But, he claims, instead of moving contrary to his congregation's wishes, "this helps us do what we really want to do—to do what the Lord is telling us to do."

Ware is interested in establishing a youth program. "We haven't had anything to reach young people," he explains. "We need this for the good of the community. None of the other churches around us have it."

Ware observes, "I've found here, more strongly than in any other place, much jealousy among the churches. Rather than make a cooperative effort, we'd shudder a little bit when we heard about record attendances in another church."

Others agree. But they think they see a change. Fielder emphasizes that Bold Missions revolves around teamwork. Stevens says, "I've noticed a changing mood. We don't have time for that kind of stuff. We've got to get busy doing what we should."

"Instead of looking at their own churches," Stevens continues, "they are looking at the peninsula. Our primary concern is to reach people. This program says we want to reach this nation for Christ—without anyone getting the credit."

Although he and Carpenter were enthusiastic about possibilities, some Olympic association members who came to September meeting were filled with skepticism. Having heard various program spiels before, they eased down in their chairs for another hardsell, armed by a packet of mimeographed projections. But as the discussion progressed, Jeff Ware, pastor of San Juan Baptist Church in Port Townsend, admitted, "I was scared."

He had been in the association only about two months—and was put right in the middle of this bold thrust."

The presentation confronted pastors with statistics they had buried, at least in reference, at the back of their minds:

Despite its national goals, the pastors expect Bold Mission to have a positive effect on individual churches. "We think we will double the number of churches we have," explains Stevens.

"And our churches should be twice as strong as they are," adds Fielder. "We're looking for a double in Sunday School."

To further illustrate the expected impact, Stevens says Port Townsend's San Juan Baptist Church has struggled through the years to maintain a minuscule membership. "Six years ago, if anyone said, 'Can you reach 60 in Sunday school?' it would have been a dream.

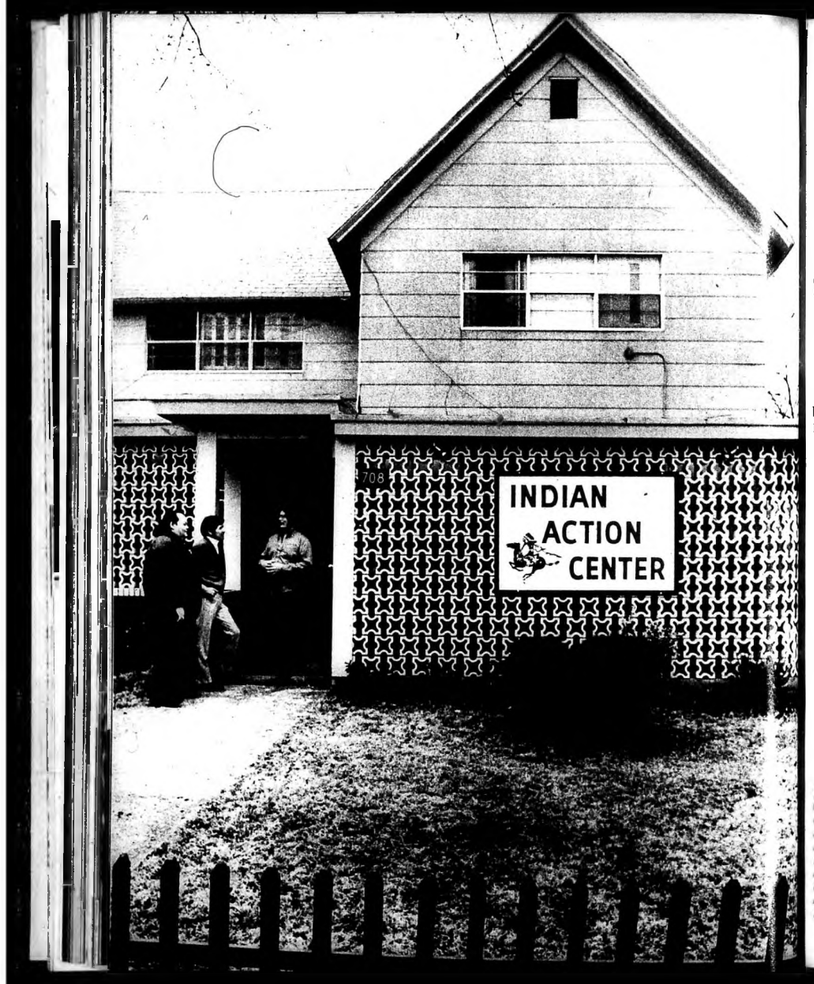
"Now," says Stevens, "they are planning on 200 or 300 in Sunday school. It's not a dream. It's a realistic goal.

"They're going after it."

Looking at the overall effects on the association, he mentions churches previously worrying about mere existence now are seeking to start missions. Talk about buying new properties comes spontaneously and with enthusiasm from the people.

"Being from the northwest corner of the United States, we have felt isolated," Stevens admits. "Suddenly, we feel we are a part; we can contribute something.

"We realize we have a place in the kingdom of God—and a job to do." •



Anderson (center) Billy Holt, house r, and assistant or Ralph Toahty onditions at Action Center. The rehabilitation ay house grew out of stry of Shawnee Baptist Mission.

The question is, can an Anglo trust an Indian to conduct Indian missions?

the answer is anderson

By **Everett Hullum**
Photography by **Don Rutledge**

You can know him on many different levels . . .

To Shawnee, Okla., Indian artisans, he's the person responsible for an annual arts and crafts show and a volunteer-manned shop to sell Indian works at fair prices for Indian artists "who were getting practically nothing for their works . . ."

To Indians with alcohol problems, he's the man who started a rehabilitation center.

To Indian school children, he's the adult who lobbied, as a member of the Shawnee Human Rights Commission, for "more understanding between school and Indian homes" and helped bring in an Indian school/home coordinator to bridge cultural gaps.

To members of Shawnee Baptist Church, he's the pastor who believed "Indian Christians could stand on their own two feet, become an independent church, and do the Lord's work without answering to anybody."

To activists with the American Indian Movement, he's a friend, "a tireless worker for the progress of his people," as a local newspaper described him.

To others he's a skilled artist, dynamic speaker, accomplished musician . . . and father of four.

But to himself, he's Jimmy Anderson, a Creek Indian from Oklahoma who now serves as a missionary to Creek Indians.

It's a historic circumstance that makes him "glad, but scared, too. When it came down to it, I thought, 'Boy, this many churches.' I'd been a pastor—now I'd be working with all these other pastors."

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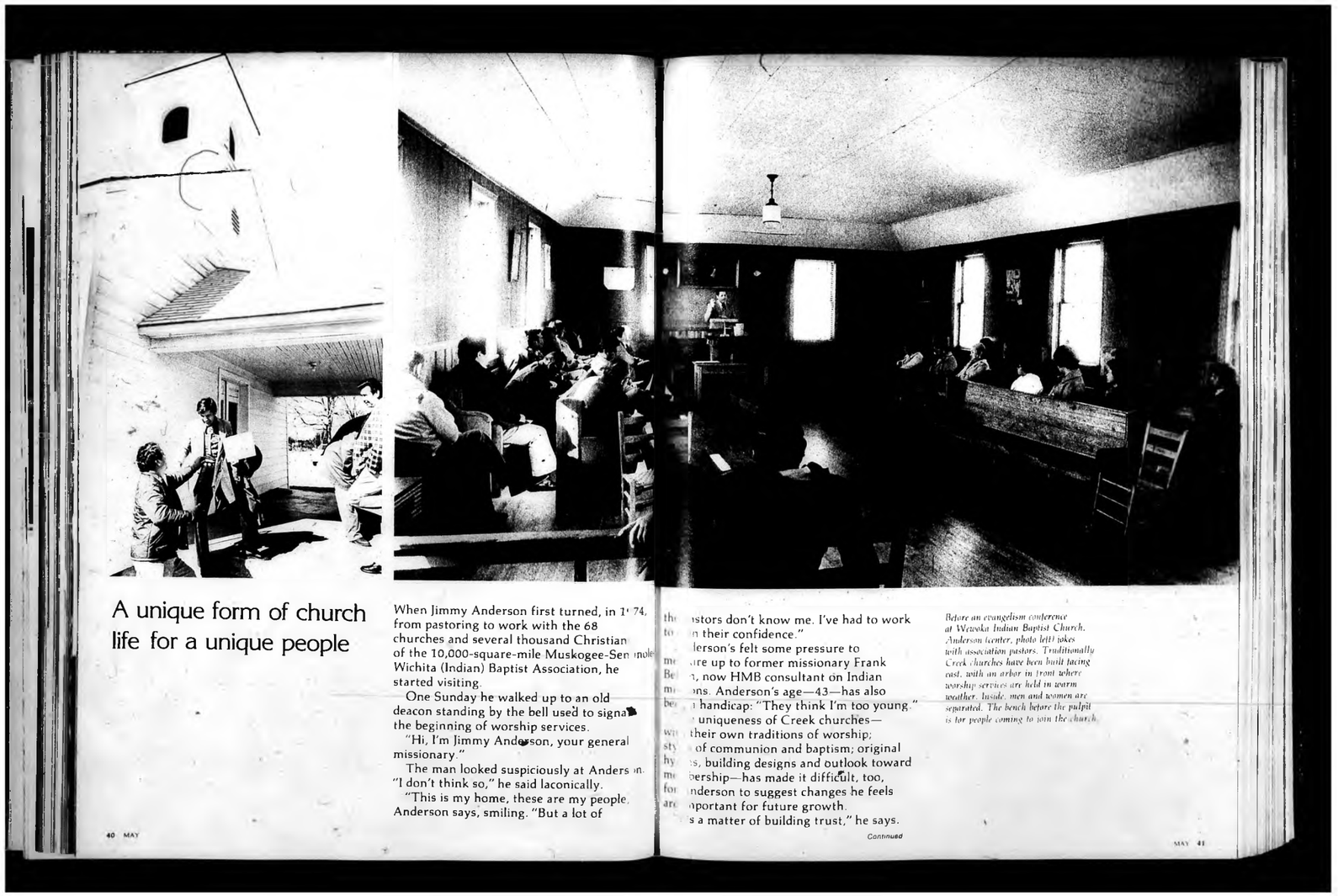


A unique form of church life for a unique people

When Jimmy Anderson first turned, in 1974, from pastoring to work with the 68 churches and several thousand Christians of the 10,000-square-mile Muskogee-Seminole Wichita (Indian) Baptist Association, he started visiting.

One Sunday he walked up to an old deacon standing by the bell used to signal the beginning of worship services.

"Hi, I'm Jimmy Anderson, your general missionary."

The man looked suspiciously at Anderson. "I don't think so," he said laconically.

"This is my home, these are my people," Anderson says, smiling. "But a lot of

...istors don't know me. I've had to work ... their confidence."

...derson's felt some pressure to ...re up to former missionary Frank ..., now HMB consultant on Indian ...ns. Anderson's age—43—has also ... handicap: "They think I'm too young."

... uniqueness of Creek churches—their own traditions of worship; ... of communion and baptism; original ...s, building designs and outlook toward ...bership—has made it difficult, too, ...nderson to suggest changes he feels ...portant for future growth.

...s a matter of building trust," he says.

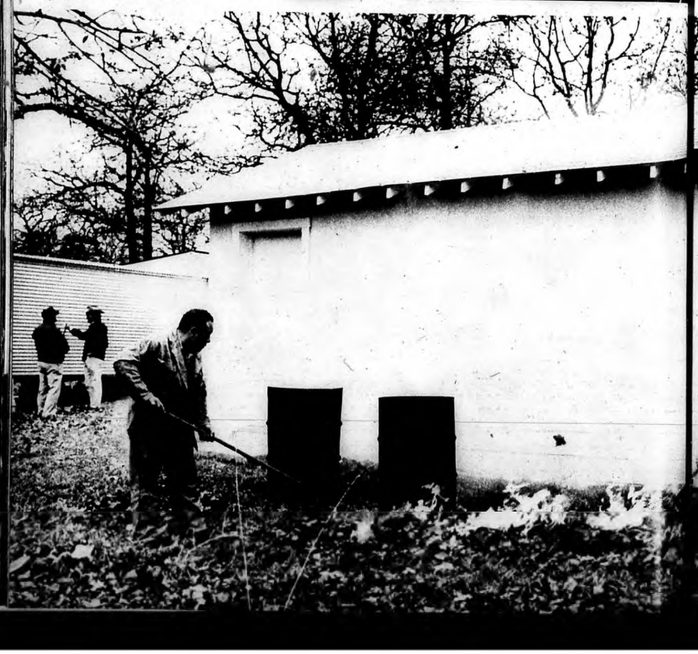
Continued

Before an evangelism conference at Wewoka Indian Baptist Church, Anderson (center, photo left) jokes with association pastors. Traditionally Creek churches have been built facing east, with an arbor in front where worship services are held in warm weather. Inside, men and women are separated. The bench before the pulpit is for people coming to join the church.


tradition, on "fourth
everyone stays for lunch at
houses" near the church

A servant of autonomous churches

Each week, lay persons from the association work on the assembly grounds. At first, Frank Belvin thought "the Lord had made a mistake on this place." But the people's enthusiasm proved him wrong.



"I'm ...e as a servant of autonomous churches," Anderson says. "...m not trying to control them. I don't do anything unti... ...ey ask; then I do everything I can. I'm here to help."

A...rson's aware, however, of problems facing the chu...es: most meet part-time; only three have full-time pas...s; city jobs are drawing young marrieds away from the r...ral lands where the churches are located.

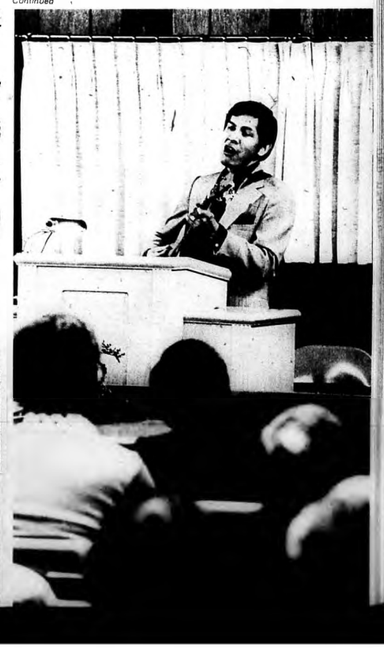
So...e remedies Anderson's already trying: more training for p...stors; better activities—such as an associational choi...—for youth; greater evangelistic outreach; increased Sunday education programs. He promotes these whenever he speaks—which is often.

But other things, he feels, must come from outside:

"In the next quarter century, the Indian population will grow from 800,000 to 2.5 million plus. It took Baptists 100 years to get 500 Indian congregations; we need 700 more by 2000 A.D.

"You talk about a missions challenge. . . ."

Continued



Before the class he teaches at Oklahoma Baptist University, Anderson talks to one of the Indian students (far left). Below, Anderson sings at an Anglo church; he often speaks to Anglo groups. "I could always paint black pictures, telling how the Indians' average life expectancy is 44 years, his average income, $1500. But I concentrate on the missions challenge we are facing."

A mixture of seriousness and humor

That thought, plus recognition of the problems—and potential—of Indian churches, had kept a harried—and sometimes frustrated Anderson running for the past 24 months.

But recently he's felt more comfortable about his work.

"I had doubts about what I could do," he recalls. "I felt awkward. I wanted to do so much, but I didn't like being away from my family on weekends and nights." Yet it was impossible for him to go less than "all out; sometimes I don't even eat."

Anderson talked it over with Belvin, his close friend and mentor. Belvin told Anderson to relax more.

Now he doesn't feel as guilty when he plays a round of golf or goes fishing with his sons.

"Take as much time for the family as I can, without hurting the program or my job as general missionary. And I don't take my work home with me."

It made his work more enjoyable; and helped restore his sense of humor, too.

"To me, humor means you're happy. It's a way of breaking down barriers. When I speak before my people, I make fun of myself. We laugh about it. They don't think, 'Anderson thinks he's somebody.'"

Though, as his work proves, Anderson is.

Continued

Far left: Anderson visits the Buckskin Boutique, an Indian crafts shop he helped start so Indians could get fair prices for their work, rather than the "$5 pawn shops were giving for items worth $50."

Center: Anderson and Frank Belvin.

Above: Anderson golfs with pastor Duane Pratt of First Indian Baptist. Afterwards, he stops at Shawnee Indian Clinic to pick up his wife, Cowena, who works in Medical Records.

ANDERSON *Continued*

Jimmy Anderson's life didn't begin quite so promisingly. His father died before he was a year old and his mother lived with relatives for several years.

From the time he was six, Anderson boarded at Bureau of Indian Affairs schools; he, like many Indian youngsters, seldom knew a permanent home after that, spending summers and holidays with relatives as often as with family.

Yet even in the "wilder days" of his youth—"when I was surrounding wagon trains and shooting flaming arrows in doors"—Anderson felt the persistent influence of his mother, a dedicated Christian, and the historical presence of traditional Creek church life.

The Creeks' exposure to Christianity dates to the early settlement of the U.S. As one of the five "civilized tribes"—the others are Cherokees, Seminoles, Chickasaws and Choctaws—the Creeks quickly assimilated Christianity, forming their own churches, calling their own pastors and even sending missionaries to other tribes.

In the 1830s, the government forcemigrated them from their homes east of the Mississippi to Oklahoma. Along the harsh winter march—the "Trail of Tears"—thousands died. But among the survivors were entire transplanted churches, pastors and members.

By the years of Anderson's youth, the Creeks had developed a style of Christian expression that ideally suited their own cultural identity. It continues today.

bell's ring—or cowhorn's bellow—signals the beginning of Sunday services. The first song, usually initiated by the pastor, begins as the bell's note dies.

Hymns are by Creek authors, sung without instruments in traditional Creek tunes.

Like the hymns, most services are in the native language; Anderson estimates only 10-12 of the association's churches use English.

Indian-woven offering baskets are placed on the "decision bench" before the pulpit; congregants come forward to give their money, with funds from each basket going to a different cause: pastor, missions, men or women's organizations.

After the sermon, those wishing to join or make a commitment to Christian discipleship come to the "decision bench." Any new Christian may elect to be baptized that day—whatever the season. Most Creek churches baptize in pond or stream, and Anderson has seen many winter baptism services begun by a deacon "breaking ice" to mark where the pastor should stand during the ceremony.

The person being baptized has his or her waist and eyes wrapped in cloth; the "blindfold" symbolizes death . . . d is to . . . away as the person emerges.

Communion, like baptis . . . has uniquely Creek pattern, conclu . . . ing wi . . . the congregation forming a c . . . le. Ea . . . member, in turn, walks the ci . . . le, sha . . . ing every other member's han . . .

This was Anderson's cultural heritage: a concept of Christianity as an integral part of Indian life, not a transplanted "white man's religion." Until his senior year at the University of Oklahoma, however, he had no plans to be more than a peripheral part of it.

But with only nine hours credit needed before graduation—and after more than nine years of struggle and sacrifice to get the education so desired by his family and friends from church—Anderson felt called to the ministry. He "fought the decision. Being pastor of an Indian church was impossible. I had a good career planned. But the Lord had plans for me. I finally discovered for myself what he wanted me to do with my life."

He quit OU. When a letter of inquiry to an SBC seminary went unanswered, he applied to an American Baptist school in Philadelphia. He was awarded a scholarship. (He later finished his degree program at OU.)

That first year away from his Indian environment, Anderson "fought loneliness." But he forced himself to overcome his shyness and "learn to get along in white man's society, depending on the Lord to supply my needs."

The next year he married Coweta, a childhood friend who was daughter of the pastor of Anderson's home church. The remaining time in Philadelphia improved markedly.

In 1961, Anderson returned to Oklahoma to work with Frank Belvin, missionary to the Creek association.

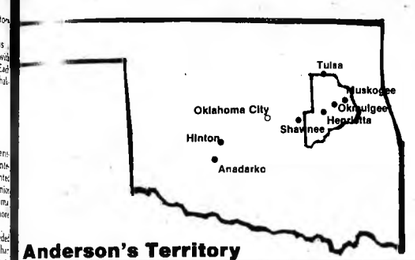
Two years later, he accepted the pastorate of a small, struggling Navaho congregation so remote was his northwest New Mexico church that Anderson became "preacher, counselor, janitor, driver—and even mortician."

"We didn't have a funeral home," he explains, "and it was so hot in the desert we'd have to bury the body the next day. They didn't want to touch the body so I dug the grave—so I did both."

Anderson moved on to pastor First Indian church of Gallup, where he stayed until 1970, when he moved to Shawnee.

But his New Mexico tenure had broadened his outlook. He recalls, when he first arrived, experiencing subtle prejudice: "Western tribes sometimes sneer at Oklahoma Indians."

On one occasion, a Navaho man looked him over carefully, then asked: "What tribe are you?"



Anderson's Territory

"Creek."

"I always wondered what a dry creek looked like," the man responded.

But Anderson's understanding of Indian thought patterns gave him a distinct advantage, and, even though he didn't speak Navaho, he managed to communicate:

"Once I was trying to explain the plan of salvation to a medicine man. I was reading from the Navaho Bible, not knowing what I was saying, but reading verses like John 3:16 that I knew what they were supposed to say.

"I made a lot of mistakes, but seeing someone saved in such circumstances, you're assured God's with you."

In Shawnee, Anderson had the freedom, opportunity and experience necessary to blend church and community involvements. He became a spokesman for the Indian community, advocating acceptance of Indian cultural patterns by Anglos and explaining special Indian needs and problems to the community at large.

His friends ranged from policemen and judges to members of the militant American Indian Movement.

"I didn't see the church limited by four walls," Anderson says, "because the world isn't going to come to the church. The church has to be out in the community showing people it's concerned."

Then in 1974, the HMB offered Anderson the job Frank Belvin was vacating to become national consultant in Indian affairs.

Leaving the Shawnee pastorate was difficult, for the mission was just maturing into a body strong enough to constitute into a church.

But Anderson could not bypass such an opportunity. The association's problems were numerous, but its promise, in the lives of committed lay people and pastors who were part of a long Christian tradition, was clear, too.

And even more important, Anderson understood both the people and the tradition.

He became the general missionary in May, 1974.

Jimmy Anderson had come home at last.

Anderson's success answers, as well as anything can, the question first asked by HOME MISSIONS in 1968: "Can a missionary trust an Indian?"

At the time, the HMB was just developing a "radical"—for Baptists—new language missions approach, which emphasized the importance of evolving indigenous leaders and allowing them the freedom to work within their own cultural milieu. It demanded missionaries reassess their own roles, become "equippers" rather than "doers." And it relied on trust—an awareness that new Christians could form their own systems of Christian expression, as the Creeks had done, and that efforts to translate Anglo practices into other languages were not likely to succeed.

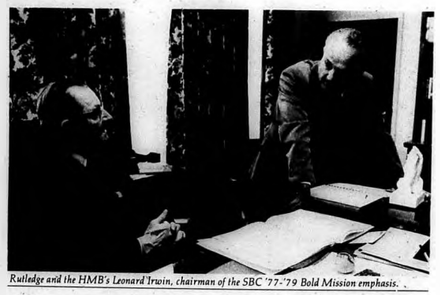
The "indigenous missions" program has, in the years of its existence at the HMB, been credited with putting Southern Baptists "10-15 years ahead of other denominations in mission efforts." And blamed with "exploiting ethnics and denying them the rights equal to Anglos."

It has been called a "dangerous" philosophy that "perpetuates segregation." And "the best thing to ever happen to the HMB."

Which is it?

Next month HM will discuss the SBC's surging growth in language congregations and its ethnic missions approach—and the role a program "born of frustration, pain and failure" has had in making the SBC "the most multi-cultured denomination in the U.S." ●

A fresh and exciting opportunity . . .



Rutledge and the HMB's Leonard Irwin, chairman of the SBC '77-'79 Bold Mission emphasis.

Bold Mission Thrust . . .

This exciting challenge will be before us for the remainder of the 1970s! A fresh advance in evangelization and starting new congregations—high priority concerns with Southern Baptists since our beginning!

At our Bicentennial year, with human needs abounding all across our nation, as many as 130 million persons in our land do not know Christ as personal Savior and Lord. Six hundred counties in the nation have no Southern Baptist witness or ministry; doubtless we should be serving in many of these.

We need to intensify our efforts in tens of key cities across the land—in north and south, east and west, through community ministries and evangelization, through Bible study groups and new churches.

Hundreds of churches located in transitional communities need the help of the associations, state conventions and/or the Home Mission Board. Varied lifestyle and culture groups in practically all our major cities, and elsewhere, will respond to a warm, compassionate Christian witness.

I am excited about the possibility of these years just ahead. HMB staff planning has included all programs in a way we have not seen before. Planning with state convention evangelism and missions leaders began early, so that resultant plans are based on input from state as well as national leaders. Cooperation of related SBC agencies, such as the Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission, is extremely encouraging.

Our hope and goal is that every one of our 1,190 associations and all of our nearly 35,000 will get involved meaningfully in this fresh thrust.

This coming summer home missions conferences at Glorieta and Ridgecrest will focus on the Bold Mission Thrust. Workshops and general sessions alike strongly emphasize this. Associational officers—especially directors of missions, chairmen of missions committees and chairmen of evangelism—are being urged to attend one of these conferences.

Practically all the state conventions are busily developing their own plans. Several conventions have already set challenging goals, especially in starting new congregations.

The HMB has been developing its plans since 1974. In the fall of that year Board members adopted a two-fold objective that has been the "north star" of all our planning:

1. Let every person in our land have an opportunity to hear and accept the gospel of Jesus Christ!
2. Let every person in our land have an opportunity to share in the witness and ministry of a New Testament fellowship of believers!

Now we are in the year of final preparation. Next year special emphasis will be given to resources for Bold Mission—human resources and financial resources.

Lay persons, adults and youth, we are confident, will supply most of the human resources. They will be needed to locate and identify places for beginning Bible study groups, chapels or missions. They will be needed for survey work, for door-to-door visitation, to conduct Bible classes and worship services.

An increased force of student summer missionaries, Sojourners and a vastly increased number of adult Christian Service Corps workers will be needed urgently. To supply needed preachers and pastors, attention will be given to discovering, training, and developing secularly employed pastors.

Additional financial resources, in much larger dimensions than ever before, will be needed to provide salary supplement for pastors of beginning congregations of both Anglo and Ethnic peoples. Additional funds will be needed to staff ministries to disadvantaged persons and to youth and families at resort centers. The Board looks to increase support through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering to supply funds for additional missionary personnel.

State by state and association by association, action plans will be developed and implemented. These will include cultivative activities aimed at preparing people for evangelistic and new congregational emphases, as well as direct efforts at evangelizing and "congregationalizing."

Teams of students from seminaries, and other teams of summer or semester missionaries, will almost certainly be used in large numbers to help in cultivating ministries. They will do such things as lead Vacation Bible Schools, hold evangelistic services, present drama and music in shopping centers and on special occasions.

Associations may engage in new-work campaigns, devoting perhaps 18 months to beginning and strengthening new congregations, with individual churches involved as sponsors. An association may launch a Bible distribution effort,' placing a copy of the New Testament in the hands of every person in the area. These are just some ways churches and associations can get involved, consistent with the plans of their respective states, in an outreach to the lost and unchurched.

Bold Mission Thrust is part of the nation's response to the denomination's theme for 1977-79: "Sharing Christ in Bold Mission in a Secular Society." There will be plans for a Bold Mission advance around the world as well.

The challenge of these years just ahead furnishes a fresh and exciting opportunity to move forward in obedience to our Lord's command: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Matt. 28:19a; Acts 1:8—New American Standard New Testament)

For Spring Readin

BASEBALL'S SERMON ON THE MOUND
Frank D. Minton
Foreword by Walter Alston
Nine innings of wit, anecdotes about baseball greats, and lessons for life make this an unusual inspirational book.
$3.25

LETTERS FROM HOME
Robert J. Hastings
A collection of the author's favorite newspaper features which illuminate eternal truths through everyday experiences.
paper, $2.75, boxed

THE CHURCH IS PEOPLE
Bob W. Brown
Touching, distinctive, warm—that's the character of these portraits of church members.
paper, $1.95

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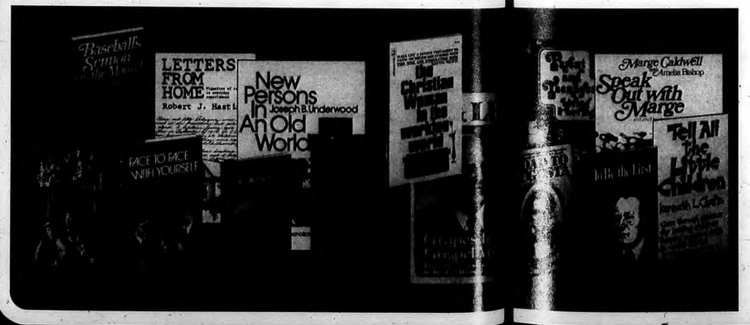

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READERS' REACTIONS

"...what the rest of the team is doing."

HM is one of the best publications I read. I have been reading HM for 22 years and I have seen a great deal of positive change in the publication. Having been an Army chaplain for 2½ years, it has been invaluable to me. It is so easy to get wrapped up in our own individual work for God, that we do not widen focus to see what the rest of the team is doing.

John McMichael
Fort Hood, Tex.

•As a foreign missionary, I enjoy reading HM to keep up on trends in the States. As a foreign missionary coming back on furlough this year, I read it with even more interest.

I was impressed with the Jan. issue, especially "Conversations on the Future."

Leroy Seat
Fukuoka City, Japan

• ...commending you on the Nov.-Dec. issue (World Hunger) is a "must." I don't believe I ever read a magazine that made such an impression on me. It at least caused me to drum up a subscription list. Every Baptist needs to read it. If every Baptist read HM regularly, the Kingdom would flourish.

Elwood Orr
Anderson, S.C.

• ...you are assuming a whole lot to note that the Jan. issue can be used as helps for the 1976 mission study. This is very disappointing—the churches are not getting this magazine, and we need something in a more concentrated form, along with some pictures that can be used. Very few people are going to labor through all that for doing mission study. I have also been disappointed in the teacher's helps.

Elizabeth Campbell
Lenoir, N.C.

Further it needs to be asked, "Who would benefit from the reduction of American productivity?" Surely not the foreign suppliers whose national economies depend so greatly on American markets. If just a fraction of the much abused Protestant work ethic could be transferred to other peoples of the world, more would be done to improve the poor nations' lot in life than by any artificial transfer of dollars. If you analyze poorer nations' labor situations you find a large share of the problem. Time lost to excessive secular and religious holidays, strikes, slowdowns, short working days, early retirements and featherbedding is at the very heart of the problem. This problem will not be cured by placing the guilt for the poor nations' plight on the back of those nations whose people do choose to work.

I must also challenge your subtle efforts to embarrass the Foreign Mission Board for lack of aggressiveness in ministering to suffering humanity. For more than a generation the Foreign Mission Board has served as a major channel to dispense Southern Baptist relief dollars overseas. ...Missionaries overseas have and will continue to minister to the limit of the resources made available to us. We join with all other Southern Baptists in our commitment to respond to the need of this world as we would respond unto our Lord himself.

Don Kamerdiener
Buenos Aires, Argentina

EDITOR'S NOTE: We did not intend to imply the U.S. should produce less; we hoped to imply the U.S. should consume less and waste less.

We believe it impossible to blame all the world's poverty on corruption and poor economics. Few nations are blessed with resources equal to our own. To give India representative democracy would not make India's soil fertile enough to feed her millions; nor would it make her people more likely to eat beef or reduce their child-bearing. The Sahel deserts of Africa would hardly be less needy with our system of government.

We do highly approve of energy consumed in production of food. Our references to energy waste referred more to individual and corporate actions such as airplanes' dumping tons of gas and persons continuing to drive big, inefficient cars when smaller, better gas mileage vehicles are available.

Finally, we did not intend to embarrass the FMB. The FMB should be credited for reacting so quickly and so significantly to a truly "grass-roots movement" of Southern Baptists.

We greatly appreciate what the FMB does in hunger and disaster relief, and recommend all Baptists read the February issue of The Commission, *which reports this work.*

• Until I came to page 40 ("Modest Proposals: What You Can Do") I thought you were doing a good job... You busy people cannot keep up with all the organizations of today. It is a surprise and hurt that you would name UNICEF as one through which food for the hungry can be channeled. For years I have heard that they send money to communist nations without restrictions on its use, that it is helping the red nations for their propaganda. I think you did it through non-understanding of UNICEF, not because your heart favors UNICEF.

Outstanding Presbyterians as well as Baptists warn against contributions to UNICEF.

I am not a forks of the creek Baptist "agin" something not Baptist, but an informed in all our Baptist activities, having a degree from Baylor and Southwestern Seminary.

...Will you please retract recommendation of UNICEF?

Jewel Westerman
Floresville, Tex.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A UNICEF spokesperson in Atlanta disputes Ms. Westerman's information. Says Carrie Nelle Thompson of the Southeast Regional Office: 'UNICEF exists with the sole purpose of helping children in the developing nations, regardless of the political ideology of their parents or governments. A hungry, sick child is the victim of social, economic and environmental (both physical and mental)) conditions over which he or she has no control. As humane individuals, we must do whatever is within our power to give such a child a chance for a reasonable existence.

"As to the charge that money is given to communist nations without restriction on its use, I would like to point out: (1) No money is given to any government; all funds are converted into goods and services. (2) All UNICEF programs and goods are very closely supervised and, in such rare occasions as there has been misuse, such programs have been terminated and products removed. (3) A U.S. State Department bulletin, dated March, 1975, begins: 'From time to time, the United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the object of attack. Allegations, innuendos and half-truths are circulated to the effect that UNICEF is dominated by communist elements and channels most of its funds into communist nations. Such statements have no basis in fact.' Interestingly, communist governments and citizens have contributed far more to UNICEF than has been used by UNICEF in nations under communist regimes."

Ms. Thompson adds that as one raised on a Baptist home in Georgia, a former school teacher and a mother of three children, she feels 'extremely deep compassion for the suffering of innocent beings. From my experience, I know that UNICEF makes life more comfortable—indeed, makes life a reality—for millions of children.' UNICEF reports that less than 20 percent of its income goes into administration and overhead; about 80 percent goes directly into goods and services. Examples include: through UNICEF, 5¢ will cure a child of trachoma, an eye disease; 25¢ will provide 175 vitamin tablets; 50¢ will immunize seven children against malaria for one year; $1.00 will immunize 80 against TB.

HMI does not recommend that any individual give hunger relief funds to any organization about which he or she has doubts. The Baptist Foreign Mission Board remains a prime outlet, we believe, for Baptist hunger relief efforts.

We enjoy HM very much; it is a good inspiration for us to see how God is working through others in our land. Thank you for such good publication.

Elias S. Valerio
Taylor, Texas

• Even for one who has lived and traveled in the Third World for 13 years, the photographs and statistics in Nov-Dec. HM were numbing. This letter in no way challenges the reality or the tragedy of the suffering... It does challenge the analysis of the causes and the remedies offered...

You imply that somehow the poverty of the Third World is due to the wealth of the industrialized nations, and that if these latter were poorer, the former would be richer. This is not a new argument. We read it in the Marxist press every day. Somehow we are to believe that if some nations produce less, others will automatically have more. If your intent is to raise money through creating guilt feelings, it will probably succeed, and the money will doubtless relieve a portion of the world's misery.

There are, however, other consequences. One is the U.S. citizens will lose confidence in the economic system that makes world relief possible. Even worse it encourages demagogues to continue foisting on their people systems of economics and politics that are doomed to failure because of their inefficiency and lack of understanding of human nature.

Make no mistake: the world is not poor because of American productivity. It is poor because of corrupt governments and bankrupt economic systems. If Russia and the nations of the world had our system, they would not need our wheat!

It is obvious that American consumption can and should be reduced, but your discussion carefully omits urgent data. The enormous consumption of energy is significantly influenced by the agricultural methods that make possible the huge surplus available for overseas needs. I for one cannot feel guilty that that energy is being consumed.

No future for females?

• ...where are the women? In the discussions three mentions are made about women: a woman might become president of the HMB; a woman who is a literacy specialist; a woman who is director of HMB business service.

(But) in the whole January issue are 47 pictures of men, 2 of women and 5 of women in shadows.

This issue dealing with the future has ignored the talents of women in home missions. Is this an area for men only? Will the church of the future be a church for men only? Will the strong and dynamic women leave the church and only the passive servant women remain?

Do the pictures in HM have to be the typical stereotyped ones?... Does your magazine have a responsibility to help eliminate stereotypes of women in areas of church and mission work? Do you have a responsibility to promote the equality of persons?

Loretta Denson
Heidelberg, Germany

The Evangelist

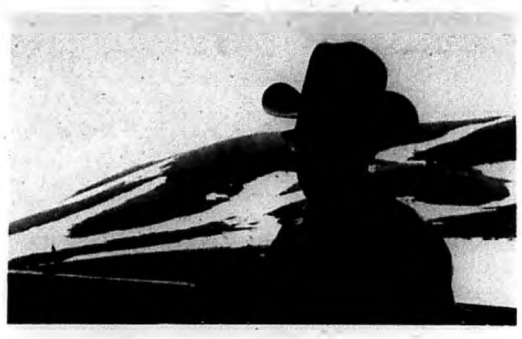
• ...I note some very critical comments concerning some of our leading Southern Baptist God-called evangelists in Sept. ('75) HM.

I am wondering how much the HMB knows about these men of God that they criticize in the magazine we finance. Brethren, I assure you that the things said in this article are certainly not the sentiments of all the Southern Baptists pastors and the multitudes of their congregations.

Now brother, you owe these men of God a public written apology...

I trust that something will be done about this matter to continue the spirit that so many churches have in missions and evangelism. I personally will not support an attack on what I believe to be a biblical calling.

Larry Stallings
Mangum, Okla.



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