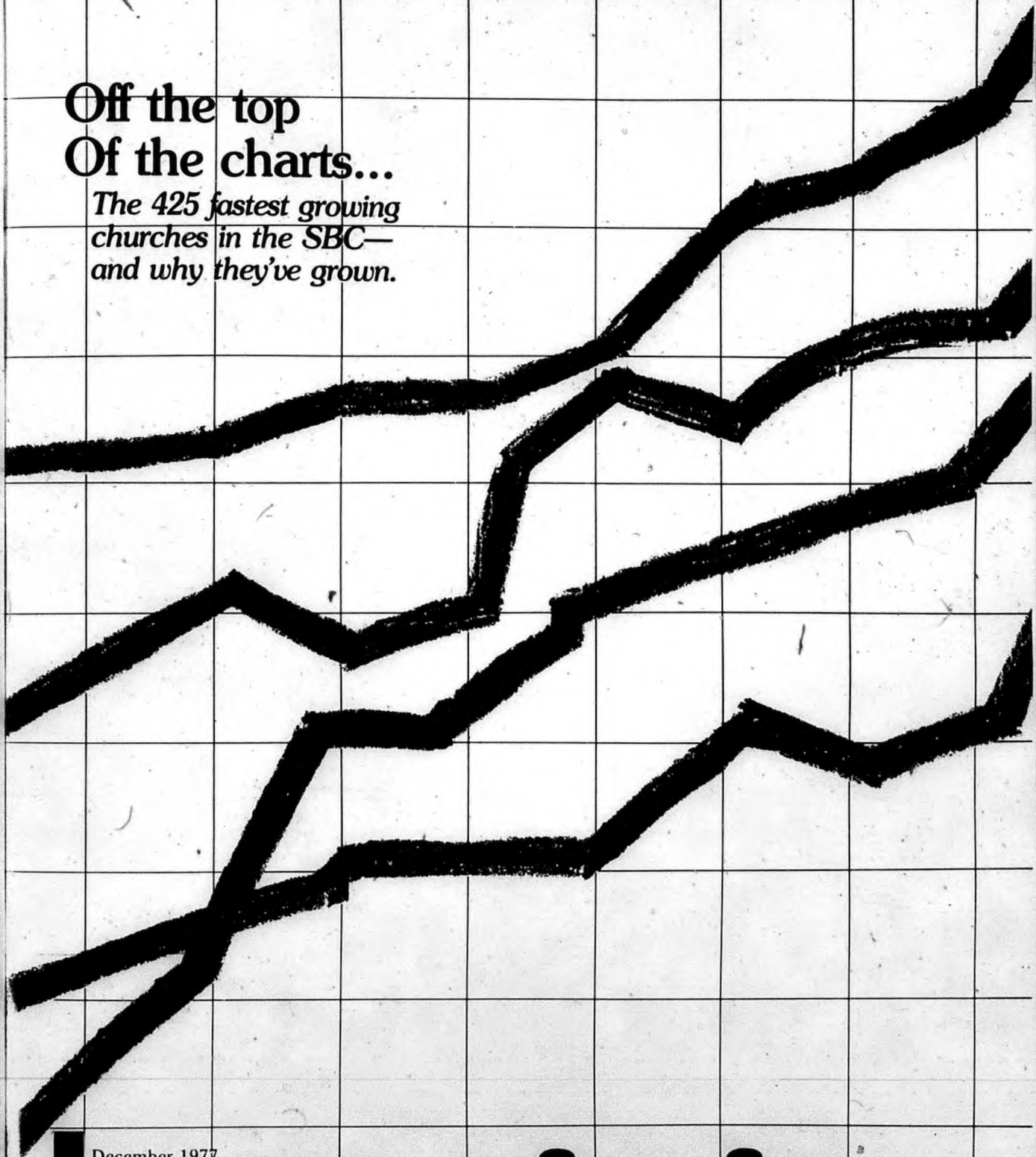


**Off the top
Of the charts...**

*The 425 fastest growing
churches in the SBC—
and why they've grown.*



December 1977

home missions

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EDITORIAL STAFF

Walker L. Knight, *editor*
Everett Hullum Jr., *associate editor*
Celeste Loucks, *assistant editor*
Karen Mitchell, *design editor*

CONTRIBUTORS

Editorial Department
Phyllis Faulkenbury
Alice Fellon
Elaine Furlow
Dan Martin
Judy Touchton

Audiovisuals Department
Knolan Benfield
Paul Obregon
Don Rutledge

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4 THE CHURCH-GROWTH QUESTIONS

Which are the fastest growing Southern Baptist churches? And who says? Beginning with those questions, HOME MISSIONS fashioned its own computer study, using Uniform Church Letter data, to discover which SBC churches had the most rapid numerical growth over a recent five-year span. The survey that followed up, including personal interviews with all Top 15 churches' pastors and laypersons, reveals the "bottom line" of church growth predictions, promises and expectations. By DAN MARTIN



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For the Top 15 fast-growing churches, closer inspection reveals the why and wherefores, with a couple of yes-but's thrown in by way of explanation... By The HM Staff



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The first question was how to begin how to determine how to determine how to begin. Or something. And if that wasn't confusing enough, everyone seemed to have all the answers, but no one was sure of the right questions.

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Quarterly listing of chaplains' birthdays

IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT YOU SHOULD HEAR WHAT WE'RE USUALLY CALLED. . . As best we remember, this issue's genesis traces to that day, some two years ago, when the 100th—give or take a couple—book on "How to Grow a Church Fast Like Crazy" passed across our desk.

As we scanned the principles of church growth, we wondered just how all these experts knew so much about a subject that had had little study based on hard data. Nevertheless, their answers seemed good common sense. And we did not question them.

We questioned the questions.

Since we couldn't find (in our cursory look) a single expert who had named THE fastest growing churches, based on actual multi-church comparisons, and had used them to explain growth, we wondered why.

"Why not?" said Max Burns, when we asked if it was possible Max runs the Home Mission Board's computers. A Georgia Tech graduate, Max believes in computers: he understands their language and potential. Fortunately for us, Max likes a challenge—and hates to say no.

"Max," we said, "everybody has rules for church growth: Follow A, B, C and Q and your church will grow. We'd like to examine the subject the other way 'round. Here are the fastest growing churches: what rules are they following?"

"Is there any way to determine the fastest growing churches?"

"You'll have to define what you mean by growth," Max said.

"If we can boil growth down to numbers," we continued, "is there any way to pull that off the computers?"

"Sure," Max said.

The key, we discovered, was the Uniform Church Letter, the report made by about 95 percent of the churches in the Southern Baptist Convention. A wealth of information, the UCL contains a statistical profile of every SBC church.

Ordinarily it is used to tabulate Convention's progress year by year: number of baptisms, number of members, amounts given to Cooperative Program, etc.

Had anyone ever attempted to take its raw data and convert it to a primer on church growth? Had anyone, in effect, begun the study of fast growing churches by determining THE fast growing churches and asking how and why?

We were sure they had. But we'd not seen the results. So, unflinchingly, we leapt into the breach.

Computer programs were written, statistics analyzed. More than a dozen churches were visited. And writer Dan Martin, swamped with reams of material and millions of bits of data, traveled more than 6,000 miles for interviews.

At Fuller Theological Seminary, perhaps the heart of the "church growth movement," Dan was told the project was "equal to a doctoral dissertation."

At least, we've concluded, if our study has done nothing else, our computers have proved Max right and given an over-worked, underpaid reporter the in-office title of "Dr. Dan."

Could've been worse. Usually we don't even get in office titles.



THE CHURCH-GROWTH QUESTIONS

A look at the how and why—
and the who—of church growth...
What happens when experts' theories are applied
to fast growing churches? What are the keys
to rapid growth? Is it possible to duplicate
others' successes? And what, after all, is success?
By DAN MARTIN

Church growth may be the hottest topic in Christendom today. In the past few years, church growth institutes, seminars, newsletters, bulletins and book clubs have sprung up. Various leaders have published lists of principles of church growth; reasons they feel churches grow or don't grow.

Yet basic questions remain:

Why do some churches explode with fantastic growth while others fizzle to stagnation?

Why are some churches hard pressed to find places for the crowds of people while others struggle to keep the machinery running?

A mobilized laity is one vital sign of growth. But the key seems to be pastor's attitude and concern. If he intently focuses his efforts on growth, it often occurs.

Why do some churches reach vast numbers of persons—baptizing every Sunday in multiple numbers—while others seldom fill the baptistry and almost never see people walking the aisles?

HOME MISSIONS set out to find answers to these questions, by determining—through available statistics—the Southern Baptist churches which were fastest growing, then surveying that select group to discover common characteristics.

Using Uniform Church Letter reports for the period 1972-1976, HOME MISSIONS compared the 34,000-plus churches of the Southern Baptist Convention in membership, baptisms, Sunday School enrollment and other additions. (For more on the study, see p.36.)

Some 425 churches were identified as the fastest

Continued

Principles of Church Growth?

Various experts have their own ideas—and lists of principles—of why churches grow or don't grow. All admit, however, that such lists are simplifications—over-simplifications, really—of a complex and individual topic. Donald McGavran, dean emeritus of the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary, and the man who first formalized the concept of church growth, refers to such lists as "reductions...miniatures of the total story. These lists are a narrow focus. You're not getting the whole picture, but they do present a good part of it...."

For comparison, HM presents on following pages several such lists.

growing. These churches were asked to fill out questionnaires about themselves, their community and ministry; 277—about 65 percent—responded. In addition, pastors of each Top 15 church were interviewed (see following reports). Their answers profile the fast growing church.

CHURCH QUICK GLANCE: The typical fast-growing Southern Baptist church is predominantly white, middle-class, family oriented, and located in a white, fast-growing suburban area.

Composed primarily of people 30 to 50 years of age, the church has more than 300 members, who generally are blue-collar, clerical or mid-management level employees. Incomes range from \$10,000-\$20,000 annually; education averages high school or better.

While it does not have a recreation facility, the church does plan a building program of some type within the next three years.

PASTOR PROFILE: Typical pastor of a fast-growing church is hard-working, experienced—having held several pastorates during his 10 years or more in the ministry—and possessor of exceptional leadership skills.

He generally has some tertiary education, although formal training ranges from high school to doctoral level degrees. He is a dynamic preacher who believes personal visitation is the most effective evangelistic tool.

Pastor and people are enthusiastic about their church, its programs and opportunities.

ON THE OTHER HAND: Despite the record of these congregations, however, the majority of SBC churches are not growing. "I expect two thirds to three quarters of them are maintenance oriented," says M. Wendell Belew, director of the Missions Ministries Division of the Home Mission Board. "Their direction is to maintain a program or a methodology that has been historic. Methods fruitful many years ago that are not fruitful now. We have a vast number of churches in limbo," Belew feels.

Jack Redford, Church Extension Department director, increases the estimate of stagnant churches: "We are baptizing more people every year than any other denomination. That sounds fantastic, but we've got more members than anybody else. We ought to baptize more."

"If you count how many Southern Baptists' kids are coming to the age of accountability, I don't think we're reaching very many people outside Southern Baptist culture," concludes Redford, whose department oversees more than 600 mission pastors.

Phillip Jones, research consultant for the HMB, says Southern Baptists are "less efficient" in growing than they were 15 years ago.

"The baptism rate per 100 members is a sort of efficiency index that allows a comparison of the effectiveness of evangelism," Jones explains. In

1900, there were five baptisms for every 100 members. By 1976, the baptism rate per 100 had dropped to 3.01, an indication, Jones says, "the Convention has been less efficient in baptizing persons, or its evangelism has been less effective."

Part of the inefficiency may come from the 12.5 percent of SBC churches who baptized no one in 1976. According to the 1976 Uniform Church Letter data, 4,390 churches of the Convention total 35,073 had no baptisms. By contrast, the Top 15 churches in HM's study accounted for 2,924 baptisms, a thriving rate of 11.01 per 100 members. In fact, baptisms for the median (typical) fast-growth church was 67; for all SBC churches, 61.

NEVERTHELESS & FURTHERMORE: The Southern Baptist Convention, despite slowdowns, is growing. Church growth expert C. Peter Wagner notes that Southern Baptists "have never had a setback" in growth, adding that while the 384,496 baptisms in 1976 was a decline, "Southern Baptists haven't been like United Methodists, who recently said, 'Last year we lost only 100,000 members.'"

Obviously pastor and laypersons in the fast-growing churches equate "growth" with evangelism and they strongly believe in evangelism. In fact, most Top 15 pastors list "winning the lost" as the priority goal of their churches.

Pastor Harvey Kneisel of Oak Ridge Baptist Church in Spring, Tex., says, "Our priority aim is reaching the entire community for Christ. There is no question about that."

And as they agree on task, so pastor and layperson feel the best way to accomplish it is personal, one-on-one evangelistic witnessing.

They are also in accord over methods. The growing churches list visitation evangelism, public evangelism (in worship services), Sunday School classes and revivals as most effective.

Many have bus ministries, radio and television broadcasts, day care, recreation and other techniques for outreach and inreach.

Some leaders, however, wonder if growth is the issue. Says John Havlik, director of evangelism development for the HMB:

"In my estimation, the primary objective of the church is to be loyal to Jesus Christ. That may mean that it will die, not grow. It may mean it will go to the concentration camp, be persecuted, be literally hounded to death."

"I don't think our (the church's) fundamental reason for being is to grow. I think our basic, fundamental reason for being in the world is to glorify God and to be loyal to Jesus Christ."

Theoreticians from Fuller seminary—Wagner and Donald McGavran—believe in most cases, if a church is dormant, it has lost viability.

"Some churches are not growing and their reasons are valid," explains Wagner. "They are pleasing to God. Yet, many more churches are not

In fast-growth churches, social ministries often receive low priority. Less than five percent in HM's survey were emphasizing ministries over numerical growth.

Continued



Flake's Formula

By ARTHUR FLAKE

1. Know your possibilities.
2. Enlarge the organization.
3. Provide the space.
4. Enlist and train workers.
5. Go after the people.

—from *Working in the Sunday School* (Convention Press)

growing and their reasons are not valid and they are not pleasing to God."

McGavran and Wagner have formally defined church growth as "that science which investigates the nature, function and health of the Christian church as it relates specifically to effective implementation of God's commission to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19). Church growth is simultaneously a theological conviction and an applied science, striving to combine the eternal principles of God's word with the best insights of contemporary social and behavioral sciences...."

Yet Missions Professor Francis Dubose of Gold-

en Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, warns against "preoccupation with methodology."

"Many people serving in places where the church is growing would be surprised if somebody sat down and outlined principles of church growth to them. They are not growing because somebody came in with a strategy of growth. Many don't have a method, a strategy. They work through people, and growth comes as a by-product of that. "Growth comes out of the life of the community. Ultimately, this happens everywhere."

THE ELBOW-GREASE RULE: While academicians debate technical definitions, pastors in HM's

Is Growth Always Possible?

Despite all the talk about church growth, most church experts agree that some churches just will not grow, no matter what.

Yet many churches can grow, says C.B. Hogue, director of the HMB's Evangelism Section.

"Non-growth is a cop-out for a lot of pastors because it is easier to talk about the intangibles and never do anything about the tangibles. Reaching people is hard work, and the reason we don't have more growth is that leaders are not always ready to expend their energies in growth activities," Hogue believes.

But, Hogue adds, that is not the case for every church. "I know some pastors really expending their energies, but going nowhere. Non-growth can be the fault of the pastor, or the people. Often, people are not interested in opening up their closed fellowship. They don't want their church to grow."

John Havlik, director of evangelism development, says some churches don't grow because of an "identity crisis...it doesn't know who it is and why it is here. The church must discover that by hearing Jesus."

"He made four great statements about missions. He said he came to seek and to save that which was lost, to fulfill the law, not to bring peace but the sword, to minister and to die.

"That says the church is to help lost people, to live out a new kind of morality, to demand a loyalty to Christ that takes precedence over all other loyalties, and to minister."

"The gospel is not a cheap gospel. It can be pretty rough. It requires dying to yourself, because it costs to minister. It means loving people and getting involved with them. It means you'll get hurt, because love is not only ecstasy, it's agony."

The church that is not willing to pay that price, Havlik concludes, will not be the church Jesus Christ wants.

AVERAGE AVERAGES: In addition, intangible and personal reasons limit growth.

Cal Guy, professor of missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, estimates 95 percent of the nation's pastors will be "average pastors of average churches."

In the experience of Robert Kilgore, only one percent of all pastors is exceptional enough to call dramatic response from the community in membership, baptisms, finances and attendance.

That does not mean that the majority will not be effective in their situation, says Kilgore, who, as HMB Church Loans Division director, deals with 1,500 churches a year. But it

does mean that most pastors will not achieve exceptional success.

Success, he says, is limited by theological, economic, cultural and geographic barriers, "which you do not violate on a long-term basis."

"Many times—even among spiritual men—these barriers cannot be overcome. We've got to develop a strategy and a structure to help these smaller churches be happy and productive," Kilgore says.

That is a difficult because "we find most pastors' desire for status and big churches overshadows their ability to see the reality of the situation," he says, citing a pastor in a town of 1,000 who wanted to build a building capable of handling 1,000.

Kilgore, who believes it is possible to accurately estimate response, adds, "We estimated he could reasonably expect to reach five percent of the population, enroll half that. We think he'll run in the neighborhood of 35 to 60 people. If we lend him money for a building seating 350, it will bankrupt the church."

Kilgore and other church growth leaders feel Southern Baptists may be "creating a monster" by holding up gigantic churches as examples.

"We Southern Baptists are very model oriented," says Havlik

survey provide simpler answers to church growth.

"Hard work," says Gary Folds, pastor of Morningstar Baptist Church of Valdosta, Ga., the fastest growing church in the SBC.

"Work!!! Pray!!! Love!!!," writes Dwight St. Andre, pastor of Westside Baptist Church of Natchitoches, La.

Pastor Harold O'Chester of Allendale church in Austin, Tex., says, "Prayer, expansion, leadership, discipleship, evangelism, strong visitation."

Others are even more specific. Terry Taylor, pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church of Warner Robins, Ga., explains, "The working of the Holy Spirit. A revolution in the thinking and vision of the

church leaders. The bus ministry. Massive mailouts. A good music program. An active youth program. An air of expectancy."

"People need a vision," echoes Jerry Davis, pastor of First Baptist Church of Gahanna, Ohio. "They have had problems and live in a world in a mess. They want a positive worship experience and need a renewed vision of what God can do. They hunger for sweet loving fellowship. They find it at FBC, Gahanna."

Concepts of church growth do not occupy the lives of most pastors in the survey.

Stan Jones of Glenview Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Tex., says "We've had such automatic

Continued

Perhaps 95 percent of the nation's pastors will be "average pastors of average churches"—and maybe that's not as bad as it sounds...

Francis Dubose, professor of missions at Golden Gate seminary, adds, "It worries me that we have these 'glamor-types' at our seminars. It is not so much what they say, but the men themselves. Most Southern Baptist pastors are not able to do what they've done."

"Our men will do good and effective work as pastors of churches which will always be the majority. But we are holding up these glamor-types."

NO SECOND-CLASS: Peter Wagner, associate professor of church growth at Fuller seminary, notes, "We can learn many things from pastors of growing churches, but if hearing them results in making second-class citizens of other pastors, it has gone sour."

"I am not in favor of setting uniform growth goals uniformly across a denomination. Each church has its own responsibility. Some churches have been given trained leadership, the right community, skilled leaders, top-notch laypeople. Very heavy growth goals are required of them," Wagner feels. "But other churches God has not given that measure of resources, and they simply are not as responsible."

Wagner estimates many are single-staff-member leaders who can effectively pastor a church of

about 200 persons. Some, he says, will never hold a pastorate larger than that.

"Also psychological mixes or plus-mixes prevent men from being growth pastors. The more we can make that pastor comfortable with who he is and the fact that he is never going to pastor a large church, the more effective he will be in ministering."

Both Donald McGavran, dean emeritus of the school of world mission at Fuller, and Wagner, believe more persons could be growth pastors.

"We did an industrial model, and found most pastors were on the industrial level of lead men, one notch below foreman. With proper training, they could be the equivalent of foreman, and it would make a substantial change in their leadership."

McGavran maintains the principles of church growth are not for superficial thinkers. "They are not something you can apply with your eyes shut. The gimmick approach says, 'Show me what produces church growth and I will push buttons 1-2-3-4.' Well, that never works. You don't push buttons. You analyze your community, yield yourself to the Holy Spirit, work hard."

Even then, "a man must be driven by theological compulsives—a belief in the unswerving purpose of God for the

salvation of man; and that Christians are really quite different from others."

NOT THAT MUCH: McGavran adds that in most circumstances a church can show growth, but emphasizes it is "growth that can be achieved by the ordinary guy," someone who "is not a pulpit orator. He is pleasant, but not a compelling personality. He is reasonably energetic, but he doesn't work eight days a week. People like him, but not all that much."

"If he applies the principles faithfully, and keeps on changing his approach until he gets the right mix, he can expect growth," McGavran says.

The formulator of the church growth movement warned, however, that most men are not going to pastor super churches. Such pastors "are exceptional men. If they were in business, they'd be the millionaires."

Wagner, who also says not every man can pastor a booming church, adds that he hopes one of the next areas the movement "tackles is helping pastors come to terms with needs."

"Some men will not pastor growing churches. We need to identify them and help them be satisfied with who they are, to be productive and happy doing what God wants them to do." •

Seven Characteristics of Growing Churches

By LYLE SCHALLER

1. *Bible preaching.* (People today are hungry for biblical preaching.)
2. *Emphasis on evangelism.* (More than an attitude or rhetoric.)
3. *Changing membership fellowship circle.* (Many congregations can be described in terms of two circles. The larger, outer circle represents the membership. . . . The smaller, sometimes much smaller, inner circle represents the fellowship group. In growing churches, the fellowship circle is as large, usually larger, than the membership circle.)
4. *Opportunities to commitment.*
5. *Imported leadership.*
6. *Specialties in ministry.* (In addition to the traditional ministries.)
7. *Minister who likes people.*

—from *Church Administration* (October 1975)

Five Principles

By C.B. HOGUE

1. Biblically based concepts.
2. Bold evangelism.
3. Broad involvement of people.
4. Burning passion of pastor.
5. Basic faith.

—from *I Want My Church to Grow* (Broadman Press, 1977)

growth.... It has mushroomed so fast on us that we didn't spend much time talking about growth except how to house and teach the people."

Thurman Kelley of Calvary Baptist Church in Joplin, Mo., describes growth there as "sort of like spontaneous combustion. It might not be healthy, but, praise God, it's worked until now."

McGavran, whose book *Understanding Church Growth*, is the foundation for the church growth movement, says churches will not grow unless "driven by theological compulsives... an unwavering belief in the unwavering purpose of God for the salvation of man."

"There is a deep theological base to it (the church growth movement). You don't get much growth unless you believe in the authoritative word. That's the reason liberal churches and denominations are declining. They don't believe in the infallible word. There's not much fire in their boiler. They can't get up much steam."

WORD-BY-WORD APPROACH: A deep thread of biblical authority runs through the top churches in the SBC, according to the survey. A majority of laypersons—98 percent—describe their pastor as "Bible-believing, evangelistic."

Each Top 15 pastor says his preaching is expository, with word-by-word, verse-by-verse exposition occupying much of his pulpit ministry.

Allendale's pastor O'Chester says, "People aren't interested in what I have to say. They want to know what God has to say about their depressions, fears, anxieties, trouble."

Kelley, the 67-year-old pastor of Joplin's Calvary church, adds, "People are hungry to hear

the word, not the ideas and opinions of some man."

"It is a great joy to preach expository sermons God can get a hold of a service like that. He gives freshness to your message."

Most pastors in the Top 15 do not preach "social issue" sermons, although they say they have preached on such topical issues as abortion, homosexuality, liquor-by-the-drink.

Explains Charles Martin of First Baptist Church of Indian Rocks in Largo, Fla., "Gambling and abortion probably are social issues, but I think of them more as sin, and I do preach against sin."

As most pastors ignore social issues, most churches are not ministry-oriented, except as they define ministry: like busing, recreation, day care.

Some have food and clothing closets. Others, in a "minister-as-you-go" approach, provide food or clothing to persons on their bus routes.

According to the survey, less than four percent of the pastors say ministry growth receives attention in their church, and, consequently, "non-evangelistic efforts"—ministries to senior citizens, poverty areas or ethnic or socio-economic groups, for example—were minimal.

THE PRINCIPAL PRINCIPLES: In its survey of fast growing churches, HM used as a reference point Peter Wagner's "Seven Vital Signs of a Growing Church," which seemed to synthesize most experts' opinions.

The list centers on pastoral leadership, role of the laity, size of the church, worship and fellowship of the church, type of membership, evangelistic methods and priorities. A breakdown of the survey results, by Wagner's categories, follows.

Vital Sign Number One: PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

*"A pastor who is a possibility
thinker and whose dynamic leadership
has been used to catalyze the
entire church into action for growth."*

"You're asking me if I think I'm dynamic," says Joplin's Kelley, who has led Calvary church from 35 members to 927 members in seven years. "No, I'm not dynamic. But no church can grow without pastoral leadership. The worst thing that can happen to a Baptist church is for it to get without a preacher. It loses its aim, its goal, has nobody suggesting anything."

Kelley, like most pastors in the Top 15, denied being authoritarian. They are generally self-effacing men, yet they also are undisputed leaders of their churches.

Overwhelmingly, laypersons describe their pastor as "shepherd of the flock," and—78 percent—"a strong leader."

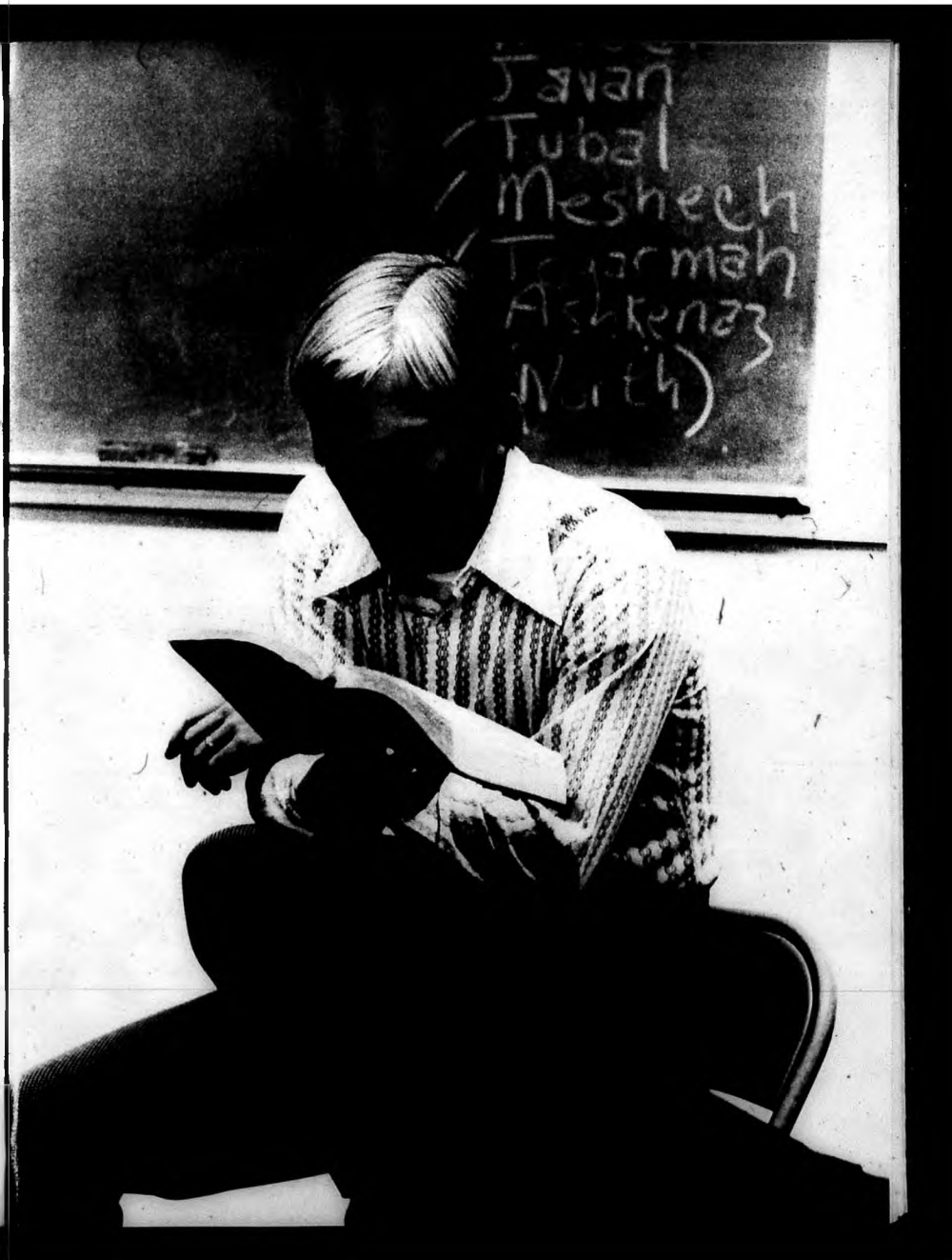
Kelley voiced the opinion of many pastors: "If it gets to the point where the church will not follow my leadership, I ought to leave."

The Joplin pastor restructured church government to make it a representative democracy, giving the church council primary authority. "I even asked for—and I say this humbly, even a little ashamedly—and received authority to set aside anyone in church leadership who does not cooperate."

Pastor O'Chester of Allendale says: "I have always been an authoritarian leader, but I'm not

Continued

Sunday School and Church Training were highly rated by pastors interested in equipping their members to "witness as they go" at work and play.



Seven Principles Of Successful Retailing

By ROBERT SCHULER

1. *Accessibility.* (The best product will not be bought if people can't get their hands on it!)
2. *Surplus parking.* (Nupubes, one criterion.)
3. *Inventory.* (Large enough to meet almost every conceivable human need... insures fantastic future.)
4. *Service.* (That means trained laity.)
5. *Visibility.*
6. *Possibility thinking.* (Asking the right questions and making the right decisions.)
7. *Good cash flow.* (Don't be afraid of debt, but know what debt is.)

—from *Your Church Has Real Possibilities* (Regal Books, 1974)

the man I used to be. My churches didn't always follow me because I wasn't follow-able. Today, my church would charge hell with a thimble full of water if I said this was where God wants us. They would follow me because I would be out front.

"It all rises or falls on leadership. And that's true, no matter who says it."

At Morningside church in Valdosta, Ga., pastor Gary Folds says God speaks through him to the people.

THIN AIR AT THE SUMMIT: Robert Kilgore, director of HMB Church Loans Division, has done a study of churches which have had exceptional response from the community in attendance, baptisms, finances and other programs.

"Without exception, the pastor has been the primary factor," Kilgore says, describing the pastor as a strong personality with an unusual ability to relate to a wide range of people.

"Education of these pastors varies widely," Kilgore says. "All of them, however, have great native ability, which has been enlarged with consistent and current study."

The pastor, he adds, preaches sermons which are, without apology, "biblically centered... objective... and not vindictive." His preaching has an air of excitement and expectation.

Such pastors are highly efficient administrators, who speak and act with "constituted authority exercised with gentleness," Kilgore concludes.

Oscar Romo, head of the HMB Language Missions Department, explains the magnetic attraction of such pastors as a form of "modern tribalism. We go to church looking for different kinds of leaders; we are attracted by the pastor's personality, radiance, ability. We are really looking for a leader and we become part of a modern tribe."

TENACIOUS TENURES: According to HM's questionnaire, only four percent of the churches have a pastor in his present position less than a year. Some 84 percent have been in their churches from one to 10 years.

Most are experienced; three-quarters of them have held more than three pastorates. Some 80 percent have been in the ministry more than 10 years, and almost all—95 percent—have five years or more experience.

Pastors of the Top 15 fastest growing churches agree the key is leadership. Most use terms like undershepherd, equipper, pastor. While giving credit to others, all say they are responsible to God for the growth, nurture, direction, outreach and ministry of the church. They feel they are God's man in God's church in God's time.

Vital Sign Number Two: THE LAITY

"A well mobilized laity which has discovered, has developed and is using all the spiritual gifts for growth."

"The pastor can be the key to growth or the key to growth limitation," says Cal Guy, professor of missions at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "Laymen are shackled by pastors who do not see themselves as biblical equippers of the saints so the saints can do the work of the ministry. Where the pastor is a frightened human being rather than a secure person who can rejoice in another's success, church growth is almost impossible."

Pastors of the fastest growing churches see themselves closely related to their people.

"I have the greatest people in the world," the pastors say time and again.

"The most destructive idea ever to hit Christianity is the idea of a clergy and a laity," says Oak Ridge's Kneisel. "There is no such thing. Laity means the people of God. We are all the people of God. We don't have two classes of Christians: we are all servants, all ministers."

Education minister at Oak Ridge Ralph Edwards, says when he first came to the church, he was told he was not to do everything alone.

"Brother Harvey (Kneisel) said the responsibility of leaders is to work ourselves out of jobs by involving other people," recalls Edwards.

Professor Guy says if Baptists are to grow, the denomination "must go back to the priesthood of the believer concept." He speaks of Baptists as having a "catholic-ordained Baptist priesthood" that has "disinherited the layman." But as laypeople grow spiritually, "either we give them authentic leadership or they will tell us to buzz off."

While Wagner uses "spiritual gifts" in his vital signs, to most Baptist pastors the term translates "charismatic movement"—and they oppose it.

Says Glenview's Jones, "The key to a great church is the right people at the right place at the right time. That boils down to gifts. Our church is characterized by a moving of the Spirit, but I draw a hard line on tongues and faith healing."

Many hold the view of Martin, pastor in Largo, Fla.: "I have had to take a pretty strong stand, being right across the street from the largest charismatic church on the west coast of Florida. When anyone visits our church who thinks along this line, I recommend they not come here."

"Tongues was a sign gift for a definite purpose and its time is past," he adds.

While Baptist pastors shy away from "spiritual gifts," Allandale's O'Chester says his ministry aims

to "teach the Spirit-filled life. Our great goal is to teach all our people how to find their spiritual gifts. Then the body can move."

O'Chester feels he has a responsibility to his people: "I was guilty of the Double D—dipping and dropping," O'Chester says. Allandale's purpose now, he says, is "the Double E: Evangelism and Edification."

EQUIPPING THE SAINTS: Many fast-growing church pastors see themselves as teachers, responsible for discipling their people. With that comes effective evangelism and growth, they believe.

An overwhelming number of pastors—96.7 percent—feel Sunday School and Church Training are among the most essential approaches in equipping members for witness.

Pastors also prefer Bible study and new member orientation as discipling methods. Some 66 percent selected Bible study as an effective approach; 52 percent checked new member orientation.

Of other methods, 43 percent of the pastors say lay evangelism schools are effective means, but only 30 percent selected Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union as efficient in discipling.

Several do not have Brotherhood or WMU organizations in their churches. Others do have a women's group, but it focuses on visitation evangelism rather than mission study.

Oak Ridge's Kneisel concludes: "Evangelism, witness, worship. Those are the people's jobs. We believe that every believer is a priest, not only in communication, but in witness. If you are not effective in doing that, you just fail."

Five Things Typifying Growing Churches

By M. WENDELL BELL

1. They are churches with a purpose.
2. . . churches which have leadership which speaks with authority.
3. . . churches which have developed a strategy for growth.
4. . . churches which know their communities.
5. . . churches which have called for involvement; people involvement.

—from *Churches and How They Grow* (Broadman Press, 1971)

Vital Sign Number Three: CHURCH SIZE

"A church big enough to provide the range of services that meet needs and expectations of its members."

In many ways, this "sign" proved too ambiguous to be meaningful in our survey. Most of the churches responding were large churches: 46.4 percent have more than 1,000 members; another quarter, 26.3 percent, have from 500 to 999 members.

Some 17.2 percent have between 300 and 499 members; the rest between 100 and 299.

They did not, however, begin the measurement period that large. In the top 15 churches, for example, membership ranged from 110 to 1,904 with the median 666. Five of the top 15 had more than 1,000 members, but an equal number had less than 500.

Yet most pastors in the Top 15 want big churches and most that have large churches offer a panoply of programs designed to minister to the entire family.

SIZING UP THE SUPER(?)CHURCH: The controversy on church size generally revolves around mission strategy, kingdom growth, effective evangelism, denominational growth, the nature and function of a church and the style of big church growth.

One pastor—Allandale's O'Chester—believes the bigger the church the better.

Quoting a church growth expert's opinion that "we are entering the Era of the Super Church," O'Chester says, "it is good a super church is evolving. Our church is becoming a super church in size. We have seven ministers and seven churches in one. Instead of having little tiny satellite churches that can't minister to the whole needs of the family, we have a church with counseling, youth, recreation, a nursery and other ministries. "The super

church can minister to the whole needs of man."

The HMB's Havlik disagrees sharply with Wagner's concept of church size. "I would not define church size in terms of needs and expectations of its members. I would define church size by whether it is big enough to do what Christ wants it to do in the community."

Professor Guy notes: "I'm sorry that principle is in there. I see the greatest growth among God's people when they want to know what they can do for others, rather than wondering what the church can do for them."

Wagner avoids "optimum growth" questions but feels "when God has given a church opportunities and resources for expansion growth, it ought not to forget its responsibilities. To whom much is given, much is required."

Wagner adds, "The one thing we are deeply concerned about is that the gospel be preached and people be saved and become responsible members of the church. Sometimes this is well done by expanding a local congregation and making it a superchurch. But worldwide—and everybody I know agrees on this—the most significant advances in the Great Commission are going to be made through establishing new churches."

"America is underchurched and churches need to be multiplied," he argues.

Studies indicate "newer churches are more effective in reaching people" than are established churches, says the HMB's Redford.

And Church Loans director Kilgore believes the most effective strategy for reaching America is proliferation of small churches. "If we are going to do the job in America, in the next 10 or 12 years we

Continued



should add 11,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention."

Redford believes the denomination "would be in an awful mess if we set out to make all churches big churches. We need a few super churches to command attention, but the main strategy has to be establishing many, many community churches."

Dubose of Golden Gate seminary sees a place for the mega-church, which he says fills a need for cathedral-type worship as offered in the middle ages. "These large churches provide visibility, symbolism, a variety of things for people in church and social life. Modern man, accustomed to bigness, needs these things."

"But, I see dangers. Super churches tend to grow at the expense of small churches, just as suburban churches grow at the expense of inner-city churches."

He adds, "One of our besetting sins is to praise growth without being critical of it. When a church is growing at the expense of other churches, the net growth to the kingdom may not be that much."

"The problem I have is not with size, but with style," Dubose continues. "Most mega-churches are growing for themselves, not for the kingdom, not for the cause, not for the denomination."

"They are mini-denominations."

ONWARD, UPWARD...OUTWARD? Wagner claims the ideal situation is that churches grow both by expansion (on their own campuses) and by extension (planting new units).

However, among the fastest growing Southern Baptist churches, only three of the Top 15 have started missions in the past five years. Of the 277 churches returning questionnaires, only 79—28.5

percent—have begun new work recently.

Of those, the majority—60—have started only one mission in that five-year period; nine have started two, four have begun three, two have initiated four and only three have planted more than five missions.

The remaining 198 fastest growing churches started no mission at all in the past five years.

Oddly enough, Joplin's Kelley pastors one of his "granddaughter" churches. During his 32-year pastorate at Forest Park church, Fellowship church was started and, in turn, started Calvary. Kelley, who pastored Forest Park, now pastors Calvary. However, during his seven-year pastorate there, Calvary has started no missions.

Austin's O'Chester claims his city is "overchurched." He points out half his sister Baptist churches—31 of 62—lost average attendance in 1976.

If they fail Wagner's "ideal situation," they fit his Vital Sign Number Three: they offer a full array of family-style activities, ranging from Bible study, worship, fellowship, organizational life to recreation, social life, counseling.

And, most pastors agree: They provide services which fulfill members' needs and expectations.

They also plan to add other facilities and services when time—and money—permit.

Most pastors interviewed do not plan to limit growth to an arbitrary number, and most laypersons questioned—74 percent—disagreed with a question which indicated churches with more than 500 members should divide.

Says pastor Jones of Fort Worth, "Our church hasn't nearly come to its heyday yet. We're a long way from that."

All, instead, project growth.

Six Commonalities of Growing Churches

By JOHN HAWLIK

1. Pastors who have a vision of growing an evangelistic church and effectively communicate their vision.
2. Pastors who genuinely like people.
3. Pastors who have genuine concern about other people's relationship to God.
4. People who as a matter of life-style witness/visit naturally and with security.
5. Churches that are pluralistic by choice... open to all kinds of persons with varying life-styles... no racial, cultural or language barriers.
6. Pastors and staffs able to administer a process of empowering, equipping and enabling believers for loving, Christ-like evangelistic ministry.

—from *The Evangelistic Church*, H. Harlowe, 1976

Vital Sign Number Four: WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP

"The proper balance of the dynamic relationship between celebration, congregation and cell."

Most pastors in the Top 15 had problems with this concept. At the word "cell" and its explanation as a small group, warning flags went up. Most disliked it for the same reason they disliked "spiritual gifts": the charismatic movement.

Consequently, most Top 15 churches in the SBC major on worship; members pick up fellowship in Sunday School or Training Union classes or in some other smaller organizational component.

Even O'Chester of Austin, who has established Bible study groups in 24 of the city's 56 zip code zones and plans to cover the entire city with small fellowship groups, fits the pattern.

Time after time, HM found the pastor to be the key to growth. His ideas, his charisma, his decisions set tone and direction for efforts of his members.

His groups are not for church members. They aim to attract persons who would not come to a church without prior exposure to Christians.

"We don't encourage our people to participate in small groups," O'Chester says. "Those who participate are ones in whose homes they are held."

Joplin's Kelley expresses a feeling similar to that held by many fast-growing church pastors:

"We've had small groups in homes, and they're okay as long as leadership is proper. When you get a wrong individual leading, that bothers me."

"Small groups are effective to a point, but they aren't the answer. I don't believe in sideshows at the circus. I don't like to see us segregate ourselves and think we can get something in the sideshow tent we can't get in the main tent."

Wagner says he has been rethinking small-group

Continued

Principles Of Church Growth

By JACK REDFORD

1. Holy Spirit basic to all that is done.
2. Bible foundational.
3. We must build bridges to people.
4. We must maintain the redemptive note.
5. Gifts of Holy Spirit must be recognized and used.
6. Love must permeate all.
7. Motivation is essential.
8. Flexibility is crucial.
9. Priorities are defined.
10. Experience should be applied to increase effectiveness.
11. A committed human leader must be present.
12. Participation planning on all levels is essential.
13. People are basic.

—from *Basic Principles of Church Growth* (1976)

concepts since his vital signs were published in 1974 in *Your Church Can Grow*.

"I have a hunch they are effective in some situations and not in others," he says. "Small groups, as I have defined them—groups to promote intimacy and accountability—are groups that require verbal skills. People who have verbal skills can function fairly well, but those who don't are self-conscious and don't function well."

"The most important element is formal schooling," Wagner concludes. "If you have a church with a large percentage of university graduates, you have a built-in small group situation. If you have elementary school graduates, you don't."

Most laypersons apparently disagree with their pastors on small groups. HM's questionnaire asked how they felt about the statement: "Our church should not encourage home Bible fellowship because they become cliques." Of those returning questionnaires, 69 percent disagreed.

Several theoreticians advocate creation of small groups as a method of church growth.

Professor Guy notes many pastors are "terrified" of small groups, but believes they will have to "get unterrified." He favors home Bible reading—not study—groups, which act as an evangelistic tool and eliminate many problems.

However, most pastors apparently do not intend to start "sideshows." Members find fellowship through such organizational units as Sunday School and Church Training, while the pastors major on worship services.

BLENDING RESPECT & REVELRY: There the atmosphere bubbles with excitement; services tend to be informal with most pastors preaching past noon, the traditional closing time.

"We want to be dynamic, reverent, worshipful, but also spontaneous and free. We are there to worship, and if we worship, we go out to service," says Oak Ridge's Kneisel.

Roy Cooper, minister of music at Oak Ridge, plans the worship service "the same way the pastor plans his sermon. I want it to be a time of worship, not a time of just coming together and going through a ritual."

"We need to try to minister to everyone. We lead our people into true worship. They are not there to be entertained or to be performed before. We encourage all to be performers, giving themselves to God."

Glenview's Jones, who doesn't like the word "celebration," because he is "just too old-fashioned," admits services "tend to be exciting. When our people sing, it usually raises chill bumps. That's just the way they sing. We want to have a real worship service, praising God."

WELCOME TO OUR HOUSE: As they major

One consistent growth technique is busing, and long routes are common. But problems with busing have caused many to curtail or reduce busing efforts.

CHURCH BUS



New Testament Growth Principles

By OSCAR ROMO

1. Penetration.
2. Spiritual nature.
3. Leaders from among the people.
4. Communicate in the language of the people.
5. Economic stability.
6. Adequate facilities.
7. Multiplication.

—from *Ethnic Missions in America* (Home Mission Board, 1977)

on worship, they also concentrate on making people feel welcome. Most encourage greeting of visitors by members. Nachitoches' St. Andres says this may take "15 or 20 minutes in our services."

Almost all laypersons filling out the questionnaire—98 percent—feel their church is a warm,

friendly place where visitors are made to feel at home: 96 percent feel "very rewarded" by worship services at the church.

And, contrary to popular opinion, a whopping 75 percent of the laypersons do not feel the church has too many meetings.

Vital Sign Number Five: SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP

"A membership drawn primarily from one homogeneous unit."

Wagner expands the dictionary's "ho-mo-geneous = of the same or a similar kind or nature," by saying, "A homogeneous unit is a group who considers its members to be 'our kind of people.'"

While most pastors interviewed by HM practiced the concept, most apparently were familiar neither with the term nor the idea.

"A lot of those guys out there probably never heard of it," says HMB's Havlik, who disagrees rather violently with homogeneity.

But disagree or not—and Havlik is joined by several others—most churches in the top 495, and the majority in the Top 15, are formed primarily along homogeneous lines.

The preponderance of membership—about 75 percent—comes from similar employment. The survey, based on the pastor's estimate of his congregation, shows 41 percent of the population of the fastest growing churches is blue-collar; 34.9 percent clerical and mid-level-management and 12.3 percent professional. Only 1.4 percent were in the farm and ranch worker category and 8.2 were business owners.

The survey also proved the homogeneous unit principle—in practice, at least. Of the 277 churches responding, 204 were predominantly made up of members in the middle income range (\$10,000 to \$20,000 per year).

That is 75.3 percent of the response.

An additional 17.6 percent—46 churches—are upper-middle income (to \$30,000 annually).

That says that 92.3 percent of the fastest growing Southern Baptist churches are middle class, middle income.

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL: The fastest growing Southern Baptist churches—242 of 277 for a lopsided 88.3 percent—admit their congregation is also predominantly white.

Of the others, four pastors say their churches are integrated black and white or Anglo and Hispanic; three say their churches are predominantly black; three report their churches are an integrated mix of three or more ethnic groups; and 22 report they are predominantly a racial type other than white, black or brown.

EXCEPTION—OR THE RULE? At first glance

one Top 15 church seems to belie the homogeneous unit principle. Located in a transitional community, it has about 20 percent black members.

However, pastor Tony Dickerson explains the membership is primarily drawn from nearby Fort Benning, a huge Army installation. The homogeneous unit at Pinehurst is formed around military alliances rather than racial distinctions.

While the homogeneous unit theory checks out in practice, it bothers some theoreticians. Their objections are based on theological, rather than practical, lines.

Golden Gate seminary's Dubose says, "First of all, the homogeneous unit is a fact. It also is a valid principle from the standpoint of communication theory." But, he adds, "It also is a sociological and anthropological fact that the homogeneous unit serves as a divisive element in society."

Dubose differs with Wagner, and each interprets scripture to prove his own case.

Dubose maintains that the "Gospel seeks to unite all men who are so divided...there is not the slightest hint that New Testament churches were divided into small ethnic congregations, or even ethnic units. The one thing that is emphasized over and over again is the fact that there was unity in the Church at Jerusalem among people who were not only from different ethnic backgrounds but from different social and economic classes."

"At the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 11) there is never the slightest hint—it never occurred to them to divide the church according to racial and ethnic backgrounds. There are hints that the other churches of the New Testament were heterogeneous," Dubose maintains.

Wagner, in tracing New Testament history, differs strongly. He suggests that Jesus picked a homogeneous unit of Aramaic-speaking Galileans to be disciples, with one exception. James, a Judean, "seemed to be a misfit." He maintains the dispute in Acts 6, where deacons were first named, was "cultural," and the Hebrew leaders gave the Hellenist Christians their own leaders "as every cross-cultural missionary knows."

Wagner also avers that the Council of Jerusalem "gave ecclesiastical approval to the homogeneous unit principle," and that "you find the homogeneous unit principle in operation in the whole

movement of the Apostle Paul."

POUR INTO POT, NO STIRRING: Many people oppose the homogeneous unit principle, McGavran says, "because it seems to oppose brotherhood and favor segregation." Wagner counters by claiming the "psycho-social history of the opposition is based in the 'assimilationist theory,' which says America is a melting pot."

"That idea was uprooted in the 1960s, and Andrew Young (UN Ambassador) now says America is a stew pot where all ingredients are together and flavor each other, but they don't get mixed up," Wagner says.

Dubose disagrees. Arguing that at Pentecost a "miracle brought all of these people together," he claims the homogeneous unit principle is a "theory which wants to divide and separate what Christ has brought together."

The principle, Dubose says, is a "Machiavellian form of mission theory and practice in which the end justifies the means." Yet he admits it is a pragmatically workable theory.

Havlik, also accepting the functional nature of the homogeneous unit, believes it is a "violation of New Testament theology" to base mission strategy on it. He says, "Paul saw the church as the Body of Christ in the world. We are his body, and it is a new body, a new race of men, a new society, a new social order, a new culture, a super culture, above all other cultures."

"Paul said in this body is no male chauvinism, no economic distinction, no racial distinction. For the Christian there should always be only a grudging concession to necessity in the world."

"I have no objection to homogeneous churches, but the Christian should always be striving toward the ideal of God, and that is breaking down the

barriers between man and man."

Havlik concedes, "Southern Baptist churches are not pluralistic. We must deliberately plan for pluralism. When we do that, we'll get it."

Despite the pragmatism of the homogeneous unit principle, both Dubose and Havlik feel the Southern Baptist Convention—and indeed all Christian churches—tread dangerous ground if they adopt a mission strategy based on "questionable theology," and a "pragmatic expedience which produces fast numerical growth at the expense of our witness in the world."

While Havlik and Dubose cite serious problems, another HMB strategist takes it in stride. Oscar Romo, director of the Language Missions Department, maintains all churches are cultural, ethnic or sub-culture groupings.

"Our job is to evangelize, not to assimilate," Romo says. "People go to church because they want to. If they don't want to, they won't go. You go where you feel comfortable."

"To reach people, we must be aware of cultural units and cultural differences."

"There has to be room for the gospel to penetrate a given group without necessarily changing that group's background. It changes their sense of values, but you still end up having sub-cultures."

While most pastors surveyed were not familiar with homogeneity, Pastor Kneisel of Oak Ridge, a former foreign missionary to Guyana and the Cayman Islands, is.

"I tried to deny it for years. But now, I have to face it. Sometimes it bothers me, but it is true. It seems to be human nature, and it seems to be the way the Spirit of God is working."

"When you see homogeneity as a fact of life, rather than fight it, you join it and capitalize on it for the Kingdom."

Factors In Church Growth

By ROBERT KILGORE

1. **Pastor:** Strong personality, unusual ability to relate, compelling drive; great native ability, enlarged by consistent and current Bible study. Sermons biblically centered and well prepared. Long tenure. Speaks and acts with constituted authority, exerted with gentleness. Very effective administrator.
2. **Church:** Located in a growing and thickly populated area. Appeals to larger geographical community of people of similar culture. Has exceptional programs directed by individuals of above average expertise.
3. **Neighboring churches:** Minimum competition. They are either in insufficient number, have limited programs and leadership, or have had divisive fellowship problems.
4. **People:** Enthusiastic. Willing and able to work. Success oriented. Fellowship warm and continuing. Family and social life center around church.

—from *Projecting Community Response to Determine Church Attendance & Income* (HMB, 1976)

Vital Sign Number Six: EVANGELISTIC METHODS

"Evangelistic methods that have been proven to make disciples."

The fastest growing churches are all evangelistically oriented. They use a variety of ministry methods—ranging from singing revivals to bus ministry to day-care. But primarily they center attention on personal visitation and one-on-one witnessing. Judging from Top 15 pastors' responses, all are interested in discipleship, but their programs concentrate on reaching those not attending church: inactive members elsewhere or non-Christians.

Training methods differ, but all have methods of preparing their workers for the task of "winning people to Christ."

Allandale church uses LIFE—Lay Institute For Evangelism—developed by Campus Crusade.

Pastor O'Chester seizes every opportunity to get his people trained and witnessing.

Glenview in Fort Worth uses modifications of Evangelism Explosion, says pastor Stan Jones.

Other churches use WIN materials developed by the HMB, or Romans Roadmap—almost any method to capture the imagination of people.

They use visitation cards, and aggressively follow up on those who are in their area.

THE LONG YELLOW LINE: Many fast growing churches use a bus ministry, but a number use it mainly as a door-opener into communities.

Pastor Kneisel says the bus ministry has been

Ten Steps For Church Growth

By DONALD MCGAVRAN
and WINFIELD C. ARM

1. Build a conscience concerning growth.
2. Identify needs and opportunities.
3. Establish faith goals.
4. Involve and train laity.
5. Rightly discern "the body."
6. Rightly discern the community.
7. Develop effective strategy.
8. Invest resources for growth.
9. Give priority to effective evangelism.
10. Use spiritual resources.

—from *Ten Steps for Church Growth*
(Harper & Row, 1977)

carefully monitored at Oak Ridge so that the "tongue won't take care of the whole wagon."

"We have 26 subdivisions around our church we could minister to. When I came, only two or three were really open. Our bus has gone into 10 of those communities, and each time, it's opened the community to our church."

One church which uses an extensive bus ministry is Glenview in Fort Worth. Until summer, the church bused 450 to 500 persons per Sunday.

But in mid-September, Pastor Jones announced a cut-back in bus routes. "We got our children's enrollment a little out of proportion to our adults. When we were running a promotion, we'd bring in

55 or 60 percent of the Sunday Schools on a bus. "We just had oversuccess. Our people were getting discouraged, because we were working them so hard. Some of our bus captains hadn't had a Sunday off in five years," Jones explains.

Now only 300 to 350 persons are brought in per Sunday. But "next year we'll be right back on the trail of more routes, but we'll have a stronger base of adults," Jones says.

The churches which are the fastest growing use evangelistic methods which keep people walking the aisles and baptisries wet. Most spend little time in evaluating. Results seem to validate methods and their effectiveness.

Vital Sign Number Seven: PRIORITIES ORDERED BIBLICALLY

"Arranged in biblical order, the congregation has a...
(1) commitment to Christ;
(2) commitment to the body of Christ;
(3) commitment to the work of Christ in the world, through both
(a) evangelism and (b) social action."

Most pastors in the Top 15 had no problems with Wagner's priorities. All feel evangelism—helping people make professions of commitment to Christ—is their top priority.

Most also saw discipling members as the second part of their two-pronged responsibility. The majority feel Bible study and new member orientation are essential approaches to discipling.

Because most pastors surveyed believe Sunday School and Church Training are their most effective methods, pastors also indicate the Baptist Sunday School Board is the denominational entity most helpful in stimulating growth.

Most use BSSB literature, although a few blend in other materials.

While the pastors weren't asked about missions giving, several mentioned they are firm believers in the Cooperative Program. Their churches' gifts emphasize that. The typical (median) fast-growing church gives more per capita tithes and offerings than does the typical SBC church in general (\$196.69 vs. \$137.33 in 1976) and a higher percentage of its total income goes to CP (to 3% vs. 5.6% for all churches).

Of special interest to the HMB, however, is the fact that the median fast-growing church gives less to home missions than does the typical SBC congregation (.35% vs. .42% of total receipts).

Laypersons were almost evenly divided over whether more of their church's budget should go for missions: 43 percent say the church should give more, while 45 percent say it should not.

Perhaps that reflects local needs. All Top 15 churches are either planning a building program or have recently completed one. All are jammed for space, and one—Eastwood in Tulsa, Okla.—has four Sunday Schools back-to-back.

Many have dual worship services, and all have juggled and scrambled for space.

"I know a lot of churches who would like to have your problems," one pastor was told after he described classes in the hallways and alcoves.

"Yes," he said, looking around with a smile on his face. "I guess so."

As in any survey, HM's concentrates on averages—majority actions indicate "typical" actions; "representative" pastors or opinions are created by percentages of response.

But each situation is unique, each an exception: how does growth begin; what hidden keys emerge on closer examination?

HOME MISSIONS visited the Top 15 fastest growing congregations. Its interviewers probed undercurrents, sought to explain excitement that couldn't be encoded on a computer form.

Results of those interviews are capsulized on following pages. Remember, however, the survey was based on quantity, not quality. Perhaps some evidence of quality is revealed in HM's "scouting reports."

The list, in computer-ranked order, is relative. Number One may have had a score equal to Number Two. Of a possible 10 points, more than one church could have scored the maximum. Ranking merely indicates these are the fastest growing.

Finally, copying techniques does not insure duplicate results. HM reports not to encourage emulation; rather to offer new information on SBC church growth. Apply at your own risk.

Fast-Growing Church Number One:

MORNINGSIDE, Valdosta, Ga.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	295	831
Sunday School members	337	670
Baptisms (1972-1976)		374

AGE OF CHURCH: Less than 20 years old, located in this area for seven years, after being in central city.

LOCATION: Occupies 10 acres on northern, growing edge of this city of 50,000. The community is characterized by middle- and upper-middle-class whites, fringe-area blacks. Nearby is Moody Air Force Base, where one bus route goes. Many military live in the community, attend Morningside.

PASTOR: Gary Folds
Age: Early 30s.

Education/experience: College degree; associate pastor in Florida, Georgia.

Administrative style: "Aggressive, strong and hard" leader. "I'm pastor of this church and everyone knows it. If I'm not a strong leader, my people are not going to be a strong people. God called me to be pastor of this church. When he is ready to move me, he will."

Preaching style: Characterized by immediacy; often inspiration for messages comes late Friday or Saturday. "The time may come when I don't have a message because I will have been too busy a pastor," says Folds. "I'll just be honest with my people and not preach that morning."

Work habits: Workaholic.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Young middle-class families, military, some administrative leaders in banks and businesses. Almost no professional people, few blacks.

BUSING: Three routes, with farthest going to Moody air base, nearly six miles away. Others go only two miles, and none "in front of other churches. We may go near them." The church has bought two other buses, but Folds says, "We are not going to expand until I feel we have the capability of giving them something after they get here. We have five children's churches now. We have no more room, and we run two morning services."

VISITATION: Three or more organized visitations each week, including bus visiting on Saturday a.m. Deacons assist pastor by visiting sick and shut-ins. Folds says, "My major is lost souls, not kidney stones."

"Work, work, work," says Gary Folds, the aggressive, often criticized young pastor of Morningside Baptist Church in Valdosta, Ga. "That's the reason for our growth. People don't come because you build a building, they come because you go to them."

Folds' willingness to live those words—working seven long days a week—has enabled him to lead a defeated, debt-ridden congregation in three years to become perhaps the SBC's fastest growing church.

problem of bringing them in the front door and running them out the back."

When he accepted the pastorate, the church was broke and not paying bills. Declaring this not right, he led the staff to forego salaries until bills were paid. In addition, he instituted a Wednesday night offering for missions.

A deacon challenged him that the offering was against the church constitution. Folds told the deacons, "God laid it on my heart to do what we did. When God tells me to do something, I don't want anyone saying we can't do it. If God says we are to do it, then we are going to do it. That's the kind of pastor I'm going to be. If you don't want that, then we will leave."

He admits, "I have to be careful of my relationship with the Lord. And I don't just pop off that this is what God says. Decisions of great importance are made after prayer, being alone with the Lord."

Gary Folds: "If God says we're going to do it, we're going to do it. I'm that kind of pastor."



**Fast-Growing Church
Number Two:
PINEHURST, Columbus, Ga.**

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	428	1173
Sunday School members	315	1868
Baptisms (1972-1976)		503

AGE OF CHURCH: 22 years, started as mission of First Baptist Church.

LOCATION: Near expressway in a community started 25 years ago to serve Fort Benning personnel. With rapid turnover in military families and ebb-and-flow of government cutbacks and buildups, community has always known change. In recent years, it has deteriorated, shifted to 90 percent black and suffered slashing remedies of urban renewal.

PASTOR: Tony Dickerson of Dothan, Ala. Age: Early 30s.

Education/experience: Began pastoring at age 12. After high school, enrolled Samford University, but "I had delusions of grandeur," he explains, feeling he did not have time for study. Took Jacksonville, Fla., pastorate; held evangelistic services. Attended Luther Rice seminary before coming to Pinehurst five years ago.

Administrative style: "I try to give strong, optimistic, loving leadership, with the emphasis on loving," he says. Since most members are military, they expect strong pastoral leadership. For Dickerson's tenure, most ideas and programs have been his, but he detects "a very refreshing change," adding, "We've gotten some strong men in positions of leadership; now ideas and innovative methods originate with them."

Preaching style: Covers broad spectrum, preaches series often. "For a long time I thought preaching ought to be done so somebody would respond evangelistically, but the people can't maintain the spiritual level they need. I've become more of a teacher," he says. He preaches through a book of the Bible. Social issues are integral to his preaching, including race "to be sure everyone understands the position of our church," which is integrated.

Work habits: Hard, long, few days off.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Mostly military families; racial balance 80/20 white. Blacks among leadership, with many from com-

"I feel like a post chaplain," says Tony Dickerson, pastor of Pinehurst Baptist Church of Columbus, Ga., "because most of our folks are military." The Pinehurst congregation, which Dickerson describes as young, eager and evangelistic, draws heavily from the huge military installation of Fort Benning, a short five-minute drive from the church.

munity. Families middle class. Has Spanish German, other international members.

BUSING: Started skyrocket growth. At one time Pinehurst operated 10 buses with 600-plus riding them. Buses helped church transcend its community and establish an even stronger tie with Benning. "It projected an image of a church interested in people," Dickerson feels, "but busing cannot sustain growth." Facilities overcrowded, and Dickerson opted to concentrate on picking up families, cut back to five buses going only to the army post. He was criticized for busing, then criticized for cutting back. But church growth continued, and now a major emphasis goes to TV and radio.

VISITATION: Four weekly programs: Monday all-out evangelism; Tuesday to nursing homes; Saturday a.m. for buses. Saturday also to enlist new members in church programs.

MINISTRIES: Dickerson's earlier concept of commitment and baptism now expanded to include helping person find employment, giving something to do, with free time, meeting physical needs. Chaplains on post often refer persons to church for counseling. Church works with city's nursing homes, keeps a crisis cupboard and closet.

FACILITIES: Small auditorium and three educational buildings. Under study is 1,000 to 1,500-seat worship center, which Dickerson sees as a multipurpose unit that might convert to a gym later. Adjacent land has been purchased. Has TV facilities.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: As Pinehurst transcended its geography, so Dickerson believes it needs to transcend the military community and become the leading church of Columbus. "Every city needs a large, pace-setting church," he explains. He dreams of 8,000-10,000 members.

Conservative theologically, Dickerson aligned with "Concerned Georgia Baptists," but after a few meetings, found the group hyper-critical. He says, "If I didn't have time to go to denominational meetings, I didn't have time to go to other meetings to criticize the denominational meetings I didn't have time to go to." An 80-year-old member counseled: "I used to be where you are, but there are more important things than fighting. I can't support a fighter, but I can support a builder."

Dickerson and Pinehurst are much interested in building.



**Fast-Growing Church
Number Three:
OAK RIDGE, Spring, Tex.**

Oak Ridge Baptist Church of Spring, Tex., sits in the middle of 26 identifiable suburbs in one of the fastest

growing areas of Texas. "When I came here three-and-a-half years ago," says pastor Harvey

Kneisel, "we were ministering to two of them." Now the church draws members from 10 suburbs, and plans to penetrate all of the others it can. "God has blessed us because the church feels we exist for the outsiders. Our philosophy is that God blesses the church that gives itself away. We are growing because we give ourselves away," says Kneisel.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	666	1627
Sunday School members	602	1682
Baptisms (1972-1976)		581

AGE OF CHURCH: Constituted 1969

LOCATION: On major interstate highway in Spring, an upper middle class area on Houston's northern fringe. The 26 suburbs around it are composed of homes no more than 10 years old, all in upper middle class price range.

PASTOR: Harvey Kneisel. Age: Mid-40s.

Education/experience: College and seminary degrees. Five years as a foreign missionary to Guyana and the Cayman Islands. After resigning from missionary field, served as associate pastor under John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist of Houston.

Administrative style: Strong leader. "The people have followed our leadership," Kneisel says, but adds, "We have worked through the people. It's not autocratic—a one-man job, or a six-man job (the staff)—it's the whole church working together, everyone doing his job."

"My style is not autocratic. I have tried to offer leadership to the staff and the church. If anything, I know how to pick good men and we have a very competent staff. I have found effective men and I work through them as well as through committees. They just assume responsibilities."

Preaching style: "Ninety-nine percent of my preaching is expository sermons—a lot exegetical. I do a lot of preaching through books of the Bible. I wanted something that would last, so I'm preaching from the Bible."

Work habits: Delegates responsibility and authority.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Largely white, upper-middle class families with children.

BUSING: Limited. "We have four buses which bring in about 100 children each Sunday. We have been careful not to let the tongue take care of the whole wagon. We have trouble assimilating bus riders now."

However, Kneisel says the bus ministry is used to open subdivisions to the church. "Every time the bus goes in, it opens the community to us. The next thing you know, 25 or 30 families are church members."

VISITATION: Aggressive, with some 200 members each week in some sort of visitation: youth, zone, bus, Sunday School. The



Harvey Kneisel: "Our people have sacrificed to grow... the key is both pastor and laity."

church follows up on the average 55 visitors it has each week in Sunday services.

MINISTRIES: Day care which houses 230 children a day; recreational and youth ministries, a bus ministry.

FACILITIES: Two crowded buildings, one of which is a multi-purpose unit used as gym, nursery, Sunday School classrooms and sanctuary. "We built this kind of building because we didn't have money for a big humongous building, and because we wanted the kind of building that would be used seven days a week," says Kneisel.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Kneisel says the success of the church can't be explained by its exploding area. "I could take you to 25 or 30 churches in a 15-mile radius that are not growing. The key is leadership, both pastoral and laity. Usually the laity gets the kind of leadership it wants. If a church plans for nothing, they can be a success."

He adds, "Our people have sacrificed to grow. Our church has tried to fit into God's redemptive plan, not only in the redeeming of souls, but also in the blessing and changing of lives and lifestyles."

Fast-Growing Church
Number Four:
FIRST INDIAN ROCKS, Largo, Fla.



Charles Martin: "It makes an impression on visitors when someone visits them Monday."

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	197	994
Sunday School members	331	873
Baptisms (1972-1976)		522

AGE OF CHURCH: Nearing 20th birthday, but its growth did not start until seven years ago when it weathered a crisis over "speaking in tongues" and the former pastor left.

LOCATION: On busy four-lane Walsingham Road between beach and causeway to Tampa or St. Petersburg. Bedroom (upper middle class) area for Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater and Largo. Homes in areas valued \$40,000-\$80,000. Almost entire west coast of this area of Florida filled with houses, condominiums, apartments and businesses.

PASTOR: Charles Martin

Age: 32

Education/experience: Attended Bible college four years, did not graduate. Decided degree would benefit him "only to advance ministerially," so has not pursued it.

Became pastor after serving as associate and youth minister; he replaced former pastor, who was asked to resign in controversy over charismatic movement.

Administrative style: Views himself as "easy going leader" but definitely person in

charge. Works through committees who sometimes disagree with him, but no fights occur. Dresses casually during week and most members call him Charlie. "I'm not concerned about what they call me as long as they respect me and do what I say."

Preaching style: Bible-centered. Seeks "positive Christian living style." Strikes out at sin through preaching on abortion, homosexuality, alcohol, but does not major on "being against everything."

Work habits: Preaches, counsels, leads visitation; also teaches "soul-winning." Bible study, other classes and groups. Almost always on call, although deacons handle first contact on pastoral care.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Average age 41; middle class, mostly white members, a few professional people. Education of the adults would include some college.

BUSING: Martin started bus ministry first year of his pastorate; this became catalyst which sparked growth. Once the church had eight buses, now runs only six. These travel within a mile-and-a-half radius. Cutback was caused by space and leadership needs for children's churches. Ten other churches busing into the Indian Rocks community don't bother Martin: "I want this area to be reached for Christ."

"The Bible is central to everything we do, even our social activities. That's the first reason for our growth. The second is the community: it's growing and nobody belongs anywhere," says quiet spoken Charles Martin, for the past seven years pastor of First Baptist Church of Indian Rocks, a suburb of Largo, Fla. The church's growth also flows with the tourists rolling past nearby Disney World to other attractions or moving to winter residences.

VISITATION: Monday night is church-wide visitation. "It makes a real impression on folks when they visit the church on Sunday, and someone is out there on Monday." While adults visit, teenagers study Bible, children attend WMU and Brotherhood organizations and new members are taught by associate pastor.

Bus visitation on Saturday is big day, but other groups visit during week.

MINISTRIES: Deacons have active benevolence ministry, funded by a monthly offering. WMU operates a clothes closet, and has worked with a jail ministry with other churches.

FACILITIES: Needs educational space and auditorium, but worship needs will be met by two services. Immediate plans are for three-story education unit. An attempt to buy five adjacent acres was foiled by the high price; church seeks off-street acreage.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Martin takes a firm stand against "tongues," saying the New Testament experience was like the Mosaic law, "given for a time."

A native of Arkansas, he was baptized in a Southern Baptist church but aligned with independents while doing evangelistic work. Friends turned thumbs down on him when he accepted the post at a Southern Baptist church.

Nevertheless, he has found "90 percent of what I was told about Southern Baptists is not so. The thing I really appreciate about a Southern Baptist church is it is a local, autonomous, independent church that has voluntarily affiliated with the SBC. I would not have believed the freedom I have had, had I not experienced it. The denomination has given us a lot of help."

Martin's marriage collapsed more than a year ago, when his wife who had had years of emotional problems deserted him and their two young children. He secured a divorce, and received the warm support of his congregation. In fact, this has opened an area of ministry to others in a divorce-plagued community.

In the midst of all this, "our church has grown more than ever before," Martin says, "but I've kinda felt like Jacob when he wrestled with the angel, he was used of God after that but he always walked with a limp." ■

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Taking Good News behind bars

By Celeste Loucks

HM Staff
HUNTSVILLE, Tex.—Olympic weightlifter, Paul Anderson, crouched beneath a table holding eight men—seven inmates and Bill Glass—and slowly raised the table with the strength of his muscled

shoulders and back.

Humorist and yo-yo champion, Bunny Martin, threw out a series of one-liners, a few magic tricks and yo-yo stunts: the spider, loop-the-loop. Then he called for a prisoner volunteer. He placed a match in the

volunteer's clenched teeth, and proceeded to strike the match with a flick of the fast-spinning yo-yo.

In the midst of a cheering crowd of women inmates, McCoy McLemore, member of the NBA champion Milwaukee Bucks, played

one-on-one with a tall, aggressive woman inmate. It was a fast-paced contest with floor-pounding dribbles and quick rebounding.

Good-naturedly, McLemore's winded op-

ponent reached out her long fingers to grasp his hand in a tight hand-shake. A white smile cut across his face. The inmates applauded.

McLemore says he plays basketball for the Lord. It's not just talk. He does.

He and the other slate of athletes and personalities were in the prison facilities of the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC) in August to use their talents to touch prisoner lives for Christ through a "total person" weekend prison crusade led by Bill Glass, himself a former All-pro defensive end-turned evangelist.

But the program was more than low-key talks by Glass or entertainment and hard-hitting Christian witness from the headlines. At the conclusion of each presentation, lay volunteers sitting among the inmates, were on hand to share Scripture, to pray, to counsel, one-on-one.

Two hundred lay people, among them doctors, engineers, salesmen, housewives, students, retirees and a few former inmates, had paid their own ways (from as far as Washington, Florida and Ohio) to come to Huntsville for the opportunity to share Christ. It was the largest group to assemble for a prison crusade.

And while the weekend was preceded by months of planning and prayer, and although Glass had conducted up to 25 similar crusades, none knew exactly what to expect when they climbed into the yellow TDC buses and headed for three prisons: Goree, housing 550 women; Ferguson, with 1,600 first-time male offenders, aged 17 to 21; and Wynne, with about 1,800 older men inmates.

Said a volunteer from



Martin strikes a match with a flick of his yo-yo.



"Would you like to ask Jesus into your heart?"

Mississippi: "My husband and I asked God to put us to use. I haven't been down the path these people have been. But it's the same Jesus who will set them free."

At Ferguson, rain poured down on the inmates gathered in the prison yard, so after about 15 minutes, 1,158 of the young men regrouped in the Ferguson gym. Dressed in white, rain-dampened cotton shirts and slacks, the men sat for hours on the concrete floor, attentively listening.

"You must never, never give up," Glass said to the sea of young inmates. "If you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on. He urged them to have healthy thoughts and healthy habits, and en-

couraged them to set goals. And he reminded them that God reached out to mankind through the life and death of Christ: "God wanted to talk to man, he wanted to say, 'I love you. I forgive you.'"

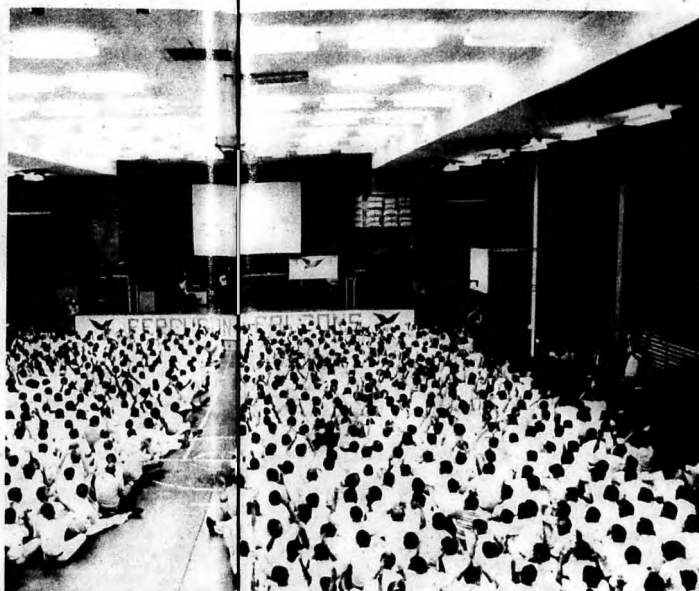
That night, to the surprise of crusade workers and prison officials, hundreds of inmates remained for counseling and prayed to receive Christ. The next evening, as clumps of inmates talked with the counselors, many new Christians gathered around to help witness and pray with their fellow inmates. At Goree, a handful of women counselors and Martin were allowed to visit prisoners in "lock-up" or maximum security. "We're here to share the good news that Jesus

knows where you are and loves you just as you are," Martin told them.

"We love you. We care. That's why we're here." The women inmates, mostly young adults, sat on tables or on the floor, along one wall. As the counselors approached, and began to talk, exchanging names and sharing information, the awkwardness subsided. Some volunteers used booklets with prepared Bible verses to witness. Others did not.

"This is the first time they let us out of lock-up," said one inmate. "My life is miserable," she blurted out. "I cry every day."

"In my distress, I've turned from God," admitted a heavyset woman, her arm dotted with little tattoos. "I feel like I'm



About 1,000 inmates sing along with Olympic gold medalist, Madeline Manning Jackson.

Abraham was no Sunday School boy.

"Do you know what I notice? We all need forgiveness," Glass told them.

And, he insisted, "Every person in this room has value to God. He did not intend for you to mainline. He did not intend for you to prostitute your body. . . . You're creation in his own image."

Among the Glass team was Nick "the Greek" Pirovolos who could identify with inmates through his former life of crime and imprisonment.

In his raspy voice, Pirovolos spoke the prisoners' language. Yet, he could tell firsthand of freedom within prison walls.

"Freedom started when Jesus reached inside my heart," he told several hundred prisoners gathered for the Sunday morning worship. "Jesus signed my pardon."

"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

Response among prisoners was overwhelming. Of the more than 2,000 inmates who heard various Christian testimonies, almost 1,000 made some kind of Christian commitment. Counselors made lists of the responding prisoner names to maintain correspondence with them, and refer names for followup. About 40 Christians in the Huntsville area provide seven weeks followup Bible study and counseling.

Jerry Lundgren, a member of the Glass board, said, "If the prison won't let us have a followup, we won't come in the first place." In some prisons, followup has resulted in long-term Bible studies. "Some followup," he said, "has continued five years later."

Henry Davidson of University Heights Baptist in Huntsville, is one who will be involved. "I retired last year to make my time available to the Lord," the former engineer said. And beside working in Huntsville, Davidson hopes to be in other prison crusades. "I'm looking forward to them calling me from here on out," he said.

When first approached concerning the Glass prison crusade concept, director of chaplains for TDC, Claude Johnston, balked. "I was skeptical," he admitted. "My feeling was that it would be a naive and shallow approach. . . . we would be invaded by 'do-gooders' who would leave in their wake a big mess for us to clean up."

However, when Johnston, a Southern Baptist, found out about the one-to-one sharing and followup, he changed his mind. "I knew this would work."

"The strongest and best thing for helping broken people is interaction with whole people. If we are ever going to rehabilitate inmates, they have to be surrounded and fortified with love."

Impact of the weekend prison ministry was expressed in terms even greater than the numbers. Said Barbara, an inmate serving a three-year sentence at Goree: "You think of people coming in here to see you, like a freak show. It's a different feeling, having people coming in here and trying to relate."

"A whole lot of inmates who haven't been talking about God are talking about God. It has touched a lot of different people I didn't expect it to touch."

"It's kind of different," she said, "having people who care." ●

Lay mission in prison yards, on death row

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—Baptist volunteer layman Ted Landgraf watched as a prisoner with a sweater pulled up over his head walked unwaveringly toward the concertina-topped fence.

Twelve feet before the prisoner reached the fence, Landgraf grabbed him by the sweater: "Hold on, and let me talk to you a few minutes—before you go over that fence."

The prisoner, Salvatore Pasatore, sentenced to 123 years in prison, may have been surprised by Landgraf's perception. Later, Pasatore admitted he thought, "I'll hit the fence and they'll shoot me down and get it over with."

Although he may have wanted to pull away—and although he argued with Landgraf, "What's the use? I've lost everything, my family, my friends. I've got no reason to live," Pasatore listened.

"Nothing is so bad that you can't give me five minutes of your time. Then I'll let you do what you want," Landgraf told him.

The two men sat down on the bottom row of bleachers and talked about the meaning of the Christian life. And that afternoon, 38-year-old Salvatore made a profession of faith. "We were emotionally high,"

Landgraf recalled. "We were sitting there, crying like babies, hugging each other around the neck."

Pasatore later was paroled, got a job in New Orleans and joined a church. The two men have maintained correspondence. Insists Pasatore, "The day I met Ted, I was gone—it was over. I wasn't a Christian, but he tells me he loves me."

Pasatore is only one of the prisoners touched by Landgraf who recently took an early retirement from a managerial position with Southern Bell, so he could spend more time with Florida prisoners.

One of his regular visits is to R-wing, or death row. Some of the men respond. Some don't. Landgraf is able to sign up some for Bible study courses. One prisoner on death row learned to read and write since he became a Christian. He's completed six Bible correspondence courses, and his ongoing goal is to "learn more about the Lord."

Chaplain Austin Brown said there are more professions of faith in maximum security and death row because the men "have more time to do some serious thinking."

Brown called volunteers, like Landgraf, "miniature pastors, death row chaplains."

"Ted's really got rapport with these guys. No matter what they say, he doesn't give up on them."

Like other prison volunteers, Landgraf has been cursed, ridiculed, spat upon and even encircled by a dozen testy Black Muslims determin-



Landgraf shares the gospel.

Ken Touchton Photo

ed to convert him to their faith. Yet, the 63-year-old persists in his work. "I'm not going to live many more years," he philosophizes. "This gives me the opportunity to do more work for the Lord." •

Adapted from *More Than Just Talk*, written by Tim Nicholas, photographed by Ken Touchton. Copyright © 1977 by the Home Mission Board, SBC.

Bible course shares "freedom" with inmates

ATLANTA, Ga.—Requests for the Bible Correspondence Course come from 97 prisons across the United States.

The requests come from educated offenders and those just learning to read; from Christians and those inquiring into Christianity; from some on death row.

An example is a request mailed from the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in McAlester: "Here I sit in prison with 35 years to do," writes the Oklahoma inmate. "I tried to rob a store and got myself in more trouble than before."

"All my life, I made the wrong choice. And each time turns out worse than before. Now the time has come for me to make another choice, and this time, I can't go

wrong. I have asked God to take over my life, I've asked him to teach me how to serve him."

"I ask you to please send me this Bible course, so that I may feed this great hunger for God's word. God bless you, brother, for making it possible for others like myself to be able to receive the Word. Please write soon. . . ."

According to Lillian Scott, Bible course coordinator, the department of evangelism development currently has enrolled 1,080 prisoners in the Correspondence Bible Course, which was begun more than 30 years ago.

Referrals of inmate names are made through prison chaplains, pastors or laypersons doing volunteer work with prisoners. Or,

requests come directly from prisoners, themselves.

The course begins with a small, red-covered booklet—a 36-page lesson 1 of book 1. The course consists of 48 lessons from a total of seven books, beginning with reading material and questions about the life of Christ as presented through the four gospels, continuing through the New Testament and moving through Old Testament studies.

At completion of each lesson, the correspondent receives a small, gold-colored certificate. A large certificate of completion, hand-signed by Scott, Frank Crumpler, director of the course, and C.B. Hogue, director of evangelism at the Home Mission Board, is presented at the end of the entire study. •

John the Baptist

By John Havlik
Evangelism Leader Editor

Ethics and evangelism are both grounded in the nature of God. The most important thing Jesus did was show us what God is like. Even his death and resurrection are revelations of his essential nature. His teaching, and especially such important passages as the parable of the Good Samaritan, the lost boy in Luke 15, his conversation with the woman in the house of the Pharisee—all of these serve to point up that Jesus was very concerned that we know what God is like. The Pharisees had their concept of God. There were other concepts of God that were very widespread in the ancient world.

But Jesus came to tell us what the God of the Bible, the God of revelation, and the God of creation is really like.

Jesus did not engage in any of the technical jargon of either the theologian or the ethicist. He just said, "God is like a certain man who had two sons."

He said God is not like the heartless and corrupt judge who is only moved by the importunity of a woman, but God is a Father who acts speedily on behalf of his children. All of this simply serves to point to one thing—God is concern. It is not just that he cares. He IS concern. Perhaps this is another way of saying that God is love.

When Christianity was launched in the New Testament world, it quite naturally came into conflict with other faiths. The most prevalent faith was probably stoicism, the most apt teacher of stoicism, Epictetus. The stoics said God is "apetheia"; apathy. God just doesn't care.

Epictetus even gave his disciples exercises in unconcern: He told them how to look at the body of a dead pet and say over and over again, "I don't care." He taught them to look at the lifeless body of a favorite servant and say, "I don't care," and finally to confront deaths of family members and say, "I just don't care." Of course this faith isn't extinct—its modern counterpart is in many Oriental mystics. Many young people have found these mystics quite attractive. They contradict values of youth of the sixties, to be concerned.

The Christian ethicist and evangelist say something to youth, today, in regard to the nature of God. God got involved with humanity because he cares.

Everything Jesus said and did was to show us that God cares, that God is concerned. In the Old Testament, we have such beautiful passages as the Exodus. God heard and God saw, and then finally God came down in answer to the cry of his people. This is a parable of the cross because God heard, God listened to cries of the world, and God got involved. This is the essence of the cross.

God's concern is a point of beginning for both the Christian ethicist and the Christian evangelist. The concerned Christian evangelist is not going to manipulate persons into making decisions. The ethicist who knows the caring love of God will not be blind to all the good that Christian evangelism has done for humanity, will not close his eyes to the fruit of Christian evangelism through the centuries because he dislikes some evangelistic methods. He will be aware that some of the peo-

ple who most heroically and sacrificially evidenced that concern about people were evangelists such as Shaftesbury, John Wesley, Whitefield, and many others since then. He will not be blind to the fact that William Ashley Sunday, in spite of not being a theologically trained man, many times during his crusades preached on civil rights, women's rights, prison reform, the terrible effects of alcoholism.

Man is made in God's image—in the image of the God he worships. If Jesus Christ is Lord, then, we are sure to have evidences of Christlike character and conduct. Rather than measuring our lives by some outward standards of religion or religious behavior, or fitting ourselves into some cultural pattern, we will make the acid test of Christianity: Do we possess the nature of God? Are we like God? Once we can agree on this premise—on the fact that God is concern and that God really cares about us, individual human beings—this gives a common beginning for the Christian ethicist and the Christian evangelist, and will keep us from straying in one direction or another.

Hope centers on laity

TOCCOA, Ga.—The National Renewal Evangelism Conference addressed a variety of topics, including stress in ministry, culture/church confrontation and the link of lay renewal to lay volunteer missions.

Reid Hardin, director of renewal evangelism at the Home Mission Board, also reported emphasis on student and youth renewal.

Gene Garrison, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Okla., who presented a daily message to conferees, said the hope of the church was centered around the awakening of the laity.

Hardin indicated a "strong, favorable response" to discussions by Mary and Jim Tillman concerning the need for the church to understand and transcend the social structure in order to be an effective witness. "There was a readiness on the part of the lay-

people to confront the culture," Hardin said.

Richard McKay, a Southern Baptist chaplain, helped people analyze sources of stress, such as overscheduling, then provided formulas and remedies for stress in ministry.

"We touched a sensitive nerve in the pastoral ministry," said Hardin. "A small group of former (divorced) wives of pastors, discussed the hurt of ministers who are divorced and 'put on the shelf.'" He said they saw hope through the dynamics of lay renewal in "reinvigorating and reclaiming these people."

Hardin also said there was discussion of using lay renewal conferences in scattered geographic areas as training bases for Mission Service Corps. Laypersons returning from volunteer mission work could report their experiences at these meetings.

From criminal to staff evangelist; Coss received Presidential pardon

By Celeste Loucks
HM Staff

DEL CITY, Okla.—Richard Coss' rap sheet read like a police drama script. In 11 years, he had been arrested 32 times. Coss started floating checks at age 16. Other charges varied from assault to car theft (more than 30 cars) to burglary. He was what prison authorities referred to as a "bitch"—a habitual criminal—not to be rehabilitated.

The muscular, red-haired Coss was a tough con artist, who had worked his way from reform school in Waukesha, Wis., to the Chihuahua state prison in Juarez, Mexico, to the Federal Reformatory in El Reno, Okla.

In El Reno, his life pattern was broken.

Curiosity led him to a religious meeting in prison, held by the Christian Business Men's Committee International.

"I attended, to break the monotony of prison life," admitted Coss. And when a Southern Baptist deacon in the group, Horace Hilton, took a special interest in Coss, the young inmate asked, "Why did you come here to talk to me?"

"He told me, 'I love you.' It was the first time in 24 years that someone said that—and I believed it."

"You've heard the cliché, you can't con a con. He (Hilton) wasn't plastic, he wasn't phoney. I knew that man was real, he really loved me. Behind that, was Christ."

Although he grew up down the street from a church, Coss claimed that afternoon in prison was the first time he had been told about Christ, and the gift of spiritual life.

"Although I had never heard the gospel before, I knew, suddenly, I had found what I had been searching for."

Earlier, Coss considered the Bible a book for "good people. I felt the Bible didn't deserve me reading it." After the encounter with Christ, he began reading the Bible, studying every Bible correspondence course



Coss says, "Prison was good for me..."

he could get his hands on. He led his three cellmates to Christ. "I know where they are today: serving Christ," he says.

And, he can say, "Prison was good for me. It's where I became a Christian." Besides his spiritual "pardon" in 1975, after an extensive FBI investigation, Coss received a "full and unconditional pardon" from President Gerald Ford—one of three granted. On January 15, 1976, he received a warrant of executive clemency.

Today, Coss works out of a small upstairs office in an annex of the First Baptist Church of Del City, Okla. His title is minister of special ministries and staff evangelist. His work includes ministry to inmates; preaching and revivals in prisons and jails; personal and Bible correspondence; parole advisor; book and tape ministry; inmate family counseling; prison newsletter; and

tract ministry to prisoners in other countries.

He also reaches confused young people involved in drugs, and at the fringe of crime in Oklahoma City. One such young man is currently enrolled at a Southern Baptist seminary.

Coss pointed out the various prisoner rehabilitation programs which have failed, and believes there is a new openness among prison officials to offer prisoners opportunity for change through spiritual conversion. "Some are taking the stand it's time to get back to the Bible," he said.

Comparing the response he has received in prisons, to churches, Coss said in a church he can "preach his heart out" and have few persons receive Christ. However, at prisons, "You don't need to tell these people they are sinners. They know that." And among prisoners, he doesn't find the stigma of admitting to sin. "They have no community standing," he said with a grin.

On the walls of his office, and in manila folders are pictures and writings from prisoners Coss works with. He pointed to a striking pencil drawing of Christ, a glass etching. He talked about the extensive talent behind bars which could be set free, through Christ.

He encourages Christians to become involved in prison ministry. "Start in small city jails," he said. "Find Gideons or some Christian already involved, to see how they work." Then, he said, "I feel if God is leading them, they'll find an open door."

Coss admitted there will be disappointments. The prisoners can be rude and rejecting. "You're going to get burnt—be ready for it."

Yet, other prisoners, like Coss, will be waiting and receptive. He told about a prisoner who had read material mailed through the prison ministry and later wrote, pleadingly, "Richard, I am in the same boat you were. I had never heard the gospel. Why doesn't someone come, and save me?" ■

Update

Team approach used at seminar

SHOCCO SPRINGS, Ga.—Glenn and Jackie Shepard of Lawrenceville, Ga., teamed as speakers for a young adult seminar here in September. Shepard discussed lifestyle evangelism with the men, with suggestions for witnessing through business contacts, in the home and through the church. His wife presented ideas for women to witness within their communities and through their homes. The meeting attracted key young adult couples from churches throughout Alabama.

Southern offers PhD in evangelism

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Southern Baptist Seminary will be the first SBC seminary—perhaps the first seminary in the nation—to offer a doctor of philosophy degree in evangelism. Program director will be Lewis Drummond, Billy Graham professor of evangelism. In addition to the doctorate, the seminary also offers a master of theology and doctor of ministry in evangelism.

Apartment evangelism discussed

NEWARK, N.J.—Theology for apartment evangelism, apartment dweller characteristics and needs, and the personality of apartment ministers were among topics discussed at the November conference on apartment evangelism. Speakers included Daniel Sanchez, Jack Lowndes, Jon Meek and John Havlik.

Conference seminars scheduled

■ The annual meeting for evangelism will be Dec. 11-14 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City. About 100 state evangelism directors, evangelism associates, interns and seminary professors of evangelism are expected to attend. Speakers will include Grady Cothen,

president of the Sunday School Board; Tom Elliff, pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla.; Bill Pinson, president of Golden Gate Seminary; Jimmy Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Convention; and Jim Henry, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla.

■ A seminar for beginning vocational evangelists will be Jan. 16-20 in Bolivar, Mo. Co-sponsored by the HMB department of mass evangelism and the Evangelism Institute of Southwest Baptist College, the seminar is designed to meet needs of high school, college and seminary students as well as pastors considering vocational evangelism.

■ A Doctrine of Man Seminar is scheduled for Feb. 3-4 at Nashville, Tenn. William L. Hendricks, author of *The Doctrine of Man*, will lead the seminar in thematic study of creation, unique personhood, sin, salvation, sanctification. The week of April 17-21 is suggested time for "Baptist doctrine" study of the book in local churches. Additional information may be obtained from the Adult Section, Church Training Department, Baptist Sunday School Department. Cassette and study aids are available.

■ A book about evangelism, *More Than Just Talk*, uses 40 percent text and 60 percent photographs to delve into the lives of six evangelism-minded Christians, from a Kentucky pastor, to a mental health lay renewal worker to a Texas cowboy. It concludes with a chapter on trends in the HMB's Evangelism Section. Author is Tim Nicholas; photographer, Ken Touchton. It is available for \$6.95 at Baptist Book Stores. (The chapter on Ted Landgraf is excerpted in this issue of EL.)

Revival in Alaska touches Georgia Baptists

By Jan Trusty
Evangelism Division
SALCH, Alaska—When approached by the Home Mission Board's department of mass evangelism to participate in simultaneous revivals in Alaska, Ken Ross hesitated.

"Our church building, destroyed by fire, had only recently been reconstructed, and I felt my asking for an additional \$800 to preach thousands of miles away would be an imposition."

However, his congregation at Milner, Ga., voted to help pay expenses through missions funding.

So, the tall, lean Ross

packed his suitcases and headed to part of the frozen north—Salch, Alaska.

Located about 30 miles outside Fairbanks, Salch remains an area almost untouched by modern conveniences. Ross called the people living in the snow-covered area, "America's last pioneers." It amazes me that couples come here, buy acreage, build a small house and just start living in this vast openness.

For a week, Ross held services in a small, community church. Sitting on hard, homemade pews, the people listened

to the soft-spoken preacher.

"The community has no social structure and its people, alert, strong-willed and educated, know how to worship together," observed Ross. The average attendance at meetings was 10, but he said, "That isn't bad, considering the total membership is only 16."

When Ross completed his work and returned to Georgia, he felt mixed emotions: "Walking back into our new church building with its steeple and padded pews made me feel a little guilty," he admits, "but at the same time I was literally bubbling with excitement."

Ross shared his experiences with the people at Milner Baptist Church. As a result, he believes they have become more mission-hearted. Financial gifts to missions have increased about 40 percent and individual members participate more actively in church and local mission programs.

He encourages others to become involved in simultaneous revival projects in pioneer areas. "Even if it means scrimping and borrowing the money himself," he said, "it is one of the biggest thrills of my life, to see and be a part of missions in action." ■

Student renewal combines rush, retreat, revival

TEMPE, Ariz.—The program was simple, the setting, austere: a couple of tall chairs, three microphones, a piano and a blackboard with the chalked message: RENEWAL.

Sitting on the carpeted floor, about 100 students from eight of the "Son Valley" colleges and universities, gathered for a renewal weekend. Some had driven as far as 40 miles to attend the meeting at the newly constructed Baptist Campus Ministries building near Arizona State University in Tempe.

Despite polished music and well-organized program, spontaneity pervaded the three-day event. The mood surprised some. But, Bill Mathis, a student at Mesa Community College, commented, "The informal atmosphere says, 'We're going to let God lead and control as he wants.'"

The atmosphere is informal enough so that we can be ourselves and... have the freedom to share Christ, and feel the Holy Spirit, to follow as the spirit moves."

Joe Ford, guest speaker, and director of young adult evangelism at the Home Mission Board, complemented the spirit, often sitting on the floor and joining students in the small group discussions.

Intermittent testimonies shared with the large group, also reflected the mood, with candid and open expression of spiritual growth.

"Did you ever have a dream smashed," asked one of the speakers who recounted a time of floundering and searching for God's direction.

"Did you ever feel like the world is a black tux-

edo and you're a brown pair of shoes?" asked another, concerning the struggle of the Christian life in a secular setting. "I have a lot of questions," admitted a third speaker. "There is one thing I do understand: a few years ago, I asked Jesus to come into my life—and he did."

The openness carried over into the small circles of students gathered cross-legged or sprawled on the floor. One girl discussed the blessings eventually growing from the painful divorce of her parents. A new Christian struggled with questions concerning his lifestyle. And there were those who contributed by attentive listening: When called to talk, a barefooted student wearing a striped shirt, grinned shyly, looked down at the ground and nervously wriggled his toes: "I'll think of something, in a minute..."

Dave Bennett, director of the Baptist Campus Ministries, calls the renewal a combination of

"retreat, revival and rush." A colleague, Pam Burton, emphasized that college campuses are "mission fields in our country. Often young people get lost on a big campus. The BSU is a vital place in leading people to the Lord."

Bennett added, "A lot of people don't realize it, but 50 percent of the Southern Baptist seminary students come off of state campuses."

Through the small groups and morning coke parties scattered throughout the Tempe-Phoenix area, the BSU managed to create a sense of closeness among the young people.

Explained Kathy Cross, a senior special education student at ASU, while at school, she sometimes feels ridiculed for her spiritual expression, "Here, I can open up with other Christians."

"A gal told me last night, this is like a family she really needs now," observed Linda Lanham, associate BSU director. "She was involved in a

lot of partying last year."

A young man commented, "I've felt like I've been in a cocoon all my life. God is just now setting me free."

In the course of the meetings, the students also had the opportunity to think creatively about their relationship to God, their Christian commitments.

At one point, they were encouraged to express, through analogy, the kind of Christians they would like to be.

One wanted his Christian influence to be "like a star, dazzling and visible"; another said, "like a mountain...so people could stand at the top and see life clearly"; another, like salt, "so when others tasted, they would become thirsty for the water of life."

At the conclusion of the meeting, Bennett who launched student renewal as director of BSU in Springfield, Mo., expressed satisfaction. "God's done something that we haven't seen around the Valley in years." ■

Students from eight colleges and universities joined in the renewal at the BSU in Tempe, Ariz.



Fast-Growing Church Number Five:

GLENVIEW, Ft. Worth, Tex.

Recently Stan Jones preached about "the death of a vision" to the people of Glenview Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Tex. The sermon related to

the fact that with its active bus ministry, the church's growth had outrun its supply lines.

"We just had oversuccess, and our

people and staff were discouraged as a direct result of one arm of the ministry growing to the neglect of other arms," says Jones.

As a result, the church pulled back. "We were willing to say 'whoa,' to admit we had some holes in our bucket. Now I think we will explode in an adult ministry and we will be right back out there looking for new routes. We'll be running 1,500 in Sunday School in the next two years. But we'll keep things in balance."

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS: 1972 1976

Total membership 796 1756

Sunday School members 725 1790

Baptisms (1972-1976) 746

AGE OF CHURCH: 14 years.

LOCATION: In a suburb north of city; expects additional development soon. The church is two blocks from the major loop surrounding Fort Worth, and is on a street soon to be enlarged to four lanes.

PASTOR: Stan Jones.

Age: Late 30s

Education/experience: College and seminary degrees.

Administrative style: Strong leader. Jones is not a "dictator" but says his role is that of God's man, the spiritual leader of the flock.

Preaching style: Primarily expository, although Jones does some topical preaching on such things as the work of the Holy Spirit, faith and repentance. Normally, he is a verse-by-verse, phrase-by-phrase and word-by-word preacher.

Work habits: Not a workaholic. He devotes time to family, seeing his number one role as "being a real spiritual leader in the home." He credits Bill Gothard's Institute of Basic Youth Conflicts for changing his views on that aspect of his life and ministry.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Primarily upper middle class, although the church has several black members—all teenagers—and some in lower socio-economic classes. Jones says he dreams of a day when the church will be made up of people from all walks of life.

BUSING: Extremely active, with 15 buses and three vans bringing in 55-60 percent of Sunday School attendance. Pulling back, however, from 12 to seven routes and concentrating on quality rather than quantity in its bus ministry.

VISITATION: Aggressive, with some 110 persons visiting on a regular weekly basis. The church uses a modification of Evangelism Explosion for some visitation, and frequently has door-to-door canvassing to saturate an area.

MINISTRIES: Primarily evangelistic, with the church performing social ministries on a

"minister-as-you-go" basis. It also has a school going through junior high age.

FACILITIES: Cramped for space, with a row of houses converted into classrooms for school and Sunday School. The church plant has been appraised at \$1,850,000. It also has a printing ministry for churches and evangelistic associations and provides office space for three vocational evangelists and support facilities for three more, all of whom are members of the church.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Jones says he sees "a correlation in the unity of our church, our fellowship, and the growth."

"We also are a young church, and there was no tradition. For better or worse, the church is what I make of it, what I lead it to be. It behooves me to bare my heart to my people. They love me and pray for me, and when I realize they are following me like that, it scares me that I might not respond to their needs."

Stan Jones: "For better or worse, the church is what I make of it, what I lead it to be."



Fast-Growing Church
Number Six:
WILLIAMS BLVD., Kenner, La.

Recognizing the need to "minister to families," Buford Easley has taken a struggling, young church and "turned

it around," says New Orleans acting director of missions Nolan Johnson. In his six years in Kenner, La., a

New Orleans suburb, Easley has helped Williams Blvd. Baptist Church grow from 125-130 attending to almost 1,000 in worship each week. Its Spanish congregation, under Home Mission Board missionary David Lema, tops 100 regularly. "The church was without a pastor for more than a year before I came," says Easley. "The people wanted the church to grow. But they didn't until we built a warm, caring fellowship. That's the key to it."



Buford Easley: "We major on fellowship evangelism. We take time to reach people."

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	564	1237
Sunday School members	602	1448
Baptisms (1972-1976)	565	

AGE: Mission, 1958. Organized 1967.
LOCATION: Corner Interstate 10 and Williams Blvd., a main intersection convenient to almost all New Orleans. New \$45,000-up homes behind church; largest high school in parish within 15 blocks (new); large middle school nearby. Older, middle-class homes to east. Expensive subdivisions; several apartment complexes nearby. The growing area of metropolitan New Orleans.
PASTOR: Buford Easley.
Age: 36.

Education/experience: D Min from New Orleans seminary. Four college seminary pastorates. First full-time pastorate is Williams Blvd.

Administrative style: "Buford brought a whole new attitude of success," says director of missions Johnson. "He's a unique personality; he leads the church," says a deacon.

Preaching style: Expository. Highly emotional. "If you are proud to be a member of

this church, say 'Amen.' " "Amens" from the entire congregation. Sometimes early.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Middle- and upper-middle class area but church "basically blue collar." Many families from religiously "mixed marriages." Heavy orientation to families. Children of Spanish-speaking members attend English-language Sunday School.

BUSING: Some half-dozen buses run regular Sunday routes, but "they limit it to their own community," says director of missions Johnson. "We don't push the bus ministry very much," says Easley. "We don't have adequate staff to do much more than we do now." Only "successful" door-to-door visitation has been for bus ministry.

VISITATION: Mostly follow-up on church visitors or names of members' friends/acquaintances. Half-dozen women visit on Tuesday a.m.; 20-25 young people, equal number adults visit Thursday night. Extensive records kept; pastor knows disposition of each visit. No special visitor recognition in services. No "cold door knocking."

MINISTRIES: In addition to the Spanish-language work, begun about six months after Easley's arrival, the church sponsors:

- Special class for retarded children, plus classes for children with special-ed needs. These are conducted by school system.
- Two "rest home" ministries: these are "fellowship services."
- Active music program, drawing number of youth from community.
- FACILITIES:** 1,200-seat auditorium; 85 classrooms. Church plans more classrooms. "We've peaked, reached a plateau. We're using all our space. We're going to hold on until spring, when we'll build. Then we'll have another push."

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Despite admitting "it's inevitable that as the man in the pulpit goes, so goes the church," Easley believes Williams Blvd. has "come of age" because of active laypersons. "The burden is on the laymen who are here to stay; the staff comes and goes. Now Williams Blvd. can depend on laymen for leadership."

The process of building leadership has taken much of Easley's time. Church's growth didn't begin until second year of his pastorate, when his idea of ministering to "couples in classes together" mushroomed from the original two or three to more than 75 in eight months. "That's basically when we started to grow."

The large numbers of nominal Roman Catholics—"about 30-40 percent of the people I baptize come from Catholic backgrounds"—and religiously mixed marriages made the church a haven for those couples without local membership.

Easley stresses "fellowship (cultural) evangelism. We take time to reach people." Staff is small, two are part-time.

Surrounded by growing suburbs, Williams Blvd. has been in Louisiana Baptists' top ten past two years in Sunday School numerical growth and net gain in membership. (Another church in Kenner, also in top ten.)

"Buford is solid, not gimmicky," says director of missions Johnson. "He doesn't use a lot of 'personality days' or headlines or special 'high' Sundays to stimulate outreach."

The key, admits Easley, "is the minister. But if he can't motivate the laypeople, it won't be done. Because ultimately, it has to be done by the laymen. Church growth depends on them."

Fast-Growing Church
Number Seven:
WESTSIDE, Natchitoches, La.

When a tornado ripped Natchitoches, La., in 1974, Westside Baptist Church was almost destroyed. But

rising from the rubble has been a "rebuilt" church, both in physical plant and congregational spirit.

"The Lord did in five weeks what we'd planned to do in five years," says the current pastor, who was in his fifth week at the church when the tornado hit. In the weeks following the disaster, attendance climbed from 70 to more than 150.

The church began busing and an ambitious television ministry, including operating the town's only cable station, at this time. And those factors combined to send Westside on a three-year upward spiral.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	438	1034
Sunday School members	198	712
Baptisms (1972-1976)	281	

AGE OF CHURCH: 50 years.

LOCATION: On main thoroughfare. But on west edge of city growing eastward. Neighborhood changing. Housing aging and businesses moving in around church. Some low-rent apartments.

PASTOR: Dwight St. Andre.

Age: 44.

Education/experience: College BA. Working on degree from Luther Rice seminary. Retired from Air Force after 20 years. Active in all areas of church work while in AF; lay pastor since 1961. "How do you evaluate that kind of education?" First full-time pastorate.

Administrative style: Authoritarian, although the church "has called his hand" on several projects, says one source. Has two sons on staff (by church invitation). "We know (the church's growth) is built on our personality, our psychology of life. But we hope we've instilled a seed...given the congregation a vision of what it can do. But no concept we've followed has brought the church where it is. The pastor has to have a desire to reach people. He has to believe God has given him the place and God thinks he's capable of doing the job."

Preaching style: Expository. Conservative.

Work habits: "We work a 24-hour day, sometimes literally." 18-20 hours common.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: "Strong family church, mostly blue collar." Ministries to elderly and youth have increased attendance; youth at 200 from 12 on first Sunday of 1974. Some students from Northwestern (La.) University. Built on "Joe Average Citizen."

BUSING: Started in 1974 with four buses. Has caused some tension among local pastors with city-wide bus routes. But St. Andre insists "we needed the buses for youth. We didn't want to develop a children's program but that happened." Has children's church. "We use the child to reach the family."

VISITATION: Very active. In services, often

spends 15-20 minutes "introducing visitors, getting acquainted." City of 18,000, about half white, "still having first-time visitors." Deacons use "Family Ministry Plan."

MINISTRIES: Extensive. During first weeks, St. Andre "looked at the community" to determine needs. "I believe in ministry." He's responded with:

- Day-care, meeting daily. Most come from "outside church family."
- Church camp: Westwind. Used by more than 2,000 in summer 1977. Available to any church group.
- Television, described as "key to our growth." Owns only cable station in city, broadcasts more than 40 hours weekly. In addition to Westside services and religious talk shows, broadcasts services of local black Baptists, community service programs, local high school football, etc. Audience estimated as high as 7,000 of potential 10,000 on cable. "It's one of our strongest elements. It's given us a lot of influence."

• Seniors programs, crafts, devotionals.

• Church facilities also used by other groups for meetings, programs, with stipulation "they have devotional and prayer time." In three years, staff has jumped from one to 19.

FACILITIES: After tornado, with less than 100 members active, built 750-seat auditorium, now filled on Sunday a.m. Tried two services but "my people didn't want it." Now looking for land on east side of town to build.

"We need more room to reach out. We want to minister to 2,500 members."

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: St. Andre's aggressiveness has helped in growth, but also caused hard feelings among local ministers. "The Lord's in the work of the church," says one, "but I'm not sure he wants to go as fast as Bro. Dwight."

Some question growth—1,000 new members in three years—has been spurious. But St. Andre has extensive training programs for new members. "He's thorough," says another. "He's a fine administrator."

Yet Nelson and others think Westside "needs to stabilize and evaluate."

Himself a Natchitoches native, St. Andre remembered Westside as a strong 250-member church. He returned to find it down to 80 in attendance.

"The church family was dormant, but ready to come alive." "New programs" excited them, we started loving them and fellowshiping with them—people had faith and began to catch the vision. Trusting "the people will come," St. Andre started a number of ministries simultaneously. And succeeded. "Where do you stop leading?" St. Andre asks. "Where do they balk? Where is the apex of my ministry based on my ability? Every once in a while I feel so inadequate." But he adds, "I believe I'm where I'm supposed to be."

Dwight St. Andre: "Where do you stop leading? Where do they balk? Where is the apex...?"



Fast-Growing Church
Number Eight:
GREEN ACRES, Warner Robins, Ga.

The word "expectancy" surfaces throughout any conversation with Terry Taylor, pastor of Green Acres

Baptist Church at Warner Robins, Ga., especially when he is talking about the fast-growing congregation

on the northwest edge of the town that Robins Air Force Base built. "If our people came on Sunday and someone did not get saved or we did not baptize someone, they would go home disturbed, asking God what was wrong. This atmosphere of expectancy builds momentum. It's healthy," Taylor explains in his intense, soft-spoken way.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	802	1641
Sunday School members	554	1520
Baptisms (1972-1976)		850

AGE OF CHURCH: 12 years.
LOCATION: On 20-acre site in recently developed Green Acres section on northwestern edge of city of middle class whites with small black neighborhood east of church. Community includes apartments, mobile homes, few older houses. New shopping centers and some scattered businesses service the area. A nursing home sits across from church auditorium.
PASTOR: Terry Taylor, a West Virginian.
Age: Early 30s.
Education/experience: College, seminary degrees.
Administrative style: Taylor feels everything rises and falls with leadership and the pastor is the leader. He did not choose "to be captain." God called him. Staff members in education, youth, music see

their roles as an extension of the pastor's ministry. "I don't think a preacher ought to be a dictator, but I think he ought to be a leader," Taylor says. "I don't want to push the people. I want to lead them."
Preaching style: "I am very fundamental," he explains. Preaches expositorially, on Wednesday nights preaches through book of Bible. At some times preaches themes, such as "Night Scenes from the Bible." Topics include the cross, the second coming.
Work habits: Seven days a week, although tries to take a day off, usually without success. He teaches classes on Sunday nights, through week, and directs bus ministry. "I'm not afraid to sweep the porch or sand a bus," he says. "People like to see a preacher with dirt under his fingernails."
MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Primarily civil service employees at Robins AF Base, mostly white but some blacks. Buses bring 15-20 black children each Sunday. Sunday School includes German class for wives who married military men in Germany.

BUSING: From one bus five years ago, 10 routes and 12 buses. Each route enlists about 35 riders, with 15-20 first-timers. Bus promotion has included Rodeo Sunday and Gorilla Sunday, when those enlisting others were given plastic gorillas. Two leftovers serve Taylor as bookends.

Taylor says three words characterize busing: work, work, work. It's hardest work of any phase of church life, and people must be dedicated to sacrifice their Saturdays for visitation. He says bus ministry has many pitfalls, unless church program well balanced. Large numbers of children, without enough workers, strain church finances. "Our ministry is just one of six major outreach programs," Taylor explains.
VISITATION: Four per week.
MINISTRIES: Taylor repeats a saying, "Our ministry includes 'soup, soap and salvation.' Soup if they're hungry, soap if they're dirty, salvation if they're lost. We try to minister to the whole person." Primary objective is to win persons to Christ, knowing that will help them emotionally and physically. Strong recreation program for youth, ministries to three nursing homes, including buses for outings and shopping.

FACILITIES: New auditorium seats 1,400. Under construction is education building and garage for buses. Church has four other education buildings, including gym. Taylor's dream for the 20 acres includes all types of recreation facilities and a 14-story highrise for elderly, for which the church has applied for \$4 million grant from HUD.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: "We are on the growing edge. There is no way we can predict what God is going to do," says Taylor. "As the Holy Spirit builds the church internally, and we begin to branch out, we are going to have to make a mold to fit what God is doing internally. I don't see any ceiling on growth. Already members drive from as far away as 20 miles. People hear what God is doing, and they come."

Taylor's life was touched by a Baptist minister who left the SBC to pastor independent churches. Taylor wrestled also with leaving, but decided to stay. "If everybody who has strong spiritual convictions and disagrees with certain points pulls out, then the conservative element which our Convention needs so much would be missing."

Terry Taylor: "We are going to make a mold to fit what God is doing. I see no ceiling..."



Fast-Growing Church
Number Nine:
ALLANDALE, Austin, Tex.

Allandale Baptist Church, says pastor Harold O'Chester, is just doing what comes supernaturally.

The Austin, Tex., church, which had been growing steadily, really began to "change seven-and-a-half years ago when God turned me inside out. God first got a man, and then he gave me a plan for winning Austin to Christ," says O'Chester.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	1304	3091
Sunday School members	1669	3026
Baptisms (1972-1976)		1261

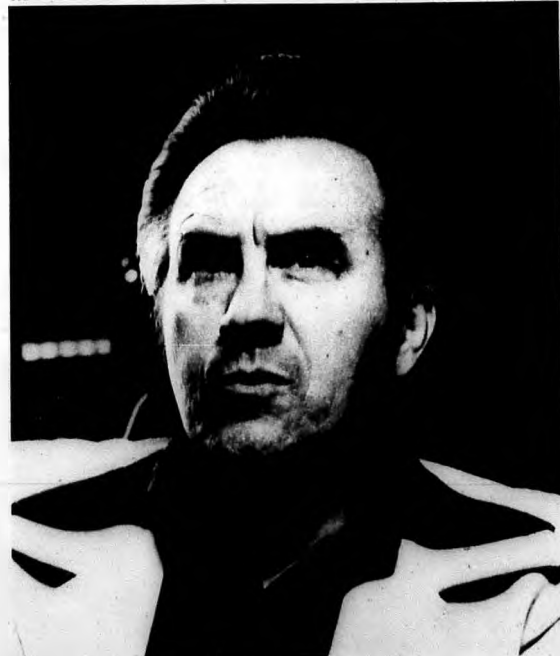
AGE OF CHURCH: Constituted 1950.
LOCATION: In a growing middle-class suburb on the northern side of Austin, capital of Texas. The church is on an expressway loop, and draws people from across the city (pop: 300,000). "We've even got a busload coming in every Sunday from Georgetown (35 miles north of Austin)."
PASTOR: Harold O'Chester
Age: Late 40s.
Education/experience: College and seminary degrees. Was "forced to leave" Mississippi pastorate because of "my views on racial equality." When he came to Allandale, the church had about 300 active members. "It is ironic," O'Chester says, that a pastor almost ruined over a racial incident has pastored a church "that God has blessed with growth."

Administrative style: Authoritarian, but delegates responsibility to staff and church-elected committees.
Preaching style: Expository, with some stop-offs to preach on social topics relating to the congregation. Also, Bible teachers and other specialists often are brought in to conduct special events.
Work habits: Normal, not a workaholic.
MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Largely middle-class white, but has sprinkling of ethnics and blacks, as well as professional categories. Mostly young marrieds with children.
BUSING: Limited, brings in about 140-150 persons per week, mainly children.
VISITATION: "Our visitation program is horrible," says O'Chester. "I used to motivate people to go out there on visitation day, but not now. Our people are out there sharing Christ every single day, sharing him in their lifestyle, with their friends."
MINISTRIES: Evangelistic orientation, but has a private school, singles ministries program, buses, works with Vietnamese and Spanish-speaking people. TV broadcasts Sunday morning services.
FACILITIES: Campus of five buildings, but the church recently bought five houses across the street and plans to buy eight more on a back street. With the additional real estate, O'Chester says the church plans to

build a new auditorium capable of seating 3,500 persons and a family-life center "to minister to the total man."
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: "The key to our success is two-fold," says O'Chester. "First is the Spirit-controlled life. We teach the Spirit-filled life and how to let Christ love others through you. The second thing is a 24-hour a day, seven-day a week intercessory prayer chain which has been going for four-and-a-half years."
O'Chester, who says he was filled with the

Holy Spirit some seven years ago when he "consciously yielded myself to the ministry of the Holy Spirit. I didn't talk in tongues, but... God finally got a man—he always uses a man—and he gave me a plan."
The pastor says the reason the church is growing while others around it die or stagnate is because "we found the secret of spiritual life. And that secret is the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer."
"We are attempting to go before God. We are finite, dealing with the infinite."

Harold O'Chester: "We teach the spirit-filled life and how to let Christ live through you..."



Fast-Growing Church
Number Ten:
BROADWAY, Memphis, Tenn.

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Broadway Baptist Church sometimes is accused of being "an independent Baptist church in Southern Baptist clothing." Pastor Bobby C. Moore realizes some might get that impression of his fast-growing Memphis, Tenn., congregation, but "we don't apologize for being Southern Baptist, but our basic ministry is not to go into a home and say, 'We're Southern Baptist.' We go in and say, 'We're Christians.' We just don't get being Southern Baptist so far out in front that we're more Southern Baptist than we are Christian."

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS: 1972 1976
Total membership 1904 3326
Sunday School members 2144 3377
Baptisms (1972-1976) 845

AGE OF CHURCH: Organized 1923.
LOCATION: Racially and economically changing suburb, Whitehaven, just south of Memphis, Tenn.

PASTOR: Bobby C. Moore, in fourth year.
Age: Late 40s.

Education/experience: Th D. from seminary.

Administrative style: "Every person in this church ought to be an extension of my ministry, but my ministry ought to be an extension of the ministry of Christ," Moore claims. "Even so, I don't ask the church members to do anything I don't do."

Preaching style: "Balanced diet of the word of God." "Services informal, preaching through the books of Bible, but with an evangelistic witness in every service."

Work habits: Spreads himself thin but relishes pastorate, rarely away on Sundays.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Mostly southerners, but a blending of all ages, professions, economic groups. If one group is distinctive, it would be white middle class "average American." Members drawn from four live communities; definitely not neighborhood church. Although some black children and adults attend services, few blacks are members.

BUSING: 18 buses operate throughout metro Memphis. Busing program, begun three years ago, has been called "largest bus ministry in SBC." Buses bring 800-900 persons each Sunday morning, 10-15 percent adults.

VISITATION: Bus workers visit all day Saturday. Minimum of 200 church members visit each week.

MINISTRIES: Several, including:

- Clothing/food closet; assistance with doctor and utility bills.
- Prison ministry: 69 new Christians since beginning in July, 1977.
- Tract distribution.
- Evangelism training classes, taught by pastor; nine months long, they attract some 300-plus adults and youth.

Church also sponsors puppet ministry, a 24-hour prayer line and a tape ministry.

FACILITIES: Full. Church parks everywhere nearby. Worship services for adults, youth, children. Has tried varying schedules to include three Sunday Schools and two worship services but found it fragmented the congregation.

Building plans limited by city ordinance requiring church to own parking space for its members. Congregation plans a "church in two locations," purchasing—it's still an if—52 acres of land in East Memphis and asking 200 families from that area to volunteer to begin new church.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: When Bob by Moore came to Broadway, the church had only one way to go—up. The former pastor had died suddenly of a heart attack; church staff splintered soon afterwards. Congregation had dwindled to "just a few." Yet Moore insists the problems were for a purpose. "Never before have I seen a congregation more willing to follow a pastor. The death of their former pastor had shown them just how important pastoral leadership is," Moore explains.

A couple from a nearby church describes the difference in Broadway and other churches: "Every Sunday we passed Broadway. When the people came out, we noticed how happy they were. We never were that happy after church. We came to Broadway because the people looked happy and we were looking for something to bring us happiness."

Moore says, however, that Broadway doesn't want to take members from other churches: "Almost every Sunday, I say I wouldn't walk across the street to make a Baptist, but I'd walk across town to win somebody to Christ."

Every Sunday, buses from 6-7 other churches pass Broadway, but Broadway doesn't mind. A community survey found that if all the people who attended all the churches were added together, for every person in Sunday School, eight would be elsewhere. "There's plenty of unchurched, unsaved people to go around," one church member explains, "even in an area as heavily church-ed as ours." •

Bobby Moore: "Never before have I seen a congregation more willing to follow a pastor."



Fast-Growing Church
Number Eleven:
EASTWOOD, Tulsa, Okla.

For a year, Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., was without a pastor. During that time, the church con-

ducted a WIN school, held a crusade resulting in 150-160 baptisms and planned a bus ministry.

When the church called young Tom Elliff, he says, "There was one question asked from the floor: 'What is your plan to reach Tulsa for Christ?'"

Elliff, now 33, doesn't remember his answer. But for six years, his 4,000-member congregation has been pursuing that goal.

Eastwood has strong lay leaders; Elliff jokes about the dog who leads by learning "which way the group is going and gets in front," admitting, "That's pretty much what I've had to do with these folks." He believes in the next decade, Eastwood will reach a tenth of the city—50,000 persons.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS: 1972 1976
Total membership 1640 3346
Sunday School members 1522 3957
Baptisms (1972-1976) 1309

AGE OF CHURCH: 21 years.

LOCATION: Along a busy street in a declining neighborhood which recently flooded, resulting in a construction moratorium.

PASTOR: Tom Elliff.

Age: 33.

Education/experience: BA from college; M.Div. from Southwestern seminary.

Administrative style: Enthusiastic leader, but insists: "We do not have a power structure. Nobody says, 'That's not my job description.'"

Preaching style: Animated, expository. Preaching through books of Bible.

Work habits: Hardworking. Remains at church all day Sunday to eat lunch with bus ministry children, counsel, teach class.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Middle class. Yet runs spectrum from wealthy to welfare.

BUSING: 25 church-owned buses, vans and limousine, plus city buses rented to transport members from parking lots and annexes up to several blocks away. "Golden Chariot" has hydraulic lift for non-ambulatory. Van picks up youngsters from local boys home.

VISITATION: Of 200-250 visitors each Sunday, "Each will be contacted by letter, visited by Wednesday and again Saturday."

MINISTRIES: Eastwood's billboards, "Tulsa We Love You," express Elliff's feelings: "You can count on people taking these seriously. We want to minister to the city."

- Deaf work: at least 30 members sign. Called on by police and hospitals to interpret.
- Migrant ministry: Bible school, sewing.
- Work with ex-offenders and families.
- Counseling by 144 qualified laypersons.
- Golden age, single adults and youth.
- Day school, 150 students in kindergarten to eighth grade.
- Health clinic serves 40 persons weekly.
- Crisis closet, legal aid, financial management.

• Radio and TV, including prime-time crusades, several drama/specials.

• Athletic program.

• Internship, in which Eastwood employs a team for a year, then pays for them to work in the pioneer area for a year.

FACILITIES: Inadequate. Remodeled portions, plus use of nearby school auditorium and prelabs, shopping center across street, another several blocks away. Church conducts four Sunday Schools. Considered purchase of 40 acres at \$1.5 million, if people raised \$750,000 in cash. About \$320,000 raised, so Elliff "gave the money back. We're committed to financial freedom."

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Member of another Tulsa church labels Elliff and Eastwood as "competition." He replies: "That makes about as much sense as two ants being in competition over who eats the most of a dead elephant. There's more of Tulsa than either of us is ever going to get."

Currently, families drive up to 100 miles to attend "Exciting Eastwood." One family gets day rates at a local motel and spends Sunday in worship and church activities, then drives back home—to another town. But, Elliff believes, "One of these days, it's going to be impossible for people to get to a church much beyond their neighborhoods."

And, he reasons, "We realize we will never build enough buildings to reach Tulsa for Christ."

As a result, Eastwood is studying the house church concept. "As it gets closer to the coming of Jesus, it's going to be tougher for Christians," he thinks. "It may be unpopular or illegal to have church. If we build our church around the best possible financial and political conditions, then, when that changes, we're gone. We want to develop a system so government, economy and everything else could collapse, but Eastwood church would continue." •

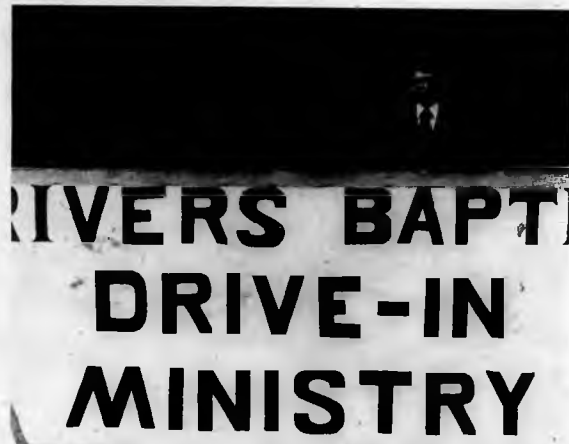
Tom Elliff: "...as much sense as two ants competing over who eats most of a dead elephant."



Fast-Growing Church
Number Twelve:
TWO RIVERS, Nashville, Tenn.

Two Rivers Baptist Church pastor Jim Henry would not allow the church staff to use the word, "problem." "Every situation is an opportunity," he tells them. With that outlook, the church has become a warm, outgoing congregation concerned about people.

Henry has left now, yet the church remains a body of people who "do not know the meaning of 'cannot.'"



Ferris Jordan: "We've wept with one eye... and seen new opportunity with the other."

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS: 1972 1976
Total membership 1418 2877
Sunday School members 1190 2251
Baptisms (1972-1976) 862

AGE OF CHURCH: Organized 1962.
LOCATION: Nashville, Tenn., growing commercial area across parkway from Opryland USA, tourist attractions and new Grand Old Opry.

PASTOR: Until recently, Jim Henry. He resigned to accept Florida pastorate after 12½ years at Two Rivers. He was church's second pastor.

Age: 40s.
Education/experience: College and seminary degrees.

Administrative style: Leadership through

charisma; people believe him and have confidence in his decisions.

Preaching style: "Through the Book."

Work habits: 24-hour-a-day enthusiastic worker.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Primarily Caucasian young adults with children; middle income range drawn from metro area and surrounding counties. "One Sunday, we had members joining from 10 different zip codes," says Ferris Jordan, associate and interim pastor.

BUSING: No.

VISITATION: Active prospect file of 2,000 potential members. During a recent revival, every prospect was visited in a two-week period. Deacons and their yokeloffs responsible for visiting flock members.

MINISTRIES: Active, including a TV ministry with services taped for broadcast later and daily devotionals at 6:10 a.m., viewed by estimated 45,000 persons daily.

Others include: drive-in and campground worship services; recreation and crafts; yokeloffs; discussion classes for "formerly marrieds"; evangelism training; and deaf **FACILITIES:** 35 acres prime commercial land. "We may have some of the most valuable property in the whole country," says Jordan. Old sanctuary and education building, completed in late '60s, very small; Christian Life Center completed 1974 includes gym with jogging track, kitchen, church offices, arts and crafts rooms and shell of educational space now used as 1,000-seat sanctuary. Plans include a children's and preschool building (cost: \$1 million) and new sanctuary.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Fifteen years ago most people thought Two Rivers was "out of its mind" to locate where it did. The church had five acres of land on a dead-end street at the river in a dying suburb of Nashville. Since then, a bridge built across the river and a parkway connecting with interstates have thrust Two Rivers into metropolitan Nashville. Opryland USA, a family entertainment complex, mushroomed across the street. Opryland Hotel, now under construction, may be the largest convention center in Tennessee. Although Two Rivers area is not a growing residential neighborhood, commercial development has emphasized that part of town.

Since 1962, congregation has increased tenfold. Because building program has not kept pace, church mixes and matches congregation needs with new schedules every few months. Recently the church met in three separate morning services and Sunday Schools. Now schedule includes only two. Congregation known for warmth. One outsider says, "It seems they go to a lot of trouble for the sake of the individual."

Former pastor Jim Henry has been gone a short time. But church growth continues. "The people have been able to weep with one eye, and have a sparkle of expectancy with the other eye," says Ferris Jordan. "That makes searching for a new pastor not a problem, but an opportunity."

Fast-Growing Church
Number Thirteen:
FIRST, Gahanna, Ohio

"We've hardly begun," admits Jerry Davis, Gahanna, Ohio, pastor. "It's so exciting; it's constantly new. The growth is so fast, we can't even knock

on the doors of all the new homes in the community. It's overwhelming. "We've such great potential for growth. But you can't wait for

biologic growth up here or you'll die. You have to constantly reach new people. You can't be complacent when it comes to evangelism here."

Davis' aggressive, non-complacent, constant reaching has spurred First Baptist of Gahanna to more than double its membership.

Heavily family oriented, First Gahanna attracts, says its native Ohioan pastor and several laypersons, because of its "sweet spirit."

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS: 1972 1976
Total membership 110 322
Sunday School members 110 614
Baptisms (1972-1976) 143

AGE OF CHURCH: First service, 1961 constituted 1963 with 44 charter members.

LOCATION: In heart of Gahanna, a community of 22,000 grown 400 percent 1960-70, a bedroom neighborhood for Columbus. Church site only 10 minutes by car from several major industries and airport, where many members work. Church's five acres across from three schools, near city administration building.

PASTOR: Jerry L. Davis
Age: 36.

Education/experience: Managed large discount store before entering ministry. Returned to college '69, earned BA. Attending seminary when called to First Gahanna.

Administrative style: Small staff (only recently hired associate for music/youth). Member assesses: "Davis practices what he preaches. He sets a personal example for the members." Davis believes his role is to "equip the saints for ministry," wants to delegate "as much responsibility as folks are willing to assume."

Preaching style: "Series sermons," by books of Bible or topics (as "angels and demons"). "I preach for decisions." At same time, tries not to neglect "Christian growth."

Work habits: Mornings for study and prayer; meetings many nights, although under his urging the church refrains from night meetings as much as possible Friday-Saturday. Davis feels "Southern Baptists put obstacles in the way of the family with so many meetings."

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Reflects community. Majority out-of-state background, occupations range truck driver to Ph.D. in physics. "They're ordinary working people. If we have any rich people, they haven't come forward."

BUSING: Two, bring about 60 people. Separate children's church. "We don't plan any further bus ministry till we have more space. It would limit our opportunity for growth in other areas, such as outreach among young couples."

VISITATION: Uses "Evangelism Explo-

sion," one hour preparation at church, one- and half hour visitation, return to church for "sharing successes and problems." Estimate dozen visitors per service. Outsider observes "strength in reaching people due substantially to warm welcome, not ignored or overlooked when they visit as newcomers." Davis says, "Majority of the people we win to the Lord are won in their homes and are people we are seeing for the first time."

MINISTRIES: Rents facilities weekdays to pre-school education group.

FACILITIES: Three connected buildings on five-acre lot are inadequate, half-way through Together We Build campaign to construct two-story education unit (20 classrooms, cost: \$175,000).

Pastor wants new building—Christian Life Center—for weekend retreats by all ages and organizations in church. Self-contained unit to have kitchen, movable cots for overnight stay, converts to Sunday school classes.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Davis is Gahanna's first full-time, church supported

pastor. The location and youth of church make growth inevitable, observers feel, yet "rapid community growth only partially explains church expansion." Association director of missions Charles McGruder, himself a Gahanna member, points to earlier financial problems which caused cutbacks in Cooperative Program and other giving before 1970. Concerned members urged revival of CP, new stewardship emphases. This renewed dedication resulted in church gaining strength, hiring Davis.

The church is the only one among the Top 15 in a "pioneer" area of the SBC. As such, little of its growth has been transfer of letter, most have come through professions of faith in age group 17-24.

Davis feels members' enthusiasm, first evidenced in their willingness to give sacrificially, contributes heavily to growth. "As a part of their daily life, members share what God is doing and convey their excitement," says McGruder. Echoes Davis, "We have a vital worship service. Visitors catch the spirit and enthusiasm."

Jerry Davis: "We're ordinary people. If we have one rich, they've not come forward."



Fast-Growing Church
Number Fourteen:
CALVARY, Joplin, Mo.



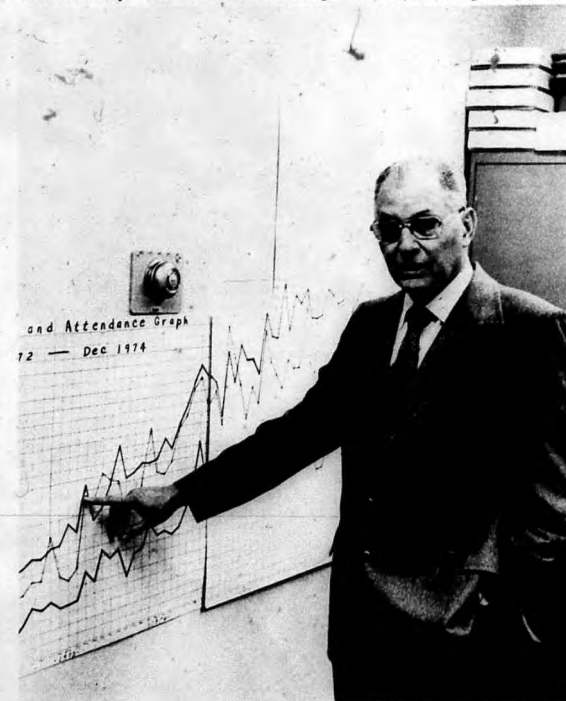
"It's sort of like spontaneous combustion," says pastor Thurman Kelley of Calvary Baptist Church in Joplin, Mo. "It might not be too healthy, but, praise God, it's working right now."

Kelley, 67, took over a 35-member church seven years ago for a salary of \$250 a month "if they got it." Now the church has more than 1,000 members and Kelley, a pastor in Joplin for nearly 50 years, has led the church into a half-million dollar building campaign and new form of church government.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976	1954: constituted 1955.
Total membership	316	927	LOCATION: In a small, upper middle class suburb, situated on a rolling, wooded 30-acre tract in the Ozark Mountains.
Sunday School members	184	749	PASTOR: Thurman Kelley
Baptisms (1972-1976)	292		Age: 67

AGE OF CHURCH: Begun as mission.

Thurman Kelley: "Whatever has been done—big or little—is purely the grace of God."



Education/experience: College degree, has pastored for almost 50 years.

Administrative style: Dynamic, almost authoritarian. He restructured the church government after assuming the pastorate, doing away with the "old church business meeting. I established a church council, kind of like sending people to Congress. It is a democracy, but a representative democracy. All church business goes before the council, and each committee—deacons, nominating, finance—must give its report each month to the church council. Members of the church council are elected once a year.

Preaching style: Expository, with some topical sermons.

Work habits: Limited because of health problem. Kelley retired from a large Joplin church in 1961 because of an athlete's heart. He pastored small churches for 10 years prior to accepting the pastorate of 35-member Calvary.

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Largely blue collar, but contains professional people. Kelley says membership is drawn from "across the board, bankers to poor people." Membership is primarily white, with one Indian architect.

BUSING: None. VISITATION: Limited, with about 10 people per week "who have a burden for souls" participating.

FACILITIES: A new stone building, looking toward the Ozarks. The sanctuary, designed with glass around two sides so worshippers can enjoy the beauty during the service, is a drawing card because "it promotes a spirit of peace." It also is a weakness because "people get influenced to attend by the beauty of the architecture and setting; they get enthusiastic for awhile, then dwindle away."

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Kelley was surprised Calvary was among the Top 15 churches "because it seems to me we haven't done much. I was worried because I am getting a little bit old, letting things slip, not putting into it what I should put into it."

Whatever has been done—big or little—is purely the grace of God. It is based on plain, down-to-earth efforts to draw people and God together so that God can forgive their sins and make their life meaningful. •

Fast-Growing Church
Number Fifteen:
FIRST, Springdale, Ark.

If a newcomer to Springdale, Ark., inquired, "Where can I go to learn the Bible?" Cliff Palmer says, "Most folks would say First Baptist Church."

Palmer, First's pastor, attributes the church's growth in the face of limited facilities to sound Bible teaching, like-minded staff and general location.

Even before he considered leaving a larger pastorate to go to First, he knew population projections for the area. Due to an influx of retirees and extensive resort resources, Springdale was set for population boom.

Drawing from years of experience in several pastorates, plus careful study of rapidly growing churches, in six years Palmer has led this downtown church through unparalleled growth. Recently, First broke ground for two of three phases of a \$5 million building project.

CHURCH VITAL STATISTICS:	1972	1976
Total membership	1385	2381
Sunday School members	1194	3031
Baptisms (1972-1976)		871

AGE OF CHURCH: 107 years

LOCATION: Downtown, within blocks of two other SBC churches

PASTOR: Cliff Palmer

Age: 51

Education/experience: Degree, Ouachita Baptist University; attended Southwestern seminary.

Administrative style: "There has to be someone who is the authority," says Palmer. "I see all of society on two pillars: authority and submission." Business meetings are short and without much discussion. "I have the minutes of the last meeting printed. The financial report is there. Recommendations are written out. We don't call it a business meeting. We call it a praise report."

Preaching style: Moves book by book through the Bible. Old Testament forward on Sunday a.m.; New Testament backward Sunday p.m.; middle on Wednesday. "The last thing the average Southern Baptist needs is another sermon—he's got sermons running out his ears. We need more down-to-earth teaching."

Work habits: Daily Bible broadcast. Teaches 400-member Sunday School class, plus regular preaching. Studies five hours daily. "I really don't do much besides study and pray."

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE: Mix of town and rural, all age groups.

BUSING: 15 church owned buses traveling 12 routes to more than 500 persons.

VISITATION: Mandatory for Sunday School leaders—in a department different from their own. "If they teach in youth division, they may visit the adult division. This makes a team effort."

MINISTRIES: "Our goal is to instill in the hearts of the people the word of God," Palmer adds, however, "What we do, we try to do well." This includes:

- Kindergarten for 150 preschoolers.
- Church school for 230 youngsters, through 7th grade. "I feel convinced we must have this ministry. You can't do it all



Cliff Palmer: "We may go against the formulas, but it's hard to argue with success."

(teach Christian concepts) on Sunday. I'm not sure the Lord ever intended the government to educate our children."

- Clothes closet, crisis care.
- Class for mentally exceptional children.
- Program for elderly, including plans for "Golden Heirs" unit located on 10 acres ad joining church property.

FACILITIES: Combination of auditorium, educational space, temporary buildings and any buildings nearby. "We can't get our people into the auditorium (seating 850), so we carry in chairs." Experts informed Palmer "we are in a very poor location." They advised the church to build on acreage bought several years ago as a prospective mission site. Phase one is a multipurpose structure seating 2,000.

A Together-We-Build campaign has helped raise needed money, "so we can go on to phase two now," says Palmer.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Palmer says church's approach is balanced, "not hyper anything. Most people would go away from a service and say, 'I don't know why the church is growing.' We use little promotion."

Almost everything Palmer says points to the strong emphasis on Bible study. Sunday School classes are large, one man teaches 150 junior highs, another, 150 high schoolers; another, 100 college students. Sunday School teachers spend many hours in preparation. Palmer admits this like other aspects of the church, goes against church growth formulas. "But it's kind of hard to argue against success."

THE METHODS IN OUR MADNESS

Before we could research fast-growing churches, we had to learn which churches were indeed growing fast. Discovering how to discover that was the first problem. The second problem was discovering what to do with what we had learned.

In the beginning, the problem was not how to determine the fastest growing churches in the SBC; it was *how to determine* how to determine the fastest growing churches.

In other words, what criteria indicated growth? It was obvious, of course, that we could only measure quantitative growth; qualitative growth was—and is—subjective. It fits no category of the Uniform Church Letter, our only source of information. Numbers, therefore, had to be the basis of our study.

At first, we thought merely to use changes in church membership over a prescribed period of time. That was quickly discarded as insufficient.

Meetings with Home Mission Board leaders in evangelism, missions and church extension helped us develop a formula using four agreed-upon indicators of growth in SBC churches: total membership, baptisms, other additions, Sunday School enrollment.

On that decision, and others that had to follow—not on the computer printout—are we vulnerable to criticism. We accept this, but ask you to hear our arguments:

COMPOUNDING AND COMPILING: Our object was to discover which churches were growing rapidly, then try to learn what they had in common. Church growth experts had suggested numerous things, from “conservative Bible preaching” to “warm, caring fellowship emphasizing cells.” To their lists we added such things as church size and location, which we felt was underrated or ignored by too many.

Our first move, then, was to try to neutralize size. At the suggestion of Tommy Coy, then the HMB’s chief statistician, we elected to use “absolute frequency” and “adjusted frequency” on each category for each church, i.e., both numbers and ratios.

Enter Donald McGavran, founder of the modern “church growth movement” and a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary. “I have always held,” McGavran told us, “that any combination (of percentages and absolute numbers) is likely to be in error. Some churches grow absolutely the most and some grow the fastest. . . . (a combination of the two) almost cuts each other.”

He suggested size categories.

We rejected that. But continued to worry about another aspect of the “equal weight” proposal: By eliminating any advantage of a large church at the top of the scale, or the small church at the scale’s lower end, would we favor the middle-range church of, say 800-1,200 members?

“That is a possible bias of the survey,” warned Max Burns, our computer expert, “no doubt about it.”

To eliminate size seemed to us to be eliminating a possible factor causing growth; we chose to risk it.

COUNTING NOSES AND TOES: As it has turned out, size does not seem a factor. In 1972, when we began measuring growth, our Top 15 churches ranged, for example, from 110 members to 1,904. Five had, in that year, less than 499 members; five had 500-999 members; and five had more than 1,000 members.

The range was as broad for all fastest growing churches: the smallest to appear had 24 members in 1972, when we began measuring growth, largest had 8,739. No bunching occurred; the most numerous category was “200-299 members,” with 14.5 percent of the total 425.

The fastest growing churches did average more members, in fact, more than twice as many, per church than the SBC as a whole. And while 61 percent of SBC churches are below 300 members, only 38.5 percent of the top 425 were that small.

CONFUSING DATES AND DATA: McGavran also made another suggestion:

“It would be nice to break the churches down into areas. You probably would have 20 different types of churches. You would find regional differences. A church in the north-east or in Wisconsin is quite different from one in Mississippi or Georgia. If you don’t break them down, you are comparing oranges and pineapples and papayas.

“You can’t compare super churches and churches in towns of 600. They are as different as hawks and pussycats. You are comparing different possibilities. In some areas startlingly good results might be 30 percent a year, or they might be three percent.

“Unless you have clearly defined groups, you are comparing things that can’t be compared.”

We decided to compare them anyway, feeling, once again, that location might be an important factor in fast growth; to break churches out by “area” would be to ignore location, something we weren’t willing to do.

Church expert Robert Schuller, for example, lists visibility and accessibility among his reasons for growth; the HMB’s Wendell Belew, while not listing location among his criteria, admits, “I’d rank it third, behind pastor and program.”

And Peter Wagner, another Fuller professor and heir apparent to McGavran’s title of leading exponent of church growth, reveals that his own church, Lake Avenue Congregational, in its plans to start 10 new churches, is carefully studying demographic data to determine the “right” communities.

Others have noted that people are most susceptible to making decisions for church membership during periods of change; among the most important is changing homes.

Since the average American moves every four years, we wondered if this might show up in the percentage of fast-growing churches located in areas reflecting growth: suburbs and urban fringe areas.

Location did seem to be a factor in church growth. A number of respondents listed it in their explanations: almost 50 percent of the churches were in areas of more than 50,000 population; 74 percent with more than 10,000. And 73.8 percent were in growing neighborhoods: suburbs or urban fringe areas.

In our study, we had churches growing in every circumstance: inner city, transitional neighborhoods, rural and open country. But the odds of rapid growth ride with the suburban church. As one expert told us: “We’ve got places we can build a church and the preacher can stand at the door with a baseball bat and the church will still grow.”

We’d like to see church growth experts do a bit more study of correlation between size and location and growth.

FIGURING THE FOUNDATIONS: Having made the basic decision to use percentages and absolute numbers for four categories of “growth,” and to include all churches, the problem became basic:

How do you get these figures out of the computer?

Working with Max Burns, the HMB computer expert, Tommy Coy devised a system which enabled us to compare statistics for all SBC churches for a one-year period: 1973-1974.

The process by which these churches were ranked will be explained later. At this point, we were gathering information which Coy felt sufficient for analysis.

We called the directors of missions for the top 15 churches in our sample, asking each to assess the church and its involvement in and relations with the association.

Once again we met with HMB leaders in the church growth field. In studying our findings, they concluded the one-year period *might* indicate frenetic—even spurious—growth. “Could you take a sample over a longer period?” they asked.

Burns said the maximum period would be five years.

The reason, he explained, was the Sunday School Board, which collects and programs the Uniform Church Letter, changed the configuration of its computer input of UCL in 1972. Simply put, that meant the computer could

match tapes from 1972 and 1976, the most recent UCL, without difficulty; beyond that would require extensive new programming.

We accepted the five-year period. In so doing, we eliminated three categories of churches: those begun since 1972; those who had not turned in valid UCLs for either one or both of those years; and those reporting zero baptisms for the period.

We realize we dropped some fast-growing new churches, therefore: Northwest Memorial Baptist Church in Houston and Berea Baptist in the Chicago suburbs, for examples.

AN AVALANCHE OF INFORMATION: But we did compute about 85 percent of the 35,000 SBC churches. That was, in fact, Burns’ most difficult problem. “It’s not the tabulation,” he said, “it’s the volume of data.”

For the two years we were comparing, 1972 and 1976, those 30,029 churches represented more than 78.5 million “bytes” of computer data. In computer language, a byte is a storage unit roughly equivalent to a character, like an “A.”

The computers aligned the two churches numerically, then transferred to other tape storage the valid information: baptisms, total membership, Sunday School enrollment, other additions.

This reduced the data to a workable level, some 1.7 million bytes of information. The computers then figured ratio or percentage for each of those prime data areas, doubling its working number of bytes to about 3.4 million.

We now had 30,029 churches’ records in four categories, plus their percent or ratio change in those same categories.

For example, a church of 10 members in 1972 and 100 members in 1976 had an absolute difference of 90, for a growth rate of 900 percent; that’s rapid. Yet if its baptisms were one in 1972, only two in 1976, its baptism ratio (baptisms per total members) would have declined from 10 percent to two percent. The two percent would show on our study, countering the high increase from “other additions.”

Programming necessary to instruct the computer to print out these figures took Burns’ office more than two weeks. Running time—what computer people call “wall-clock time”—took hours. Computer time—the time it takes the machine to do all calculations—was measured in seconds.

NOTHING UP OUR SLEEVE: And when it was over, we had a red wagon load of statistics that Tommy Coy used to build a scale necessary for the final ranking. Plotting percentage ratio differences (standard deviations) on graphs, Coy assigned arbitrary numerical values to ranges. Maximum a church could get in any category was 10; minimum one.

The computer was given this information. And in seconds, it had ranked the 30,029 churches according to Coy’s formula. Of these, we asked for only the top one and a half percent.

Curiously, five of the top 15 we’d gotten originally, based on year 1973-1974, reappeared in the new Top 15, although in a different order. Eight others remained in the list (of the two lost, one split over charismatics, the other went independent). So Coy’s original projection had more validity than we’d been willing to give it.

Our new 1972-1976 ranking we cut off at 425 churches. They are printed on the following pages.

Continued

Top 425 fastest growing churches in SBC

1 Morningside, Valdosta, Ga.
2 Pinehurst, Columbus, Ga.
3 Oak Ridge, Spring, Tex.
4 First Indian Rocks, Largo, Fla.
5 Glenview, Ft. Worth, Tex.
6 Williams Blvd., Kenner, La.
7 Westside, Natchitoches, La.
8 Green Acres, Warner Robins, Ga.
9 Alandale, Austin, Tex.
10 Broadway, Memphis, Tenn.
11 Eastwood, Tulsa, Okla.
12 Two Rivers, Nashville, Tenn.
13 First, Gahanna, Ohio
14 Calvary, Joplin, Mo.
15 First, Springdale, Ark.
16 Sagemont, Houston, Tex.
17 Emmanuel, Manassas, Va.
18 Second, Pearland, Tex.
19 First, Roswell, N. Mex.
20 Summer Grove, Shreveport, La.
21 Palma Celia, Hayward, Cal.
22 Glendale, Miami, Fla.
23 Fort Cove, Humble, Tex.
24 East Park, Memphis, Tenn.
25 Gracemont, Tulsa, Okla.
26 First, Jenks, Okla.
27 Waller, Bossier City, La.
28 First, Winter Park, Fla.
29 Applewood, Wheat Ridge, Colo.
30 Elliott, Camden, Ark.
31 North Phoenix, Phoenix, Ariz.
32 Scott Lake, Lakeland, Fla.
33 First, Mt. Juliet, Tenn.
34 Southwest, Austin, Tex.
35 Broadmoor, Memphis, Tenn.
36 South Lindsay, Oklahoma City, Okla.
37 Warren Woods, Warren, Mich.
38 Rehoboth, Tucker, Ga.
39 McGregor, Fort Myers, Fla.
40 East Side, Fort Smith, Ark.
41 Cottage Hill, Mobile, Ala.
42 Champion Forest, Houston, Tex.
43 Northside, Lebanon, Ohio
44 First Sou., Florence, Colo.
45 First Sou., Apple Valley, Cal.
46 Fellowship, Petal, Miss.
47 Green Acres, Tyler, Tex.
48 First, Pasadena, Tex.
49 College Park, Houston, Tex.
50 Brigrance Road, Brazoria, Tex.
51 Hilltop, Moore, Okla.
52 First, Broken Arrow, Okla.
53 Woodlawn, Vicksburg, Miss.
54 Waynedale, Ft. Wayne, Ind.
55 Graceland, New Albany, Ind.
56 West Rome, Rome, Ga.
57 Ridgeview, Gainesville, Fla.
58 Bethany, Myakka City, Fla.
59 Magnolia Ave., Riverside, Cal.
60 First, Papillon, Neb.
61 First Mira Mesa, San Diego, Cal.
62 First Southern, Troy, Ohio
63 Bluegrass, Hendersonville, Tenn.
64 Indian River, Chesapeake, Va.
65 Trinity, Pasadena, Tex.
66 Hyland Heights, Lynchburg, Va.
67 First, Euless, Tex.
68 Leawood, Memphis, Tenn.
69 Germantown, Germantown, Tenn.
70 Plainview, Tulsa, Okla.

72 Harvey Road, Seminole, Okla.
73 First, Harrah, Okla.
74 Arlington Heights, Pascagoula, Miss.
75 Colonial Heights, Jackson, Miss.
76 Parkview, Baton Rouge, La.
77 Prince Avenue, Athens, Ga.
78 Mt. Zion, Snellville, Ga.
79 Edgewood, Columbus, Ga.
80 First, Palmetto, Fla.
81 First, Atlanta, Ga.
82 Olive, Pensacola, Fla.
83 First, Jacksonville, Fla.
84 First Mar Vista, Los Angeles, Cal.
85 Pinelake, Brandon, Miss.
86 Smoke Rise, Stone Mountain, Ga.
87 West Pensacola, Pensacola, Fla.
88 Spring, Spring, Tex.
89 Calvary, Rosenberg, Tex.
90 Paramount, Amarillo, Tex.
91 Bellevue, Memphis, Tenn.
92 Charleston Hgts., Charleston Hgts., S.C.
93 First Lakewood, Tacoma, Wash.
94 First Sou., Del City, Okla.
95 Council Road, Bethany, Okla.
96 50th Avenue, Vancouver, Wash.
97 Meadowood, Oklahoma City, Okla.
98 Calvary, Vancouver, Wash.
99 Clyde, Clyde, Ohio
100 N. Dayton, Dayton, Ohio
101 Calvary, Winston Salem, N.C.
102 Lakewood, Pontiac, Mich.
103 First, Horn Lake, Miss.
104 Temple, Pascagoula, Miss.
105 Highview, Louisville, Ky.
106 Ninth and O., Louisville, Ky.
107 Center Grove, Rock Spring, Ga.
108 Windsor Park, Ft. Smith, Ark.
109 First, Bryant, Ark.
110 Greenwood, Tuscaloosa, Ala.
111 Casas Adobes, Tucson, Ariz.
112 First, Chandler, Ariz.
113 Twenty Second St., Tucson, Ariz.
114 Fourth Missionary, Houston, Tex.
115 Wayside, Sturte, S.C.
116 St. Stephens, La Puente, Cal.
117 Spring Creek, Spring, Tex.
118 Teri Road, Austin, Tex.
119 First, Norfolk, Va.
120 Hickory, Lake City, Fla.
121 Bacon Heights, Lubbock, Tex.
122 First, Concord, Tenn.
123 First, Alcoa, Tenn.
124 Emmanuel, Emd, Okla.
125 Hoffmantown, Albuquerque, N. Mex.
126 First, Ferguson, Mo.
127 Spring Bayou, Kevill, Ky.
128 Calvary, Ft. Wayne, Ind.
129 Rockdale, Conyers, Ga.
130 Central, Lawrenceville, Ga.
131 Piedmont, Marietta, Ga.
132 Mt. Vernon, Stockbridge, Ga.
133 Double Branch, Zephyrhills, Fla.
134 First, Canoga Park, Calif.
135 Coral Park, Miami, Fla.
136 University, Fayetteville, Ark.
137 First, Fair Oaks, Cal.
138 Airport Blvd., Mobile, Ala.
139 Temple of Faith, Detroit, Mich.
140 North Dune, Dunedin, Fla.
141 Antioch, Belleville, Mich.
142 Grace Memorial, Shiloh, La.

143 Hidden Valley, Houston, Tex.
144 Tallwood, Houston, Tex.
145 First, Schertz, Tex.
146 Birchman Ave., Fort Worth, Tex.
147 Hyde Park, Austin, Tex.
148 Geer Memorial, Easley, S.C.
149 Northside, West Columbia, S.C.
150 Nichols Hills, Oklahoma City, Okla.
151 Putnam City, Oklahoma City, Okla.
152 Faith, Saskatoon, Sask., Canada
153 Metropolitan, Portland, Ore.
154 Clearmont, Clearmont, Mo.
155 First, Blue Springs, Mo.
156 Oakland, Corinth, Miss.
157 Ford Park, Shreveport, La.
158 Shively, Louisville, Ky.
159 Westside, Omaha, Neb.
160 Russell Street, Marietta, Ga.
161 Byne Memorial, Albany, Ga.
162 New Antioch, Shannon, Ga.
163 Eastside, Dover, Fla.
164 Bellevue, Colorado Springs, Colo.
165 Foxworthy, San Jose, Cal.
166 First, Daytona Beach, Fla.
167 Calvary, Redding, Cal.
168 Meridian Sou., Ft. Collins, Cal.
169 First, North Pole, Alaska
170 New Hope, Anchorage, Alaska
171 Front Range, Thornton, Colo.
172 Kingspoint, Houston, Tex.
173 First, Waterville, Ohio
174 Cedar Creek Lake, Mahanik, Tex.
175 Friendship, Crawfordsville, Ind.
176 First, Elkins, Ark.
177 Bethany Place, Richmond, Va.
178 Gill Grove, Chesterfield, Va.
179 South Main, Houston, Tex.
180 Bellevue, Hurst, Tex.
181 Hillcrest, Houston, Tex.
182 Mangum Oaks, Houston, Tex.
183 Hilltop, Fairfield, Ohio
184 Calvary, Cleveland, Tenn.
185 Sunnyside, Cheyenne, Wyo.
186 First, Columbia, S.C.
187 Dixiana, West Columbia, S.C.
188 New Pisgah, Spartanburg, S.C.
189 Hillcrest, Charleston, S.C.
190 Southern Hills, Oklahoma City, Okla.
191 Pines, Spokane, Wash.
192 Olivet, Tulsa, Okla.
193 Emmanuel, Farmington, N. Mex.
194 Pleasant Valley, Liberty, Mo.
195 Pass Road, Pass Christian, Miss.
196 Carlisle, Carlisle, Pa.
197 Bapt. Fellowship, Columbia, Conn.
198 First, Broussard, La.
199 Southern Heights, Lexington, Ky.
200 Stewart Street, Carmi, Ill.
201 Southview, Lincoln, Neb.
202 Calvary, Columbus, Ga.
203 Sunset Hills, Douglasville, Ga.
204 Friendship, Altamonte Spring, Fla.
205 Damdee, Dundee, Fla.
206 Westside, Lake Wales, Fla.
207 First, Hernando, Fla.
208 First, Orange Park, Fla.
209 N. Jacksonville, Jacksonville, Fla.
210 Neptune, Neptune Beach, Fla.
211 Sheridan Hills, Hollywood, Fla.
212 Rosemont, Niceville, Fla.
213 Ridgeview, Fayetteville, Ark.

214 First Southern, Phoenix, Ariz.
215 Royal Palms, Phoenix, Ariz.
216 Shady Woods, Phenix City, Ala.
217 Marble City, Sylacauga, Ala.
218 Crabtree Valley, Raleigh, N.C.
219 Oakland, Birmingham, Ala.
220 Monte Sil, Montevallo, Ala.
221 Gateway, Milledale, Ill.
222 Unity, Plaquemine, Miss.
223 Berkeley, Berkeley Spring, W. Va.
224 Trinity, Monroe, N.C.
225 Calvary, Elko, Nev.
226 Calvary, Delta, Colo.
227 Pleasant Grove, Texarkana, Tex.
228 Plaza Heights, Blue Springs, Mo.
229 Onalaska, Onalaska, Tex.
230 Pond Springs, Round Rock, Tex.
231 Calumbus Avenue, Waco, Tex.
232 Trinity, San Antonio, Tex.
233 Oak Island, Anaheim, Tex.
234 Castle, Hills, San Antonio, Tex.
235 Eastside, Baytown, Tex.
236 First, Missouri City, Tex.
237 Bammel, Houston, Tex.
238 First, Highlands, Tex.
239 Friendship, Austin, Tex.
240 Southside, Mt. Pleasant, Tenn.
241 Judson, Nashville, Tenn.
242 Elliston Ave., Memphis, Tenn.
243 Radnor, Nashville, Tenn.
244 Greenbriar, Southaven, Miss.
245 Central, Elson, Tenn.
246 Fourth St., Harrisville, S.C.
247 Westside, Spartanburg, S.C.
248 Northside, McMinnville, Tenn.
249 Red Hill, Camden, S.C.
250 Lee Road, Taylors, S.C.
251 Midland Park, Charleston Hts., S.C.
252 Bethel, Norman, Okla.
253 San Juan, Fort Townsend, Wash.
254 Riverside, Franklin, Ohio
255 Far Hills, Dayton, Ohio
256 Millcreek, Erie, Pa.
257 Alum Creek, Columbus, Ohio
258 Tower Grove, Albuquerque, N. Mex.
259 River Grande, St. Louis, Mo.
260 First, Raymore, Mo.
261 Goodrum, Vicksburg, Miss.
262 First, Jackson, Miss.
263 North Monroe, Monroe, La.
264 Highland Park, Topeka, Kans.
265 New Point, New Point, Ind.
266 Chatham, Chatham, Ill.
267 First, Jonesboro, Ga.
270 Mt. Carmel, Douglasville, Ga.
271 First Pine Hills, Orlando, Fla.
272 Calvary, Clearwater, Fla.
273 Friendship, St. Petersburg, Fla.
274 Russell Park, Ft. Myers, Fla.
275 Dunwoody, Dunwoody, Ga.
276 Dover Shores, Orlando, Fla.
277 Briarlake, Decatur, Ga.
278 Circle Drive, Colorado Springs, Colo.
279 Happy Valley, Anderson, Cal.
280 Trinity, Livermore, Cal.
281 First, Chino, Cal.
282 First, Valdez, Alaska
283 Bayou Sara, Springland, Ala.
284 Tennala, Piedmont, Ala.

285 Shades Mountain, Birmingham, Ala.
286 Community, Rentz, Miss.
287 Green Acres, Bay Minette, Ala.
288 First Queensgate, Brimfield, Wash.
289 Crabtree Valley, Raleigh, N.C.
290 Grace, Haleyville, Ala.
291 Parkway, Macon, Ga.
292 Hillcrest, Atooka, Okla.
293 Natchez Trace, Camden, Tenn.
294 Brantwood, Brentwood, Tenn.
295 Summit, Pataskala, Ohio
296 Huguenot Road, Richmond, Va.
297 Pleasant Hill, Tyler, Tex.
298 Calvary, Weatherford, Tex.
299 Southwayside, Ft. Worth, Tex.
300 Freeway Forest, Houston, Tex.
301 Towering Oaks, Memphis, Tenn.
302 Cumberland Dr., Clarksville, Tenn.
303 Wynnburg, Wynnburg, Tenn.
304 First, Deer Lodge, Mont.
305 New Hope, Gallatin, S.C.
306 Mt. Calvary, Dillon, S.C.
307 Bethel, Okemah, Okla.
308 Alameda St., Norman, Okla.
309 Chisholm Heights, Mustang, Okla.
310 Woodland Acres, Tulsa, Okla.
311 Terrace Heights, Yakima, Wash.
312 Robert Gray, Longview, Wash.
313 Carter, Park Hill, Okla.
314 Chapel Grove, Gastonia, N.C.
315 Green Valley, St. Joseph, Mo.
316 Peoples, Ripley, Miss.
317 Olivet, Gallipoli, Miss.
318 School House Rd., Lancaster, Pa.
319 Brookstown, Baton Rouge, La.
320 First, Rosepine, La.
321 Rockford Lane, Louisville, Ky.
322 Gardenside, Lexington, Ky.
323 First Hayneville, Clinchfield, Ga.
324 Windsor Forest, Savannah, Ga.
325 Eastside, Marietta, Ga.
326 Bethesda, Harlem, Ga.
327 Mt. Vernon, Ringgold, Ga.
328 Liberty, College Park, Ga.
329 Oakland, Jasper, Ga.
330 Benning Hills, Columbus, Ga.
331 Northside, Fitzgerald, Ga.
332 Blue Lake, Chapey, Fla.
333 Trinity, Apopka, Fla.
334 First Palm River, Tampa, Fla.
335 Florahome, Florahome, Fla.
336 Stetson, Deland, Fla.
337 First, Pinellas, Fla.
338 Kelly Park, Apopka, Fla.
339 Riverside, Ft. Myers, Fla.
340 Bayshore, Tampa, Fla.
341 Arapahoe Rd., Littleton, Colo.
342 First, Ormond Beach, Fla.
343 First, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
344 First, El Sobrante, Cal.
345 Archview, Little Rock, Ark.
346 Paradise Hills, San Diego, Cal.
347 Crescent Snu., Anaheim, Cal.
348 Mayflower, Mauldin, Ark.
349 First Sou., Camp Verde, Ariz.
350 Mt. Olive, Grapet, Ark.
351 Grand Ave., Hot Springs, Ark.
352 Watson Chapel, Pine Bluff, Ark.
353 Genoa, Genoa, Ark.
354 First, Salina, Ala.
355 First Hoover, Birmingham, Ala.

356 Park Forest, Baton Rouge, La.
357 Fellowship, Mainesville, Ohio
358 Grassland Heights, Franklin, Tenn.
359 Rockvale, Piedmont, S.C.
360 Western Hills, Wichita Falls, Tex.
361 Wilcrest, Houston, Tex.
362 Providence, Gastonia, N.C.
363 First, Roanoke, Va.
364 Worcester, Worcester, Mass.
365 Blue Ridge, Memphis, Tenn.
366 Southeast, Salt Lake City, Utah
367 Friendly, Tyler, Tex.
368 Clay Road, Houston, Tex.
369 Rainbow Hills, San Antonio, Tex.
370 First, Harlingen, Tex.
371 Oaklawn, Winchester, Tenn.
372 Bethel View, Bristol, Tenn.
373 Salem, Summerville, S.C.
374 Summerville, Summerville, S.C.
375 Fall City, Rock Island, Tenn.
376 Bethel, Greenville, S.C.
377 First, Goose Creek, S.C.
378 North Tremholm, Columbia, S.C.
379 Dovercourt, Edmonton, Alberta, Can.
380 Skyview, Okemah, Okla.
381 First, Mohe, Okla.
382 Calvary, Broken Arrow, Okla.
383 First, Bartlesville, Okla.
384 Howie, Waxahaw, N.C.
385 Ebenezer, Durham, N.C.
386 Bonnie Duane, Fayetteville, N.C.
387 Briggs Memorial, McLeansville, N.C.
388 First, Shull Knob, Mo.
389 New Site, Monett, Mo.
390 South Haven, Springfield, Mo.
391 Carey Chapel, Red Banks, Miss.
392 McDowell Rd., Jackson, Miss.
393 Pleasant Valley, Grafton, Conn.
394 First, Lafayette, La.
395 Houghton, Houghton, La.
396 Hillcrest, Hopkinsville, Ky.
397 South Side, Litchfield, Ill.
398 New Hope, Richmond, Ind.
399 Calvary, Covington, Ga.
400 Southside, Crestview, Fla.
401 Mt. Zion, Asson, Ga.
402 Thundering Springs, Leesburg, Ga.
403 Prays Mill, Douglasville, Ga.
404 Mt. Zion, Jonesboro, Ga.
405 Safety Harbor, Safety Harbor, Fla.
406 Southside, Lakeland, Fla.
407 Flemington, McComb, Fla.
408 Normandy Village, Jacksonville, Fla.
409 First, Rocklin, Cal.
410 Selma Friendship, Graceville, Fla.
411 Riverside, Denver, Colo.
412 First, Thousand Oaks, Cal.
413 Second, West Memphis, Ark.
414 First, Rancho Cordova, Cal.
415 First, Paso Robles, Cal.
416 First, Marmolada, Ark.
417 West Side, El Dugout, Ark.
418 First, Fort Smith, Ark.
419 Immanuel, Rogers, Ark.
420 First Aura Valley, Monaca, Ariz.
421 First, Pecota, Ariz.
422 New Hope, Helena, Ala.
423 West Huntsville, Huntsville, Ala.
424 First, Waco, Ala.
425 Westwood, Birmingham, Ala.

THE NEXT STEP?

At the end, we wonder about the beginning: What have we learned? Where do we go from here? Have we expanded the body of knowledge about church growth? Or are our efforts merely GIGO after all?

Once we had a ranking of the top 425 fast-growing churches, we sought more information. Each was sent a two-part questionnaire. Part A for pastor. Part B for layperson. We sent one reminder letter to those who had not responded initially.

Some 277 churches answered the questionnaires.

The results were key-punched and fed into computers at Georgia State University, using a standard package called SPSS—Statistical Program for the Social Sciences. Again, sorting and tabulating data would have been impossible without computers. The pastor's questionnaire alone had some 25,000 bytes of information which had "a virtually infinite number of possible combinations," says Burns.

The several pounds of raw data the computers spewed out were sent to Phil Jones, who replaced Tommy Coy in HMB's Planning and Research Department during the time our "fast-growing church" study was underway.

Jones spent hours with writer Dan Martin and others on HMB's staff, helping analyze data. His help, as that of Coy and Burns, has been invaluable: we are deeply grateful.

A COUPLE OF FINAL NOTES: This project has just scratched the surface, as they say, raising more questions than answers. People with time, energy and a lot more money need to examine our results, plus the unused data.

It is a scientific fact that no theory can ever be proved: it can only be disproved.

We recognize the inadequacies of our effort: the questions concerning the validity of our sample; the poorly phrased—or omitted—questions on our survey.

So we won't be offended if others challenge our findings.

If we weren't so tired of the whole thing, we'd do it again, just to correct our mistakes. That's why we hope the scientific community will charge full steam into the crack we've made. For we believe—whatever our faults—our concept of using hard, cold statistics to measure and learn about growth is a valid approach.

Which brings us to the response of one layperson who returned our questionnaire, though he didn't approve of it. His comment was "GIGO—garbage in, garbage out."

A neat cliché, perhaps. But curious, too, since the garbage that went in came from him and others in fast-growing churches. Which, finally, seems the only legitimate "horse's mouth" to turn to to discover "why churches grow fast."

PASTORS QUESTIONNAIRE

- [1] What is the population of the area in which the church is located?
- 10.6% (1) open country or small town under 2,499
4.7 (2) 2,500-4,999
10.6 (3) 5,000-9,999
25.5 (4) 10,000-49,000
29.2 (5) 50,000-249,999
19.3 (6) more than 250,000

- [2] What best describes the population of the church's neighborhood? (Choose only one.)
- 73.8 (1) growing in population
23.3 (2) stable in population
2.9 (3) decreasing in population

- [3] What best describes the racial/socio-economic composition of your church's neighborhood? (Choose only one.)
- 6.7 (1) changing in racial status
58.7 (2) increasing in economic status
1.1 (3) decreasing in economic status
18.6 (4) population changing racially and economically
14.9 (5) other

- [4] What most characterizes the neighborhood in which the church is located? (Choose only one.)
- 6.7 (1) open country
13.0 (2) small town
7.9 (3) central city
36.1 (4) older suburb (more than 10 years old)
13.4 (5) newer suburb (less than 10 years old)
20.8 (6) urban fringe (recently rural, becoming urban)
2.6 (7) other

- [5] What is the predominant racial type of the neighborhood (one-mile radius) where the church is located? (Choose one.)
- 2.2 (1) black (60% or more)
83.7 (2) white (60% or more)
1.1 (3) Hispanic (60% or more)
0 (4) Asian (60% or more)
7.6 (5) integrated (black, white, Anglo/Hispanic, etc.)
3.3 (6) ethnic mix (three or more groups)
2.2 (7) other

- [6] What is the predominant way the congregation receives income? (Choose only one.)
- 1.5 (1) farmer/rancher
41.6 (2) blue collar worker
34.9 (3) clerical, mid-level management worker
12.6 (4) professional and executive-level worker
1.1 (5) business owner
0 (6) welfare, social security, etc.
8.2 (7) other

- [7] What best characterizes the church type?
- 49.1 (1) neighborhood church (serving primarily the immediate surrounding community, whether suburbs, central city, etc.)
42.8 (2) metropolitan church (most people drive to church from all parts of city)
3.3 (3) transitional church (social/economic/racial changes within the community from which most members come)
4.8 (4) other

- [8] What is the church membership?
- 0.4 (1) 0-99
9.9 (2) 100-199
17.2 (3) 200-499
26.3 (4) 500-999
46.4 (5) 1,000 or more

- [9] What is the estimated average family annual income bracket of the congregation?

- 0 (1) wealthy (over \$50,000)
1.1 (2) upper income (above \$30,000)
17.0 (3) upper middle income (\$20,000-\$30,000)
75.3 (4) middle income (\$10,000-\$20,000)
5.6 (5) lower income (under \$10,000)

- [10] What is the predominant racial type of the congregation?
- 1.1 (1) black (50% or more)
88.3 (2) white (50% or more)
0 (3) Hispanic (50% or more)
0 (4) Asian (50% or more)
1.5 (5) integrated (black, white, Anglo/Hispanic, etc.)
1.1 (6) ethnic mixed (three or more groups)
8.0 (7) other

- [11] What is the age of the church?
- 2.2 (1) 1-5 years
17.9 (2) 5-10 years
39.2 (3) 10-25 years
15.8 (4) 25-50 years
24.9 (5) more than 50 years

- [12] What is the estimated average age of adults in the congregation? (Choose only one.)
- 5.1 (1) 20-30 years
68.7 (2) 30-40 years
24.7 (3) 40-50 years
1.5 (4) 50-60 years
0 (5) older than 60 years

- [13] What marital status/family composition best characterizes the people in the church? (Choose only one.)
- 1.1 (1) single young adults
0 (2) single parent families
1.1 (3) married without children
95.1 (4) married with children
1.1 (5) married with children away from home
1.1 (6) elderly married/widowed, etc.

- [14] What is the predominant educational attainment of the over-18 adults in the congregation? (Choose only one.)
- 0 (1) less than high school
47.3 (2) high school degree
4.4 (3) trade school/apprenticeship
20.9 (4) college, did not graduate
24.9 (5) college bachelor's degree
0.7 (6) college master's degree
1.8 (7) other

- [15] What best describes the structure of the church's pastoral staff? (Choose only one.)
- 1.4 (1) one part-time pastor
16.3 (2) one full-time pastor
12.7 (3) one full-time pastor and one part-time "assistant" (i.e., music, religious education, etc.) minister
20.7 (4) multiple staff including only one other full-time ministerial staff member
19.2 (5) multiple staff including two other full-time ministerial staff members
27.9 (6) multiple staff including three or more other full-time ministerial staff members
1.8 (7) other

- [16] Does the church have one or more full-time secretaries/clerks?

- 73.9 (1) yes
26.1 (2) no

- [17] Does the church have a gymnasium or other recreation facility?

- 30.8 (1) yes
69.2 (2) no

- [18] If yes, does the church use its recreation facilities for community (other than member) outreach?

- 56.6 (1) yes
43.4 (2) no

- [19] Is the church planning a building program within the next three years?

- 76.0 (1) yes
24.0 (2) no

- [20] If yes, what is estimated cost?

- 7.2 (1) \$0-\$49,999
32.9 (2) \$50,000-\$99,999
19.1 (3) \$100,000-\$249,999
25.4 (4) \$250,000-\$499,999
19.6 (5) \$500,000-\$999,999
15.8 (6) \$1,000,000 or more

- [21] Since Jan. 1, 1972, has your church started any missions?

- 28.5 (1) yes
71.5 (2) no

- [22] If yes, how many

- 76.9 (1) one
11.5 (2) two
5.1 (3) three
2.6 (4) four
3.8 (5) more than four

- [23] How many of these are now constituted churches?

- Of 113 missions, 39 are now churches.

- [24] How many years have you served in your present pastorate?

- 3.6 (1) less than 1 year
21.4 (2) 1-3 years
27.9 (3) 3-5 years
35.1 (4) 5-10 years
10.1 (5) 10-20 years
1.8 (6) more than 20 years

- [25] How many years did the previous pastor serve?

- 41.3 (1) 1-3 years
20.6 (2) 3-5 years
24.6 (3) 5-10 years
11.9 (4) 10-20 years
1.6 (5) more than 20 years

- [26] How many pastorates have you held?

- 12.7 (1) one
12.7 (2) two
24.0 (3) three
20.0 (4) four
30.5 (5) more than four

- [27] How many years have you been in the ministry?

- 5.1 (1) 1-5 years
14.5 (2) 5-10 years
21.4 (3) 10-15 years
23.9 (4) 15-20 years
35.1 (5) more than 20 years

- [28] What is your highest level of secular education completed?

- 1.6 (1) high school not completed
7.8 (2) high school
11.6 (3) college, did not graduate
66.3 (4) college bachelor's degree
9.7 (5) college master's degree
1.9 (6) college doctorate
1.2 (7) other

- [29] What is your highest level of seminary education completed?

- 17.7 (1) no seminary
14.3 (2) seminary, did not graduate
52.5 (3) seminary degree
7.2 (4) seminary Th.D.
8.3 (5) other

- [30] Check the five (5) approaches you believe most effective in promoting the church and attracting visitors to it. (See also Laypersons Questionnaire [4].)

- 41.5 (1) sign pointing to church location, or location itself
20.9 (2) radio advertisements, programs
18.1 (3) television advertisements, programs
41.5 (4) newspaper advertisements, articles
32.1 (5) pastor involvement in community affairs
97.8 (6) personal visitation
25.3 (7) Christian social ministries
93.9 (8) congregational word of mouth with friends, neighbors, etc.
33.9 (9) direct mail advertisements
46.2 (10) neighborhood survey, canvass
6.5 (11) pastor involvement in civic organizations
13.7 (12) other

[31] Check the five (5) evangelistic methods which result in most of the professions of faith. (See Laypersons Questionnaire [2])

- 86.3 (1) public evangelism (in services)
- 92.8 (2) personal (one-to-one) evangelism
- 88.1 (3) visitation evangelism
- 41.5 (4) bus evangelism
- 64.5 (5) Sunday School classes
- 18.1 (6) small group evangelism (home Bible study, etc.)
- 24.5 (7) youth evangelism
- 6.1 (8) social ministries
- 62.8 (9) revivals
- 3.6 (10) city wide crusades
- 4.7 (11) other

[32] Check your two (2) most effective techniques for making visitors feel welcome at your church.

- 58.8 (1) personal greetings
- 46.2 (2) recognition in worship (standing or raising hand)
- 2.9 (3) pairing with member
- 18.1 (4) letter
- 13.0 (5) greeting as leaving
- 59.2 (6) members greet
- 5.1 (7) other

[33] Check your two (2) most essential approaches to disciplining new members.

- 51.6 (1) new member orientation
- 65.7 (2) Bible study
- 29.2 (3) family incorporation through old-new member pairing, such as "Deacons' Plan"
- 32.9 (4) offer opportunities to work in church programs
- 9.7 (5) lay evangelism training
- 0.7 (6) renewal retreats
- 7.2 (7) other

[34] Check your three (3) most essential approaches to equipping all members for their roles of witness and ministry in the world.

- 24.2 (1) home Bible fellowship
- 96.8 (2) Sunday School/Church Training
- 30.3 (3) Brotherhood/Woman's Missionary Union
- 42.6 (4) lay evangelism schools
- 18.8 (5) renewal retreats
- 18.8 (6) family pairings between active/inactive members
- 28.5 (7) other

[35] Check the denominational entity whose programs have been most helpful to you in stimulating church growth.

- 71.1 (1) Sunday School Board
- 20.6 (2) Home Mission Board
- 1.8 (3) Brotherhood
- 5.1 (4) Woman's Missionary Union
- 19.1 (5) state convention
- 15.9 (6) local association
- 9.7 (7) other

[36] Check the type of "church growth" now receiving priority at your church. (Choose only one.)

- 53.9 (1) numerical growth (including recruitment of persons by calling them to repentance and faith in Christ)
- 21.6 (2) fellowship growth (development of the relationships among the members)
- 21.2 (3) awareness growth (degree of consciousness the church has of its nature and mission in the world)
- 3.9 (4) ministry growth (degree of involvement in the life and problems of its social environment)

[37] Do you feel the church recognizes the effort you make toward church growth?

- 96.0 (1) yes
- 4.0 (2) no

Explain: (sample answers.)

My people understand there can be no fellowship if there is no leadership. They can't miss it. I can't help in your survey. After three years of phenomenal growth our church was devastated by problems—charismatic being one of them. We are rebuilding our fellowship. They had declined for 15 years until I came. They are very aware of the difference. There is a growing awareness "making disciples" is every Christian's job. They know the direction I am leading and are excited in following. They have shown interest in every program I have in-

roduced. They recognize the stress I place in my preaching, remarks, writing. The church is trying to find additional paid help. NO, they are not willing to pay the price of future growth.

[38] What are your recommendations to strengthen weak churches?

Most pastors serve on so many committees they don't have time for anything else. Better trained pastors and workers. Faithful in worship attendance. Longer pastoral tenures. God's man needs to be the leader. 1. Carefully spell out church's objectives. 2. Set obtainable goals. 3. Build leadership. 4. Emphasize Sunday School. 5. Have a warm, meaningful worship service. Weak churches are weak because of weak Christians. Therefore, the pulpit should emphasize the exciting possibilities of the "Christ-filled" life. PREACH! PREACH! PREACH! No substitute for preaching. Get off their tails and go to work.

[39] How can the denomination develop practices or materials to help churches grow?

We need more practical, workable, simple, easy-to-use materials, also more dynamic, motivating, field-oriented, field-service people. My concern is the letting down of Holy Gates and allowing liberal steps to weaken what the denomination is and has done. Get out of the geographical confine of Nashville and the South. It really is different in the West. It can't, it has too many materials and practices now. Decrease denominational meetings so pastors can work on local fields. Encourage large self-supporting churches to choose a small, struggling church and support it. Studies need to be made concerning the use of our church facilities in a more productive way. The seminar, in-shop training approach is the most viable one. paper is a rather poor conductor of life. Help us know how to see problems of a growing church while the problem is still quite small. Our denominational leaders and conference speakers must be men who have successfully done what they ask us to do. Guard against modernism! Get out of the static and get into the innovative. Stop putting down on growth—we've so de-emphasized numbers that one who emphasizes people and counts them and is reaching hundreds almost feels guilty. The denomination has already programmed churches to death. Stop using their mouths so much and put their thoughts into action.

[40] How can the denomination encourage growing churches like yours to reproduce themselves in missions and mission endeavors?

Take 50 young preachers out of seminary and pay their salaries for 1-12 years and place them in the 50 fastest growing S.S. in the SBC, then let them go out to duplicate what they've learned. Be ready to give resource help as a church sees need on the field and not force church to fit into denominational programs and red tape. Help us get big money to do big work. Storing preachers on penny-pinching budgets won't grow great churches. I do not believe a church should ever split to start a mission or another work, but that the local church should grow until it can evangelize its Jerusalem and then to the uttermost parts of the earth. We do not plan to expand into an extremely large church. Our new sanctuary is planned for 408 people. If and when we get it built, or even before, we will launch out into a mission elsewhere! Provide guidelines in starting missions from churches who have done this.

[41] What explanation(s) do you give for your church's growth?

A lot of exciting things are happening in our church and our people are telling others. Active visitation program, good preaching. I have a thirst for lost souls and I have an extreme love for all people and I do show it. I have a concern for people and their needs. Growing community. Preach and practice the Bible and magnify and exalt Jesus. Our philosophy is that church is the biggest business in the world and that we are to reach and train every person. A real expression and practice of love and concern for each other and for others. There is a positive outlook on life, joy is the chief characteristic of our programs. 22% of our budget to missions. The people are

willing to walk by faith. John 15:16-17. People will work, work. Bus ministry. A long pastorate where the people have come to have complete confidence in the Pastor and given him complete leadership control in church decisions and manner of progress. Verse-by-verse exposition of word of God in all services. We stopped trying to promote growth and deepened the message and left the adding and the growing to the Lord. Our willingness to be different. Theocratic leadership with the pastor as head of the church. Hard work.

LAYPERSONS QUESTIONNAIRE

[1] Check the five (5) characteristics which best describe the pastoral leadership of your church.

- 19.5 (1) authoritarian
- 77.9 (2) strong leader
- 46.3 (3) encourages feedback from people
- 15.2 (4) depends on laity for church direction
- 6.3 (5) non-directive style of leadership
- 57.1 (6) delegates authority and responsibility
- 78.8 (7) strong counselor/pastor type ("shepherd of flock")
- 74.5 (8) accessible and warmly human
- 97.8 (9) Bible-believing, evangelistic
- 14.7 (10) other

[2] Check the five (5) evangelistic methods which result in most of the professions of faith.

- 84.0 (1) public evangelism (in services)
- 88.3 (2) personal (one-to-one) evangelism
- 82.3 (3) visitation evangelism
- 37.7 (4) bus evangelism
- 68.6 (5) Sunday School classes
- 12.1 (6) small group evangelism (home Bible study, etc.)
- 48.1 (7) youth evangelism
- 9.1 (8) social ministries
- 48.1 (9) revivals
- 3.0 (10) city wide crusades
- 6.1 (11) other

[3] Check the five (5) factors which most account for the growth of your church.

- 41.1 (1) pastor who is a good counselor
- 68.8 (2) pastor who is a dynamic preacher
- 11.3 (3) church focuses on mass evangelism
- 33.8 (4) bus ministry
- 3.0 (5) Christian social ministries
- 61.5 (6) church program for every age group
- 27.3 (7) children's church
- 32.0 (8) dramatic worship services (including music)
- 10.4 (9) recreation program
- 35.1 (10) building personal relationships by pastor
- 52.8 (11) laity active in church visitation/witnessing
- 35.5 (12) laity active in personal (on the job) witnessing
- 29.0 (13) music and choir program
- 9.1 (14) active church missionary organizations
- 34.6 (15) pastor who equips laity
- 11.3 (16) other

[4] Check the five (5) approaches you believe most effective in promoting the church and attracting visitors to it.

- 48.9 (1) sign pointing to church location or church location itself
- 20.8 (2) radio ads. programs
- 10.8 (3) TV ads. programs
- 34.2 (4) pastor involvement in community affairs
- 31.6 (5) newspaper ads. articles
- 95.7 (6) personal visitation
- 30.3 (7) Christian social ministries
- 97.8 (8) congregational word-of-mouth with friends, neighbors, etc.
- 16.0 (9) direct mail ads.
- 35.1 (10) neighborhood survey/canvass
- 6.9 (11) pastor involvement in civic organizations
- 22.1 (12) other

[5] Does the church have a committee of laypersons responsible for outreach (including publicity of church activities)?

- 58.0 (1) yes
- 42.0 (2) no

[6] Are the church facilities used in ways other than for Sunday and Wednesday activities and church program meetings?

- 82.1 (1) yes
- 17.9 (2) no

[7] If yes, how are they used?

- 28.1 (1) children's day-care
- 13.9 (2) community meetings, such as AA
- 30.7 (3) activities for elderly
- 64.1 (4) activities for youth (excluding GAs or RAs)
- 6.1 (5) mothers' clubs
- 4.3 (6) nutrition/health club
- 53.2 (7) recreation
- 46.3 (8) clothes and food for needy
- 20.3 (9) other

[8] Below are several statements concerning the church. Rate each statement as you agree or disagree with it.

- 1 = strongly agree
- 2 = agree
- 3 = no opinion
- 4 = disagree
- 5 = strongly disagree

(Answers indicate majority response: A = agree or strongly agree; D = disagree or strongly disagree.)

- D78.3 (1) Churches bigger than 500 should split and form new churches.
- D81.8 (2) Social issues are not the concern of the church.
- A98.3 (3) Our church has a warm, friendly atmosphere. Visitors are welcomed and made to feel at home.
- A82.2 (4) Evangelism is most important part of church life.
- A60.1 (5) Discipleship is the most important part of church life.
- A86.1 (6) Our church is open to all, regardless of race.
- D93.9 (7) Pastor doesn't renege his messages to everyday life.
- D86.6 (8) The laity is not given enough responsibility.
- D44.3 (9) Most of our church budget should go for missions.
- D69.7 (10) Our church is growing just as I'd like it to.
- D68.8 (11) Our church should not encourage home Bible fellowship because they become cliques.
- D74.9 (12) Our church has too many meetings.
- D68.4 (13) Denominational ties are not important in growth.
- A93.1 (14) VBS is an important evangelism tool.
- A64.5 (15) I should be more involved in church ministries.
- D33.3 (16) I would not like a teen collection in our church.
- A95.7 (17) I feel very rewarded by services at the church.

[9] Do you feel responsible for missions outreach to everyone in your own community?

- 93.8 (1) yes
- 6.2 (2) no

Explain your answer: (sample answers.)

To effectively minister to everyone would be like trying to cover a black wall with one coat of white paint. We try to specialize like every other effective business organization. Every person is a prospect for heaven. The church should be helping the poor and address instead of the government, which would lead to ministering to them spiritually. Some people will do anything to hurt the church. There comes a time they should be left alone. To the lost, yes—to everyone, no. Obviously there should be no hesitation in the Gospel presentation because of race, cultural or social differences.

[10] If yes to the above, does your church "practice its concern for others?"

- 98.6 (1) yes
- 1.4 (2) no

If yes, how?

By having the lost and letting them know it. By providing for their needs by bus ministry, personal evangelism and involvement in the community. Personal witnessing. Visitation program. TV and radio ministry. Newspaper ads. By going the extra mile. Pastor sets the pace, we minister and act as followers. Benevolence gifts—however, we do not practice to the extent we should. (Many listed social needs as benevolence, food, clothing, nursing home and hospital ministries, rescue mission, mental institute.)

111) Do you feel as responsible for missions in other areas of the U.S. as for your own community?

81.9 (1) yes

18.1 (2) no

Explain your answer:

This is why we have a Cooperative Program: God didn't lead us to other areas. We feel the responsibility but we don't do much about it. We have yet to scratch the surface of personal Christian opportunities in our own community. We should have more love and concern for those closer to us. Acts 1:8. Other areas are just as important but the area in which a Christian lives should be his area of deeper personal ministry. Bible teaches the main responsibility is local first, then beyond next.

112) If yes to the above, does your church practice its concern?

98.9 (1) yes

1.1 (2) no

Explain your answer:

In our support of Cooperative Program as well as direct support of missions and missionaries. Visiting. Writing letters. Prayer. We give our money. By preaching missions. Youth mission trips in the summer.

What can the denomination do to help churches grow?

Practice what we teach and preach. SBC should maintain a low profile, general public does not understand our democratic organization. Quit trying to "program" Jesus. Maintain a God-reverencing Christ-trusting, Spirit-led, Bible-believing image on the national level. HMB provide more funds and personnel to start and sustain missions. Promote bus ministry. Provide simplified materials for average Baptist churches depending on small volunteer staffs. Be certain writers and editors are scripturally sound in each publication. Train pastors in seminars to preach to meet every need of church rather than so much theology. Incorporate fresh ideas (I am not talking about doctrine). Get better writers for SBC literature. More clinics on "how to" personal evangelism. Get rid of teachers (in SBC schools) who don't believe that the Bible is the Holy Inspired word of God. Growth is the natural function of life, the goal is life.

not growth. Nothing! Only the Holy Spirit can give growth. Don't you think we have used denominations as barriers instead of bridges too long?

What are your recommendations for strengthening weak churches?

Family Ministry Plan. Get back to basics in Sunday School. Hold lay evangelism school. Get rid of liberal professors in SBC supported colleges who do not believe the word of God infallible. Less formality. Evangelistic, energetic leadership to inspire congregations to see the need and not get over a little sweat to accomplish it. Temporary assistance by experienced people to local church. Pay your pastor well. Positive attitude by leadership instead of being against everything. Have active youth programs with first class leaders. Consolidate small, weak churches into stronger, larger churches. Emphasize discipling as much as evangelism. Put leather to the pavement—faith without works is dead. Be more friendly. Find a dedicated, Bible-believing, evangelistic pastor. Christian social ministries. Large churches need to help weak churches by providing and sharing materials as well as leadership. Power in the pulpit. Computer studies are not a step in the right direction. G.I.G.O. means garbage in, garbage out.

What can the denomination do to encourage churches like yours to be active in missions?

Put the money into missions instead of salaries for executives. Encourage pastors to have strong missions programs, less of CP going to buildings and salaries in the U.S. We need no help. We are ready to become involved in other missions as soon as we are somewhat larger and able to branch out. Assign churches to specific missionaries as prayer partners. Get back to the Biblical meaning of missions (don't use the associational definition) and practice what God says in his word about missions. Give laymen more opportunity to participate in missions efforts. Show results (of missions) Sell rather than tell. Have missionaries visit local churches so members can see, hear and personally know what their mission going is accomplishing. Don't let us know that material and human resources are being used for such surveys as this.

comment / Struggling churches

By Walker L. Knight

Southern Baptists may be big nationally, but in eastern Montana, an area of 73,000 square miles of mountains, ranches and farms, the 13-million-member denomination is a distinct minority.

For this reason and others, the constituting of Circle Baptist Church in Circle, seat of McCone County, became an occasion of some note, despite the fact the church has only 24 members, no property and a pastor on the field only a few months.

The importance of the event was underscored by visitors from Nashville, Atlanta and several Montana towns with Baptist churches.

Churches are hard for Southern Baptists to come by in these parts. In all the 73,000 square miles are only three associations, representing 18 churches plus seven missions.

These include two churches on Indian reservations, led by missionaries.

The 25 congregations, by anyone's standards, are small. A church with 100 in Sunday School is medium-sized here. Towns in Montana—where ranches are measured in sections rather than acres—are small.

Statistically, Southern Baptists represent only one percent of the 694,000 population of the state. Baptists of all affiliations comprise only three percent of the population.

According to HMB findings, some 51 percent of Montanans claim church adherence, but Catholics and other non-evangelicals represent almost half that figure.

While small, Southern Baptists are not exactly new to the area. Some 25 years ago, the first Southern Baptist churches were started when military and oil field personnel migrated to the area from states where Southern Baptists are strong.

However, during the 25 years, the churches often failed to reach longtime or native residents. When military and oil people left, churches died or hung on with a few hardy members. Some churches started or restarted as often as three times.

Circle church, sponsored by First Baptist of Wolf Point, 50 miles northward, started a little more than a



year ago when members of the mother church moved to Circle. A Bible study was formed in an apartment and eventually the Masonic Lodge basement was rented.

Keeping the Circle group proved difficult, and when Ray Willis was invited to come in view of a call, only one member showed up for service. Others were contacted and he accepted, encouraged by the two adults who came on professions of faith and one on promise of letter.

Willis, a native of Illinois, graduated in June from Mid-America Baptist Seminary in Memphis, and since moving to Circle has had professions or additions to the mission nearly every Sunday. The Sunday after the church constituted, five persons presented themselves for baptism and three more came by letter.

The week following constitution, the church bought property and made plans to build.

High attendance has been 55. Circle's future seems bright, more so than many small Montana towns, because it sits astride one of the largest coal deposits in the nation. Construction is underway for an industry that will mine coal for fuel and manufacture fertilizer. Nearly 2,500 new residents are expected, tripling current population of 1,100.

Area director of missions W. J. Hughes, a six-foot, six-inch giant whose boots and Stetson hat make him appear seven feet tall, cites half a

dozen places in eastern Montana which are responding to the hard work and vision of men such as Willis.

At Glasgow, where Calvary Baptist struggled just to stay alive after the Air Force base closed, pastor Bob Walker has led the way to new life. A retired AF sergeant, Walker had only 12 persons in this congregation on his first Sunday. Now, more than 100 attend.

Growth, he says, comes by one-on-one evangelism.

Walker's plain speaking and aggressiveness have alienated some: "They call us fanatics and this place Holy Hill," he says. The church has a bus, an active puppet ministry, services at the air base property where a small town is building.

At Forsyth, a recent revival at First Baptist Church resulted in an almost unheard of 38 conversions, and pastor Jerry Davis in his first year has people so inspired they are visiting with him at the farms and ranches all over.

At first Baptist Church of Wolf Point, pastor Ray Self is building a congregation of native and longtime residents. On the Sunday following constitution of Circle church, Wolf Point baptized a young physician serving with Public Health Service.

Terry Buford serves in Opheim, ten miles from the Canadian border. He volunteered to work during the summer, but now sees the church as God's place for him. A 25-year-old bachelor, Buford is well equipped to weather the financial strain such small situations place on ministers.

Church members feed him, house him and the congregation extends some finances. Buford gets help from friends in Arkansas and Tennessee. A mission at Scobey receives support from a church in Mississippi.

For every success is failure. Hughes says of ten pastors who came to eastern Montana in 1975, five left within a year. Mission dollars keep alive those who stay. Funds come from the Northern Plains Convention, the HMB or from churches who support them directly.

The pastors who do stay see their fields much as do foreign missionaries, expecting little rapid growth and long periods of building acceptance and gaining conversions. •

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BROADMAN

(A Division of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention)

letters

Baltimore bust?

We, the deacons of First Baptist Church in Baltimore, must lodge a protest in behalf of our congregation for the false and misleading "message" about the church and its work that was conveyed by the picture of our building and the accompanying caption (Sept. HM). Such use of a photograph, totally out of a meaningful context, and set in contrast with another sister church in Baltimore, is disgraceful journalism, to say the least. We should hope that "SBC hopes rest on models like First Baptist Church of Baltimore." That is, hopes of the SBC should rest on churches already involved in excellent racial relations, not to mention relevant Christian social ministries, at the heart of the Bold Mission Thrust (BMT) is ever to come to light!

We protest most vigorously because of the irrevocable damage done to our witness in the city and now to the nation, but more fundamentally, we deeply fear that such an action may betray a lack of understanding on the part of officials of the HMB and our own state convention of what is actually happening in Baltimore, and what really has to be done by the convention through its affiliated churches which are still in the city to prepare the way for reaching the people of the cities of America.

To demonstrate just how false the "message" conveyed by the photograph is: first, the sign has been in disrepair for some time because a brand new one is being constructed by the state penitentiary. If the person who took the picture had been courteous enough to enter the building and ask about it, that person and the nation would see that the broken sign doesn't accurately represent a struggle at all.

The photographer would have discovered, in addition to a fully integrated congregation, an even bolder dynamic at work in our building. For a year now, we have been sharing our facilities with another Baptist congregation, Providence Baptist Church, through a "Covenant of Unity of Sharing Facilities" that both churches entered into. And that covenant plan is not the usual one of a rental type or of a lease arrangement. Rather, it represents a profound and comprehensive statement of cooperation and witness for Jesus Christ between two diverse congregations: one integrated and affiliated with the SBC; the other black inner-city and affiliated with American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

How much more helpful your agency could have been in furthering BMT by including photos of First Baptist Church's day care center, full choir loft on Sunday morning, two autonomous congregations working together, two pastors sharing a single office space on a daily basis! How much more helpful it would have been to include some comments, or an interview, from the pastors!

Irrevocable damage has been brought upon our congregational integrity, work and witness through careless research and the indiscriminate use of photographs.

Cornelius Mason
Baltimore, Md.

EDITORS NOTE: An unfortunate set of circumstances created this misunderstanding. During the week writer Walker Knight spent in Baltimore, First's pastor was on vacation. Knight planned to call from Atlanta, but was unable to do so in the crush of deadlines. He had learned, however of First's innovative work and willingness to enter many areas, including integrating facilities.

It is unfortunate the cutlines could be interpreted incorrectly. They were not meant to imply that First Baptist Church is not a model for Southern Baptists, for indeed it is.

Although Mr. Mason does not consider it so, the sign does speak to us of First's struggle. How long would such a broken sign have remained unrepaired during the days when First was at its strength?

High on CHA

Thank you for the fine coverage and beautiful photography of Christian High Adventure (Oct. HM). CHA truly brings God and man together.

Elmyra, Black
Swainsboro, Ga.

● The last time I looked Elaine was up an orange tree in Florida. I meant to write then to say thanks for *Love With No Strings* (the HMB's photo/text book on Christian social ministries). I liked it the first time I read it, but it saved my life on an Accent assignment second-time around. Last night I looked again and there Elaine was 14,000 feet up in the Rocky Mountains. Does she request these assignments or is somebody up there at 1350 Spring Street on her case? [She asks for it. - Ed.]

However, maybe "really getting with it" is what makes Furlow the best writer at HMB. Of course, that's just my opinion and what do I know!

Barbara Joiner
Columbiana, Ala.

● Here in North Carolina we have worked with Chuck Clayton for two summers and have found the CHA program to be a great way to challenge today's teenage boy. Southern Baptists should be proud of the numerous ways that are being used to help people find Jesus Christ in a more real way. Keep up the good work!

David Langford
Raleigh, N.C.

● Elaine Furlow's article on CHA was

great! How can I get more information? It sounds like something I need!

Roger Warnack
Tifton, Ga.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Write Chuck Clayton, Rt. 4, Box 339 B 1, Montrose, Colorado 81401.

Working men...and women

For eight years I worked at the juvenile court as a group worker while serving as pastor of a church-type mission. The stress and strain of a 40-hour work week and the after work hours and weekends on a church field are well known to me. I relate to the experiences described in the coverage of the pastor as working man ("The Bi-vocational Pastor," Oct. HM).

Another subject to be discussed is the pastor's wife as working woman. My income consists of a housing and transportation allowance from the mission and supplemental money that is given by our sponsoring church, an association in Texas and a personal friend. This totals about \$585.00 per month. This is not adequate to meet our needs and we are grateful to God that our basic income is provided by my school teacher wife.

It seems appropriate to recognize the contribution that these women make toward the furtherance of the kingdom of God. Many of them, like their husbands, work a full week, then assume the responsibilities of homemaking, and in addition are variously involved in the ministries of the church.

Ward H. Laurence
Vancouver, Wash.

● We particularly enjoyed the article on Bi-Vocational Pastor; please convey our thanks to Judy and Ken Touchton for doing such a good job.

Peggy Wiscarson
Missoula, Mont.

● For six years I served on the Missions Committee of the Virginia Baptist General Board. During this time we assisted a few new churches for several years until they became self-supporting. But we had many churches, usually small, rural, coal-mining communities that are not likely to ever be capable of paying a full-time pastor an adequate salary. It would seem that the bi-vocational man is a viable solution.

I hope that from time to time you will have other articles showing the progress made in this direction. The general Baptist constituency and other Baptist pastors must not think of the bi-vocational pastor as a "second-class" citizen. He may be the key to our future growth.

John J. Bryan
Bluefield, W. Va.

and in passing / When it's right

By William G. Tanner

As the Christmas rush slows down our work at the Home Mission Board, I cannot help but reflect on my first year at the helm of this agency.

The past 12 months have been exciting, exacting; challenging and extremely satisfying for me. I have been exposed to a wealth of information and programming material that is almost beyond comprehension, but the experience has been positive.

In my judgment, I have the privilege of working with the smartest, most talented and most dedicated group of people in Southern Baptist life. And I am rapidly discovering how complex, yet how viable, is the Home Board.

I have never encountered an agency so alive, so creative, so energetic in its mission. Yet I am also daily perplexed by the myriad involvements and details that constitute our work.

Some evaluations:

On the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering: We've received \$1.1 million more than last year, and as the year ends, we are less than \$800,000 short of our \$11.2 million goal. This is outstanding; no home mission agency of any denomination in this nation has ever received this much.

It reminds me, too, that this is the season of the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions. It is our sincere hope that all Baptists will respond as sacrificially to the Lottie Moon appeal.

On the missionary force: We've gained 347 new missionaries this past year, bringing our total to 2,839 under appointment by the HMB and state conventions.

On Bold Mission Thrust: We've realized a basic goal of coordinating all 14 Home Board programs toward a single objective: winning our nation to Christ.

We are, of course, still a long way from attaining our stated Bold Mission objectives of evangelizing and congregationalizing the entire nation. But as we move into later phases of the emphasis, we expect increased results.

Toward this end, we count heavily on the new Mission Service Corps to provide additional human power;

already the HMB utilizes some 20,000 volunteer workers through the Special Missions Ministries Department, and another 5,000 through Evangelism Section.

On new churches: We've been gratified to learn some 602 new church-type missions were started in 1976, and believe this past year will show an even larger accomplishment.

All these factors have made this initial year as your Home Mission Board executive director an invigorating, stimulating, challenging one for me, and have given me a most exciting outlook on 1978.

Let me conclude, then, with a few personal comments.

First, I am especially grateful for the leadership of my predecessor, Arthur Rutledge. Many times I have recalled wise and useful information he passed on with the suggestion, "This will help you." He was entirely correct.

Second, I am grateful for my colleagues here at the Board. No one has been so engrossed in his or her program that he has not been willing to take me "back stage" and let me see how it all works together.

Third, I have come to believe the Home Mission Board is an institution which—unlike many big institutions—can and is trying to retain its humanity. We often talk of being willing to sacrifice ourselves as God demanded; but often, it does not go beyond the talk stage.

I find the Home Mission Board to be an agency which has, in the past, been willing to sacrifice itself despite public opinion. In such areas as race, social justice, ministry to all—proclamation where the gospel was unwelcome or unknown—the Board could have taken a course more expedient.

That it did not is enviable. I find here an institution willing to apply the whole Good News of Jesus Christ to the hurting, helpless, hopeless and lost of the United States: be they rich or poor; black, white, red, yellow or brown; north, south, east or west.

As long as this institution can continue to care more about people than

about itself, it will serve God well. I believe.

Fourth, I have found an agency on the cutting edge of America; one dedicated to new frontiers of spiritual opportunity.

People in every department are planning increased, intensified efforts to witness and minister to our nation.

These are creative, innovative people. And I have heard the undercurrents: "What's the new boss like? Will we have to cut back...go slower...take fewer risks in our efforts to develop strategies and programs and methods of reaching people?"

Reasonable questions, realistic questions, when a newcomer takes the reins.

But as I sense the times and the people with whom I work—as I gauge the mood of Southern Baptists everywhere—I believe this is no time to play it safe.

Risk—and failure—are as much a part of missions as is security—and success. Perhaps even more a part. We are living in an unprecedented time of opportunity and acceptance. But I do not believe we are so glibly able we are unwilling to challenge this nation to discover the abundant life Christ promised.

Recently, in one ceremony honoring his retirement, Clovis Brantley was asked, "How could you do it all?" In his 40 years in home missions, first as a local pastor, then Christian social ministries worker, Clovis had begun a rescue mission for alcoholics, a Baptist center for needy people of any race, a home for unwed mothers—and several other ministries that were unpopular with his brethren at the time.

Now, someone wanted to know where Clovis had gotten the courage to wedge against the times.

Clovis answered in his simple, soft spoken way:

"I knew," he said, "it was right."

With that understanding as our walking papers, we begin another year. And you can be assured that if IT IS RIGHT, your Home Mission Board will be there in the years and decades to come. ●

Chaplain calendar

Quarterly listing of chaplains' birthdays

JANUARY

January 1: Andrew A. Bratcher Jr., Tex. V.A.; William Counselman, Miss. inst.; Herman M. Kinzald, Tenn. Army; William H. Matton, S.C., A.F. January 2: Lucy C. Justice, Ky. inst.; Ernest Johnson, Tex. inst. January 3: Roy M. Mahan, S.C., Army; January 4: Carl B. Case, Tex. hosp.; Aubrey Neal, Ark. Navy; January 5: Michael D. Moore, Tex. Army; January 6: Edward Carl Middleton, S.C., Navy; January 7: Randolph D. Spear Jr., N.C., ind.; Wendell T. Wright, Va. Army; January 8: John R. Hagan Jr., Ark. inst.; Ralph E. Medlock Jr., Ga. Army; Hilma Lamas, Travis, Ala. Navy; Robert W. Trotter, Miss. hosp.; Vernon Wall, S.C., hosp. January 9: Leroy C. Beane, Mo. hosp.; George M. Coaker, Ala., V.A.; Robert R. Whiteside, S.C., A.F.

January 11: Jay D. Peterson, Fla. Navy; January 12: Harry L. Lile Jr., La. Navy; Jack C. Randles, Ga. Army; January 13: John E. Rostovsky, Ala., A.F.; January 14: Charles E. Burgess, Tenn. inst.; Ronald D. Herold, Okla. hosp. January 15: Dehon Collins, Ga. Army; January 16: Milton O. Tyler, Wyo., A.F.; Joseph W. Vetter, Ky. Army; Harold D. Wright, La. hosp. January 17: William T. Flynt, Ark. hosp. January 18: Donald C. Hancock, Ga. hosp.; A. Duward Hazard, Tex. inst.; James T. Maxwell, Tex. hosp. January 19: Camille O. Atrendall, Tex., A.F.; Roy A. Baxter, Tenn. Navy; January 20: James A. Buckner, N.C. Army; Kenneth C. Spears, Ala. hosp. January 22: Newton Hardin, N.C., A.F.; William E. Hallom, N.C., V.A.; Hugh R. Kinsey, Fla., A.F. January 23: Bill Reaves, Ala. Army; William M. Sticklin, Mo., A.F.; Devery D. Underwood, Tex. hosp. January 24: Joe Donald Robert, Tex. inst. January 25: James M. Briggs, N.C. hosp. January 26: William E. Albert, Fla. hosp. January 27: Willis L. Saunders, Okla. hosp.; Deyo J. Williams, N.C., V.A. January 28: Richard L. Mahler, N.Y., hosp. January 29: Arnold Holley, Tex. hosp.; John D. Singletary, N.C., A.F.; Dewie Williams, La. inst. January 31: Charles G. Campbell, Ga. hosp.; Edward A. McGregor, Tenn. hosp.; Frank A. Rice, La. A.F.

FEBRUARY

February 1: James S. Harper, Ga. inst.; Raymond J. Wade, Calif. Army; February 2: Clyde N. Kerley, N.C., A.F.; February 3: Peter J. Kraak, Mich. Army; February 4: Vasten E. Zumwalt, Ark., A.F.; February 5: Grady F. Criswell, Tex. inst. February 6: Robey D. Goff, Tex., V.A.; Floyd Key, Ky. inst.; James H. Ruetherford, Ala. Navy; February 7: Darrell E. Hall, Tenn., A.F.; Ezra J. Richardson, Mich. inst. February 9: George T. Bryson, Miss. Army; David Morris, N.C., ind. February 10: Duane D. Redding, Tex. Army; James Rantz, S.C. hosp.; Robert W. Riley, Ga. Army; Samuel Southard, N.C. hosp.

February 11: Robert James Fleming, Ga. inst.; Ralph C. Johnston, Tex., V.A.; Hylon Vickers, Tex. inst. February 12: Donald O. Burnett, Tex. Army; Gerald J. Smith, Miss. Army; February 13: Kenneth A. Burnette, Pa. hosp. February 14: William Reid Buckelew, Ga. hosp.; William B. Kirby Jr., N.C. Army; Melvin H. Pickering, Okla., A.F.; Boyd D. Walton, Okla. inst. February 15: Malcolm E. Smith, Fla., A.F.; Stanley F. Taylor, Okla. hosp.; Tally Williamson, N.C., hosp. February 16: Earl T.

Trotter, Ga. hosp.

February 17: Charles F. Harding, Mo. Army; Walter D. Parris, S.C. hosp. February 18: Bobby Harbin, Ga. inst.; Vaughn H. Tollett, Ark., A.F. February 19: Myron G. Madden, La. hosp.; Salvatore Rubinio, Calif. Navy; February 20: William D. Aders, Ala. Navy; James Calmes, Ohio Army; February 22: John R. Johnston, Ark., A.F.; Frank C. Taylor, S.C., V.A. February 23: William H. Warren, Ala., A.F. February 24: Joe B. Abbott, Ala. hosp.; Berdon M. Bell Jr., N.C. Army; Robert W. Mulkey, S.C. hosp.; N. Boyd Robertson, Okla. ind. February 25: Lindell E. Anderson, Mo. Army; Paul W. Wood, La. Army; February 26: Byron W. Aylodge, Ohio inst.; Max E. Burch, N.C. Army; Oscar L. DeLozier, Ga. hosp.; Tarnel G. Genden, Ark., V.A.; Marie E. Stuckland, La. Navy; February 27: W.B. Johnson, Fla. inst.; Carl E. Tolbert, Okla. Army; Walter G. Tucker, Ark. Army; Warren B. Wall, Pa. inst. February 28: Clarence Barton, Ky. hosp.; Frank C. Taylor, S.C., V.A. February 29: James A. Whitorn Jr., Ga. A.F.

MARCH

March 1: Joseph E. Galle, La. Army; Wilburn T. Hendrix, N.C., ind.; Charles W. Pike, N.C. Army; Douglas E. Pond, Tex. Army; George T. Slurch, Tex., A.F. March 2: Otis W. Smith, Miss. Army; March 4: James W. Wilson Jr., Ala. Navy; March 5: Bennie I. Billings, La. Navy; Kelly Blanton, N.C., ind.; Joseph Dukes, Ga. hosp.; John P. McMichael, La. Army; March 6: Billy D. Hensley, Ark., A.F.; Marvin C. Hughes, S.C., Army; George J. Stafford, Ga.

V.A. March 7: Charles C. Noble Jr., Mo. Navy; James Pollard, Ky. hosp.; Franklin Sparkman, Ala. Army; March 8: Jack Thomas, N.C. Army; March 11: Oscar Forrester, Ga. Navy; March 12: Lamar Dinkins, Ala. hosp.; James W. Millaps, Tenn. A.F.

March 13: John M. Allen, Fla. Army; Ernest A. Banner Jr., N.C. Army; O. Norman Shands, Ga. inst. March 14: Wayne M. Lanham, Va. hosp. March 15: Jimmy G. Cobb, Tex. inst.; Edward A. Flippen Jr., Va. Army; Harry C. Jacobs, Ark. inst.; Zeak C. Mitchell Jr., Ala. Navy; March 16: Ira O. Carter, Fla. Navy; Harry A. Tidwell Jr., Ala. Navy; March 17: Ernest E. Kiteus, La., A.F.; Larry V. Steir, Kans., A.F. March 18: William C. Jackson Jr., Ga. hosp. March 19: James F. Bray, Ga. Army; Robert D. Christian, Ala., A.F.; Leonard B. Hinz, Tex., V.A.

March 20: Thomas A. George, Ga. Army; Bobby D. Moore, Ala. Army; Leo S. Stank Jr., S.C., Navy; March 21: Walter C. Jackson III, Ky. hosp. March 22: Leonard E. Markham, Ala. Navy; March 24: James E. Jordan, Tex., A.F.; C. Todd Walter, S.C. hosp. March 25: James Dent, Ky. inst.; James Hatley, S.C. hosp. March 26: John L. Hinkle, Tenn. hosp. March 27: Robert Foy, Miss. inst. March 28: E.C. Houston, Ala. hosp.; Irvin H. Thompson, N.C. Navy; March 29: Frank M. Ornburn, Mo. Army; Harold Thompson, Tex. Army; March 30: Erwin W. Robinson, S.C. hosp. March 31: George T. Boyd, Miss. Navy; Joseph K. Dodd, Ala. Army; Clinton R. Phelps, Mich., V.A.; John O. Solano, N.Mex., A.F.

ATTENTION!

All Church and Denominational Leaders!

The March issue of Baptist Program will bring you important information concerning Home Missions!

Opportunities for expanding the work of evangelism, church extension and ministry have never been greater!

Brother Pastor, please urge the leaders in your church to use the additional material in Baptist Program in March to help your people become better informed about the kind of ways they can become involved in missions in the United States.



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