



FEATURES
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75-11

'Nobody Ever Told Us About
Jesus This Way Before'

By Tim Nicholas

Omaha, Neb. (BP)--Calvin Miller's evangelism methods get action-packed results.

For instance, there was the time Miller, the pastor of Westside Baptist Church here, rang a doorbell. A fierce dog crashed through the glass door, the glass slivers cutting Miller's leg.

"The man who owned the dog took me to the emergency room at a nearby hospital," says Miller. "He came to church later and during a sharing time, he received Christ."

Most events resulting from Miller's style of evangelism aren't quite as dangerous, but there are definite results.

Probably the first evidence of results would be in growth. Westside church began in 1966 on the west side of Omaha, which for Southern Baptists is still considered a "new work" area.

Initial "door-knocking" for the church turned up 64 per cent Catholic and 20 per cent Lutheran in the neighborhood. Miller came to build a Baptist group from five families who had been meeting in a home.

Today the church averages 340 in Sunday School and 500 in worship. The church had financial help from the local Baptist association and another church, plus pastoral aid from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, but within a couple of years was self-sufficient.

The Home Mission Board assistance is an example of Southern Baptists' mission support efforts through the denomination's Cooperative Program (unified budget) and the Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions.

"We have a missionary-type philosophy," says the angular, bearded Miller, "with extremely active visitation using our Woman's Missionary Union and the deacons."

The Chamber of Commerce publishes a list of newcomers to the westside--upper middle class, mainly anglo, residency--they all get a call, letter or a visit.

"Between 30 and 40 people go out visiting each week," says Miller. "And every Thursday night they take team training in basic witnessing," a 14-week course based on Presbyterian James Kennedy's methods detailed in *Evangelism Explosion*.

"The average soul-winning visit takes between two and four hours." No "cold turkey" calls either--the visits follow either a visit to the church by the person or a visit to the person by the pastor. He makes about 25 such calls each week.

In a recent month, 200 visits were recorded. "I figure some sort of bridgework was made in about 95 of these," says Miller. "Twenty people accepted Christ in their homes and 40 were baptized at the church."

Another method of building Miller uses is a basic Bible doctrine course for non-church members. Many accept Christ and join the church during the 22-week course averaging 50 each Sunday morning.

"The last class was graduated in January, and we began two new Sunday School classes out of the 90 enrolled."

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Miller wrote his own text for the basic Bible doctrine course as he did for several congregational Bible studies. One of his studies was written for partial fulfillment of requirements for the doctor of ministries degree he just earned from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

He is prolific, having written several articles for Christianity Today Magazine, including "St. Paul and the Liberated Woman" and "Christ and the Existential Imagination."

Miller communicates on multiple levels. He has produced seven books so far published by such organizations as Baker, Word, Zondervan, and Intervarsity. Some include his poetry and his office walls are decorated with several of his paintings.

"I like the idea that a man can empty himself out before the Lord and be humble before Christ," says Miller.

"But at the same time it's very important to feel that you have some real worth to the kingdom, especially when you're in little situations working hard all the time. I wish more of our pioneer pastors would try writing."

Miller's preaching style varies. Sometimes he stands behind the pulpit to talk to the congregation, sometimes beside it and sometimes he's out in the congregation. Occasionally the congregation gets to talk back.

He and a medical doctor recently held a forum sermon on abortion, opening the discussion to the congregation. "I'm a pro-lifer, but I tried to make the discussion objective," says Miller.

"We rotate five basic orders of worship," he says. "One is 'passing the peace' where an usher goes to the end of a pew and says, 'The Lord be with you.' The response is 'And with your spirit.'"

Mother's Day they had a mock wedding ceremony for 200 couples in the church and in the fall they have Advent services.

"Most of the people we're reaching have Catholic and Lutheran backgrounds," says Miller. "And for the rest of us it's new and kinda' fun to be lighting candles and such."

Most of the children who come to Sunday School, arrive with their parents, says Miller. "We blitzed the whole area during Vacation Bible School with our two buses, but on the whole, we haven't had much luck getting more than 25 children."

The youth choir is active in the community, having performed "Godspell" at nearby (Father Flanagan's) Boy's Town. They did a special production of "The Night the Animals Talked" complete with costumes for the local children's hospital.

Twenty per cent of the church's budget is sent out to missions, In addition, the church has designated money to go toward support of a foreign missionary through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, says Miller.

Some of the church's men have volunteered with the Baptist Center in town and some have been in a lay counseling service for juveniles on probation.

"We want our Christian social ministries to be primarily meaningful to an upper middle class neighborhood," says Miller.

This fall the church began a licensed preschool program with 25 children enrolled. And Doris Reese, a church member, is teaching an art class.

Sunday nights, a coffee-tape hour is led by David Glover, a physician. Prepared by Miller, the tapes include such topics as "Christ and Confusion", "Sex and Despair", and "Christ Symbolism in Current Novels". "Our church's philosophy could probably be summed up 'as you go, witness,'" says Miller, a native of Enid, Okla.

Say Maynard and Helen Whittier, in their 70's, "Nobody ever told us about Jesus this way before."



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January 21, 1975

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Mobile Medical Clinics
Effective in S. E. Asia

By Dave Howard

RICHMOND (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries in Vietnam and the Philippines have begun mobile medical ministries serving the remotest parts of the lands, providing medication and treatment while spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In Saigon, a converted U. S. military snack truck now functions as a Baptist mobile medical clinic, while in the Philippines a mobile clinic was built on a landrover chassis.

Gene V. Tunnell, missionary in charge of the Vietnam Christian social ministries program, admits that the mobile medical van operates on a "financial shoestring." But in the same breath he explains, "We launched the ministry in faith that God would supply continuing needs for the ministry."

Some funds to purchase and equip the van in Vietnam were provided by First Baptist Church, Decatur, Ga., while the \$10,000 needed for the van in Davao City, Philippines, came from Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds.

Under the direction of the department of Christian social ministries of the Vietnam Baptist Mission (organization of Southern Baptist missionaries), the van is staffed by three women: Dr. Nghiem Thi Thuan, a Vietnamese doctor; Mrs. Samuel M. James, Southern Baptist missionary nurse; and Mrs. Peyton M. Moore, missionary.

Because of limited funds and personnel, the mobile clinic is only operating two days a week on the outskirts of Saigon. But all services of the clinic are free, including medicines.

At each stop, the van is parked at a Baptist church where members provide help in scheduling and counseling the patients. Other lay people encourage new patients, pray with them and provide Christian tracts.

One vietnamese pastor feels the medical ministry is the most meaningful ministry his church has ever experienced. "We have seen personally how we are helped by helping others," he said. In Vietnam, there is only one doctor for every 9,000 people.

The Philippines' medical van, that sleeps four, is under the direction of Dr. Charles C. Norwood, Southern Baptist missionary. Norwood says he will go anywhere, anytime with his van to minister to the people. At present, the Davao Oriental Province has been chosen for the medical work and Norwood hopes to be operating as many as four days a week.

Although the Mati Hospital mobile clinic will be the first operating in Mindanao, Norwood will not be a stranger to the people. He will be aided by barrio captains (local community leaders), rural health officers, and other persons in the medical van vicinity.

Norwood, who has served at the 42-bed Mati Hospital since 1969, has been making trips into the tribal areas of Mindanao, often accompanied by a Filipino pastor. He would treat patients during the day and at night would conduct evangelistic services.

Now, with the aid of the medical van, missionary press representative Robert L. Stanley says, "He can perform minor surgery, do basic lab analyses, and even spend the night out in the remote areas when necessary."

In addition, the van is equipped with a portable generator that will allow the doctor to show movies on health, family planning and nutrition.

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Although no sophisticated medical treatment is performed in Vietnam's mobile clinic, Mrs. James says that one of the most vital ministries is the referral service. "Many of the patients come in desperation," she said, "because they have no funds to go to expensive or distant hospitals." They are referred to nearby government or private medical facilities, she noted.

Because of the successes, the mobile medical van operations will continue in Southeast Asia. Tunnell expressed the hope that other clinics can be started throughout Vietnam. He added, "Personnel and medical supplies, especially medicines, are the hurdles which have to be overcome."

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Dave Howard is a staff writer for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Virginia.

(BP) Photos mailed to Baptist state papers.

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High Court to Rule in
Topless Dancing Case

Baptist Press

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court announced it will hear arguments challenging a New York community's ban on topless dancing.

At stake is the constitutionality of a local law in the town of North Hempstead, N. Y. prohibiting such dancing in bars, discotheques and other public places.

The law sets penalties of a fine up to \$500 and a jail sentence of 15 days for each day the ordinance is violated.

The case was appealed to the high court by North Hempstead town officials after two lower federal courts held the law was worded so broadly that it violated the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of expression.

In September, 1973, a U. S. district court imposed an injunction forbidding enforcement of the law until its constitutionality is decided by the courts. The U. S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit affirmed the district court's ruling in June, 1974, setting the stage for the appeal to the nation's highest tribunal.

In a written brief asking the court to accept jurisdiction in the case, town authorities argued that "the power of the municipality to regulate and control public nudity by enactment aimed at . . . commercial exploitation . . . , has been, and must be continued in the locality."

The officials also argued that "while the traditional right of free expression is afforded absolute protection, distinctions of conduct-type expression has never been afforded similar protection."

What the high court must decide is whether federal courts should intervene in ruling on such a law, and if so, whether the contested law is constitutional.

Under Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, the Supreme Court in recent years has tended to refrain from deciding such cases by involving the principle of federalism. Exceptions, however, can be cited.

If the high court does choose to decide the constitutionality of the North Hempstead law, it will mark the second time this term the issue of nudity in live entertainment has been confronted.

Earlier in its current term, the court heard oral arguments in a case challenging the power of the city of Chattanooga, Tenn., to refuse to lease its municipal auditorium for a production of "Hair," the controversial musical produced in the late 1960s. City officials there objected to the play's language and to a nude scene.

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In both cases, the court may choose to sidestep the constitutional questions and decide the disputes on other grounds.

In a related action, the Supreme Court issued orders in three other obscenity cases involving motion pictures and printed materials. In all three instances, the court decided 5-3 not to hear challenges to the convictions of persons accused of selling obscene matter.

The refusals are only the latest in a long series of such actions dating back to the high court's 1973 decision in *Miller v. California* giving local communities power to establish their own standards of obscenity.

-30-

Building Program Begins For Spanish Seminary

Baptist Press

ALCOBENDAS, Spain (BP) -- Construction on the first unit of the Spanish Baptist Seminary has begun following a recent groundbreaking ceremony at the site in this suburb of Madrid.

According to the seminary's director, Southern Baptist missionary Gerald A. McNeely, this will be the first of two proposed buildings to be located on the property acquired several years ago on the outskirts of the Spanish capital.

The seminary, formerly located in Barcelona, was moved to Madrid in 1971. Due to delays in building, the seminary used the facilities of the English-speaking Immanuel Baptist Church and a rented apartment for two years.

McNeely said he anticipates that two floors of the three-story building now under construction will be ready in time to provide facilities for the seminary's next semester which begins in October.

The first unit will have classrooms, administrative offices, a library and instructor's offices. The third floor, to be completed as funds are available, will provide dormitory space and efficiency apartments for married students.

A second unit will consist of a smaller, one story, chapel-conference area building.

The Spanish Baptist Seminary, with 23 students currently enrolled, trains pastors and other workers for churches of the Spanish Baptist Union. The three-year plan of study is similar to that of seminaries in the United States and Europe.

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Estonian Baptists in Sweden Mark Three Anniversaries

Baptist Press

STOCKHOLM (BP) -- Estonian Baptists marked three anniversaries as they commemorated 90 years of Baptist work in Estonia, 30 years of the work in Sweden and 10 years since the Normals (Estonian) Baptist Church was begun here.

Baptist work in Estonia began from the work of Swedish missionaries in 1884, with help later coming from German, American and British Baptists.

The church in Stockholm has had, according to European Baptist Press (EPBS), a total of 322 members, 223 of whom have moved on to the United States, Canada or Australia. The church's present membership is 62.

Southern Baptists have only one missionary to Estonians in the United States and probably the world, Boris Makarov, the pastor of Craig Avenue Baptist Church in El Verano, Calif., a native of Tartu in the heart of Estonia.

Estonia was incorporated into the USSR in 1940.

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English Baptists, Anglicans
& Methodists Share Church

NORTHAMPTON, Eng. (BP)--A sunken baptistry for observance of baptism by immersion and an 18th century marble font for christening stand side-by-side in Emmanuel Church here, where leaders of three denominations took part in dedication services.

Baptists, Anglicans and Methodists share ownership, membership and ministry in the new church, located in the Weston Favell Centre with shopping mall, schools, community theater and sports center.

Financing of the church facility came from local Baptist congregations, Anglican Church commissioners and the Methodist Rank Trust.

The church is staffed by a Baptist, Methodist and two Anglican ministers, a report by European Baptist Press (EPBS) noted.

-30-

SBC President Weber's
Father Dies in Louisiana

Baptist Press

ST. LANDRY, La. (BP)--Edward Weber, 82, the father of Southern Baptist Convention President Jaroy Weber, died here.

Surviving in addition to Jaroy Weber, the pastor of First Baptist Church in Lubbock, Tex. are the late Mr. Weber's widow and a daughter, Mrs. D. K. Cassell of Charlotte, N. C. He died January 21, 1975.

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