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# New World Outlook

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# New World Outlook

## Publisher

Randolph Nugent

## Executive Editor

Susan Keirn Kester

## Consulting Editor

James R. McGraw

## Administrative Assistant

Hortense A. Tyrell

## Art Director

Roger C. Sadler

## Photo Editor

John C. Goodwin

## Production Assistant

Claire M. Johnson

## Copy Editor

Christie House-Forni

## Circulation Fulfillment

Mary Jane Shahan

## Editorial Offices

475 Riverside Drive, Room 1349

New York, N.Y. 10115

## Advertising/Promotion Director

Ruth Kurtz

475 Riverside Drive, Room 1337

New York, N.Y. 10115

212/870-3784

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# DEAR READER

Behold, I make all things new!

These words from The Revelation to John (21:5) are an appropriate theme for this Epiphany season (January 6 to February 12) and for this issue of NEW WORLD OUTLOOK.

The word *epiphany* means "manifestation." In Christian usage, "epiphany" means the manifestation of God in Jesus Christ. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5)

The world's darkness is dogged and deep, threatening and timorous. These words are written and this issue goes to press under a fearsome uncertainty concerning what will yet happen in the Middle East. This Epiphany season may inaugurate an indeterminate term of incredible bloodshed and sorrow. Since this issue will arrive in the hands of our readers after the January 15 date authorized by the United Nations for the use of force in effecting an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, the United States may be at war with Iraq by the time these pages are read.

But it is precisely in such seasons of deepest darkness that the light of the manifestation of God in Christ shines most brightly with persistent hope. Neither atrocity nor apostasy can cancel epiphany—God made manifest through Christ in a future which belongs to God. Even the present deployment of nuclear or chemical weapons cannot overcome the promised future which comes from God: Behold, I make all things new!

This issue spotlights epiphanies, light shining even in present darkness. It begins with a personally revealing and missionally inspiring interview with Dr. Randolph Nugent, General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries. In a wide-ranging survey of mission reality, mission challenge and mission possibility, Dr. Nugent gives our readers a most enlightening "mission saturation" reading experience.

J. Enrique Larrea O. gives a verbal and pictorial description of light shining among the poor of Peru, as they combine the strengths of cultural heritage and common solidarity to create a new future. Gabriel Habib penetrates the darkness of the Persian Gulf to illuminate both present fears and future hope, urging Christians to join in common partnership with God in Christ in telling the truth and paving a new path toward understanding.

David and Willow Teeter, and Laura Engle, document that current Middle East darkness has not overcome the light of witness, service and love. Paul Bock describes an illuminating new look at the changing relationships and attitudes among Christians and Jews; and Stephen Goldstein, speaking from a personal religious heritage somewhat unique today but commonplace among the earliest disciples of Jesus, identifies shadows which still need to be dispelled by the light of God in Christ.

Faye Wilson-Beach gives creative, practical guidance in making the message of this issue manifest in mission education. And a poster insert indicates the many missionary opportunities available to those called to manifest "epiphanies" throughout the world in mission partnership.

Speaking recently of her role as a playwright, Cherrie Moraga said: "I really believe that our task as people of color...is to be specific about who we are. It's not about trying to neutralize or assimilate or translate. If we're not specific down to the little details, then we lose our humanity and become generic."

Our understanding of Epiphany derives from a similar specificity. As the writer of the Gospel of John put it: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only son from the Father." (John 1:14) God became specific about who we are, specific down to the ultimate detail of incarnation, to finally nail down the point that every human being is a child of God and the whole human family is one. Making that manifestation of God manifest in specific places to specific people is what mission is all about.

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# Mission Memo

The following Mission Memo items were taken from missionary newsletters and are related to articles contained in this issue of NEW WORLD OUTLOOK.

**MIDDLE EAST SUFFERING** In his April 1990 newsletter, GBGM World Division missionary Alex Awad reported, "Christians and Muslims in Palestine continue to suffer immensely as a result of a brutal and evil occupation. Nawal Kumsieh, a former student of the Bethlehem Bible College and a member of a prayer group that I once formed in the town of Beit Sahour, wrote me the following: '...this week the soldiers attacked my son Ra'fat. Twice yesterday they beat him severely. Today he is suffering all over his body. I am suffering more than him because I know he has done nothing. He was walking down the street with his friends when a soldier, full of hate and rage, jumped on him and began beating him mercilessly. A Scripture has been ringing in my head all day long: 'Lord, why do you stand faraway? Why do you hide in time of trouble?' (Psalm 10:1) Why does God allow us to suffer so much? Are we more sinful than others? Do you have an answer?'"

"I wish I had an answer for Nawal," Mr. Awad continued, "and for the thousands of Palestinians who continue to suffer every day. I wish I could tell them the Christians in the U.S. are with them. As we continue to inform American Christians about the true situation in Palestine, we are seeing more understanding develop."

Rev. Alex Awad, and his wife Brenda, were missionaries working at the Bethlehem Bible College and serving the East Jerusalem Baptist Church (a Palestinian congregation pastored by Rev. Awad) before returning to the United States at the Israeli government's request in 1989. Upon their request for return to Israel, the Israeli government denied them a visa, delayed a decision, and claimed that Rev. Awad's case needed further consideration. He was born into a Palestinian Christian family in Jerusalem in 1944. "On March 14," said Rev. Awad, "we finally received a response from the Israeli government through the United States Department of State. We were told that the Israeli government will not allow us re-entry to Israel. No reasons were given." As of December, 1990, Alex and Brenda Awad had still not been allowed to re-enter Israel, and continued to serve on home assignment as Peace with Justice educators in Syracuse, New York, working with the

Northern New York, the Central New York, and the Western New York conferences.

**MIDDLE EAST QUESTIONING** In his September, 1990 newsletter, GBGM World Division missionary Romeo Del Rosario, serving in Jerusalem, said: "Many Palestinians are angry at the U.S. for its quick intervention in the occupation of Kuwait while the long-time Israeli occupation of traditional Palestinian lands has largely been ignored. Last night, I was at a dialogue between Israeli Jews and Palestinians. Israeli Jews, who are considered moderate and left in the political spectrum, expressed their disappointment with Palestinians over the support which the latter have voiced for Saddam Hussein. Nevertheless, they vowed to continue their struggle from within the Israeli Jewish community and government for politics and concessions favorable to Palestinians and the two-state solution. The Rt. Reverend Samir Kafity, the President-Bishop of the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, issued a Message of Peace, in which he counseled that action in this crisis 'should not be prompted by the price of oil and self-interest, but by the sacred value of human life.' He called upon all the churches to pray that God may lead all churches, nations, and peoples into a new era in the Middle East, a time of transformation into a new life lived in faithfulness to God, when hatred is replaced by love, violence by dialogue, condemnation by forgiveness, self-centeredness by sharing, and war by peace."

**MIDDLE EAST HEALING** General Board of Global Ministries mission intern Joanne Reich, who is serving on the West Bank at the Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children (which is supported by UMCOR), sent these words of witness, also in September, 1990: "When they say the Occupied Territories, they mean it. Living on the Mount of Olives is very beautiful but it does have a very strong military presence, which includes an occasional tear-gassing, or shooting. God has shown me beauty and peace, however, in the faces of these Palestinians who never seem to give up hope."

"I have visited a wide variety of places throughout Israel and the West Bank, everything from touring a Jewish settlement, talking to nonviolent groups on both sides, speaking to a Jewish woman who was imprisoned for her political views about the possibility

of two state towns.

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of two states, touring several refugee camps and towns.

"My work at the Centre is very good. I am acting as the assistant to the director and enjoy helping to run this fascinating place. There is a school, an in and outpatient physiotherapy department, occupational therapists, craft classes, a pool, and a workshop to make artificial limbs, braces, and shoes that serve the entire West Bank. The children are mainly cerebral palsy, post-polio, (or) spinal bifida cases. We also serve children and adults who have been injured in the *intifada* (uprising) at no charge.

"I live in the Centre and share a flat with two other international volunteers. We come from all over from a wide variety of organizations but we all are very committed to see the Centre continue and pray for justice in these lands."

**PERUVIAN PLIGHT** In their November, 1990 newsletter, United Methodist missionaries Dr. Donald and Jane Thompson, serving the Colegio America (school) in Lima, Peru, wrote: "We've been in Peru over a year now. During that time, we've seen more of the following situations than ever before in our lives: dead bodies in the streets (when someone is killed by a vehicle, the body is not moved, but covered with newspapers until the coroner comes, traffic continuing around the body), dead and three-legged dogs, people using the sidewalks for bathrooms, the Pacific Ocean used as a big garbage dump, garbage piled high in the streets, open sewers, days without sunshine (typical Lima-Callao winter caused by cold Humboldt current), days without water and electricity (caused by drought and terrorists, Sendero Luminoso 'Shining Path'), blowing up towers, days of illness, and hyper-inflation.

"When Alberto Fujimori became Peru's president in July, inflation and prices soared due to government policies (Fujishock). The 500 percent inflation in August and 7,100 percent in the first 10 months of 1990 are too much to bear for the average Peruvian earning \$40 per month. Our apartment electric bill was 449,000 Intis (\$1.45) for July and 11,025,000 Intis (\$25) for August. Instances of being swindled by vendors are so commonplace that we laugh at it, after we are laughed at. (Ha! Another North American taken advantage of !)

"...At one time we had 20 (missionaries) in Peru. When we came last year there were nine. Now there are three!! We continue to hang on in an increasingly difficult situation.

"Much needed social programs are just not here. October 7, Iglesia Metodista del Callao initiated a program to give milk and bread to neighboring children. The cost is about \$10 a week, but due to rising costs and inflation, it is difficult to continue desperately needed outreach programs in Peru.

"We are grateful to God that in all the distress and grief described, we are able to give support to many persons here. This is our witness to Christ."

**HUMAN RIGHTS WORSENING IN PERU** A World Council of Churches delegation, which included former bishop of the Methodist Church in Bolivia **Rev. Rolando Villena**, returned from a visit to Peru to report that violations of human rights in that country have reached crisis proportions. Nobody in Peru escapes the violence generated by a 10-year-old civil war and a collapsed economy, according to the delegation. The delegation cited 3,500 documented cases of "disappeared" persons; the frequent discovery of mass graves; and the use of peasants as "cannon fodder" by both the army and the rebel forces. The delegation also condemned the "terrorist acts" of the particularly "bloody, violent movement" known as the *Sendero Luminoso* or "Shining Path."

**DEATHS** **Pauline Bartruff**, a deaconess with 48 years of service, died on September 14, 1990 in Cincinnati, Ohio. After a yearlong assignment in Michigan, she served in Indiana and Ohio before retiring in 1964....**Mary (May) Coburn**, a deaconess with 46 years of service, died on October 1, 1990 in Tupelo, Mississippi. She served in Missouri, Tennessee, Texas and Florida before retiring in 1960....**Helen M. Leach**, a deaconess with 39 years of service, died on October 19, 1990 in Millerville, Maryland. She served in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Baltimore, Maryland, before retiring in 1972....**Helen C. Wolfarth**, a deaconess with 22 years of service, died in Asheville, North Carolina on December 5, 1990. She served in New Mexico, Florida and Georgia before retiring in 1974.

# Letters

## Our Readers Respond

In the Mission Memo section of your Nov.-Dec. 1990 issue, you have the correct information that the Rev. Alice Tabiando-Cruz is a district superintendent. She is one of the first two women district superintendents in the Philippines. The other, Rev. Lina D. Villaneuva, was appointed to the Mindanao Southwest District at almost the same time.

From September 1967 until August 1968, I served as an "exchange deaconess" in the Mindanao Conference. Lina Dacumos was my co-worker, serving as Conference Director of Youth Work. Alice Tabiando at that time was a former deaconess, married and starting her family, also living in Mindanao. Lina and I visited with Alice when we were in meetings at her church. I had lost track of Alice until her recent appointment, but Lina and I have kept in close touch with each other during the years.

Both of these women graduated from Harris Memorial College in Manila, in the class of 1965, and were commissioned as deaconesses. Each has a daughter studying at Harris preparing for deaconess service.

I have been a regular reader of NEW WORLD OUTLOOK (and its predecessor) for over forty years. Keep up the good work.

*Anne McKenzie  
Asheville, North Carolina*

In the Nov.-Dec. 1990 issue you report in Mission Memo the "good news" of a church in Colorado whose financial secretary "hit the jackpot" in the state lottery. Does this mean the UM Church now approves gambling? Are we now encouraging greed? And advertising the action? Something is wrong.

*Clara Torrant  
Madison, Wisconsin*

I was most interested in Robert J. Harman's reference to the 75th anniversary of the Wembo Nyama

mission station in Zaire in the May-June issue. I was born in Nashville, Tennessee in February 1913, and my parents, Dr. and Mrs. D.L. Mumpower, left with me for the Belgian Congo when I was seven months old. It was not until January, 1914 that we finally arrived in Wembo Nyama. Bishop Walter Lambuth and seven missionaries made the trip from Antwerp, Belgium to Wembo Nyama together in an ocean liner, train, river boats, and then in hammocks in a caravan. We were the first missionaries to Wembo Nyama. Bishop Lambuth and Prof. John Wesley Gilbert of Paine College in Augusta, Georgia, paved the way. They were the pathfinders. A few highlights: ceremonies for the organization of the church on February 12, 1914; hospital started by my parents; Bishop Lambuth baptized me; Chief of Wembo Nyama gave me his name; my brother was born in Wembo Nyama in 1917. Thought you might be interested in this bit of background.

*Betty Mumpower Mooney  
Lake Mary, Florida*

Many thanks for the NEW WORLD OUTLOOK issue "Celebrating 50 years of Mission Witness." What a comprehensive, convincing and exciting history it is. Congratulations on a job well done. We are all proud to be a part of it.

*Tracey K. Jones  
Former General Secretary  
GBGM*

I am amazed that as scholarly and prestigious a professor as Dr. Harvey Cox should write (March-April 1990 issue) "The Islamic movement was not a revolt against the gospel...but against the imperial Christianity they saw as its corruption."

Islam as practiced in the Federation of Malaysia, where I lived and worked for 13 years, was in every sense a religious phenomenon in its

own right. While it was not adopted as the state religion, and therefore had a different orientation than in Pakistan, it did enjoy the status of the "official religion" when independence came in 1957. Freedom of religion was guaranteed, which included profession, practice, and propagation, except that this freedom was not possible for Muslims who may have desired to change their religion.

Even scholarships awarded to Muslims for study outside Malaysia were closely scrutinized to determine whether they had been granted with conversion in mind by Christians, and any evidence that religion had been tampered with during overseas study was grounds for non-acceptance of change of faith. Muslims were likewise barred from attendance in classes in Scripture organized by grant-in-aid schools operated by Christian denominations. But Buddhists in northern Malaysia were converted to Islam.

The effort to promote more understanding is commendable and we do wish to explore whatever common ground we have. But that does not erase these fundamental differences of faith.

Such exploration will assist us to rectify the excesses related to the Crusades and to later stereotypes of Islamic lands as personified by terrorism and by the reign of the Ayatollah Khomeini and his cohorts.

But Dr. Cox too easily dismisses theological differences because of their being rooted in what he calls "a turbulent political history." And, while all of us admire the kind of recognition accorded prime minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, she will probably be remembered for her political leadership as a Muslim woman and for her charm rather than for what Dr. Cox calls "the religion she embodies."

*Robert F. Lundy, Pastor  
Norris (Tennessee) UMC*

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# A NEW WORLD OF MISSION

AN INTERVIEW WITH RANDOLPH NUGENT



Looking toward a new decade, a new millennium, and a new age in mission, consulting editor James R. McGraw interviewed GBGM General Secretary Randolph Nugent, publisher of *New World Outlook*, in late November last year. Their conversation follows.

**MCGRAW:** You have been General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries for nine years, and Deputy General Secretary of the National Division for nine years before that. Looking back, what do you see as the major accomplishments, or perhaps the major challenges, in mission?

**NUGENT:** A number of things have happened. We have tried to enable the church to receive gladly the gifts and graces of its entire missionary community; to include minority persons in leadership positions of the Board along with the existing leaders who were not minorities. That is essential; so that the mission itself, even in its ad-

**We have tried to enable the church to receive gladly the gifts and graces of its entire missionary community, so that the mission itself reflects the world into which we are moving.**

ministration, reflects the world into which we are moving. I think that must be understood as an accomplishment because the whole mission emphasis of the church has not always been open gladly to these minority communities.

Even today there are still instances of discouraging persons who are minorities. Let me give you an illustration. One young man, who was a member of one of these minority communities, was evaluated as being "too aggressive." Well my goodness, if he weren't aggressive, he wouldn't have risen to the top!

**MCGRAW:** It also makes the judgment that the quality of aggressiveness is not an asset to engaging in mission evangelism.

**NUGENT:** Exactly! That is, with regard to minorities. It's like the gender stereotype. When women assert themselves, there are those who say, "she's too aggressive." But with men it is acceptable.

There also was the reorganization of the Board in the 1980s, to make the units of the Board more interdependent and interrelated. We are still struggling to reach a higher degree of efficiency and service, and representational character of the unity of the Christ, by working more collaboratively within the units.

Another area is the recruitment of missionaries. It is my view that there never are enough missionaries; that is, people enabling others to meet the Christ, to have their lives fulfilled by Christ, and to have a relationship with God in Christ. But in the past we have spoken as though we could stop, or interrupt the flow of missionaries, for one reason or another. Such language grows out of our experience with political structures and behaviors—colonialism and domination by political structures and even by the churches.

But theologically, and in terms of our unity and relationship with Christ, we have to say that there are never sufficient numbers of missionaries.

**MCGRAW:** In other words, you can't cancel the Great Commission.

**NUGENT:** Exactly, you can't cancel that! You can't say that we're not going to send people, or that we're going to take a hiatus. We need more people in mission.

The preparation of people globally to be in mission in every place is very essential. In that regard, the Mission Resource Center in Atlanta has been a major accomplishment. We not only struggle to recruit *more* persons for mission but we have a place where they can learn, and reflect, and be *trained* for mission.

The whole question of commissioning people for mission to be one with all people globally, and preparing them specifically for the outreach and the engaging task of mission, has not been fully understood. I understand how the situa-

**Our concern should be how we can help persons who feel the call to missionary service be what God wants them to be. The call from God is serious; and missionary training is an awesome task.**

tion developed in which people were recruited as missionaries from one geographic location to the exclusion of others. But that should not happen. Yet one should never think that God wouldn't be in North America. Here again is a confusion.

While we know that we are all culturally bound, we also know that God calls *persons*. And we ought to be rejoicing that God is calling persons from the North American community; because it is a community which has been filled with cupidity, and has been aggressive, colonialist, and racist—and still is. And yet God calls people out of that very context. In these very people who are called into mission, imperfect as we all are, we see people who have caught some glimpse of the Christ, and therefore they are persons with whom we can work in missionary training.

I have said to the staff at the Mis-

sion Resource Center that their task is to get people through, not weed them out. When you see people who want to serve the Christ, your job is to enable them to be more fully and better prepared, not to say they can't make it. Our concern should be how we can help them to be what God wants them to be.

The call from God is serious. Once people feel the call and publicly confess it, you can't deal with them as though their call was just a job! No, no, no. This is a very serious matter.

**MCGRAW:** So just as you can't cancel the Great Commission, you can't cancel the call either.

**NUGENT:** Exactly. The incredible and wonderful thing is that God touches and calls imperfect people. God *calls* us to perfection, but *uses* us in our imperfection. So missionary selection and training is an awesome task.

Another accomplishment is our mission evangelism effort. At the General Board of Global Ministries, we have been doing mission evangelism all along. But some parts of the church—because the church has many different parts—did not recognize a certain style of evangelism. In responding to that, we needed to recognize that this matter of responding to God's call is a very broadly based response and different persons respond in different ways and to different signals.

I went to a funeral the other day. It wasn't at the church but rather at the funeral home. In what I gather is becoming a tradition, the pastor gave an altar call at the funeral home—and people came! That is not a tradition that I have experienced. But I gather that people who made a commitment to Christ in that situation might not have made it in a different context. They may not have found that response on a picket line, or a Sunday morning altar call, or street corner evangelism or whatever.

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So you have to do evangelism in a number of different ways. Our mission evangelism thrust is not a replacement but rather an augmentation, an increase, and a broadening of the myriad of ways in which this Board is involved in mission.

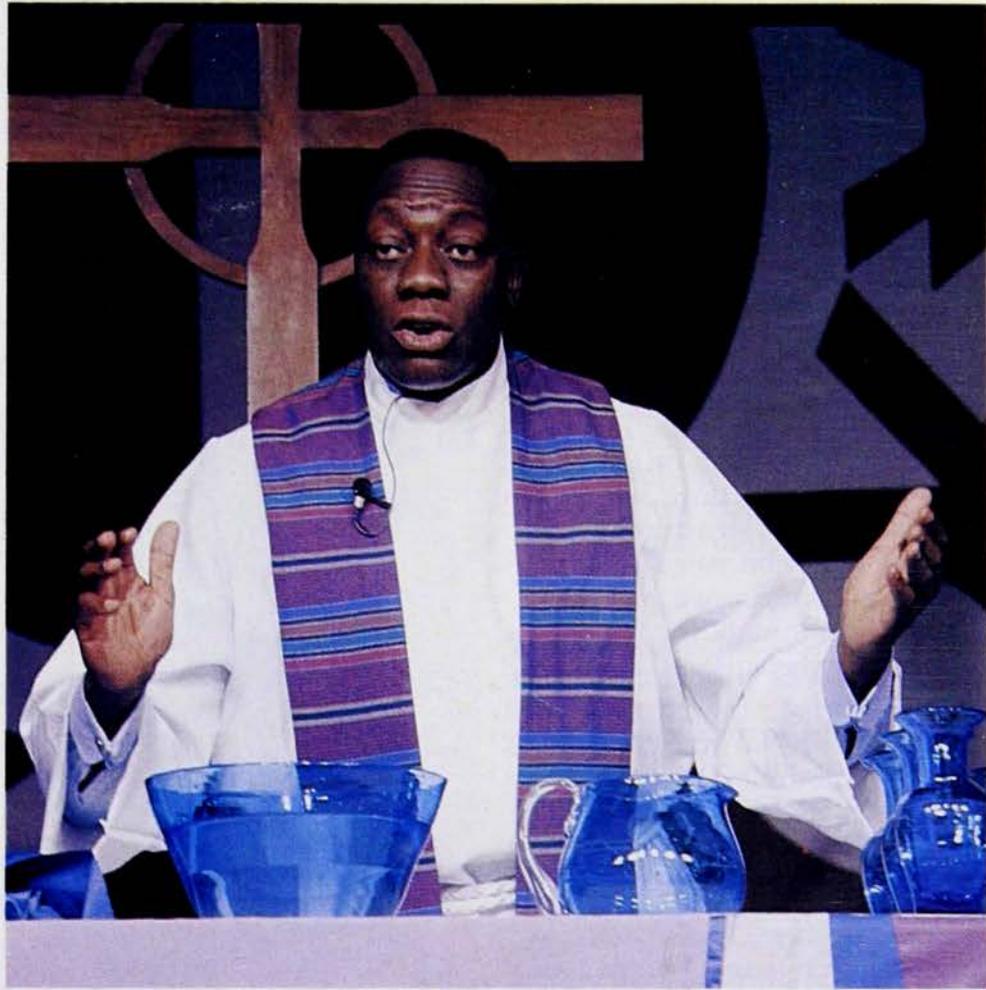
**MCGRAW** Would it be fair to say that the Mission Evangelism Committee helps both the Board and the church to understand and identify the many different ways in which evangelism occurs?

**NUGENT:** Exactly.

**MCGRAW:** This issue of *New World Outlook* is the first issue of a new year, and it is a new year which begins the countdown of the decade which will usher in a new century. Over the past several months, we have witnessed remarkable events and sweeping changes: the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany, the challenge to communism in China and its toppling in East Europe and even in the Soviet Union, the freeing of Nelson Mandela in South Africa and the painful initial movement toward a new South Africa, the disintegration of the Cold War standoff between the two superpowers, and so on.

What challenges do these developments pose to the church in mission? And as the world gropes toward a new international order, what does this say to our global church in mission?

**NUGENT:** Now everyone in the church is using the word "global," primarily because of recent events in Eastern Europe—because we haven't seen those changes accomplished in China, or parts of Asia, or South Africa, or even Latin America. So we're talking about Germany, the Soviet Union, the challenges to communism in China. Because of the technological advances which bring us into faster communication with some parts of the world, we have set our course now on being global. We have not really



*Dr. Randolph Nugent blessing the waters from all over the world at the March, 1987, Global Gathering in Louisville.*

examined the political structures in which all of us still are, or the economic structures which still prevail. We have assumed that these movements in Eastern Europe away from communism are towards democracy. We haven't defined that very carefully.

Even though changes have come in the Soviet Union, for example, there is very serious disorder based on the fact that the economic structure is in shambles and there are new challenges to how the republic will be governed.

We need first to be very clear that God has always called us to be with other people everywhere. The changes we are now seeing are limited political and economic transitions—not the kingdom of God. Moreover they are creating a new captivity to materialism. Look at Eastern

Europe. The poverty and unemployment is very clear for all to see. Now we have to deal with those very, very poor people for whom there will be no opportunity in the market.

**MCGRAW:** There are no longer government guarantees of their support as there were in the old order.

**NUGENT:** That's right. So how can we rejoice when that has taken place? More than that, what is the means by which we mark our relationship one to another?

Are we going to rejoice that we can find new relationships in Eastern Europe and not new relationships in South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, South Vietnam, Singapore, or China?

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Christ was there, and  
the church was there.**

What marks the globality of our church? And how should we *always* have been in solidarity and relationship with the people whom God has given us so that we could be in mission, *in spite of* the political structures under which those people were living?

We have begun to rejoice in the change in *some* political structures which are moving in the direction of those political structures with which we are familiar. But mission has *always* called us to be in touch with everybody anyhow, *no matter what* the political structures were. Therefore it may be *more* difficult to do mission, because we will think that we have brought the Christ to these places, when in fact Christ was always there.

We need also to remember that in those Eastern European countries where there was a Protestant church, they have remained faithful and done significant work which now enables The United Methodist Church to be there. The Russian Orthodox Church taught people how to pray. When you are praying in the midst of chaos, you are close to your God. They were in house churches, in private cells, in their homes. So now when the political system changes, they are still the church ready to be there.

We cannot underestimate our coreligionists, our brothers and sisters in other expressions of the same faith. The Russian Orthodox Church taught people how to survive in the midst of suffering, without anything, and facing constant threats of death or deportation. So the Christ was there, and the church was there. So the whole question of globality needs to first ask what our relationship with our brothers and sisters has always been anyhow.

Secondly, how do you bring about an expression of global solidarity? We are tempted to try to do it with numbers; that is, you need five of these people in that United Methodist meeting, or four of them

in another, and maybe 28 people from Eastern Europe among the directors of the General Board of Global Ministries. And this is what we celebrate. It is understandable because we live in a world in which size is a dominant factor. Like China. They are one-quarter of the world's people. They are a presence, and you can't undo that massive size and its impact on the world.

With regard to United Methodism, you can't undo the size of the church in the United States and its impact on the whole church. But we have to realize that our relationship isn't based on size. There are other things that put us in relationship. The basis for recognizing the authenticity, egalitarianism, and power of a partner church, or brothers or sisters in another part of The United Methodist Church isn't

because they have five members, or a thousand members, or 600 members. We *regard* them as important because they *are* important.

With our large size in the United States, we have to find the humility to understand why it is important that they have equality and are at one with us. Whereas we might have larger numbers coming from one segment of the church, that larger number should not vote its will numerically and arbitrarily. It needs to seek to *understand* the brother or sister coming from that segment of the church which economically and politically may be more fragile.

The church is not just a democratic system. It is much more, and the global question calls attention to that. We need to be sensitive to the question of how we equalize something which we know in numerical terms is going to be unequal.

**MCGRAW:** I hear you saying that what we tend to rejoice in is that the people of Eastern Europe and elsewhere are becoming more like us. They are yearning after democracy, and we are the big example of democracy. And that carries over into our understanding of globality and the church.

We tend to apply those democratic, majority-rule principles, when in truth we are at a time which really shows the correctness and the importance of Paul's image of the body of Christ. What you are saying about new ways of defining and measuring the church with regard to our Eastern European brothers and sisters is that the stronger members cannot say they have no need of the weaker members, the head no need of the foot, and so on.

**NUGENT:** In addition is the whole Pentecost idea, in which there was the recognition that there were different groups, all of which heard in their own language. They didn't have to become one ethnic, racial,

cultural group; they could hear in their own language. So the present situation, while we affirm that people should not be in slavery or under oppressive governments anywhere, we also have to recognize that there *will* be different governments.

Not that we accept the killing, the human degradation, deprivation and starvation. But even if such things were not factors, there would be different ways by which people would choose to organize their lives. The gospel and the church need to be able to transcend that and relate to all people no matter where they are, and not suggest that because you are in country *x* or country *y* I can't relate to you, or that I have something you need to have other than the gospel.

I was reading in the newspaper yesterday about women in Saudi Arabia and how they can't drive cars, and the Saudi women held a demonstration over that issue. We can't be afraid to say that if this society is oppressing women, that's not right, and that's not acceptable. So even though I have said that we have to recognize different governments, that doesn't mean we can condone or rejoice in communities which are oppressing people. Heavens no!

**MCGRAW:** So cultural contextualization does not mean that you have to accept everything in a particular cultural context. Cultural contextualization does not eliminate cultural critique.

**NUGENT:** Exactly.

**MCGRAW:** And also the Pentecost event is the one Spirit expressing itself pluralistically.

**NUGENT:** Yes, and even though North America is a unique cultural and political expression and experience, that doesn't mean that every other area has to be like North America, or that it is the best in the



*Dr. Nugent*

long run. We know that there is starvation in our country, that there are people on our streets that we as a nation do not care for, that there is racism and sexism, that there is exploitation and sweatshops. All of this, here in the United States and globally, calls forth the church's response.

**MCGRAW:** This leads us back to mission evangelism, and along with that congregational development. What new understandings, realities and sensitivities are required in developing congregations?

**NUGENT:** It is a question of what are the terms of our engagement with persons going to be, and with whom do we need to be engaged? In North America, our mission outreach has been fundamentally to the poor and the oppressed. And we

need to continue that. But there also needs to be an engagement with segments of North American society who are not poor and oppressed in the traditional sense. They may indeed be poor in spirit, but they've got lots of resources, and power.

But since the question is resource distribution and power sharing, the gospel has to be proclaimed in their midst. I think part of the problem of developing congregations with missional ideas is that we have approached congregational development in terms of doing mission locally.

The problem is that you cannot be local alone, because as a church we are local *and* global. We have to always work in the local congregation to stretch its understanding beyond the local community; because some of our communities, particularly those with wealth, are isolated communities, in which highways pass over the poor. That means that the capacity and possibility exist that, if you happen to be wealthy, you may not find yourself in a locus or community in which you see anyone except those who have wealth.

The global mission emphasis has to be engaged with the local emphasis everywhere. To illustrate to the point of absurdity, you can come out of the airplane into a glitzy airport, get into a car with smoke-colored glass and you can't see out, and you ride to your palace wherever it is. And you get out never having seen what was around you.

Now remember, both in the United States and around the world, the rich have become richer lately, at the expense of the poor. How can we say to someone who is rich, and who really may never have experienced anything else, you can just do your mission locally in your own community? The mission reality is that

*(Continued on p. 36)*

# The People of PERU

## A New Life in Solidarity

By J. Enrique Larrea O.

Like many Third World countries, Peru faces a terrible economic crisis. But Peru also has unique problems. The geography of the country is complicated and its weather patterns are unpredictable. Loss of state control has resulted in considerable administrative chaos and corruption, as well as political violence on the part of the state and right-wing political groups (unleashed a decade ago by the Sendero Luminoso group). The lack of state initiatives to remedy these situations forces the majority of the general population to live outside the law. The gap has widened between the general population (the "real" country) and the privileged urban minority (the "official" country).

For the third consecutive time over the past decade, Peru has elected a democratic government; yet involvement with the common people is still not an important part of the government's agenda. In terms of current social services and persistent repressions, the "new" government is little different from the military regimes of the past. The people of Peru have survived past devastations and crises in spite of the government rather than because of it.

During the 1960s, the ancient customs and traditions followed by the majority of Peruvians were con-

sidered worthless. Many believed that industrial progress and the development of a highly organized, cohesive nation-state would erase the useless ancient traditions. Yet it is clear that these very traditions have saved the people from total collapse, absolute misery, loss of identity and complete chaos. While the Peruvian people have waited for long-overdue solutions to their problems to come from the state, their traditions have sustained them.

Ancient ancestral customs of survival have constituted the beginnings of self-determination among the Peruvian people. Through adherence to tradition, the people have begun to gain a small measure of political and economic independence. Self-determination efforts have included the construction of schools and homes, the creation of jobs, the sale of land to peasants, as well as organized struggle to obtain workers' rights and to get

popular cultures represented in the media. Rather than looking for solutions to come from the government, the Peruvian people have relied upon themselves and organized their own initiatives.

### Small Groups as Alternative Power

Over the past decade, new types of organizations have arisen in those sectors which were not previously organized, and new methods have been implemented in previously organized sectors. Influenced by feminist thought and the need to obtain better living conditions for



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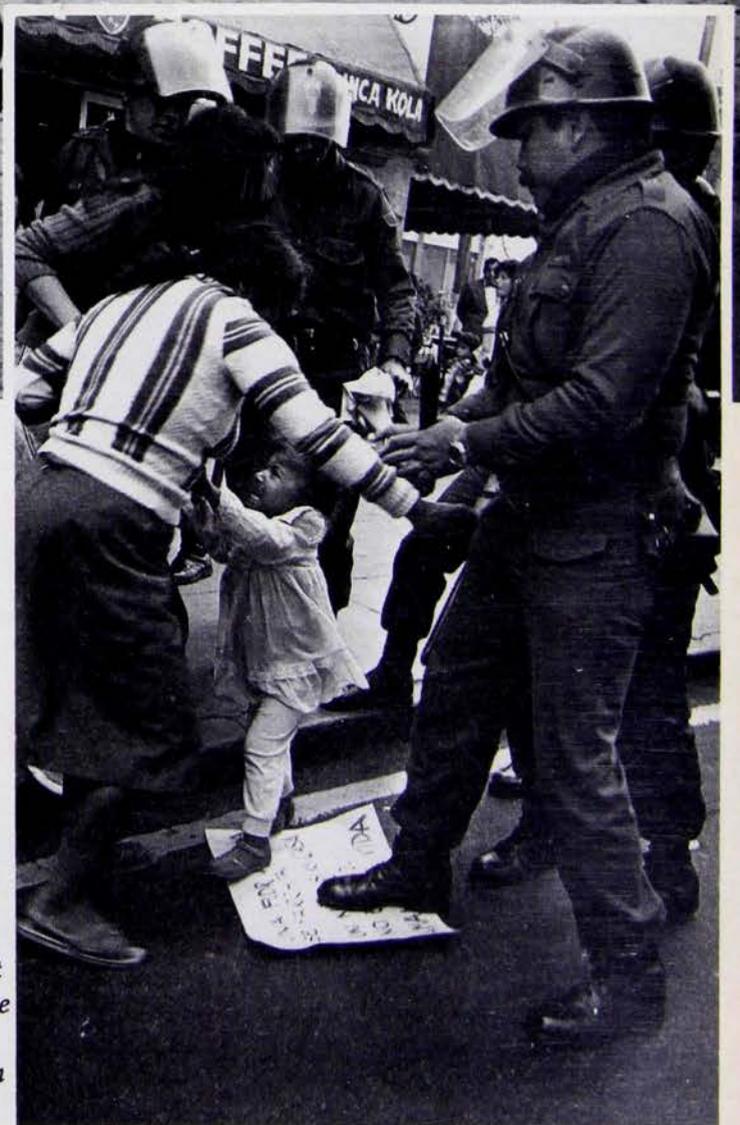


their families, young women and peasant women have assumed new social responsibilities and have been crucial in the organization of soup kitchens, Glass of Milk committees, workshops and so on.

Other groups, although not as numerous, have been important to the self-determination of the people. The "rondas campesinas" (volunteer police) consist of workers from the countryside who have organized as a kind of civil police force to defend the peasants against criminals, administrative corruption and the abuses of the Sendero

*(Above) "The photography workshop has helped us to organize a union alliance of five mines in the Morococha district in the face of the abuse that befalls many miners."*

*(Right) "We are the victims of constant aggression—arbitrary detentions, house searches, torture, assassinations—which keep us from developing our own possibilities."*





(Above) Peasant leaders

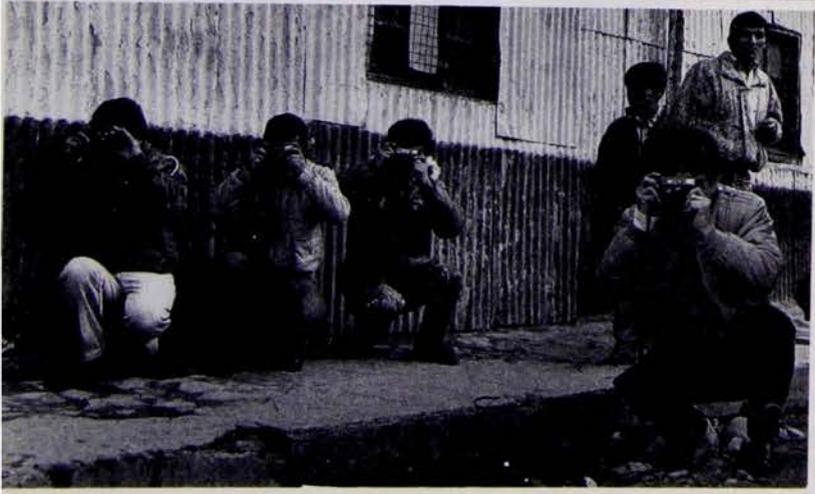


(Above) "Our wives are the center of the struggle. Without them, the struggle would be a failure."

(Below) "The pictures we take speak with clarity for us."

(Right) "Because of the altitude of our country and its dangerous climate, our people face difficulties in growing food in the mountains. Sometimes there are severe hail storms which tear and kill our crops."

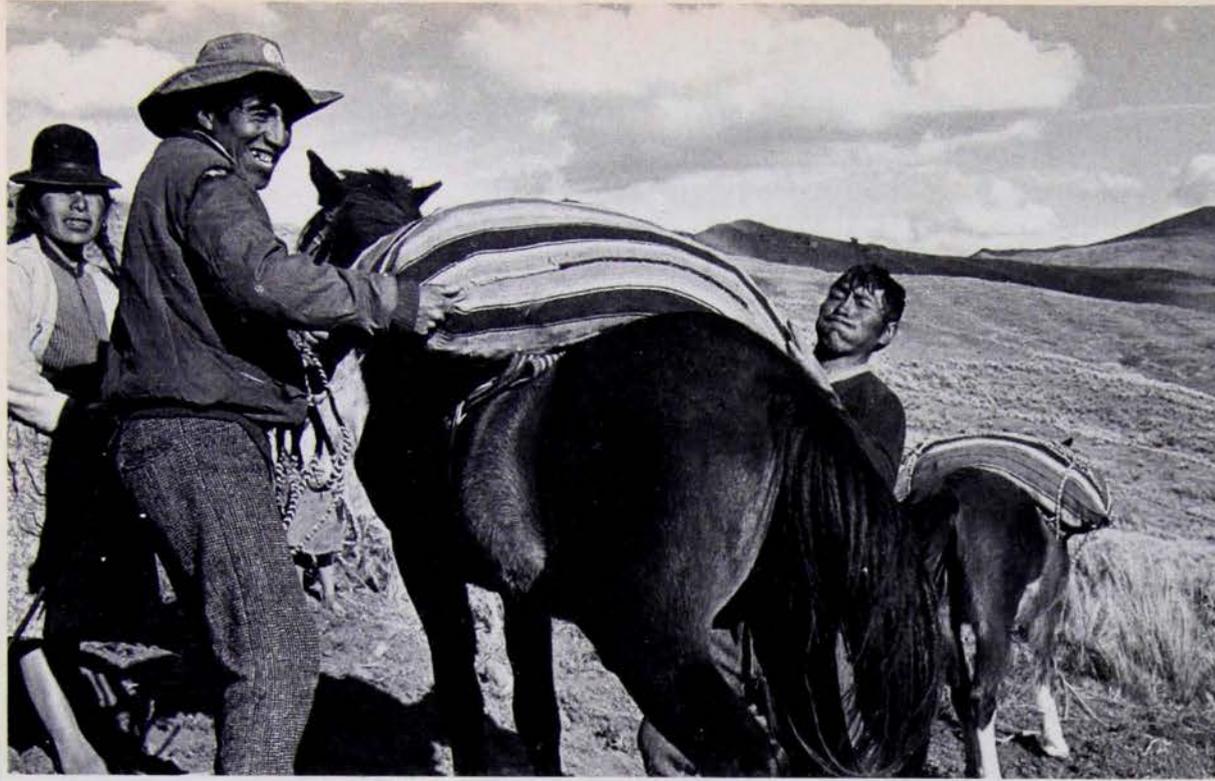
(Inset right) "The reality of our situation is that there are few services available, little education, few health programs and no health insurance."



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uminoso group. Provincial and district clubs welcome migrants and help to preserve and transmit regional expressions of the Andean culture which are less-appreciated in the urban areas. Several religious, athletic, youth, and nursing groups encourage people to express their particular culture and customs without fear of repression (unlike national celebrations which impose a social conformity). Unions, peasant communities, and small groups of merchants continue to strengthen their own organizations and hold forth the hope of projecting a new vision for Peruvian society.





“Through our photography, we are trying to recapture ancient customs and traditions, and to share them with other communities and peoples, as well as to learn from them.”





*(Above) "We take pictures to document our pain and to denounce what has been done to us. We can take the pictures to the authorities."*

*(Inset left) "We struggle for equal pay. What we don't want is one salary level for stable workers and another level for contractors."*



These photos were taken by members of TAFOS, a workshop of social photography comprised of amateur photographers from the base communities in Peru who represent many different sectors of the population: peasants, urban developers, miners and students. The photos were taken with simple automatic cameras, and the quotations accompanying the pictures are in the people's own words. Together the words and pictures tell what is happening in Peru today by documenting both the current conditions and the future hopes of the Peruvian people. □

*J. Enrique Larrea O. is the director of TAFOS based in Lima, Peru.*

# Beneath the Surface

## A Middle East Church Perspective on the Persian Gulf Crisis from Gabriel Habib

On the eve of Thanksgiving, 1990, Gabriel Habib, general secretary (since 1977) of the Middle East Council of Churches, stopped by the headquarters of the General Board of Global Ministries in New York City to share his perspective on the momentous events in the Persian Gulf region. The Middle East Council of Churches is an ecumenical organization embracing four families of churches: Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant.

Gathered with Mr. Habib were Sue Robinson, executive secretary of the GBGM World Division's Middle East Team; Dale Bishop, executive secretary for the Middle East Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); and James R. McGraw, New World Outlook consulting editor. The results of their probe of Mr. Habib's perspective follow.

**What are the perceptions and concerns of the people and the churches in the Middle East with regard to the current crisis in the Persian Gulf—the U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the United Nations resolutions regarding the use of force?**

**HABIB:** I think there are three aspects that concern the people in the Middle East, and the churches in particular. One is the legitimacy of the international resolutions taken concerning the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

Most of the people in the area would consider the United Nations to be a legitimate organization that must have the authority to impose sanctions when international law and its charter are violated. Because all the countries in the world—those



Gabriel Habib



Dale Bishop

that are being violated and those that are violating the rights of some people through occupation and otherwise—have accepted the legitimacy and the instrumentality of the UN for the implementation of such sanctions.

There is a concern about the intentions of the United States. It seems that the United States is using the UN for an objective which is not *only* the withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait. Certain things point to a long-term agenda beyond the issue of withdrawal. It is understandable that the United States should, through the escalation of force and display of military power, impress and scare Iraq in order to make it withdraw from Kuwait. But the number of troops and the large amount of arms that are installed there indicate something bigger than the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. Especially when Iraq has said to the United States, "Let's talk," and the U.S. has taken the position, "We talk only if you withdraw."

Some behavior on the part of the United States indicates that it is taking the lead rather than the UN. The U.S. appears to be using, misusing or abusing the UN.

There also is the question of the interrelatedness or "linkage" between the various conflicts in the region. Middle Eastern people can understand that there should be pressure on Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. But they cannot understand how all this force could be mobilized solely for that purpose when it was not mobilized (or any fraction of it mobilized) with regard to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict or Lebanon or Cyprus or any other issues of war and peace in the Middle East.

The U.S. seems to say that all the human things—the values of justice, the development of people in the area, their aspiration for peace, their frustrations, their history—have no value in comparison with the selfish economic objective involving oil. There is a problem of a double standard. In that sense, you

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ave many people saying, "Well, the Americans are selling us for a barrel of oil."

The long-term U.S. agenda seems to be a military presence to control the flow of oil and the powers in the region, so that it would not be destabilized every now and then and threaten the American interest. It is an agenda which suggests that now that there is no longer a threat from the Soviet Union, the "demon" should be seen everywhere. And the U.S. must have the responsibility of controlling the "demon" and therefore must have a higher budget for the Pentagon for more weapons to deploy any time, any place in the whole world.



Sue Robinson

If the European nations get together in 1992, they might attempt to control that situation, since they need at least 50 percent of the oil from the Middle East. Thus there is a perception that the U.S. wants to be established there before the Europeans can take control.

There is a kind of vicious circle between insecurity and the sale of arms. It is also feared that, by keep-

ing the Middle East situation in the climate of insecurity, the states of the area will continue to buy arms from Western countries and from American industries. The resources of the area will then be recycled into arms and military technology, and will be sent abroad instead of being used for development of the region.

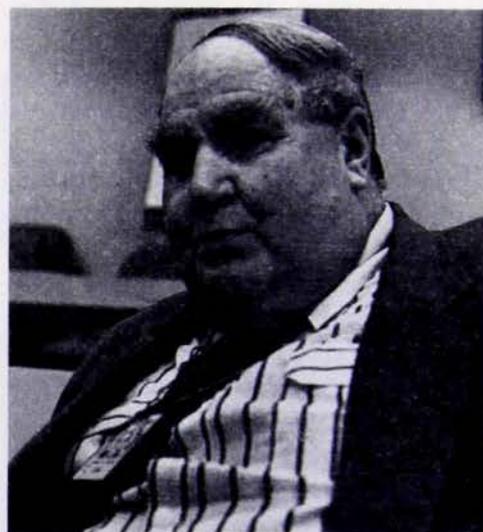
Some people make the connection between the objectives of the U.S. and the objectives of Israel. When the U.S. indicates a desire to destroy Iraq no matter what (whether it withdraws from Kuwait or not), they are reminded of what Israel has been saying. Palestinians get more nervous, and side with Iraq against the U.S. rather than normally siding with the U.S. and challenging Iraq (even though theoretically they are saying that Iraq doesn't have the right to occupy Kuwait).

**Are the Christian communities feeling any special pressure from the Muslim communities because of so many Western people being in Saudi Arabia?**

**HABIB:** Politically, no. Religiously, yes.

Politically, the Muslims are divided, and they could be putting pressure in two opposite directions. It also depends on what level we take the Muslims. The regimes, even if they say their constitution is Islamic, or the heads of the state are Islamic, it is one thing. The liberal silent majority is something else. Radical Islam is still another thing.

But politically speaking, they are not putting pressure. Religiously, however, those who are in support of the sanctions and the U.S. policy now, and those who are not in sup-



James R. McGraw

port, view the Western presence in the area as a new crusade. And this is definitely bad because it's wrong. This is what we in the churches are trying to demonstrate to the Muslims: that the churches in America or in Europe are not necessarily an addendum to their administrations. They could be a distinctive prophetic voice. Therefore, there is a religious kind of image, although no direct pressure at all. In the newspapers sometimes you have people writing articles, talking about Western intervention as a new crusade. Some evangelicals are also speaking about the American military presence in terms of biblical prophecy and Armageddon.

We think that the churches should help their constituencies not fall into that "religious war" trap. This is not a Christian war against Islam at all. And the demonization of Saddam Hussein, or the Middle East population, or the Arabs, or the Jews, whatever, is wrong and should be overcome. Otherwise you cannot have a responsible kind of role in peace-making.

**What about the Arab nationalism aspect?**

**HABIB:** This is one of the aspects of the tension that exists in the Middle East between the nationalist option for the future and the ethnocentric or religious-centered type of society.

For many, Saddam Hussein symbolizes the trend towards nationalism. Because nobody takes him seriously on the religious Islamic aspect, his opposition to Western powers reminds people of the time of the movement to win independence from the British and the French.

Now that it appears that the West is coming back to stay, people go back to that period when Gamal Abdel Nasser, for instance, boosted their pride against Western occupation. Also, those who are not very much in favor of religious fundamentalism would think that if the option of Saddam works, then religious fundamentalism would fail and you would again revive a reformist liberal nationalism.

The Islamic movement that is supporting Saddam Hussein is supporting him for political reasons. It is a short-term, tactical alignment. Those in Egypt, for example, who are opposed to President Mubarak (because his government is considered to be a liberal regime) have to say Hussein is right in order to stress their opposition to the Mubarak regime. So you have to be with somebody to oppose somebody else.

Other groups may be opposed to the Saudis or to the Iranians. So the alliance with Saddam Hussein is short-term in opposition to the pro-Western, pro-American camps. But they could consider Saddam Hussein's regime as not being Islamic enough, so that it must be overthrown one day for a more Islamic society in Iraq.

**Speaking to the churches in the United States, what would you say to them in terms of how the U.S. churches can be in solidarity with the churches in the Middle East, and Christians can be in solidarity with their brothers and sisters there?**

**HABIB:** First of all, I am grateful to the churches and church leadership in the United States who have been trying for the last decade to understand, and make their people understand, the real dynamics of the situation. Changes have occurred in many churches on the level of their mission policies, their official statements, visits, involvement in issues of peace and justice, and support of

## The churches have the responsibility to interpret the reality of the Middle East to their constituency.



humanitarian service done by the churches and the Middle East Council of Churches. We know how much Church World Service, UMCOR, and all kinds of departments or boards of the various churches have done.

We have to continue the way of partnership together. One way is that of making our constituency more sensitive and more informed. Because sometimes our constituency may be used or exploited when it does not know the truth. The innocence or ignorance of people can be used, misused or abused by the powers and principalities of this world.

The churches have the responsibility to interpret the reality to their own constituency. Not only do the churches need to interpret the immediate events and actualities that are usually conveyed through the media, but also, through the actualities and events, the churches need to explain and help their constituencies understand the historical background.

In our part of the world and in our collective memory, we go to the alpha and the omega of things. People in the U.S. are more in a hurry in relation to history. They want the "catch word;" they want the immediate thing, the event, and then to be finished with it. "Let's do it quick because time is precious." For us in the Middle East, time is precious, but time is inclusive of the alpha and the omega. It's not just the moment. In our part of the world, if

we want to be on the same wavelength within the universal church as the common body of Christ, we have to be sensitive to the churches and people in the United States. We have to take them in their culture and understand them. And they have to do the same.

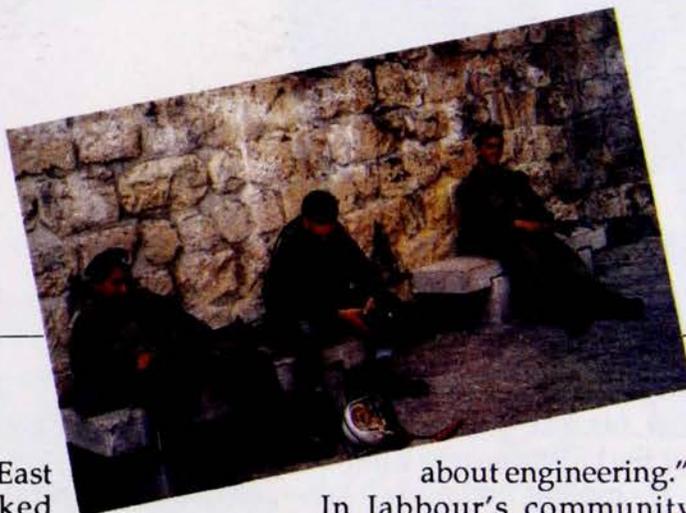
I also would ask the church to be a prophetic voice, lifting up the moral and ethical values. People in the Middle East who confuse the churches with the U.S. administration, and consider President Bush to be the patriarch of the American churches, then would see that this is not true. Even if people agree with their president to a certain extent, I'm sure that there is space for the churches to remind the U.S. administration that it has to be more faithful to its own principles and must not play the double standard game with anybody. The soul of the nation has to be salvaged by the moral voice, which is the voice of the churches, and that voice must be projected everywhere and translated into action.

Finally, I hope the U.S. churches will continue to support all efforts to relieve the pain of the people who would be the victims of any eventuality that may occur if the powers of this world and their objectives prevail rather than the moral voice that will prevent us from going into war and move us to fulfill peace. If the moral voice does not prevail, we will have too much suffering, too much destruction of life and property. Human solidarity and the church's solidarity are expected to continue to respond to those needs.

Here the churches can learn from history—their own history. In Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East, despite the appearance of destruction, there are underneath the potentials of construction and creativity which need to be enabled and brought to the surface. And this is how we understand Jesus Christ.

He came into a place where you had so many divisions—wars and massacres—to be the seed of creativity. We followers of Jesus Christ of Nazareth cannot but see that the Holy Spirit has planted seeds in that troubled part of the world which need to be revived for unity and peace in the Middle East today. And Jesus was and is the prototype of unity and peace that we have to follow. □

# LIGHTING A CANDLE FOR PEACE



*Young Israeli soldiers relax at the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem.*

BY LAURA ENGLE

Elias Jabbour knows a peacemaking process as old as the hills. In fact, if you stand on his property you can see the hills where it all began. He is a Palestinian Christian from the land of Galilee.

Jabbour believes Palestinian Christians are a forgotten minority in the Holy Land. Yet Shefa-Amer, a village near Nazareth where the Jabbour family lives, has sheltered Christian families for centuries. "Our people were among the first to hear the disciples' message thousands of years ago," he says.

Today, perhaps as they did centuries ago, the Jabbours and other Arab-Christian families find themselves voices for peace in a land torn apart by war. "We are the land of peace, but we have no peace. A land of love, but we have no love," says Jabbour. That is why he has established the House of Hope, a peacemaking center in the Holy Land.

In the autumn of 1989, Jabbour and the young people from the House of Hope participated in a youth exchange, consisting of Jewish and Palestinian youth, that traveled to Germany to witness the destruction of the Berlin wall. "I had been to East Germany many times and seen the wall," Jabbour said. "You've never seen such an ugly thing. The ugliest wall in the world!

On one side the East Germans walked with sad, angry expressions on their faces and just ten minutes away was West Germany, so modern, so thriving. I said to myself this wall is never going to go." Yet in November, the delegation from House of Hope—Palestinian and Jew together—witnessed the destruction of the wall, and while they watched some of the differences between them also dissolved.

A Jewish guide who accompanied the group to Germany, eager to help the young people build understanding between them, suggested that Jews and Palestinians room together. One young man protested and refused. The Jewish tour leader pleaded with him to be tolerant. "Let them alone," Jabbour suggested. "Let them share rooms with their friends if they want. We do not have to force this exchange. Understanding and friendship will come."

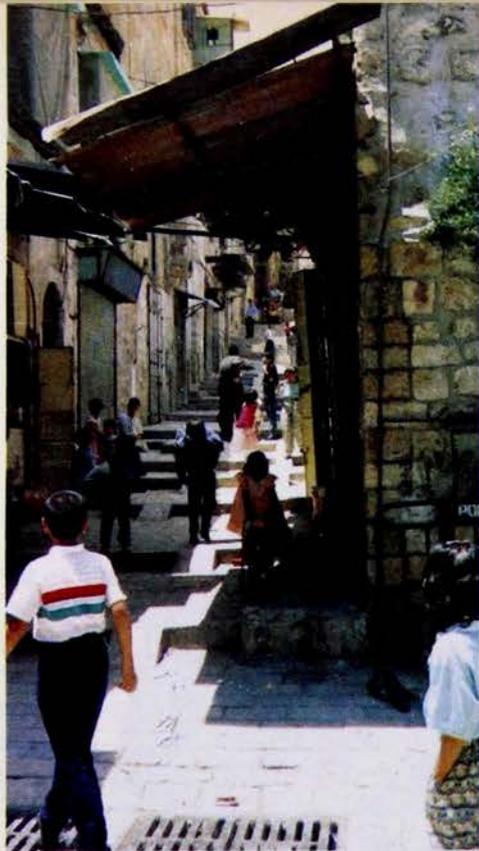
As Jabbour tells the story, several days later the same student came to him. This time he *wanted* to room with the Palestinian student. "I thought you wanted to room with your friends," Jabbour responded. "But Mr. Jabbour," the young man said, "he is an engineering student, and I am an engineering student. We want to room together and talk

about engineering."

In Jabbour's community, the peacemaking process is called the Sol-ha. The community calls upon a leader respected by all to help settle differences. He must be a man of spotless reputation whose word is "like gold." His goal is to restore both rights and dignity. "Both of them must be restored and both sides must leave smiling or you will not have peace," says Jabbour. "When we arrive at a solution, we make the reconciliation public. The two parties must shake hands in front of everyone, otherwise we cannot be sure the anger has gone out of their hearts. Then, they take a meal together. I wish the Israelis and Palestinians could sit down and share a meal together," he says with a broad smile.

What accounts for the hope that drives Jabbour's House of Hope? He has a ready explanation. "It comes from having a father such as mine," he says. "My father served our town as mayor and he was a man of peace. Always I was with him, only a boy, bored by the whole thing. But it seeped in unconsciously, and today I use those same techniques to settle disputes in my community."

The ancient community of Shefa-Amer, situated just ten miles from Nazareth and five miles from Zippori (Mary's "hometown"), is



(Left) Street scene in Old Jerusalem.



(Above) A woman selling fruit in the marketplace of the Arab section of Old Jerusalem, and a Christian grandfather and grandson in Manger Square in Bethlehem in the West Bank.

rumored to be "the town where Jesus lost his hat." "Just imagine him over the hills in nearby Zippori, visiting his mother's relatives," Jabbour smiles. "The boy Jesus was bored and went to play in the hills. Finding himself in Shefa-Amer he saw the people gathering in their doorways for an evening card game. 'Come and play with us,' they shouted to Jesus. 'But I have no money,' he said. 'Then play on your hat,' they suggested." According to legend, Jesus played and lost!

Villagers in upper-Galilee cherish such stories which illustrate that Jesus was one of their own. In Shefa-Amer today, men still gather in their doorways at twilight for a friendly game of cards. "Jesus Christ stood on these very hills and said 'Blessed are you peacemakers,'" Jabbour reflects. "I think it is my highest Christian calling to take up this message of peace now in this land."

Yet peacemaking is not an easy process in Israel, and does not necessarily make the peacemaker popular. "When I began the House of Hope I thought people would kiss me on both cheeks because they were so thankful," Jabbour explains. "Instead I get questions and sometimes anger from both sides." Though he feels constant pressure to sympathize with one side or the other, Jabbour's Christian faith impels him to try and understand all

points of view. "This is the art of living!" he says good naturedly.

Tolerance for diversity has enabled members of the House of Hope to enjoy life among the disparate groups in their community. Christians are a small number, and in some Arab villages Christians and Moslems live together. Jabbour respects his Moslem neighbors and they in turn respect his Christian witness. "I do not need to try to convert them," he says, "this does not show them respect. I am happy though, when a dispute arises, for example, among the Druze (an ancient Moslem sect), because they will call on me to help mediate though they know I am Christian."

Sometimes peacemaking is only a matter of seeing what's there. On a recent trip to Germany, the House of Hope delegation gave their German tour guide a shock. The guide ran to Elias Jabbour imploring him to come quickly, two of the boys were in the cherry orchard fighting. When Jabbour arrived on the scene, he found the two boys, Arab and Jew, having a "regular Middle-Eastern political discussion." One had climbed a cherry tree and the other stood on the ground. They appeared to be having a heated argument. "But what's this?" Elias said. "They are not going to kill each other; they are only having a political discussion. In the Middle East this is the way we talk politics, with all of our

hands and all of our hearts. Nothing to worry about."

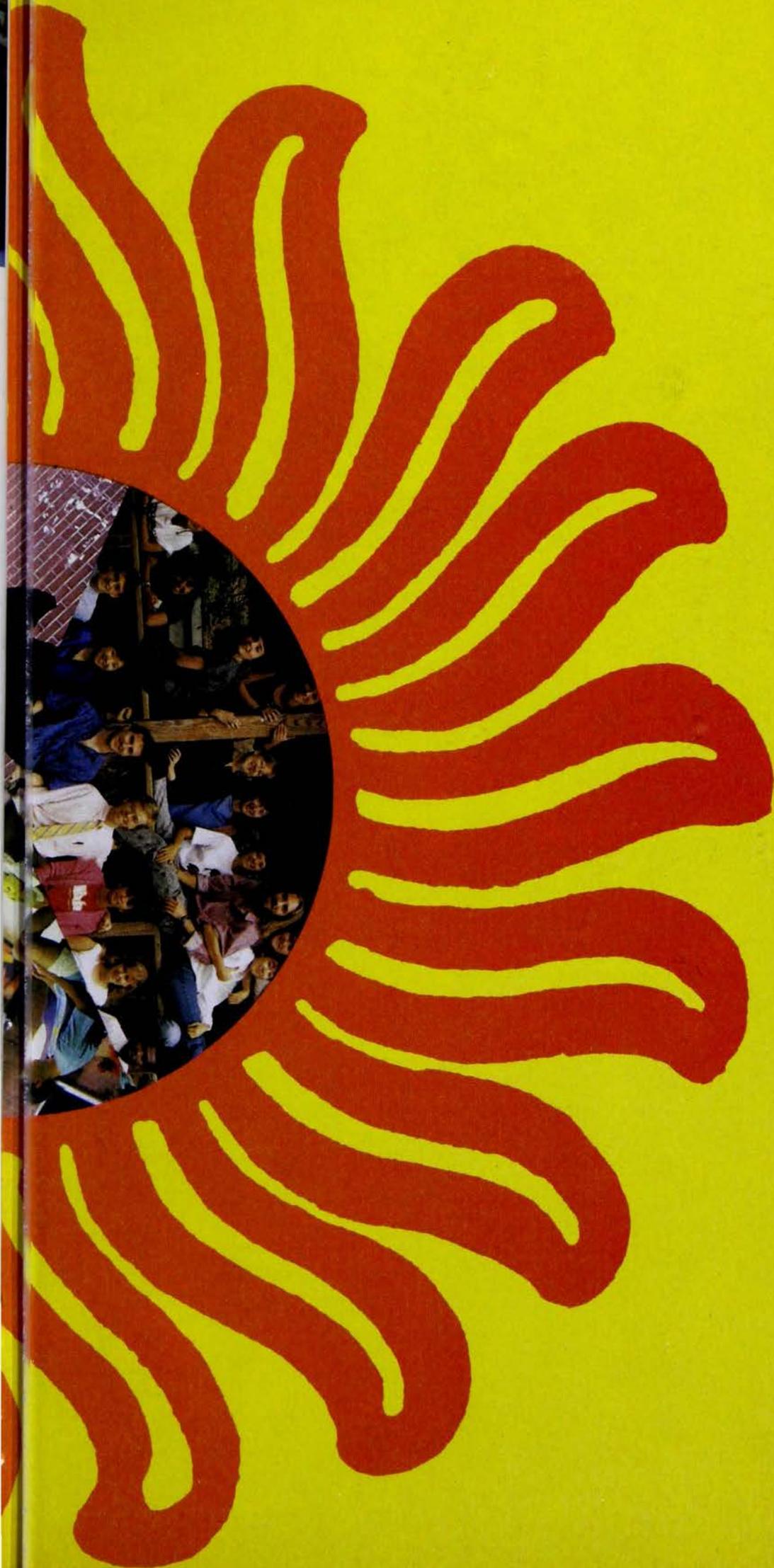
He has been called an idealist to take up the mantle of peace as an Israeli-Palestinian. His dual identity leaves him only a fine line to walk while trying to speak for peace. Despite his naturally idealistic nature, Elias Jabbour understands the practical difficulties of living faithfully in the midst of conflict better than most. "I inherited this problem from my father," he says, "and I do not want to pass it on to my children."

The Jabbour children are already becoming young men and women. What will their future hold? More conflict, undoubtedly, and the ever-increasing need to maintain hope. "I know," says Jabbour, "that the House of Hope will not dispel the darkness. It is merely a candle in a very dark place. But it will bring some light to those around it, and if (the international visitors to House of Hope) carry the candle of peace into their lands and remember us, then our situation becomes brighter." □

*Laura Engle first met Elias Jabbour when he visited George Fox College in Oregon, and she later visited him at the House of Hope. She is a member of the First United Methodist Church, Portland, Oregon. Ms. Engle is a free-lance writer living in Newberg, Oregon.*

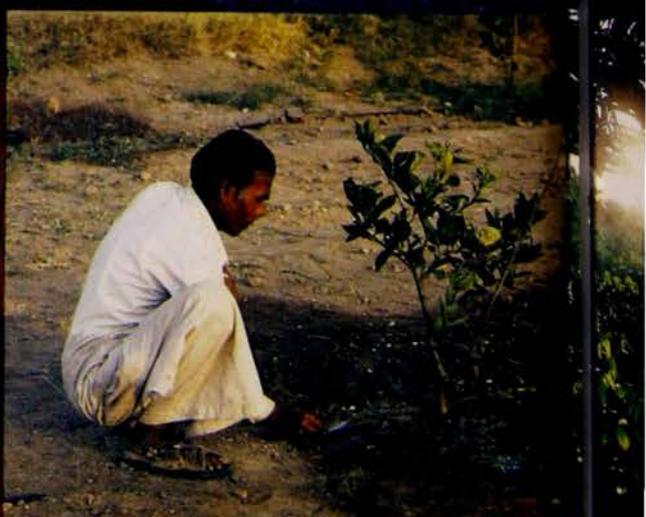
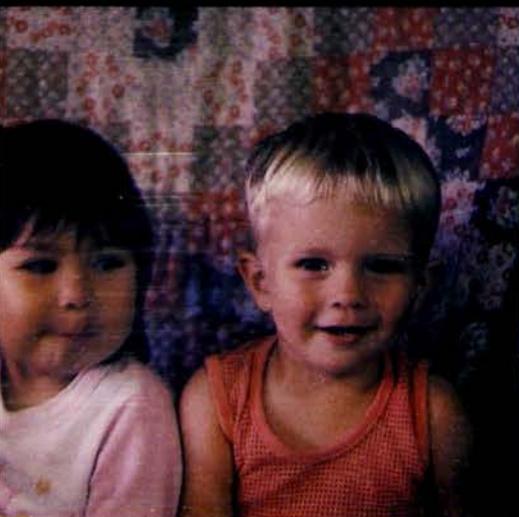
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REVELATIONS 21:5



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*For more information contact:*  
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# Still We See Thee Cry

We live in Bethlehem. We watch bus loads of tourists go by on their way to see the birthplace of Jesus. We can see their faces peering out from the windows of the bus.

But we have a very different view from our front room window. It looks down into the entrance of a Palestinian refugee camp.

We used to hear and see hordes of small children on their way to school. But no longer: all of the schools on the West Bank are closed indefinitely. The children are losing their chance for an education.

'Issa (not his real name) lives in the camp next door with his parents, four brothers, and three sisters. He is 18, and he wants to go to the university, when and if it opens. For the moment, his education is quite different.

His matriculation began at midnight. An army truck and bus pulled up at the camp entrance. Soldiers entered the camp and approached several of the homes.

'Issa was asleep with his family. The whole family was suddenly awakened by soldiers banging on the door. When 'Issa's father opened the door, the soldiers pushed past him into the house. 'Issa and his brother 'Abed were roused from their beds. They were handcuffed, blindfolded, and hauled off to prison in the army bus. Six other camp youths were arrested in the same sweep.

The eight boys were held without trial in an army detention camp. They can be held for six months,

without charge, and without being brought before a judge. It is called "administrative detention."

By February, 1989, 30,000 Palestinians had been ar-

rested since the beginning of the *intifada* uprising in December, 1987.

Some 6000 were in prison, and more than 1200 were being held without trial under "administrative detention."

There is one bright spot in the situation: weddings are cheaper now!

The traditional village wedding can cost as much as \$10,000. The groom's family is expected to buy the bride thousands of dollars worth of gold jewelry as a "bride price." A feast must be prepared for the hundreds of kinfolk and friends of the two families. A hall may be rented and orchestra hired for the wedding parties.

Since the uprising, all that has changed. So many families are in mourning that parties and festivities are considered to be in poor taste. The traditional "bride price" is either reduced or waived. Many young men and women are taking advantage of this bargain; it is about the only joy to be found in the land in these days.

What does it mean to be a Palestinian in the Israeli occupied territories? It means living with constant fear and humiliation. It means being treated as a despised alien in one's own country. It means discrimination in the job market. It means being denied all citizenship rights, and all political expression.

by David and Willow Teeter

By February, 1989, 30,000  
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Street scenes in Bethlehem (above and next page).

The *intifada* has come to Bethlehem, the town where Jesus was born. Children saw their fathers being humiliated, their older brothers shot or dragged off to prison. They concluded that such a life was not worth living.

David Teeter



The older Arab generation had given up. Many of the fathers had simply bent their necks and accepted their fate as "hewers of wood and drawers of water." The new generation decided not to accept the situation. The children saw their fathers being humiliated, their older brothers shot or dragged off to prison. They concluded that such a life was not worth living. So they began confronting the soldiers with stones instead of fleeing in fear.

That was the beginning of the *intifada* (which means "uprising," or more literally, "to shrug off"). It began in the Gaza Strip and soon spread to the West Bank.

The West Bank refers to the territory captured from Jordan by Israel in the 1967 Six Day War. One million Palestinian Arabs live in the West Bank. There are 20 refugee camps housing 100,000 refugees from the 1948 war. Some 94 percent of the Arab population are Muslim; and about four percent are Christian.

The *intifada* has come to Bethlehem, the town where Jesus was born. Bethlehem is an Arab town in the Israeli-occupied West Bank territory. It was once an all-Christian town. However, due to the large in-

flux of Muslim refugees, Muslims make up 60 percent of Bethlehem's 34,000 residents.

The Christians were slower to get involved in the *intifada*, although they also had felt oppressed by the occupation. Christian merchants were caught in the middle between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Israeli army. The PLO ordered a series of commercial strikes. The army tried to force the merchants to ignore the strike orders. When the army imposed punitive taxes on the merchants, the Christian community was drawn into the struggle.

The *intifada* caught both the PLO and the Israeli army off-guard. Belatedly, the PLO tried to assume a position of leadership over the stone-throwing youths. They began putting out leaflets to organize the strikes.

A year of *intifada* finally pushed the PLO into a political initiative. A Palestinian state was declared, the PLO recognized Israel, and the

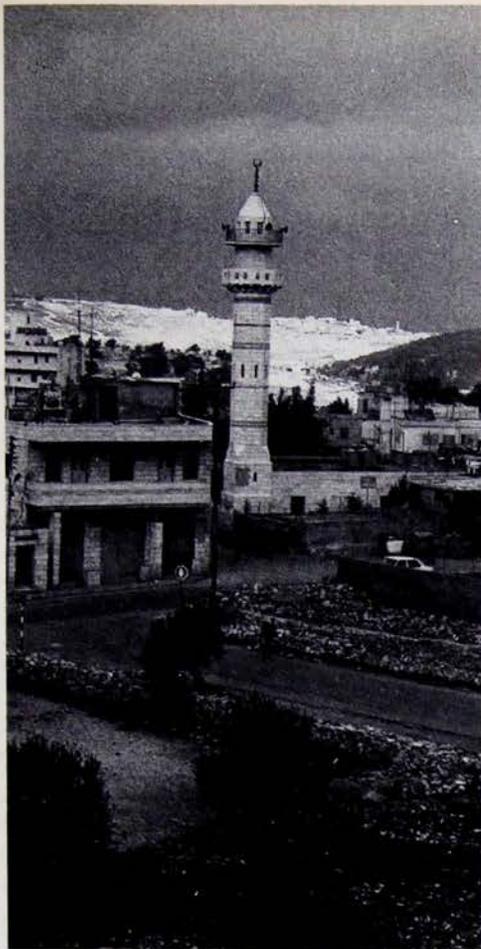
United States entered into dialogue with the PLO.

Israel's response to the *intifada* was to bear down even harder with its "iron fist" policy. This only added fuel to the fire by trying to put down the uprising with the same methods that caused it in the first place. Some of Israel's top military leaders conceded that there is no military solution to the *intifada*. How did Israel get into such a dilemma?

The founders of the State of Israel had hoped to realize three values:

- To establish a Jewish state
- To establish a democratic state
- To "redeem" the biblical "land of promise."

But that *promised* land was not *empty* land; it already had a large Arab population. If Israel took *all* of the land, the State of Israel would have an Arab majority. If Israel gave Arabs equal rights as citizens, Israel would not be a Jewish state. And if equal rights were denied to the Arabs, Israel would not be a democratic state.



The United Nations solution was to partition the land into a Jewish state and an Arab state. Israel, after much internal debate, accepted the proposal. The Arab states rejected it. This led to the 1948 war. The West Bank, with its large Arab population, ended up under Jordanian rule. Thousands of Arabs were displaced as refugees from Israeli territory. Israel had a solid 85 percent Jewish majority inside of its 1948 borders.

But Israel's victory in the 1967 war reopened the issue. Israel gained control of the territories, with their Arab population. Once again Israel was faced with the question: Should Israel annex these territories, or give them up as part of a peace settlement?

In 1967, a peace settlement seemed far away; so no decision was made. For Israel, the occupation was a convenience. Arabs from the territories do most of the menial jobs and construction work in Israel. Industrial development in the territories has been suppressed, and the territories serve as a captive market for Israeli-manufactured goods. Thus the occupation has enabled Israel to enjoy the benefits of the territories without having to give rights to the Arab population.

In 1977, Israel launched a mas-



sive settlement program in the West Bank. The idea was to prevent any future Israeli government from ever giving up the territories. By February 1, 1989, two billion dollars had been spent to build 109 settlements for the 67,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank. The Israeli government remains deadlocked on the "territory or peace" issue.

As Americans working in Bethlehem for the past decade, we feel Christ has called us to be "servants of reconciliation." We are trying to break down barriers of hostility and prejudice.

Christian support for Israel is highly publicized in this land. Christian tourists from America have told local Arab Christians, "God gave *all* of the land to the Jewish people; you Arabs are just trespassers."

Our Palestinian friends ask us, "Why are you Americans giving Israel money and weapons to kill our children?" Too often we are asked, "Why do Christians in America hate Muslims? Or Palestinians? Is this what Jesus taught?"

How do we answer such questions? First, we pray for God's grace

Bethlehem is an Arab town in the Israeli-occupied West Bank territory. It was once an all-Christian town. However, due to the large influx of Muslim refugees, Muslims make up 60 percent of Bethlehem's 34,000 residents.

to walk in the spirit of Christ. We open our hearts and our home. We try to show Christ's love in patient, loving service.

We are not alone in this. Through the General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist people are working to demonstrate Christ's love in practical ways. For example, the Board of Global Ministries supports two hospitals; one in East Jerusalem, and one in Gaza. Hundreds of injured Palestinians, many of them women and children, are being cared for in these hospitals. The Board is also involved in local development projects. In this way, Christ is reaching out in love to bring healing and hope to the people of this troubled land.

And this also is what we see from our window in Bethlehem. □

*F. David Teeter is director of Project Redemption in Bethlehem, and is also academic dean at Bethlehem Bible College. Willow N. Teeter is co-director of Friendship Center in Bethlehem, which ministers to Muslim university students. She taught at Bethlehem University for several years. Natives of Washington state, David and Willow have three daughters and three grandsons living in their home state.*

# Changing Views of Christians Toward Judaism

By Paul Bock

In the twentieth century, and especially since World War II, significant changes have taken place in Christian-Jewish relations, particularly in regard to Christian views of Judaism. Ideas which have been held for more than 1900 years have been re-examined, revised, and, in many cases, rejected.

There were many factors that contributed to these changes. They include new findings in biblical and theological studies, participation in Christian-Jewish dialogues, and reflection on the meaning of the Holocaust. Religion scholars in the United States and Europe have contributed much to the modified thought. One of the centers of Christian-Jewish dialogue is Temple University in Philadelphia. The *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, published at Temple, is in the forefront of scholarly pursuit on this topic. Not only scholarly articles, but also church pronouncements reflect the changed views.

## Old and New Covenants

Until recently the Jewish covenant was considered to be fulfilled by the Christian covenant which rendered invalid God's special relationship with Israel. The Christian Church was viewed as the New Israel. By rejecting Jesus, the Jews presumably forfeited their covenant relationship. The destruction of the second temple was the warrant for this claim.

Such views are changing. According to Paul Van Buren of Temple University, the Christian Church is the community of the Gentiles who have been drawn by the God of the Jews to worship Him and to make His love known to the nations. That, however, does not annul the Jewish covenant.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA expressed the same idea in this statement: "We affirm that the church, elected in Jesus Christ, has been engrafted into the people of God established by the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore, Christians have not replaced Jews....We affirm that both the church and the Jewish people are elected by God for witness to the

world."

A striking change in Roman Catholic thought took place at the Second Vatican Council. It issued a "Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to non-Christian Religions" which contains the words, "the Jews still remain most dear to God because of their fathers, for He does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the calls He issues." In the same vein, Pope Paul II addressed a group of Jews in Germany as "today's people of the covenant concluded with Moses." And, as if to make sure that no one missed the point, the Pope specifically referred to the Jewish people as "the people of God of the old covenant never retracted by God."

While some scholars perceive Jews and Christians as participants in two aspects of one covenant, Rosemary Ruether of Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary accepts a two-covenant theory and anticipates an ultimate convergence of the two in the Messianic Age. Jews look for a Messiah who has not come. Christians believe that He has come; but it is quite apparent from world events that the Messianic Age has not. Both religious communities, she says, can aspire for the Messianic Age.

**Rejection of Anti-Jewish Attitudes**  
In reflecting on the Holocaust, Christians have expressed penitence for having contributed

throughout the centuries to the anti-Jewish sentiments which reached their peak in the venomous persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany. One of the manifestations of this penitence is seen in the determination among Christians to re-examine and revise many of the teachings about Judaism in Christian education and worship.

The World Council of Churches (WCC), to which most Protestant and Eastern Orthodox churches belong, denounced every form of anti-Semitism in its founding Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948. In its 1961 Assembly in New Delhi, India, the WCC urged its member churches to do everything in their power to resist anti-Semitism, insisting, "In Christian teachings the historic events which led to the crucifixion should not be so presented as to fasten upon the Jewish people of today responsibilities which belong to our corporate humanity and not to one race or community."

In a similar vein, the Roman Catholic bishops of the world, meeting at the second Vatican Council, declared in 1965: "True, authorities of the Jews and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ (cf. Jn.19.6); still, what happened in His passion cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, nor upon the Jews of today....The Church...deplors the hatred, persecutions and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at any time and from any source."

Some of the strongest expressions of penitence have come from Germany, the site of the Holocaust. For example, the Synod of the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland



*Easter in Jerusalem*

proclaimed, "We confess with dismay the co-responsibility and guilt of German Christians for the Holocaust."

Christian biblical scholars have benefitted much from the studies of Jewish scholars, thereby gaining new perspectives on Hebrew Scriptures and increased appreciation for the contribution of the Jewish heritage to Christianity. A number of distortions are being corrected, among them the negative views Christians have taken toward Pharisees and toward the Law.

Christian leaders have joined with Jewish leaders in their criticism of the famous Oberammergau Passion Play which, despite some changes in the introduction, still (they believe) presents a distorted view of Jewish leaders in the time of Christ and tends to absolve the Romans of their responsibility for Christ's crucifixion. Christian scholars are beginning to admit the Jewish charge that there is some anti-Semitism in the New Testament itself. (Rosemary Ruether does so in her

book *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism.*)

### **The State of Israel**

Christians have been trying to understand the theological significance of the state of Israel for Jews. Historically there was little Christian interest in this topic. The perpetual wandering of Jews was viewed as punishment for rejecting Jesus Christ. Also, in Christianity, there is no direct connection between religion and land such as there is in Judaism. For centuries Jews have prayed "next year in Jerusalem." They have been bitterly disappointed by the fact that the Vatican has not recognized Israel.

The lack of consensus among Christians is reflected in a statement of the American Lutheran Church which notes that Lutherans themselves take three positions: (1) a "theology of the land" seeing in the state of Israel a fulfillment of biblical promises; (2) a "theology of the poor" making special reference to the plight of the Palestinians; and (3)

## Possibly the most critical point in Christian-Jewish relations has to do with evangelism; that is, with the Christian mission to the Jews.

a "theology of human survival," pointing out that the validity of the state of Israel rests on juridical and moral grounds.

A statement of the Presbyterian Church USA manifests an appreciation of the meaning of the land for the Jews: "Not only is Israel a reminder of the vitality of Judaism but it also reminds us of the particularity of biblical faith. We are often inclined to assume that God reveals himself through abstract principles and universal categories. The 'scandal of particularity' is manifest in Jewish identification with Israel in a way which parallels the 'scandalous' claim of Christianity that the full and decisive revelation of God to man is Jesus of Nazareth."

The Netherlands Reformed Church also expressed understanding for the Jewish state when it said that if God's election of the people and the promises connected with it remain valid, then it follows that the tie between the people and the land also remains by the grace of God. However, the same document objects to the treatment of the non-Jewish people as second-class citizens. More recently, tension between Christians and Jews has been exacerbated by many Christian statements which, while recognizing the rights of the state of Israel, champion the rights of the Palestinians.

### Christian Mission to Jews

Possibly the most critical point in Christian-Jewish relations has to do with evangelism; that is, with the Christian mission to Jews. One of the factors impeding dialogue is Jewish suspicion that, despite all disclaimers by Christians, the

dialogue itself is just one more means of converting Jews.

In the traditional Christian view, it is the Christian duty to convert Jews and, at numerous times in history, all sorts of coercive measures were used to that end. Many Christian documents issued since World War II have denounced proselytism; that is, coercive measures of conversion.

Today there are three views concerning Christian mission to Jews: (1) Christian mission to Jews is of primary importance because their conversion is connected with the end-time of history; (2) Christian witness to Jews is like the church's witness to any other people; and (3) Evangelizing Jews is unnecessary. Jews have their role as God's people; just as Christians have theirs. While positions (1) and (2) are still widely held, position (3) is gaining adherents in recent years.

Swiss Roman Catholic theologian Hans Küng has said that, in view of the sorry record of Christians in their relation to Jews, the present task of the church is not to *convert* the Jews, but to *be converted* itself to a humanitarian and theological encounter with Jews that might provide church members with new self-understanding. In a similar vein, the Texas Conference of Churches has stated: "In response to this movement of the Holy Spirit today we believe that the desired and most appropriate posture between Christians and Jews is one of dialogue."

The Rhineland Synod in Germany has made perhaps the most thoroughgoing statement of any Christian judicatory to correct negative teaching about the Jewish people. With regard to evangelism,

it says, "We believe that in their respective callings Jews and Christians are witnesses of God before the world and before each other. Therefore we are convinced that the church today may not express its witness towards the Jewish people as it does in missions to the peoples of the world." The same document stresses the importance of Jews and Christians working together for justice and peace, and thus serving together as a sign of hope in the future as promised by God.

Robert Willis of Hamline University found a unique way of expressing opposition to a mission to Jews: "It would be a total denial of our own Way if we even pretended to try to show it to the Jews, for they already have their way of being in the Way and, indeed, our way of being in that Way presupposes the validity of the Way in which their ancestors were traveling before we came along and in which they continue to walk."

John Pawlikowski of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago summarized the recent progress in Christian-Jewish relations by quoting a rabbinic colleague who said to him that Jews and Christians have moved, as a result of their encounters over the last decade, from the status of "second" cousins to "first" cousins. One might hope that in the coming decade the relationship will become even closer. □

*Dr. Paul Bock is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ and a former professor of religion at Doane College in Nebraska. He is the author of In Search of a Responsible World Society (Westminster, 1974) and Signs of the Kingdom (Eerdmans, 1984).*

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# MISSION TO THE JEWS?



The church seems to suffer a dearth of self-criticism when it comes to Judaism. The anti-Semitism of Christian Scripture and practice has not created much to attract Jews.

During the last two decades of the 19th century, the long history of Christian anti-Semitism created havoc for the Jews who lived within the Russian empire. Sanctioned (and often instigated) by both the Orthodox church and Czarist rulers, thousands of Jews lost their lives, homes, and property as pogroms swept the southern and western borders of the dying Romanov Empire.

"The last eight months of 1881," wrote W. Bruce Lincoln in his book *In War's Dark Shadow*, "saw 70 times more pogroms than had occurred in the entire first eight decades of the century...*Bei Zhidov!* 'Smash the kikes!' The cry struck terror into the hearts of Russia's Jews....Fanned by the shameful bigotry of the Russian masses, the shout quickly swelled into a fearsome roar....(T)he Bishop of Kishinev actually...blessed a crowd of pogromists as he passed them in the street, while not far away the mob was raping 16 women and girls....Russian Jews were better off to seek new lives elsewhere."

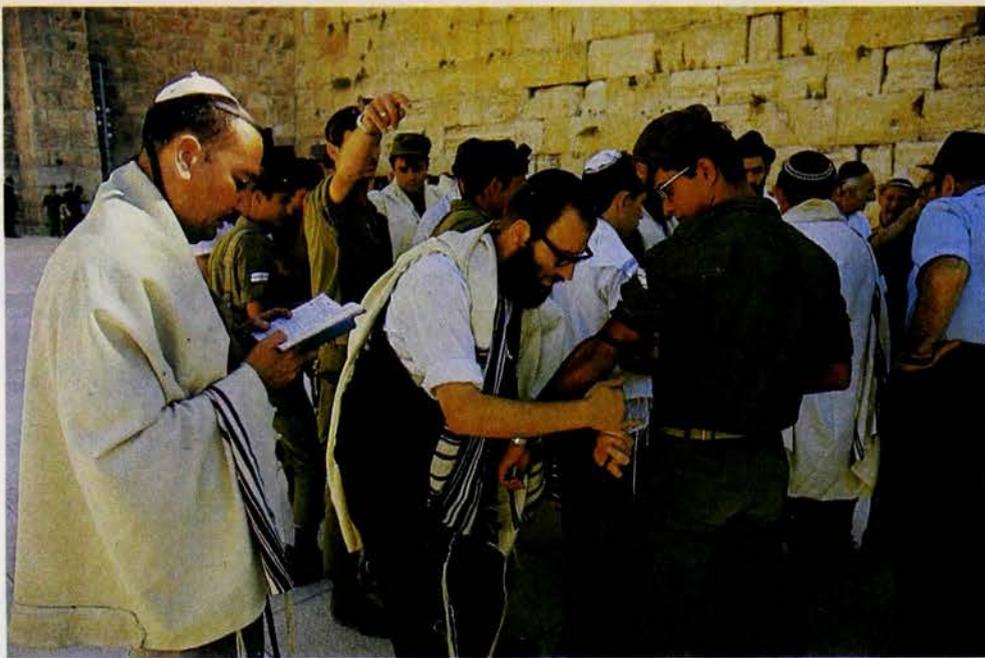
My grandfather, Hershel Goldstein, did just that. In 1904, he left a village near Warsaw in Poland to seek a new life in the United States, where many Jews had already fled. His wife Lena and four children followed him to New York City's Lower East Side the following year. In 1906, their last child was born. He was named "Joseph" but was called "George" after George Washington. He is my father.

I became aware of being Jewish in a second generation immigrant community, which at the time was predominantly Catholic (Italian and Irish) and Greek Orthodox. There must have been Protestants, but I

only became aware of them later. As a youngster, I learned that, as a Jew, I was somehow different than other people. The Hebrew school I attended in a nearby Jewish Community Center reinforced this awareness. When I was told that my gentile friends were not welcome for after school athletic activities, I was troubled. My best friends and their families were Roman Catholics who taught me similar lessons about being a Jew.

My father did not "practice" Judaism in the home. I learned that "fitting in" and not calling attention to myself as a Jew was prudent behavior. Jews raised during the Holocaust sometimes chose this course. It was not so much a denial of being Jewish as it was an attempt to fit in and be left alone. Although not directly affected by the Holocaust, I learned very early on not to expect good from Christian gentiles. Whether the lesson came from my family, or from Jewish friends, I do not recall. When I was 13, the year of bar-mitzvah, I abandoned all childhood influences to be part of the wider Jewish community.

High school brought an interest in religion, through the tutelage of my mentor at the time, a literature teacher, amateur-theater director and an elder in the Presbyterian Church. In reading 17th and 18th century American and English literature, I learned about Protestantism and religious symbolism. The Mathers, Ann Hutchinson, Hawthorne and Melville all challenged me. A performance of Graham Greene's "The Potting Shed" (directed by my teacher) elicited my first ideas about the figure of Jesus.



## The question for Christians ought to be whether we are faithful to God—not whether the Jews are faithful today or were in Jesus' day.

Depending on what I was reading, I fashioned myself a deist or agnostic; yet I was intent about religion if only in its rejection.

I remained distanced from formal Christianity by the seemingly senseless Baltimore catechism understanding of my Roman Catholic friends; and later by my Baptist friend's attempt to convert me by way of a Billy Graham movie. As some headed for an altar call in the front of the theater, I headed out the back door.

In college, the civil rights and anti-Vietnam war movements opened religious questions more deeply for me. My need for acceptance led me to a Methodist college community that was asking questions about its own faith and church; challenging the institution in its apparent failure to address the social issues of the day. My search for faith in the midst of a society gone mad was challenged with the gospel by a Methodist chaplain.

Jesus the Jew embodied the values that were forming in me. An effective piece of "evangelism" transpired as these Christian persons tried to overcome the complacency of the church in defining a religion that was more faithful to the gospel.

I was attracted to a social and ethical salvation, not a pietistic one. The Christ who came into my life as

we celebrated the Eucharist each week was concerned about justice and peace. I came to believe he had saved the world—and me. I sought baptism; and in this symbolic moment I embraced Christianity and my Jewish identity at the same time. Not very orthodox on either count. But my faith rested on One who was not really high on orthodoxy.

I share my personal journey to raise questions about the church's understanding of its relation to Judaism, and its so-called mission to the Jews. Having participated in Jewish-Christian dialogues over the years and now serving the General Board of Global Ministries, I remain troubled when conversion of the Jews becomes the agenda—whether as understood by our thankfully pluralistic denomination or in a more unfortunate vein by the self-proclaimed "evangelical" churches and denominations. I too have understood my vocation as a clergy person in terms of evangelism; that is, by challenging Christians to greater faithfulness and commitment to a vision of the reign of God through following Jesus Christ, rather than trying to convert persons of different faiths to Christianity.

The church seems to suffer a dearth of self-criticism when it comes to Judaism. As a Jewish-Christian, it seems remarkable to me

that we could be so arrogant about our historical witness over the millennia. Quite frankly, the anti-Judaism of Christian Scripture and the anti-Semitism of Christian practice has not created much to attract Jews or to be attractive to Judaism.

A remarkable passage from Andre Schwartz-Bart's novel *The Last of the Just*, has always haunted me:

*Two Jews, Ernie and Golda, are talking.*

*Golda asks Ernie, "Tell me, why, why do the Christians hate us the way they do? They seem so nice when I look at them without my star." (She is referring to the Star of David which she was forced to wear during World War II.)*

*"It's very mysterious," murmurs Ernie in Yiddish. "They don't know exactly why themselves. I've been in their churches and I've read their gospel. Do you know who the Christ was? A simple Jew like your father, A kind of Hasid."*

*Golda smiles gently. "You're kidding me."*

*"No, no, believe me," Ernie answers. "And I'll bet they'd have got along fine, the two of them, because he was really a good Jew. You know, sort of like that Bal Shem Tov—a merciful man, and gentle. The Christians say they love him, but I think they hate him without knowing it. So they take the cross by the other end and make a sword out of it and strike us with it!"*

*"You understand, Golda," he cries suddenly, strongly excited, "they take the cross and they turn it around, they turn it around, my God...."*

In this post-Holocaust era, it seems quite untenable for a Christian to seek Jewish conversion. Two thousand years of active and passive persecution by persons baptized in the name of the Lord of love ought to cause faithful followers of Christ to question their motives for seeking Jewish conversion. To dissociate ourselves from such a Christian history is sin—both of commission and omission. If we as Protestants seek to dissociate our-

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selves from responsibility for our past, to what Christian ethic are we being faithful? How can we consider ourselves true disciples of Jesus?

From the biblical scholarship of the past 60 or 70 years, it is apparent to me that Christian self-understanding is at its best when it is theocentric. Jesus pointed a pagan gentile world toward an understanding of a universal God who is beyond any particularism which divides humanity—for any reason—especially division having to do with oppressed and oppressors, haves and have-nots.

Jesus criticized the religious establishment of his day for its failure to be faithful to God. He spoke as a Jew to Jews during an extremely pluralistic time in a rapidly changing culture. Whether or not Jews are any more or less faithful to that God today than they were in the first century seems to me to be primarily a Jewish question. God knows Judaism is no more monolithic than Christianity. The question for Christians ought to be whether *we* are faithful to that God (and there is little evidence that we are) not whether the Jews are faithful today or were in Jesus' day.

Simply put, Christians have enough to do working for God's reign of justice and righteousness without worrying whether Jews have a right understanding of Jesus.

The most exciting evidence of life and faith in the church today comes from the varied witness of Christians from other cultures and nations; a witness which should cause North American Christians to re-evaluate our cultural myopia, and our tendency to define Christianity by white American culture with its individualism, materialism and bellicosity.

As a United Methodist, I am often surprised by our anti-Semitism. I have told my story many times from pulpits around the U.S., only to discover how unaware our church people are of their relationship to Judaism. We are too patronizing of our roots and historic identity. I've

## Christians have enough to do working for God's reign of justice and righteousness without worrying about whether Jews have a right understanding of Jesus.



Hershel Goldstein

been called "rabbi" enough times to almost believe it. Even if white Christian people have stopped telling ethnic jokes to black brothers and sisters, they still tell Jewish jokes around people like me.

Have my brother and sister preachers stopped equating Pharisees with modern normative Judaism? Have they attempted to place first century Jewish practice in its context? Do we preach about the social and political factors which caused the early church to intentionally establish itself against its Jewish identity in the face of Roman persecution of the Jews in the first century and into the second? Do we mention why the authorities, both Jewish and gentile, were politically threatened by Jesus of Nazareth on Good Friday and Easter? Or do we

still perpetrate stereotypes worthy of 1950s B-movie westerns—replete with good guys and bad guys wearing white and black hats?

When was the last time you heard a sermon allude to the dissociation of early gentile Christian communities from Judaism in order to survive in the face of an increasingly hostile Hellenistic culture? When does the church confess its emerging identification with an oppressive empire rather than following the wandering Jew of Nazareth who lived on the edge and identified with the oppressed?

Ten years ago, I visited Israel. It was an important experience for me. It was the first time I had ever felt part of the majority culture, and not a minority person, somehow different. Upon my return, I awakened one night from an especially vivid dream. In the dream, I was trying to catch a wise man, who was in the guise of the tour guide named Beno with whom I had traveled in Israel. As I pursued him, Beno was transformed into flying animals and scurrying creatures. Finally he returned to human form and allowed me to "catch" him. He asked what I wanted. I had a question for him to answer. "Why Jews and why Christians?" I asked.

It was my own question as a Jew and as a Christian follower of Jesus the Jew. "Neither today nor tomorrow may you be given the answer to this question," said Beno, "for it would drive you mad."

In God's grace I pray that one day we might live into an answer to my question which witnesses to the respect and acceptance of each other by two peoples with a common thirst for justice and peace to be faithful in love for our God. For God has a mission to Jews, Christians and all other of God's children. □

*Stephen Goldstein is an ordained elder and member in full connection of the New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. He is executive secretary of Field Interpretation for the Mission Education and Cultivation Program Department of the General Board of Global Ministries.*

**The mission problem  
is that you cannot be  
local alone, because  
as a church we are  
local and global.  
When we teach,  
preach, pray and sing,  
it is never done  
in isolation.**

**Nugent**

(Continued from p. 11)

the *whole* church is called to bring the reality of the *whole* world to that particular community; to each locality.

So congregational development must be a missional congregational development which makes it very clear that a congregation, though located in a specific community, has global ties with everyone in the world. When we preach, teach, pray and sing, it is never done in isolation.

Mission evangelism is outreach. No matter where you sit, the new mission evangelism calls for outreach beyond your local community to all parts of the globe, with *everybody* doing it. We cannot only have mission with the poor and powerless. We also have to have mission with the rich, the famous and the powerful.

Mission evangelism outreach has got to move us into an understanding of the call of Christ which transcends all political and economic structures. What is most important is not that we sit under a particular national government but that we belong to God in Jesus Christ. And no matter where we sit, we need to understand our relationship one to another.

**MCGRAW:** Listening to you it occurs to me that the Great Commission needs now to be interpreted in a more inclusive way. Part of the "going unto all nations and making disciples" is bringing those nations to the awareness of those communities you are talking about. The going unto all nations also means bringing an awareness of other people to those congregational pockets that you have described.

**NUGENT:** I was in a taxi the other day and the language coming from the radio was Arabic. I sensed it was some kind of religious service or prayer. I asked the driver and he



said he was listening to the reading of the Koran. Even though I did not understand the language, the cadence of the reading and the driver's attitude toward it was a spiritual experience for me also. I realized that followers of the Koran are here in the United States in substantive numbers, and exposure to the Koran is going to be much more commonplace in our everyday lives. I am not Islamic, but I tried to feel the link we have with the Koran.

**MCGRAW:** Muslim, Jewish and Christian, we are all people of the Book. There is a definite link through Abraham. Which brings us back to the Pentecost story. In a real sense you heard it in your own language even though you didn't understand the language.

**NUGENT:** And in a real way, Jim,

we were worshipping together in that taxi, the driver and me. It wasn't a fast, frantic taxi drive. Inside of that vehicle there was a different presence. It was really interesting.

**MCGRAW:** Let's talk a little bit about missionaries. Who are missionaries today, and how should the church's concept of missionaries change with the changing times we have been noticing, and how do missionaries themselves need to change their own self-understanding and vocational definition?

**NUGENT:** As we broaden the base of understanding of The United Methodist Church in every place, we need to recognize that people from every place will be responding to the mission. We need to be very sensitive to the fact that the communities of persons who will be missionaries will reflect our church in its entirety. The mechanism which is utilized to recruit, to prepare, and to train missionaries must be sensitive to that. We will find missionaries coming from all segments of our church—all races, all cultural and ethnic groups, all language groups and geographic areas.

I believe there is another change taking place in the United States in the nature of self-understanding and ministry among those who respond to God's call to missionary service. Instead of giving themselves freely to God's call to be *sent* anywhere to *serve* anywhere, much more attention is being given to the needs of those who are called as opposed to the call itself and the place to which the call directs them. We find ourselves having to spend more time worrying about how much money they are going to get.

A lot of people want to be somewhat comfortable before they give of themselves. We have to spend more time worrying about compensation for things which may be lost by missionaries if, during the mission endeavor, some event occurs

which motivates them to leave that mission place. They lament that they are not able to take all of their worldly goods with them; as opposed to their saying, "Well, that's gone, but I didn't lay up that treasure there anyhow, so let's get on with the mission."

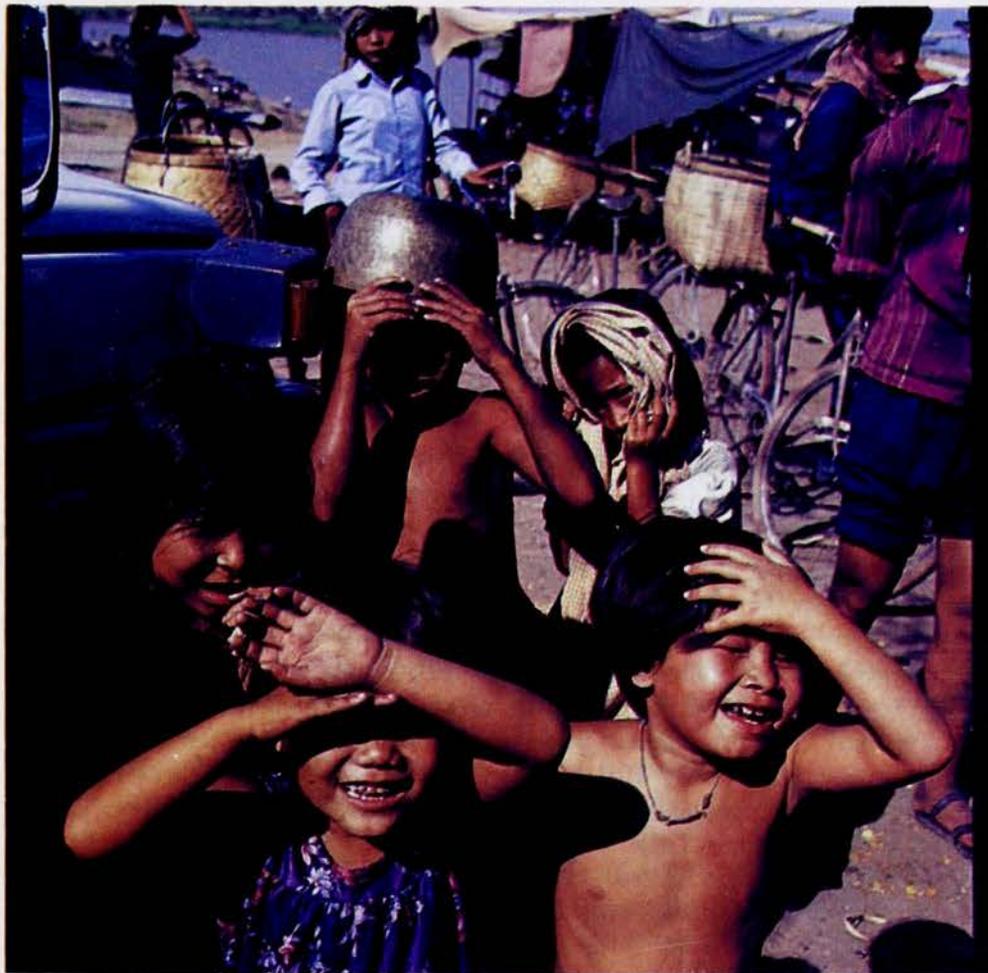
**MCGRAW:** Is this part of mission education and missionary training? That is, to lay out very clearly what it means to serve or be served?

**NUGENT:** Oh, very much so! But you can't do it all in the training. This goes back to our congregations, and the tendency to equate *success* with *wealth*. The persons who come out of these congregations may also fit that mode, so that what I call "worldly possession" may be viewed by them as "necessities." It is very hard in training to help such people lay aside those "necessities," and to begin to give themselves to God with abandon. That has to begin to happen in the congregations.

In our congregations, we are not talking enough about giving yourself to God *fully*. Or about not laying up treasures for yourself. So how can we expect our people to understand what servanthood means?

Missionaries have to understand that they are in connection with people everywhere. They have to understand "connectionality." It means that when they are in mission in *any* place—say in urban communities or rural communities in the United States—and there comes a time of confrontation or stress within that society and even danger to their own lives, they are to remain there *if* they really are with the people.

Or when they are in Liberia, or Mozambique, and the question comes up "do we bring our missionaries home?" It raises a fundamental question about who we are—even though the people there have said the missionaries can go home. Do we have the luxury to



*Children of Kampuchea*

move ourselves from one place to another, if we are truly with people, when crisis comes in that locality? Should we even think about it? Or should we say, "This is now our home, and we must share everything that happens here."

That is not an administrative question which can be addressed administratively. It is a question of the nature of mission, and the nature of our relationships with people.

**MCGRAW:** We have said that neither the Great Commission nor the call can be cancelled. But I would suggest that the call can be clarified. People get the call in many different contexts; and it seems to me, without questioning the legitimacy or the power of that call, we can clarify it, and lead persons toward a connective understanding.

**NUGENT:** That's right. And a lot of people are quite willing to share their lives. If we are going to clarify the call, we have to clarify it in such a way that missionaries will understand themselves as being one with the people, and will not be thinking "now I can go back home to wherever I came from."

It is true that "you can't go home again"—not in the same way. Once you have seen, you cannot. We need to help missionaries clarify their call so that they see the mission not only in the places where they are serving but also in the places from which they have come. Those who have gone from place to place need to understand themselves to be in mission to those at home when they return—not only in terms of understanding the people in those places where the missionaries have been but in terms of helping people in

**Look at all the people flooding into America from different places on God's earth. Well, that is God sending them to us in answer to our prayers about declining membership. God says, "I'm sending you lots of people. Just open the door and bring them in."**

congregations to understand themselves.

Mozambique is a good illustration of people who have given themselves over to mission. For example, the doctor who started out as a short-term volunteer and then returned as full-time missionary, saying, "If war comes, don't bring us out. Use the money you would have used on travel 'escape' to send more supplies for the hospital." And her colleagues share the same commitment. They have given themselves entirely to the Lord, under the management and supervision of the church in the place where they are and alongside of the local leadership.

Most so-called Third World countries—and here I am talking economics only because that is what "third world" is about—do not have the capacity to export military violence very far beyond their own borders. When we talk about Mozambique, the war there is not isolated to Mozambique, and the war in Angola is not an Angolan civil war. It is exercised, promoted and sustained by outside forces. Therefore we must do mission in our own midst because it is the United States, for example, which undergirds the military forces in Angola. Being from a place which has global economic, political and military reach makes it *urgent* that the people of the United States understand the consequences.

Last night on television, a woman was being interviewed who had lost a son in the Middle East. He was a marine, and he was killed in the marine barracks explosion in Lebanon. Now she has another son in the desert in Saudi Arabia. And the mother said, "I'm afraid. I don't know fully what is going on." And I thought that this mother needs to be helped to understand what is happening there. Not just what our president says, although that certainly is part of the reality. But there are other parts of the reality; and there are not only two sides. We need to present as many of those

sides as possible to help people to understand.

For example, a very high percentage of American soldiers at the front in Saudi Arabia are Spanish-speaking, who have not even been in the United States more than two years. Sergeants have been recruited from Puerto Rico and other Spanish-speaking areas to lead these troops. And also you have a very high percentage of black troops at the front.

**MCGRAW:** It begins to look suspiciously like combat not only to protect our "style of life," as the president said, but also to enact retroactive immigration population control.

**NUGENT:** Here it is very hard. What does God call us to do? To be faithful to *all* of God's creation or only to a *part* of God's creation? It's very difficult. But it is the same question for missionaries. It is not only a question of under whose jurisdiction they serve. We know that they are under the jurisdiction of the local church in the area in which they go. But do they *become* a part of the people, and if a crisis comes, do they *remain* a part of the people?

**MCGRAW:** We have just celebrated the 50th anniversary of UMCOR. It began as a special agency of the church, and has since be-

come part of the Board structure. How should our notion of relief response change accordingly?

**NUGENT:** As I understand it, the Methodist Committee on Overseas Relief began with Bishop Welch. I was the pastor of a church which Bishop Welch also once pastored. The spirit he left reverberating off the four walls of that church must have augmented my missionary soul!

One of the things he did was to raise our consciousness about the condition of people in Asia. I don't mean to suggest he was limited in any way. I think he was speaking to the conditions of people in a particular place at a particular time. Knowing Bishop Welch's record, I do not think he focused his attention *outside* the United States exclusively, nor did he limit his relief concerns to disasters resulting from so-called acts of God.

In focusing his attention upon Chinese people whose communities had been devastated by war, he was not only responding to the flooding which resulted from the destruction of dams but also to the *overall* conditions of people. I think that provides a clue as to how we should view disasters globally, as well as in the United States. That is, we must recognize the disaster of hunger and starvation which comes from economic structures, or which results from the dislocation of people from an agricultural base to an urban base, which is very much a part of the situation in the United States.

We need to recognize other contemporary disasters; such as the disasters of drug addiction and alcoholism which are ravishing our communities; the bottles and the vials which are affecting God's creation and God's people. We very much need to see and understand these as "disasters" to which we also need to respond, rather than just seeing "disasters" which result from earthquakes, or hurricanes, or floods or famine.

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**MCGRAW:** If the bubonic plague occurred today, UMCOR would respond immediately. But I hear you saying that AIDS and drugs should be just as legitimately viewed as plagues.

**NUGENT:** They are plagues of the first order. But we have resources to respond in Christ's name to the plague of alcoholism, for example, which is devastating the Native American community, or to the wholesale destruction of many of our communities—urban and suburban—because of drugs.

I believe that if we really took that job on, the whole society would begin to change its point of view. The United Methodist Church must say: This is a disaster. We're going to invade these areas with volunteers, and augment the work of the local churches who are trying to stay the rising tide of human persons whom our society, quite frankly, considers to be waste. We have a social service mechanism in place for dealing with this situation in the name of Christ Jesus.

At this dawn of a new century, we need to define these places as disaster areas and places in which we respond with emergency disaster relief, rehabilitation and renewal. These disaster areas are mission fields where UMCOR needs to be involved. We need UMCOR there because it is a proven, effective disaster-responding agency, and, God knows, these are disaster areas!

**MCGRAW:** I wonder if you could take our readers on a quick, necessarily piecemeal tour of your world parish rounds, pointing out some aspects of our church in mission on several continents which perhaps they do not know and which particularly excite and inspire you?

**NUGENT:** There are so many places! For example, it is not well-known that we have a missionary present with the Methodist Church in Italy. The missionary is black and

he has a fast-growing congregations.

We have a missionary in the Middle East in Jerusalem. Our churches are engaged in nation-building in Angola and Mozambique. I point to these because it tells us some important things. First of all, it tells us that Europe is not the mono-cultural community it has often been characterized as being. There are groups from Africa, Asia and Latin America who are significant parts of European communities. Our church needs to recognize this and reach out in mission to these groups. For example, in Oslo, Norway, there are 10,000 Pakistanis.

I would also cite the work we have been challenged to do through persons who have come to the United States from Cambodia, asking us to work with the people in refugee camps in Hong Kong or Vietnam. I point to this particular example to indicate that we need help in recognizing that the mission frontiers now are not "traditional" frontiers.

I would also lift up the challenge to the church in the Philippines which has increased its episcopal areas and annual conferences. They have so many islands and people and yet have experienced an inordinate amount of natural disasters—earthquakes, typhoons and the like. What is our mission in that place?

In the United States, something has happened in our urban communities which we have not fully recognized and responded to. Our churches are far more pluralistic than we have thought. What were once viewed as "white" churches now have substantive numbers of people of color. The question becomes one of recognizing the transitions which need to be enacted to enable those people to be received and incorporated, and to enable their style of worship to be a part of the worship life of those churches. While we have huge pockets of ethnically oriented communities in our

urban areas, we still have a center which has a diversity to it, a uniform diversity, which we also have to minister to.

I would also mention our work among the street children in Brazil and other places. A large majority of the street children in Brazil are black, because Brazil is the largest African nation in diaspora. The Brazilian church has a missionary couple working with the street children in the garbage dumps of Rio.

A World Division staff member told a moving story about the drug wars which were taking place in the garbage dump area of Rio. The police were shooting at random and everyone was afraid. A lay woman in mission gathered the children together and they began to sing songs to allay their fear.

Then one of the little children said, "I know what we can do. We can pray. Because if we pray for rain, the rain will come, and the police will leave, and the people will go inside, and we won't have to be afraid." So they prayed—and it rained!

Later they told the story to a woman who lived in another part of Rio. And they discovered it didn't rain where that woman lived! It only rained where God's little ones were afraid!

With all the tragic, terrible stuff going on in the world, every now and then God says, "Don't mess with this. I'm going to show you whose world this is." God acts through what we call "miracle," but really it is just what God does in the world. God says, "You're messing with my children. Don't you ever forget it police and drug lords: these are my children. My children are calling for rain, and I listen to my children. It's going to rain."

**MCGRAW:** What would you say to our readers quite specifically about how they can be in mission?

**NUGENT:** Our readers are people

who are committed to mission and who really want to be in mission and support mission everywhere. So we need to call on them to do a number of things.

One thing is to *pray*. To pray for the intensification of our recognition of God's presence in the world everywhere.

Second, is to be very, very sensitive to God's creation and our care for it. Stewardship is a good word: our care for God's creation *everywhere, all of the creation*; and be willing to take up the cross on behalf of that creation in all places. There is no better symbol. We need *literally* to carry the cross into the streets. You've seen those pictures of exorcism, where they are holding up the cross? That's what we need to be doing. Holding up the cross literally and exorcising the devil. Get out devil!

We also need our readers to *support* and not *denigrate* the mission. Presently in our denomination, there is an unease about mission, and a willingness to be more in tune with what governments say about their people than what the churches say about those same people. That is strange. We need to be more in tune with what the churches are saying in mission places because it is the church for whom Christ prays, and we are part of that body. To be a part of the body of Christ immediately gives us a relationship which is far different from the way people relate to their local governments or governments relate to them.

We need to be supportive of the structures for mission which the denomination has set in place to do things which we cannot do locally. We need to be involved beyond our local situation. That doesn't necessarily mean going beyond the United States. There are places in this country we need to pray about beyond our local situation, issues we need to lift up and become involved with as missionaries: environmental issues, for example, or



economic structures.

It is not acceptable that we in the church do not become involved with the issue of people who have no place to lay their head. That's our issue! Jesus was a refugee with nowhere to lay his head. People don't only need shelter; they need a home. They should be able to find a home in the body of Christ, or safe refuge with the followers of the refugee Jesus.

Of course, our readers need to support our global partnership projects, our missionaries, the Advance for Christ offerings, insist the World Service apportionments are paid in full, and make sure special offerings are recognized and received, such as Bishops' appeals. Our pastors need help in this. Sometimes they are afraid to ask for too many offerings. So sometimes our readers will need to remind their pastors that when people know Jesus they give all. God is more gracious than we understand, and God takes even what little people have to give and stretches it. Think what God can do with the enormous resources which some of our congregations have!

We need to be thankful when God gives things to us, and respond according to that graciousness. We who are in mission do not see resources as being stored or laid up for future use. And here we are run-

ning against the whole society. On television and in other media, the emphasis is always on money, money, money, and building up for the future, and making millions through real estate or whatever. Everything runs counter to the call which says not to lay up treasures on earth. It is a question of being able to hear what God is saying to us.

Finally, I would say to our readers that we have a need for volunteers in mission and we have many opportunities for such missionary service. But also people need to be missionaries *wherever* they are. We don't want to professionalize mission, even though we need some people professionally involved in mission. But it is also important for United Methodists everywhere to help *all* people in *every condition and place* to hear the call of Christ. That is our heritage.

**MCGRAW:** How would you want your epitaph as General Secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries read?

**NUGENT:** I would want it simply to read, "He believed in God, and he loved Jesus." What happier experience could a person have than to have been able to see what God does in turning lives and situations around? I always like to remind people, when they are all down in the dumps, of what God does and is doing.

Look at all the people flooding into America from different places on God's earth. Well, that is God saying to us, "I heard your prayers. You said your churches were declining and emptying. So I'm sending you some people. I'm flooding your communities with them. You didn't specify that they had to be white. You just said you needed people, so I'm sending you lots of people, all kinds of people. They're living all around you. Just open the door and bring them in." □

# Mission Education

## Suggestions for Mission Leaders

By Faye Wilson-Beach

The purpose of this page, devoted solely to mission education, is to help prepare mission leaders—at the local church, district and annual conference levels—to do their best at the job of helping churches and individuals become more mission-minded.

I welcome your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas as we develop this page and make it an integral



part of the "new" *New World Outlook*.

### LIGHTING A CANDLE FOR PEACE

In a Sunday School class or fellowship group, read the article "Lighting a Candle for Peace" (see pg. 21).

Share the experiences of Elias Jabbour and the young people from Palestine by completing one or more of the following exercises:

Build a dividing wall. Divide the class into two groups. Using chairs, desks, bookcases, plants, books, or clothing, create a wall that cannot be crossed over easily. Within separate groups, make a list of what changes have happened in the life of the group because of the wall such as:

- we have to sit on the floor because there are no chairs;
- we are cold because we have no coats.

Next, identify which persons would have to be the first, to help tear down the wall, i.e., by reclaiming a coat, chair, book. Then, talk about those things which belong to no one but must be reclaimed in order for the wall to be destroyed, such as desks or bookcases. Compare the desks to similar issues that

may not belong to anyone in particular but have to be addressed.

Hold a candlelight service. Have a candle for everyone present. In a darkened room, have someone read aloud (by flashlight or available light) the first four paragraphs of the story "Lighting a Candle for Peace." Invite persons to say aloud biblical passages related to making peace. Then, have the reader light one candle and say, using a paraphrase of Jabbour's words:

*"I know that...it is merely a candle in a very dark place. But it will bring some light to those around it, and if [I] carry the candle of peace into [my] land ... our situation becomes brighter. Will you join me?"*

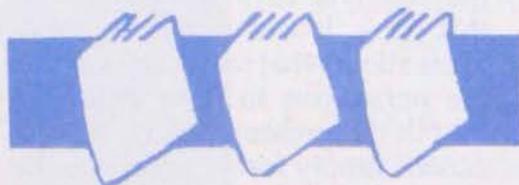
Everyone else should rise in groups of two or three and light their candles from the reader's candle, while each says "I light a candle for peace."

Close the service by singing the chorus printed here or another song of peace.

#### Chorus:

(tune: *Rock of Ages*, #361, *United Methodist Hymnal*)

Light a candle everyone  
tell the darkness it must go  
Let our light shine out so bright  
that all hatred's put to flight  
light a candle, everyone  
tell the darkness it must go.



#### FOR YOUR MISSION LIBRARY

*The Prayer Calendar* (#1257) \$5;  
*T. V. Guidelines*, subscription only; nine issues, \$11;  
*Great Mission Ideas for Workers with Children* (#4293) \$3.  
(available from the Service Center)  
*Wind Across China*, tells about

Christianity in China, including the Three-Self Movement. Basic resource book and youth study guide material by GBGM staff, Kenneth Guest and Camille Funk. (Published by Graded Press.) To order, call: 1-800-672-1789.

#### SPECIAL SUNDAY

**One Great Hour of Sharing, March 10.** This Sunday highlights mission work that focuses on relief, rehabilitation, and land reclamation. Special materials for adults and children are available.

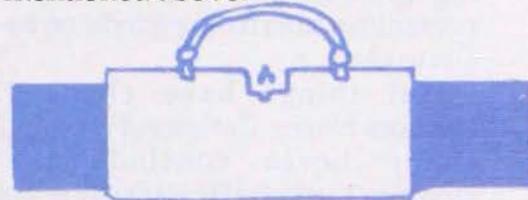
**Native American Awareness Sunday, April 14.** This Sunday emphasizes the ministries and gifts of Native American people within The United Methodist Church.

Order Special Sunday materials from United Methodist Communications, (615) 742-5400.

#### MISSION AND CHILDREN

**Easter Sunday.** Help children observe Easter and understand mission by using materials in the *Great Mission Ideas* book, pp. 21-22 (see "For Your Mission Library").

Use pages 21 and 23 for ideas on observing the two Special Sundays mentioned above.



#### GET READY FOR ...

Mission Travel/Study Seminar to Japan, May 13-31, 1991.

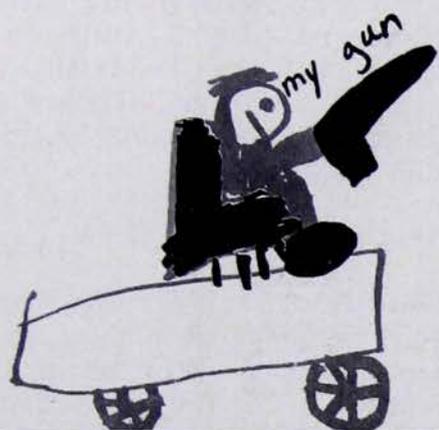
- Cost: \$3900. For application and brochures, write or call Ernestine Mumford, GBGM, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1318, New York, NY 10115, tel. (212) 870-3787. □

# BOOK REVIEWS

Resources for making a new start in Peace and Justice Ministries

## Who's Calling the Shots?

How to Respond Effectively to Children's Fascination with War Play and War Toys



NANCY CARLSSON-PAIGE & DIANE E. LEVIN

### Who's Calling the Shots?

by Nancy Carlsson-Paige and Diane E. Levin, New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, PA, 1990.

\$12.95 paperback. To order: 1-800-333-9093.

"Bang, bang, you're dead." Since the days of sticks and stones, peaceful parents have listened with some discomfort to the war play of their children. Removal of toy guns often resulted in a resort to pointed fingers or guns made of carrot sticks or cardboard. Most parents accepted the normal, and in fact, healthy role such play had in the lives of their children. For children make sense of the world by playing out themes of good and evil. Other parents banned war play, reinforcing the ban with reminders and presenting alternative kinds of exciting play.

But things have changed. Authors Nancy Carlsson-Paige and Diane Levin conclude that children's interest in war play is not coming primarily, as it had in the past, from children's own developmental needs and their attempts to understand the world. Rather, the media and the toy industry are taking control of war play from children. They are "calling the shots" and determining "much of the content of children's play and lessons that are learned" (p. 16).

This the authors find alarming. "Program length commercials" like He-Man and GI Joe which feature the manufacturer's toys dominate children's television. Their plots and products encourage imitation rather than real dramatic play. The issues of children's television, say the authors, are inseparable from the issues of war play.

Carlsson-Paige and Levin are professors of education at Lesley and Wheelock Colleges in Boston and this book is the result of four years of research together. Both are also parents and their book is greatly enhanced by their struggles with these issues with their own children. Their understanding of child development, the use of anecdotes, children's drawings and direct observations of children's play makes each chapter lively reading.

The authors contrast old fashioned war play which offers children a rich opportunity to play with their ideas of good and evil, friend and enemy, boy and girl, fantasy and reality, life and death, power and control, with the one dimensional, imitative play, loaded with stereotypes, which characterize play with highly structured war toys. In both kinds of play children are learning moral and political lessons. Parents have reason to be concerned about the lesson and militaristic thinking fostered by play which is controlled by war toys and violent television. "How to Respond Effectively to Children's Fascination with War Play and War Toys" is the subtitle of this book. It is a rich resource of ideas about what to do. The authors are persuasive in their argument that in the present society, parents cannot simply forbid war play. But the sense that the writers know the real world of parents and children gives the responses they suggest authenticity.

A wealth of suggestions for materials, things to make and do, and guidelines for using children's books make up the second part of the book. A bibliography and list of concerned organizations adds to its

usefulness.

The implications of child's play, captured by the marketing of violence by consumer forces cannot be answered only by the measures taken by parents with their own children. The authors point to a growing body of research supporting the "link between exposure to media violence and anti-social behavior and attitudes" (p.132). Yet national policy in the deregulation of television made it possible for toy makers to create demand for war toys. Sales of TV linked toys skyrocketed. Smaller toy manufacturers were taken over by TV linked giants. Children, the most vulnerable of consumers, were targets of campaigns whose purpose was not children's welfare, but profit.

Response then demands that parents be involved in encouraging public dialogue, pressuring manufacturers, and regulating children's television. Such action may help children regain the right to control their own play, once again to "call the shots."

### The Universe Bends Toward Justice: A Reader on Christian Non-violence

Edited by Angie O'Gorman

New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, PA, 1990.

\$14.95. To order: 1-800-333-9093.

American Christians who have involved themselves in the peacemaking activities of their churches and communities could easily produce a short list of persons whose thinking has informed their work. It would probably include Martin Luther King, Jr., William Penn, Dorothy Day, Daniel Berrigan, and perhaps Clarence Jordan. Angie O'Gorman had done us a great service by providing us with a long list of American Christians whose speaking, writing and actions have contributed to the theory and historical development of Christian non-violence. This chronologically organized reader begins with an account about a Quaker, Mary Dyer,

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who was hanged on Boston Common in 1660 for speaking against Boston's "bloody laws" restricting religious freedom, and carries us into our own time with writings on the Theology of Sanctuary and the United Methodist Council of Bishops statement on the Idolatry of Deterrence.

It is clear in these readings that the tradition of Christian non-violence has profoundly affected every major social movement in American history—the struggle for religious liberty, the movement against slavery, the treatment of native Americans, the battles for women's rights, the questioning of every American war, the civil rights movement, the anti-nuclear movement and Sanctuary. Often issues of the past seem remarkably contemporary. We read David Low Dodge's 1809 pamphlet in which he examines the Sermon on the Mount and questions even defensive war. His writing caused the first questioning outside the traditional peace churches of the lawfulness of war. The idea of a world court and arbitration as an alternative to war

was proposed by Noah Worcester in his treatise published in 1814. That human rights issues are inseparable from one another is a thread running through these selections. The fiery Angelina Grimke wrote in the 1830s, "I recognized no rights but human rights...the rights of the slave and women blend like the colors of the rainbow" (p.53). We are reminded of the tension in the modern civil rights movement when connections were made between that struggle and the anti-Vietnam war movement.

Like most of the writers in this book, its editor, Angie O'Gorman, is also an activist who has worked in the Sanctuary movement and with battered women and their children. Her own account of an encounter with a man who broke into her house describes how she was able to disarm the crisis by her realization that her assailant's safety was as important to her as her own. Her transformation of the situation recalls the earlier account of Lucretia Mott who, threatened with violence by a gang of toughs at an 1853 Women's Rights Convention, calmly took the

arm of the gang leader and said, "This man will see me through" (p.88).

This book is about brave risk takers, as Washington Post columnist Colman McCarthy calls them in his foreword, those who opt for the "force of justice, the force of love, the force of sharing wealth, the force of noncooperation, the force of ideas" (p. x). Some of the most useful sections have to do with the practice of this kind of force—Adam Ballou's writings in 1846 on the tactic of Christian nonviolence, David Dellinger's combining of Gandhian and Christian ideas in his piece on the future of nonviolence, Thomas Merton's finely reflective definitions, the Ten "How to's" in nonviolence of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

As the prospect of violent conflict in the Middle East rises in the consciousness of Americans, Christians are challenged again to examine the teachings of Jesus as they confront prevailing views on the use of violent force. This book can contribute to that examination. Indeed, editor O'Gorman says, "This

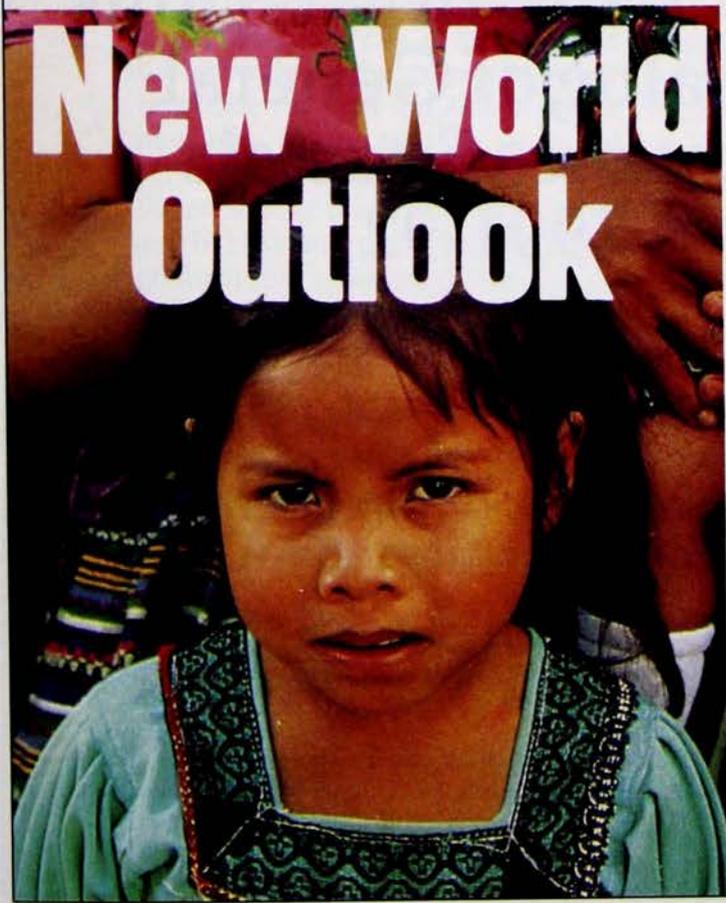
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volume is a plea, specifically to Christians, to look into their religious tradition for the criteria by which to assess personal and political policies based on the violent suppression or elimination of people who threaten us by their aggression, ideologies, or simply because their needs conflict with ours" (p. 7). An excellent resource on peace and justice issues, this book belongs not on the church library shelves, but in the hands of church people as they struggle to walk with the writers in the way of the Prince of Peace. □

*Reviews of these two New Society books concerning peace issues are offered by Barbara Schradling, a United Methodist in the Western Pennsylvania Conference, member of the Community of Reconciliation Church in Pittsburgh, PA. Barbara Schradling has worked professionally for many years with young children, as teacher, educational director, and most recently as director of a childcare center in Pittsburgh, PA. She has an M.S. in Child Development from the University of Pittsburgh and is active in peace and justice concerns in her local church. She is a board member of the Pittsburgh Peace Institute.*



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# The World Looked New

Howard Thurman on Commitment

There seem to be persons who have the gift of the Spirit where there is no awareness of any act of commitment initiating it. They are the "once born" souls. Their openness to God is one with their own self-consciousness—to share [God's] life and be flooded by [God's] presence is natural to them. ...Something total within [them] says "Yes." ...

[For others] the act of commitment may pinpoint a certain moment in time, or a certain encounter in given circumstances, or a place, or an act of decision that stands out boldly on the horizon of all [their] days. ...Moses invaded by the Presence of the great "I Am" before the burning bush—Abraham with Isaac on the lonely height—Jesus coming up out of the water of the Jordan when the Spirit descended like a dove—Paul crying out in the exquisite agony of surrender on the Damascus Road. ...

The importance given to the conversion experience in Protestant Christianity cannot be separated ultimately from the importance and significance of commitment. Conversion, in Christianity, signifies that there was a moment in the life of the individual when he felt himself convicted of sin. In such a crisis he was able by the grace of God to renounce his past life and accept a new way as one moving dramatic action of his spirit. For many this is the encounter with the living Christ, and in His name or in His Spirit they go forth into newness of life. ...

The conversion experience, however it may be interpreted, is the moment when at the depths of [one's] being [one] says "Yes" to the will and the rule of God. ...At such a time the world seems different because of the shining light that glows within. George Fox says that after such an experience, to him "all the world had a new smell." In the church of my childhood we sang an ancient song:

*My feet looked new.  
My hands looked new  
The world looked new,  
When I came out the wilderness,  
Leaning on the Lord.*

Such an experience marking the moment of commitment, provides not only a point of referral for subsequent life but also a basis for integrated behavior. Something seems to be established outside the self, almost independent of it, to which one can now refer when one's way is lost. This provides the individual with an other-than-self reference against the threat of self-deception. It is not absolute, for even in this, conceivably, one might be deceived. But it functions in life as an absolute; that is the important thing. There is available to the convert a time-space symbol which is...the moment above all moments in life...when [God was] met in utter encounter. And nothing is ever the same again. ...

Important as is the moment of commitment, when deep and total

consent is given, it cannot be over-emphasized that a new process has been initiated in the life. The commitment itself releases vast creative energies, but these energies must be geared to the specific demands of the new life. They cannot be left to dissipate themselves in ecstasies and exhilaration of spirit.

...  
[For still others] the yielding of the center of consent may be a silent, slow development in the life. The transformation may be so gradual that it passes unnoticed until, one day everything is seen as different. Somewhere along the road a turn has been taken, a turn so simply a part of the landscape that it did not seem like a change in direction at all. ...There has been a slow invasion of the Spirit of God that marked no place or time.

But the principle remains the same... "If with all your heart you truly seek me, you shall surely find me." ...

Here we are faced with the essence of the discipline. Commitment structures a life, giving it internal and particular order. The total inner landscape becomes altered by a central emphasis. ...It may be that only in the experience of commitment is an authentic sense of self born. □

*Excerpts from Disciplines of the Spirit by Howard Thurman, Harper & Row, Copyright 1963 by Howard Thurman. pp. 21-16. Used by permission.*

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# A Prayer for Strength

*The types of injuries from the war are amputations, bullet wounds...and many other inhumane atrocities by the bandits...No one here has escaped losing family, homes, or possessions...Pray for them to have strength.*

Beth Ferrell, Chicuque, Mozambique

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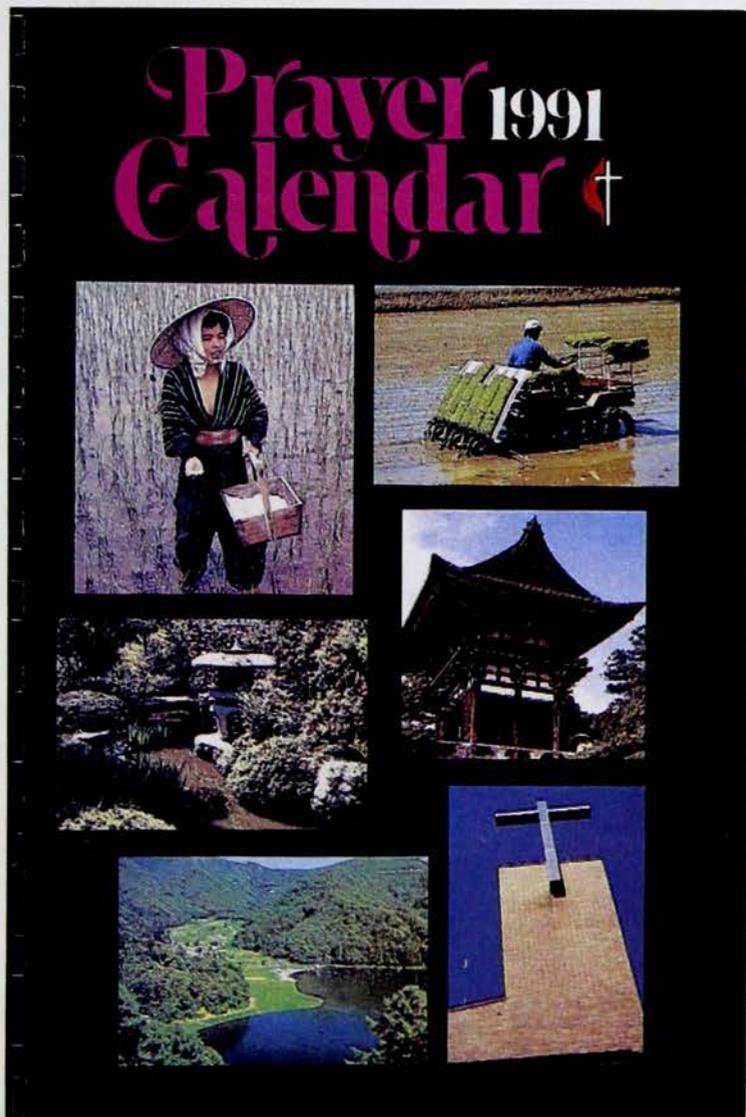
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with love!*

*One  
Great  
Hour of  
Sharing*

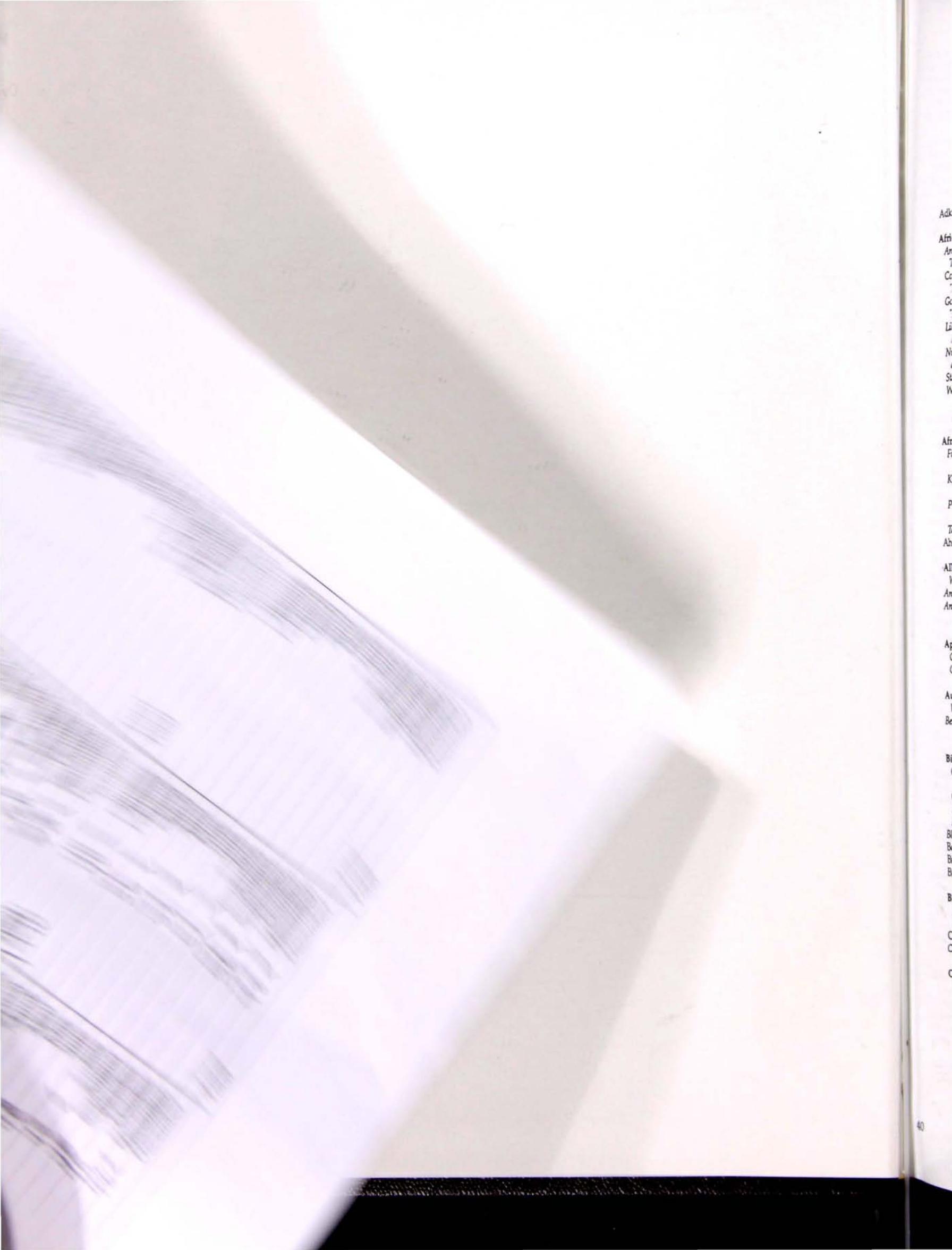
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March 10, 1991

# New World Outlook

The Mission Magazine of The  
United Methodist Church  
March/April 1991



**Celebrative Witness—  
Growing Congregations  
In Africa**



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