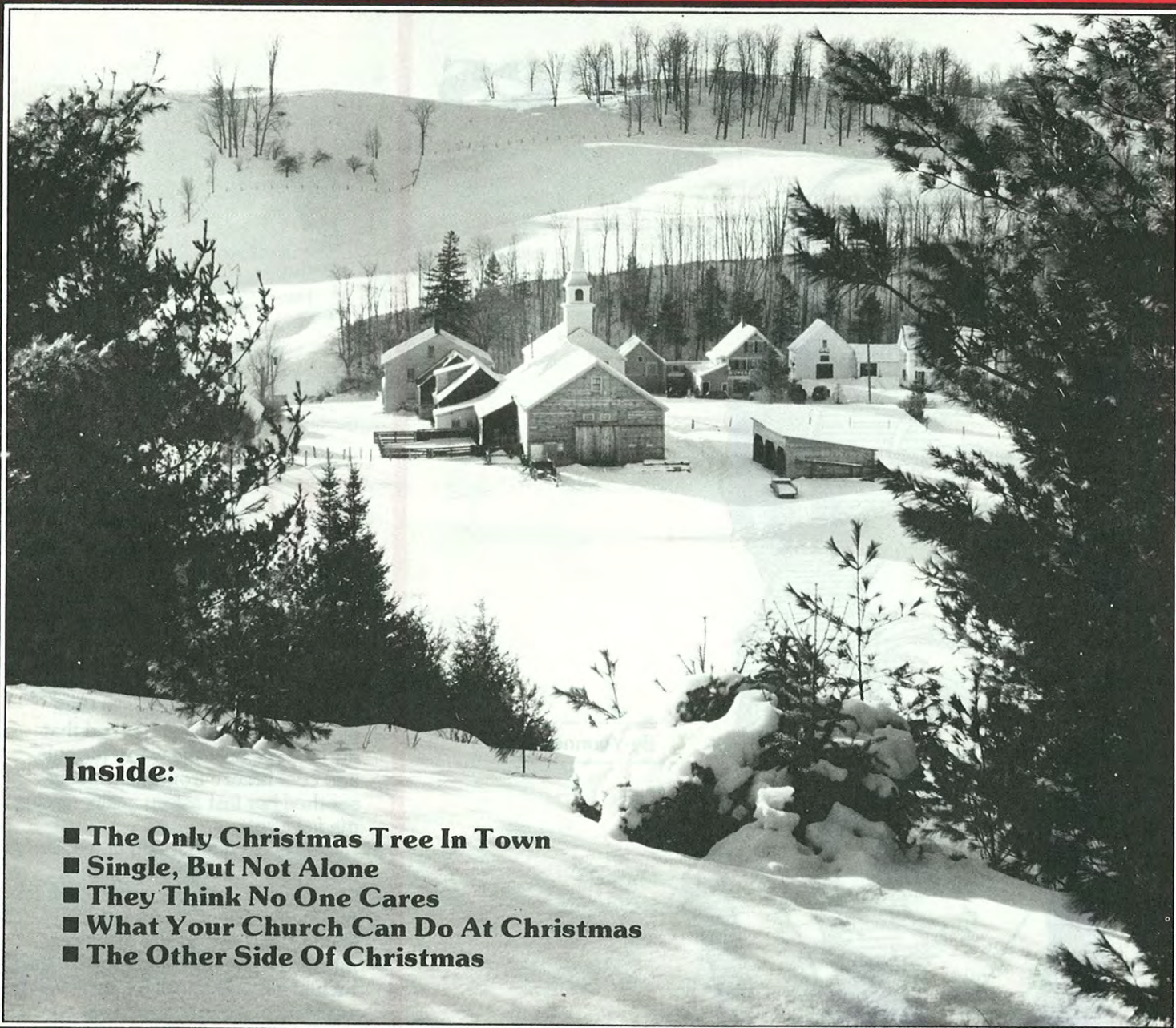


DECEMBER, 1982

Contact

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS



Inside:

- The Only Christmas Tree In Town
- Single, But Not Alone
- They Think No One Cares
- What Your Church Can Do At Christmas
- The Other Side Of Christmas

Christmas - 1982

They Think No One Cares



By Yvonne Thigpen

While bright streaks of sunlight struggled to break through the early morning fog, my husband was off and running to work. Things started humming a little earlier than usual today.

Half an hour before the dreadful screeching alarm clock had a chance to ring, the baby was awake. She played so intensely in her bed that during breakfast the warm formula and cool breeze from the window soothed her fast asleep again, freeing me for a rest.

As I poured a hot cup of tea, I heard voices outside my kitchen window. My neighbor had not left for his job yet. He and a friend were leaning over the engine of his car masquerading as mechanics. At least he had a friend to call on for assistance.

It gets increasingly difficult finding time to be a friend. I occasionally find myself free for a few hours and proceed to catch up on friendship. To my

astonishment, the rest of the world continues to revolve without me.

I usually listen for stirrings of life on my block, but each rustle of activity turns out to be someone bustling from car to house to car in an endless errant route. All the numbers I dial on the phone generally connect me to either a busy signal, no answer, or a message of "something's up—catch you later."

It isn't long before the few free hours pass and I too am running relays from oven, to washer, to car, to market, to church, to church, to church . . .

Church and church related activities are our whole life! Sometimes I feel my husband and I are Ministers of Time Consumption—it therefore becoming God's will for us to accept any task of great detail. Consequently, all this busywork keeps us frustrated about friendships wilting from overexposure to schedule conflicts.

I get annoyed when I find myself wishing that my friend's impromptu visit had been by appointment instead. I get even more annoyed when it is suggested that I shelve friendship-building time with my own family to take on still another project.

Joyce Landorf aptly describes, "We seem to live our lives as spectators at a drama called *life*. Our fellowman is so inventive, he has besieged us with so much to entertain us, that even the art of conversation has lost most of its sparkle."

Conversing with a friend who really *listens* to you is irreplaceably encouraging. At a recent meeting I noticed a lady deliberately lingering in one area during intermission, awaiting the appearance of her friend. From my vantage point, I saw the friend zig-zagging through the crowd, yielding to this one and that one for brief small talk.

The friend finally approached this lady and again slowed his stride long enough to say, "How have you been feeling?" "I'm going to have surgery soon," she began to confide, but was interrupted with a reply of, "Be sure to let me know when it will be and I'll pray for you."

With that, the friend hastened on. The lady didn't show strong feelings

of disappointment or rejection, but I sensed that she would have shared more of her anxiety had she been invited to do so. An opportunity to minister was lost.

We all need to know

someone cares from time to time. When life's problems arise, long hours have a way of turning into days and weeks—a pseudo eternity. Often a sympathetic ear is needed to sort things out.

In our city a volunteer crisis call center ran an ad with a lone withered flower in a vase inscribed with the message, "Some people can't make it alone; they think no one cares."

Simple acts of kindness (unpretentious and selflessly motivated) need to find their way more into our lives. Our homes need to be dedicated more as retreats for sharing love, hope, and encouragement.

Our family places great value on spending the holidays with those we care most about. Yet, if we know of someone outside our intimate fellowship circle who will be alone, we extend an invitation to share our food and festivities. The love shared with hamburgers for six or eight is more gratifying than steak for two!

When I see old friends and they tell me that they have been thinking about me over the months we have been apart, I can't help but reflect on that period and all I have encountered wishing that I had known *then* that my friends supported me.

From this experience I have tried to discipline myself more to keep stationery and address book handy to jot a note to people far away when I am praying for them and their needs. It takes a few minutes now and then, and I can keep a penny jar to pay for the stamps. Compassion reminds me it is a small investment to shoo away the doldrums of those who have been good to me.

I don't know where

we ever got the notion to fuss over those in our churches who are the most creative, most educated, most skillful, most exciting personalities. I try to look around from time to time

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to see who is melting into the walls and let them know I appreciate their faithfulness, or their pleasant appearance, or their dependability—anything to remind them that God uses ordinary people.

When I hear about a friend who is moving to a new house, my sympathies quickly surface. While a

out for you." All these evidence the promise of fulfillment in the kingdom.

Perhaps you don't feel completely comfortable with every aspect of entertaining today. Co-hosting is rewarding to everyone involved. Find a friend who has strengths where you are weak and together plan an evening of friendship building for new acquaintances. You'll both benefit by the shared responsibilities and your guests will witness Christian love

one for whom I pray. Somehow I can't concentrate on myself and pray out of love for others at the same time."

Even alone, I can have a ministry to others by becoming an intercessor.

Conflicts aren't always resolved as rapidly as we would like. The four most difficult words for me to accept in the Bible are "wait on the Lord." God has a purpose for the great gulfs of time in our lives that we often view to be wasted or painful or unfair.

Time spent listening while a friend vents his frustrations, conversing about God's Word, being kind to one another, laboring together, fellowshipping and praying all fulfill the command to "encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" (Hebrews 3:13 NAS). ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Yvonne Thigpen, a member of Donelson Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College. She served as editorial assistant for CONTACT Magazine 1980-81.

The love shared with hamburgers for six or eight is more gratifying than steak for two!

new home is often exciting, there are sure to be two weeks on either side of moving day totally devoted to chaos. Cooking is greeted like the plague and eating out every night is wearisome. However, moving day blues can be temporarily suspended when you show up to help bearing a picnic lunch for everyone or a cool refreshment.

Over the years, fellowship has been the finest dish served at my table. I can't remember what food we ate but the cuisine of Christian love was most satisfying.

Every time I wash my china cups I recall the scores of ministry opportunities I have had around those dishes. I remember the funny story that goes with my crystal goblets, and the tears that were shed over a china plate.

I have always felt the significance of the Lord's Supper was the sharing of Christ's tremendous love. He said, "take this," "share this," "this which is given," "this cup which is poured

from two households in one evening.

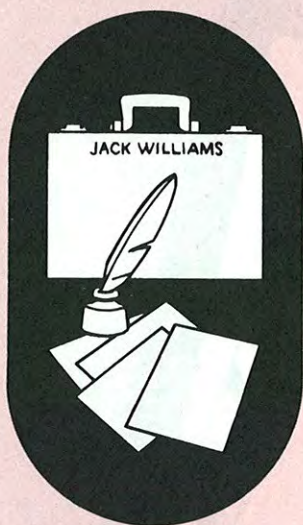
There's something special about sharing God's Word and praying with others in the comfort and privacy of your living room. But sometimes circumstances eliminate this avenue of ministry.

A recent confinement at home gave me a greater appreciation for the elderly, the shut-ins, the handicapped—those forced to be inactive. Being short on physical strength, I devoted my energy to mental and spiritual calisthenics. I spent much of that time reading and searching for personal uplifting.

In *Lord, Change Me*, Evelyn Christenson wrote, "When I pray for others it takes my mind off my trivial or perhaps very real complaints. There is always someone worse off than I, and when I go into deep intercessory prayer for that person I change from a self-centered complainer into a person with genuine concern and love for that

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Briefcase



The Other Side Of Christmas

I'd like to scrub the world clean with the holy Christmas truths and start us all over afresh on Christmas morning. But the night the soldiers came, many parents in Bethlehem and surrounding areas pressed dying children to their bosoms and cursed the unexplained reason behind it.

There was no logic to it, or so it seemed. How do you explain to a mother that her child was brutally killed before her eyes because a madman was terrified of a man-child he didn't know and blinded by a star he didn't see?

Perhaps the Man of Sorrows understood grief so well in later years because His name was baptized in innocent blood the night the soldiers came. The night Joseph and Mary aged a lifetime, the night that Hell made a sweep through the promised land on a search and destroy mission.

The other side of Christmas is tragic enough to make the angels weep, to hush their song, and turn the heavens to brass.

Rachel weeping for her children, a prophecy gruesomely fulfilled. A night that foreshadowed another death—His death. A night that foreshadowed more blood—His blood. The sorrow in Bethlehem's mothers foreshadowed another sorrow—a sorrow so great that no words can tell it, a sorrow so deep that the stones cry out in protest, and God turns His head to weep.

Christmas—it's a story of uprooting and flight etched in the minds of a young mother and father fleeing with their child to Egypt where they spent the wise men's gold and exchanged the frankincense and myrrh for corn.

Christmas—a night of heartache and unimagined grief. A city with no children. A hundred small graves dotting the Judean hills.

And so the Christmas struggle begins. The struggle that will rage undiminished until on a stark windswept hillside from out of a darkness the likes of which the world had never before seen, a cry arises that drowns the wails of Bethlehem's childless mothers—"My God, My God, Why . . . ?"

From that soul-wrenching question would come understanding and peace. A liberating shout would leap forth breaking the unbreakable chains of sin—"It is finished!"

Yes, on that first Christmas, the sweet message of hope was sung by angels and believed by shepherds. Yes, let us remember the sheep and the manger, the Magi and the virgin. We do not dwell on the good in order to forget the horrible, but because the hope born that night overshadows the agony of Rama and Bethlehem, overshadows the hate of Herod and the bloody swords.

Let us join the wise men from the east who, though they may have told it to the wrong man, nonetheless were correct when they confessed, "... we have seen his star . . . and are come to worship him" (Matthew 2:2b).

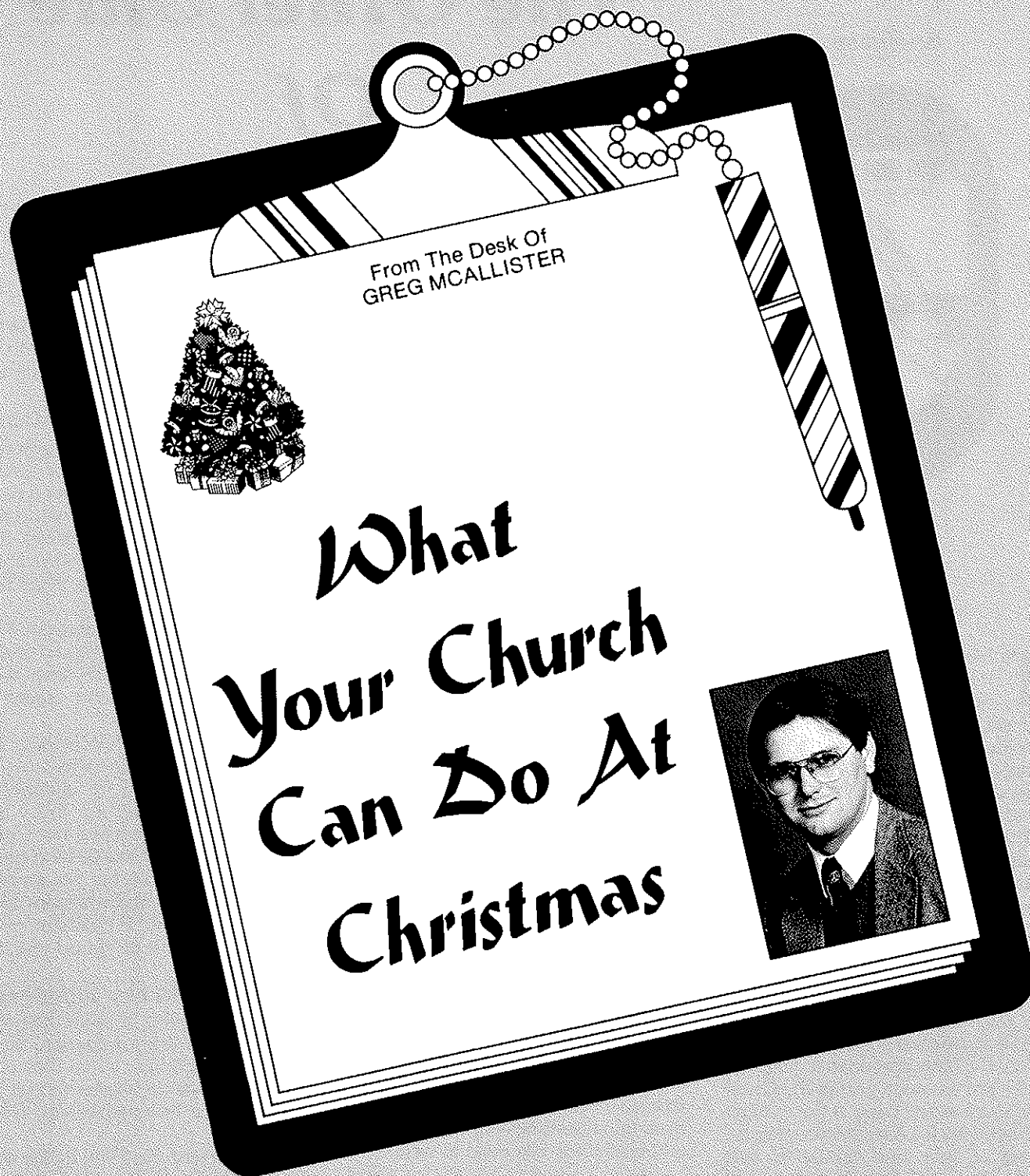
We must worship Him, be the consequences what they may. If it mean sword or flight, better far to risk fortune and future with the Bethlehem Christ than grope blindly through life among men who never hear the angels' song and who never see the star. ▲

There is a dark side to the Christmas story that seldom gets told, or if told is whispered quickly and set aside. The Christmas drama unfolds by and large in the first two chapters of Matthew and Luke. The dark side surfaces in the second chapter of Matthew.

If you ask 10 people to read Matthew 2 and describe what's in it, nine of them will start with the Magi, the star, the young child, the gold, the frankincense, and the myrrh.

I suppose that's the way it should be. Two thousand years is long enough to muffle the screams of dying infants and wash the blood from the swords. But it happened in the same town where the Magi spread their treasures and is just as much part of the Christmas story as the babe in the manger.

Matthew 2 is a chapter of contrasts—giving of gifts and taking of lives, human hate and divine love, treachery and truth, jealousy and trust, manipulation and Magi, dreams and nightmares, salvation in Egypt and scheming in Israel, men's evil plans and God's overruling providence.



Sometime around Thanksgiving a mini-drama will unfold in the church basement after CTS. It will go something like this—the pastor of your church will say to the associate pastor (or CE director, or music minister), “Well, what have you got planned for Christmas?”

Thanksgiving is definitely NOT the time to start thinking about church Christmas activities. Maybe July is even too late. January might be a good time to start.

Standard Publishing Company recommends that you start planning for next year's Vacation Bible School right after this year's VBS. Why not try that same approach with the Christmas program? When you plan actually determines what you plan. Let me suggest a dozen or so ideas.

CHRISTMAS PLAY

Now, that's innovative, since nobody has Christmas plays. However, there is a type of play in which everybody can participate and enjoy.

In July or so, start taking pictures of people in particular scenes—Mary and the angel, Mary and Elizabeth, Joseph and the angel, etc.

Get people in costume and shoot the scene in the summer or fall. Have the pictures made into slides. Get someone to narrate the slides for you on a cassette, and add some orchestration in the background.

By November, it can be ready to go, and you can show it anytime, or as many times as you wish. You could even take it to retirement homes, or shut-ins.



CANTATA

Another brilliant idea. But wait—if it's done right, the whole church can participate in this, too.

Choose a simple cantata with familiar songs and SAB (soprano, alto, bass) arrangements. Buy enough books so every three people can share one. Have the music director or pastor do the narrations.

This will cost a little money (probably a lot of money), but the books can be used again for special numbers by the choir. If you start planning in January, you should be able to raise the purchase price. (Also, you can be very selective about your cantata.) Or, you can write your own cantata, and have the congregation sing out of hymnals, alternating with solos, ensembles, and narration.

CHRISTMAS BROADCAST

In Mountain Grove, Missouri, one year, the Ministerial Alliance was asked by the radio station to arrange a Christmas broadcast. Every fundamental church in town was involved and we had a great time. The broadcast was scheduled for the Saturday afternoon before Christmas.

This would be very practical for a larger church in a small town to do on its own. It might even be arranged for free.



LIVING NATIVITY SCENE

This would be subject to weather conditions, of course, but if your church has a good location on a busy street, you can probably attract a lot of attention.

Using real animals would be nice if you could make sure someone was available who knew how to handle them. Run it for three consecutive nights, and schedule different people to play the parts every night. In November, this may seem monumental, but in January, you can plan it and iron out all the wrinkles.

CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATRE

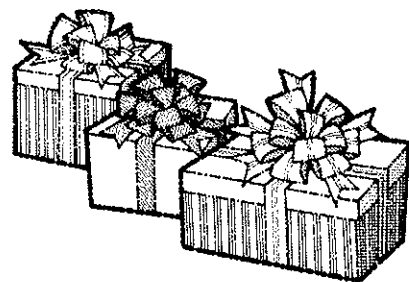
Maybe you can combine your Christmas program and your annual

Christmas dinner (if you have one).

Rent a National Guard Armory or a public school activity room. Have a big potluck dinner, clear the tables, and then settle back and watch a good play.

CHRISTMAS EVANGELISTIC DINNER

This is a variation on the Dinner Theatre idea. Instead of making it exclusively a church affair, invite your unsaved friends and family to a good potluck dinner, to be followed by an evangelistic devotion.



YOUTH/SENIOR CITIZENS PARTY EXCHANGE

Have the Senior Citizens Sunday School Classes prepare a party or dinner for the teenagers. Then, the next week, have the teenagers prepare a party for them.

This might give a family to some lonely elderly person twice during the holidays, and it could be just what your teenagers' appetites need to serve others and to share their time.

CALENDAR PARTY

It might be a good idea to have a party in December where teens and adults can suggest what kind of activities they want during the year. Come to the party knowing what is already scheduled, and ask them to come with school calendars and some idea about their vacation dates.

CHRISTMAS FAST

Everyone gains weight during the holidays, so this activity would be beneficial both physically and spiritually. Pick out specific needs to pray for, and have a participation goal in mind. The money saved on meals might be



CHRISTMAS (From page 7)

given toward some needy missions account.

SERMON SUGGESTION BOX

There might be some things the congregation is curious about, of which the pastor may not be aware. Many people are depressed during the holidays instead of joyful. That might be a good sermon topic, and it just might wind up in your suggestion box.

CHRISTMAS CAROL STORIES

Many carols have great and inspiring stories behind them. These could be told by the music director, pastor, or a variety of people in the church.

CHRISTMAS TESTIMONIES

Encourage people in your church to give their own testimonies before each worship service in December. For some, the holidays have brought trials or experiences that have drawn them closer to God. Choose one person for each Sunday service throughout December, or maybe even begin in November.

MISCELLANEOUS SUGGESTIONS

Christmas poems and stories. Let your members write a memorial booklet.

Christmas Bulletin Board. Invite everyone to post recipes, gift and craft suggestions, and diets for AFTER Christmas.

Let the little children decorate the church for Christmas.

TV Party. Find out if there are any good Christmas programs on television, or check into renting a VCR or Video Disc machine and a good film cassette or disc.

Christmas in your Church doesn't have to be elaborate. You only need three things: Jesus, planning, and energy. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Greg McAllister is Teen Minister at First Free Will Baptist Church, Farmington, Missouri. He is a graduate of Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, Moore, Oklahoma.

Thank You For Your Contributions...



... Through the Cooperative Channel

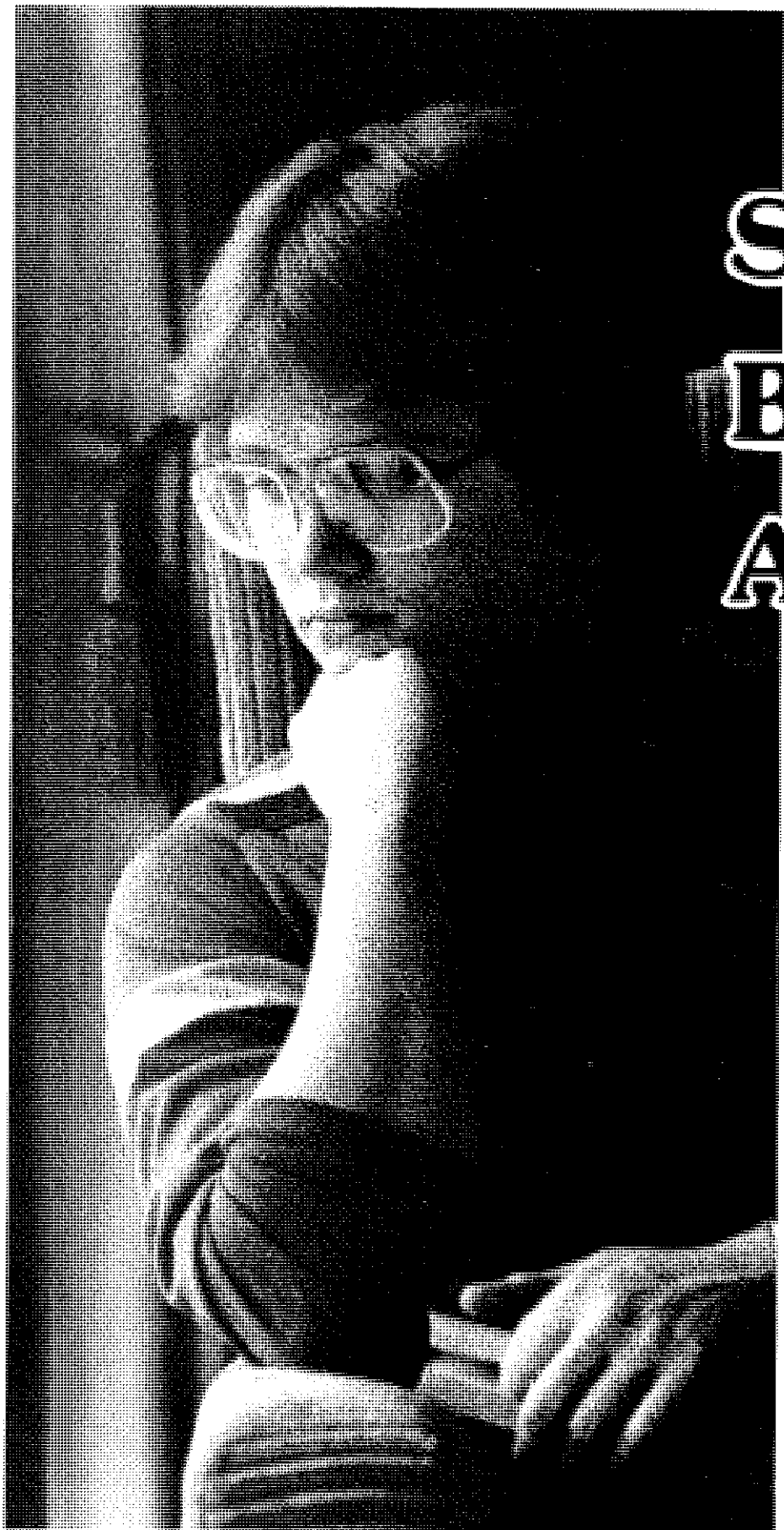
September, 1982

RECEIPTS:

State	Design.	Undesign.	Total	Sept. '81	Yr. to Date
Alabama	\$ 600.16	\$ 2,297.97	\$ 2,898.13	\$ 70.60	\$ 10,998.31
Arizona	.00	.00	.00	.00	359.38
Arkansas	.00	4,115.78	4,115.78	2,545.15	32,115.10
California	.00	732.34	732.34	990.46	9,698.58
Florida	.00	1,509.95	1,509.95	1,241.11	14,302.28
Georgia	1,995.52	505.00	2,500.52	870.08	18,925.33
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	125.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	218.78
Illinois	.00	.00	.00	1,044.40	50,072.89
Indiana	.00	.00	.00	.00	206.79
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	207.65	1,934.31
Kentucky	.00	200.00	200.00	.00	357.00
Maryland	.00	60.00	60.00	10.00	310.00
Michigan	6,528.09	755.09	7,283.18	4,846.13	35,513.68
Mississippi	418.64	585.10	1,003.74	614.88	6,608.29
Missouri	6,098.08	.00	6,098.08	5,725.20	54,059.46
New Mexico	.00	.00	.00	.00	1,226.06
North Carolina	50.00	450.00	500.00	850.00	6,993.72
Ohio	.00	.00	.00	1,517.00	18,387.42
Oklahoma	16,599.04	9,434.86	26,033.90	.00	244,200.37
South Carolina	.00	.00	.00	.00	25.00
Tennessee	195.68	340.39	536.07	975.34	10,378.36
Texas	.00	60.00	60.00	8,753.00	30,722.54
Virginia	.00	.00	.00	139.87	676.90
West Virginia	.00	.00	.00	11.50	196.95
Totals	\$32,485.21	\$21,046.48	\$53,531.69	\$30,412.37	\$548,612.50

DISBURSEMENTS:

Executive	\$ 1,267.67	\$ 8,936.48	\$10,204.15	\$ 8,968.64	\$ 94,187.55
Foreign Missions	22,300.85	3,088.05	25,388.90	14,466.41	263,645.29
FWBBC	2,815.30	3,088.05	5,903.35	3,613.02	65,727.04
Home Missions	5,439.84	2,300.90	7,740.74	1,962.61	84,704.59
Retirement and Insurance	450.30	2,240.35	2,690.65	937.01	25,128.35
Master's Men	63.69	1,211.00	1,274.69	374.76	12,077.79
Commission on Theological					
Liberalism	47.56	181.65	229.21	89.92	2,201.22
FWB Foundation	100.00	.00	100.00	.00	100.67
Convention	.00	.00	.00	.00	740.00
Hillsdale College	.00	.00	.00	.00	100.00
Totals	\$32,485.21	\$21,046.48	\$53,531.69	\$30,412.37	\$548,612.50



Single, But Not Alone

By Patty Hiltibidal

Hurry! The 1982 Christmas season is here and, more than likely, you are behind in your schedule. There are presents to wrap, parties to plan, cookies to bake, and an odd assortment of additional tasks competing for your immediate attention.

Here it is December again, and it seems that once more the world has gone Santa Claus crazy. But wait just a moment. Who said the Christmas season has to be so packed with parties, presents, and pressures? If Christians are not extremely cautious, they can be swamped by the hurried holiday confusion that brings frustration instead of real Christmas joy.

To many (perhaps most), Christmas is just another hustle-bustle holiday. We become so involved in the rush of activities that we overlook the



SINGLE (From page 9)

season's main objective—reaching out and giving a little of ourselves to others in the name of the One who reached out and gave so much to us.

As a single Christian, I am stricken several times during the year, and especially holidays, with slight cases of "singles complexitis." This holiday disease is common among the unmarried and can have devastating effects both physically and spiritually. Sufferers tend to look solely at their own problems and cease to be a blessing to those whose lives they touch every day.

For a single adult the Christmas season can be a special time of visiting friends and neighbors who may also be frustrated and who long for someone to show them love and attention. How easily we become so involved in our own self-centered worlds that we fail to pause and do some little service for others. We are usually much too busy and concerned with our own fears and frustrations to step out and make someone else's Christmas brighter.

I often find myself adrift in my own problems and fail to see a world filled with lost and lonely people, searching for ways to solve their everyday problems.

As a teacher in a small Christian school, I have wanted to give up and quit several times in the past months.

The large responsibilities and small results of my efforts were almost more than I could handle.

The difficult task of consistently teaching Christian principles is hard, aggravating, and frustrating. After mopping kool-aid, breaking up fights, settling unnumbered arguments and drilling endless phonetic charts, the longing to quit teaching grows great. Yet I continually remind myself that as a Christian teacher my primary obligation is to become involved with my students. If I don't, who will?

By our reluctance to give of ourselves, Satan takes full advantage of our selfishness and gathers a good harvest of hardened hearts. It is tempting to hurriedly go on our way. The fun, frills, and large paychecks the world has to offer are often more appealing than waiting on the Lord.

Looking back on the past year, I am filled with praise for my Savior who gave me a newfound confidence in learning to follow His leadership even when my desires pulled in another direction. If we stop dwelling on personal problems and start reaching out to others who have just as many trials, then Christ can take, bless, and use our willingness for His glory.

Christmas should be a special day, set aside not only to praise God for His blessings, but also to thank Him for the peace He brings us through His Son.

Christ was alone (single) on this earth, but He brought joy and peace into the lives of all who trusted in Him. There are many who may be single and alone, but this is not an excuse to be a discouragement to those around us.

Jesus was never too busy to befriend those in need; yet we who claim to be Christians and have time to bring happiness to others, usually quietly turn and walk away.

During this Christmas season let us try to slow down our hurried preparations, step out of our shells of loneliness, and shovel some Christmas cheer into the lives of others.

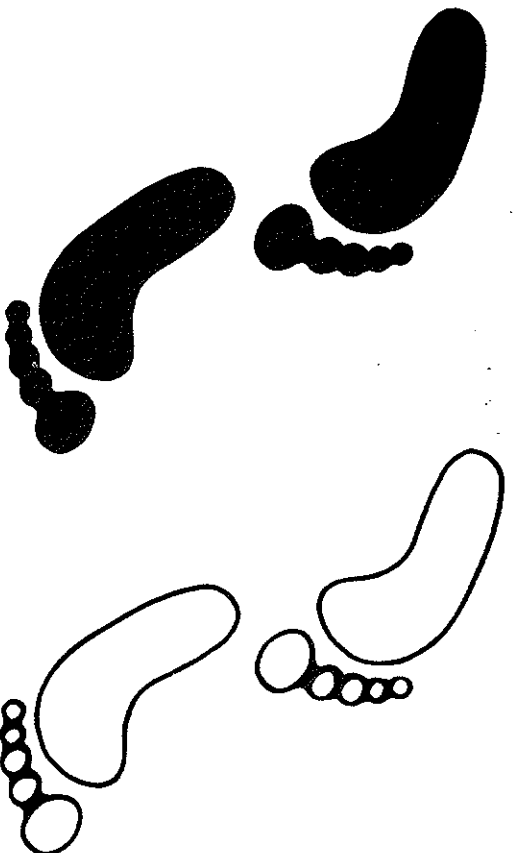
Christmas, 1982, could be the beginning of a whole new outlook for you. Reach out to the lonely, discouraged people who need to be encouraged and show some true Christian love. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Patty Hiltibidal is a 1979 graduate of the Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee. She teaches at Wesconnett Christian Academy in Jacksonville, Florida.

F.W. BAPTIST



Walking Is Part of the Gift



By Morris Chalfant

Do you remember O. Henry's famous Christmas story "The Gift of the Magi"? We tend to snicker at this tear jerker in these sophisticated days, but the fact remains that few other characters—real or fictional—have ever portrayed the Christmas spirit as well as did O.

Henry's destitute couple, Jim and Della.

In case you've forgotten, Della cut off and sold her long hair to buy Jim a chain for his treasured pocket watch. Unknown to Della, Jim had also sacrificed by selling his watch to buy a set of beautiful combs for Della's long hair.

Modern cynicism says, "They should've known better than to crawl out on limbs like that." Contemporary



WALKING (From page 11)

realists would call Jim and Della a couple of sentimental fools. Even with our colorful gift catalogs, advertising, and gift advisers, lots of us still make fools of ourselves at Christmas—and not because we sacrifice like Jim and Della.

No Christmas ever dawns that doesn't bring its own disappointments, regrets, and plain old sulking. When our gifts fail to elicit the right response, it's usually because, unlike Jim and Della, we failed to give a part of ourselves.

One Christmas in Africa, a missionary was given many gifts. Each one was treasured by him, for it represented love. But his favorite was a gift that could not be seen or touched. A man came to him with his gift, a simple one. The missionary knew the man came from a village deep in the jungle, miles away.

"Thank you, my friend, but you should never have come so far alone, and through treacherous jungle."

"But, Sir," the smiling native replied,

"the walk was part of my gift to you."

Gifts wrapped in tissue and ribbon may be exciting and beautiful, but the pretty wrappings are torn and tossed aside. The gifts are enjoyed for a while, then they wear out and are gone, even forgotten. But what we give of ourselves lives on.

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11).

The material gifts at Bethlehem were second in importance—they gave of themselves first.

It is possible for you to give Christ a gift this Christmas. I speak not of monetary gifts, although many will do that. The most precious gift you can give Him, and the gift He wants above all others, is yourself!

For many years Christ has been knocking at the door of hearts declaring: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in" (Revelation 3:20).

Many have kept Him outside, however. We have been so busy with our homes, farms, friends, business, and church activities that we have not taken time to open the door.

How patient He is! He will not force His way in, for either we will open to Him, or else He will never enter. Do you know why He waits so patiently? It is because He loves you. He loves you more than any earthly love, for His love took Him to Calvary to die in your place.

Softly and tenderly He is still calling. In every Christmas carol, every scripture reading, every Christmas gift, He is saying, "Give Me thy heart!" How easy it is to do just that. Realize your need of Him, confess your sin to Him, and receive Him as your personal Savior.

Will you do that—right now—and make it your Christmas gift to Him? The burden of guilt will roll away, the joy of salvation will flood your soul, and it will be the best—and most important—Christmas you have ever known. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Morris Chalfant is a free lance writer who resides in Norwood, Ohio.

DIRECTORY UPDATE

CALIFORNIA

Bill McCarty to First Church, Salinas
from First Church, Youngstown, OH

CANADA

Philip McAskill to Stickney Church,
Stickney, New Brunswick

FLORIDA

Arnold Woodlief to Midway Church,
Cypress

GEORGIA

Barry Headrick to Pine Level Church,
Chester from First Church, Dublin
Jack Lysaker to First Church, Dublin
Randy Sloan to New Hope Church,
Cochran

KANSAS

Nathan Eason to First Church, Salina
from Five Points Church, Washington,
NC

MISSOURI

Mike Fields to Pleasant Grove
Church, Anderson from First Church,
Wilburton, OK

NORTH CAROLINA

Larry Stevens to Parker's Chapel,
Greenville from Unity Church, Smith-
field.

OHIO

Dan Booth to Newark Church,
Newark
David Boggs to Heritage Temple
Church, Columbus
Don Patrick to Long Run Church,
Lucasville

SOUTH CAROLINA

Billy Baker to Damascus Church,
Conway from White Savannah Church,
Conway

Ronnie Floyd to Lebanon Church,
Effingham from First Church, Charleston
Heights

Danny Keen to Fellowship Church,
Florence from First Church, Ocala, FL

Norman Johnson to White Savannah
Church, Conway from Damascus
Church, Conway as interim pastor

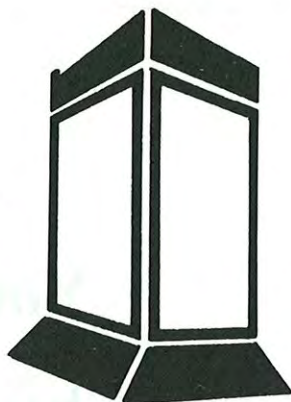
Ron Moore to Calvary Church,
Georgetown

Wayne Perhealth to Twin Pines
Church, Jefferson

Dan Runion to First Church, Charles-
ton Heights from First Church, More-
head City, NC as assistant pastor, youth
and music director.

OTHER PERSONNEL

Keith Fletcher to Grace Church,
Broken Arrow, OK, as minister of music,
youth and education from Maccriline
Church, Macclesfield, NC as pastor.



The Free Will Baptist Pulpit

Milton Worthington, Pastor

Central Free Will Baptist Church, Royal Oak, Michigan

The Simplicity of Salvation

Ephesians 2:1-10

INTRODUCTION

The book of Ephesians gives a full explanation of the believer's riches in Christ, responsibilities to Christ, and resources through Christ.

In Ephesians 2:1-10 Paul unveils the miracle of transforming grace that removes our guilt and destines us for His glory.

Believers have been quickened:

- I. *FROM the Way of Satan* "Who were" (2:1)
 - A. Dead as to Position (2:1)
 - B. Disobedient as to Practice (2:2-3a)
 - 1. The Pressure of Society (2:2a)
 - 2. The Power of Satan (2:2b)
 - 3. The Problem with Self (2:3a)
 - C. Doomed as to Prospect (2:3b)
- II. *BY the Work of the Savior* "But God" (2:4-9)
 - A. The Redeeming Facts (2:4-5)
 - 1. God's Passionate Love (2:4)

- 2. God's Pardoning Mercy (2:4)
 - 3. God's Providing Grace (2:5)
- B. The Resulting Features (2:5-7)
 - 1. Death gives way to life (2:5)
 - 2. Disobedience gives way to liberty (2:6)
 - 3. Doom gives way to likeness (2:6b-7)
- C. The Receiving Faith (2:8-9)
- III. *TO the Walk of a Saint* "We are" (2:10)
 - A. Divine Design Described (2:10a)
 - B. Divine Dynamic Declared (2:10b)
 - C. Divine Demand Disclosed (2:10c)

CONCLUSION

Having sensed our guilt and sought His grace, let us share His glory both visually and verbally that sinners might come to know Him and saints might be challenged to make Him known. ▲

Starting January, 1983
"On Little Lanes"
A Children's Series By Donna Mayo
Don't Miss It!

Your Church And The Handicapped Community



By Sheila D. Scarborough

Couldn't someone else do it better? Why would any church feel compelled to begin a work with retarded persons? Do you feel led?

These questions might be asked of a missionary candidate to a foreign country, but why would God have to "call" someone to work with the retarded? Do these crippled minds and misshapened bodies experience the love of God? Can those so handicapped be assured that the Heavenly

Father could care for them personally? The answer of course is yes!

The local church must become involved as a support unit for families that have retarded members. The entire family of a retarded person desperately needs to be encouraged and helped. They are constantly asking for loving support, whether outwardly or silently. The local church by its very nature should be eager to respond.

But the church has a responsibility to go beyond appearances to the heart of any matter (I Samuel 16:7).

For a church to be accessible means more than curb cuts, ramps, handicapped parking areas, enlarged restrooms, non-slip surface materials, handrails, blunt doorsills, pews set apart to accommodate wheelchairs, braille or large-print hymnals.

Being accessible means remembering the Lord's words that no sin or shame is connected with a disability, and that the church's mission to the world includes persons with handicapping conditions as active doers in that mission, not merely receivers of it.

A loss or limitation is not a handicap until it comes in contact with an object or society which creates a barrier to what the person wants to do. Jesus met and dealt with many disabled persons. He gave a living example of sensitivity and respect for these individuals. Can we do less?

Families with handicapped members need a listening ear. Handling and coping are big barriers when a mentally retarded or handicapped person enters the family. Ministering to their

emotional and spiritual needs are vital. Listening is the beginning of acceptance and support.

We must realize that feelings of inadequacy or awkwardness are all natural and honest. The family struggles to overcome the element of fear just as church members do. We must show our love as well as His love to help these families maintain hope. Families need added help, and they sometimes wonder why the church supports other areas and fails them.

Families need a respite from their continuous 24-hour duty. Husband and wife may need a together time or time to spend with a non-handicapped sibling. Could you provide that respite?

"I need a special loving person who would help with Richie during the regular worship service," says Jane Gibbs whose 14-year-old severely mentally retarded son cannot be taken to service because of seizures and occasional loud behavior. "My husband attends one service and I another," she concluded.

I speak as the mother of an eight-year-old multiply-handicapped daughter. I am blessed that the Lord has spoken to two special loving persons who see that my handicapped daughter is taken to junior church services on Sunday mornings, freeing me to enjoy the worship service with my husband.

But many parents are not so fortunate. They withdraw from the church because they feel their handicapped member will not be accepted by the church family.

One mother said, "I just can't cope with the pity and individuals saying 'The poor thing.' I get that at the grocery and department stores. I don't need to go to church for it."

This mother's comments should cause us to see that as a church we need to get involved with the families and the handicapped individuals themselves; learning their personalities and learning to recognize and develop that unique individual who lies beyond the handicapping condition.

This can be done in various simple ways. Try associating with people in your own community. Learn who your neighbors are and determine if this need is as close as your doorstep.

Associate with a retarded loved one or volunteer your services at agencies, schools, or group homes that work

with these individuals. (Contact the local Association for Retarded Citizens in your area.) God can and will speak in a number of ways to place the burden of these special people on the hearts of prospective workers.

Retarded people don't always get what they are entitled to get. They have been taken advantage of or completely ignored through the years. Christians should want to seek to correct this unfairness. The compassionate and sensitive Christian should rise to the occasion when a fellow brother or sister in the Lord is wronged.

The abilities of many retarded individuals are often overlooked. It becomes a challenge and a joy to help develop and lead retarded persons into an experience with the Lord. They are His creation, although they may be damaged and difficult to look upon. They still have the potential for loveliness because they are created by God.

But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, that there should be no division in the body, but that members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it (I Corinthians 12:24-27 N.A.S.V.).

My handicapped daughter, Shawna, learns acceptance and love from those she comes in contact with at church. She recognizes the choruses about Jesus sung in Sunday School, and in God's time may experience a spiritual truth from the puppet ministry she excitedly views in junior church.

The other children see her as being a part of their service and are very protective and caring of her needs. They realize she needs supervision and offer to sit with her during services in junior church. Shawna has learned what it means to sit quietly during a worship service. By being with her non-handicapped peers, she is learning best by having role models. These very individuals could be used by God to open her heart to the understanding of God's love.

I am most appreciative of these special loving persons, whether young or old, that God places in my daughter's path to enrich her spiritual life.

Almost any retarded person can blossom like a rose in an atmosphere of Christian love and support.

God will use those who know and love and understand. Investigate what a ministry there could be in working with the handicapped. You may feel the warm sensation of God's call in your heart. You can cultivate a desire to work with the retarded. A continuing exciting dedication on the part of a Christian worker makes it easier to begin this work in a church.

The church needs to support the family in their adjustment period, in their financial crises, assistance in child-care, establishment of a class or an extended worship service for the handicapped member.

Help is needed to secure alternate loving persons to sit through services with the child or adult and provide family respite. If the attention span is short, some loving person can take the individual on a long walk explaining the wonders of God's creation.

Accept and include brothers and sisters of the handicapped individual; pray for the family and handicapped individual daily; show love and Christian support.

This ministry should be pursued in all our churches. Families of retarded individuals need love and support . . . need you. A work of this sort can and will survive in a church where there is an atmosphere of acceptance.

This type ministry should be a total church program. It should never be considered extra or as an extension but a corporate part of the church. To see a special person flower and know that you or your church contributed to it, brings a blessing from God experienced in total. This blessing will be felt by every church member in every area of the church life.

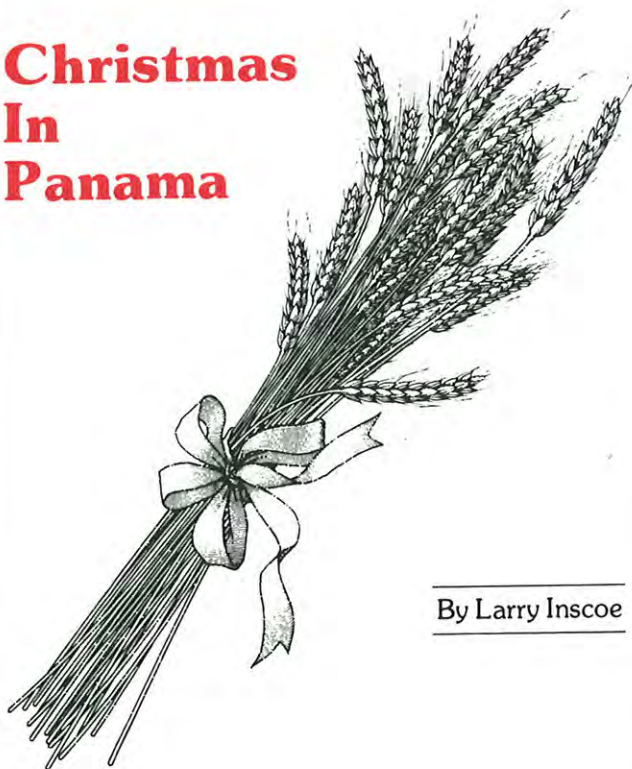
Should you consider starting a ministry to the handicapped in your church? ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Sheila D. Scarborough is a member of Cofer's Chapel Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, Tennessee. She graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1970.

Mrs. Scarborough wrote a similar article titled "Are They Our Responsibility?" for the November, 1981 issue of CONTACT.

She was appointed by Nashville Mayor Richard Fulton to his advisory committee for the Office of the Handicapped.

Christmas In Panama



By Larry Inscow

Christmas here in the tropics is similar to our state-side holiday season. The greatest difference is probably due to the year-round warm climate in Panama, whereas in our home country, Christmas is usually associated with cold weather and snow.

Christmas is celebrated in different ways in various parts of Panama. In Panama City, the capital of the country, Christmas has become almost as commercialized as in the States. By August, major department stores begin special television programs hawking toys that will be available for Christmas.

As the holiday season approaches, children, particularly those from wealthier homes, are allowed to select the toys they want. The toys are given to the children at the time of purchase. Children from poor families never know what it means to receive a toy at Christmas.

In many homes during Christmas, the main holiday preparation centers around the nativity scene. Some families erect elaborate, life-sized figures which may cover much of the front porch or yard. Other homes may have one corner of the porch or livingroom reserved for their nativity scene. But in any case, that part of decorating is the focal point of Christmas in most homes.

The nativity scene is usually set up during the first week of December with Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, wise men, and the empty manger. Each night one figure is added, many of which are animals and angels. At midnight on December 24th, the Christ Child is placed in the manger.

Children are usually put to bed early on Christmas Eve to be awakened at midnight after the Baby finds His place in the manger. The remainder of the night is spent with the family, enjoying special holiday foods such as

tamales, arroz con pollo (which is a rice and chicken dish prepared with vegetables) and potato salad.

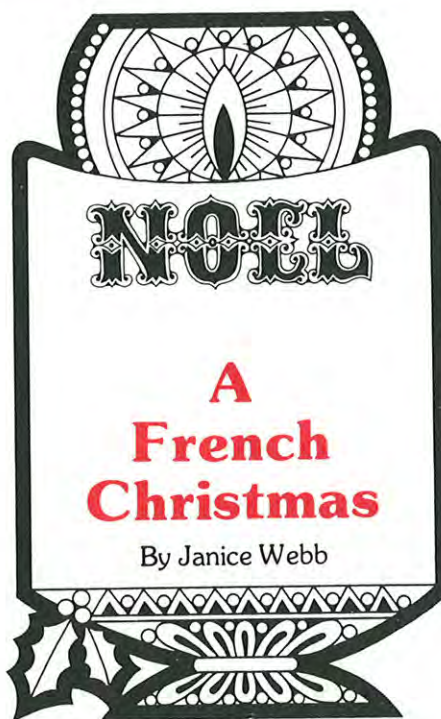
Some traditionally North American food has become popular in Panama and is eaten during the holiday season. In many homes, there is an unlimited flow of liquor and countless parties.

In even the most humble homes, the mother will try to provide a special meal and punch drink for Christmas day. In our system of values and lifestyle, it would be difficult for us to be satisfied with the semi-absence of things we consider traditional essentials in order to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

We believe that Christmas in Panama has helped us to vividly recall the true meaning of this wonderful day. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER:

Reverend Larry Inscow serves as a missionary to the Republic of Panama. Larry is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College. He was appointed to the field in 1971.



December 1, and suddenly every store seems to be blanketed by a surprise avalanche of toys, decorations and chocolates.

In the next few weeks tons of chocolates will be exchanged, the "Pere Noel" will have bought most of the

toys for good boys and girls, and the "fete de Noel" will be planned.

Windows sparkle and enhancing displays urge us to offer gifts to friends, relatives and acquaintances. Restaurant windows scream about special prices for all night dinners. "Les fetes" are uppermost in the mind.

Some will even follow a special diet—not to lose weight but to adapt their bodies to the rich food they will be eating. In addition to great quantities of chocolates, it is the time to eat snails drenched in butter and garlic, foie gras (fat goose liver) raw oysters, caviar, rich sauces, the *Buche de Noel* (Christmas Log) and much alcohol. So it is not surprising that many have a "crise de foie" (an attack of the liver, usually severe indigestion) during this time.

Families unite Christmas Eve, the house having been decorated with mistletoe, holly and garlands. Sometimes there are real candles or sparklers on the tree. The "sabots," wooden shoes (or ordinary shoes since few children have wooden ones now) are placed before the fireplace so that the *Pere Noel* will know who lives there.

Small children will be in bed early because they must not see him come. Dinner will begin around 10:00 P.M. or as late as midnight.

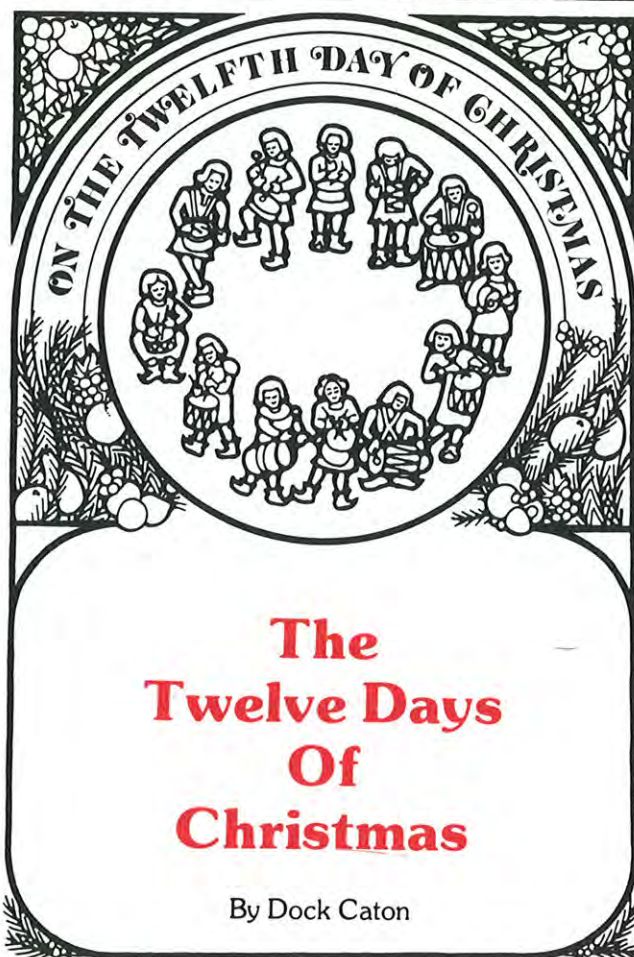
For the religious there is mass at midnight which may be followed by a procession in the streets. Occasionally there are Christmas pageants or choral presentations, but in the Brittany area there is very little participation.

It is not all work for missionaries during the Christmas season. While each family has Christmas in its own way, we usually all get together Christmas afternoon for a time of fellowship with prayer, song, skits (we have some real "ham" actors among us) and of course, real American food. How good it is to be with those of like faith!

The Christmas lights are bright—Christian lights are scarce and often hidden under bushels. Overindulgence in rich food is common—there is a famine of spiritual nurture. Alcohol flows freely and continually—there are few who have ever drunk of the living water.

Children waiting for Santa, adults playing Santa—ignoring the greatest gift of all, God's Son. Great churches built to glorify God—a few faithful gather therein, never knowing Him, only hoping that somehow the church, its traditions, its history of "being there" will save them.▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Janice Webb and her husband, Jerry, are missionaries to France. Mrs. Webb is a graduate of California Christian College. The Webbs were appointed to the field in 1973.



Spain celebrates the joy of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" from December 25 through January 6 with much giving, receiving and merrymaking.

Felices Fiestas or "Happy Holidays" is the daily greeting heard among the nearly 36 million Spaniards. Work days are modified so that the only work performed is that which is necessary to keep the country operating. However, stores nationwide log top sales during these days. Christmas in materialistic Spain is highly commercialized, while the true meaning of the season fades to the background.

The big kick-off for the hectic two weeks is December 22—the day of the national lottery when some auspicious character will pocket upwards of a million and a half dollars after his number has been drawn from the huge spinning basket. Many throughout the country will win lottery gifts, but the majority will lose money, be it a little or a lot, as is usual in gambling circles.

Nativity scenes will grace the living rooms of each home, being favored over the Christmas tree, which is a new tradition. *Papa Noel*, "Santa Claus," does not come to Spain, although new traditions over the past few years permit him a visit to some homes.

December 24 welcomes a special candlelight dinner, including such delicacies as lavish sea foods and baked



CHRISTMAS (From page 17)

"besugo," the Christmas fish. The meal is topped off with "turrón," the traditional Christmas candy.

On the morning of December 25, while the more devout Catholics make their way to the early "mass of the rooster" in neighborhood cathedrals to honor the baby Jesus, born again believers will be singing praises together to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in a special Christmas service in some Evangelical churches.

December 28 is the day of jokes and pranks, called "innocent ones days," sort of a Spanish April Fool's day. Festivities continue through the week until December 31. The old year is put to bed and the new year springs to life as the 12 tones of the "Old Tower Clock" ring out in the downtown square.

Instead of singing "Auld Lang Syne," each individual gulps 12 grapes between the first and the last toll, to bring good luck throughout the year. All over the country, pleasure seekers party, drink and dance throughout the night, and all the way to January 5.

January 5 is the day of gala fiestas and parades in the streets of most cities and villages, as children anxiously await the appearance of the wisemen, laden with gifts and mounted on camels (or on horses in smaller villages). Madrid displays a fantastic parade with beautifully lighted floats as thousands of spectators line the streets hours in advance to get choice spots to see this majestic event.

Then all make their way home, and the children fall asleep awaiting the visit of the wisemen. If they have been good all year, they will find toys and treats in their shoes, but if they have been bad, they will find only a chunk of coal as a reminder to be good next year.

Whether in America or Spain, seasonal pleasures remain the same, because man's fallen nature is universal. The only difference is the cultural wrappings. Let's reevaluate what we do with our time and money during the festive days of our Lord's birth.

Let's unselfishly share what we have received through grace as God's Christmas gift with those next door and those 6,000 miles across the ocean; with those who have never heard, and those who are surrounded by the truth, yet sadly do not possess the truth. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER:
Reverend Dock Caton is a missionary to Spain. He lives in Madrid. He is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College, but also attended Oklahoma Bible College (now Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College) and California Christian College. Dock earned the Master of Arts Degree at Grace Theological Seminary.



Christmas In Brazil



By Florine Coscia

Christmas in July! Well, no, not really in July but in the middle of the summer.

We arrived in Brazil in September, so the shock of celebrating Christmas on one of the longest, hottest days of the year was really strong that first year. Then we thought about the traditional Christmas tree, only to discover that there were no small pine trees available. Brazilian Christmas trees usually sport dry branches painted white or silver and are decorated with colored balls.

We went out and bought a potted rubber plant. At least it was green!

It is common for Brazilians to buy new clothes for Christmas. Of course this means summer dresses, sandals and short-sleeved shirts. Exchanging of Christmas gifts is not very common in Brazil. Most families buy new toys for the small children. The toys are given to them the day they are bought instead of waiting until Christmas day.

Many of our Brazilian friends tell us that Christmas is a sad time, because this is an occasion when we can really see that a few people have a lot of material possessions while many people have very little. Another sad aspect to us is the common custom of drinking wine during this season. They say wine makes people merry and helps them have a merry Christmas.

Tradition says that a rooster crowed when Jesus was born, therefore, the Catholic Church has a "Rooster Mass" at midnight on Christmas Eve. The women prepare a big meal, and then after the mass the family eats before going to bed. Christmas day is usually quiet because most people sleep almost all day.

Thanks to the transforming power of the gospel, we have seen these customs change in the lives of the Christians. They have learned the joy of receiving God's

great Gift and have experienced true happiness in Christ. They no longer attend the Rooster Mass. Many of them do continue the Christmas Eve meal with the family gathering after a special Christmas church service or drama representing the birth of Christ.

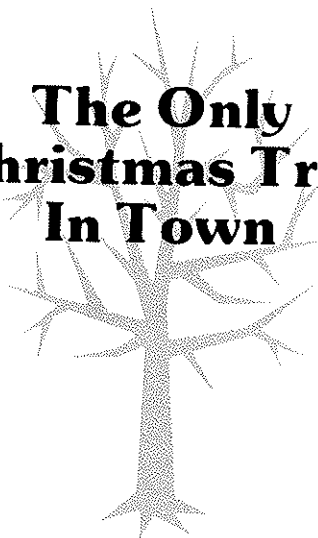
Yes, we still miss the snow, the green tree, and the presence of our loved ones at Christmas. But we have felt the joy and the presence of our Lord because Brazilian Christians usually invite us to their homes to share the Christmas Eve meal with them.

After all, we are all in the same spiritual family because Christ came to this world to reveal OUR Heavenly Father. And that's what Christmas in Brazil means to us. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mrs. Florine Coscia and her husband, Louis, have been missionaries to Brazil since 1964. The North Carolina native is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College.



The Only Christmas Tree In Town



By Robert T. Bryan

We're the only folks in Goumère (Ivory Coast, West Africa) opening presents this Christmas morning, and our Christmas tree is the only one in town.

In fact, if it weren't for the children being out of school and announcements on the radio wishing everyone "Joyeux Noel," most people in Goumère wouldn't know it is Christmas at all.

And it really wouldn't matter to most of them. After all, why should the Muslim celebrate the birth of Christ? He believes that a greater prophet, Mohammed, came later bringing God's final revelation. And to the animist sacrificing another chicken to appease evil spirits, Christmas is just another day.

Even to Christians, Christmas doesn't mean gifts and trees and Santa. Rather, it means special services and fellowship in the family of God.

Christmas Eve, we all gather for a service—sometimes to go marching and singing through the village to draw people back for a play or message—which may last until near midnight. Then early Christmas morning, we come back again to pray, sing and preach our joy.

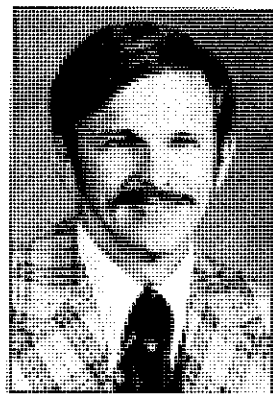
That afternoon, the whole "family" gathers to eat. No one is in a rush (except the watch-conscious missionary), and the meal begins when the yams, rice, ground corn and the sauces arrive, whenever that may be.

Visiting Christians from outlying villages only add to the festivities. The fellowship and talking go on late into the afternoon.

No one is hurried and harried about buying gifts or going to parties or decorating the house and the tree. In fact, by U.S. standards, these Christians don't celebrate at all.

But then, neither do they lose sight of the fact that Christmas means that unto us a Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. Anything beyond that is simply unnecessary. ▲

ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Robert Bryan serves as a missionary to Ivory Coast, West Africa. Reverend Bryan is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College (B.A.) and Syracuse University (M.A.). The Bryans were appointed to the field in 1968. Robert's responsibilities have been primarily in teaching and literature production, including eight months as interim director of the Evangelical Publications Center in Abidjan.





FREE WILL BAPTIST

newsfront

ROMANIAN PASTOR SPEAKS IN NASHVILLE CHURCH

NASHVILLE, TN—Rev. Joseph Ton, Eastern European Dissident and former pastor of Romania's largest protestant church spoke at Donelson Free Will Baptist Church, Nashville, on September 19.

Ton has been one of the last decade's most outspoken voices. His plight behind the Iron Curtain has long been followed by Christians and statesmen in the West. Until his expulsion in 1981, he constantly challenged his government's illegal discrimination against Christian citizens.

Frequently arrested, interrogated, threatened, and once beaten, Ton was exiled last year for being a "danger to state security."

In his visit to Donelson, Reverend Ton spoke to large numbers and to several smaller groups including a singles Bible study and the fellowship of deacons. He preached both morning and evening services on Sunday and held a question and answer session for college students after lunch.



John Neal, (L) Minister of Music; Rev. Morgan; Rev. Ton

OKLAHOMA TO BUILD \$125,000 STATE OFFICE

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK—Delegates to Oklahoma's 74th annual state meeting budgeted \$125,000 to erect a one-story, 3,000-square foot office complex on the northeast corner of the Hillsdale FWB College campus, according to Executive Secretary Lonnie DaVoult.

The decision to green-light the state office building came on the last day of the October 11-14 conference. Reverend DaVoult said that construction will start as soon as possible. The new structure will house five offices and a conference room.

DaVoult asked for permission to address the delegates as the meeting drew to a conclusion Thursday, and promptly raised \$25,050 toward the cost of the new office building.

More than 750 Okies crowded into the gymnasium at Hillsdale College in Moore for the evening services. Day sessions were conducted at the Capitol Hill Church in Oklahoma City.

Four Oklahoma pastors preached sermons on the 1982 theme "Fundamental Truths." Odie Nunley (Guymon Church, Guymon) preached on "Theology—The Doctrine of God"; Gene Thomas (Christian Grove Church, Pocola) on "Soteriology—The Doctrine of Salvation"; Frank Wiley (Sunnylane Church, Del City) on "Pedagogy—The Doctrine of Teaching"; Charles Murphy (Duncan Church, Duncan) on "Eschatology—The Doctrine of Last Things."

Delegates endorsed a \$1.6 million

budget for 1983, the bulk of which (\$850,000) was targeted for Hillsdale College.

Sixty-two percent of Oklahoma's projected \$275,000 cooperative receipts was allocated to state ministries, while the remaining 38 percent will be channeled through the national Cooperative Program.

Oklahoma State Senator Joe Johnson addressed the Monday evening Master's Men meeting on the subject of personal evangelism. Missionary Jean Deeds (Brazil) spoke to the state auxiliary participants. The Auxiliary theme was "Magnify The Lord With Me."

More than 100 ministers took part in a one-day Minister's Conference on Tuesday. Three pastors delivered major addresses developing the theme "Missions in the Local Church"—Burton Perry (Murry Spur Church, Spiro); Delbert Akin (Westgate Church, Shawnee); Curtis Linton (Crystal Hill Church, Lawton).

Moderator James Murray declined the nomination to continue as state moderator. David Sutton, pastor of First FWB Church, Ada, was elected as the new state moderator.

The 1983 association, the state's diamond anniversary, will meet October 10-13 at the First FWB Church in Ada. The state previously met on the 25th and 50th anniversary years in the Ada Church.

ARKANSAS CHURCH CELEBRATES 'FOUNDERS DAY'

RUSSELLVILLE, AR—First Free Will Baptist Church of Russellville celebrated its 33rd anniversary on September 13, 1982 according to Pastor Floyd Wolfenbarger.

Founders Day was shared by 315 people in the morning worship service, including four former pastors—Willard C. Day, Cecil Sanders, R. D. Hester, and O. T. Dixon.

Reverend Dixon preached in both the morning and afternoon services. Each former pastor was given time to speak and was presented with a boutonniere and a certificate of appreciation from the church.

Three charter members attended the activities; Parthena Winters (age 93) and Mr. and Mrs. F. Mangess.

Pastor Floyd Wolfenbarger read a history of the church which he had written.

The group gave a special debt retirement offering exceeding \$9,300 to be applied toward the loan on the church building.

First Free Will Baptist Church of Russellville was formed September 7, 1949 as a result of a tent revival held by Rev. T. H. Dixon. The first pastor was Rev. W. S. Isbell, who presently resides at the Russellville Nursing Home.

NATIONAL RETREAT ATTRACTS 1,100 FWB WOMEN

HOT SPRINGS, AR—More than 1,100 Free Will Baptist women from 22 states gathered at the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs on September 23-24 for the second National Auxiliary Retreat, according to Lorene Miley, editor of *Co-Laborer Magazine*.

The theme for the 1982 retreat that was two years in the planning was "The Woman God Sees." Keynote messages were delivered by former missionary to India Trula Cronk, North Carolina tape ministry specialist Rudene Kennedy, and former WNAC Executive Secretary Eunice Edwards.

Eight workshop leaders directed sessions designed to help women in the practical aspects of Christian living—Living Above Frustrations (Peggy Davis—OK); Forgiving (Dorothy Cox—KY); Witnessing (Eva House—MS); On Being Vivacious (Joanne King—NC); Being Hospitable (Laura Thigpen—TN); Getting Organized (Brenda Evans—KY); Being All God Wants You To Be (Nancy Trimble—MI); and Unconditional Surrender

(Helen Sanders—NC).

Fifteen home and foreign missionaries were on hand for the Friday afternoon "Missionary Hour" featuring music, testimonies, and a parade of missionary fashions, in which missionaries modeled clothing from their fields of service. Conferees responded with a missions offering of \$2,788.

Missionary to Japan Olena McLain who admitted that she came to the retreat weary from travel, said, "The messages and seminars met my needs in such a marvelous way that I came away refreshed."

Perhaps the most significant evaluation of the retreat came from Ashland, Tennessee's pioneer auxiliary worker Agnes Frazier, "The retreat at Hot Springs was the best meeting of Free Will Baptist women that I have attended in 47 years of Women's Auxiliary activities."

The third retreat is scheduled September 6-8, 1984 at Ridgecrest, North Carolina.



Mrs. Laura Thigpen



Missionaries in Costume

TENNESSEE MASTER'S MEN IN SMOKY MOUNTAINS RETREAT

GREENEVILLE, TN—Sixty-three men met at the campgrounds near Greeneville as the Tennessee Master's Men conducted their first annual retreat September 17-18.

After the evening meal on Friday, the men gathered in the Tabernacle for singing and worship. Successful Knoxville businessman Elbert Farley from the Wooddale Free Will Baptist Church presented the first of three challenges regarding stewardship. His topic was the "Blessings of Stewardship."

After a coffee break the men moved to an open campfire and one by one stepped forward to give personal testimony and share prayer requests. This time of sharing and fellowship was led by electronics instructor Keith Walkley from the Liberty Free Will Baptist Church in Millington, Tennessee.

Around midnight the men sang and prayed together and then retired for a short night of rest in cabins at the foot of the Smoky Mountains.

Saturday morning early devotions were led by Sparta, Tennessee layman Gary McBride. After breakfast the campgrounds echoed with group singing and special music by Rick and Tim

Polston from Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, and by Harvey Crain from Limestone, Tennessee who served as retreat music director.

Mr. I. L. Stanley spoke on the topic "Stewardship of Time and Talents" and shared the leadership of God in his life during the past 70 plus years.

The final speaker was Tennessee Master's Men Activity Director John Riley from the Wooddale Church in Knoxville. His topic was "Stewardship of the Truth," a challenging exhortation for men to be faithful in sharing the Word with the world.



General Director Loyd Olsan (L), TN Master's Men President Jim Lauthern

BIBLE COLLEGE CONVOCATION TO INAUGURATE GRADUATE SCHOOL

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College will hold a special service on December 7, 1982, to inaugurate the new graduate school, according to President Charles A. Thigpen. The graduate school opened in August with nine ministers enrolled in a one-year program leading to a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies.

The convocation is scheduled for 8:00 p.m. in the college's Memorial Auditorium. Graduate School Dean Robert Picirilli will bring the principal address. President Thigpen will preside. Special music by the College Choir and the Instrumental Ensemble is planned.

The graduate school's opening is the culmination of denominational plans begun in July, 1976 by the National Association of Free Will Baptists. Although the first program is for ministers, other programs are expected to be added as interest in graduate studies grows and as the need for more thoroughly trained workers increases.

The administration invites Free Will Baptists across the denomination to pray for the new graduate school and to attend this special service.

When the **Crossroads FWB Church, Effingham, IL**, turned 70 weeks old in September, Pastor **John Hollis** set a goal to have 70 present on the 70th Sunday—71 people were present for Sunday School and morning worship. The group is meeting in a house but is looking for larger facilities to rent.

A **Missouri FWB** minister, **Rick Dablemont**, has begun a ministry geared primarily to youth which includes street evangelism, testimonies of "Juveniles for Jesus," and other avenues of expression. Rev. Dablemont serves as Juvenile Probation Officer and Detention Supervisor for the 25th Judicial Circuit Court.

The **King's Way FWB Church, Springfield, MO**, observed 10th anniversary activities in August. Pastor **Dan Talbott** says the church has a membership of 93. Former Pastor **Gene Terry** delivered the afternoon anniversary message.

The **Evergreen FWB Church, Iola, TX**, observed Pastor Appreciation Day in honor of Pastor **W. A. Richards**. The day included a surprise luncheon and money tree for Pastor and Mrs. Richards.

Pastor **Richard Cordell** said members at **Guin FWB Church, Guin, AL**, made 794 contacts one week in September. The weekly community contacts enable the church to have a constant ministry in the local community.

According to Pastor **Tom Keylon**, members at **Bethel FWB Church, Allen, OK**, took just 53 days to erect their new sanctuary which will seat 200. The church was started in November, 1981. The newly constructed building contains 4,000 square feet of floor space and includes eight classrooms, as well as a pastor's study.

When the church feeds the pastor, it usually doesn't make news. But when the pastor feeds the entire church, that is a news item. It happened at **Bear Point FWB Church, Cisne, IL**, on September 21. Pastor **Bill Howard** and his wife prepared a meal for the entire church family. Pastor Howard and his wife started cooking at 4:00 a.m., and 12 hours later, a 90-lb. pig had been roasted and was ready to be served to the 80 members who shared in the unusual meal.

The **East Alabama Bible Institute** opened classes at **St. Mark FWB Church, Phenix City, AL**, according to **James Allen**, registrar. The institute enrolled 17 students for classes this fall. Classes meet on Monday and Friday evenings and use the basic ETTA teaching materials.

September 12 was Pastor Appreciation Day at **First FWB Church, Pleasant Grove, AL**. Pastor **George Ritter** and his wife received some original cards from the teen class. **Mrs. Ritter** was presented with a crystal bell, while Brother Ritter was given a walnut desk set with two pens and digital clock.

CONTACT welcomes **THE GOSPEL COURIER**, publication of **First FWB Church, Sikeston, MO**. **Wayne Hale** pastors.

Friendship FWB Church, Rose Bud, AR, dedicated its new sanctuary in August. Arkansas Promotional Director, **David Joslin** was guest speaker. Pastor **Sidney Sawrie** said the completed sanctuary cost an estimated \$55,000. Friendship Church was organized in 1932 with 11 charter members.

The **Spencer Road FWB Church, Spencer, OK**, voted to begin a Christian school by 1984. Pastor **Waldo Young** said the group plans to start with preschool through fifth grade with traditional type training. The church vote called for \$25,000 to be in the treasury before building began. Projections call for construction of a 4,000 square feet building by late 1983.

The **Blue Point FWB Church,**

Cisne, IL, sponsors a weekly 15-minute radio program at 5:45 p.m., Sundays. Pastor **Clifford Donoho** speaks over radio station WNOI in Flora, IL. The program is named "Blue Point Vespers." By the way, the church threw a surprise birthday dinner for Pastor Donoho and bought him a new three-piece-suit.

Pastor **Walter Sumerlin** says the **Charlottesville FWB Church, Charlottesville, VA**, organized on May 12. The group has a comfortable meeting site. They ordained two deacons in September. Pastor Sumerlin requested continued prayer support for the mission work's financial needs, citing the need for such items as hymnbooks, filing cabinets, a used van for Sunday School, office desk, etc. Interested parties may contact Brother Sumerlin through the National Home Missions Department.

The **Wesconnett FWB Church, Jacksonville, FL**, celebrated its 25th anniversary this fall with 100 in attendance for Sunday School and 197 for morning worship services, according to Pastor **Howard Bass**. Guest speakers included Rev. **Elro Driggers** and Rev. **Fred Lockwood**.

Pastor **Jim McAllister** reports that 70 people took part in the Thursday night visitation in September at **First FWB Church, Farmington, MO**. The 70 visitors included 32 men. The growing church averages more than 270 riders per Sunday on their nine bus routes.

Mrs. Laverne Hanson was honored for 15 years' service to **Saint John Valley Bible Camp in Canada** this fall. Camp Director **Otis Derrah, Jr.**, presented an inscribed tray to Mrs. Hanson who had labored as a counselor, dining room and kitchen staff, camp chief, and with ceramics. Mrs. Hanson is the wife of **Fred Hanson** who pastors the **Upper Brighton FWB Church in Hartland, New Brunswick, Canada**.

The **Columbia FWB Church, Columbia, MO**, celebrated its 14th anniversary on September 12 according to Pastor **John Postlewaite**. The occasion included a seven minute tape from Home Missionary **Mark Vandivort** who began the church as a national home missions project in the summer of 1968. **Charles Edwards** prepared a historical review for the 14th anniversary. A



Green Tree Bible Study

Robert E. Picirilli

A STUDY IN PHILIPPIANS

The Christian Mind

The November column suggested the value of studying a theme in a scripture portion, and used joy, in Philippians, as an example. Philippians also has the Christian's *mind* as one of its important themes.

One's "mind" is the way he thinks, and that undergirds all behavior. We have to *think* Christianity before we *act* that way.

The basic word for mind (Greek; *phroneo*) occurs 12 times in Philippians—always as a verb rather than as a noun. The references are: 1:7; 2:2 (twice); 2:3; 2:5; 3:15 (twice); 3:16; 3:19; 4:2; 4:10 (twice). All of these are translated "mind/think" except in 4:10, "care/careful."

There are four other verses where different Greek words are used, also translated "think" or "mind(ed)": 1:27;

2:20 (where the word is *psyche*, "soul" or "self"); 4:7 (the word is *noema*, "mental faculties"); and 4:8 (the word is *logizomai*, "consider").

Without space to analyze all passages carefully, we can look at some of the main characteristics of the Christian's way of thinking that Paul is concerned about.

FIRST is "likemindedness" or "same mindedness." Note 1:27; 2:2; 3:16; and 4:2—and compare Romans 12:16. This characteristic applies to oneness with other believers: we are to "mind the same thing"; notice in these verses the close association with words like one, together, same, love, accord.

Essential to the life of a church is harmony and unity of mind, sharing a common outlook, purpose, conviction. And that, obviously, is of great value to the Lord. We should value it, too.

SECOND, is "lowlimindedness," which is another way of rendering the word "humility." In 2:3 and 2:5 we

have this instruction, along with a clear statement of what it will mean and with Christ given as our example.

The lowly mind means we will esteem others better than ourselves (v. 3) and look out for their concerns in preference to our own (v. 4). That is the "mind" Jesus had (v. 5) and which should be in us. Humility is thinking rightly about oneself—and, because rightly, lowly.

THIRD, Paul is concerned that we be "heavenly minded" rather than "earthly minded." You see this in 3:15, 19. He exhorts us to be "thus" minded, and "thus" refers to the way He was minded (vv. 13, 14) in considering that He had not yet laid hold of His goal but continued to press on toward the upward call (standing before the Lord).

That is the opposite of those who "mind earthly things" (v. 19). As Paul



GREEN TREE (From page 23)

puts it, our citizenship is in Heaven (v. 20), and that means our minds should be on things there rather than things here. No doubt, some have said Christians can be "so heavenly minded they are no earthly good"—but most of us have it the other way around.

FOURTH on our list is "peace of mind," and 4:6, 7 tells us the secret of that. We should not be careful/anxious about "things" (the Greek word is *merimnao*, to be anxious, tense, distracted) but should put our concerns

before God in prayer, with thanksgiving. Then God's peace will keep (Greek: *phroureo*, guard, garrison) our hearts (emotions) and minds (mental faculties).

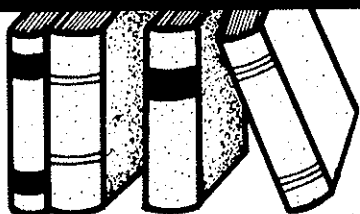
FIFTH, Paul speaks about what we may call "wholesomemindedness," in 4:8, 9. We should think on, consider, reflect on wholesome, spiritual things—things that are (1) true, (2) "honest" (literally, reverent or venerable), (3) just (upright), (4) pure, (5) "lovely" (worthy of love/affection), (6) of good report (that is, well spoken of), (7) virtuous (morally excellent), and (8) praiseworthy.

The point here is that what we think about enough, we will become. What we reflect on is finally reflected in us. Then we should focus on the good, the true, the noble, the uplifting, and our minds will be shaped accordingly.

Romans 12:2 speaks of the Christian mind as one renewed, transformed from conformity to the spirit of this age. Surely Philippians helps us understand some of the characteristics of that new way of thinking.

And surely it is in the power of the Word of God, which is the expression of *His* mind, as we live in it, to shape our minds in just these ways. ▲

Top Shelf



Thomas Marberry



Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties by Gleason L. Archer (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982, 476 pp., hardback, \$16.95).

The Bible contains many perplexing problems with which the serious student of the scriptures must deal. Difficult Bible passages cannot be simply ignored; a serious attempt should be made to understand and correctly explain them. Because of his great facility with biblical languages, Gleason Archer is well qualified to undertake the task of explaining these difficult passages.

The fact that a passage is difficult to understand does not mean that the passage is in error. That two passages of scripture seem on the surface to contradict one another does not mean that one of them must be in error. A better understanding of the passage or

passages involved may offer an explanation of something which appears to be an error or contradiction.

Archer points out that some difficulties result from incorrect copying of Greek and Hebrew words. Also, some problems in interpreting scripture are the result of poor translations. He demonstrates that often a better understanding of the original Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic can clear up many problems.

Recent archaeological discoveries have helped to clarify difficult passages by providing better insight into the language and culture of biblical times.

One helpful section of this book describes the kinds of errors which are likely to arise when documents are copied by hand. Archer explains how scholars examine and compare early hand-written copies of the Bible in an effort to recognize these copying errors and reconstruct the original text. Scholars have been so successful in this that today we have very reliable texts of the Old and New Testaments.

Another helpful section of this book describes how New Testament writers used Old Testament quotations in their writings. Sometimes they quoted from the Hebrew version of the Old Testament; sometimes they quoted from the Greek version known as the Septuagint.

There are, to be sure, several places where Free Will Baptists will not agree with his explanations of difficult passages.

For example, Free Will Baptists will not agree that God decides through his foreknowledge whether a child which dies in infancy will be saved or lost.

Also, Free Will Baptists will not agree with Archer's argument that Christians may never fall from grace.

In spite of these areas of disagreement, this is a volume which I can recommend. This volume can help the Christian to better understand his Bible. In particular, it helps to assure the Christian that the Bible which he studies teaches truth and not error. ▲

ATTORNEY ADVISES 'PULL BACK AND THINK'



OUR READERS COMMENT

I have been reading with interest the fussing and fighting over Free Will Baptist Bible College.

As an attorney I am fully aware of the nuances of language and how the entire meaning of a sentence can easily hinge on the interpretation of a word. But we as Christians are required to uphold certain laws just as I am required to uphold (rightly or wrongly) the laws of this country. Jesus' great commandment is to love thy neighbor as thyself. All other laws follow from this.

The tone of the debate concerning the Nashville college has reached such an unloving legalistic level that I feel compelled to remind everyone involved of Christ's law.

Furthermore, I have noticed over the past few years a general feeling of strict, unloving legalism creeping into the Free Will Baptist

denomination. I think the current battle is the direct result of this.

We are Christians first and Free Will Baptists second! As Christians we are required to love everyone as we love ourselves. If the members of this denomination forget this, then it is doomed to split as it has so many times in the past.

I would strongly urge the participants of this battle to pull back from the battle and to think about what they are doing.

Furthermore, I would urge anyone caught up in this issue to go back and study Psalms, Proverbs and Jesus' Beatitudes.

Robert T. Hardcastle
Attorney at Law
Wilburton, Oklahoma

READER DISAGREES WITH TONGUES ARTICLE

As a born again Christian, filled with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, I would like to say your first article of the October, 1982 issue is rotten.

I will never be able to understand why well educated people cannot accept the simple things of the Bible. Why do Free Will Baptists preach so hard against tongues as a gift and yet say you believe in healing, even have a bottle of oil and pray for the sick?

Either you or I have missed the mark. The Bible says we are not to add to or take away. I feel you should retract your story to clear this matter up.

I don't say everyone will speak in tongues, but not everyone who is prayed for to be healed is healed. This is very confusing to young Christians. Our church teaches the whole Bible. We believe it from cover to cover.

My idea of the rebellion is that you have never experienced the full power of the Holy Ghost upon your being. If you yield and the Lord ever one time slays you under His Spirit, you will never doubt this again.

Mrs. Ruby Roper
Birmingham, Alabama

CANCEL MY SUBSCRIPTION!

I am sending your October issue back and this is the reason . . .

I don't see how you can print such a mistake about talking in tongues. Why do you try to take this part out of the Bible? If you don't believe this part, you need not believe any of it.

We are members of First Free Will Baptist Church, Dover, Arkansas. Our pastor does not teach this, but he also does not deny it either.

Peter told the Jews how it came to pass. He also said it was for you, your children, and their children, and as many as the Lord God should call. Have you been called?

Please don't send me any more books.

Ray Jackson
Dover, Arkansas

ENJOYS MAGAZINE AGAIN

The timely article "Reach Beyond Your Raising" is inspirational to those of us basking in the easy life. The October issue with its other articles concerning motivation will help us grow into the denomination for which our doctrine destines us.

I invite every Free Will Baptist to tape this where it can be read daily so we can implement the directives in "Reach Beyond Your Raising."

Thanks to Melvin Worthington for the kind remarks toward Master's Men. That organization is on course, and with the encouragement of denominational leaders we will strive toward the challenge set forth.

I enjoy CONTACT again since we seem to realize the unsaved world is out there, and are not seeking the imperfections of those within our denomination.

Keep up the good work. Its professional appeal has brought good flavor to us laymen that are on the sidelines just going to church and trying to do our jobs.

Tim Jordon
Heritage Builders, Inc.
Albany, Georgia

ONE MORE CHANCE

Enclosed is our check for our subscription. We will carry it one more year.

We believe the mission of the church and/or the denomination is evangelism, and it is beneath the dignity of the denomination to argue over legalistic matters.

Prayer over these matters is the real solution to any problem of this nature. We hope that this method will be used, since the matter is not one affecting salvation or evangelism.

Mrs. E. C. Conger
Arizona City, Arizona

LAYMEN GRATEFUL TO BE INFORMED

As Free Will Baptists and lay church members, we wish to express our thanks to CONTACT for the information you print.

We support the Bible College in Nashville and appreciate their side being published, so that we might have the facts.

Dennis and Flo Edgar
Memphis, Tennessee

READER LIKES IT!

I don't want to be without this paper. I enjoy it from front to back cover.

Reverend C. J. Kettman
Ewing, Illinois

MAGAZINES HAVE A MINISTRY . . .



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—Compiled by CONTACT Staff

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THE SECRETARY SPEAKS

By Melvin Worthington

Benjamin P. Browne suggests that the millions who have no concept of its spiritual significance are *Christmas Christians* when he chides: "Christmas Christians are limited Christians. It might seem safe to try to keep Christ wrapped as a baby and limited to a manger, a cradle, or a creche, but too much is lost. It is in the context of His life and ministry—and, we should add, His death—that Bethlehem has meaning."

Those who properly celebrate this Christmas season may want to shout as did Paul, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (II Corinthians 9:15). Words fail to express the greatness of the gift of God's Son and the mercies that resulted from it.

God's gift is the gift of Himself in His Son. Here is the source of all His grace, blessings and love.

The gift of God's Son reveals God's plan, purpose, passion, presence and provision. He knew what was best for this world. At the precise moment, He interjected His Son into the world, a world that He controlled then and still does.

When we look around and see the apparent collapse of what is right, we are tempted to doubt. But faith has always had to rise above the tangled fears that seek to drag it into the pit. God's gift of His Son is His constant reminder that there is hope in the world. He does not forget His promises, for He works His will as surely as day follows night.

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The Bible and the Babe



The traditional Christmas scene is but one of six stages of the total Christmas story. Christ has been out of the cradle for 2,000 years. Join me as we survey the six Christmas truths about Christ.

Virgin Birth

Isaiah predicted the virgin birth more than 700 years before the event startled the Roman world and divided time (Isaiah 7:14). Shortly after the close of the intertestamental period (or 400 silent years), Matthew 1:22-23 declared the fulfillment of Isaiah's sparkling prophecy.

When Jesus Christ was born, He had a human mother but no human father (Matthew 1:20). He was the God-Man; the virgin birth being the essential vehicle to the mysterious, unexplainable union of the divine and the human which took place when Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary.

The Lord Jesus needed a human body, thus He was "made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). And in order to be sinless, His had to be a virgin birth.

Virtuous Life

Jesus lived a perfect life while here on earth, a record never once flawed by sin. That sinless life was one of the qualifications for Him to be the Redeemer for mankind. This Christmas season may we be keenly conscious of the price He paid to live that virtuous life.

Vicarious Death

Jesus Christ, God's Gift, became a vicarious offering and died in the stead of sinners. The heart of the gospel is the truth that "Christ gave himself" for our sins. He died as our substitute, bearing God's wrath for our sins, the Sinless One in the place of the sinful ones.

Albert Barnes refutes the error of those who would see Christ's death as a horrible accident of history, "The whole plan originated in the divine purpose, and has been executed in accordance with the divine will. If in accordance with his will, it is good, and is worthy of universal acceptance."

Victorious Resurrection

Christ's death and resurrection are bedrock doctrines of Christianity. Paul declares that Jesus Christ was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification (Romans 4:25). He hurls to any hesitant believer the truth that "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain" (I Corinthians 15:17).

The gospel which Paul preached consisted of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, according to the scriptures (I Corinthians 15:3, 4).

Verified Ascension

Acts chapter one records the ascension of Christ. Following the giving of the commission to proclaim the gospel

to the ends of the earth, Christ ascended and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

Angelic messengers then announced the Second Coming of Christ to them as they returned to Jerusalem.

Vital Intercession

John 17 and Romans 8 clearly set forth the truth that Christ is praying for us. Hebrews 9:24 states that Christ now appears in the presence of God interceding on our behalf.

What a comforting thought that Christ is our High Priest. He is interested in us; He intercedes for us; He intervenes on our behalf and interprets the deepest desires of our hearts.

Christmas is not an isolated event that is over in one day, but it is one in a series of glorious days that involves God's redemptive plan, purpose, power, provision and people.

Christmas belongs to Christians. But let's not be a scrooge about this truth. Spread the good cheer that He came once and will some day come again! ▲

The Secretary's Schedule

December 6-7	Executive Committee Meeting Nashville, Tennessee
December 7	Graduate School Convocation Nashville, Tennessee
December 8-10	Leadership Conference Nashville, Tennessee
December 29-January 6	Bible Lands Tour Israel and Egypt

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