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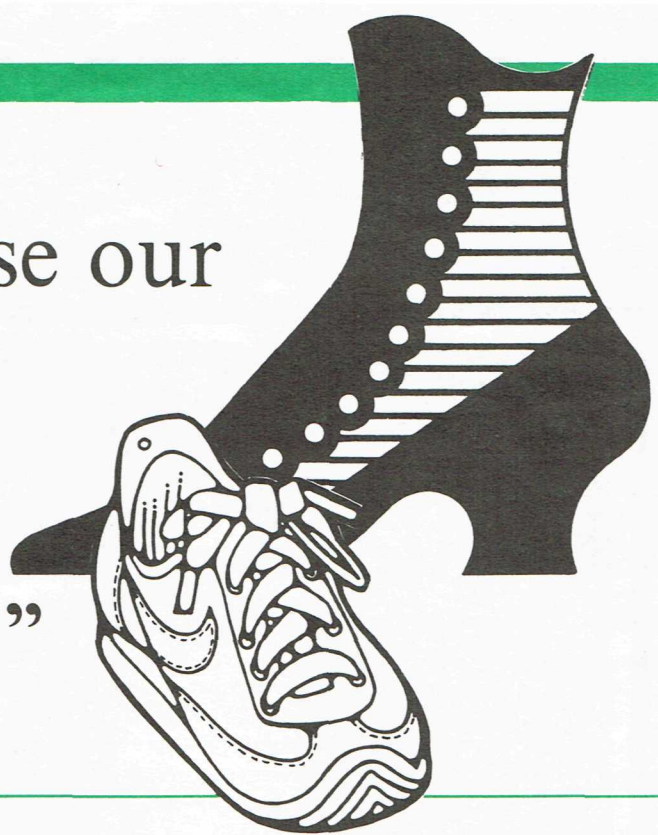
VISITOR

May 1988



*Let
justice
run down
like water,
and
righteousness
like a mighty
stream.*

“If we could choose our mother, I’d look for a mother like I shop for a pair of shoes”



by Betty J. Rosentrater

We aren't permitted to choose our mothers. But if we did choose mothers, I'd look for a mother like I shop for a pair of shoes. My feet must carry me through many, many miles in a lifetime under all kinds of circumstances, so my shoes must help my feet do all that will be required of them. Mothers are much the same.

I'll pass by the cute, ruffly baby booties. They are soft and dainty, but they don't endure and they are easily soiled. Some women are like that—sit around demurely, but can do little else.

Sneakers look inviting, but I note that soon they get smelly. Some people hold in all their hurts and frustrations, and though they appear active on the outside, on the inside they are a source of dying discontent and give off a bad odor.

Sandals are a lot of fun—a lot of freedom. But mothers who are like sandals allow too much freedom and don't give enough support, so I must

pass them by also.

Ballet slippers. Ah, to twirl and swirl and spin about, to twist and turn in the limelight. But where do they go? Only into the practice sessions and on to the public stage. One really can't go anywhere or do anything with them. I don't want a mother that is just for show, for “pretty” and not practicality. So on I go—still searching.

Aha! High heeled pumps. Now they are snappy and sharp and would present me well. Yet I know that when one is teetering about on spindly heels, she is more apt to stumble and fall. And no matter how high we build ourselves, our true height remains. I must look further.

I like the little Chinese slippers—black with a tiny flower. They feel good, aren't restrictive and don't weigh much. Yet as I look about, I know the cloth top will never protect me from the hard knocks in life. I need a mother who will stand between me and the heavy blows life deals.

There. There they are—the pretty little mesh shoes with the wedge heels. I'll get some support, some style, and my feet can breathe. But the dust of the world seeps in and soon my feet are as contaminated as the world around me. I want a

mother who can help screen out some of the evils through which I must pass.

Clodhoppers. Now those are practical. I'll have protection, sturdiness and durability. But as I clod around the store, too much gets crushed under foot. I don't want a mother who will tramp about, disregarding the fragile and beautiful about her. Clodhoppers are not for me.

I glance at the tap dance shoes, all shiny and bright. One could move with those and the action would be exciting. But do I want constant, frenetic motion, and a noisy announcement of every activity? I think not. I prefer a mother more modest and unassuming.

An Eastern European, government-issued work shoe—high top, down to business shoe. But where is the personality? The beauty? The individuality? The distinctiveness? I couldn't bear the redundancy of a mother who never had a thought of her own. My search continues. It isn't easy finding the best shoes. It isn't easy finding a good mother.

Well, there are still boots—boots that protect from everything around, give clout, and some with spurs to kick if things aren't going your way

Mother of five, Betty Rosentrater is an innovative teacher in the Nappanee school system. Her mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Chamberlain, are living in Lakeland, Fla., after years of mission work in Jamaica and several ministry tours around the world. (SAS is a brand name of shoes sold in the United States.)

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or going fast enough. But where is the meekness and gentleness? No, they won't do either. I must look on. Like my shoes, probably the mother I choose won't be perfect, but there are important characteristics that are worth hunting for.

Life sometimes surprises us. Maybe I should invest in a shoe that has a false bottom so I can hide things? But if I hide things, my life can't be open, and I don't want a mother who hides a lot of things about herself, nor one who is afraid to trust God in times of stress or surprise.

Is there no shoe? Is there no fit mother? I ponder. What is it I truly want and need? What qualities are absolutely essential. Like my shoes, I want a mother who is sensible; who has and maintains values under stress and duress; who is not easily bent out of shape, yet is not rigid nor unbending. I need a bit of flexibility and gentleness, a recognition of change and growth. I need a mother who is amiable, lovable, kind, agreeable, who doesn't seek her own way. I need a mother who is spiritual, whose adorning is not on the outside, who is genuine—crafted by God rather than self-made or conformed to the common mold of the world.

I spot them, a bit more costly, but there they are. Shoes that will support me, comfort me, protect me, are neat but not pretentious, practical shoes that will fit in every situation without being frivolous nor ostentatious. Not stylish, nor yet not strange and clashing with taste; a color that blends rather than taking over. There they are. I found some shoes that cushion from life's hurts, but don't make me oblivious to the hard, uneven places; that keep above the muck and mire. These shoes are just like the mother I want and need. They are like the mother I have—SAS® shoes.

A SAS® mother. Sensible, Amiable, Spiritual. That's my mother. She wears well and adds grace, beauty, and comfort to every step through life's long walk.

A SAS® mother. I thank God he chose her for me, for I couldn't do it myself. ■

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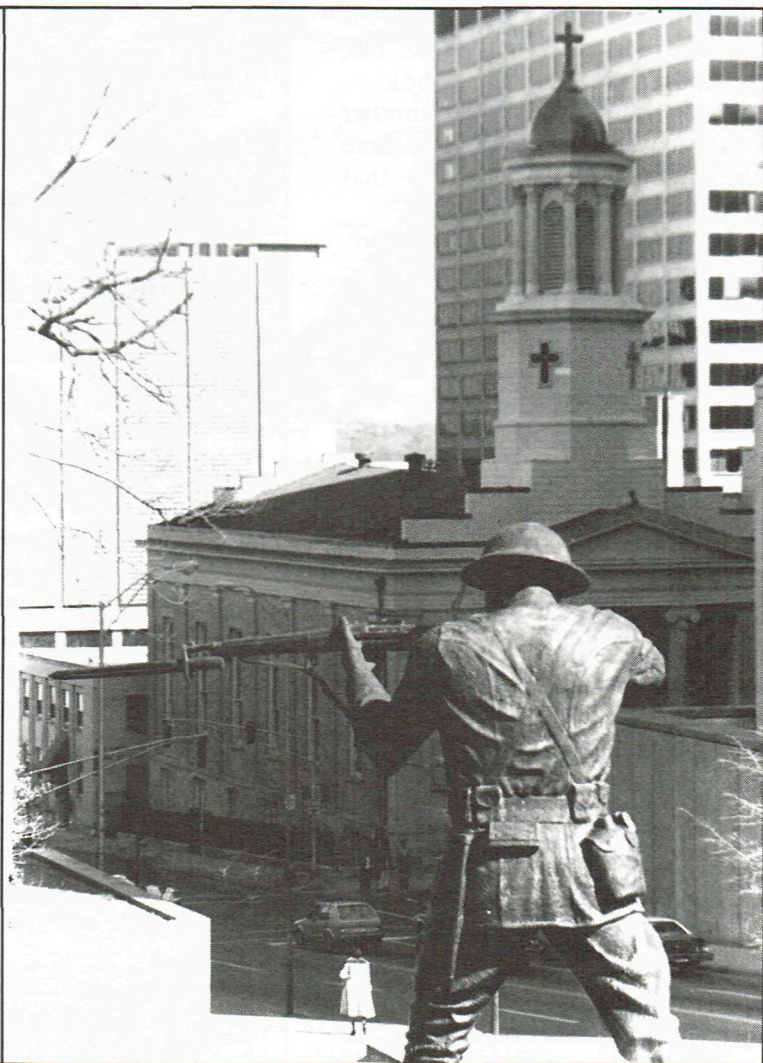
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Praying for peace and justice

by Ronald J. Sider



Paul Schrock

The next two decades are the most dangerous in human history. I believe that the only hope for our time is a new movement of biblical Christians who immerse their search for peace and justice in prayer and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Nuclear disarmament, the preservation of the family, international economic justice, and the restoration of the sacredness of human life will involve fundamental changes in our society. These changes will not happen, global disaster will not be avoided, unless God sends sweeping revival and Spirit-breathed action for peace and justice. Prayer has always been central to mighty movements of God. I am certain it still is.

Ronald J. Sider is executive director of Evangelicals for Social Action, a position he has held since September 1987. Ron, his wife Arbutus, and daughter Sonia, live in Philadelphia, Pa.

Recent decades have seen important social movements, and many Christians have been involved in them. But never in this century has there been a movement calling for fundamental social change that was immersed in intercessory prayer and a radical dependence on the Holy Spirit. It is a tragic fact that contemporary Christian social activists often place less emphasis on prayer than contemporary gospel evangelists. Richard Lovelace is right: "Most of those who are praying are not praying about social issues and most of those who are active in social issues are not praying very much."¹

Earlier models

This was not always the case. William Wilberforce (1759-1833) and other members of the Clapham Sect were the leaders in the great British crusade to abolish the slave trade.

Historians tell us that they immersed their political strategizing and lobbying in daily three-hour sessions of intercessory prayer. Later in the nineteenth century, Lord Shaftesbury spearheaded a large number of social reforms, ending child labor and reforming the factories. When his son asked how he could do so many things at once, he replied: "By hearty prayer to Almighty God before I begin, by entering into it with faith and zeal, and by making my end to be His glory and the good of mankind."²

Charles Finney, the Billy Graham of the nineteenth century, was also one of the leading crusaders against slavery. Finney insisted that long hours of intercessory prayer were central to his work and would have appreciated what Helmut Thielicke has said of Martin Luther: He prayed four hours each day, "not despite his

busy life, but because only so could he accomplish his gigantic labor."³

The promise of Jesus

If we are to learn how to pray, we must come to believe that Jesus meant what he said about prayer. Many Christians do not believe Jesus' teaching about prayer. And when I read his words, I can hardly blame them! Jesus said some of the most astonishing, outrageous things about prayer.

In Mark 11:23-4, we have these incredible words:

"I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

When the disciples could not heal the epileptic lad, they asked Jesus for an explanation. Jesus pointed directly to their weak faith. "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matt. 17:20-21).

The Gospel of John contains these breathtaking promises:

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it" (14:12-13).

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you" (15:7).

Of course none of us really believes these words! Jesus must be exaggerating! For years I never seriously believed these promises. For years I didn't really believe he could have meant what he said. Slowly, however, I am beginning to think that perhaps he did. My faith is still

small, but it is growing. I am beginning to believe that the one I confess to be God Incarnate promised again and again that whatever we ask in his name, he will give.

Three conditions

Notice, however, that Jesus attached three important conditions to his promises. First of all, we must have *faith*. But that condition only seems like a further burden rather than a help. If we don't have faith, we can't suddenly manufacture it.

How then do we obtain the necessary faith? I often feel very much like a first grader in the school of prayer. But two things have helped me here. In the past few years, I have pleaded to the Lord to heal broken marriages of close friends. And God has answered some of those prayers. As God has done that, my faith has grown stronger.

I was meditating on Matt. 17:19-21 just after Hiroshima day this year, pondering Jesus' promise that faith the size of a mustard seed would move mountains. Like a flash I thought: "Lord, even the preventions of nuclear war?" That seemed too much! The nuclear arms race—the growing danger of nuclear holocaust—is surely the most foreboding mountain looming over us today. But Jesus clearly answered me: "Yes, even the mountain of nuclear weapons. Even that immovable mountain can be removed, if my people pray." I believe Jesus means exactly what he says. He is the Lord of the

"Most of those who are praying are not praying about social issues, and most of those who are active in social issues aren't praying very much."

universe. Surely then we can believe that he will remove the terrible mountain of nuclear weapons if we unite in persistent, believing prayer.

But there is a second condition attached to Jesus' promise. We must be ready to *obey*. John 15:7 says "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." Jesus makes this sweeping promise to answer prayer only to those who walk in intimate, obedient fellowship with him. We abide in him as we commune daily with him. We abide in him as we keep his commandments. One of his commandments is that we forgive others in the same way he forgives us. In fact, Jesus said that when we start to pray, we should first forgive others (Mk. 11:25).

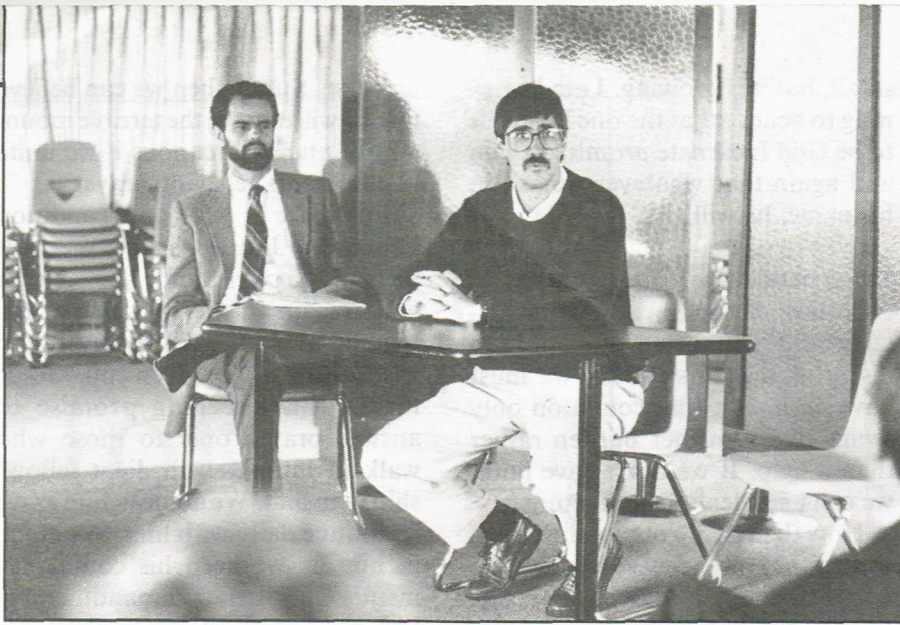
It is impossible to pray properly with resentment in our hearts toward other people. My wife and I had a quarrel one weekend. When I started to prepare this piece on prayer the following Monday morning, I still felt anger and resentment toward her. I wanted to pray for God's guidance in my writing. It became quite clear, however, that I first had to let go of my anger at my wife before I could open myself in believing prayer for God's presence and direction. Obedience is inseparable from effectual prayer (1 Jn. 3:22; James 5:16). If we want to pray for peace and justice, we will also have to obey Jesus' command to be peacemakers and seekers of justice. If we want to pray for peace, we must let go of anger and hostility toward people of our nation and other nations.

A third condition is that our sole aim be to *glorify* God. Jesus says that whatever we ask in his name, he will do it. Why? So that the Father is glorified (Jn. 14:12-13). This means that God will not answer self-seeking prayers. The central goal of prayers for peace and justice must be the glory of God.

Prayer in peacemaking

If we start to believe Jesus' promises about prayer and begin to fulfill the conditions attached to them,

(continued on page 7)



John Paul Lederach, right, with Rich Sider, MCC Secretary for Latin America and the Caribbean.

When things get hot, we don't pull out, says MCC mediator

wife and daughter returned to the United States. After the second one, Lederach took special precautions.

"It is disconcerting that my tax dollars pay for my daughter's kidnapping," Lederach said. He told how the U.S. government wants YATAMA to be allied with the contras in their fighting and in their negotiating with the Nicaraguan government. So the U.S. opposes the negotiations that Lederach is involved in, and a State Department official told Lederach, "We're going to do everything we can to make sure this doesn't work."

Vernon Jantzi, an EMC sociology professor currently on sabbatical in Central America, said 10 years ago he would not have believed that the U.S. government would get involved in the kind of plots that were directed against Lederach. But then Jantzi, who was in government-related work for several years, heard a U.S. official tell a Costa Rican official that "we are willing to pay to eliminate" leftist leaders of a land-grabbing effort for landless farmers. Even more humbling, as an American citizen, was the Costa Rican's reply: "We're a democratic country. We don't do things that way."

Participants in the consultation affirmed Lederach's involvement in mediation. "We should replicate this elsewhere," said EMC president Joe Lapp. "This seems like a good way to use our MCC dollars." While noting wryly that Lederach's efforts are costing a lot of money, MCC Latin America director Rich Sider said the efforts are having a big impact and that MCC may get more heavily into mediation now. "We could do it at all levels—within families, in congregations, and between warring parties," he said.

Lederach called the YATAMA-Nicaragua peace talks a "God-given opportunity" for the church. "If God is with us, who can be against us?" he said, quoting the Bible. —*Steve Shenk for Meeting-house* ■

Neither personal threats nor mob violence should stop us from helping bring peace in troubled areas, says Mennonite Central Committee mediator John Paul Lederach, who experienced both things recently. "When things get hot, we don't pull out."

Two days after returning from mediation work in Nicaragua—and one week after escaping the rocks and clubs of an angry crowd—Lederach was the main speaker at the Consultation on the Role of the Church in Central America. Held at Eastern Mennonite College, Mar. 20-21, it attracted representatives of Mennonite agencies working in that region as well as students, professors, and others.

The event, sponsored by MCC and by EMC's Orrie Miller Global Village Center, was timely in that participants got to hear the latest news about peace talks between the Nicaraguan government and Indian rebel groups. Lederach has been serving as a mediator between the two sides. In another sense, the event was *too* timely. The other main speaker who had been scheduled, Nicaraguan Protestant leader Gustavo Parajon, had to cancel because of the current crisis caused by fighting along the Nicaragua-Honduras border and the sending of U.S. troops to Honduras.

Lederach, who is a trained and experienced mediator on loan to MCC by Mennonite Conciliation Service, said the recently concluded second round of negotiations between the Nicaraguan government and the Indian rebel groups—who have formed an umbrella organization called YATAMA—included a 12-day tour of the East Coast, where the Indians are a majority and government

authority is resented. Traveling together were government and YATAMA negotiators and members of the Conciliation Commission—Nicaraguan church leaders who brought the two sides together. Lederach is an advisor to the commission and the "shuttle" between the government and YATAMA.

On Mar. 13, violence broke out at the end of a rally in which YATAMA leader Brooklyn Rivera spoke to supporters. Pro-government ruffians began attacking YATAMA supporters with rocks and clubs, and the police did nothing to stop them. At one point, someone pointed to Lederach and said, "Get the North American!" Lederach escaped in a pickup truck, but not before the angry mob smashed the windows as it drove away. Lederach suffered only minor cuts.

Later, back in the capital city of Managua, the commission members confronted Interior Minister Tomas Borge about how local government officials not only failed to stop the violence but seemed to condone it. Borge, who carries special responsibility for the East Coast, expressed regret, promised to take a more active role in the negotiations with YATAMA, and offered to tour the East Coast with the YATAMA leader.

As a mediator, Lederach had now suffered at the hands of both sides in the conflict. A few months earlier, he was informed of a plot to kidnap his daughter and then of a plot to kill him. (See the April *Visitor*, pages 20-21). Both plots were apparently hatched by the U.S.-supported "contra" rebels in Nicaragua and involved a Cuban-American operative of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. After the first one, Lederach's

then the importance of prayer will become clearer and clearer to us. Prayer is the most important way to work for peace and justice today. Prayer is not just something we do for our personal spiritual growth. Prayer is not merely a brief introductory invocation while people straggle into the planning meeting for the nuclear freeze campaign. Prayer is the way we do our work. Prayer is the way we change the world. Prayer is the way we affect history.

In his book, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, Andrew Murray says that in prayer we are allowed to hold the hand that holds the destiny of the universe. By their prayers Christians are "to determine the history of this earth."⁴ God wants to save the family. God wants more justice in society. God does not want to see his beautiful creation destroyed in a nuclear holocaust. And God wants to accomplish those things through our prayers.

How incredible! Prayer is not incidental to peacemaking. Prayer is not peripheral to seeking justice for the oppressed. Prayer is a central part of how we do those things.

Andrew Murray puts it well:

*As long as we look on prayer chiefly as the means of maintaining our own Christian life, we shall not know fully what it is meant to be. But when we learn to regard it as the highest part of the work entrusted to us, the root and strength of all other work, we shall see that there is nothing that we so need to study and practice as the art of praying aright.*⁵

Spiritual warfare

Another reason prayer is so central to the search for peace and justice is that our battle is also a spiritual one. We are not just dealing with fearful politicians and nationalistic generals. We are also fighting against the demonic powers of Satan who want to destroy God's good creation (Eph. 6:12). Only by spiritual warfare, only by the power of the Holy Spirit through intercessory prayer, can we overcome militarism, injus-

tice, and the disintegration of the family.

Some practical suggestions

Reading a couple of classics on prayer is a good place to start. Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* is my first recommendation. Don't just read his book as an academic exercise; begin to apply his suggestions. Then follow Foster with Andrew Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer*.

For me, setting aside time at the beginning of the day has been important. You may want to start with 10 and work up to 30-45 minutes. Don't be legalistic—it doesn't matter if you miss a day. But if you discover

Prayer will move mountains only if each of us, one by one, resolves to draw nearer to God.

that you are only finding time once a week for prayer, legalism is not your problem!

For years I struggled and fought with my busy schedule. Every morning the pile of "important, urgent" things was so high that I could hardly force myself to spare ten minutes to read and pray. Even when I did, my mind was preoccupied with waiting responsibilities. Then the Lord allowed me to experience a very difficult period in my life. The only way I survived was by crying out to him in prayer. Those times of prayer—of telling God about my struggle—were times of deep comfort. As a result, I came to enjoy that daily conversation with my Lord in a way I never had before. During that time, and since, it has been easier to set aside significant time at the beginning of the day for prayer and Bible reading.

Of course, our entire day should be a life of prayer in which we pray without ceasing. And it is also

wonderful to learn how to live on two levels. On one level we can be talking with friends or colleagues at work; on another level we can be breathing short prayers to God for ourselves and others.

In his book *The Breath of Life*, Ron DelBene suggests that individual believers select a short one-sentence prayer that they breathe to God many times a day. This prayer should focus on a central desire and concern in the believer's life. During lulls at work or school, while driving or eating, Christians can breathe their short prayer to God. Perhaps Christians in the peace movement could adopt breath prayers like the following: "Lord Jesus, please remove the mountain of nuclear weapons." Imagine what God would do if a few million Christian peacemakers breathed that prayer to God a dozen times a day for the next twenty years!

A personal conversation with David Watson, a leading British evangelist, provided me with another practical prayer suggestion for the biblical movement of peace and justice today. When I talked with him a few years ago, he said God had led him to pray daily for the gift of evangelism. And God has answered that prayer in a marvelous fashion. David Watson believed I should pray regularly for the gift of Spirit-filled work for peace and justice. I wish that every member of Evangelicals for Social Action (ESA), indeed every Christian concerned with peace and justice, would do the same.

A new praying movement

Imagine a local ESA chapter working on a nuclear freeze campaign in its locality. The most sophisticated and hard work would be combined with long sessions of group prayer as well as private prayer by all the individuals involved. At particularly important decision-making times, there would be all-night prayer chains. During the time when some members visited the mayor for his support, others would gather to pray. On the night before the election, prayer chains would intercede throughout

the night for the transforming presence of the Holy Spirit.

The same sense of prayer and radical dependence on the Holy Spirit would pervade regional and national peace and justice conferences. Surely we are not too secular to make our conferences on peace and justice a little more like the old camp meetings where Christians interceded all night (like Jesus) for the radical healing presence of the Holy Spirit!

Prayer can provide the missing link in the new movement for peace and justice in the late twentieth century. Through prayer, American society can recover a commitment to the sacredness of human life and the

sanctity of the family. Through prayer, affluent Americans can join the Third World in a new partnership for global justice. Through prayer, our children can even be spared nuclear holocaust.

But prayer will move mountains only if each of us one by one resolves to draw nearer to God. Prayer will move mountains only if each of us understands that the essence of Christian faith is a personal living relationship with the Risen Lord. Prayer will move mountains only if each of us nurtures that relationship with God in Christ through sure faith, costly obedience, and heartfelt praise.

You and I, through our prayers,

can change the course of history. Let's seize the missing link of prayer, believing that it is as strong as Jesus said it is.

"Everything is possible for him who believes."

"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:23, 24)

Footnotes

¹Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life*, p. 392.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 381-382.

³Elton Trueblood, *The New Man for Our Time*, pp. 66-67.

⁴Andrew Murray, *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, pp. 102-103.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 8.

Christian Peacemaker Teams— a symbol of new commitment

"We believe that our churches have been drawn by the Spirit into a new era of active peacemaking," said the steering committee for the Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) at their last meeting. The committee was established by the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Council of Secretaries and Moderators in June 1987, and also includes a representative of the Church of the Brethren.

To facilitate this movement, the committee is appointing a half-time staff person, Gene Stoltzfus of Chicago, beginning May 1. Stoltzfus has been active in recent years with Synapses, a faith-based and justice witness in Chicago, which he and his wife, Dorothy Friesen, founded some years ago after MCC service in the Philippines.

The CPT steering committee also issued a call through MCC to former mission and service workers of Haiti to respond to the tragic events there. On February 20 six former MCC'ers from Canada and the U.S. who served in Haiti met in Columbus, Ohio, to discuss ideas for supporting Haitian Christians' peace efforts in light of recent tragic events there.

"We are blessed with a gold mine of global experience which is not corporate or diplomatic, but instead has taken us to villages and barrios, to farmers and rural laborers, and to the urban poor,"

the CPT committee had noted in issuing its call to the MCC'ers.

The group discussed ideas ranging from helping a community group rebuild a grain storage facility burned during the recent government-sponsored violence to helping sponsor a meeting of Haitian community workers on strategies for peaceful struggle in their society.

"The Christian Peacemaker Team idea does not mean we North Americans burst on the scene and announce that we are fixing everything," said Ruth Jost, chairperson of the CPT committee and host for the Columbus discussion. "It does mean, however, that where we have formed bonds with local Christians over a period of years and then a crisis comes, we find a way to stand with them in the risks they face."

Another CPT project nearing completion is the collection of stories about grassroots peace action. Phil Stoltzfus from Harrisonburg, Va., has been interviewing and writing while on a six-month voluntary service assignment under the Mennonite Board of Missions, supported by designated contributions to CPT from individuals and congregations.

Responding to these stories, which will be made available in the near future, the CPT committee noted with gratitude the many members who are en-

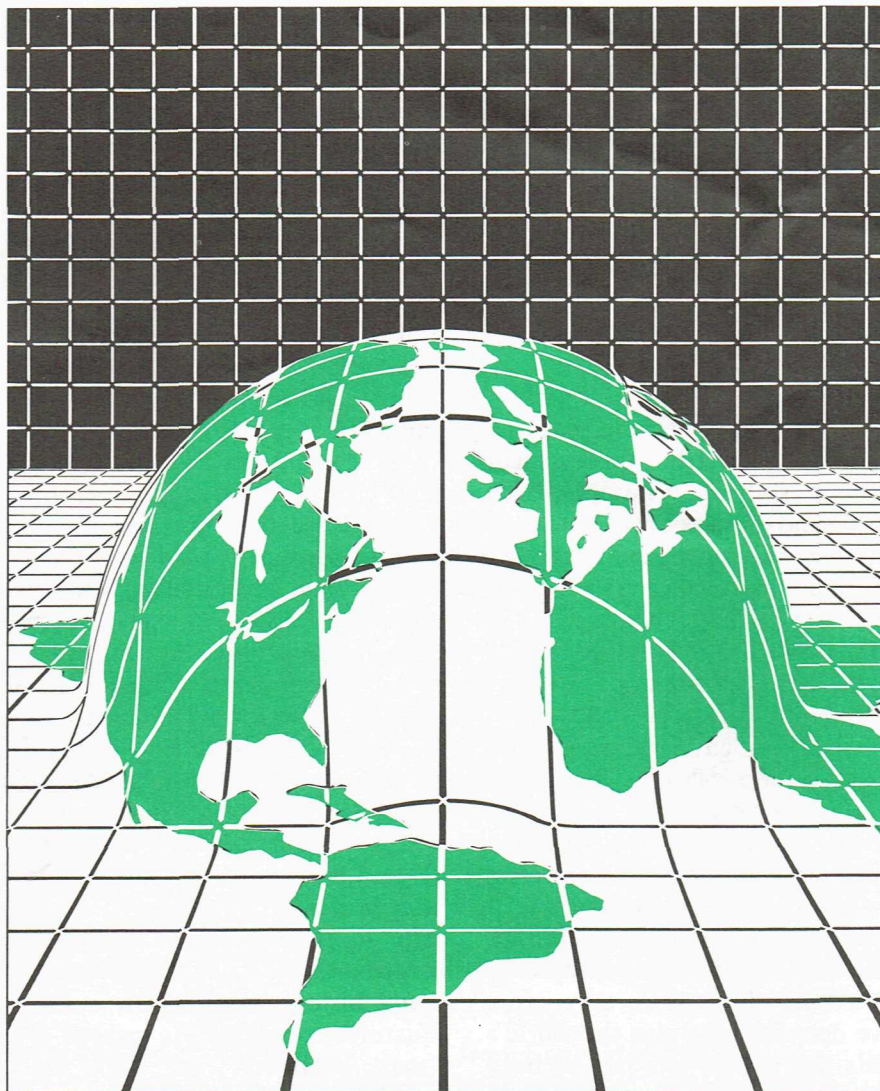
gaging in new forms of public witness, including nonviolent direct action. These actions are "grounded in biblical study and congregational support . . . a way to make the gospel concrete," in line with the statement from the Techny consultation which launched CPT over a year ago.

The committee plans to help with resources for congregations and groups who want to engage in new forms of peacemaking in their communities. This would include biblical reflection, training in nonviolence, and guidance on how to develop a local project.

To carry forward these tasks, the new staff person, Gene Stoltzfus, plans to develop a team of persons who will help to respond to various requests. In accepting this assignment, Stoltzfus admits to some fear, in view of the inevitable questions which arise whenever new steps are taken. But, he says, "It is the right time. I believe it is of the Spirit. Mutual support is absolutely fundamental."

The committee believes CPT is a symbol of a new commitment to the Christian calling to peacemaking, especially at the congregational level. This is being expressed in many ways without a CPT label. The committee welcomes suggestions as to how the CPT vision can be further incorporated into the mission of the church.

Information requests and suggestions about Christian Peacemaker Teams can be sent to Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515; after May 1 to 1821 West Cullerton, Chicago, IL 60608. Tax deductible contributions can be sent to the Elkhart address.



The power of concerted prayer

by David Bryant

Not long ago I heard Scottish expositor Eric Alexander talk about the apostles' ministry priority in Acts 6:4, 7. He said: "The frontline in world evangelization is the Word of God and prayer."

He's right. World evangelization demands many things of us, but we can never get any closer to advancing the gospel among the nations than to link our hearts around God's Word, turning its visions and promises into concerted prayer.

Concerted prayer is distinct from other prayer times in a number of ways. First, it's primarily a *movement* of prayer. It defines an effort to forge a coalition of praying people

who regularly unite for a very specific agenda surrounding spiritual awakening and *world evangelization*. In concerts of prayer we work together toward consensus about all we want God to do within his church and his world.

A concert of prayer requires a balanced concentration on two major sweeps: (1) fullness in the body of Christ for (2) fulfillment of his global cause. Both sweeps create healthy tension. A concert is designed to allow us to get at fullness and fulfillment in prayer as effectively as possible. This focus of concerted prayer rises from one common concern: zeal for God's glory. Prayer for fullness and fulfillment both seek God's glory among his people as well as among the unreached.

When Christians reach a point where they are convinced there are

some things in the church and in the world that God either cannot or will not do until they pray, then miracles begin to happen.

That's why the emergence of united prayer in the church worldwide at this moment may be the first great miracle of the awakening just ahead, a sign of other miracles to come. When prayer is on the increase, then we can be sure revival is at hand.

I do not see swelling crowds gathering in concerted prayer—not yet. But the breadth of prayer efforts for revival across geographical, national, denominational, or organizational and social lines, and the depth of the agenda surfacing in prayer groups everywhere, suggest very clearly that God is up to something extraordinary.

The German Evangelical Alliance sponsors an annual week of prayer

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in more than 650 cities, towns, and villages in East Germany. A few months ago, one million Christians at 5,000 locations in East and West Germany attended prayer meetings sponsored by the Alliance.

In Romania there is a great emphasis on prayer with a resulting church growth that may be unprecedented in Eastern Europe. Renewal is to be found not only in the independent evangelical churches, but also in the Eastern Orthodox church. It is not at all unusual to find Romanian pastors rising at 4:00 a.m. to spend two hours in prayer before going to work.

For some time a prayer movement has been quietly unfolding in the Middle East. Currently, there are revival prayer groups in twenty-three Muslim countries, and more intensive plans are being developed for the next five years.

The *Christian*, a Japanese equivalent of *Christianity Today*, recently ran a front-page story challenging the church in Japan to engage in concerts of prayer as its only hope for evangelizing the more than 100 million Buddhists and materialists within their island country.

Out of New Zealand has come a movement of concerted prayer known as the Lydia Movement. Women

We can do more than watch history happen; through our prayers, we can make history together.

gather in bands to fast and pray one day a week, interceding for revival in the church, their community, their nation, and for missionary outreach. Currently, this movement is active in eleven nations, including the United States.

The Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization has spelled out the following prayer strategy in its paper entitled "Evangelism and Social Responsibility":

"We resolve ourselves, and call upon our churches, to take much more seriously the period of intercession in public worship; to think in terms of ten to fifteen minutes rather than five; to invite lay people to share in leading, since they often have deep insights into the world's needs; and to focus our prayers both on the evangelization of the world

(closed lands, resistant peoples, missionaries, national churches, etc.) and on the quest for peace and justice in the world (places of tension and conflict, deliverance from the nuclear horror, rulers and governments, the poor and needy, etc.). We long to see every Christian congregation bowing down in humble and expectant faith before our Sovereign Lord."

I can't fully explain *how* prayer changes things in world evangelization. It may be that prayer fits into the sovereignty of God in the same way that time lapse photography makes a rose open up before my eyes in thirty seconds. Similarly, as God's people unite to seek all that he has determined to do, prayer, like the movie camera, accelerates and intensifies the unfolding of all God has already willed for his kingdom.

None of us is able to begin to untangle every crisis or meet every need in the world. But through prayer we can accelerate and intensify God's methods for extending his kingdom among the nations. We can do more than watch history happen; through our prayers we can *make* history together. Or, as Dick Eastman observes, in prayer we "make room for God." After that, anything can happen! ■

Evangelism and Missions Convention Information

What in the world is God doing through the Brethren in Christ? What new directions in evangelism are occurring both in North America and overseas? How is the Holy Spirit moving in places where the Brethren in Christ have been for decades? How can our small denomination meet the world's great needs?

The answers to these questions are exciting. The Board for Evangelism and Church Planting and the Board for World Missions want you to know these answers. That is why we are co-sponsoring an Evangelism and Missions Convention two days prior to the '88 General Conference at Azusa Pacific University. Special speakers, including John Maxwell, will answer these questions and more. The agenda of the convention is designed to give us a greater awareness of the needs of our world and a closer look at what the Brethren in Christ are doing.

To register for this convention, you must use the General Conference registration form. A copy of that form was in the January issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*. If attending both conventions, you must register for both at the same time on the same General Conference form. You will receive one bill for room, board, and registration for both the convention and General Conference. This bill must be completely paid with one check prior to the Evangelism and Missions Convention.

Registration will be on Thursday, June 30, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. The convention will convene at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 30, and close Friday at 4:30 p.m.

Transportation to and from the airports will be provided by the General Conference staff. Children's programs for children through age 11 will be held during the convention.



Clifton Hostel at Woodstock School, the Criders' home.

Dana and Judy Crider have been at Woodstock School in Mussoorie, India, since September 1979. Woodstock is a Christian international school with 30 nationalities and at least nine religious persuasions represented.

The Criders serve in Clifton Hostel as dorm parents to 82 boys ranging in age from 14 to 19. Their own children are Andy, Philip, Bonnie Beth, and Jonathan. The family plans to return to the United States in July for a year's furlough, during which Dana will pursue his teaching credentials.

Welcome to Clifton Hostel. We are still working here after eight years. Geoffrey and Byron Sutton

from England have come to assist us this semester. Geoffrey teaches German full-time. Currently we have 82 boys in grades ten through twelve, and 14 of them are at Woodstock for the first time. Twelve of our boys come from Christian families, and the rest from everything else conceivable.

Let me invite you into a day in the life of "mother" of 82 plus 4 children.

I get up at 7:00 and quickly get my four children down to breakfast. At that time, Dana and I must be available to the students for a host of tasks: filling out dispensary passes if they are ill and need to see the doc-

tor; getting stamps for them, which they charge to their parents' accounts; making sure they have *dhobi* slips on which they record the dirty clothes they send to be washed; attending to any other morning eventualities; seeing them off to school. The students and our children are all gone by 8:15. Then Dana and I sit down to a quick breakfast together and prepare ourselves for the day.

After breakfast I go through all the letters written by the boys. We require them to write home every two weeks; I keep a record and on Mondays post a list of boys who need to write home. They have until

The work at Woodstock

by Judy Crider



Judy chats with three of the boys.

Thursday morning before school to write; if they don't, they will not get dinner Thursday evening until they do. (Aren't we awful?)

After the letters, I review the fines incurred during the previous week for transgressions such as not checking in properly, lights on after "lights out," or rooms untidy at room check. I write out a slip for each fine incurred and then record it in the fine book. This is part of our discipline system. If a boy has incurred Rs. 10 in fines, I write a slip informing him that he is "gated" the next Saturday. "Gated" means he is restricted to the dorm for the whole day from rising bell to lights out.

Usually I'm not done with the fines before the *Dhobi* (washer man) comes and calls me to do the boys' *dhobi*. This is a three-hour or more job which lasts until lunch. I must check the clean clothes to make sure he has brought back what he took according to the slip. I check off each item as he calls it out, in Hindi, of course. Then we must compare the new slip to the dirty clothes to make certain the figures agree. We do this twice weekly—Monday and Thursday: Monday's dirty clothes return Thursday and vice versa. Last Monday, 80 of the 82 boys sent dirty clothes to the *Dhobi*, which totalled 1,539 pieces of clothing. (One pair of socks counts as one piece of clothing.)

At lunch I break to eat and then return to finish the fines. After that I am free until 3:15, when I prepare to

welcome the boys home. I check through the incoming mail and record any letters from parents. Then I sort the letters into the mail boxes in the office (each boy has his own box), put out the newspaper and any magazines that may have come, and make sure the check-in chart is clean and ready for the day. My own children return first, and of course they are hungry, so I fix them a snack. Then Byrony and I take turns sitting in the office from 4:00 until 6:15 p.m. every school day. The boys need to know that someone is available when they come home—if nothing else, to complain to when they don't get a letter or to talk with about their day at school. We make sure that one of the staff is always in the office; the others are free to talk to the boys in their rooms, play games with them, and so on.

The boys must be home by 6:15 for our daily announcements—the one time of the day when we all get together. Dana or Geoffrey usually makes the announcements: it's not the easiest thing to stand in front of 82 boys and talk! After announcements, the boys walk to dinner in another building, Alter Ridge, which houses the main dining hall and kitchen.

At 7:15 the boys assemble in the dorm for study hall until 9:00. The senior and honor roll students may study in their rooms; the rest of the boys must study in the dorm's dining hall, supervised by a senior student.

We walk around once in a while and make sure everything is quiet. This is also the time when we can spend a little time with our own children before we put them to bed.

After study hall comes showers. At 9:30 we give the boys warm milk and sometimes cookies. "Sound out" is at 9:45, when the boys are supposed to turn off their music, put away their games, get undressed and ready for bed. And 10:00 is "lights out." Seniors have the privilege of extended "lights out" for one hour. After 11:00 we close the dining room and wait for all the lights to go off. If the lights or noise do not go off by 11:05, offenders will be fined. Finally, by 11:30 our day is finished.

On various weekdays I perform additional tasks. Thursday I do meal numbers, totalling up the different meal categories for the main kitchen: "A" eats all meat, "NP" eats no pork, "NB" eats no buff (instead of "beef"), "NF" eats no fish, and "V" eats no meat. Once a month I figure pocket money, a task which takes a few days to complete. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday the boys' rooms are checked to make sure that beds are made, floors are swept, clothes are put away. Of course, many small duties must be performed in order to keep the dorm running smoothly.

Dana is the final authority and administers most of the discipline. He teaches eighth grade math—two classes every day—and does most of the closing up at night.

In addition to our duties at Clifton Hostel, we are also involved in several small groups. Every Wednesday (our day off) we meet in different homes with our Koinonia groups. We have Bible study and prayer and fellowship. Dana has been leading a Bible study on Ephesians and must spend some time each week in preparation. On Tuesdays I attend a ladies' Bible study.

You can see that our lives are very full. We request your prayers that we would not grow weary but would remain alert and helpful to these boys whose lives are under our care.

Children and church planting

by Arlene Schuiteman

In the little village of Nenfwe, Jeremiah Muntanga was the teacher in the elementary rural school as well as the lay pastor for the community. He had two visions—that his students would reach the seventh grade, and that he might be able to plant a church in the village. These two goals were not unrelated: each Sunday a few Christians met in the school building to worship. But Jeremiah brought them even closer together.

It was Jeremiah's plan to involve the school children in the support of a new church. One day he asked each child to pick up the ears of corn which fell off the loaded ox carts during harvest time, and then bring them to school. "These ears of corn belong to God," he told them. The children came with the corn. At the end of that year (1982) they shelled it, and it filled two sacks which sold for fifty *kwacha*.

This money was used to hire a young Zambian man, Lenord Moono, to make bricks. He was very energetic and made 2,000 bricks. A kiln was built nearby, and the bricks were baked. When the site for the church building had been chosen, several people carried the bricks from the kiln to the site. Some were able to carry three bricks, others only one, on their heads.

Then Jeremiah sought the help of the building committee of the denomination. As a result, two door frames, three window frames, and some bags of cement were donated for their use. Skilled bricklayers, not

available in Jeremiah's community, were needed to lay the brick walls, and so a group of pastors who were skilled in this way offered to help. Before they arrived, Jeremiah, his wife, and three friends worked very hard to lay the foundation.

After the walls were completed, work began on the roof. Men cut long poles in the forest and women cut a special kind of long roofing grass. With the grass roof in place, they began worshipping in the partially completed building. But the roof did not last, and heavy rains were causing the walls to crumble. Again, Jeremiah approached the building committee, and precious funds were allocated to purchase new roofing poles and corrugated sheets of roofing. Some experienced from Macha Church put up the new roof.

When the roof was completed, the small congregation felt a sense of relief. They chose a date for the dedication of their church—May 30, 1987. With new enthusiasm they began work on the interior of the building—plastering the brick walls, and constructing benches and a pulpit. A white cross was painted on the wall above the entry: everyone could see that this was a church.

The dedication day dawned bright and cool in the autumn of the year. We travelled to Nenfwe with two vehicles from Macha. As we approached the village, we immediately caught sight of the neat little brown church with the cross above the door. Guests were already arriving, and we greeted one another with the customary triple handshake. We were instructed to sit down while we waited for others to arrive. We spread out our *chitengis*, the all-purpose,

wrap-around cloth worn by women, sat down, and sang until the service began. Periodically the church bell was rung to call people to worship. The bell is actually a piece of cast iron suspended in a tree which one strikes with an iron rod to send the message. At 11 o'clock, the church leaders led the way into the new sanctuary, and the service began. Many stood outside near the open windows and doors.

The joy of the little congregation was obvious. It was truly an inspiring time. The program included eight special music numbers, sung by the Girls' Gospel Team from Macha High School and the King's Men Quartet. The message was taken from 1 Kings 8:33-50 and Exodus 25:8.

When the service ended at 2 o'clock, this congregation of about twenty members entertained everyone present to *nshima* and relish. A cow, some goats, and some chickens had been killed in preparation for the event.

It had taken five years for the desire of Jeremiah's heart to be fulfilled. Clearly the Lord had used him and the efforts of the school children to advance His purpose. We were honored to be present on this special day. We are also excited that several other small churches in the Macha area are under various stages of construction.

One of the dedication speakers remarked: "It is one thing to build a church; it is another thing to fill the church." We can be involved in the life of this church by praying that the Holy Spirit would uphold this congregation, and that their numbers and faith might increase.

Arlene Schuiteman serves as tutor-in-charge of the Nurses' Training School at Macha Hospital.

God at work in our world

Celebrations

Roy Sider, world traveler

Roy and Dorothy Sider enjoyed fellowship with the Cuba churches during the anniversary celebrations in February 1988. They share this bit of news:

"Jose Rodriguez and Moises Hernandez have completed the four-year study course with the Nazarene Bible Institute in preparation for the Christian ministry. Plans are in focus for these two young men to be ordained in 1989 as Brethren in Christ ministers. The present membership of the two churches in Cuba is Cuatro Caminos—55; Nazareno—25."

Let us celebrate with them the raising up of new leaders and continue in prayer for our brothers and sisters in Cuba.

Tour group praise

Told by Lou Cober, tour leader

The Africa tour group is praising God for a good trip and for a helpful vision of the things God is doing in Zambia and Zimbabwe, Kenya, and London. They are also thankful for safety in travel. One particular incident shows God's hand of protection.

The group of 17, including several missionaries, were traveling in a two-ton van from Choma to Livingstone, Zambia. At a speed of 100 kph (60 mph), as they were approaching a narrow bridge across a river gorge, a front tire blew out. God gave supernatural strength and wisdom to the driver to negotiate the bridge safely and bring the van to a stop.

Help!

Phil Thuma and Deveen Boyd, physicians at Macha and Mtshabezi Mission Hospitals

God does provide in times of need. With Dr. Charles Andrews and Nursing Supervisor Eileen Sherk delayed in North America during Zambia's busy malaria season, Macha Hospital has been extremely short-staffed. God sent two capable and helpful medical students from Philadelphia, Cary Companella and Laura Holmes, to give much-needed help.

Deveen Boyd also writes his apprecia-

tion for a medical student from Hershey who has been a real help to him during busy days at Mtshabezi Hospital, Zimbabwe. However, "... hospital work is very busy and staffing remains a serious problem; we are averaging about ten admissions per day this year." Pray that God will now send long-term help. Ask yourself if perhaps *you* could help to answer your own prayer by making yourself available for service.

A good name is as much to be desired as a passport

Told by Daryl Climenhaga in a telephone conversation

After months of thwarted plans and frustrating delays, the Daryl Climenhaga family finally left the States February 25, 1988, for an assignment at the Theological College of Central Africa in Ndola, Zambia. They will be providing teaching relief at the college while the Richard Stuebing family is in the States on an extended study leave.

Although the trip was long and tiring, especially with a sick child, they arrived safely in Lusaka two days later. Rich Steubing met them at the airport. All went well with immigration and customs procedures until officials spotted the personal computer Daryl was carrying. Since the day was Saturday, the computer could not be cleared through customs until the following Monday. Daryl was required to leave his passport as identification, along with the computer. There was nothing to do but go on to Ndola, four hours' drive north, without them.

These days there are seven police checkpoints along the road they traveled to Ndola. Travelers need to show identification, and vehicle papers must be in proper order before people may go on. At the first four checkpoints, there was no problem. Lois and the boys were asleep in the back of the van, and Rich was waved on through. But at the fifth stop, the officer insisted that Daryl must have his passport as proper identification in order to pass. He was not to be excused because he had left it with customs officials in Lusaka. Then Daryl offered his work permit as an alternate form of identification. The officer looked

at it and said, "The Brethren in Christ Church is your employer?" Daryl replied that that was correct.

"Do you know Sikalongo?" was the next question.

"I lived there as a child," Daryl answered.

"Who is your father?"

"David Climenhaga."

"I know him! I went to school at Sikalongo!" said the officer as he waved their van on through. God shows himself faithful in many ways.

God answers prayer for a Zambian pastor

Mary Lou Biser, Macha Hospital, Zambia

Tonight I was encouraged by a visit from Pastor Rothan Muchaanga. He mentioned that he had received a letter from Fannie Longenecker. The letter said that the North American church had been praying for him on October 12, 1987—a request I had given when he was being moved to Mbabala Church. He had been hesitant about accepting the transfer.

His first months at Mbabala took much adjustment. (Can any North American pastors identify with this?) Now he feels accepted and has a few good lay leaders who help. He sees more and more work to do. He has started a TEE class there, and a group in another area wants him to have a class with them again. His great desire is to learn to be a better pastor.

Therefore, he is awed that God has chosen him to be one of the seven pastors who are taking the fourth-year course at Sikalongo Bible Institute—and has provided the money for him. He wants to take full advantage of this privilege and opportunity. He came to my house for prayer (we do this periodically) that his ears and eyes would be opened so that he'll learn and understand well! After attending the first week of classes, he was overwhelmed by there being so much to learn. But he was excited that Steve Ginder is such a good teacher, and he especially wants to learn more about preparing sermons and counseling. (He is having problems reading the blackboard, so I directed him to the hospital's eye clinic; I hope it's only glasses he needs.) With so many people struggling in their spiritual lives, it's a real inspiration to see his enthusiasm. He specifically said that God is answering our prayers for him, and he is grateful.

The brethren in the Canadian West

When some of the brethren, attracted by cheap land and more elbowroom in Saskatchewan, moved there from Ontario in 1906 and later, they did not abandon their church. Indeed, establishing a "mission" there was a high priority. As one of the very first settlers said, the Brethren came to Saskatchewan "to take advantage of the reasonable offer of the government, and to cause this part of God's earth to shine for Him."¹

Those brethren who had the determination and strength to homestead prairie land and wrest a living from it were obviously not to be easily swayed from their convictions.

When in the 1920s the government of Saskatchewan offered homesteads in the northern part of the province, the Brethren in Christ Church on the prairies encouraged its people to take advantage of it. Reuben Climenhaga, minister of the Delisle congregation, went north and took up a homestead, going several times a year from Delisle to Howard Creek to clear, plant, and harvest his land. During the time spent there, he would visit nearby settlers in their homes and then conduct worship services. These services were usually well attended and Rev. Climenhaga enjoyed the respect and confidence of the people.

One time he went to a cabin in the evening to hold a service where a number of men had gathered for a night of card playing and drinking. The host tried to persuade Rev. Climenhaga not to come in as "the boys may not like it," but the minister said that he had come to conduct a service and conduct it he would. So a short service was held in which Climenhaga soundly denounced their activities. The host later said that after Rev. Climenhaga left the cabin, they tried to resume their revelry, but the fun had gone out of it.²

Naaman Climenhaga ministered at the Kindersley congregation for many years. He had a difficult time financially until 1938, when he decided to tithe his income faithfully. His farm, Laban Climenhaga's, and Leonard Baker's farms

all lay in a fairly straight line diagonally across the prairie. After his decision to tithe, Naaman noticed that rain nearly always fell on their lands, while neighbors on either side received much less. Why this should be, no one knew, but Naaman and the two other men believed God was honoring them.³

Travel across the prairies was often a challenge. But the people enjoyed worshipping together, and bad weather seldom kept them at home. Before 1938, most travel was done with horses. In summer, with high winds and dust often blowing, families would arrive at church in a farm wagon⁴; or they would use a two-seated buggy; or later, a rubber-tired wagon when these became available. One time, remembers Verna Climenhaga Heise, their family traveled the 112 miles in a horse-drawn vehicle to the Kindersley church for the annual Love Feast.⁵

In winter, the mission workers would go to visit people in the community in a "caboose." A caboose was a pair of sleds with a little house built on them, with windows in the sides and in the front, and a door in the side. Inside were seats and a wood heater (with a chimney going up through the roof) to keep them warm as they travelled. So on a cold crisp day with the snow squeaking under the hoofs of the horses whose faces were all frosted up, the caboose could be seen going down the road with the team pulling it and smoke coming out of the chimney on the top.⁶ Or, people would travel on an open wagon-box on bobsleds with charcoal-heated footwarmers at their feet.

During the spring break-up, travel was especially exciting. The roads were no longer good for sledding nor ready for summer buggies. Then people would travel on steel-tired wagons; sometimes the wheels on one side would break through the frozen crust of snow into the water slush beneath—then it would be the other side. "We were so afraid we might tip over and be dumped into the icy water, but secretly rather wishing it might happen—just once!" says Verna Heise.

However they traveled, when there was room, the Climenhagas would take neighbors to church with them.⁷

So it was, that from the spring of 1906 when the Nottawa District of Ontario sent off Bishop Charles Baker and Rev. Isaac Baker to "spy out the land" in Saskatchewan and look for productive soil as well as a place conducive to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ,⁸ until the present time, the Brethren in Christ have had an active witness in the Canadian West. They have helped "to cause this part of God's earth to shine for him."

Compiled by Doris Cober

¹75th Anniversary 1911-1986 Church History, Delisle Community Chapel.

²Brethren in Christ North Star Mission 50th Anniversary 1932-1982.

³As told by Earl Brechbill.

⁴As told by Earl Brechbill.

⁵From "The Pilgrimage of the Brethren in Christ" (Evangel Press): "I remember—" by Verna Climenhaga Heise.

⁶As told by Dearing Sider.

⁷From "I remember—" by Verna C. Heise.

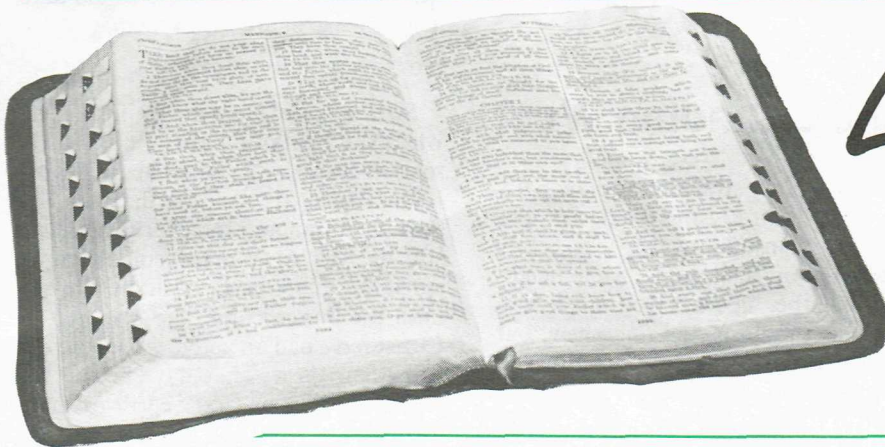
⁸From 75th Anniversary History, Delisle.

"Mennonite Your Way" directory still available

Mennonite Your Way Directory V for 1987, '88, and '89 is still available, announce Leon and Nancy Stauffer, publishers of the Mennonite Your Way travel directory. This is the 5th edition and continues to grow in popularity as a means to travel and fellowship among Mennonites, Brethren in Christ, and the larger Christian community.

Directory V includes nearly 2300 homes in the U.S. and Canada open to receive visitors traveling through. In addition there are helpful articles about "wellness" as you travel, ideas to satisfy traveling children, and a fold-out map suggesting Mennonite and Brethren in Christ agencies to visit as you travel.

The purpose of this hospitality directory is to increase community spirit and fellowship, both in North America and internationally. With vacation and the travel season just ahead, the *Mennonite Your Way Directory V* can be used to good advantage. Single copies are available for \$9.00 (PA residents add 6% sales tax). Write MYW Directory V, Box 1525, Salunga, PA 17538.



Literalism and the understanding of Scripture

by Luke L. Keefer, Sr.

Many years ago, while teaching preachers the techniques of handling the Scriptures responsibly, the late Dr. C. N. Hostetter gave an admonition something like this: “When the plain ordinary sense of the Scriptures makes common sense, then seek no other sense unless it is plainly indicated otherwise in the context.”

As a learning and inexperienced minister myself, I was profoundly advised by the rule. The need for the use of this rule far exceeds the need for making exceptions to it. Nevertheless, a quick glance at the need for exceptions does compel us to use this rule with sincerest honesty. In the Bible we find symbolisms, figures of speech, parables, prophecies, allegories, proverbs, the purposes of the various writers, historical and cultural overtones, language translation difficulties—to name some obvious factors. So, at times, we are forced to depart from a strict literalism.

Literalism in our heritage

The Brethren in Christ, in our heritage, have a sacred regard for simplicity. Coupled with this is a conscience concerning the teaching of all things found in the Bible in order to establish a correct faith and practice.

Both elements—simplicity and the desire to be obedient “in all things”—

Rev. Luke L. Keefer, Sr., is retired from the pastorate and lives with his wife Martha in Millersburg, Pa. He is, however, quite active as an evangelist and Bible teacher.

were present in the process over 200 years ago as our founding fathers formed what we might now call a “study group” in Lancaster County, Pa., leading to their unique identity in the midst of similar groups. Simplicity dictated to them their understanding of pride, extravagance, worldliness, adornment, fashion, aggrandizement, and such like. Their concept of simplicity begged for a definition of standards and uniformity within the church. Their conscience concerning simplicity dictated the need for humility and self-discipline in their rigorous lifestyle practices of separation from the worldliness they saw in the lives of unbelievers around them.

To them, literalism was companion to divine illumination, and obedience was the exalted guardian against impiety. To their disciplinary focus, add the “all things” issue. The Scriptures spoke directly to this understanding: all Scriptures were inspired of God; the Great Commission enjoyed the teaching of all things; and “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

To our forebears, such interpretive issues as essentials/non-essentials, basics/optionals, oft-mentioned/singly stated, law/grace, Old Testament/New Testament, divine/human origins, etc., were treated as harboring the potential for heresies at the very least, and quite likely the eventual denial of divine inspiration of the Word.

The early Brethren in Christ were a people of the Book—especially a

literal understanding of the Book. To them, faith without works is dead—a farce. To them, everything applicable to practical living as stated in the Scriptures needed an appropriate lifestyle conformity. To them, the literal means of “dos and don’ts” were by no means crude legalism; they were the very essence of life in the Spirit.

The contribution of literalism

Literalism has a dynamic and worthy contribution to make to the vast hermeneutic landscape. It insists on the premise that the true meaning of the text is inherent in the text within its context and, hence, easily understood. In Dr. Hostetter’s words, it makes common sense. Even the unlearned and uninformed will know and feel its urgency of truth by the illumination of the Spirit—that is, if genuine inquiry and honesty are present.

This concept is of particular value when the New Testament church is seeking to express itself through its message. By literalism the truth is established, and by culture the practice is defined, but never is there a justification for the disregard of a truth just because of the various cultural adaptations involved. Literalism seeks to be honest in dealing with divine inspiration of the Scriptures and joyfully accepts the “all things” mandate for total truth.

Literalism promotes the principle that everything in the Bible must be treated as essential to a correct and complete faith and practice. It declares that all things are essential, but not

necessarily equally consequential. However, it must be borne in mind that to eliminate the less consequential from one's faith and practice would damage that person's spiritual wellbeing. It is on this basis that our founding fathers gave much more attention to specific details in the practice of their faith and conscience.

By employing literalism as the instrument for rightly discerning the truth, it is a foregone conclusion that truth will manipulate the cultural consequences, rather than that the reverse should happen.

Students of the Word are well aware that some biblical truths are recurrent while others are briefly mentioned. This brings to focus the issue of corroborating texts. Is truth repeatedly stated more important than truth stated once, or only a few times? Literalism's answer is that it is not necessarily so, because nothing God says is a trifle.

Then there is the issue of what constitutes church ordinances. From my youth I heard our leaders say that whatever Christ himself participated in and also commanded for the body of believers are undeniably an ordinance. Hence baptism, communion, and foot washing were so designated. One can see the literal/obedience frame of mind which their literalism deemed obligatory. It is in the same frame of mind that the Apostle Paul's counsel regarding the devotional head covering, the holy kiss, and separation from extravagance, fashion, and adornment were observed. Literalism provided the brethren with the belief that only the uninformed or misguided would transgress in any of these areas.

Limitations of literalism

It is only fair to admit that the principle of literalism, when considered as the priority principle of hermeneutics, is also open to the hazard of possibly becoming very restrictive, biased, illogical, and misleading in the use of the inspired Word.

For example, it could be pointed out that in the book of Revelation, symbolism eclipses literalism. In the Song of Solomon, allegory predom-

inates. In parables, the illustration of divine principles is the purpose. In miracles, the evidence of the divine process is more important than the incident itself. Under the Old Testament law, the issues are for a specific people in a specific place for a specific time and for a specific purpose; when these specifics are all fulfilled, then the law ceases to be a chart to follow.

The proverbs provide moral meditations; the psalms guide us into worship of Almighty God; in Job we search for the answer to "why do the righteous suffer?"; the prophets define Israel's destiny, finely threaded through the rise and fall of Gentile nations until, by God's sovereignty, Christ shall inherit the throne of David.

It is a part of discovery to also ask, "Who said it and to whom; what was said, and where, and when, and why?"

By these and other considerations, one realizes that the literal understanding of truth and the appropriate obedience to it follow only after first finding the truth by a variety of processes for interpreting the Scriptures.

In conclusion

For more than two centuries, literalism has been a hallmark of the Brethren in Christ Church. A timely evaluation of ourselves is worth the effort, and Renewal 2000—Phase II should give literalism solemn attention.

Let us then ask how literalism has been a gain to us, and would not the loss of it impoverish our faith and holy lifestyle? Without literalism, could it not be predicted that our brotherhood may become engrossed with a common-denominator American evangelicalism?

What a terrifying thought! ■

Shroud of Turin investigation will not impact evangelical faith

Carbon-14 tests of the Shroud of Turin will in no way impact the traditional evangelical belief regarding the resurrection of Jesus Christ, according to Arthur Climenhaga, chairman of the Theology Committee of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).

The Roman Catholic Church has commissioned carbon-14 tests on the Shroud of Turin to determine its authenticity. The 14-foot strip of linen cloth, preserved in a monastery in Turin, Italy, bears the image of a crucified man. Some consider it to be the traditionally honored burial cloth of Jesus Christ, saying the image was made by a burst of energy during Jesus' resurrection.

The mysterious cloth has been revered as a holy relic. The late Pope Paul VI called the shroud "the most important relic in the history of Christianity."

Scientists in 1978 subjected the cloth to a battery of tests, and a 1979 finding of shroud imprints supposedly correlated to markings of coins from the era of Pontius Pilate. But the carbon-14 age-dating process is expected to yield the most information dating the shroud to within 50 to 100 years of its actual

age. Scientists' results are expected later this year.

"Should tests prove that the Shroud of Turin comes from the time of Jesus Christ, the question will still be there: Was this actually the shroud that covered Christ's crucified and resurrected body?" observed Climenhaga. "Even if proof could be offered that the Shroud of Turin were the shroud of Christ, that would be no more than an additional artifact in the historical evidences of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection—already so well attested."

"We worship the crucified, resurrected Christ and venerate his name as our Redeemer and Lord," said Climenhaga. "No matter what the Shroud of Turin may prove to be, it is no more than an interesting investigation. The faith of evangelicals in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is rooted in the historical record faithfully recorded in Holy Scripture."

Climenhaga, professor of theology and missions at Ashland (Ohio) Theological Seminary, has served on NAE's Board of Administration for more than 20 years.



General Conference Information

The *deadline* for registration is soon—June 1. The January issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* had a registration form. Ask your pastor for extra copies or make photo copies.

Those who need transportation from an airport should be sure to fill out and send in FORM B to Asa Bert. If you need other transportation assistance (not including Conference Sunday morning), contact: Asa Bert, 883 Magnolia Ave., Upland, CA 91786. His phone: (714) 982-0053.

The main registration form, FORM A, should be sent to Paul Hostetler by June 1. A separate form should be filled out for each man, woman, and child attending General Conference, including those commuting from their own homes. The only exceptions are those attending evening sessions only.

Registration at Conference will be on Friday evening, July 1, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday morning from 8:00 to 12:00 noon. You will save time in the registration line if you send your payment to Paul Hostetler ahead of time. All persons, including those in the pre-conference sessions, will register for General Conference at the above times.

The registration will include: getting a name tag and convention packet, registering for General Conference membership, receiving room assignments and room tickets, choosing a workshop, reconfirming plans for place of worship on Sunday morning, registering for children's and youth activities, and signing up for other activities.

The final session will end at noon on Thursday, July 7, unless an afternoon session is needed. If you arrive on Saturday, please do so by 10:00 a.m. so that your registration can be completed by noon.

The first business session will convene at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 2. Some very important items of business will be considered in that opening session, and all Members of Conference are expected to be present. All voting members should plan to attend all business sessions unless excused by the General Secretary or the Moderator.

You will be able to check into your room upon arrival. Those arriving at unusual hours should be sure that Conference Services at Azusa is aware of the schedule so that keys are available at the Security Office on the first floor of Adams Hall when you arrive. This office is open 24 hours a day.

Parents who will be having children sleeping on the floor of their rooms, be SURE to bring bedding. If children sleeping on the floor use linen packages provided by Azusa, a \$15 charge will need to be made.

Some Conference people will be housed in apartments which have refrigerators and stoves. These are NOT to be used to prepare meals. Please respect the firm request of the host campus.

When you move into your room, check carefully for broken or missing furnishings and report such within 24 hours to the Assistant Convention Director, Carmen Attwood. This is very important.

If you do not already have General Conference programs, they should be in your hands soon.

If you find it necessary to cancel a paid registration, full refunds will be made if the cancellation is made to the Convention Director by June 23. No refunds after June 23 except in emergencies. Because of postal delays, please make any cancellations after June 10 by phone.

The ministries for children are free, but a modest charge will be made for field trips. The field trips are optional, but parents will need to supervise children who do not go. There will be a registration charge of \$25 for the youth program, which is for ages 12 and up. The Board for Congregational Life is providing more information on these activities in the printed program and in other ways.

Table rental for exhibit areas is \$15 per 8-foot table needed. Make your request to the Convention Director. Please indicate any need of an electrical outlet. Make out your check or money order, in U.S. funds, to "General Conference."

Permanent seating will be assigned for all voting members of General Conference in the Saturday afternoon session, after the break. You will be able to mark the seat you wish to sit on before that, on either Friday evening or Saturday morning.

No service will be conducted at Azusa on Sunday morning. You are invited to attend area Brethren in Christ Churches, and transportation will be provided at a nominal charge to cover bus expenses. Be sure to give complete information when you register. It will be too late to request transportation after you arrive. Plan to reconfirm your request when you register at Conference.

The following churches welcome you: Alta Loma, Chino, Chino Hills, Duarte, Etiwanda, Gethsemane, Lighthouse, Moreno, Morning Star, Ontario, Open Bible, Pomona (New Community), Riverside (evening service only), Upland, and Walnut. Why not visit one of the smaller churches? The noon meal at Azusa will be delayed for those who attend services off campus.

The Sunday service at General Conference will be from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Dinner will be served from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. A drama will be presented by the Upland Church at 8:00 p.m. This is an extra feature, not arranged by the Program Commission. Admission is free.

For more information, check previous issues of the *Evangelical Visitor* starting with January. Or contact Paul Hostetler, Convention Director, Grantham, PA 17027. Phones: (Office) 717-697-2634; (Home) 717-766-2621. You can leave a recorded message at the home number.

General Conference workshops announced

Twenty-nine workshops are scheduled to be held simultaneously at General Conference on Tuesday, July 5, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. The following list will allow you "consideration time" in selecting your choices. Workshops will be limited to 20-25 participants on a *first come* basis. Registration forms will be available at General Conference, or you may register prior to Conference by submitting your first three choices to: General Conference Program Commission; 4404 Meadow Creek Circle; Sarasota, Fla. 33583.

1. **Should We Provide Christian Schooling for Our Children?**—*Mark Garis*. Responsible voices continue to raise probing questions about public education. Can Christian parents depend on public schools for the education of their children or should they seek alternatives? Hear qualified Christian educators discuss the issues surrounding this question.
2. **Highlights From Our Colleges**—*D. Ray Hostetter, Don McNiven*. These college administrators will describe some of the exciting developments on their campuses. They will illustrate how our colleges are responding creatively to current challenges in education and seeking to meet the educational needs of Brethren in Christ youth.
3. **Implementing the GRADE Ministry in Your Congregation**—*Wayne Arnott*. GRADE is an acronym for Growth Resulting After Discipleship and Evangelism. The goal of GRADE is to mobilize the laymen of your church around the commands of Christ and to have your church grow as a result of winning people to the power and grace of the gospel.
4. **Evangelism in Church Planting**—*Warren Hoffman*. Deals with the interrelationship of prayer, identification of unchurched persons, personal witness, gospel presentation, nurture, encouragement, and leadership in bringing secular people to a vital relationship with Jesus Christ and with one another as a core group for a new congregation.
5. **How Evangelism Can Be Done in a Growing Church**—*Ken Hepner*. Evangelism is the fruit of discipleship training—a natural response to a growing commitment to "reach out" and individual confrontation with a "theology of lostness." Suggested reading: *Let the Church be the Church*, Ortland; *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, Coleman; *Love, Acceptance and Forgiveness*, Cook
6. **How to Provide Leadership for a Growing Church**—*Dale Shaw*. This workshop for pastors and church leaders will outline the basic principles of leadership and give practical application of those principles.
7. **Creative Use of Hymns in Worship**—*Ron Miller*. Many worship leaders are seeking guidance in relation to what constitutes ideal congregational songs. Dealing with the wide spectrum of songs for worship, Ron Miller and Loine Bert will illustrate creative ways to use congregational music.
8. **Assimilating New Believers**—*Ken Letner*. Using a variety of techniques, we will look at two questions: Why Assimilate? and, How Can I Help Assimilate? We'll get the big picture of assimilation and then talk about three specific areas in which you can play a part.
9. **Appreciating Diversity in the Church**—*John Reitz*. Healthy congregational life fosters and allows for a broad range of diversity. Much of the diversity is not theological but psychological. As you participate in this workshop, you will gain a better understanding of your own unique personality as well as a deeper appreciation for the differences you find in others. Suggested reading: *Please Understand Me*—David Keirse and Marilyn Bates; *The Enneagram*—Marie Beesing, Robert Nogosek, Patrick O'Leary.
10. **Good Grief, or "Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled"**—*Sandra Musser*. What is grief? What reactions can one expect? Can I prepare myself now to handle it? How can I help soften or shorten the anguish another is feeling in bereavement? This seminar will discuss practical hints which can be used to help the grief sufferer take steps toward recovery of his equilibrium.
11. **Writer's Workshop**—*Glen Pierce*. This workshop focuses on book-length manuscripts. Author E. Morris Sider discusses "what writers should know" about choosing a topic, doing research, and working with an editor. Publisher Roger Williams examines such topics as financing the project and marketing.
12. **Self Publishing Workshop**—*Jon Stepp*. "Self Publishing" means the author assumes the cost of printing and distribution. Evangel Press Manager, Jon Stepp, shows you how to prepare your manuscript, select a printer, discover your market, and price your product. A free book about self publishing will be given to all participants.
13. **Ethics in Preaching**—*Owen H. Alderfer*. Ethics of the preacher: on the street, in the pulpit, in the parish. Ethics in sermon preparation. Ethics in

sermon delivery. Ethics in the invitation and follow-up. Ethics in special cases: media, money, office.

14. **Worship**—*H. Frank Kipe, Dr. Robert Ives*. Focus will be given to the elements of worship. The need to evaluate the nature of the worshippers is important. Presentations will model several worship styles and contents and how they seek to match the congregation.
15. **Spiritual Renewal**—*Glenn A. Ginder*. Renewal in the congregation: stop-gap or stabilizer. Resources or shared ideas for turning renewal into "standard equipment." Workshop goal: to gather helpful insights that can become the practical guides for ongoing renewal in our congregations.
16. **Skill in Resolving Conflict**—*David Brubaker*. Designed for persons interested in learning skills in conflict resolution.
17. **Serving the Elderly in Your Congregation**—*Keith Ulery, George Kibler*. What can we do for elderly persons before they go to a retirement community and for those who don't go to a retirement community at all?
18. **Mennonite Disaster Service**—*Lowell Derweiler*. On being God's light to people in crisis. A short video review of MDS activities in 1987 followed by sharing and discussion on how the work of MDS volunteers is a Christian witness to God's love to people caught in disasters.
19. **Ministering Redemptively to Homosexuals**—*Leslie Harvel, Lenora Stern*. Homosexuality is not an acceptable lifestyle, according to the Scriptures. How can we bring love and transformation to persons in need of help?
20. **The Biblical Basis for Peace**—*Woody Dalton*. This session is a Bible study on the way of peace: a consideration of the nature of the Church and the ministry of the Church. It is a call for members of Christ's Church to give total allegiance to Him.
21. **How to Oppose Pornography**—*Eber Dourte*. A look at the nature of this problem and ways in which we may counteract it. A look at Christian action.
22. **Minister's Pension and Health, Mennonite Mutual Aid Programs**—*Elbert N. Smith, Ray Musser*. How can Mennonite Mutual Aid help the church minister to needs in health, protection, and wellness? Plus developments in our minister's pension and hospitalization benefits.
23. **Dealing With Divorce and Remarriage**—*Luke Keefer Jr., John A. Byers*. We will discuss the doctrinal understandings, church policies, and practical considerations that have guided our church since 1974 in dealing with people at the congregational level and in the ministerial ranks whose marriages have experienced failure.
24. **Reaching the "Samaritans" at Home and Overseas**—*Roy V. Sider*. The stories of Jesus among the Samaritans are reenacted around the world. Church leaders (representing Board for Brotherhood Concerns, Mennonite Central Committee, Board for Evangelism and Church Planting, Board for World Missions, World Hunger Fund, local congregations), will dialogue on reaching people on the "margins of faith" through relationship building and special ministries.
25. **The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Missionary Enterprise**—*Fred L. Holland*. Beginning with the early church, we will trace together the work of the Holy Spirit in sending and empowering workers. We will include the expansion of the church in Europe and into the present missionary movement. The Holy Spirit in revival, people movements, and church growth will be included. This will be a mini-course with audience participation.
26. **Getting Your Church Involved in World Missions**—*Louis O. Cober*. Missions is a biblical mandate! But exciting participation in missions doesn't just happen . . . it must be planned. Learn how to make missions a meaningful adventure. Hear from those who have done it! Help for all congregations . . . small, mid-sized, or large.
27. **Stewardship of Time and Talents: Utilizing Volunteers in Congregational Ministries**—*Lester and Mary Fretz*. Do you have a surplus of jobs and a deficit of workers? This workshop will discuss recruiting and matching jobs to abilities/interests; training and motivating workers; recognizing and rewarding volunteers.
28. **Family Finances—How Your Church Can Help**—*Charles Frey, Merle Brubaker, Philip Keefer*. For congregational leaders. Gain ideas to help people grow in their ability to create and manage their financial resources. Hear what other congregations are doing. See resources available through the Stewardship Office and the Jacob Engle Foundation for personal, family, and congregational use. Bring resources you have found helpful.
29. **Spiritual Warfare for God's Kingdom**—*Grace Holland*. A look at spiritual warfare in Scriptures with a study of principles for warfare and examples of present day victories. Some time will be spent in prayer and an opportunity will be given to participate in a special project for the year.

Atlantic Conference

Congregational Life Festival

"The Church of God is People" was the theme of the Atlantic Conference Congregational Life Festival on Feb. 28. Dan Houck, Atlantic Conference Board for Congregational Life (BCL) field representative, welcomed the 200 adults who met in the Lancaster (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church. He said the BCL embraces the current spirit of renewal, and strong worship is the beginning of renewal.

As worship leader, Bruce Gerlach encouraged the gathering to "enter into God's gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise." He stated that each song, Scripture reading, and uni-

son reading had been selected for its statement about our corporate devotion to Jesus.

Rev. Woody Dalton of the Harrisburg congregation shared about the reorganization that is taking place there (old boards changed into eight new commissions). After the new worship committee evaluated the worship service, they decided it wasn't really a *worship* service. They have restructured the service by having the sermon first and the congregational participation in direct worship of the Lord afterwards.

The Harrisburg intercessory prayer ministry is praying for revival and for God to move on their desire for evangelism. They have committed themselves to pray ten minutes of intercessory prayer each day, two hours of prayer for the church one day a week, attend Wed-



Mary Jane Davis ("Oprah") interviews Pastor John Hawbaker.

nesday evening prayer service, and read a chapter of *Touch the World Through Prayer* each day. Pastor Dalton said they are becoming the most excited group of people in the church.

Kevin Ryan, pastor of the Souderton church, explained their three-member reconciliation team. Its purpose is to deal with interpersonal conflict with the goals of being redemptive, compassionate, and dealing forthrightly with problems. This team helps take the weight of problem-solving from the pastor and helps to diffuse confrontational counseling.

Rev. Warren Hoffman of the Oklahoma City church planting shared experiences he has had in reaching out to draw people to the church and assimilate them into the congregation. He believes the quality of congregational life needs to be high to nurture and keep people. Sharing from Psalm 126:6, he said the farmer in that psalm was weeping as he went because he knew the risk and uncertainty involved in sowing. As a church planter, Warren, too, has times of weeping as he works. He has learned firsthand the need to disciple new converts. They must be trained and taught—how to sing, how to pray, how to teach Sunday school.

A mock "Phil and Oprah Show" hosted by Ken Letner and Mary Jane Davis encouraged those present to "Speak Up! Be Heard!" "Phil and Oprah" led a lively discussion on "Why it is difficult to get people to serve in the church." Some reasons suggested were: lack of interest, lack of commitment, working outside the home, and having programs that have lost their usefulness. A positive suggestion was that Christians may be serving outside the four walls of the church, thus leaving less time to serve inside. —Jane Musser

General Conference 1988 Youth Program "Worship in Spirit and in Truth"

Registration: Saturday, July 2, 8:00 a.m. to noon

Cost: \$25 (U.S.)

Program Preview

Saturday (July 2)	- 1:00 p.m.	Sightseeing (Hollywood, etc.) (Back on campus for supper)
	9:30 p.m.	Get acquainted time
Sunday (July 3)	- 10:15 a.m.	Session #1—Craig Sider
	2:00 p.m.	Volleyball tournament
	7:00 p.m.	Bar-B-Q
	8:00 p.m.	Music and speaker—Vern Burgess
	9:00 p.m.	Fireworks
Tuesday (July 5)	- 11:00 a.m.	until ?? Beach trip
Wednesday (July 6)	- 10:15 a.m.	Session #2
	2:30 p.m.	Sports day
	7:00 p.m.	Conference rally
	9:00 p.m.	Quizzing finals
	10:00 p.m.	Ice Cream bash
Thursday (July 7)	- 10:15 a.m.	Session #3 Communion, sharing, farewell

A full schedule of times and meeting places will be distributed when youth register at Conference.

Directors: Karl Hostetler and Brian Lofthouse

Church News

Allegheny Conference

On Mar. 18, the youth group of the *Air Hill* congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., went to see the Billy Graham film, "Caught." • Lane Hostetter was evening speaker for the **Antrim** congregation, Chambersburg, on Mar. 20. • The **Big Valley** congregation, Belleville, Pa., scheduled spring revival meetings with Earl Lehman, Apr. 10-17. • Bishop Kipe led a deacon consecration service Mar. 2 at the **Canoe Creek** church, Holidaysburg, Pa. Ken Mackie was evangelist, Apr. 3-10. • Carl H. Shenk, previously serving as pastor of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Schenectady, N.Y., has been called as associate pastor of the **Carlisle**, Pa., congregation.

The **Cedar Grove** congregation, Mifflintown, Pa., recently gave 30 bags of groceries and \$188 to the MCC Grocery Sharing Project, to be distributed in Philadelphia and New York. General Secretary, Don Shafer, was revival speaker Mar. 19-23. • A Mar. 14 art craft sale was held at the **Chambersburg**, Pa., church. The children presented "Down by the Creek Bank" on Mar. 20. • Fred Holland was missionary speaker Mar. 12-13 for the **Clear Creek** congregation, Everett, Pa. Ken Letner spoke Mar. 27. • The **Cumberland Valley** congregation, Dillsburg, Pa., now has a newsletter, "The CVC Forecaster."

Midwest Conference Bishop Glenn Ginder brought the morning message Mar. 13 to the **Dillsburg**, Pa., congregation. • An all-church roller skating party was Mar. 29 for the **Fairview Ave.** congregation, Waynesboro, Pa. The congregation reports that a mother participating in the MOPS (Mother of Preschoolers) program recently received Christ and is being disciplined. • The **Five Forks** church, Waynesboro, was the location for the Board for Brotherhood Concerns (BBC) Mar. 19 seminar, "Respecting Human Life: Brethren in Christ Perspectives," with Lucille Wingert, Bethany Christian Services; Jo Hart, Lancaster County Women's Services; Wilmer Heisey, Executive Director of MCC U.S.; and Lenora Stern, member of the General Conference BBC.

Eight new members were received in March by the **Grantham**, Pa., congregation. "Set Free to Be: faithful living in a fallen world" was the theme of the Mar. 13 Spiritual Life Day, with speaker Manfred Brauch of Eastern Baptist Seminary. • On Mar. 27, Darla Thompson presented a concert for the **Green Grove** congregation, Spring Mills, Pa. Harold Rohrer was speaker Mar. 30-Apr. 1 for Easter services. • John and Esther Spurrier were mission speakers Mar. 6 for the **Hanover**, Pa., congregation. Four persons were baptized on

Minister of Music

The Elizabethtown, Pa., Brethren in Christ Church has an opening for a part-time minister of music. For more information, write to Joel Kaltreider, c/o Elizabethtown Brethren in Christ Church, 996 E. High Street, Elizabethtown, PA 17022, or telephone the church at (717) 367-2651.

Mar. 13. • The Mar. 16-20 missions conference of the **Hollowell** church, Waynesboro, Pa., included Boyden and Lois Donmoyer, Wycliffe in Peru; Gordon and Susie Gilmore, Venezuela; Fred Holland, Africa; John Petersen, Unevangelized Fields Mission; Emory and Ruby Pinkerton, Zaire; Eleanor Poe, Nicaragua; and John and Esther Spurrier, Zambia.

Pastor and Mrs. Maurice Bender of the **Iron Springs** church, Fairfield, Pa., recently held an open house in their new home. Morris Sider spoke in the Mar. 6 morning service. • The Elizabethtown, Pa., Brethren in Christ Church choir recently sang their Easter musical, "He Is Alive," at the **Locust Grove** church, York, Pa., during a morning service. • The **Marsh Creek** congregation, Howard, Pa., recently raised \$175 for missions by having a donut sale. The children brought items in March and April for Navajo Mission. Irving Parker was revival speaker, Mar. 20-27.

A Focus on the Family video series was one option this quarter for the **Martinsburg**, Pa., congregation's adult Sunday school. An old-fashioned love feast was held Mar. 5 with speakers H. Frank Kipe and C. B. Byers. The Omegans sponsored the film "Twice Pardonned" on Mar. 6. • The **Mechanicsburg**, Pa., church had an informational meeting on Mar. 16 concerning the possible hiring of a third pastor. Frank Tillapaugh, author of *The Church Unleashed*, spoke on Mar. 6 to the congregation and Mar. 7 to a pastors' and leaders' conference.

Martha Lady was installed Feb. 28 as an associate pastor of the **Messiah Village** congregation, Mechanicsburg. • The **Morning Hour Chapel**, East Berlin, Pa., basketball team participated in mid-March in the Messiah College Brethren in Christ Sports Tournament. • Starting Mar. 6, the three-part video series "After You Say 'I Do'" was shown in the young adult class of the **New Guilford** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa. The resurrection celebration "I Am" was presented Mar. 26-27. • The **Peace Light Singers** were in concert Feb. 28 for the **Peace Light** congregation, Gettysburg, Pa.

The **Roseglen** congregation, Duncannon, Pa., hosted the community Good Friday service. The Singing Hetrick Family sang at Roseglen Easter services. "Make it as short as possible," and "The excitement of hearing the knock upon the door" were sermon themes. • The **Van Lear** congregation, Williamsport, Md., urged its members to participate in the Good Friday community "cross walk"—a procession of Christians including hymn singing and reading of passion narratives at different stops along the way. • The **West Shore** congregation, Enola, Pa., recently received six new members.

Atlantic Conference

The **Bradford County Fellowship**, Ulster, Pa., hosted Marshall and Eleanor Poe and daughters in the Feb. 28 morning service. • The **Community Bible Chapel** adult Sunday school, Sarasota, Fla., has been involved in a new study, "Everything Necessary." On Mar. 20, the congregation viewed the film "Two Masters," about personal finances. • Thelma Bolton was among those who spoke at the **Conoy**, Elizabethtown, Pa., congregation's mission's weekend, Mar. 5-6. She spoke of her home involvement with "Mennonite Your Way" tourism. • Alice Dourte led a Sunday evening "Visit to Japan" on Mar. 13 for the **Cross Roads** congregation, Mt. Joy, Pa. She included slides, music, hands-on demonstrations, and worship—Japanese style.

The **Dayspring** congregation, under the direction of Audie and Linda Gadis, Harrisonburg, Va., has found a worship facility and now has a core of dedicated leaders. • The **Elizabethtown**, Pa., congregation sponsored a bell choir festival on Apr. 10. • The Mar. 6 evening worship at the **Fairland** church, Cleona, Pa., included *Magical Ministries* with Bob Bracilano. The film "How to be a Positive Parent" was viewed Mar. 27. • A spring baptism and reception for three new members was planned by the **Hummelstown**, Pa., congregation for Apr. 10.

Half-time Ministry Opportunities

The Board for Congregational Life is seeking Associates for Field Services to serve in the **Central** and **Pacific** Conferences. These persons would provide resource, facilitate communication, and give administrative leadership to the varied areas of congregational life within the churches of the conference assigned (i.e. music, worship, Christian education, youth, etc.).

For the right person, this position would fit nicely with other work already held, or prove to be just the right amount of work for someone seeking half-time. Interested persons should have knowledge, interest, and skills according to the varied areas of congregational life. This is another step in the direction of placing an available associate in each regional conference.

Please send a letter of interest and/or resume by *May 15* to: Ken Letner, Executive Director, P.O. Box #163, Mount Joy, PA 17552. For more information and/or job description, you may call (717) 653-9321.

Starting on Mar. 13, Youth Sunday, a four-week youth Sunday school elective, "Why Wait?" was offered by the **Lancaster, Pa.**, congregation. This study was coupled with the Josh McDowell video series for parents on Wednesday nights, "How to Help Your Child Say 'NO' to Sexual Pressure." • "The Light Brigade" was presented on Mar. 27 by the youth choir of the **Manheim, Pa.**, congregation. • Mar. 13 was "come as you work Sunday" for the **Manor** congregation, Mountville, Pa. Four Manor basketball teams participated in the Messiah College Sports Tournament. Guest speaker Mar. 27 was Eduardo Llanes, Miami, Fla.

On Mar. 6, the **Mastersonville** congregation, Manheim, Pa., enjoyed an evening of "Bible charades," the acting out of a character, parable, etc. • Arlin Buckwalter was speaker for the Youth Sunday service, Mar. 13, at the **Mt. Pleasant** church, Mt. Joy, Pa. The ladies planned a ham and bean soup sale for April 1. • The **Palmyra, Pa.**, congregation's secretary, Karen Haldeman, has accepted the position of office manager at the Mt. Joy missions office. Mar. 26 was spring clean-up day at the church. • The **Pequea**, Lancaster, Pa., youth sandwich sale—ham boats and subs—was Apr. 16. The Evangelism and Extension Committee has begun home visitation.

Gordon Gilmore spoke Mar. 13 to the **Refton, Pa.**, congregation on "The Emerging Church in Venezuela." Spirit Force, a music and drama group from Messiah College, ministered in an evening program on Mar. 27. • An installation service for James Artz was held Mar. 2 at the **Shenks** church, Elizabethtown, Pa. • Spiritual enrichment services, Mar. 27-30, with Thomas McDaniels were held at the **Silverdale, Pa.**, church. • John Debrine led spiritual life services Mar. 27-29 at the **Skyline View** church, Harrisburg, Pa.

• "The Family Under Fire," a film about the pornography industry, was shown recently to the **Stowe, Pa.**, congregation. • Mar. 5 was a sub and bake sale by the **Summit View** congregation, New Holland, Pa., to raise funds for the summer camp scholarship fund.

Canadian Conference

The **Falls View** congregation, Niagara Falls, Ont., welcomed two new members on Feb. 28. The Omegas sponsored a spaghetti supper on Mar. 5. • On Mar. 13, George W. Smith of Christian Blind Mission brought a presentation to the **Heise Hill** congregation, Gormley, Ont. "Praise Thee," a women's trio, ministered in both services, Mar. 27. • The film "Jesus" was shown on Mar. 20 and 27 at the **Massey Place** church, Saskatoon, Sask. The congregation is looking for a new director for the Children's Center. • Mar. 27 was Friendship Sunday for the **North East Community** congregation, Calgary, Alb., on the theme, "Can friendship be recycled?" A potluck meal followed the service.

Luke Keefer, Sr., led revival meetings Apr. 10-17 at the **Oak Ridges, Ont.**, church. Louis Cober spoke on behalf of Brethren in Christ Missions on Apr. 24. • The film "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe" was shown Feb. 28 and Mar. 6 to the **Port Colborne, Ont.**, congregation. • The **Prince Albert, Sask.**, congregation recently studied *Building People Through a Caring Sharing Fellowship*. The ladies have a Thursday exercise and study class. • The **Rosebank** congregation, Petersburg, Ont., hosted the Canadian quizzing competition on Mar. 6. • A missions conference at the **Sherkston, Ont.**, church, Mar. 23-27, featured Fred and Grace Holland, and Gordon and Susie Gilmore.

George Sheffer was renewal speaker Mar. 4-6 at the **Wainfleet, Ont.**, church. The congregation had Evangelism Explosion sessions on Mar. 13 and 20. • The Emmanuel Bible College choir sang Mar. 6 in the morning service of the **Welland, Ont.**, congregation. • Pastor David Illman of the **Westheights** congregation, Kitchener, Ont., was in Guatemala Mar. 15-24 on a preaching mission. Five couples from Westheights attended the BCL Marriage Enrichment Weekend, Mar. 4-6.

Central Conference

Bob Finley, Messiah Village, was guest speaker Mar. 20 at the **Amherst** church, Massillon, Ohio. The mission service group recently worked at the Stark Co. Hunger Task Force distribution site. • A missions offering of \$738 was given by the **Bethel** congregation, Merrill, Mich., on Feb. 28. Louis Cober spoke in that service. • The **Christian Union** congregation, Garrett, Ind., has new *Praise* songbooks. A "Growing in Love" workshop was Mar. 20. • The **Highland** congregation, West Milton, Ohio, hosted Central Conference on Mar. 18-19. Don Shafer was keynote speaker at the Friday night rally. Luke Keefer, Jr., challenged the gathering Sunday morning on "Keeping the Faith."

The Teen Missions spaghetti dinner, Mar. 6, of the **Lakeview** congregation, Goodrich, Mich., raised \$550 for Iceland-bound Linda Bye, and Holly Whiting, headed for Hong Kong this summer. Dr. David Ben Lew, a "completed" Jew who spent time in a German concentration camp, spoke to the congregation on Mar. 20. • The **Mooretown** congregation, Sandusky, Mich., hosted one of five community Lenten services on Apr. 1, with speaker Pete Crawford. • In March

Pictured below are five brothers and sisters and their spouses who have had the privilege of celebrating Golden Wedding anniversaries: Hershey and Dalta (Arnett) Gramm, married Feb. 19, 1930; Paul and Esther (Gramm) George, June 25, 1931; Clarence and Elsie (Paulus) Gramm, Dec. 25, 1934; Harold and Martha (Gramm) Rohrer, Feb. 22, 1936; Woodrow and Ellen (Gramm) Wiles, Dec. 8, 1936.

Hershey Gramm writes, "[Of the eleven children born to Irvin and Elizabeth (Hershey) Gramm], there are still ten of us living. I do not know if we would be called a close family, but we have what we call the chain letter. I am not sure what year it was started, but not later than 1936, so it has been going for more than 50 years. It takes about three months to circulate, give or take a little."

Over 272 years of married life



Paul and Esther George



Harold and Martha Rohrer



Hershey and Dalta Gramm



Clarence and Elsie Gramm



Woodrow and Ellen Wiles

and April, the **Peace Chapel** congregation, Ravenna, Ohio, had Wednesday night studies on *Life with God*, a new book about basics of the Christian life, and "Cults that Look Like Faith," about such groups as the Mormons, Hare Krishnas, and Worldwide Church of God.

The **Phoneton** congregation, Tipp City, Ohio, asked for help from the conference recently in implementing a telemarketing-style phoning approach to outreach. The goal was to have 250 people in church on Easter. • The ladies of the **Pleasant Hill**, Ohio, congregation worked recently on sewing hospital gowns for Macha Hospital. • The **Sippo Valley** congregation, Massillon, Ohio, hosted a combined Easter sunrise service with the Amherst congregation. • The **Union Grove** congregation, New Paris, Ind., and the **Nappanee**, Ind., congregation heard from Andrea Hoke on April 10 about summer missions, VS recruitment, and her recent trip to Venezuela. The two churches also hosted Charles Dupree of OMS International.

Midwest Conference

Gerald and Lucille Wingert, now taking a respite from pastoring after 35 years, led a week of spiritual emphasis meetings in April for the **Bethany** congregation, Thomas, Okla. • Two persons from the **Mt. View** congregation, Colorado Springs, Colo., recently attended the **Christian Ministries Convention** (formerly the Mountain Area Sunday School Convention). • The **Oak Park** congregation, Des Moines, Iowa, participated in the 50-Day Spiritual Adventure, Feb. 14 through Easter. The church and Sunday school boards held a joint meeting Mar. 6 to discuss issues related to church growth and Sunday school.

The Gospel Echoes Prison Ministry Team from Goshen, Ind., recently gave a program in song, word, and film, for the **Palm Valley** congregation, Pharr, Tx. • Gordon Schrag, representing Menonite Mutual Aid health insurance, spoke to the **Rosebank** congregation, Hope, Ks., on Feb. 29. • On March 6, Dean and Ann Marie Parry, missionaries to Macha Hospital in Zambia, spoke in the Sunday school hour of the **Zion** congregation, Abilene, Ks.

Pacific Conference

Guest Keith Ward sang in the Mar. 6 morning service of the **Moreno Community** congregation, Moreno Valley, Calif. • The **Ontario**, Calif., congregation's Mar. 27 "dinner theater" presented "Smoke on Mount Sinai" and "The Mystery Movie." • Art Cooper, who had pastored the **Pacific Highway** congregation, Salem, Ore., for 18 years before retirement, gave the morning sermon on Mar. 6 while Pastor Hostetler was attending Pacific Conference at the **Chino** church. Rosetta Brinlee reported about conference to the Pacific Highway congregation by video tape and verbal presentations.

Steve Penner, director of West Coast MCC, joined the **Riverside**, Calif., congregation on Mar. 6 for a slide presentation. A Mar. 30 prayer vigil and an Apr. 2 "Jesus lives" party for children were two Holy Week activities. • The film "Fractured Families" was shown Mar. 13 to the **Upland**, Calif., congregation. • The Apr. 22-24 spring retreat of the Pacific Conference Women's Ministries featured Marita Littauer speaking on "Character, Confidence, and Charisma." • Bishop John A. Byers and Rev. John Hawbaker planned to serve in leadership positions for the Christian Holiness Association 120th Annual Convention, Apr. 19-21, in Portland, Ore.

For the Record

Births

Afseth: Joel Donald, Feb. 6; Wayne and Flo Afseth, Massey Place congregation, Sask.

Bender: Jesse Daniel E., Mar. 11; Daniel and Fan (Eshleman) Bender, Manor congregation, Pa.

Berry: Jessica Kay, Feb. 28; William and Sandra Berry, Susquehanna Valley congregation, Pa.

Booker: Carolyn Mary, Feb. 23; Craig and Diane (Carver) Booker, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

Davis: Amber Marie, Feb. 15; Terry and Diane (Newhouse) Davis, Cumberland Valley congregation, Pa.

Davis: Ashley Elizabeth, Jan. 29; Melanie Davis, Mt. View congregation, Colo.

Denhollander: Victoria Elizabeth, Feb. 9; John and Debbie (Packer) Denhollander, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

Etzweiler: Amber Lynn, Mar. 4; Terry and Natalia Etzweiler, Free Grace congregation, Pa.

Gerlach: Tracey Elizabeth, Mar. 4; Carl and Sandy (Beyer) Gerlach, Cedar Heights congregation, Pa.

Giffing: Dustin Charles, Mar. 12; Charles and Kathy Giffing, Pequea congregation, Pa.

Gorham: James Curtis, Feb. 17; James and Nadine (Fernberg) Gorham, Cedar Heights congregation, Pa.

Griesbach: Jarod Montgomery, Mar. 1; Chris and Shelley Griesbach, North East Community congregation, Alb.

Groff: Adrienne Frances, Feb. 22; David and Vicki (Allshouse) Groff, Manor congregation, Pa.

Heise: Rebecca Christine, Jan. 20; Dan and Sue Heise, Jorn, Sweden.

Hess: Danielle Laray, Feb. 21; Daniel and Vonnie (Martin) Hess, Antrim congregation, Pa.

Hoffman: Quay Wesley Grove, Feb. 14; Dave and Carol (Grove) Hoffman, Mt. Rock congregation, Pa.

Hoover: David Jesse, Feb. 24; Robert and Esther (Heise) Hoover, Pleasant Hill congregation, Ohio.

Marentette: Benjamin, Dec. 3; Chris and Laura Marentette, Westheights congregation, Ont.

McMullen: Brittany Ann, Jan. 28; Martin and Kristina (Bell) McMullen, Mt. View congregation, Colo.

Mease: Rebekah Grace, Jan. 16; Ron and Ann Mease, Conoy congregation, Pa.

Pereira: Adrianna Lynn, Feb. 22; Dan and Charlene Pereira, Sherston congregation, Ont.

Schneider: Jeremy William, Feb. 17; Rob and Denise (Vittie) Schneider, Wainfleet congregation, Ont.

Shenk: Cory Philip, Mar. 7; Ronald and Jill (Holland) Shenk, Manor congregation, Pa.

Shenk: Jason Ronald, Jan. 29; Ronald and Sandy (Zeplin) Shenk, Manheim congregation, Pa.

Siegrist: Neal Robert, Mar. 10; C. Eugene and Carole (Ambrust) Siegrist, Manor congregation, Pa.

Steinbacher: Brandon Neil, Mar. 2; Patrick and Christie (Toner) Steinbacher, Cedar Heights congregation, Pa.

Winger: Justin Gary, Dec. 20; Gary and Sylvia Winger, Westheights congregation, Ont.

Weddings

Benedict-Geesaman: Annette, daughter of Ray and Linda Geesaman, Waynesboro, Pa., and Todd, son of Ralph and Beverly Benedict, Waynesboro, Feb. 13 at the Fairview Ave. Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Lynn Thrush officiating.

Clouser-Miller: Ruth E., daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Paul Miller, Spring Mills, Pa., and Thomas R., son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Clouser, Jr., Madisonburg, Pa., Nov. 14, 1987, at the Green Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Paul Smucker and Rev. Paul Miller officiating.

Eberly-Daniels: Kimberly Diane, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Daniels, Greencastle, Pa., and Randy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Eberly, Greencastle, Feb. 20 at the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. LeRoy Eberly officiating.

Long-Pugh: Beverly Pugh, Kitchener, Ont., and Ronald Long, Clarence Center, N.Y., Dec. 19, 1987, at Westheights Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. David Illman, Rev. Ron Lofthouse, and Rev. Richard Long officiating.

Smith-Famous: Susan T. Famous, daughter of Shirley Moyer, and Daryl E., son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Smith, Mar. 20 in the Shenks Community Church with Rev. Daniel Houck officiating.

Smith-Flatt: Robyn Margaret, daughter of Gordon and Nancy Flatt, Stouffville, Ont., and Jeffrey Kenneth, son of Rev. Ken and Bev Smith, Oak Ridges, Ont., Mar. 19 at the Springvale Baptist Church, Stouffville, with Rev. Robert Fleming officiating.

Stence-Klinger: Kathy Jo, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Klinger, Williamstown, Pa., and Rick Wayne, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Stence, Millersburg, Pa., Feb. 27 at the Williamstown United Methodist Church.

Timmons-Musser: Nancy Irene, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Musser, Jr., Lurgan, Pa., and Scott Thomas, son of Mrs. Barbara Timmons, Newburg, Pa., and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Timmons, Orrstown, Pa., Mar. 5 in the Air Hill Brethren in Christ Church, with Rev. William R. Baublitz officiating.

Obituaries

Brumbaugh: Paul Brumbaugh, born Sept. 30, 1917, died Oct. 12, 1987. Surviving are his wife, Pauline; three daughters, Beth Gantz, Carol Hostetter, and Joyce Ketron; seven grandchildren; a sister, Evelyn Engle; and a brother, Ralph. He was a member of the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church where funeral services were conducted with Rev. William Hoke and Rev. Sam Hollingsworth officiating. Interment was in the Fairview cemetery.

Crawford: Lawrence E. Crawford, born July 6, 1916, died Feb. 25 in Miami, Fla. Surviving are his wife Evelyn; six sons, Robert, Donald, Kenneth, Dennis, Tracy, Stanley; and a daughter, Phyllis Crawford. He was a member of the Zion Brethren in Christ Church where the funeral was held with Rev. Ron Bowell officiating. Interment was in the Bethel cemetery.

Ellis: Edgar (Ed) Ellis, born Sept. 30, 1932, died Mar. 10. Surviving are his wife, Helen (Nigh); a son, Richard; a daughter, Tricia; his father, Ernie; a brother; and a sister. He was a member of the Oak Ridges, Ont., Brethren in Christ Church where he had served on the church board and trustee board. The funeral service was held at the Oak Ridges church with Rev. Ken Smith officiating. Spring interment will be in the Heise Hill church cemetery.

Good: Mitchell Scott, infant son of Anthony and Susan Lehman Good, Manheim, Pa., was born and died Mar. 8. Surviving besides his parents are a brother, Andrew; two sisters, Adrienne and Monica; maternal grandparents, Rev. and Mrs. J. Robert Lehman; paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Rufus C. Good; and paternal great-grandparents, Mary Crouse Good, and Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Kreider. A family graveside service was held with Rev. J. Robert Lehman officiating.

Habecker: Dorothy E. Habecker, born Mar. 13, 1913, the daughter of Albert A. and Maude Reed Woodrig, died Mar. 14. She was the wife of Charles H. Habecker who died in 1969. Surviving are 7 children, Albert W., Samuel W., Nancy A. Jenkins, Lee D., Carol H. Bleacher, Florence H. Herr, and Dorothy J. Piekielek; 17 grandchildren; and 2 great-grandchildren. The funeral service was held at the Manor Brethren in Christ Church where she was a member, with Rev. John B. Hawbaker officiating. Interment was in Conestoga Memorial Park.

Hale: Franklin G. Hale, Sr., of Clayton, Ohio, born Jan. 11, 1921, died July 28, 1987. He was a member of the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church. Surviving are his wife, Jacqueline; a daughter, Donna Aiken; a son, F. Grant, Jr.; four grandchildren; two sisters; and one brother. Funeral services were held at the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Robert Verno officiat-

ing. Interment was in Royal Oak Memorial Gardens.

Helmuth: Michael Helmuth, born Aug. 6, 1960, died Dec. 18. Surviving are his wife, Sharon; his children, Erica, Elizabeth, Joshua, Justin, Jason, and Jennifer; his parents, Henry and Shirley; a brother, Gregory; and grandparents, John and Marilyn McNulty. Rev. Sam Hollingsworth conducted funeral services at the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church, Englewood, Ohio. Interment was in the Fairview cemetery.

Kane: Glen F. Kane, born Mar. 27, 1907, the son of John C. and Mary Ellen Gabler Kane, died Mar. 13. Surviving are his wife, Velva K. Kane; two brothers, Harvey and John; and four sisters, Helen McGowen, Ethel Mellott, Mary Petruska, and Lora Musser. He was a member of the Air Hill Brethren in Christ Church, Chambersburg, Pa., where the funeral service was conducted by Rev. William R. Baublitz, Rev. Barton M. Starr, and

Money Matters

An interview with Harry E. Martens

*Maggie Glick is the editor of **Sharing**, the publication of Mennonite Mutual Aid. With her permission, the second (and final) installment of this article is being published in "Money Matters." Harry Martens has served the Mennonite churches in many capacities through the years, beginning at Bethel College, North Newton, Ks. Retired now, he and his wife Olga live in Elkhart, Ind. What Martens says about the Mennonites applies with equal force to the Brethren in Christ. And so, when "Mennonites" appears, just insert "Brethren in Christ." — PH*

Are Mennonites in the United States, generally speaking, rich or poor?

Harry: I have visited in homes where they've been on welfare and had good reason to be. So I think it cannot be said that we have no poor among us. But by world standards, I think we can say basically Mennonites are primed to take care of themselves.

I think there is something ingrained in Mennonites to want to give the best they have, and normally that's productive and brings good returns.

So the qualities of thrift and hard work "prove out"?

Harry: Also the feeling of responsibility. We're ashamed to ask help of anyone. I recall the Mennonites of Mexico some years ago. Many of their animals had died in the drought, so

they traded their last chickens—one at a time—for a little flour to bake bread. As a last resort they came to our Mennonite Central Committee station. And then they passed by for several days before they came in, and then very, very cautiously.

There's something in Mennonite people that makes them shy away from outright assistance.

Is this a cultural pattern, based on Scripture?

Harry: Basically, yes. However, like anything else, a perfectly good principle can go off on a tangent and be overdone. Then we lose some of the sensitivities of life because we feel everything we do has to have a utilitarian value.

Are you saying most traditional Mennonites have a built-in drive which is moving us from the frontier ethic to an upper-middle-class lifestyle? And that unless we redirect our energy or our money—or both—we soon will reach a collision course?

Harry: Not about to happen, it is happening! The direction is clear. It behooves us to do all we can to redirect our course. However, we can't do it by condemning the people who may have made mistakes and veered too far off line. Let's invite them to become partners in the mission of the church.

Earlier you said one of our hangups is reluctance to talk about money. How do we begin the conversation?

Harry: Our discussions about money already are considerably freer than they were only a few years ago. Part of this

The

Rev. Roger N. Witter. Interment was in the Air Hill cemetery.

Lenhart: Paul G. Lenhart, M.D., formerly of Arcanum, Ohio, died at age 84 on Nov. 25, 1987. He was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Berger Lenhart, two brothers, and three sisters. Surviving are four children, Galen, Esther M., Lucy Brubaker, and Samuel; a grandson; a sister, Mary Eshelman; and a brother, Benjamin. Paul served with dedication in many offices in the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church, Englewood, Ohio, and served selflessly on the Brethren in Christ Board of Missions for 23 years. He was a friend and benefactor of Messiah College, serving on its Board of Trustees for 32 years. Funeral services were held at the Fairview Church with Rev. Sam Hollingsworth and Rev. Henry Hostetter officiating. Interment was in Fairview cemetery.

Martin: Paul R. Martin, 85, born Sept. 23, 1902, died Feb. 25. He is survived by two daughters,

Ruth Lockbaum and Ethel Hykes; a son, John A.; 5 brothers; 9 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. Paul was a member of the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church. The funeral service was held at the Antrim Mennonite Church with Rev. Roy Hawbaker and Rev. Joe Baer officiating. Interment was in the adjoining cemetery.

McCoy: Richard McCoy, born Mar. 2, 1949, died Feb. 9. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond McCoy, Selinsgrove, Pa., who survive. Also surviving are his wife, Deborah, Harrisburg, Pa.; two sons, Joshua and Nathan, both at home; and a sister. He was a member of the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church. Services were held at the Neill Funeral Home in Camp Hill, Pa., with Dr. Robert Ives, and Rev. Paul Hostetler officiating. Interment was in the Grantham Memorial Park.

Moore: Glen Moore, Englewood, Ohio, was born Nov. 19, 1938, died Jan. 4. He was a member

of the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church. He is survived by his wife, Janet; a son, Michael; a daughter, Teresa Taylor; one grandchild; one brother; and seven sisters. Rev. Sam Hollingsworth and Rev. Luann Zercher conducted funeral services at the Fairview Church. Interment was in Polk Grove Cemetery.

Wolfgang: Charles O. Wolfgang, born July 8, 1909, died Feb. 6. He is survived by his wife, Ruthe; 2 sons, Lowell and Charles J.; 4 daughters, Lorraine Coleman, Nina Shaw, Nancy Mallory, and Sue Roberts; a brother; 2 sisters; 22 grandchildren; and 17 great-grandchildren. He was an attender of the Bethel Brethren in Christ Church, Merrill, Mich., and a member of the Wesleyan Holiness Church, St. Louis, Mich., where services were held with Rev. Earl Newton, Rev. Bedsaul Agee, Rev. Robert Fleming, and Rev. Bruce Brown officiating. Interment was in Ridgelawn Cemetery, Breckenridge, Mich. ■

Money Test (Part Two)

by Maggie Glick

may be because of what the youth of the 1960s promoted: living without property. At least it brought some of us back to looking at the Christian use of money.

Honest confrontation is best, perhaps person to person. But we need to hear it from the pulpit, too.

Do our ministers actually preach about money? Or is that why you have talked from coast to coast on the subject?

Harry: It varies. One pastor will tell me, "I'm glad you're here. You can say it as an outsider." Another will say, "I preach it, but they don't listen."

At one church where I was to speak, the minister and I were in the lobby after most of the people were inside. He was still pacing when the singing started. So the next time he came by, I asked him what the trouble might be. He said, "Well, Harry, you know you get a bit excited on most any subject. Just remember, our people are sensitive about money."

His congregation wasn't so unusual, was it? Let's assume a person has overcome reluctance to talk about money, and now is aware of the importance of good money management for the Christian. What next?

Harry: Then he needs a formula. He needs to look at his total income and, by percentages, decide what is reasonable for living, for retirement, for tax, and for the church.

The first time he does this, it will be one formula. But in a year or two—maybe earlier—he will want to review it and see if it still is a responsible plan. He needs this model to evaluate by.

It's amazing what can happen. I've heard dozens of people testify that when they once put it all down on paper and began working with a plan, changed it a number of times, how surprised they were at how much they could give to the work of the church.

I'll vouch for the value of getting a budget on paper. It's liberating. Why don't more of us discover this?

Harry: This is where group sharing can help. If the importance of good money management, for the sake of the work of the Kingdom, is determined first, then they know why management is essential. When you hear what others in a similar situation are doing, it makes you aware of the responsibilities and possibilities.

Will you sum up your philosophy of money for us?

Harry: First, remember it all belongs to our Lord. Keep that vertical relationship solid and clear.

Second, use money to serve people, not vice versa. The more solid your vertical connection, the better you will know what to do in your horizontal relationships with regard to people and possessions.

Third, riches, as our Lord said, are a hard thing. We must be faithful in exercising our dominion over money. Misuse of money is a real threat to our church. I think it's a bigger threat than communism, more subtle.

Finally, when I appear before our Lord, I want to be able to say that I tried to be faithful in what He gave me to do, that I was obedient. When it comes to money, it's a matter of obedience.

Messiah College News

College hosts another successful sports tournament

Athletes and spectators alike kept Messiah's Grantham campus hopping while the college students were on spring break, March 11-19. The occasion, of course, was the 35th annual Brethren in Christ Sports Tournament for the Allegheny and Atlantic conferences.

"I think this was a record crowd, especially for the first weekend," tournament director Dean Lehman (Mechanics-

burg congregation) noted. Lehman was again assisted by Grantham Church members Fred Barr and Dewey Hartstock in running the men's basketball, women's volleyball, doubles ping-pong, and bowling.

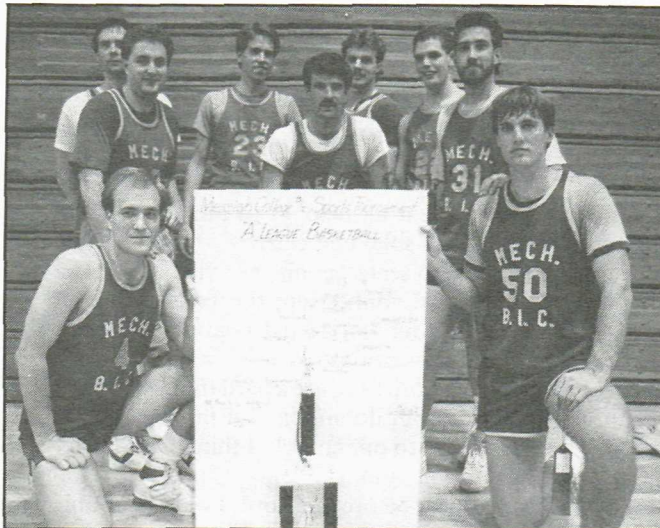
Although not everyone experienced the "thrill of victory" (some did well just to lace up the dusty sneakers), winning teams are pictured on this page. Congratulations!



A League Volleyball winners—Chambersburg, which swept Manor in the finals. Kneeling from left, Patti Reath, Lisa Rife, Linda Martin; standing from left, Anna Mae Burkholder, Marlene Crider, Nancy Black.



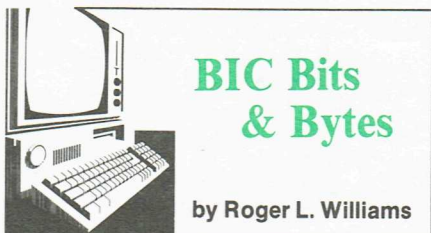
B League Volleyball winners—Grantham, which swept Mount Rock in the finals. Front from left, Mindi Brubaker, Faithe Spurrier, Cheri Stern; second row from left, Coach Brent Wolgemuth, Lisa Brubaker, Cindi Lehman, Mary Bixler, Sue Felix.



A League Basketball winners—Mechanicsburg, 98-84 winners over Manor. Kneeling from left, Roger Knepper, Dave Barnett; standing from left, Lyle Herr, Mike Miller, Phil Simmons, Andy Mull, Lonnie Shover, Layne Lebo, Kurt Sherk.



B League Basketball winners—Green Springs, 62-56 winners over Carlisle. Kneeling from left, Dan Coy, Wilber Coy; standing from left, Randy Hock, Pete Coy, Lee Stum, Jack Lehman, Doug Weaver.



BIC Bits & Bytes

by Roger L. Williams

No one can deny the impact computers have had on our secular lives. They have affected the way we bank, play, work, relate to others, etc. Like most technology, not all that is new is nice.

The computer is growing in its utility within the Brethren in Christ Church. The February issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* featured a number of articles on computers and their growing relationship to the denomination. Indeed, things are moving.

In February, the Board of Administration established a committee of four to study the matter of Brethren in Christ computerization. Serving on the committee are: R. Donald Shafer, General Secretary (P.O. Box 245, Upland, CA 91785); Harold Chubb, General Treasurer (P.O. Box 450, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055); Barry DeRoos, a member of the Messiah College faculty working in the area of computers (Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027); and Roger Williams, Executive Director of the Board for Media Ministries (address below).

This committee has the challenge of making recommendations concerning computer policy within the denomination. If you have ideas concerning either congregational or administrative computer use within the Brethren in Christ Church, please contact one of the committee members.

To increase awareness of church-related computerization, the Board for Media Ministries has already started to work more closely with other agencies in gathering and disseminating computer information. We presently have a copy of *The Christian Computer User's Sourcebook—A Complete Vendor List*. This resource lists vendors in several different categories according to their product:

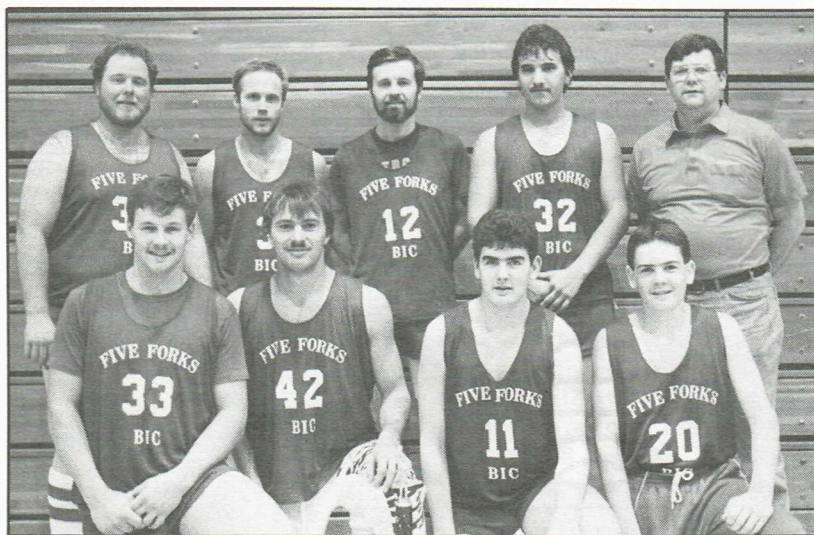
- Telecommunications and unclassified software (9 listings)
- Church management software (142 listings)
- Non-profit ministry software (4 listings)
- Consultants/services (11 listings)
- Christian data processing supply houses (11 listings)
- Christian educational software (104 listings)
- Christian computer groups/newsletters (23 listings)

If you are investigating computer use, then this vendor list information might

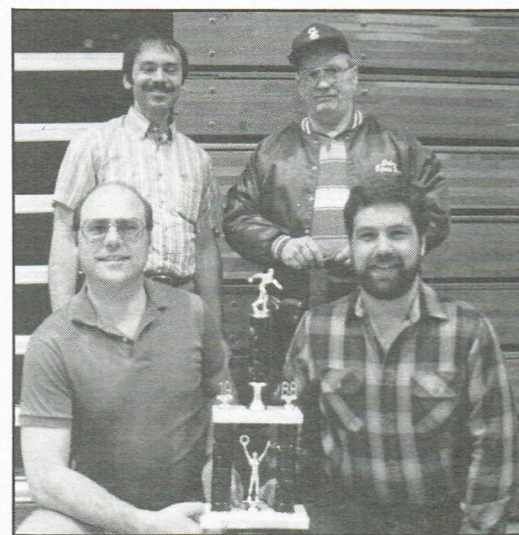
be very helpful in selecting the "proper" software for your application. Call or write the Board for Media Ministries, Box 189, Nappanee, IN 46550. Our telephone number is (219) 773-3164. The *Vendor List* is updated and published by the Christian Computer Users Association (CCUA) of Grand Rapids, Mich. They have given the Board for Media Ministries permission to dispense this information from their publication. For those interested in purchasing the full publication, the price is \$25. The CCUA also publishes a thought-provoking newsletter entitled *Christian Computer News*. It costs \$20 per year.

At this point, the *Evangelical Visitor* will be the prime source of computer information disseminated by the Board for Media Ministries. We hope to keep you informed of developments as they relate to the Brethren in Christ Church. If you have computer information that you think should be "spread around," please send it to the editor for consideration.

Editor's note: In the February issue, we indicated that the editorial department uses Leading Edge (IBM compatible) computers and the Word Perfect 4.2 word processing program. We did not, however, specify the size of floppy disks we can accept: 5 1/4 inch. Sure enough, within a week or two, we received some correspondence submitted on a computer disk—a 3 1/2 inch disk, which none of our computers can accept! ■



C League Basketball winners—Five Forks, which defeated Roseglen. Kneeling from left, Doug Gray, Terry Egolf, Brad Gift, Toby Gift; standing from left, Kirk Besecker, Dave Tiedemann, Eric Reitz, John Kell, Coach Dennis Gift.



Winning bowlers from Green Spring, sitting from left, Ray Brubaker, Mark Potteiger; standing from left, Robert Lehman, Calvin Thompson. Potteiger logged a tournament-high 231, leading his team past second-place Mechanicsburg.

“I thought the Mennonite church was only Honduras.

I didn't realize it was
a great family,
a great community.”

Adalid Romero, Honduras



Some people perceive Mennonite World Conference as a planner of big meetings. They are not aware of the larger MWC vision.

Mennonite World Conference today is assemblies. But it is also an ongoing venture in faith and mission. Today, ninety-three church bodies in 50 nations are members and appoint delegates to MWC's General Council.

MWC: Fellowship, Communication and Facilitation

Fraternal visits...Mission consultations...General Council meetings...

Mennonite World Fellowship Sunday... International Mennonite Peace Committee...

Mennonite World Handbook... International Songbook... News service... Courier/Correo magazines.

All have been sponsored by Mennonite World Conference to increase unity and understanding and to provide a strong Anabaptist witness in the world.

As Adalid Romero noted after the MWC General Council meeting in Paraguay last summer, the church extends beyond national boundaries.

And MWC continues to strive to build a worldwide network of mutual concern among Mennonites, Brethren in Christ and related churches.

MWC: Assembly 12

Assembly 12 will be held on July 24-29, 1990, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

The theme for this event is “Witnessing to Christ in Today's World.”

There are several ways that you can become involved, right now, in the program of MWC:

1. Plan now to use the Faith and Life study book in your congregation in 1989. This six-lesson

study based on the theme will assist in preparing for Assembly 12. Churches all over the world will be doing the same.

2. Sponsor an international delegate to Assembly 12 and to your congregation. This is a unique opportunity for Canadian Mennonites to share in making this a truly international event. MWC will send Travel Fund information in September 1988.

3. Support your conference as it supports MWC. MWC's continuing program is financed by conferences through their budgets and contributions.

For more information please contact:

Canadian Office:
Mennonite World Conference
405-326 Broadway Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0S5
Telephone 204-947-9188

International Office:
Mennonite World Conference
465 Gundersen Drive, Suite 200
Carol Stream, Illinois 60188
Telephone 312-690-9666



1990 Winnipeg

Onesimus

Onesimus, a slave to Jesus Christ, called to serve the gospel; to Paul, my advisor and friend in the grace of God. Peace to you, my brother and may every spiritual blessing be yours!

It is the subject of spiritual blessings that causes me to write to you at this time. Perhaps I can be more specific, for our spiritual blessings are vast and limitless in Christ Jesus our Lord. My questions to you today center around dreams, which I understand to be one way to understand more fully the blessings we have in Christ.

Dreams have guided faithful people in their service to God's mission for as long as we have record. In Matthew's account of our Lord's birth, dreams play an essential role in the events of that miraculous time. Joseph and the Magi understand their dreams as special messages from God (Matt. 1:20-25; 2:12). In the ancient stories I remember Gideon hearing a man telling of his dream; Gideon worshiped God as a result and then led Israel to victory (Judg. 7:15). The stories of Abraham and Joseph have dreams as significant indicators of God's will. This list goes on and on, Paul. You told of a vision that came to you in the night, calling you to Macedonia (Acts 16:9). So my question is this: where are the dreamers in our churches today?

I see in the churches in my region a

strong scepticism concerning dreams and their value. Science and technology in these days are higher values than spiritual wisdom. Some splinter groups in the churches may actually speak about their dreams, but for the most part this subject is left to non-believers in fields of secular psychology. But we *all* dream. Shouldn't we pay attention to this? What should I say to my people about dreams?

To be honest with you Paul, I am a little afraid to bring up the subject in many circles. Even though the evidence is overwhelming in the Scripture, Christians today are not interested in such spiritual matters. They want facts and tangibles. They want to be taught about principles and theologies. They want slogans that inspire them. They call the introspection that comes with dream interpretation, "spacey" or, at best, "not for me." Why are we closing off an avenue to understanding God's will that is so often written about in the Scripture? How do I address those who claim that such things are too "other worldly" for them? Some even claim that such things scare away non-believers who would otherwise consider conversion. What are we trying to convert them to, if not a revelation of God's miraculous intervention in our lives? They want the stuff that is "practical." But what could be more practical than a picture from God of what *he* wants?

Paul, I fear we are cutting ourselves off from the movement of the Spirit in these subtle ways. We avoid seeing our lack of spiritual discernment and direction by busying our minds with the "business" of the church: meetings and lectures, discussing endlessly how to build a new building, or how to decorate the one we've got. We wonder why one brother has missed our worship times for several weeks. But we neglect the work of getting next to him to find out why and to offer love—someone else should do that! I wonder if a dreamer or two in our congregations wouldn't shake us and wake us up! Knowing Jesus Christ is a journey during which we come to know ourselves also. Dreams reveal much from the depths of ourselves. We must not let our fear of deeply spiritual things go unchallenged. Send me your counsel on this matter soon, my brother. I await it with much

eagerness and thank God for the grace he reveals through you.

—Onesimus

*Learn all you can
about writing . . .*



Mennonite writers' conference

Sept. 23-25, 1988
Laurelville Mennonite
Church Center
Mt. Pleasant, PA

- Draw strength from other writers
- Improve the quality of writing available to the publications and ministries of the Mennonite community
- Whether you write for a newsletter or a newspaper, for pay or for pleasure, for church or community, poetry or prose, sermons or prayers, you will find here much that applies to what you have been doing and what you want to do
- Open to all

CPS Reunion

A Camp Landon/Gulfport reunion is being planned for Aug. 5-6, 1988, at the Bethel College Student Center, North Newton, KS. All persons connected with the Camp Bernard or Camp Landon experience are invited to attend. For further information, contact one of the following planning committee members:

Orlo Kauffman, P.O. Box 33,
Moundridge, KS 67107 Phone (316)
345-2764;

Harold Regier, 1404 Axtell Rd.,
Newton, KS 67114 Phone (316)
283-7991;

Willard Ebersole, 1332 N. Market,
Wichita, KS 67214 Phone (316)
267-6842.

Mennonite Writers' Conference
616 Walnut Ave.
Scottsdale, PA 15683

- I'm interested. Send me a brochure.
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Phoebe's Journal

On being a parent: what they need and what I want

Recently, I read Josh McDowell's book, *Teens Speak Out: What I Wish My Parents Knew About My Sexuality* (Here's Life Publishers, 1987). The book is the result of his research among mostly Christian teenagers and consists primarily of excerpts from teens' essays about their sexuality and their relationships with their parents. For me, as the parent of two children, it's frightening and yet helpful stuff.

In addition to some rather startling statistics about the level of pre-marital sexual activity, even among evangelical Christian young people, the book contains many comments by teens on what they want most from their parents. A recurring theme seems to be the desire to be loved, listened to, and trusted. McDowell says: "Our kids are saying, 'I want to be loved and accepted totally apart from what I do.' The fear of having to perform to be accepted dominates the thought life of most teens. All of us are driven to be accepted and loved. When we discover a conditionless love and acceptance with our parents, we are set free from trying to earn a dominating, emotionally draining, performance-based love" (p. 77). Obviously, that has implications for teenage sexual behavior, but the principle is not limited to that.

I can't help wondering whether my children feel that kind of acceptance and unconditional love from me. To find out, sometimes I've asked Beth whether she worries that if she doesn't make

good grades, for example, we'll love her less. She assures me that she doesn't worry about that; in fact, she apparently can't imagine a parent attaching that kind of condition to love and acceptance.

Recently, however, we've been having discussions about her progress in school. I tell her that I expect her to do her best (which in her case means doing very well); I expect excellence rather than mediocrity (too many people settle for mediocrity these days). She tells me that she's tired of the constant effort it takes to do her best; she wants to be allowed to make mistakes, to goof off sometimes. "Besides, Mom," she says "it's not like I'm flunking; I'll still get a B and that's good." "But," I counter, "that's the kind of attitude that leads to more slacking off. Next you'll be saying, 'I'll still get a C, and that's average.'" The fact that we each have some truth on our side inevitably makes the "discussions" rather circular!

Having lived with a strong streak of perfectionism which often means that I set unreasonably high standards for myself, I work hard at letting myself off the hook when I make mistakes. I want to do the same for my children. At the same time, however, there's something to be said for the high quality of work that results from people who don't like to make mistakes, who are always driving themselves to do better. So I am constantly walking that fine line between expecting the best from myself and my children and being content when perfection isn't achieved. I try very hard not to measure either my own worth as a person or the worth of my children by performance.

Right after I read McDowell's book,

Beth and I argued about a science test. She had carelessly (I thought) forgotten to bring her book home to study, and I accused her of being irresponsible and willing to settle for less than best. As I thought about it later, I realized that I was in danger of basing my approval of her on performance, that she's old enough to take responsibility for her own assignments and if she slips up and fails occasionally, it's not the end of the world. So I apologized for giving her such a hard time, assuring her that her worth and my love for her don't depend on a good grade on a science test. She gratefully accepted my apology, obviously feeling vindicated by my admission of wrong. Still walking that fine line, however, I also reminded her of the value of being responsible, having high standards, and striving for excellence.

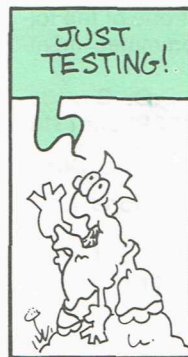
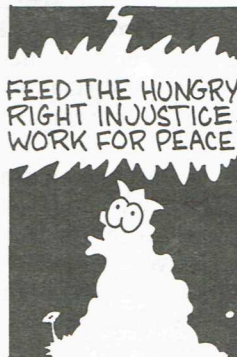
For me one of the most difficult tasks of parenting is communicating the values I want my children to adopt and yet recognizing that they are individuals with the freedom to choose their own values. If they choose values and behaviors of which I disapprove, I can continue to tell them what I think and believe, but in a way that communicates to them that they are nonetheless people worthy of my love and acceptance. And after all, isn't that precisely what God does for each of *his* children?

Phoebe

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

Pontius' Puddle

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



© Joel Kauffmann

One of the more welcomed items in the news recently was the March cease-fire agreement between the Sandinista government of Nicaragua and the *contra* forces. Every reader of the *Visitor* has reason to follow this story, not simply because Nicaragua is our near neighbor, but because a young, vibrant Brethren in Christ Church is located there.

Due to the time lag between completing the editorial work on the *Visitor* and its delivery to your home, it is risky to try to comment on current events. New developments occurring while the magazine is being printed and mailed may completely alter the situation. As the April 4 issue of *Newsweek* noted about Nicaragua, "The peace plan could flounder on any number of issues." But we hope that as you read this magazine in May, the cease-fire will still be in effect, and that genuine progress is being made in ending the war in Nicaragua.

The April 22 issue of *Christianity Today* carries an interview summarizing the views of five American Christians (including Vernon Jantzi, former Mennonite missionary to Costa Rica and Nicaragua) who have "informed but varying perspectives on Nicaragua." The five agreed on some issues, such as the idea that democracy, as defined by the peace plan proposed by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, is best for any country, and that Marxism is ultimately incompatible with democracy. According to the article, they also agreed that at its highest level, the Sandinista leadership seeks to establish a one-party, Marxist-Leninist state. However, they differed in their views on other topics, such as the advisability of the United States providing military support for the *contras*, and the prospects of genuine peace growing out of the present cease-fire agreement.

The article concludes with a perspective by Richard Millet, professor of History of Southern Illinois University, and senior advisor for Central American affairs to the International Peace Academy, who believes that "the truce has a 'better than 50-50 chance' of succeeding." Saying that he sees the church playing a role in monitoring Sandinista progress toward democracy, the article quotes Millet: "All policies are going to be sinfully flawed. They are enacted by sinful men, living in sinful societies, out of sinful motives. So there are no easy solutions, there is no cheap grace. . . ."

An interesting parallel exists between the truce talks involving the Sandinista government and the *contras*, and the dialogue between the Sandinistas and the Miskito Indians (reported in the April *Visitor*, pages 20-21; see also page 6 of this issue). The similarity is noted by John Paul Lederach, MCC worker who has shared in the mediation process with the Miskito Indians since the fall of 1987.

Reflecting on the recent cease-fire agreement between the Nicaraguan government and the *contras*, Lederach in a recent MCC news release said, "It's interesting to see that their negotiating format and agreement on cease-fire procedures parallels

Working and praying for peace

almost literally the formula used in the Nicaraguan government/Miskito preliminary accords."

Lederach believes the cease-fire likely will help the ongoing dialogue between the Indian resistance and the Nicaraguan government, since the atmosphere being established is that of negotiated settlements rather than escalation of fighting.

He reports that a second round of negotiations involving the Miskito Indians was held in early March, with additional discussions scheduled for late April. The reconciliation commission of which he is a member toured 20 communities along the East Coast, traveling as far south as Bluefields, and as far north as the Rio Coco along the Honduran border. Although most community meetings occurred without incident, one "lamentable incident" occurred at a public rally in Puerto Cabezas. Rocks, bricks, and sticks were thrown between the crowd who had come to hear Miskito resistance leader Brooklyn Rivera speak, and employees of several state institutions and members of the Sandinista youth party, who ardently voiced opposition to Rivera's return.

Commenting on the incident, Lederach said, "It is clear that there is a lot of reconciliation work to be done at the local and regional levels. The attitude and spirit of reconciliation found between the principal negotiating parties is not always evident at the local level, between people who have been adversaries in the past."

"Not only have I been fascinated by this process," Lederach said, "I feel we are called to be involved. . . . our pacifism and nonviolence has to move into the violent world. If we are against military solutions, we need to know what we have to offer as alternatives and how we can help them happen. If we have skills in mediation or conflict management, we should offer them."

The perspectives of *Visitor* readers no doubt are as varied as those of the five Christians interviewed by *Christianity Today*. And few of us will have opportunity to be as directly involved in the peace process as John Paul Lederach. Nevertheless, we should be informed and can be involved—if in no other way, through prayer.

Be sure to read the article "Praying for peace and justice," on pages 4-8 of this issue. We are called to pray for fellow believers in Nicaragua, especially the Brethren in Christ Church, which has been experiencing spiritual and numerical growth despite the war. Pray that the Lord will build his church, no matter what the political environment, and that Christians will be strengthened, encouraged, and sustained through difficult days.

And, no matter what our differing perspectives on Latin America, we certainly can—and should—pray that dialogue, rather than fighting, is the order of the day in Nicaragua, and that through that process a reasonable degree of freedom, peace, and justice is achieved in the region. G



Bishops' Column

Clearings in the jungle

by Owen H. Alderfer

I've had a fascination with jungles ever since I was a child. Maybe it began with the used set of the *Book of Knowledge* my parents brought me from Los Angeles to enrich our learning as grade school children. Maybe it was the *National Geographic* that came to our home monthly and carried me far away

to the jungles of Central Africa and the Amazon. The idea of hacking my way through dense undergrowth, amid all kinds of seen and unseen dangers in the Brazilian rain forest, still conjures up a host of fantasies.

The other day the picture of the jungle came crashing in again, but with a different turn. I was reading Richard Lovelace's *Renewal as a Way of Life*. Lovelace writes insightfully about the Christian conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil, describing vividly how these forces tend to entangle us in a paralyzing bondage from which we cannot escape. In contrast, he writes, "The parts of the earth where the gospel has taken firm root and the church is alive and vigorous are 'cleared spaces' in our spiritual jungle."

Lovelace's picture switched on a set of lights that helped clarify thoughts from Ephesians that I've been handling for a year or so: "Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, . . . authorities . . . powers . . . spiritual forces. . . ." In the paragraph from verse 10 to verse 18, Paul describes something of the jungle of evil that is our environment. With that he presents the means whereby we, by the power of the risen Christ, can make clearings in the jungle. He devotes only about a verse and a half to describing the jungle; he gives about seven verses to making clearings in the jungle.

Paul makes clear that it's a real jungle out there, with all kinds of destructive forces that simply swallow people up and destroy communities and nations. This is a spiritual jungle against which we must hack our way with all the resources available to us.

And there are fully adequate resources at our disposal: The Lord and his mighty power; the resurrected Christ

who rips open the jungle and makes it a clearing; the sovereign Lord who sets the boundaries of the jungle and declares an end to it in his good time.

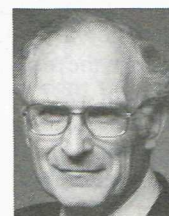
God's people are given *equipment* to penetrate the dark jungle and tame it and tear it away. Paul calls this the full armor of God—"the panoply." The equipment is available; only as we put it on and use it will there be clearings in the jungle. The verbs and participles in the section are all plural, implying in each case that "you" means everybody. Clearing the jungle calls for united action. We, God's people in God's church, move unitedly in the power of the Almighty to make and maintain the clearings in the jungle.

This paragraph (Eph. 6:10-18) outlines the *process* whereby the clearings in the jungle are made—and maintained. We begin from a fundamental position of relation to God. The relationship is prior to the host of individual wants and needs. It is essential to our success in the conflict against the forces. Twice Paul writes, "put on the full armor. . . ." Here the equipment is on and the task is joined and clearings are made in the jungle of evil.

I've wondered what's gone wrong in the churches—any of them—that gross evils are happening. I've got a suspicion that the jungle is creeping back into the clearing. As Lovelace wrote, "where the church is alive and vigorous are 'cleared spaces' in our spiritual jungle.' "

Seventh Annual Heritage Service
 at the historic
Ringgold Meeting House
 Ringgold, Maryland
June 5, 1988
3:00 p.m.

A worship service similar to Brethren in Christ practice in the late 19th century, in one of the oldest buildings used by the denomination. Arthur Climenhaga will preach the sermon. Ronald Miller will lead singing. Come and share in worship, praise, and fellowship.



Owen Alderfer is bishop of the Central Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church. He and his wife Ardys live next to the Memorial Holiness Camp-ground near West Milton, Ohio.