



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

---FEATURES

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Minister Sees Poverty, Returns to Help Indians

By Kim Watson

MANDAN, N. D. (BP)--He hadn't meant to come back. He was driving through with his wife, and the poverty in which the Indians lived stayed on his mind long after the little town had faded away behind them.

John and Berna Miller don't remember why they were passing through Fort Yates, N.D., in 1967. He thinks they were driving through on their vacation, but what they saw was never packed away with their vacation memories.

"We went down the streets and there was just row after row of houses with little outhouses behind. I just couldn't believe it. To see the poverty these people were living in..." Miller's voice trailed off.

"I looked around at the churches and there was only one church building that looked like it might be meeting some needs of the people in evangelical witness for Jesus Christ..."

"It was a small community church. I investigated and found the church was only for white people. The Lord would not let me get this off my mind," Miller recalled.

Miller was, at the time, the pastor of Duffay Baptist Church in ^HAlico, Tex., but the sights and sounds of Fort Yates continued to bother him. In 1967, he gave up the Texas church to become the pastor of First Baptist Church in Mandan, an Anglo (white) church 50 miles from Fort Yates. The Mandan church is the base of operations from which Miller reaches out to Indians and Anglos.

When he assumed the pastorate in Mandan, there were two families in the church. Now there are about 50 members. The work is difficult and slow.

Four city-wide crusades have been held in the Mandan area since Miller began his work there. From the first crusade came 180 decisions and about 500 decisions resulted from the fourth. When Miller showed the Billy Graham film, *Time to Run*, over 700 people made public decisions for Jesus Christ, he said.

Not one of the 1,380 people who "accepted Jesus Christ," however, became members of a church. Miller said the Anglos in his area aren't oriented toward churches. When the people are snowed in, church becomes a form of recreation. In the summer, they're bored from many months of staying at home, and they all leave for parts unknown, he said.

Nevertheless, Miller is making headway in attracting local people to the church. There are two different types of churches in Mandan and the surrounding area, he said. One type of church is made up of people who have come from the South, and the other consists of native North Dakotans.

"Our church has become exclusively native North Dakotans, except one family who have been in North Dakota 10 years, and you can almost say they're natives now."

Miller's first love is his work with the Indians on the Standing Rock Reservation. He began his Indian mission work in 1968.

"We talked about it and expressed an interest, so we went out that summer and just said we were going to have a Vacation Bible School (VBS) in six weeks.

"I didn't know a person, but we went out to a little (reservation) community called Ponderosa--it's the slum area in Fort Yates--started knocking on doors and asking parents if they'd send their kids if we had Bible school.

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"That first year we rented an old building. All the windows had been knocked out, but it was the biggest building in the area and we had VBS for the children," Miller recalled.

Later, Miller visited the reservation town of Cannonball, N.D., where he saw the same needs as in Fort Yates. He held another VBS in 1968, this time in Cannonball.

By summer, 1972, Miller and his wife, with a volunteer team of adults from First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Tex., extended the VBS activities into eight towns around Mandan. Using four teams twice a day, they conducted eight Bible schools a day.

Besides Bible school work and the pastorate, the Millers conduct weekly mission services in Fort Yates and Cannonball.

"We have a regular service in Fort Yates on Friday nights, where we have Bible school with anywhere from 20-45 Indian adults, mostly women, who attend.

Despite the "large" attendance in Cannonball, only two Southern Baptist church members are there. One is a woman Miller baptized earlier this year, and the other is a young girl.

Miller explained why work among the Indians is so difficult. "The Indian concept of God is strong. The Indian god lives in the outdoors, with the whole world as his domain..."

Miller continued, "Most Indians think the Anglo God is different because he's connected with the building. The religious needs are great out here," the minister added.

"We have a large number of Indian ladies who come to services. They seem to be the spiritual heads of the families, but one man, Gilbert Two Bear, is going to be baptized shortly.

Miller said he has encountered no real opposition from the Indians but said the Indian men react indifferently to his work because they don't consider religion a male activity.

Miller is a tall, solid man with an ever-present smile who expects his mission work with the Indians to grow.

"We've come to a place where we know the people, and we hope over a period of a few weeks to reach into other towns for weekly ministries.

"Our hope and prayer is, if the Lord is leading, churches will be established in all these towns, Miller said.

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Kim Watson is a staff writer for the Atlanta Bureau of Baptist Press and for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

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Opportunity for Ministry
Follows Student Uprising

11/26/73

BANGKOK, Thailand (BP)--Since October's bloody political riot here that led to reorganization of the Thai government, missionaries who work with the Baptist Student Center here have had opportunity to minister to students who were involved.

A reportedly peaceful demonstration of 200,000 students and others, calling for a new constitution and other changes in the government, led to a weekend of violence. Police armed with machine guns and rifles fought students armed with clubs, according to Bobby L. Spear, missionary to Thailand.

Several hundred people died in the fighting, according to Spear, but on Monday, Oct. 15, after government leaders announced that new elections would be held and a new constitution drawn up within six months, the fighting stopped.

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Because of her contact with students, Mrs. Raymond L. Shelton, director of the Baptist Student Center, knew many involved in the demonstration.

"Participation ran the gamut from student demonstrators to nurses who cared for the wounded," she said.

One student who was in the crowd at the gate of the king's palace when the first shots were fired described the pandemonium that broke loose as unarmed students fell under the bullets while the fortunate ones escaped by jumping into a nearby canal.

Another student who had gone home Saturday night rushed back after hearing radio reports of the fighting, thinking he could help his friends. Finding the streets blocked off, he went to donate blood and then joined those at a market who were providing food.

An adult woman who studied English at the center found herself with her family upstairs in their combination home-drugstore, protected from the fighting by a locked collapsible steel grate across the front of the store.

A Buddhist monk, one of many who study English at the center, told Mrs. Shelton that more than 100 students became monks in his temple after the demonstrations were over in an effort to gain merit for their fellow students who lost their lives.

Two nurses who also study English were working at the hospital which treated most of the casualties.

Following the uprising, Spear said, "We give thanks to God for an explosive situation being defused."

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First Baptist Church,
Lubbock, Names Weber

11/26/73

LUBBOCK, Tex. (BP)--Jaroy Weber, pastor of Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala., has accepted the pastorate of First Baptist Church here, the second largest church in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Weber, current president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, has served the Dauphin Way Baptist Church since 1966 and held previous pastorates in Texas and Louisiana.

A son, Billy Weber, is pastor of Northway Baptist Church, Dallas, and vice president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference.

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Utah-Idaho Convention
Adopts Record Budget

11/26/73

BOISE, Idaho (BP)--"Messengers" to the ninth annual Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention adopted a \$312,413 budget, the largest in its history. The convention will allot 20 per cent of that to Southern Baptist Convention causes.

In other action, messengers elected as president, Luman Gilman, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Salt Lake City, Utah, where next year's convention will be held Nov. 12-13.

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Gen. Taylor Sets Retirement
From Southwestern Seminary

11/26/73

FORT WORTH (BP)--Maj. Gen. Robert Preston Taylor, retired chief of chaplains of the U. S. Air Force, will retire Dec. 31 as director of development for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

The Southern Baptist chaplain, who came to Southwestern in 1966 after retiring from the Air Force, survived the infamous Bataan Death March, Hell Ships and Japanese prison camps of World War II. His World War II experiences are recounted in a recent book, Days of Anguish, Days of Hope, published by Doubleday.

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Fire Causes \$7,000
Damage in Seminary Housing

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--A mid-morning fire caused an estimated \$7,000 in damage to an apartment in married student housing on Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary campus here and destroyed clothing, furniture and personal items of the family living there.

No one was injured in the fire, which was brought under control in 10 minutes and did only slight smoke damage to two connecting apartments.

A spokesman said the fire was started by a child playing with matches.

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Texas Baptists Name Church
Training Department Secretary

11/26/73

DALLAS (BP)--Harold G. Hanson has been elected secretary of the church training department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Tommy Dixon, an associate in the Texas Baptist church training department since 1966, will join the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, as a consultant in the youth section of the church training department.

Hanson succeeds R. Clyde Hall, who resigned in June to enter private business. He is a former associate in the Texas Baptist Sunday School division and has served for the past six years as minister of education at First Baptist Church, Tyler, Tex.

Both Hanson and Dixon are graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. Dixon is a graduate of Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., and Hanson is a graduate of Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, Tex.

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Oklahoma Baptists
Victims of Tornado

11/26/73

By Jack L. Gritz
For Baptist Press

When killer tornadoes ripped across central and north central Oklahoma Monday night, Nov. 19, they left behind death and destruction for several Oklahoma Baptists as well as many others.

The four-month-old baby daughter of Jeff Moore, associate pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist church in Moore, Okla., was among five persons killed in the storm.

The tiny body of Jennifer was found in the debris of the Moore family's demolished mobile home in Royalpark Trailer Park not far from the church.

Mrs. Moore (Tommie Sue), 21, was reported in good condition at Moore Memorial Hospital. A four-year-old son, Jeff III, was treated at the hospital for minor injuries and released. Moore was not injured.

Emmanuel Baptist Church is collecting love offerings for the Moore family.

Another Southern Baptist, Mrs. David Hill, 20, of Blanchard, a member of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, died in the storm along with her infant son, five-week-old David Neal. She was the former Elinda Frances Chaney of Oklahoma City and South Carolina. Her husband, David Hill, was seriously injured and hospitalized at Norman.

Another tornado victim was Ray A. Saunders, 76, of Oklahoma City, a retired printing pressman serving as night watchman at a county warehouse on the south side of Oklahoma City. The building in which he was security guard collapsed when the storm struck. He was a Free Will Baptist.

The fifth victim was Robert L. Maynard, four-month-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Maynard of Moore, who were friends of the Jeff Moore family and lived near them in the same trailer park.

At Moore, Trinity Baptist Church's new auditorium, which had been dedicated two weeks earlier, was severely damaged. Pastor John Shelton said the new facility had cost \$115,000 and estimated that repairs and replacement of equipment would cost about \$50,000.

The devastating storms hit nine Oklahoma cities and towns that night--Oklahoma City, Moore, Blanchard, Blackwell, Tonkawa, Hennessey, Arnett, Collinsville and Copan.

Fifty-nine persons were reported injured and property damage was estimated to be in excess of \$5 million.

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Yugoslav Baptists and
Others Adopt WIN Brochure

LANGESUND, Norway(BP)--The Baptist Union of Yugoslavia has printed the first edition of an evangelistic brochure which is part of the Southern Baptist-developed WIN (Witness Involvement Now) lay evangelism program.

Gunter Wieske, chairman of the European Baptist Evangelism Committee, based in Langesund, Norway, said the brochure, "How to Have a Full and Meaningful Life," has already been produced in Finland and West Germany and that Baptists of Norway "are preparing for the same step."

"Lay evangelism seems to be one of the major areas in which Baptists of different countries can cooperate," Wieske said. "The process of gathering our own European experiences has just started. The first results are already very promising."

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