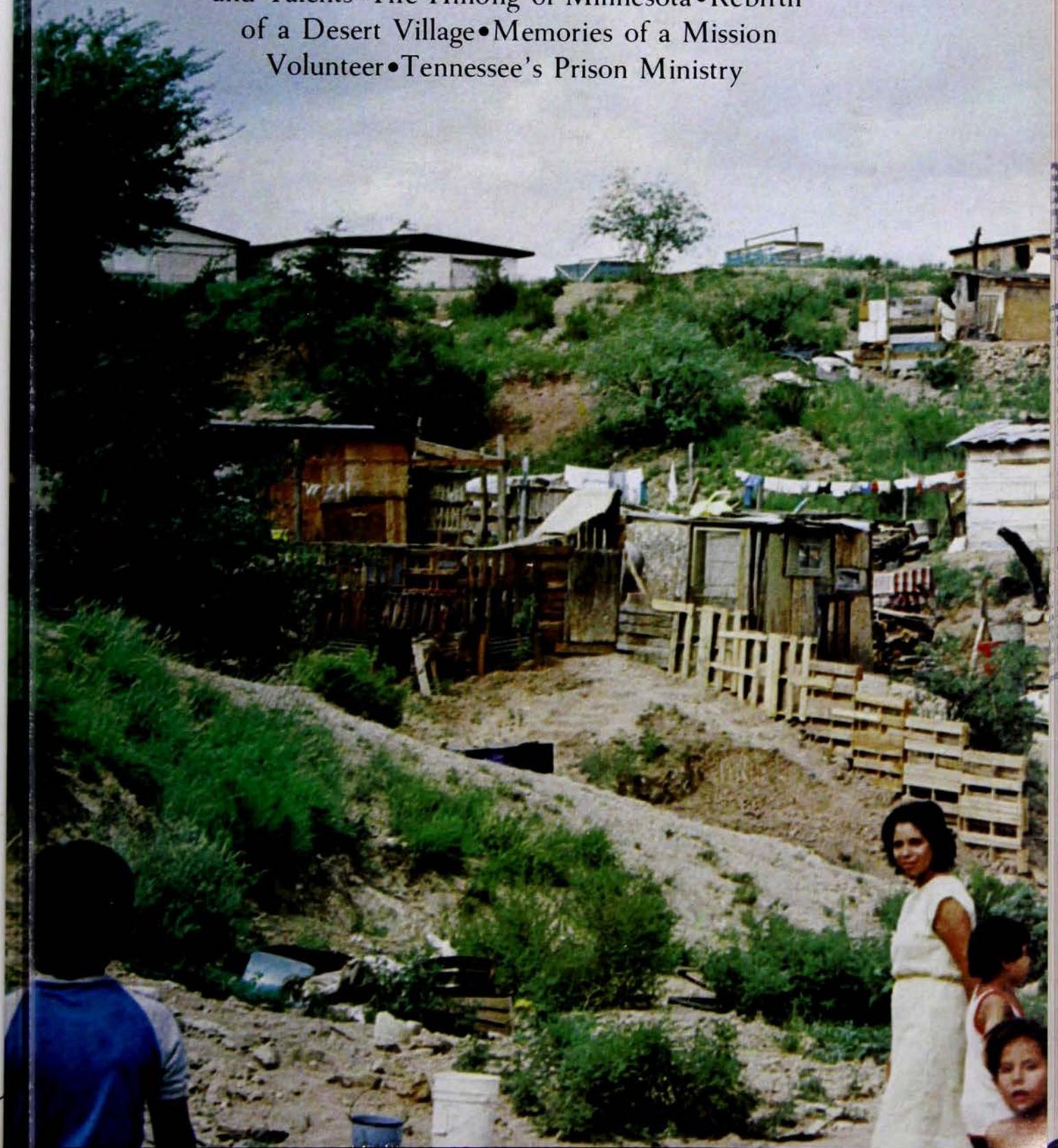


New World Outlook

THE MISSION MAGAZINE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

APRIL 1987

Working for Change
on the Mexican-American Border • Sharing Our Time
and Talents • The Hmong of Minnesota • Rebirth
of a Desert Village • Memories of a Mission
Volunteer • Tennessee's Prison Ministry





11



20



23



31

New Series Vol. XLVII No. 6
Whole Series Vol. LXXXVII No. 4
April 1987

New World Outlook

- 3 Mission Memo**
- 7 Editorials**
- 8 Working for Change on the Mexican-American Border** A community developer helps to make life more bearable.
Michael Higgins
- 14 Sharing Our Time and Talents** The need for short-term volunteers in West Africa.
Clelia and Gardner Hendrix
- 18 Rebirth of a Desert Village** Christians and Muslims work together in Senegal.
Norma Kehrberg
- 21 The Hmongs of Minnesota** Refugees make a life for themselves in the church in a strange land.
Virginia Watkins
- 24 An Interview with Edwin Taylor** The outgoing president of the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas talks to
George M. Daniels
- 28 Life on the Run: the Kanjobales of Guatemala** Caught between the army and the guerrillas, Indians flee to Florida.
Kathy Barber Hersh
- 34 Journal Notes: Memories of a Mission Volunteer** "This was not my mission, or even theirs, but God's all along."
John Cogswell
- 36 Tennessee's Prison Ministry** Church people discover the needs of inmates and their families.
M. Garlinda Burton
- 39 In My Opinion** *Thomas S. McAnally*
- 40 Books**
- 43 Healthwatch** *Charles E. Cole*
- 44 Q and A About Missions** *Donald E. Struchen*
- 46 Viewpoint** *Leontine T.C. Kelly*

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Mission Memo

April 1987

Global Gathering. Over 4,000 United Methodists gathered in Louisville, Ky., March 12-15, for a mission convocation, "Celebrating God's Mission", sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries. They heard sermons and speeches by Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, head of religious broadcasting at the BBC and former missionary Colin Morris, Louisville UM Bishop Paul A. Duffey, Venice, Cal., pastor and former missionary Linda Pickens-Jones, GBGM president Bishop James M. Ault, and panelists from the U.S. and other countries. They were led in bible study by Bishop Roy Sano, the Rev. Elizabeth Lopez Spence, and the Rev. Philip Potter. They participated in a communion service, a service of reaffirmation of baptismal vows using water from 15 countries, and a commissioning service at which 36 missionaries were commissioned or recognized. They heard the Board's new Theology of Mission Statement presented by members of the task force which developed it. They were entertained by the Berea College Dancers and Black Ensemble and by The Montana Logging and Ballet Company. They visited a global village, featuring 25 exhibits highlighting the church's mission involvement around the world and singers and dancers from a variety of cultural backgrounds. They attended a Youth Coffeehouse in the evenings. They saw displayed banners and posters entered in the "New World Outlook" contest on the Convocation theme.

GBGM. A proposal for a new "programmatic structure" to highlight evangelistic mission was adopted at the Spring meeting of the General Board of Global Ministries in Louisville, Ky., March 9-12. The proposal came from six persons who represent the Board in a continuing dialogue with the unofficial Mission Society for United Methodists, but it was stressed that the proposal did not come from anyone but the GBGM group. The Board's Research and Development Committee will present a detailed proposal at its annual meeting in October, together with a timetable for implementation. Total Board income for 1986 was reported as \$107.5 million, including \$15.3 million from World Service, almost \$18 from United Methodist Women, and \$25 million from Advance Special giving. In other actions, the Board joined other religious groups calling on the U.S. Congress to investigate the Nicaraguan Contras and their supporters, asked an end to funding of the Contras, joined a campaign requesting Citibank to withdraw from South Africa until apartheid is dismantled, and supported elections in Haiti and contacts between North and South Korea. It learned that: World Division revised its budget to provide for an additional 100 missionaries by the end of 1988; three million dollars has been distributed to help colleague churches weather the world economic crisis; and \$1.2 million in Ethnic Minority Local Church grants were approved for 74 projects.

GCOM. The coordinating and evaluating agency of the United Methodist Church has asked a study team to develop a "theme" on evangelism for the 1989-92 quadrennium, which would encompass "leading people to a commitment to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, deepening the faith, building of a just world and addressing critical human needs." At its meeting in Dayton, Ohio, April 6-9, the General Council on Ministries also endorsed in principle proposals to "institutionalize" the current missional priority on the Ethnic Minority Local Church. The Council recommended the amount of \$144,500,000 for the World Service budget for 1989-92, a 19.61 increase over current askings. GCOM agreed to recommend to the 1988 General Conference that the 12-year tenure rule for agency executives include apply to lay persons as well as clergy and that counting years of service should start with 1981. The Council also decided to take a more active role in electing agency general secretaries. The Rev. Mearle L. Griffith, 43, was elected GCOM associate general secretary for research, succeeding the Rev. Paul F. McCleary.

Health and Welfare. In a statement on the AIDS crisis passed at its spring meeting in Louisville March 10-11, the Health and Welfare Ministries Program Department, GBGM, said that "the compelling need to save lives overrides reluctance to promote the use of condoms", asked public media to carry responsible condom advertising, urged government health agencies to establish standards and testing procedures for development of the "most effective and user-acceptable" condoms, and called for expanded educational programs for prevention of the disease. The Department commended U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop for his leadership. H&WM will be one of the agencies sponsoring a consultation on AIDS ministries Nov. 12-15 in the San Francisco area.

World Methodist Council Churches. Membership in the 298 church units that belong to the World Methodist Council has increased by 5.2 percent since 1981, according to statistics in the 1987-91 World Methodist Handbook. The units now count 23,816,204 members, and the global Methodist community is estimated at 54 million. Pacing the growth were churches in Africa (23 percent), while Asia, Central American-Caribbean, South and North America showed smaller gains. European churches show a loss of almost eight percent and those in the Pacific region reported a drop of 21 percent.

UM-RC Dialogue. Theology and ethics relating to living and dying was the topic for the second Roman Catholic--United Methodist dialogue in Lantana, Fla., March 5-8. Two Roman Catholic priests interpreted the Vatican's 1980 Declaration on Euthanasia and it was critiqued by a United Methodist. Two papers on Wesleyan perspectives that influence an eventual UM statement on the subject were presented. The next meeting of the three-year dialogue will be in Houston in October. Co-chairs of the discussions are UM Bishop Benjamin R. Oliphint of Houston and RC Bishop Joseph Delaney of Fort Worth.

Brazil Missionaries. 26 UM missionaries in Brazil, meeting in February, issued a statement condemning U.S. support for the Nicaraguan Contras. The statement denounced "distortion of the truth by the U.S. government" and said that "when the American people know the truth, we believe they will surely call for drastic changes in American policy." The statement also called for international arms reduction, implementation of a new and just economic order allowing Third World countries to participate in decisions about debt payments, and called attention to ecological issues.

UMDF. Loans for new church construction totaling \$6.8 million dollars were approved by the United Methodist Development Fund at a recent meeting in Long Beach, Cal. The amount represents loans to 31 churches in all five jurisdictions, ranging from \$32,000 to \$380,000, with 11 loans being for first units. The Fund also reduced the interest paid to investors to six percent, effective April 1. Churches borrowing from the Fund will be charged ten percent, although new congregations will pay nine percent for financing first facilities.

Deaths. The Rev. Emory Stevens Bucke, 73, book editor of the United Methodist Church for 20 years and former editor of Zion's Herald, died March 10 in Pheonix, Ariz.,...J. Thoburn Legg, 77, a retired World Division missionary who served in Brazil for 31 years, died Feb. 12...Charlotte King Price, a retired Women's Division missionary who served in Burma for six years, died on March 19...The Rev. Lewis F. Ransom, 76, a retired Baltimore Conference pastor, was shot and killed March 22 in an attempted robbery near University Hospital where he was visiting the sick...Ethel Roa, 86, founder of St. Paul's UM School in Tampa, Fla., died on March 18...Robert Stephens, 33, a teacher at Baruch College, New York, and a son of the president of the Methodist Church of Ghana, died suddenly on April 5....Valerian Trifa, 72, died in Portugal Jan. 28. An archbishop of the Orthodox Church in America, he was deported from the U.S., following charges that he had been responsible for the massacre of Jews in his native Romania...Nettie Thompson DeWall, 97, one of the pioneer missionaries at Red Bird Mission in Kentucky, died Dec. 31, 1986. Her late husband was the first superintendent at Red Bird...Bithia Reed Watts, 95, a retired deaconess who served in ten states, died Feb. 26...Lucy J. Webb, 91, a retired Woman's Division missionary who served in China for 29 years, died March 3.

Personalia. Harold Batiste has been reelected president of United Methodist Men for 1987-89...Kara Cole, former administrative secretary of Friends United Meeting, has joined the staff of Mercy Corps International...Bishop Ernest T. Dixon, Jr., was elected president-designate of the UM Council of Bishops for 1988. He will succeed Bishop Earl G. Hunt, Jr., who assumed office in April. Bishop Melvin G. Talbert was elected secretary-designate to succeed Bishop Paul A. Duffey, who will retire in 1988....Susan M. Eltscher will become director of women's and ethnic history for the UMC Commission on Archives and History on June 1...Paul S.H. Liao, a Taiwanese Presbyterian who serves as a UM missionary, has been named president of Taiwan Theological College. Currently academic dean, he assumes his new position Aug. 1...Basil Meeking, a staff member of the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity since 1969, has been named Roman Catholic Bishop of Christchurch, N.Z....Mercy Amba Oduyoye, an African theologian, has been named scholar-in-residence for 1987-88 by the Methodist Theological School in Ohio...Yong Suk Park, 39, a Korean journalist with more than 14 years experience writing for newspapers in the U.S. and Korea, joined the staff of UM News Service on April 1. He is working in the Washington, D.C., office with Robert Lear...Bishop Armando Rodriguez, 57, has been elected to a fifth term by the Methodist Church of Cuba...Jean Skuse, general secretary of the Australian Council of Churches, has resigned, effective at the end of the year. She will serve as executive officer of a committee preparing for the 1991 Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held in Canberra...Sonya Yvette Tolson, a junior at Wheaton (Ill.) College, will receive the first Leonard M. Perryman Communications Scholarship. The \$1,000 grant is to assist ethnic minority students planning a career in religious communications.

House Congregations. The British Methodist Home Mission Division is encouraging development of "house congregations", which will worship in homes and not own property but will be under the care of a class leader from a regular congregation. A report in the Methodist Recorder says the congregations are not meant as an "opportunity to assist disaffected Methodists to stay within Methodism" but are "predominantly a missionary exercise to enable new people to bridge the gap between being on the outside and being on the inside of a worshipping community."

UM Council of Bishops. Following its pastoral on the nuclear crisis, the UMC Council of Bishops is now moving to focus on the denomination's more than 38,000 local churches. At its semi-annual meeting March 23-27 in Arlington, Va., the Council approved the concept of a major initiative on "Vital Congregations--Faithful Disciples" but delayed until their fall meeting the release of the initiative. The outline was presented by Bishop C. Dale White, New York, and Bishop Calvin D. McConnell, Portland, Ore., chairs of the episcopal initiatives committee...In response to criticism of the continued appointment of an avowed homosexuality, the Council pointed out that a bishop is bound by annual conference board of ordained ministry recommendations and votes of the ordained members of an annual conference. "If persons are approved initially or upon annual review for ordained ministry, the bishop is obligated to appoint them."...The UM Bishops also held a joint meeting with bishops from three historically black Methodist denominations, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion and Christian Methodist Episcopal Churches. The more than 100 bishops issued a joint statement calling for integrity in public and private life and dealing with nuclear armaments, South Africa, racism, the poor and homeless, AIDS, and evangelism.

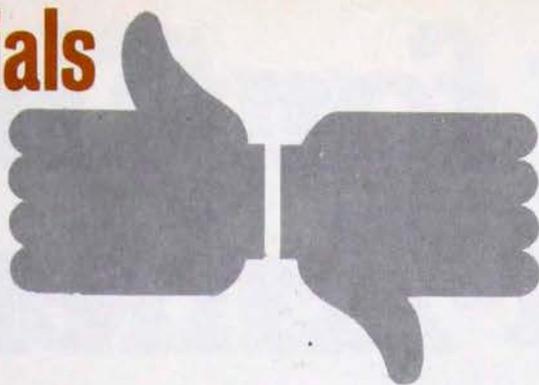
Baltimore. A proposed \$216 million sports complex threatens the structure and ministry of a 200-year-old UM shrine. Old Otterbein Church, built in 1785, is only 400 feet from two proposed new stadiums on an 85-acre site. Governor William Donald Schaefer is pushing the proposal but so far the legislature has been cool to plans for funding the project.

Hymnal. Thirteen modern hymn writers, including four UMs, have been commissioned to write hymn texts that use biblical feminine imagery for God to round out the new hymns category in the proposed UM hymnal. Editor Carlton R. Young said, however, that texts addressing "Mother God" are not tenable. "God is not addressed as 'mother' in biblical tradition, but descriptions of God as 'motherlike' can be found. These are what we lack in our hymnic tradition."

Older Adults. a UM task force formed in 1984 for a four-year study of the needs of older adults in church and society will recommend formation of a churchwide committee to coordinate ministries with and advocacy for persons 65 and older. The proposed Interagency Committee on Older Adult Ministries would oversee coordination of older adult programs and resources, support training at conference and local church levels for ministries with and by older adults, advocate against institutionalized age discrimination and negative stereotypes in church and society, and make referrals to church and other agencies on concerns of older adults. The proposal also makes specific recommendations to existing agencies.

New World Outlook. Arthur J. Moore, editor of NWO and editorial director of the Mission Resources Section, MECPD, will retire June 1. He will be 65. Joining the staff in 1954 as associate editor, he was named editor in 1964.

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SOME ADVANTAGES OF BEING A UNITED METHODIST

The United Methodist Church, like all human institutions, has its weaknesses and, lately, we've been hearing a lot about them. Everyone concerned about the denomination's loss of membership, its perceived lack of zeal for evangelism, and what some consider its lack of direction (and others see as its rapid movement in the wrong direction) are quick to point out the obvious flaws. Overorganized and muscle-bound with bureaucracy, is one complaint. Not faithful to the Wesleyan tradition, is another.

Now, both of those charges have a certain validity to them and any attempts to loosen up our tight structure and to reclaim our theological heritage can only be applauded. Still, anyone who has recently been following the varying soap opera plots involving a number of prominent television evangelists might well notice two important elements in United Methodism which should serve as safeguards against the kinds of problems now unfolding.

The first of these is organizational and involves financial accountability. Church historian Martin Marty has pointed out that the mainline denomination local congregation has "to account for every penny it has taken in. The treasurer lives next door to you. You all get to vote on the budget." In The United Methodist Church, this accountability applies at all levels of church life. General agencies of the denomination have their budgets voted by boards of directors elected throughout the church, their expenditures are audited by public accountants and their records are available for inspection. If similar controls were in effect for all television evangelists, a lot of con-

trovery could be avoided.

All of this raises the delicate question of Oral Roberts.

Mr. Roberts, it must be admitted, has a peculiar relationship to the United Methodist Church. He is, technically, a local elder related to the Boston Avenue UMC in Tulsa and was ordained a minister of the Pentecostal Holiness Church. He is an ordained minister and a UM, but not a UMC minister. None of his enterprises—the television ministry, Oral Roberts University or the City of Hope Hospital is related to the United Methodist Church. This is perhaps just as well; think of what would happen to a UM pastor who accepted nearly two million dollars from the owner of dog racing tracks.

The second, and more basic, check on UMC pastors which does not apply to well-known television evangelists is theological. Whether it is the notion of utter depravity and the disparagement of other Christians (and Jews) that marks Jimmy Swaggart's approach or the optimism that God gives you the good life in a material sense that characterizes Jim and Tammy Bakker as well as Oral Roberts, neither finds support in the Wesleyan tradition. Against the emphasis on total depravity, we place the Wesleyan emphasis on prevenient grace, the knowledge (as Bishop Paul Duffey put it at the Global Gathering in Louisville) that "there are persons here and there and everywhere who are touched by the leading of the Holy Spirit." Against those who believe that God wants them to have the lifestyle of the rich and famous, we quote the General Rules of the Methodist Church which forbid "doing what we know is not for the glory of God, as the putting on of gold or costly apparel" and "laying

up treasures upon earth."

That latter admonition might cause most of us trouble; it certainly provides no rationale for owners of mansions and Rolls-Royces.

The point of all of this is not to say that we are superior as persons. We are all sinners; all subject to the same temptations. That is why traditions and rules emerge—to teach us and enable us to live within social structures. It's something to remember the next time you want to grumble about your church.

ISRAEL: NORMALIZING ITS LINKS TO AFRICA

None of the Africa or Middle East watchers we know are willing to predict just how far Israel will go in reestablishing diplomatic and economic ties with the majority of Black (Subsaharan) African countries that broke with it 15 years ago over the Middle East war.

But even the most cautious observer of events in Africa and the Middle East should be willing to admit that Israel's recent decision to ban new military sales contracts with South Africa and generally to reduce ties with Pretoria is a reasonable and long overdue decision. However, we must all wait to see exactly what the decision means — just how far it will go towards helping to dismantle apartheid, and how far it will go towards helping to establish a just political system in a land where injustice has prevailed for so long.

Some people see the Israeli action as only a smoke screen to blunt formidable pressure from the United States Congress, American Jews and Blacks who criticize Israel for not moving more into line with Western sanctions against the South African government. Others hail it as a milestone which signals that Israel's relations with South Africa will never be the same.

The Israeli action has a unique chance to advance its cause in Black Africa and the world if it would expand the scope of its action by joining other Western countries in providing substantial aid to the nine Black African countries whose economies are at the mercy of South Africa.

Working for Change Mexican-American

by Michael Higgins A community developer faces one of United Methodism's more pressing challenges: to make life more bearable for some of Mexico's impoverished people.

The current economic plight of the U.S. southern neighbor, Mexico, is a grim one: a national debt nearing \$100 billion; an inflation rate spiraling towards 100 percent; hardcore unemployment estimated at 15-18 percent; underemployment of 40-50 percent of the work force, and a greatly devalued peso.

Francisco Castillo, a community developer for the United Methodist Church in Nogales, Arizona, does not need a daily paper or a dinner newscast to tell him what's going on across the border. He deals with it on a daily basis.

From his small office in El Mesias ("The Messiah") United Methodist Church, a few hundred yards from the busy border crossing that separates the two cities of Nogales, one

in the U.S. and one in Mexico, Castillo sees undocumented workers jumping over the short fence keeping them from what they regard as the Land of Opportunity. Chases often ensue when the Border Patrol appears.

A naturalized U.S. citizen, Castillo is in the forefront of one of United Methodism's more pressing challenges: its Southwest Border Committee's effort to make life more bearable for some of Mexico's impoverished people.

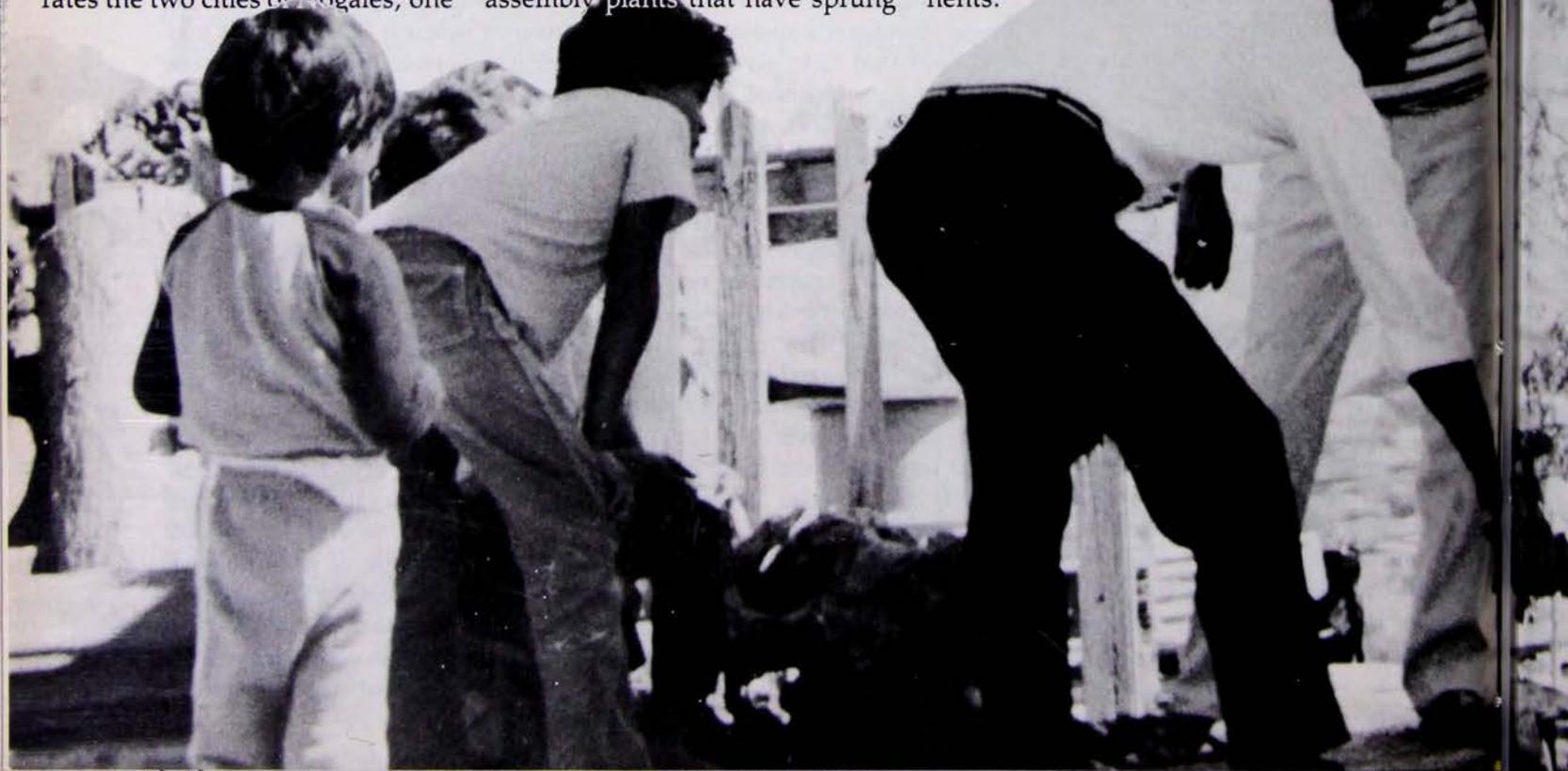
The 36-year-old father of four is all too familiar with the conditions he is now working to ameliorate. He grew up in the crowded border city of Mexicali, and was employed as a supervisor at one of the many assembly plants that have sprung

up in the border cities to take advantage of the low wages generally paid to Mexicans.

The assertive but respected community developer views his mission in straightforward terms. "As a Christian and as a Mexican, I now have the opportunity to help other Mexicans."

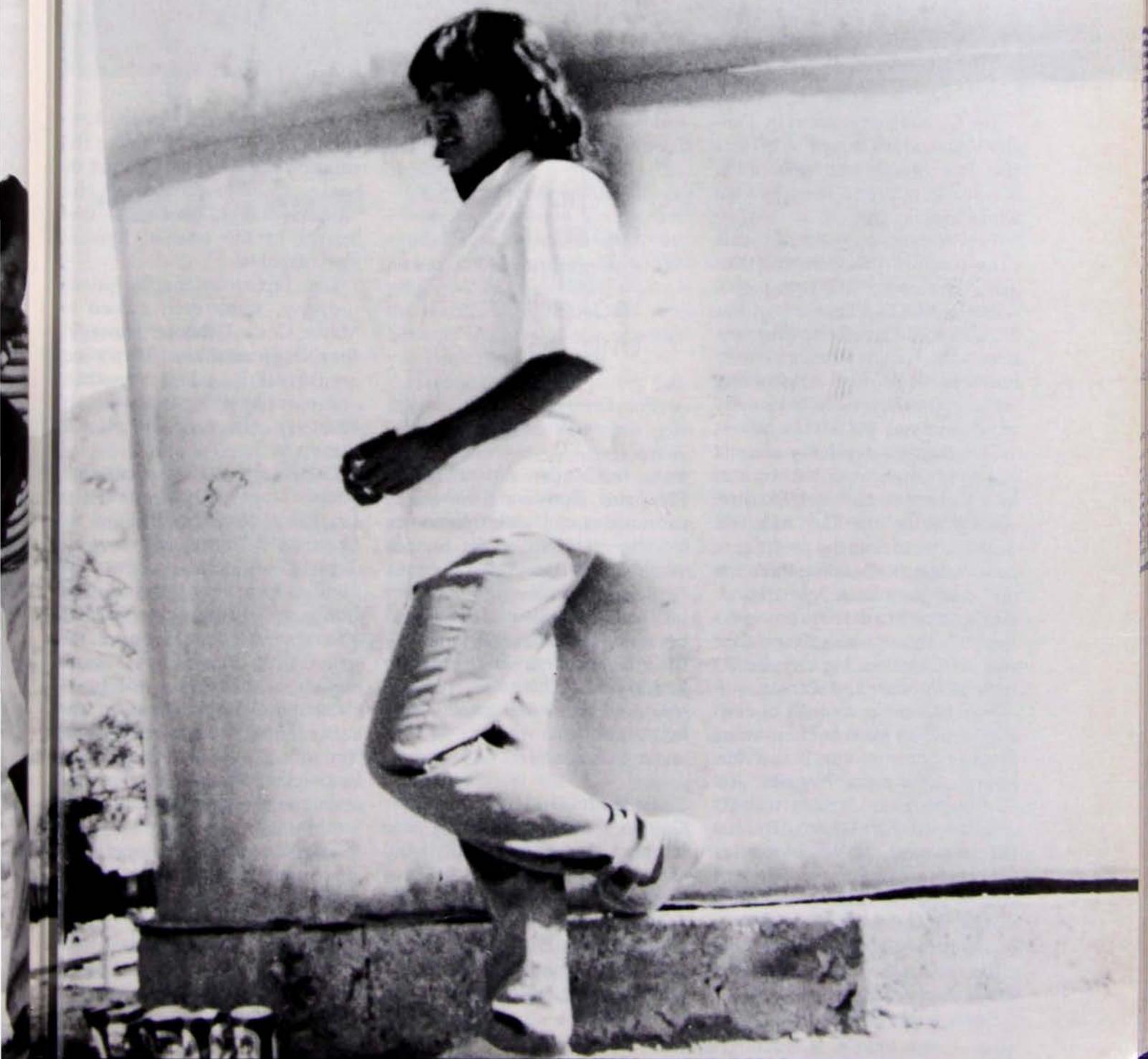
The Two Nogales

Located 65 miles south of Tucson, Nogales, Sonora, was the site of a 1976 summit meeting between U.S. and Mexican presidents Ford and Echeverria. Today it is the site for 20 or so American firms which cut costs on the making of electronic components.



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PHOTOGRAPH BY [unreadable]



Many U.S. companies have assembly plants on the Mexican side of the border.

The Sonoran city, taken by Pancho Villa and his troops in 1914, is also known for arts and crafts, leather goods and inexpensive wines and liquor.

The economic center of Santa Cruz County, the American Nogales has about 100,000 people while its Mexican counterpart has 200,000. Little animosity exists between the two populations. They function more like neighboring wings of the same extended family, which in many cases they are.

The Arizona residents are not fearful of undocumented workers taking over their jobs because employers on the U.S. side are usually able to note the presence of new residents. Besides, there are not enough jobs to go around. Undocumented workers pass stealthily through Nogales on their way to preferred big city locales such as Phoenix and Tucson.

Ford Motor Co. recently opened a \$500 million plant in Hermosillo, another Sonoran city just a few hours' drive from Nogales. Yet 80,000 workers and students staged a strike in Mexico City, last fall, to protest the lack of jobs.

Hundreds of thousands of young women work for minimum wages approaching \$3 a day in booming industrial parks in border cities such as Juarez, Tijuana, Mexicali and Nogales.

Such a profitable outgrowth

"What they make in one day there, we make here in one hour."

along the border, not unlike the Philippine, Korean and Taiwanese subsidiaries of U.S. corporations, led the president of the Sunbelt World Trade Association, John D. Barfield, to proclaim: "With any luck at all, you should see this area becoming the major area for industrial development in this whole hemisphere." This golden promise makes it even harder for the many border residents who lack food or water each day.

Squatters in Tin Huts

Castillo spends a lot of his time bringing donations of food and clothes to the residents of "Los Tapitos," the makeshift home for 5,000 or so "invasores" (invaders), as the squatters who live in cardboard or tin huts on a hill on the outskirts of the Mexican Nogales are labelled.

There's no daycare of any kind, so visitors will quickly notice that children of all ages run around the camp. Castillo points out that working parents often leave their infants in the care of five- or six-year-olds.

Los Tapitos is mainly private property, some even owned by Mayor Cesar Dabdow. However, the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (P.R.I.) does not want to start a riot by trying to remove the squatters. Also it has no place to put them.

Castillo makes brief social-worker-like stops with a number of families, before heading to the tin-covered "office" of one of Los Tapitos' unelected leaders. The families have told Castillo of the intricacies of local water politics, about how the water from a 2,500-gallon tank, donated by a Phoenix church, is not being shared by those managing the tank. As with many Mexican problems, it has become a point of contention among the various political parties, with one claiming the tank for its supporters.

The community developer calmly reminds the families that the party had nothing to do with acquiring the tank; party initials marking the tank would have to be removed, and the pecking order for families wanting to draw water would have to end.

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(L) Francisco Castillo, a UMC community developer, in Nogales, Az. (R) A stairway of rubber tires serves a squatters camp in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.

Trust and Self-Help

Los Tapitos' residents trust Castillo. They feel that he is one of them, even though his world stretches beyond their camp. Castillo does not bark out commands. He speaks softly and tries to elicit the opinions of the shy residents.

Camp leader Miguel Vecerra, a former government worker, spends his days in a conveniently located clubhouse. Nothing goes on in Los Tapitos that Vecerra is not aware of. The camp's only source of electricity, a generator hooked to a truck, helps propel activities at the clubhouse. Kids are taught on a casual basis there, a necessity since most of Los Tapitos' children cannot attend organized schools. Welding and mechanics are taught to teenaged boys and some men in their 20s. Girls learn hairstyling. A class in diesel mechanics is planned for the future. Castillo, a former diesel expert with International Harvester in El Centro, California, will teach it.

Today, talk of the new tank dominates the friendly conversa-

tion between Castillo and Vecerra. Vecerra acknowledges that the water rationing is a hateful policy, and he tells Castillo that the tank's caretaker is a "strong man" who lives a few yards from the tank. Just a few weeks earlier, the tank had been installed by Castillo and resident volunteers at a well-attended session.

Vecerra believes that among the numerous problems Los Tapitos' residents face—scarce food, few jobs and no electricity—the continuing paucity of available water is the worst. "No question it's number one," he says, "without water, you can't drink or wash."

Having touched all bases, Castillo, who serves the community as a referee, reporter and minister in his community developer position, now makes his way to the "strong man's" residence. As they talk, alternating their hands upon the tank to punctuate their points, it becomes clear that this Mexican "High Noon" scene will not deteriorate into a yelling match. The conversation is not friendly like the one with Vecerra, but diplomatic.

The man tells Castillo that he was unaware of what was going on. He would make sure that nothing like that happened again. Castillo praises the man, saying that he is the only one strong enough to do it. The women and children thank him.

Castillo is one of Indigenous Community Developers, men and women who answer to both their local church officials and a special board of directors who oversee their activities. One of the goals of the Southwest Border Committee



is to improve Mexican "self-empowerment," and Castillo has helped to do this by introducing half a dozen grassroots programs on the other side of the border.

In addition to his Los Tapitos' concerns, Castillo is currently getting a free dental clinic started on the Nogales, Sonora, crowded main street, Avenida de Obregon. He meets regularly with factory workers in an attempt to improve their bargaining and working positions; runs a youth program on both sides of the border; and even directs a children's church choir.

An "Experience With Christ"

A Baptist Church worker, Juan Guevara, a veteran of five years of missionary work in Central Mexico, marvels at Castillo's boundless energy. "He really likes what he's doing," Guevara says. "He always has several projects on his mind."

What Castillo's wife, Cecilia, describes as "an experience with Christ" that Francisco had five years ago, and what others might call a devastating occupational injury, seems to be intricately tied in with the community developer's enthusiastic acceptance of his new profession. It happened when a diesel part blew out, and, as a result, Castillo lost his left eye. He was no longer able to work at his



old job that paid so well. It then became time to redirect his energies, and a Bible institute in Tecate, in his home state of Baja, California, provided that opportunity.

He then spent two years at another institute in Nogales, deciding to dedicate his life to "try to involve church members in community social work."

A man of great patience, Castillo needs that quality every time he deals with cagey bureaucrats. One warm morning last November, Castillo was shown to a chair by a receptionist in a large crowded federal building. The community developer had been told he would have to get permission from higher-ups before a truckload of needed clothing for Los Tapitos would be permitted across the border. Castillo could not shake his suspicion that \$20 to the customs official at that point would have worked wonders, but he preferred to follow the often-winding bu-

Cardboard and tin huts shelter 5,000 squatters on the outskirts of the Mexican side of Nogales

reaucratic channels.

An older official greets Castillo, and, after listening to his story with sympathy, produces a slip of paper on which he scribbles government approval. Clutching the government approval like a winning lottery ticket, Castillo drives expertly through Nogales' bumpy streets.

His fellow worker, Juan Guevara, says that Castillo gets too upset at Mexican government workers because "he expects too much of them."

Helping Workers Improve Their Lot

Castillo helps publish a paper for workers that tries to improve wages at assembly plants by publicizing what is being earned in other border areas. The totally unionized Matamoros region is paying \$107.40 (U.S. equivalent) to its workers each month. This is top wage among border cities, the tabloid proclaims. Nogales is second at \$94.50, and Juarez last with \$83.20 paid to its plant workers. The vast majority of workers across the country are young women.

Since the peso has dropped from 190 to the U.S. dollar to 970 (as of this writing), the \$3 or so earned by workers each day buys less after a 48-hour week. Castillo explains the consequences of the devaluation, "What they make in one day there, we make here (on the U.S. side) in one hour." He adds that workers on the Mexican side have no choice but to accept the low

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Internal migration, destruction of family structures, unhealthy work conditions, and foreign economic dependency are some of the effects of border industry

wages as there is a large labor pool for employers to choose from.

Castillo holds monthly meetings with groups of workers, usually in a church or a restaurant so as not to compromise the workers. Topics such as the lack of breaks, speed-ups, worries about product quality in such companies as Peramex, Airco, Samsonite and Memex are brought up. The speed-ups have resulted in accidents says Castillo, who has had such work experience before becoming a supervisor.

"They want us to make more for the same money," says a teenaged girl. In turn, Castillo explains that as a supervisor his job had been to make people do more than they could.

Not far from the assembly plant, a flourishing Nogales neighborhood contains large and opulent homes. Castillo takes American visitors there to show them the contrasts in Mexican lifestyles. This area is known as "La Colonia Grande."

Some of the residents who live in these homes have been chosen to manage their countrymen in the busy plants. Most of the top management commutes from the American side every morning, however. Others own the property the giant plants are built on.

A publication called "The Cross Border Bulletin" warns of some of the effects of border industry. "In Mexico, these economic changes

have meant the employment of thousands of young women who have no previous work experience," it begins. "The social costs of the establishment of these plants have been: 1. Tremendous internal migration 2. The destruction of the family structure 3. Unhealthy working conditions, and 4. Increased foreign economic dependency." Added to that is Castillo's observation that the continual devaluation of the peso has brought more drug addiction and alcoholism.

The Positive Side

On the positive side, Castillo is especially proud of a dental clinic recently opened through the help of American church groups, a centrally located office on the Mexican side for which a Hermosillo dentist has already been hired. Lacking a social work network, needed dental work is beyond the means of most Nogales residents.

Asked about the controversial Sanctuary movement in the U.S., Castillo believes it's "something positive" and says his church members are now very supportive. He does not jeopardize his other causes by getting involved.

Trying to solve the partisan divisions among the squatters that was preventing equal use of the lifesaving water, Castillo might just as well have been summing up all his efforts when he said he hoped to organize the squatters "so they can get a better life and not fight among themselves." □

Michael Higgins is a free-lance writer based in Phoenix, Arizona.

Indigenous Community Developers (ICD)

The Indigenous Community Developers program of Hispanic-American, Asian-American and Native-American churches came into being in 1970 as a component of the national Community Developers program (originally known as the Black Community Developers program) of the United Methodist Church. This unique community ministry draws support, impetus and leadership from local churches. The ICD program attempts to cherish and enhance the contributions of minorities to the UMC by strengthening local communities through a variety of grassroots programs aimed at alleviating poverty and oppression. Hunger, water rights, economic development, healthcare and education, to mention only a few, are some of the issues that ICD programs focus on. The ICD programs seek to bring about positive changes in the lives of people in keeping with the Gospel mandate of working toward an abundant life for all.

Funding for the program is provided mainly through the Human Relations Day offering. However, individual projects often receive support through United Methodist Women's Supplementary Gifts and through the Advance. There are presently 18 Black Community Developers and 14 Indigenous Community Developers working with communities throughout the U.S.

Sharing Our Time and Talents

By Clelia and Gardner Hendrix

"Don't forget us when you return home." This was the final admonition from our newfound friends in West Africa.

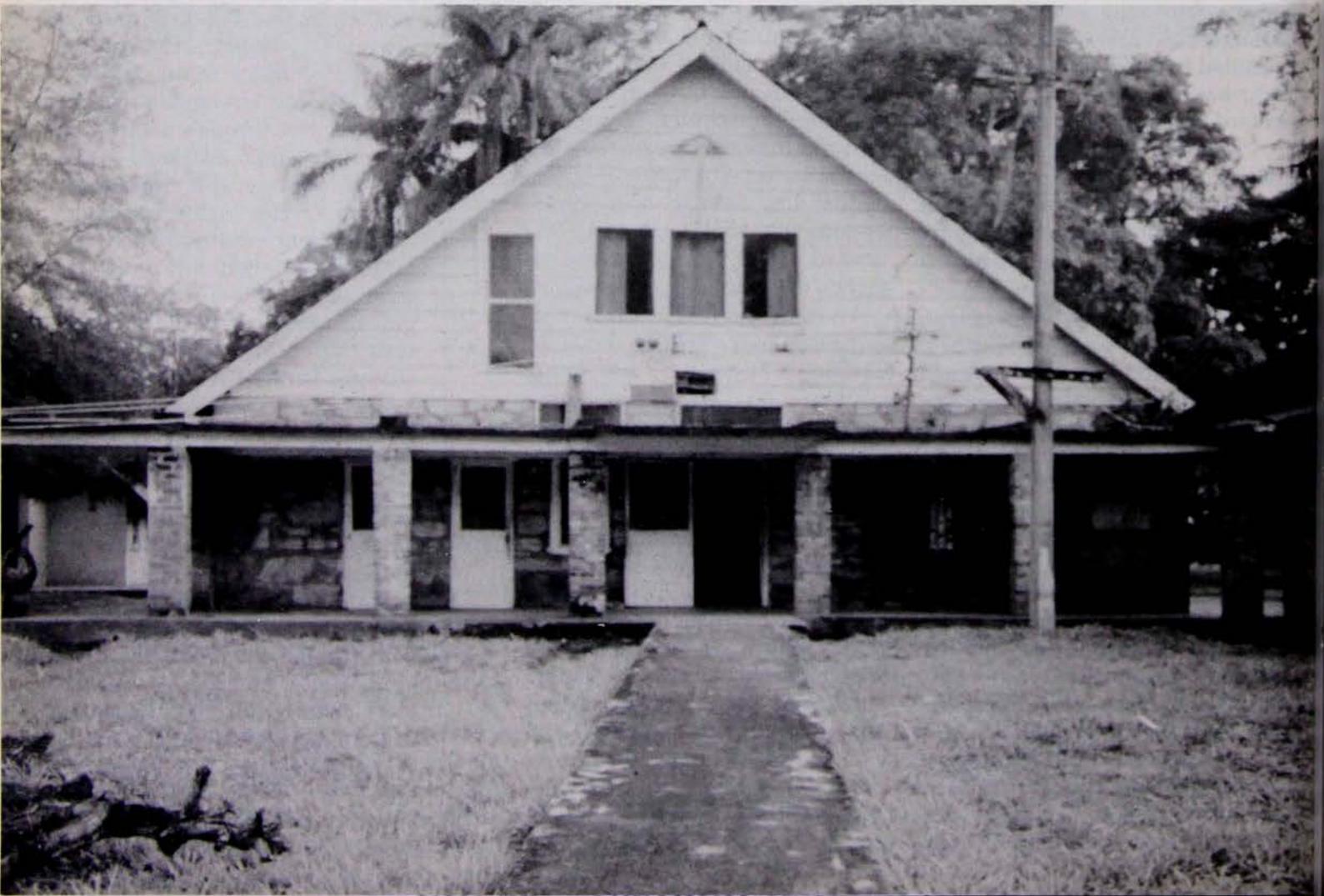
We shall never forget the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone. To live with them, to experience their daily frustrations, to listen to their hopes and dreams, and to feel their implicit trust, have changed our lives forever. Nowhere in any community in this part of the world have we seen or felt the degree of need that exists in West Africa.

During our recent visit, we walked with the people; we rode with them; we ate with them; we worshipped with them; and together, we decided the priorities of need. We held many interviews, had conferences with church groups, and visited as many potential project sites as time and travel permitted.

Our assignment was to search out places of greatest need, where other volunteers can do short-term mission work. We realized that

anyone who possesses any skill at all, willing hands, and a caring heart, can find an outlet for sharing those skills in West Africa. Need is everywhere. The nationals welcome volunteer help.

We saw the results of former volunteer work teams—a school dormitory to house 145 boys, built in a remote area of Liberia; a hospital built and maintained by a retired U.S. physician, who continues to give service in Sierra Leone; and a church being built at a



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The need is everywhere for volunteers to do short-term mission work



(L) Liberia's Ganta Hospital, serving a wide rural area, is in dire need of renovation and equipment. (Above) West Africa welcomes volunteers in mission and is willing to provide accommodation at cost.

United Methodist mission center by work teams of college student volunteers. We discovered continuing activities of persons who go to Africa annually and who recruit other volunteers for short-term service as doctors, teachers, accountants and agriculturists.

Economic Slump

Due to various factors, such as a slump in the economies of Liberia and Sierra Leone and a change in government leadership in Liberia, teachers' salaries have been terminated, taxes imposed on religious agencies, and duty-free privileges to churches have ceased. Unemployment is high, salaries are deplorably low, and even those with jobs often wait for months to be paid. However, the population continues to grow, with only ten percent of the nation's children being educated because of a lack of free schools. In many parts of the outlying areas, illiteracy runs as high as 99 percent.

One Freetown, Sierra Leone, conference employee, who is well educated, is paid 530 Leones per month. One Leone is worth a fraction more than three cents in

American money. Our van driver is paid 180 Leones (\$6.00 U.S.) per month. There is little money to buy what we regard as life's necessities. Even school pencils and paper are a rare luxury.

What can United Methodists in the U.S. do about all this? We can share our time, our talents, and our material goods.

Schools, Churches and Parsonages

Liberia is a country of traditional tribal beliefs, with about ten percent of the population estimated to be Christian. The United Methodist Church, with about 45,000 members, is the largest Christian group.

In Sierra Leone, schools are a part of the services offered by every United Methodist congregation. Here, faith and commitment are producing rapid church growth. Many meeting houses have thatched or rusting tin roofs and dirt floors, but worship and learning are taking place. We worshipped with them, watched children and teachers at work, and marveled at their dedication.

So, what can United Methodists do about all this? We can form

volunteer work teams and help build schools and churches and parsonages.

While in Liberia and Sierra Leone, we listed dozens of construction projects that could be completed by 16 persons in a two- or three-week period. In a crowded section of Freetown, we visited a new parsonage built in three weeks last year by a team of 16 United Methodist volunteers from California.

Health, Food and Water

Medical care is minimal in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Clinics are needed everywhere. Existing clinics need volunteer doctors and other medical specialists to provide services and to train nationals.

This year in Liberia only 12 students from 400 applicants were able to enter a nursing school as freshmen, because teachers were not available. This class of 12 is being trained by a missionary at the George Way Harley Memorial Medical Center, a part of the United Methodist mission program at Ganta. This mission program offers many service opportunities to volunteer specialists and

work teams in the fields of medicine, education, and construction.

In Sierra Leone, trained nurses are clustered in the cities, but few are willing to work in the rural clinics where the need is greatest. Government hospitals are financially beyond the reach of the masses, who depend on the United Methodist clinics for care and medicine. Nurses frequently work from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., seeing 400 persons a day. Volunteer nurses and teachers of nursing are urgently needed.

Food is not a critical problem in these two West African countries where oranges, grapefruit, bananas, coconuts and native vegetables furnish much of the food supply. Meats, except for fish and occasionally chicken, are scarce.

Water, however, is a critical concern. At one rural clinic, the only available water source was contaminated. A short-term missionary is now at work trying to alleviate the problem. In most areas, water must be carried for long distances and during the dry season, in some areas water is non-existent. A volunteer from Pennsylvania is now drilling wells in Sierra Leone.

Volunteers in Mission

Volunteers in Mission (VIM), coordinated by the World Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, offers United Methodists an opportunity to practice the presence of God in their lives. New services for individuals and groups are opening daily. The people of West Africa welcome volunteers in mission and are willing to provide

Volunteering for service must not be equated with a luxury vacation

accommodation at cost.

Planning for volunteer visits must be started well in advance. Transportation is difficult, fuel is costly and scarce, and adequate room and board must be provided close to the work assignment. Also materials for each project must be in place before a work team arrives to avoid delays.

Local churches, districts and annual conferences in the U.S. are invited—and urged—to form part-

nerships with church groups in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Continued relationships of sharing and caring would bring much needed encouragement, relief and progress to these developing countries. A variety of suggested projects are awaiting at the VIM office for the taking.

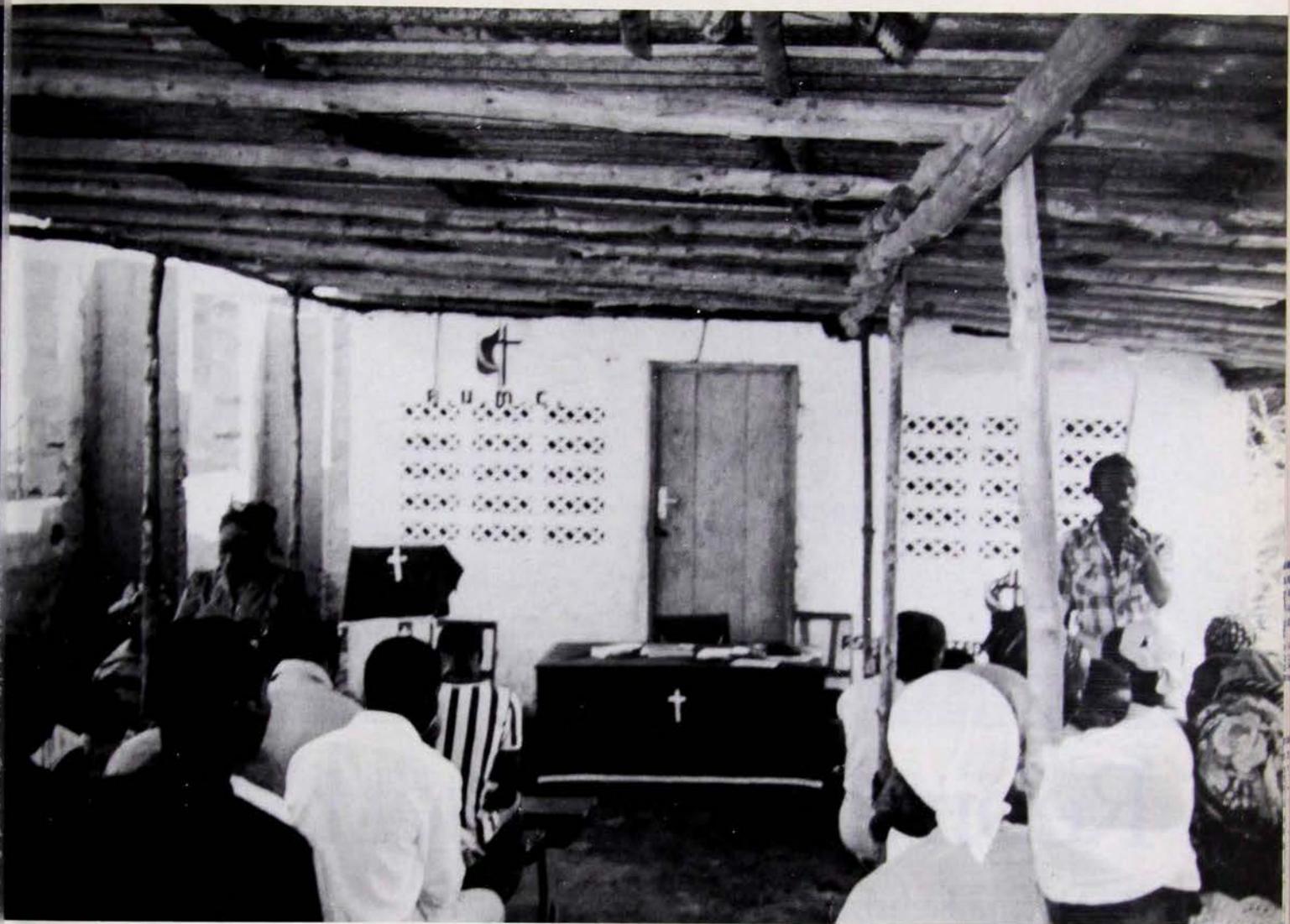
African deprivation is difficult to describe to well-nurtured Americans. But volunteering for service must not be equated with a luxury vacation.

Volunteers must understand that in Liberia and in Sierra Leone, water and electricity are in short supply, customary food is limited, American luxuries are unobtainable, and even ordinary comforts are rare. Compared to U.S. standards, sanitation is deplorable and the moist, hot air is uncomfortable.



Musselman UMC parsonage was built last summer by volunteers from California.

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Much To Offer

Volunteer service, nevertheless, brings rest to body and spirit and nurture for the soul. Life in West Africa has much to offer to volunteers. As many have said, "This kind of service is a life-changing experience."

We found the people of West Africa to have a sense of togetherness, family care and neighborly love. We saw no boisterous hilarity on the streets, no pushing and shoving among children, and no neglect between parent and child. Among the masses, we saw no drunkenness or drug addiction, no stress and daily strain, and no struggling for power or recognition. We were amazed at the neatness of the school children in their uniforms, and impressed by the superb posture of the women with babies on their backs and baskets of goods on their heads.

There are almost no obese people. In the streets, as in the rural areas, most people seem to be in

good health and to possess sufficient energy—in spite of the high rate of disease and lack of preventive care.

Volunteers for mission service have much to give and much to gain by serving with the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone. The spirit of receiving, as well as the spirit of giving, must be present in both partners. In sharing, we must realize that we do not have all the answers to the perfect life, but that we do have the major share of life's material goods.

To share our material goods is a start. But to share ourselves, as volunteers in mission, is to go the second mile in practising the presence of God in our lives. □

Clelia and Gardner Hendrix, a retired couple from South Carolina who have long been active in the United Methodist Church, visited Liberia and Sierra Leone on behalf of the World Division, GBGM, in 1986.

Volunteer
service brings
rest to body
and spirit and
nurture for the
soul



Rebirth of a Desert Village

By Norma Kehrberg

At a time when news reports are rife with conflicts between Muslims and Christians, episcopal leaders of African annual conferences of The United Methodist Church recently saw the "rebirth" of Mafre, a desert village in West Africa, through the cooperative work of peoples of both faiths.

A cooperative development program of Christians and Muslims has reclaimed seven villages in the Gambia region of western Senegal and is putting 2,500 acres of former desert land under cultivation in northern Senegal. It has developed seven new farm lands in Guinea and is beginning a massive reforestation program for the rivers of the Sahel. With gifts of "seed money" from members of The United Methodist Church, OFA-

DEC (Office for Development and Cooperation in Africa) has also begun work in Mauritania, the first time The United Methodist Church has had any involvement there.

This transformation of villages in the vast continent's arid western areas prompted the United Methodist Church's General Board of Global Ministries to sponsor a trip last December for leaders of Africa's episcopal areas to witness an interfaith effort in the reclamation of once-desertified land.

A unique characteristic of this Christian-Muslim program is the cooperation and support given to it by government leaders. This was evident in meetings with Daouda Sow, President of Senegal's National Assembly, and in meetings with the State Minister for Planning and Development and with the Minister of Social Affairs, a high ranking

woman leader in the Senegalese government. Aboubakry Kane, the Vice President of the National Assembly, and his wife warmly welcomed the group for a West African dinner in their home.

The leaders of The United Methodist Church worshipped in the Evangelical Church in Dakar on their arrival; held discussions with church leaders, including Pastor Samuel Damasakar; met the Vicar General of the Roman Catholic Church; and had extensive discussions with the highest leaders of two Muslim Brotherhoods. The group also visited a remote desert development program of one of the Muslim Brotherhoods in Keur Momar Sarr in northern Senegal.

Mainly concerned with boosting food production for local consumption, the OFADEC program

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Christians and Muslims work together to transform arid wastelands into productive farmlands in Senegal's Gambia region.

also involves marketing assistance for villagers who wish to sell their crops, as well as primary health care using local resources and primary education in cooperation with the government of Senegal.

A New Life

Life has changed in Mafre, the village we visited in northern Senegal. In March, 1985 a 200-meter well was dug in Mafre and a diesel pump installed. In June, 1985 water began flowing in the desert in Mafre. But it wasn't just a well, it was a "well program." The well program is designed to provide drinking water for the people and animals, to support increased food production through family farming and to provide water to develop a small plantation of trees.

Seedlings were planted in July, 1985 on the border of the farm plots

and the Mafre tree plantation was started. The farming plots were plowed. Extension training in farming and reforestation with villagers began working to maintain the Puerhl herdsman's ability to raise animals ecologically.

Changes occurred almost immediately. Village huts were improved. In December, 1986, when the group visited Mafre, the villagers had just completed their school and "farmers" had harvested their third planting of melons. The villagers also eagerly wait the primary health care program of immunization and maternal child care. Land which once looked like blowing sand in the desert is beginning to produce food again.

The delegation also visited other villages along the northern Senegal border, including Fanaye, a nursery started in July, 1984. Currently the Fanaye nursery provides three million plants per year. There are 314 families enrolled in the cooperative putting 2500 acres of land into production.

The director of the cooperative told the participants, "As we Christians and Muslims are 'condemned' to live together, this program is a venture of faith which will help our people survive. This program is not built on money, not built on power, but built on the force of men, women and children living and working together."

Working Together

What will result from this special time together? Some new direc-

tions are already being taken by one episcopal leader in developing a nursery near the churches' farm lands rather than transporting tree seedlings. During a long, hot walk in the desert sand to see a field blooming, one of the African bishops said, "and to think, all we have to do is stick a seed in the ground and it grows." There are requests for increased contact to share resources and expertise across national borders. As Bishop Bangura of Sierra Leone commented, "Guinea and Sierra Leone are neighbors. Perhaps we can work together in the future on a regional basis." And there are requests to have more opportunities for dialogue among Christians and Muslims working in the same region.

Not only did the group witness benefits to rural peoples' physical needs—water, food, seedlings, education—the group also experienced a renewed vision of the power and results of working with members of other faiths.

I, personally, was deeply moved many times during the trip. However, the most special time was hearing the leader of the cooperative in Mafre, the village that has "come back to life", say, "We have peace in our area. What we have gained we want for others also. Thank you for enabling this gift of new life to come to us. Go in peace and live in peace." □

Norma Kehrberg is associate general secretary, United Methodist Committee on Relief Program Department, GBGM.



Sierra Leone's Bishop T.S. Bangura inspects seedlings being prepared for planting by Senegalese villagers.

All but two of the African United Methodist Episcopal Areas were represented in the December trip. The delegation included: Bishop Arthur Kulah, Liberia; Bishop T. S. Bangura, Sierra Leone; Bishop Onema Fama, Bishop Katembo Kainda, Bishop Ngoi Wakadilo, all from Zaire; and Bishop Abel Muzorewa, Zimbabwe. The Reverend Jose Machado represented Bishop Penicela of Mozambique. (Bishop de Carvalho of Angola and Bishop Ndoricimpa of Burundi were unable to participate.)

Other participants included: Mrs. Pearlina Johnson, UMCOR Director, representing the Liberian Annual Conference on the General Board of Global Ministries; Sue Robinson, assistant general secre-

tary of the World Division; Pat Rothrock, World Division executive staff and Norma J. Kehrberg, associate general secretary of UMCOR.

Our host in Senegal was Jean Carbonare, Director of OFADEC, a cooperative agency of Christians and Muslims working in development in West Africa. The group was warmly welcomed by Mr. Aboubakry Kane, Vice President of the Senegalese National Assembly and one of the OFADEC Directors. Three regional directors of OFADEC, Mr. Mamadou Naiaye, Senegal; Mr. Francois Millinone, Guinea and Mr. Mohammed Abby of Mauritania assisted as staff of OFADEC.

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The Hmong of Minnesota

Hmong refugees make a life for themselves
in the church and in a strange land.

By Virginia Watkins

Imagine having to call a language interpreter every time you need to visit the doctor or deal with a utilities company. Or assume that you have learned a modicum of the language but are thrust from an agricultural background, with no schooling because of the disruption of war, into an urban job-hunting situation. Finally, put yourself in the place of a leader in a refugee community, caught between the demands of the new sponsoring country and the survival needs of the people.

One such leader is the Rev. Jonah Xu Yang, pastor of the Hmong Community United Methodist Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. Late in 1980, the International Institute of Minnesota held a conference and invited Mr. Yang to be a workshop panelist. Represented at the conference was Church World Service, which had a position open for a social worker who could preach and be able to help refugees with public assistance, transportation, and access to medical care. Mr. Yang was hired to work with a Christian community of 37 refugees.

This Christian community soon found itself ministering to 400 refugees and seeking help from the Minnesota Conference of the United Methodist Church. The Conference found an unprecedented challenge to the quadrennial mission priority of the Ethnic Minority Local Church as well as its own Decade for Greatness goal of New Church Development. Hmong Ministries became a Conference Advance Special and a General Advance Special.



The Rev. Jonah Xu Yang in front of Hmong Community UMC

In the Shadow of the State Capitol

In the shadow of the Minnesota State Capitol lies a neighborhood with a mix of low-income housing, offices, second-hand stores, fast food businesses, and bars noted for brawls and trouble. The roots of Hmong and United Methodist connections lie here due to the proximity of Wesley United Methodist Church and McDonough Public Housing Project, where some Hmong lived. The Rev. Mike Miller, who was pastor of Wesley Church, brought together a Hmong man who attended his church, Church World Service, and ten members of his congregation who became tutors of English as a second language.

As Minnesota winter commenced, the tutors realized the Hmong were going out in clothing suited to the California-like climate from which they came. The Wesley congregation successfully initiated the participation of many Minnesota Conference churches in a clothing drive. Thus began a multi-faceted ministry of friendship from several congregations.

Wesley church members donated use of their building to the Hmong congregation, and, with that relationship, countless member-to-member involvements occurred. One example is the assistance provided by Milo Thompson, then Wesley treasurer, toward helping Hmong Community United Methodist Church set up its finances. Mike Miller described the Hmong experience as having "created spiritual vigor" for Wesley, which previously found min-

istering to the Hmong neighborhood discouraging.

Church and Community Interaction

Lao Family Community of Minnesota, Inc., a social service agency for Hmong refugees, provides an example of close ties between Hmong Community UMC and the needs of Hmong people. Executive Director Ying Vang says, "There is much cross membership between the two, much interaction. The church helps with volunteers for the program."

The reception area of this busy agency rings with bilingual voices and invites one to read brochures on such subjects as vocational training, poison caution for children or landlord-tenant matters. After finishing business, one can go downstairs to the Laos Family Center Credit Union.

A typical day might include a meeting of Ying Vang with the board, a cultural orientation class, and helping a refugee to solve a business problem. Staff may counsel a couple in a troubled marriage and eventually work with relatives to solve the problem, or staff may help someone on welfare to overcome job hunting fear brought on by doubt about language skills.

Mr. Vang has sensed impatience on the part of some federal officials that many Hmong are on welfare. "There are lots of pressures, but we try our best" he says, adding that the message "to do better" is passed on in the community.

Speaking English and Getting Jobs

"The biggest problem we face is speaking English," said Vang. This sentiment was echoed by the Rev. Her Yang, an ordained deacon of the Minnesota Conference and brother of the Rev. Jonah Xu Yang. Also, transferring skills from Laos for use here is difficult and the exception rather than the rule, according to Mr. Yang. Work at machine shops is common among the Hmong who have received their training in the U.S. Many men and women work in factories. A few have found sales jobs.

The ways of American job hunt-



Picking basil at the Citizens Hmong Garden Project

ing are a mystery to many Hmong, who need information about how to write a resume, approach an employer and secure an interview. The Hmong Ministries Committee, staffed by Ginger Oakland and funded by the Minnesota Conference, is tackling that problem. Armed with research provided by Mr. Her Yang on job skill and English proficiency, they are developing strategies to enable the Hmong to be fully employed.

Two skills Hmong have been able to carry over from Laos are needlework and gardening.

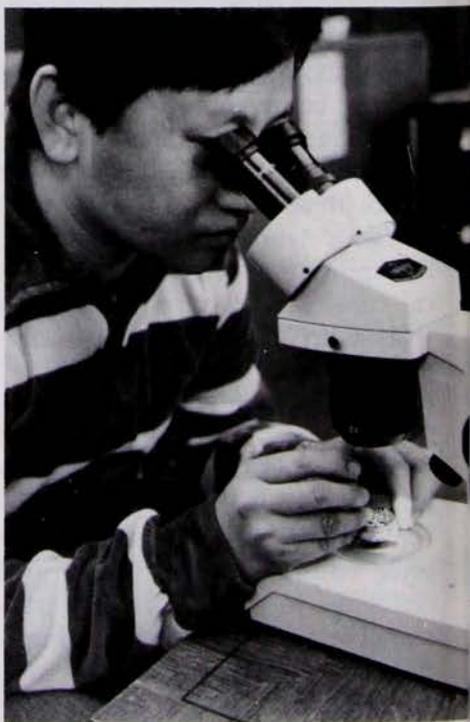
Neng Thao has found some business lining coats. Much of her business has been church generated. Other women are also proficient at needlework, but have not been able to sustain substantial lucrative business. Joyce Dewey, who with her husband was formerly a missionary for the General Board of Global Ministries in Zimbabwe, has taught classes on dressmaking and has found Hmong women "to do such beautiful work." But because she is on the staff of a public school, Ms. Dewey is constrained from developing a business as an outgrowth of the class. On their own, Hmong

women run into difficulties with pricing, as they are used to a barter economy. Many do not speak enough English to talk with a customer.

Gardens Near the Mississippi

Near the Mississippi River, at the edge of the Twin Cities, lie some of the several gardens in which Hmong grow their native plants as well as coriander, onion, corn, lettuce, mustard greens, basil and several kinds of cabbage. Some gardeners sell part of their harvest at the Minneapolis and St. Paul Farmers' Markets in addition to using it to feed their families. Skilled at reaping full value from their plants, Hmong make use of greens, fruit, and seeds for the next planting.

Hmong also rent gardening land from a Presbyterian church. The Presbyterian effort has also brought temporary staff and a fundraiser for the Hmong Recipe Cookbook. Christ United Methodist Church in suburban St. Paul provided money for a water system. Funding for 1986 garden costs and an interpreter was a joint effort between the Hmong and the United Methodist Women's special emphasis for supplementary giving, "Food, Land, and Justice".



Hmong technician works at a watch repair business managed by Hmong.

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The Hmong Ministries Committee through the support of the Minnesota Conference is enabling the Hmong to be fully employed

The Story of Faith

There are many stories of the difficulties and successes experienced by the Hmong in America, including the story of their faith.

By 1984 the Hmong Community UMC of St. Paul was providing worship and evangelism opportunities for other Hmong communities throughout the U.S. Pastor Jonah Xu Yang traveled to Appleton and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and to New Jersey, where he assisted with starting Hmong churches. His ambition is to continue evangelism wherever possible. "My intention is to help other Hmong refugees who are not Christians to become Christians. The United Methodist Church is more helpful and suitable," he says. He adds that there is much potential, with 63,000 Hmong refugees in the U.S.

Mr. Xu Yang refers to the in-

creasing number of Hmong in Minnesota, and points out that it is a big job to reach everyone. His brother, Pastor Her Yang, cites a need, "The second generation needs leadership coming from among themselves. It would be nice to see more persons going to seminary."

Dorothy Sower, who chaired the Minnesota Conference Board of Global Ministries and served on the New Church Development Committee when the 37 refugees first began their church efforts, isn't surprised at this evangelistic enthusiasm. "The depths of the faith that the Hmong have and their evangelistic concerns are what most strike you," she says.

The Move to St. Paul's UMC

Growth of the congregation to more than 650 persons has prompted their move from Wesley

Hmong began to flee their native Laos in 1975 after American withdrawal from Southeast Asia. Many had collaborated with the U.S. during the Vietnam War and were promised by Americans that they would be taken care of in the event that their country was lost. Approximately 20 percent of Hmong are Christian.

to St. Paul's United Methodist Church in St. Paul. St. Paul's congregation will soon move into another building. Then the wish of the Hmong to have their own church will be fulfilled. Sower repeats their sentiment that they are in a "strange land, don't own our homes, so need something that's ours."

The General Board of Global Ministries has approved grants from New Church Development, Ethnic Minority Local Church and a loan to aid in the purchase of St. Paul's UMC.

The Minnesota Conference is conducting a special campaign for funds for pensions, New Church Development and the Hmong Church and Ministries. Special campaign money will help pay back the loan.

The Hmong have changed the face of United Methodism in Minnesota. As they assimilate into American culture, perhaps the rest of us will absorb something from their willingness to reach out and care for one another, their hospitality to all, and their faith. □

Virginia Watkins is a lay delegate to the Minnesota Annual Conference from Minnetonka UMC. She also serves on the Minnesota Conference Board of Church & Society.

INTERVIEW

with **Edwin L. Taylor** President of The Conference of The Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas.

Indian legend describes the Caribbean as the "workshop of the angels."

More precisely, it is largely water, an area 4,000 miles long and 1,500 miles wide, generously sprinkled with a maze of islands that bob beneath a bright warm sun. Their exact number is still a matter of conjecture, but some say they run into the thousands. Some, as Cuba (the Pearl of the Antilles), Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Trinidad/Tobago are among the larger and better-known of all of the Caribbean island nations. Others are sparsely settled or are no more than mere tops of volcanos largely undiscovered or ignored by the outside world.

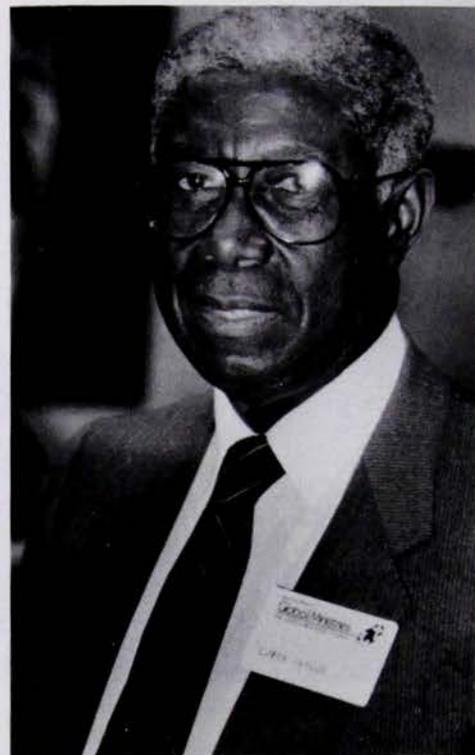
The islands of the Caribbean were among the New World discoveries of Columbus and other explorers nearly 500 years ago. They were opened up and plundered by pirates over 200 years ago, and many of their sparkling white sand beaches carry such glamorized names as Gunboat Beach, Runaway Bay, the Alley, and Black River Bay.

Most of the region's people are of African, Indian, Chinese and European descent, who speak English, French, Spanish and Dutch, and variations of each. And though their religions range from Christianity, Islam and Hinduism to Voodoo and Black Magic, Christianity flourishes. The most prominent denominations are Methodist, Moravian, and Anglican, but there are also large numbers of Catholics, Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists, Pentecostals, and a host of other evangelicals.

Methodism reached the Caribbean in 1758, shortly after Nathaniel Gilbert, a white slave owner from Antigua, and two of his slaves were converted by John Wesley in England. When they returned to Antigua, a colony of Great Britain until it became independent in 1981, Gilbert began preaching to his friends and to the slaves who gathered in his courtyard.

Antigua is the center of Caribbean Methodism today. There, perched atop Belmont Hill, just outside St. John's, its capital city, and looking across Antigua in every direction, is the headquarters of the Conference of The Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA). It is an imposing octagonal building with an unusual cone-shaped roof painted fire-engine red. The land on which it sits was donated by the government of Antigua after it learned (in 1967) that Caribbean Methodists were establishing themselves as an independent church within worldwide Methodism.

The Rev. Edwin L. Taylor is the fourth president of the MCCA, and in his final months in office. The following interview was conducted by Executive Editor George M. Daniels, who has reported on MCCA conferences and Caribbean issues since 1971, four years after the MCCA became an independent church.



The Rev. Edwin L. Taylor

NWO: You are in the last days of your presidency of the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas. How would you assess the past two years of your administration?

In the future we will be able to look back and see what has indeed been achieved. But one of the things that has come out of our years of association and working together with the general Board of Global Ministries has been the closer and more positive relationship that has been established between the Board of Global Ministries and the MCCA. That is, to me, one of the high priorities.

Also, our districts, spread so far apart as they are, have become more committed to helping one another. They have become more involved and aware of the great problems in the region. This, I believe, is a significant accomplishment.

NWO: What are some of the major issues you've had to deal with during the last several years?

There are some things I regret we did not achieve. We have a 1976 constitution. It's not adequate for 1987. All we've been doing is patching it up. We need to revise it radically so that it can reflect what is going on in the church, what is the hope for the church rather than be a report of what happened. And, speaking very frankly, we change stations (pastorates) too often.

NWO: How often do you change?

There is no tenure. A person can stay in a station for seven years, eight years, but sometimes ministers, especially the younger ones, leave after one year. Sometimes our ministers are moved without sufficient thought of why they are being moved. It affects the life of the church and it affects the lives of ministers and their families.

NWO: How will changes in the constitution improve the effectiveness of ministers in their work?

I don't think that changes in the constitution will make people work better or not work better. Yet there are certain anomalies in the constitution that do not allow persons to work. For example, if it were mandatory that a person work for five or seven years in a particular job, there would be some sense of continuity. We are working at this.

NWO: You have expressed concern about world poverty. How widespread is poverty in the Caribbean?

It is the world economic crisis rather than abject poverty as such. In some of the countries there are

people who do go to sleep hungry. But when you consider that these countries have their economies tied not to themselves but to outside forces, you will find that there is only so much money that any of these countries can attract. As a result, there is not a fair distribution of economic resources.

NWO: How has the world economic crisis affected MCCA churches?



Look at a country like Panama, which has a fairly good economy. The MCCA church there is a small church, maybe about 5,000 members—a church limited in number and in all the necessary things for keeping it afloat. The giving power of its members is limited, and that affects what they can do with their individual churches and their schools and so on. The problem often is not that of

On President Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative: '...products from the Caribbean are still largely prohibited or taxed unfairly in the United States.'

people not being able to find money on which to live; rather, they do not have sufficient purchasing power and money to allow their churches to survive properly. Therefore, they need help. But what are we talking about, poverty or needs? Poverty is a result of needs. The problem is that we don't have certain needs, so we are not regarded as poor. And it's not that the people aren't generous;

there just aren't enough members to make the church there as viable and vibrant as it seeks to be in a society where it is needed so much.

NWO: How effective is President Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative?

That depends on who you are. Government leaders, at least some of them, have said that there have been some good results. Yet, others seem to have questions about whether it is an open way in which products from the Caribbean can go to the metropolitan countries. There is a bit of ambivalence and uncertainty about it. What we see are opportunities for U.S. companies to come into the Caribbean to participate in our markets, while products from the Caribbean are still largely prohibited or taxed unfairly in the U. S.

NWO: Are MCCA churches involved in economic development programs?

They are forced to be. You can't live in a country, see its poverty and need and not do something about it. However, this is where outside agencies such as the Board of Global Ministries can assist.

NWO: Can you give us one or two examples of what MCCA churches have done?

One of our major efforts has been in Haiti, where we've helped small farmers and others with sugar cane production. We started Operation Friendship in Jamaica many years ago, now we're starting Operation Peace. We've done a lot in St. Vincent and in Grenada.

... there just aren't enough members to make the church as viable and vibrant as it seeks to be' . . .

NWO: Do you have the personnel you need to carry out MCCA programs? If not, what are your personnel needs?

The MCCA could do easily with 50 more ministers. This sounds like a lot, but it isn't. There are some circuits where a minister has twelve churches. It's an impossible task, so he does what he can. Therefore, he (I say he because often it would be a male minister who would be burdened with anything like that) has to depend on lay persons to do much of the work. We are greatly understaffed. We have more persons coming into the ministry, but we have lost too many in the past. They are working chiefly in the United States.

NWO: How serious is the exodus of MCCA pastors to the U.S.?

It is a problem in that after some of them finish their studies in the U.S., they're offered jobs there. They haven't returned to the Caribbean, or the MCCA, and we don't expect to get them back. But what is perhaps positive is that in the last four years, I know of only two ministers who have left and gone to the United States. The exodus has apparently been halted.

NWO: Don't some of your ministers go to England as well?

Yes, we have ministers from the Caribbean who are working in England, but they work by mutual agreement. They are on loan to the church in England for a certain number of years. They know that when they are finished, they will be returning to the MCCA, to the Caribbean.

NWO: Teams of volunteer workers have been traveling to districts throughout the Caribbean to offer their services in construction, medical assistance, agriculture, and many other areas where specific needs have been identified. How does the MCCA view what many people believe is a vital part of Christian missions?

I think it is a good thing. I can speak from personal knowledge of the work teams. I have nothing but the highest respect and appreciation for them.

NWO: You were once deeply concerned about the construction of new churches in the Caribbean, and also worried about the renovation, rebuilding or upgrading of existing churches. Is this another major issue for the MCCA?

You are talking about Guyana, and a few other places. Guyana is where most buildings are made of wood. Guyana has a lot of good hard wood, but wood rots, and over the years some of the churches have suffered a lot of neglect. Antigua had an earthquake in 1974 and it damaged their major church, Ebenezer Methodist Church. It was repaired in 1983. They borrowed quite a bit of money to do it. One of the things that one has to remember is that

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anybody or anything that would get them out from under that kind of oppressive rule. Grenadians realized that something had happened in the English-speaking Caribbean that had never happened before, where a prime minister, one of their own, was shot and killed by their own people. It was a little too much for them.

NWO: Were any MCCA pastors there at the time?

Yes. And they were really scared. They, and others like them, were quite convinced that the so-called invasion was the best thing that ever happened. They were mortally afraid. This is not a simplistic situation. What people are asking now is: What will become of Grenada? Will Grenada be a Caribbean state, controlled by itself as it once was, where decisions are made in Grenada without undue influence from outside?

NWO: What do situations as the Grenada affair and the overthrow of the Haitian dictator, Jean Claude Duvalier, have to say for the church, specifically the MCCA?

So long as we have Methodists in a country of the right or of the left, or whatever, we must be with them. Unfortunately, sometimes we will have to live under a different regime than we would want to, but we would try to see that justice is declared. We cannot leave our people and run away. □

Caribbean Islands are subject to earthquakes and hurricanes. You never know which one is going to come. Sometimes you get both of them. We're always at their mercy.

NWO: It has been three years since the U.S. sent troops into Grenada. How do you view that chapter in Caribbean-U.S. relations?

I went into Grenada about 15 days after the invasion. I was in

one of the first commercial planes that was allowed to fly again. American and Caribbean troops were still there. If I were to view that event through the eyes of Grenadians, the problem was not so much the invasion. The lives of the average Grenadians, who lived through the killing of the prime minister and four or five days in which there was a curfew, were so affected that they were glad for

Life on the Run

The Kanjobales of Guatemala

Caught between the Guatemalan army and the often ruthless guerrillas, more than 150,000 Indians fled into Mexico.

By Kathy Barber Hersh

Florida state highway 710 is a straight-as-an arrow, two-lane blacktop, which slices through farm country just west of Palm Beach. About halfway up the highway, in the middle of nowhere, is Indiantown—a post office, a couple of grocery stores, a Dixie Fried Chicken fast food restaurant and a gas station. At the north end of town is the Seminole Country Inn, which in the 1920's hosted the rich and famous, who came to hunt and fish in the wilderness surrounding the local Seminole Indian reservation.

Passing motorists may pay no attention to Indiantown, unless the light happens to be red at the town's one stop light. But since 1983, scores of journalists, anthropologists, psychologists, lawyers, human rights advocates and filmmakers have flocked to the place because of a local phenomenon: the migration of hundreds of Kanjobale Indians from the highlands of northern Guatemala, seeking refuge from a civil war so bloody one Guatemalan newspaper called it "genocidal annihilation."

The Kanjobales, so named because of the Mayan dialect they speak, have been one of the most unusual groups to emigrate to Florida. Pure descendants of the ancient Mayan civilization, these people are short, very Indian-looking and almost totally non-westernized. Once they could communicate, they had horrible stories to tell.

By the late 1970's, guerrilla insurgents battling the Guatemalan military government were becoming entrenched in the highlands. In

1982 the army undertook an all-out campaign to rout the guerrillas from their strongholds. With a record of human rights abuses already so abysmal that U.S. military aid had been withheld for years, the army slashed, shot and burned its way through the highlands, earning the universal condemnation of human rights groups around the world. According to human rights reports, 440 villages were destroyed, and an estimated 30,000 Indians were killed. Caught between the Guatemalan army and the often equally ruthless guerrillas, more than 150,000 Indians fled into Mexico.

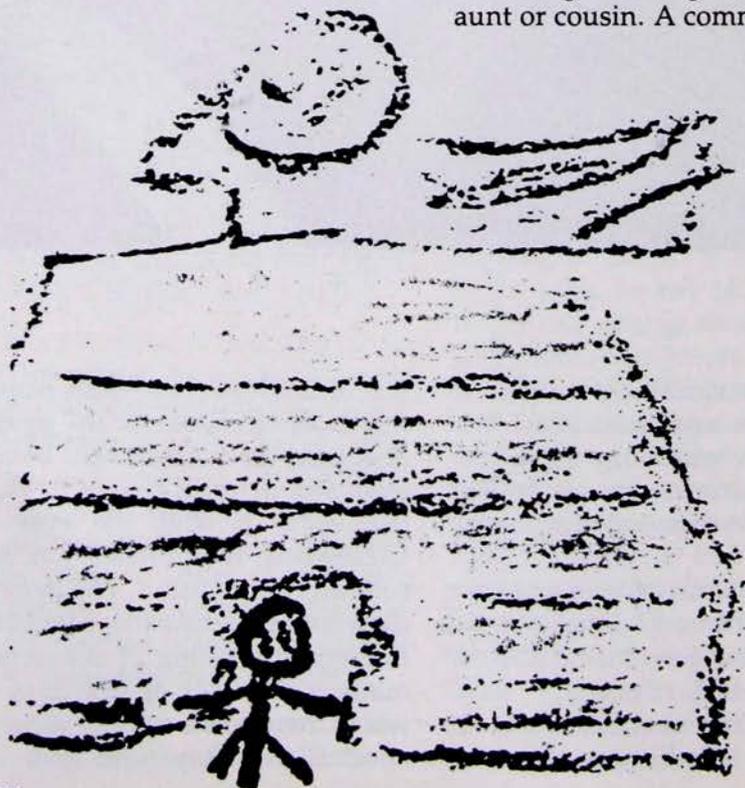
Many Kanjobales clustered in miserable refugee camps just

across the Mexican border, hoping they could return home to plant their next corn crop. But Guatemalan army incursions created so much tension between Mexico and Guatemala that Mexico finally relocated the camps hundreds of miles to the north.

Running to the United States

Traumatized by their upheaval and fearful of authorities, many Kanjobales kept running until they reached the United States. They found work doing what they had been doing for centuries—planting and harvesting.

The first family to arrive in Indiantown was the Francisco family. Many other families soon followed. Other Kanjobales were drawn to Indiantown in the hope of finding a missing brother, sister, aunt or cousin. A community sup-



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port network was established by Father Frank O'Loughlin, of the Holy Cross Service Center, a storefront office which is the hub of Kanjobale advocacy work.

"We didn't recognize the problem immediately," says Father O'Loughlin. "It was not until the



This drawing by Isolda, 13, shows her village (and church) in Guatemala being strafed by fire from a helicopter.

... "Our children prayed for the children of Guatemala," ...

Sister Carol

Within weeks the Kanjobales started showing up in Indiantown.

Border Patrol came in and arrested six men and one woman and their children ran away and hid in the woods that the community became aware of the Kanjobales." Staff and volunteers spent the night searching for the children who had run away during the arrests. "We had a hell of a time finding them because they hid themselves so well," Father O'Loughlin said. One child was found on the shelf of a closet.



A School Called Hope

Not far from the stop light, down a side street which skirts the fields, is Holy Cross Church and Hope Rural School, which teaches farmworker children from kindergarten through fourth grade. In 1982, no one at the school had even heard of the Kanjobales. But they had heard of the atrocities going on in Guatemala. Sister Carol Putnam, founder of the school, put a map of the world on the wall of the room where morning assembly is held.

Next to Guatemala, she pinned a picture of a Guatemalan child.

"I told them what was happening in Guatemala, about the suffering and the hunger, and our children prayed for the children of Guatemala," recalled Sister Carol. Within weeks the Kanjobales started showing up in Indiantown. Sister Carol said the children of Hope Rural School saw this as no coincidence. The Guatemalan children had come because they had prayed for them.

Dealing with children and parents who spoke neither Spanish nor English was only the first challenge. Many of the Kanjobales had lived in such isolation they were ignorant of "modern" conveniences such as bathrooms and appliances. Patience and understanding were needed to teach them how to deal with the basic necessities. And it was soon obvious that many of the children had been traumatized by the terror they had witnessed in their villages.

Santa Claus in a Helicopter

At the end of 1982, Hope Rural School was invited to nearby Jupiter, Florida, to a Christmas party at the Burt Reynolds Dinner Theatre. This was the Kanjobale children's first Christmas experience in the United States. As a surprise, Santa Claus arrived in a helicopter, landing in the parking lot. The Kanjobale children ran for cover and hid under the cars. They knew about helicopters. Helicopters rained bullets. Helicopters brought soldiers. Nothing good could possibly come from a helicopter.

Sister Carol was deeply moved by the experience. "I explained to them that Santa Claus is a good man who brings people presents at this time of year." The children were hard to convince. "Santa took off his beard and let the children see his face and feel it," said Sister Carol. "He was very good with them." It was clear that a great deal of healing was taking place.

Much of the healing has taken place in the office of Hope Rural School's principal, Sister Esperanza Jasso, a Mexican educator who

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came here on sabbatical three years ago and stayed on. Sister Esperanza (the Spanish word for hope) coaches young readers through one of the most difficult reading curricula in existence—Open Court. Today her tiny office is filled with Cecilia, 11, Maria, 9, both Kanjobales, and Brad, 8. Cecilia is struggling through a folktale called "The Boy and the Worm." Brad and Maria respectfully assist. When they finish, Sister Esperanza showers them with compliments. She explains that Cecilia and Maria have only been at the school for two years and when they arrived they did not speak English. "Didn't they learn quickly!"

Sister Esperanza explains why they chose the difficult Open Court reading system: "It teaches them to think," and it is not culturally biased. The readings are universal, based on international folklore, fairy tales and fact.

"We Try to Make Peace Here"

The reading lesson is interrupted by a young girl with an injured knee. She sits on Sister Esperanza's lap while getting doctored. A visitor asks the pupils what they like about their school. "We try to make peace here," says Brad.

The lunch bell rings and in bursts Tomas, aged 5, carrying a plastic garbage bag bigger than he is. He is collecting the trash and is filled with zeal for his important mission. Sister Esperanza explains that the children take turn doing assigned chores. It makes them feel involved and develops a sense of responsibility.

When the Kanjobale children

first came, they were homesick, scared, frustrated with their inability to communicate and very shy. They are still more contemplative and reticent, according to staff, than most American children, but they smile a lot, are very loving and gentle and can hold their own in English conversation.

"We realized that we couldn't have the children leave school at three o'clock and be alone until their parents came home from the fields around six. So we started doing things after school," says Sister Esperanza. They go on field trips, and they watch television under supervision.

The parents actively participate on the school's board. Meetings are held in three languages—Spanish, English and Kanjobale. The parents place utmost importance on their children learning English. Another important activity is the school garden. Kanjobales have a reverence for the land, and they do not want their children to lose that. So each child spends one physical education period a week working in the school garden. This way, they can appreciate what their parents do for a living.

At the end of the school day a big yellow school bus, donated by actor Paul Newman, comes to pick up the children and take them home. Without being told, each child goes straight to his or her seat. Some children begin to read their homework, or share a book with a brother or sister. When the bus is nearly empty, the remaining children go around and put up all the windows so that the bus driver doesn't have to do it at the end of

The Kanjobales' survival depends on how long the Immigration and Naturalization Service permits them to remain in the U.S.

Older children look after toddlers while their parents work in the fields.



his round. The driver, who is Mexican and a legal resident, sends his children to Hope Rural School because, he says, "It's different."

Debbie Banks, who has lived in Indiantown for eight years, and has been volunteering at the school for the past three, opted to enroll her children at Hope because she wanted them to grow up without being influenced by racism. "There's more of an innocence here . . . and there's a lot of love." The children in this school are sons and daughters of migrant workers from Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean as well as the United States, and they are taught to be proud of their backgrounds.

The I.N.S. and Petrona Mateo

The Kanjobales' survival may depend on how long the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) permits them to remain in the United States. Several Kanjobale cases for political asylum are now pending in immigration court. One case is that of Petrona Mateo Esteban, picked up by the Border Patrol shortly after she reached Florida. She was released from detention after the Holy Cross Church promised to sponsor her.

Last June, Petrona told her story before an immigration judge. Soldiers came to her village and hacked her father, two brothers and eight other villagers to death with machetes; then burned the village to the ground. Petrona witnessed the slaughter from her hiding place. In the chaos she became separated from her mother and sister. She never found them again. She and other survivors

spent the next few months going from village to village, trying to avoid the Guatemalan army and the guerrillas. They witnessed more horrors. Finally, they decided that the only safe place was Mexico. But when they crossed over, they saw Guatemalan soldiers even there. Petrona eventually made her way to the United States and finally to Indiantown, where she heard there were other Kanjobales. Maybe there she would hear something about her mother and sister, she thought.

The INS lawyer tried to discredit her story because she could not name the date of her father's murder or of her escape. In further testimony, it was revealed that Petrona could not name the months of the year. The INS contends that she is an economic refugee come to the United States just for a job. But Petrona's only "job" since coming to the United States has been sewing clothes in a Catholic-run cooperative operating in Indiantown. It would be difficult for her to have any other kind of job because of a distorted spinal column, the result of a childhood fever.

Under the recently passed Simpson-Rodino Immigration Reform Act, many of the Kanjobales may qualify for temporary residence status extended to farmworkers. But because of her deformity, Petrona cannot work in the fields, so she is ineligible. Asylum is her only hope. The idea of being deported terrifies her. After her hearing before the judge, she was interviewed by a reporter. When asked what she would do if she

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When asked what she would do if she were sent back, she quietly replied that she would kill herself.

were sent back, she quietly replied that she would kill herself.

The judge will take into account documentary evidence called "master exhibits." Petrona's lawyers, Peter Upton, of American Friends Service Committee, and Rob Williams, of Florida Rural Legal Services, will try to convince the INS, with expert testimony, that Guatemala is not safe for the Kanjobales to return to, in spite of the election of a civilian president. The INS master exhibit, on the other hand, will attempt to establish that it is indeed safe for the Kanjobales to return home.

"The government confidently makes the point that they can return and not fear persecution," says Peter Upton. "But we don't think there are any guarantees of that . . . The same forces that mass-terminated the massacres of the Indians in the early 80s remain in power . . . The countryside has become militarized." □

Kathy Barber Hersh is a writer and documentary producer with a strong interest in refugee and farmworker issues. She lives in Miami.

Methodist Involvement

Diane Wells, a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, is the secretary of the Board of Directors of the Holy Cross Service Center. She recalls the impact the Kanjobales had on the Indiantown area: "The community was overwhelmed . . . We collected blankets. The most basic necessities were needed. The Women's Society donated Christmas presents for the kids."

Wells encouraged her church to become more deeply involved. She helped set up educational meetings on Sunday mornings. Through slide presentations and guest speakers, the congregation learned about the Kanjobales and the depth of their problems.

Trinity UMC has become an important supporter of the Service Center, contributing \$375 quarterly towards staff support. Individual members of the congregation donate clothing and used furniture to the Thrift Shop, which helps support the center and provides inexpensive clothing and household furnishings for those in need.

Since her involvement with the Kanjobales, Diane Wells decided to go back to school, where she got a degree in social work. "I wanted to find out how one's Christianity could help."

Dr. R. Earl Rabb, pastor of Trinity, says that a Methodist church helping to support the ministry of the Catholic Church has been especially meaningful. Says Rabb, "That sense of oneness is the important aspect for us."

How the Kanjobales Arrived and How They Communicate

Although relatively naive, the Kanjobales managed to make their way up through Mexico and into the United States because a few of their leaders spoke enough Spanish to be able to communicate with Mexicans who told them about agricultural work in the U.S. and assisted them in getting across. Once the first Kanjobale families established themselves in Indiantown, they sent "letters" back home on audio tape (they have no written language), informing relatives that they had arrived safely and were being helped by sympathetic people.

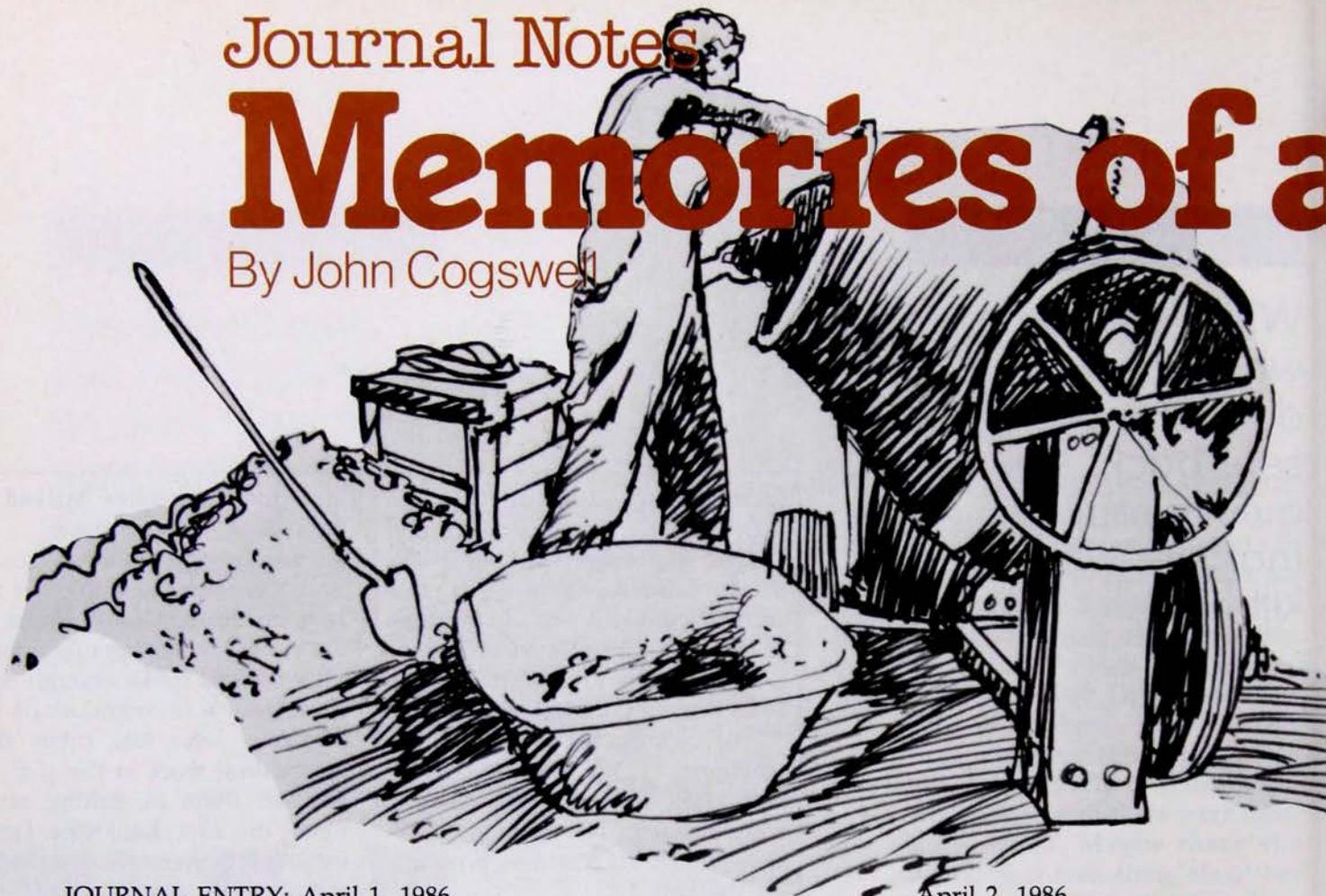
Antonio Silvestre arrived in Indiantown in the spring of 1981. He is from Jacaltenango, a municipality near San Miguel de Acatan, the area from which most of the Kanjobales come. He understands the Kanjobal dialect well enough to translate and is one of the few people in Indiantown who can speak both Kanjobal and English. He works at the Holy Cross Service Center, helping the Kanjobales process their asylum applications. He and another Guatemalan colleague, Jeronimo Camposeco, who also speaks Kanjobal, Spanish and English are important links between the Kanjobales and their adopted community.

As Kanjobale children acquire English skills in school, they act as translators for their parents, particularly in situations calling for complex communication like explaining an illness to a doctor.

Journal Notes

Memories of a

By John Cogswell



JOURNAL ENTRY: April 1, 1986
5:30 a.m. – Ashland, MA

It's hard to believe that two weeks ago I was at St. Andrew's High in Dominica, laying blocks and plastering walls. My calloused hands and a fading tan are the only physical evidence I have of being there—that, along with an airline ticket stub and a stamped page in my passport. Little enough to show, and yet so much to feel and think about.

I remember the sinking feeling I had in Antigua as I came to realize that I would have to remain behind and retrieve our missing luggage and freight, while the rest of the team went on. I remember the joy and relief of picking the last box off of the conveyor belt and seeing everything arrive—and then the accommodation of having Leeward Islands Air Transport check it all in early for me.

I remember the pitch black morning (4:30 a.m.) as I walked down from the hotel to the airport terminal for an early departure to Dominica. I remember the good feeling of arriving at the work site

and being reunited with the team. I certainly remember the hard work, hot sun, sore muscles, and blistered hands, and chuckle with quiet satisfaction that I had not forgotten how to lay cement blocks, and that I really did learn the basics of plastering a wall.

How can I ever forget the beauty of the gardens (for subsistence) and the spectacular view from Top-Captain-Bruce—a ridge of land coming to a point high above the village of Marigot.

I think a lot about my visit to Myld's and Hilma's: their tiny houses, energetic children, and utter lack of everything I deem 'necessary'—running water, indoor toilets, electricity, chairs, and privacy. I can still feel the small frail and weathered hand of Eva (Hilma's 70-plus-year-old mother)—no retirement home for her—just a loving family to care for her in the waning years. I saw in her face a lifetime of hard work and poverty, friendliness and love.

April 2, 1986
5:30 a.m. – Ashland, MA

I shall never forget Geraldine Sorhaino and the Agape Co-operative down at the village of Delices, and her explaining to us how 22 women of that remote and nearly forgotten community banded together to stitch quilted products to augment their incomes.

And of course there was Jimmy James, who directed our work and the construction of the school. And how about the cooks, and Oscar, our driver, who worked so hard to accommodate our needs. I think of each team member—Ethel, Mike, Kim, Barbara, Bill, Marylu, Bob, Margery, Sheri, and Liz, and remember the unique contribution that each made to the project and to the group.

I paid \$1,400, and spent two weeks doing things that anyone could do—many of them just menial tasks—busting rocks, sifting sand, and pulling nails out of old boards; all the little, 'unimportant', jobs that make up any construction project, we willingly did. Is that really what it means to be in

A Mission Volunteer

'I answered a call, an invitation to help my brothers and sisters. This was not my mission, or even theirs, but God's all along.'

mission, to be in service, to build God's kingdom? I think I understand 'foot-washing' better now. I also ponder, again, the fact that I didn't just 'decide to go to Dominica' for two weeks. I answered a call, an invitation to help my brothers and sisters. This was not *my* mission, or even *theirs*, but God's all along.

Funny, in another week my tan will be gone, the callouses softened, my ticket stub and passport put away—little to show—and yet, I have been unalterably changed.

Thank you, God, for showing me once again who I am and whose I am.

April 3, 1986

5:30 a.m. – Ashland, MA

More and more I'm beginning to see a new dimension to this business of short-term volunteers in mission. This past trip has shown me that we went to Dominica not as missionaries, but as servants willing to work, and as students eager to learn. We begin to become missionaries upon our *return* as we talk to people and interpret what we did, what we saw and heard, and how we felt. More and more I realize that conversion and new understanding of the Gospel needs to happen in *me* and in the congregation I am a part of here, in this country and not just in Dominica. They have their shortcomings too, but the gift God gives me through the lives of the poor is humility and understanding of the fact that I am not just Christian, but a rich Christian; that I am not just skilled,

educated, and committed, but proud, arrogant, and selfish in subtle ways I had not realized before. And, as I process and deal with this, I am called to bear witness to the change that God brings about in me, and thus, unwittingly and almost without trying, I become the missionary.

It's strange, we go to teach and discover that we are taught. We go to change and come back changed. We go to serve and *are* served. We go to convert and it's we who get converted—again.

May 18, 1986

8:00 a.m. – Ashland, MA

Individuals interested in being short-term volunteers in mission must often be willing to serve longer than one or two weeks. Those of us coordinating and interpreting volunteers in mission must encourage people to prepare for longer commitments. This preparation must be deliberate and over some period of time. Individuals must prepare and then be available, on perhaps short notice, to be in service. This preparation is really our mandate and responsibility. This is why we are Christian.

It occurs to me that church attendance is not really an expression of our faith. Church attendance comes out of need or celebration or thankfulness. Faith, on the

other hand, is demonstrated to the world not by going into a church, but by coming out of it and entering the world in such a way that we leave no doubt as to the existence of God and the reality of the resurrection.

May 27, 1986

6:00 a.m. – Ashland, MA

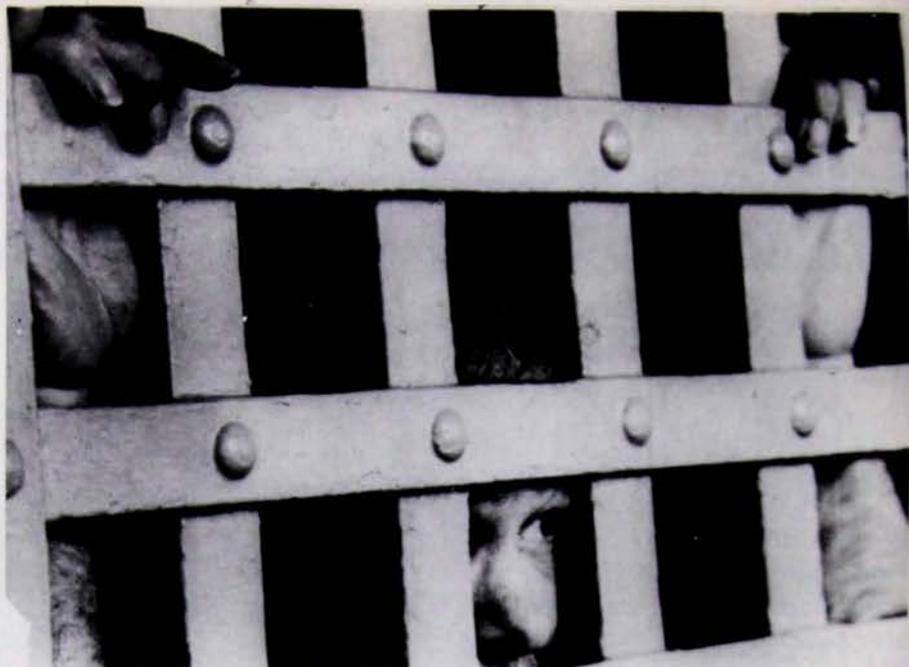
When I was in New York City at the General Board of Global Ministries, Jim Brentlinger and I had a chance to visit together. I suggested to him that mission interpretation must be from the heart—a matter of feeling—in order to be understood, and believed, by the listener. Jim agreed and then said "We translate from the head, but interpret from the heart."

If, in fact, we become missionaries only as we interpret our encounters with the world of building God's kingdom, then 'coming back' is just as important as 'going.' Perhaps the training and preparation of missionaries should be more around the issues of servanthood, discipleship, and being a student. And, upon their return from the field, people should be taught how to become 'missionaries' (i.e., interpreters). I think this is particularly true for people serving in areas where the church is already established and has some maturity of its own. □

John Cogswell is a lay member of The Southern New England Conference. He divides his time between graphic design in Ashland, Mass. and leading work teams overseas.

Tennessee's Prison Ministry

By M. Garlinda Burton



"The people behind those walls have a definition beyond 'criminal'—beyond 'thief' or 'murderer'. Each one of them is somebody's son or daughter, and each one is a child of God. As long as that's so, the church has a reason to be in prison. There is good soil, ripe for sowing, behind those walls . . ."

For Laura Wells, United Methodist church and community worker and coordinator of the Tennessee Conference "Church in Prison" project, her first encounter behind bars was not with some menacing ne'er-do-well, who committed crimes because he hadn't been taught any better.

As she read the newspaper one day she was stunned by a picture of police officers and a young man in handcuffs. She recognized the young man as one she had met when she had been a youth worker in rural Tennessee. "He wasn't a criminal, he was someone I had known, a boy who had been active in the church. But there he was, he had committed a crime and he was going to jail."

Miss Wells called the young man's family, who then asked her to visit and talk with him. Thus began a five-year prison stint for Ms. Wells as well as for the young man. She visited him, counselled him. They shared their faith. It was her first one-to-one involvement with a person in prison.

From Tennessee, Ms. Wells moved to Missouri and worked on the church's prison project there. Later, she returned to Tennessee, where she has worked for nine years as coordinator of the "Church in Prison" project. Her position is jointly supported by the Tennessee Annual Conference and the National Division of the General Board of Global Ministries. Working with an advisory committee, she coordinates the conference's prison ministries; serves as facilitator for some groups; raises support through her speeches to various church and community gatherings, and recruits volunteers from local churches.

To Discover the Needs of Inmates

One goal of the conferencewide project is to get mission-minded church people to discover the needs of inmates and those of their families—from advocacy for better living conditions to Bible study classes to giving little bags of toilet articles at Christmastime.

Linking United Methodist and other denominational Christians who are interested in corrections ministry, is a significant part of Ms. Wells' work. Several projects in Tennessee operate with financial support and/or volunteer labor from the United Methodist Church: The Reconciliation Guest House, which houses inmates and

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visiting families, initiated by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Project Return, an interfaith job referral service for ex-cons; Dismas House, a halfway house for ex-offenders.

There are also ecumenical networks for advocacy. Tennessee Sentencing Support encourages correction officials to consider community service as an alternative to serving time. Tennesseans Against the Death Penalty lobbies for changes in state legislation.

"This Fellowship Saved My Life"

Among the most successful programs in the conference is Yokefellowship, an interfaith network of covenant groups which meet behind the walls as often as once a week. Yokefellowship groups, which include Christian inmates and church volunteers, combine Bible study, spiritual formation, and peer counselling techniques as they create support communities among the inmates.

It is Thursday night, and six young women huddle in a circle on hard folding chairs in the front of the chapel. Each wears the institutional uniform of faded jeans or denim skirts with white stripes at the seams, and a blue shirt.

Frances "Lulu" McClain is quiet and listens with patience. Brenda Turner tucks a hair in place, studies her manicured hands and babbles in earnest. The women begin their 90-minute session. The discussion begins with a recap of a spiritual formation retreat held at the prison the week before.

Brenda starts, pointing a telling finger at Lulu. "When I came in here, and they told me I had 11 months to do, I said 'Lord, I can't do this time.' But it's October,

This Conference-wide project is to get mission-minded church people to discover the needs of inmates and those of their families.

and I'll be out in December. Lulu and the others have shown me the kind of love in Christ that has seen me through the worst time in my life. This fellowship saved my life."

This kind of frank self-disclosure is characteristic of weekly Yokefellowship meetings in Tennessee's women's prison. For many inmates, governed by the unspoken, unwritten code of tough, cool and sometimes violent behavior that is prison life, the weekly Christian gathering is the only opportunity to reveal joys and sorrows.

Sharon Guillory, one of the Yokefellowship's members, tells how the support she found in the Christian women's group has bolstered her as she struggles with

A church group is oriented before entering Tennessee State Prison.

alcoholism. A member of a prison-based Alcoholics Anonymous group, she says her relationships in Yokefellowship have brought solace and a sense of sisterhood that makes "doing time" bearable.

"There's this sign in the chapel here that asks, 'Are you serving time or serving God?'" Sharon said, "I have a choice, even in here. I'm serving God . . . we all are.

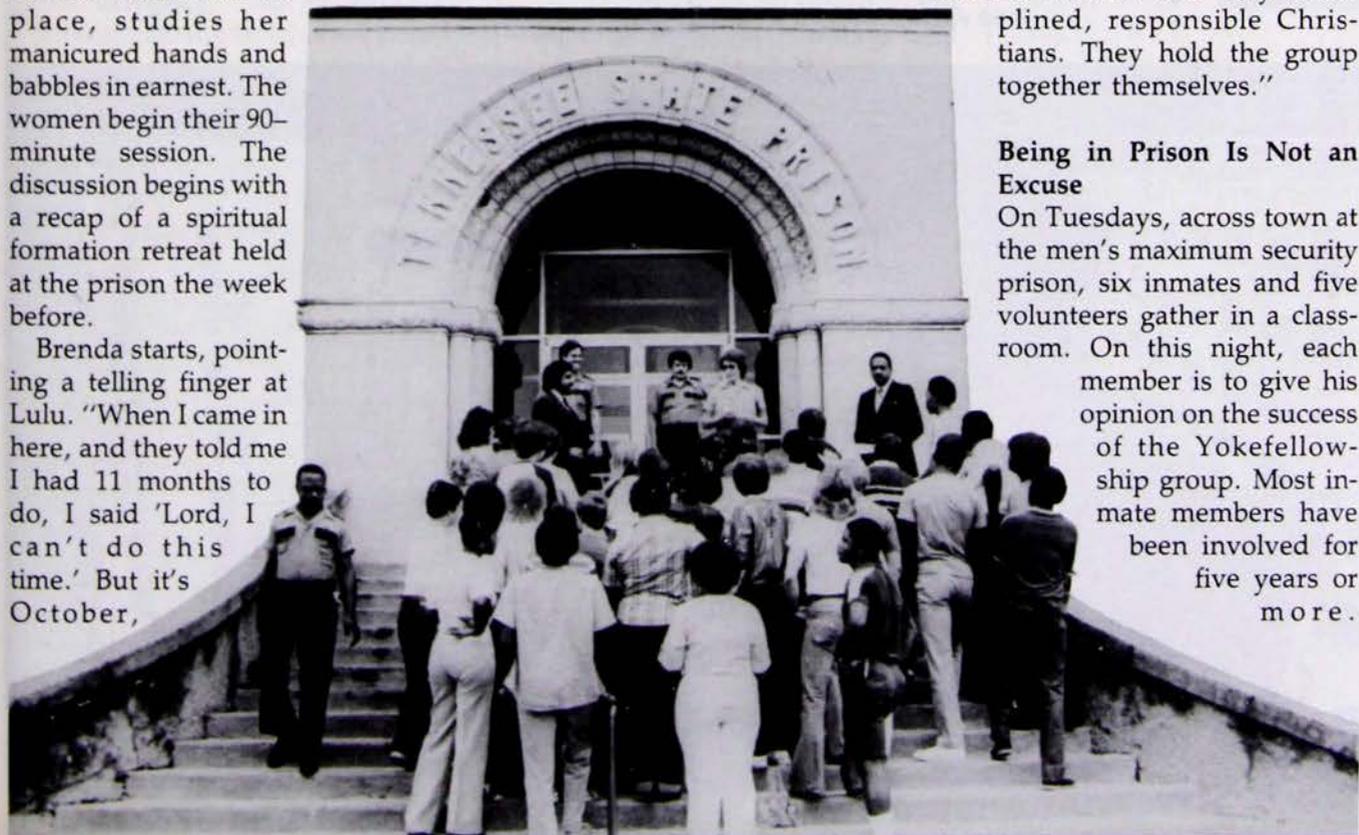
"I'm so free since I've learned to trust Jesus to help me make my life better, that I don't have time to dwell on where I am at this point in time. Sure, there are places I'd rather be, but I've got this group, I'm in school, I'm turning my life around," she said.

Lulu, who is at once motherly and tough, had just learned that day that her appeal had been denied. She has 19 more years to go. But, listening to the other women who give her credit for their budding Christian faith, she says, "I know it sounds crazy to people on the outside, but this penitentiary needs me—God has given me a purpose. And I am going to do this time, and make the best of the situation."

The group at the women's prison has been meeting on Thursday nights for three years. Explains Laura Wells, "There are a few volunteers from the outside but the women inmates are very disciplined, responsible Christians. They hold the group together themselves."

Being in Prison Is Not an Excuse

On Tuesdays, across town at the men's maximum security prison, six inmates and five volunteers gather in a classroom. On this night, each member is to give his opinion on the success of the Yokefellowship group. Most inmate members have been involved for five years or more.



Tennessee
Sentencing
Support
encourages
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service as an
alternative to
serving time.

One man sums it up very well when he says that the give and take of that group has done more to "turn my head around than anything else."

"When you realize what it means to be a Christian, and to be a part of a group of sisters and brothers, being in prison is not an excuse," said Charles Ewing, an inmate. "In this group, we've become family—we're responsible for each other."

"It's hard back here, but knowing that there are some people on the outside who are willing to be a part of our lives, that's important," adds William Hailey.

Volunteers like Paul Givens, a United Methodist layman from Murfreesboro, Tennessee, admit that what started as a six-week "give-it-a-try" ministry, has become a life commitment. "This is not just us giving time to the inmates; they give to us. Put us all together, and this is the most honest group I've ever been associated with. We don't just smooth things over, we deal with tough issues from a Christian perspective.

"When I have to be out of town on Tuesday nights, I look at my watch, think about our group and wonder what they're doing, what they're talking about," Mr. Givens said. "When you work one-on-one with people, it's not just duty,

it's family."

Group leaders Ray and Phyllis Sells agree. "When Laura (Wells) first asked us to come to prison, she told us to give it six weeks and then we could stop any time after that," Ms. Sells said. "Two years later here we are, and I couldn't imagine not being a part of the group. The guys have become a part of us."

Otis Tate, another inmate, agrees. "The free-world (outside) people in our group are real Christians. They care. If I had learned about faith sooner, had this kind of support, I might not be here now."

Ms. Wells says she is aware that people are apprehensive about going "behind the walls," and she's not trying to force them. However, she feels the church must support ministries which help men and women behind the walls.

"The local churches must do their part. United Methodist Women's groups will respond, especially when I tell them of a specific need. But also, I tell churches to pay their apportionments—part of that money supports what we're trying to do." □

M. Garlinda Burton, director of the Nashville office of United Methodist News Service, is also a volunteer at the Tennessee Men's Prison, through the Tennessee Conference prison ministry project.



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IN MY OPINION

For our communications efforts *within* the church we deserve good grades. We have quality general church, conference and area news-

papers, local church newsletters and an array of direct-mail and face-to-face networks. But United Methodism in most areas doesn't get a passing grade for its

efforts to communicate the Good News to the "outside world."

Is it possible that we are overlooking the most obvious, cost-effective channel for telling the Good News? I think so. The public news media—including weekly and daily newspapers, radio and television—are available to the church. That fact was noted at the uniting conference of Methodism in 1940 by the late editor, preacher and author Roy L. Smith.

Referring to informal proposals that the new church create its own daily newspaper, Dr. Smith told the delegates, "Let me call your attention to the fact that we already have in the U. S. at least 1,800 newspapers which are open to the news of The Methodist Church.

"Somebody else is paying the bill, somebody else is hiring the reporters, somebody else is doing the financial worrying about each one of those 1,800 papers. Their columns are open to our news."

Dr. Smith's oratory carried the day and the delegates created a commission, forerunner of today's United Methodist News Service. For the past 46 years that agency, now a unit of United Methodist Communications, has gained stature and credibility among both church and public news media reporters and editors as a reliable source of information about The United Methodist Church.

Less successful have been efforts

to get episcopal areas (if not annual conferences) to employ journalists to tell the church's story through the public news media within those regions. Many annual conferences have no mailing lists for media in their area, no contact person readily available to respond to media inquiries, nobody to help church leaders identify news and help report it through the various channels available.

Reader interest, which defines news, tends to decrease in direct ratio to the increase in distance between its place of origin and place of publication or broadcast. Stories must have local interest.

When the Council of Bishops released a pastoral letter on the nuclear crisis last May in New Jersey, United Methodist News Service released a story quoting bishops most directly involved in the letter's development. But such a story taking place in New Jersey, mailed from Nashville, quoting bishops from New York and North Carolina will have limited interest to readers or viewers in Phoenix or Orlando. Ideally, a journalist in each of the episcopal areas should have prepared a story, using the UMNS release as background, but quoting their own bishop and other local leaders.

A survey of conference communicators conducted by United Methodist Communications last year showed that few conferences produce news releases or do anything to cultivate relationships with the public media. However, those who do all agreed: news releases they prepare *are* used.

Relationships between church and news media people are not good. Editors often tell me, "I never see a preacher unless they are complaining or want something for nothing." Thus they write off anything connected to the church. On the other side of the chasm is the church leader who has had a bad experience with a particular television station or newspaper reporter and considers all news

media people irresponsible.

The news media are not our enemies. It is not their job to "promote" the church but they can be our allies if we but spend some time and money seeking to understand what news is and how it is reported through today's media.

"The media carry only the sensational and overlook the many great things we are doing," is a common complaint I hear from church leaders. But what are we in the church doing to help the media know about the many great—and newsworthy—things we are doing? Often very little. That may account for another complaint I hear—that the Catholics (or some other denomination) are getting all the coverage. If that is true, it is probably because the Catholics are working at telling their story through the media.

Unless the church develops an international and aggressive effort to work with the public news media, we will continue to be on the defensive about a few national

stories of major emotional appeal—such as the "gender" of God used in worship resources. Those stories will continue to appear because they are newsworthy. Our task is to help them be as accurate and complete as possible.

There will always be risks in working with the news media. They will occasionally misquote someone. They will leave out what we think is important. But, on the whole, I believe the media can be trusted to tell our story.

Our challenge in 1987 is to learn how to tell that story amidst competing voices and a complex news system. □

Thomas S. McAnnally is director of United Methodist News Service.



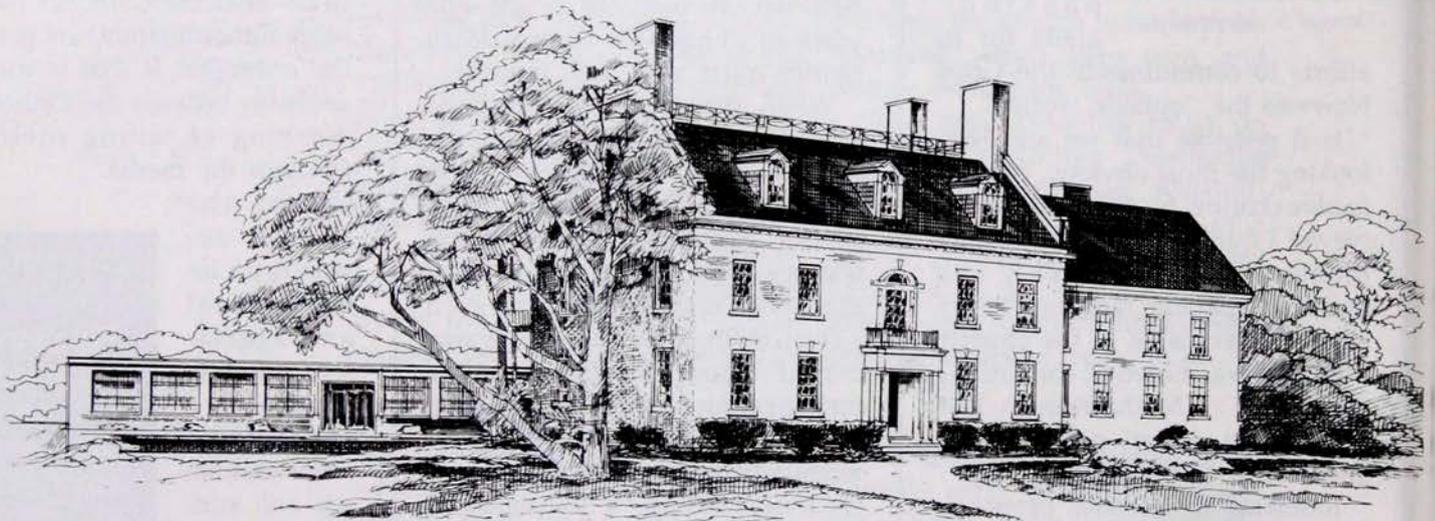
Thomas S. McAnnally

Relations between church and news media people are not good

Opening August, 1987

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After August 15, 1987, OMSC's address is 490 Prospect St., New Haven, CT 06511-2196. OMSC's regular program continues in Ventnor, New Jersey, through July 31, 1987.

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Books

CREATIONISM ON TRIAL: EVOLUTION AND GOD AT LITTLE ROCK

by Langdon Gilkey
Winston Press. 301 pp., \$12.95

Langdon Gilkey, the well-known writer and teacher at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, provides an engrossing account of his participation in the creationist trial at Little Rock, Arkansas in December, 1981. The case by Arkansas religious and secular bodies, including United Methodists, The Arkansas Educational Association and The National Association of Biology Teachers was supported by the ACLU against Arkansas Act 590, mandating equal treatment of "creation science" and "evolution science" in the public schools. The plaintiffs were upheld by the United States District Court, which declared the law unconstitutional.

Gilkey notes the irony that professional theologians like himself were arrayed on the side of "science," which in the popular understanding was in contest with religion in this case, while the witnesses for "creation science" were professional scientists from Fundamentalistic institutions or backgrounds, "each one replete with a scientific doctorate and a tenured position on a scientific faculty . . . From the start this strange union of popular religion and popular science fascinated me . . ." (p. 15) The creationist position involves confusion both in the distinction between the "proximate origins" and the "ultimate origin" of the universe and between theological and scientific theories. This posed fatal dilemmas for the advocates of creation science, namely " . . . to show the 'secularity' of a concept whose significance for them was very unsecular indeed, to treat as merely an objective hypothesis a notion which constituted the center of their own religious existence." (p. 37)

Gilkey's account of the preparation of the ACLU team and of the testimony presented at the trial is engrossing. The first witness for the plaintiffs was United Methodist Bishop Kenneth W. Hicks, then of Arkansas, who argued for separation of church and state and contended that Act 590 excluded the perspective of his denomination, which accepted neither godless evolution" nor "secular humanism." Professor Bruce Vawter from De Paul University testified that the perspective promoted by Act 590 was derived from Genesis and Professor George Marsden from Calvin College showed that creation science was an outgrowth of American Fundamentalism. Gilkey's testimony dealt with the creation

ex nihilo doctrine, showing that the State's defense of Act 590 entailed a Marcionite denial that the creator was "religious," while in fact the doctrine of creation science requires the concept of God in its fullest religious sense. He went on to distinguish between scientific theories and religious ideas, arguing that while creation science has no place in a science class, it is quite suitable for discussion in a comparative religion class.

Professor Michael Ruse from Guelph University in Canada testified on the distinction between scientific views of the origins of the world and creation science as a religious system. Professor Francisco Ayala of the University of California at Davids argued that creation science appeals to a supernatural cause and is not therefore a testable hypothesis as would be required if it were scientific rather than religious. He testified that State Law 590 was similar to Joseph Stalin's effort to prevent the teaching of scientific evolution. Dr. G. Brent Dalrymple, assistant Chief geologist of the United States Geological Service, West, testified on the scientific evidence for dating the origins of the earth, including evidence from NASA recovery of moon rocks, showing the universe to be about 4.5 billion years old. Professor Harold Morowitz of Yale refuted the creationist view of the second law of thermodynamics, showing that open systems like the planet earth continually receive new energy from outer space. Finally, Professor Stephen Jay Gould from Harvard testified for the plaintiffs that the explanation of evolu-

tionary data by creation science is refuted by fossil evidence. Gilkey missed the testimony of Arkansas science teachers and those who witnessed in behalf of Act 590. But he reports the outcome of the trial. The verdict and extensive "Memorandum Opinion" by Judge William R. Overton, provided along with other documents at the end of Gilkey's book, brilliantly summarized the issues and supported the conclusion that Act 590 violated the First Amendment, forbidding the establishment of a religion.

Gilkey's reflections on the implications of the Little Rock case are quite provocative. He notes that in a scientific age the most serious threat is that "scientific knowledge and religious belief may unite . . . in very dangerous ways . . . adding force, not restraint, to religious fanaticism . . ." (p. 169) Moreover science in such a setting tends to gain "a sacral aura . . . the supreme form of knowing and the key to effective action" (p. 177), which leads to its confusion with religion. It is dangerous both for science and for the broader culture to be blind to other forms of knowledge, including genuinely religious forms. There is thus a need for ongoing dialogue between autonomous forms of religion and science, which is very different from enshrining a particular doctrine in the science classes of public schools.

Robert Jewett

Robert Jewett is a Professor of New Testament Interpretation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL 60201.



**NEXT
MONTH**

ANNUAL REPORT ISSUE

The May issue will present the annual report of the General Board of Global Ministries. It will include messages from the President and the General Secretary, a roundup of 1986 activities of each division and program department, a comprehensive financial report and listing of the Board's current directors and staff. The June issue, as usual, will be a special issue on one of the year's two churchwide mission studies. This one: Toward Health and Wholeness.



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CALENDAR

MAY

Mission Saturation Event; South Indiana Conference, Indianapolis NE District; May 2-6

Mission Saturation Event; East Ohio Conference, Steubenville District; May 2-6

Mission Saturation Event; Western New York Conference, Olean District; May 3-7

Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA) Annual Conference; Antigua, West Indies; May 25-29

SPECIAL NOTICE: There will be a series of "Our Mission Today" seminars in the Pacific Northwest Conference May 11-15; 17-21; and 31-June 4. The event will be held in 15 locations in all seven (7) districts of the conference.

JUNE

United Methodist Women's Conference; Harare, Zimbabwe; June 3-7

Reunion of Liberia missionaries; Texas Wesleyan College, Fort Worth, TX; June 26-28

JULY

Southeastern Jurisdiction Youth in Mission Conference; Lake Junaluska, NC; July 1-5

Missionary Conference, World Division, General Board of Global Ministries; Lycoming College, Williamsport, PA; July 13-17

General Conference of the Methodist Church in Brazil; Sao Paulo, Brazil; July 15-31

AUGUST

Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries, National Seminar. Quadrennial gathering of United Methodist Women to study emerging social issues; Ohio State University, Columbus, OH; Aug. 14-21

National Division Mission Development Committee, General Board of Global Ministries; Lake Junaluska, NC; Aug. 21-23

North Central Jurisdiction/Fellowship of Conference Secretaries of Global Ministries; Alaska, Aug. 22-29

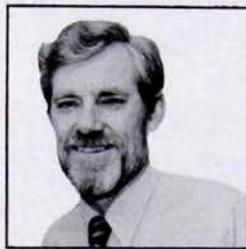
Southwest Border Committee Meeting; El Paso, TX and Chihuahua, Mexico; Aug. 25-59

To have your mission event or meeting listed in the NEW WORLD OUTLOOK Calendar, send details to: Calendar Editor, NEW WORLD OUTLOOK, Room 1349, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10115. Materials must be received four months prior to the date(s) of the event(s).

HEALTH WATCH

Tar-water and Sea-water, Raddish Juice and Garlic

By Charles E. Cole



You might read John Wesley's sermons to learn about Christian perfection, but would you consult them for your psoriasis?

It would come as news to most United Methodists that Wesley practiced medicine and was the author of a book on healing. We could write off this information as a cultural oddity. People in the 1700s had to know something about medicine just as they did about housebuilding, horse training, and a thousand other matters that have now been taken over by specialists. And it is true that medical doctors had not at that time become the specialists we think of today.

Wesley was so taken with the need to practice medicine that he actually opened dispensaries in several places in England. He himself met patients weekly and diagnosed their ailments and prescribed treatments. Among the items that Wesley prescribed for therapy were "tar-water and sea-water, raddish juice and garlic, or marigold flowers and Spanish snuff," according to E. Brooks Holifield, whose book *Health and Medicine in the Methodist Tradition* (Crossroad, 1986) is the source for this information.

Wesley published several works on medicine, some of them only his editing of others' works, but one of them *A Collection of Receipts for the Use of the Poor*. It contained a description of cures for sixty-three illnesses. Another was *Primitive Physick: An Easy and Natural Way of Curing Most Diseases*, first published in 1747 and a book that underwent twenty-three editions during his lifetime and that was used well into the nineteenth century. It was not an original work but reported on the work of others and prescribed cures for some 250 different conditions.

Wesley published these works because he wanted to educate ordinary people about how they could care for themselves. He hoped these cheap prescriptions would help the poor, and he hoped to "demystify" medicine, according to Professor Holifield.

Much as we might applaud this farsightedness on Wesley's part, however, we would have to admit some of his advice was wrong. In his effort to simplify, he discounted the value of bark that contained the components of quinine. And as has been noted, he put too much trust in remedies that at most

had a placebo effect.

Wesley had the good sense to recognize the need for moderation, although his sense of moderation and ours might not coincide. He thought that too much sleep was bad for health and recommended only six or seven hours a night for men. Women, being weaker, he thought, might need seven or eight. In his advice on child-rearing, Wesley urged that children not be allowed to sleep beyond four in the morning. It can be deduced from this advice that Wesley believed adults needed to arise before 4 a.m., since the ability of children to get out of bed before dawn without considerable aid from their parents is notoriously poor.

Moderation means exercise, too, and Wesley believed that two hours of walking or horseback riding a day promoted good health.

As for eating, Wesley's habits were about what you would imagine from that pale countenance we see in many of his portraits. Wesley ate sparingly, a habit he said he learned from his mother. He did not think highly seasoned foods good for health, which was probably a good thing, given the reputation of English cuisine. Wesley drank milk and water, no distilled spirits, and was an on-again, off-again tea drinker. He also drank ale and wine.

Wine he believed to have medicinal value but he warned about overuse of it as well as ale. It is indeed surprising to learn that Wesley brewed ale in his home and that British Methodists drank home-brewed beer at church dinners. We need to remember that even though Wesley rang the changes on denouncing the curse of liquor, the Methodist tradition of total abstinence did not come until much later and was not accepted in early British Methodism. Nor did British Methodists accept the substitution of grape juice for wine—a practice we also need to be reminded was a fairly recent innovation. These historical facts should not undermine our determination to promote temperance and abstinence.

Wesley also saw the need for what we would today call public health. He recommended frequent baths in a time when even the affluent rarely bathed, and he suggested that dung hills might be placed elsewhere other than under windows. Lice was bad, he thought.

He also condemned snuff and tobacco.

We have focused here on the physical aspects of health and medicine, but according to Professor Holifield, Wesley saw health as more than the cure of disease. His interest lay in the reconciliation of the person to God, and both physical and spiritual health were part of salvation.

Wesley prayed for healing, and he believed that supernatural action could bring about cures. He accepted reports of miracles, but he also exercised some care about these matters and once expelled a Methodist who claimed to be able to heal by using sputum combined with a verbal formula.

These may seem like only antique matters of interest, but it is important that we understand as much as we can about Wesley and his times, and particularly the relation of religion and health. Just take the issue of Wesley, a clergyman and a theologian, also considering himself a medic. We might think this ludicrous and yet it is an idea resurfacing in some areas. Erlinda Senturias, a health professional in the Philippines, reported that in her country, people from all walks of life are being trained as health professionals. Some theologians, she said, are being asked to learn health skills.

We are used to the idea that medical doctors can learn theology, but we seem slower to accept the idea that clergy and other religionists might learn medicine. It is easy to scoff at such notions, and it is unlikely that many theologians will soon be doing heart transplants or appendectomies. But when medical professionals expound on questions of faith or ethics, no one seems to mind. So maybe we should think of medicine as belonging to the people, as Wesley did. And for sure, we should seek as much knowledge as we can about our Methodist heritage and its relation to health.

The Rev. Charles E. Cole is Executive Secretary for Model Development and Planning, Health and Welfare Ministries Program Department, GBGM.

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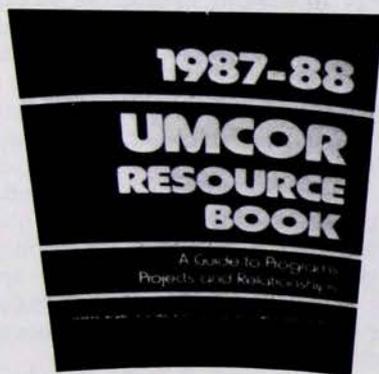
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ABOUT MISSIONS



Donald E. Struchen

GBGM Provides Phone Service for Missions

QUESTION: *I understand there is an "800" telephone number at the GBGM we can call to find out about what's happening in missions. What is it?*

ANSWER: This is the United Methodist Committee on Relief "Hot Line" number, which provides information on disaster situations so that anyone interested can learn what United Methodists are doing in that particular situation, how much money we are sending, and what the code number is to which funds can be sent. The phone number is 800-841-1235.

Also, by calling the Mission Personnel Resources office number 800-654-5929, you can inquire about available missionary service opportunities, and secure information on how to apply for mission service. Those with questions about Volunteer-In-Mission concerns and Crusade Scholars may also use this number.

A third number at the GBGM is in the Congregational Development Unit of the National Program Division. If you have questions or need assistance with architectural matters, congregational development or redevelopment, need the Loans, Finance and Field Service or the United Methodist Development Fund, you may use this easy-to-remember number: 800-UMC-GROW (800-862-4769).

Unfortunately, because of telephone company regulations, residents in New York State cannot call these numbers, but they may be used in all other sections of the country.

The Board does have another "800" number which has been sent to Conference mission leaders for their use in dealing with mission concerns.

All of these numbers are an attempt by the Board to provide services and information to the church.

QUESTION: *What's the difference between giving money to mission projects and interests as Advance Specials and/or Supplementary Gifts?*

ANSWER: Advance Specials are mission programs and projects which have been selected by those who know the needs best—persons in the field—and have been approved after prayerful investigation and consideration. They are a means by which United Methodist Church members may direct their money to a specific interest, and every penny given will be used as directed. It is called "second-mile giving." World Service funds should be raised before Advance Specials are promoted. Individuals, families, church school classes, or an entire congregation may give to an Advance Special.

Supplementary Gifts are the means by which United Methodist Women give to designated mission causes. United Methodist Women have their "Pledge to Mission" funds for all ongoing mission involvement. Their Supplementary Gifts are for designated causes just as Advance Specials are for the rest of the church. The women may give to the same programs, projects or interests but gifts should be through their own United Methodist Women treasurer rather than through the church treasurer.

This may seem like a small or unimportant distinction in mission giving, but for accurate record keeping and proper dispatch of funds, members of United Methodist Women should give through their channels of giving, and all other United Methodists through theirs.

QUESTION: *Where may I find a list of Advance Special gift suggestions?*

ANSWER: This year for the first time, every United Methodist minister has been sent a copy of "Partnership In Mission 1987-88".

This Catalog of General Advance Specials contains all of the 2,000 approved projects. Ask to see your pastor's copy. Don't be "turned off" by some of the large figures attached to some of the projects. These are the top limits of what can be accepted for each. Any amount up to that figure is acceptable. Use the code number given with each project to be assured your money will go to the project you have chosen. Remember, United Methodist Women can give to any of these projects by using the code number and sending money as a Supplementary Gift through their treasurer.

Anyone else wanting a "Partnership In Missions 1978-88" (#4706) catalog may secure one from the Service Center for \$3.00.

Readers are invited to pose questions about missions. If you address letters to: Donald E. Struchen, Room 1405, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10115.

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GENERAL BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES



Leontine T. C. Kelly

Speaking the Truth in Love With Great Spiritual Power

The scene of the World Methodist Conference, Nairobi, Kenya, July 1986 is ever before me and in me. People of Methodist heritage gathered from around the world to proclaim their common faith that Jesus Christ is God's hope for the world. It was in this setting that the World Methodist Council perfected a resolution against apartheid in The Union of South Africa to be sent to both President Botha of that country and our own President Reagan. Just as we were about to take a vote on the resolution, someone made a motion that the South African delegation be permitted to refrain from voting because of the risk of their being involved in such action. However a member of the South African delegation went to the microphone to say, "South Africa will vote!"

These spoken words have resounded in my mind like a significant and symbolic chant, "South Africa will vote!" The words are a strong statement of faith reminiscent of Martin Luther's, "Here I stand!" They ring out the biblical understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ against which "the gates of hell shall not prevail." They speak of an assurance beyond human safety and claim the promise and premise that in the midst of persecution persons of such discipleship will not be broken by threats or fear of physical violence even to the

point of death. They acknowledge the suffering the church in South Africa has already borne with structures burned, members missing, dead and imprisoned. With such commitment there is no such thing as a "safe vote." There is only the security provided by the presence and power of God's Spirit that persists in justice for all of God's children.

I recall that the words, "South Africa will vote!" caused my mind to play a trick which has become for me an act of calm in the midst of any stormy situation. My mind sings to my heart without any visible or audible sign. There is no movement of the lips, no note sounded. The words of the delegate from South Africa caused me to silently sing the message based on the promise of God through the prophet Isaiah as they are found in one of my favorite hymns, "How Firm A Foundation." In the great assembly hall of the Kenyatta Conference Center, Nairobi, they were summarized in the powerful words contextualized by our setting and our times, "South Africa will vote!"

During this Lenten Season as we make the meaning of the Cross applicable to our individual and corporate lives we are reminded of the cautious, security need of the disciples as they sought to prevent Jesus from going to Jerusalem. The city held the fearsome promise of death, but the words of Jesus, "No one takes my life, I give it," interpret the meaning of the journey of redemption which safety could never guarantee.

My personal confession during this season of penitence is that I too often compromise the position of risk for the sake of safety, comfort, acceptable and expected behavior, and the familiar. Yet I know that neither the disciple nor the Church of Jesus Christ is called to conformity with unjust structures and systems of the world. To be, as Paul challenges, *transformed* by the renewal of our minds is to risk both confrontation and reprisal for the sake of Jesus Christ. The true Christian community is in trouble

all over the world. Its membership does not increase on the basis of retracted statements for the sake of numbers, but grows by the power of witness under fire. Its energy is not the result of careful wording that soothes spirits unwilling to make sacrifices or to give public criticism to callous leadership. It is energized by the Holy Spirit who gives courage for each day, wisdom for words that must be spoken and healing for brokenness. Spirit-ed worship and community concern seems best expressed today in suffering areas of the world where the Gospel is tested and found to be holding fast in the minds and hearts of believers.

The words, "South Africa will vote!", were spoken and acted upon by persons who had not attended the World Methodist Conference for a few days vacation, or just to see another part of

The Gospel is holding fast in suffering areas of the world

the great African continent. They were not there merely to collect exotic souvenirs or even to "come up for air" (though rightfully deserved). Black and white delegates together had made the journey from South Africa as part of their witness to the world of Christians that a significant part of their heritage is the willingness to struggle with hard issues. It was to testify to that gathering of the significance of sharing the common cup of the Holy Communion in remembrance of the One who gave himself for each of us and for the world on the cross of Calvary.

Their words push me out of the ruts of my life. "Don't just sit there! The Methodist Church of South Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe and many other places of this world is voting daily at great risk on behalf of the Kingdom of God. Join the journey to Jerusalem so that the world will indeed believe *who* is the Hope of the World."

Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly is bishop of the San Francisco Area of The United Methodist Church.



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