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February 5, 1982

82-21

Grant ¹Donate \$20,000
Toward Recorder Land

CO

RALEIGH, N. C. (BP)—Marse Grant, editor of the Biblical Recorder, and his wife, Marian, have donated \$20,000 for the purchase of a site for the Recorder's new offices.

"We believe in the Recorder and want to help maintain its ministry as a free and independent paper," said Grant, who retires Sept. 13 after 23 years as editor.

"The Recorder has provided my living for these years, and my wife and I wanted to give back to it a part of what I have earned. My wife may have to sell our house to cover the check, but she's had to be a good 'juggler' of money the 40 years we've been married," he said, smiling.

The gift was made in honor of his father who died in 1967, in honor of his mother and Mrs. Grant's parents, who are still living.

Commenting on the gift, Tommy J. Payne of Greenville, N. C., chairman of the newspaper's directors, said, "The Recorder has been Marse's life. You put your money where your life is."

The money is one-half the \$40,000 purchase price of 20,000 square feet adjacent to the Raleigh Baptist Association's offices at New Bern Avenue and Luther Road. Grant says \$2,000 earnest money has already been given the association, which owns the land, to secure the deal. The remaining \$18,000 will be raised through individuals and foundations in keeping with the state convention's financial plan, he said.

The Recorder's plans to construct offices apart from the state convention, which announced recently a move to a new location, has prompted some controversy in the state. Grant opposed the move and the Recorder's land purchase was announced hours after the state's general board announced its move.

From 1911 to 1957, the Recorder had its own offices and in fact rented space to the state convention. When the convention built its current building in 1957, the Recorder joined them and is currently paying more than \$15,000 annual rent.

Payne said in a statement that Grant seconded, the newspaper's situation is "not unlike a family that has rented for 25 years and now wants to buy a home of its own."

Members of the general board, however, passed a resolution asking the Recorder to explain why it wants to locate outside the Baptist building and how it plans to raise the money to build new offices.

Meanwhile, despite a cold, driving rain Feb. 2, more than 400 people attended a retirement dinner to honor Grant and his wife, Marion. North Carolina Gov. James Hunt Jr., and others praised them for their contributions to Baptist life as well as to the state at large.

Tributes included a letter from former president Jimmy Carter, who wrote: "You can be proud in knowing that your vote on behalf of human, civil and spiritual rights has been heard by many."



-- FEATURES

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First in a Series:

The Jesus Movement:

Visited 10 Years After

By Walker Knight

AB

A decade has passed since the Jesus Movement, like a time bomb on a crowded subway, burst on America in the late '60s and early 70s. Then shock waves of religious ecstasy rippled from West Coast to East. Rapturous youth by the thousands scrambled from mire and muck of the counter culture's drugs and rebellion to find an "Oh, WOW!" experience with Jesus.

To no one's surprise, 10 years later the Movement's no longer a movement. It peaked in the mid-70s. Energies turned toward conserving the overwhelming ingathering of converts. The inevitable came: institutionalization. Mini-denominations. Cults. A music industry. Festivals. Super churches. Publications. Ministries.

Recently photographer Everett Hullum and I retraced our 1971 coverage throughout the nation of the Jesus Movement. One of our first stops was Bethel Tabernacle of Redondo Beach, Calif. The church had showcased the counter culture's role in fueling the movement, with revival seven days a week for more than three years.

Today, Bethel has little trace of the 4,200 converted drug users and an estimated 100,000 youth who may have passed through its doors. Following the accidental death of the pastor the church split, with youth pastor Breck Stevens founding the Faith of Our Fathers Church.

We found the new group meeting in borrowed facilities. Attending the service was like being caught in a time warp--little had changed. Counter culture dress dominated the youthful crowd. The service was preceded by tongue-speaking individual prayers, and then the music boomed with the rock sounds of piano, drums, guitar and hand-clapping.

Testimonies harked back to 10 years ago when individuals came off drugs to meet Jesus. Like the name--Faith of Our Fathers--the church was rooted in the past.

With the death of the hippie culture, many Jesus Movement groups died. "The whole thing changed because the street scenes changed," says businessman Paul Bryant, a Golden Gate seminary graduate and co-founder of a number of San Francisco Bayarea house ministries. "People at first were trying to discover what Jesus was about. Since then, they've been trying to find out what the church is about."

At one time 600 house ministries dotted the West Coast, popping into existence like corn in a hot pan. But those which survived are now Christian homes where members, for economic or other reasons, live together in a discipleship arrangement; some are house churches, others just convenient and desirable places to live.

One Southern Baptist who struck fire within the counter culture and continues today is Arthur Blessitt. He preached in the streets of Hollywood 15 years ago, started Jesus cheers, stickers and marches; went into bars and clubs. He opened His Place, a storefront Christian nightclub which doubled as a church and was the hub of his ministry to street people. It is closed now; tourists had taken over. In 1970, Blessitt walked his way into national attention dragging a life-sized cross across the United States.

Blessitt, now 40, did not fade with the counter culture. Currently he is traveling and preaching in Germany and other European countries and plans to go into Eastern Europe. Last June, he spoke to the Pastors' Conference in Los Angeles.

Blessitt left a trail of influence. Pastor Lester Buice of Rehoboth Church, Atlanta, one of Georgia's fastest growing congregations during the 70s, admits Blessitt "changed my ministry."

Buice first heard the evangelist in 1969. Despite Blessitt's long hair, T-shirt, medallion and beads, Buice invited him to Rehoboth.

"We got into the schools," Buice says. "Kids responded in a tremendous way. He centered everything on Jesus. He talked constantly, everywhere, about Jesus. It was a natural thing, and it changed my life. Since that time our church has been more evangelistic. I've preached about Jesus."

Such super churches as Rehoboth appear to be a legacy of the Jesus Movement and its influence.

In 1971, Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa attracting standing-room-only crowds of 500-plus, mostly youth in come-as-you-are garb caught up in the magic of a new relationship with Jesus. The congregation was led by 42-year-old, balding Chuck Smith, who wore knit shirts, cardigans and slacks. His husky voice carried a soothing, authoritative, fatherly message straight from the Bible.

From the chapel sprang communes, Bible studies, drug centers and other programs to meet the needs of both street people and middle-class youth.

Visiting Calvary Chapel 10 years later we still feel an "Oh, WOW" but also a subdued wonder at the transformation. Now its buildings, like a huge shopping center of tan brick and red tile, sprawl over 10 acres in an affluent section 40 miles south of Los Angeles.

Nearly 2,000 attend the 11 o'clock Sunday service, the third such service of the morning.

Calvary Chapel, however, is more than a local congregation. It has missions in Mexico, Japan, China, Guatemala and other foreign countries; broadcasts worship services on 115 radio stations and seven TV stations. Nearly 200 Calvary Chapels dot the United States--a mini-denomination--formed by ministers who have left the Costa Mesa congregation to try and duplicate what Chuck Smith has done.

Creation of new churches is a logical consequence of the Jesus Movement.

Southern Baptists have not been quick to accept congregations spawned by Jesus Movement converts. In the San Francisco Bay area, house churches started by Golden Gate seminarians such as Paul Bryant, Kent Philpot, Robert Phieme and Bob Hymers eventually culminated in the Churches of the Open Door and Covenant Fellowship.

The first years of its existence, Covenant Fellowship petitioned the local Southern Baptist association for membership. They were turned down because of charismatic practices and a form of church government considered not Baptist. By the second year the group had grown to the point they no longer were interested in joining.

An Oklahoma City congregation--well on its way to becoming a super church--also slipped away from Southern Baptists. It is MetroChurch started by Richard Hogue, the electric evangelist of Jesus Movement fame.

After years on the road, Hogue became convinced churches were not adequately discipling young adults from the Jesus Movement. To remedy the problem, and to help create a more stable home life for his growing family, Hogue decided to begin his own church. He selected Edmond, Okla., in suburban Oklahoma City.

Hogue, in his mid-30s, has lost none of his good looks, directness, celebrative style; his old-time religion is still wrapped in the electric sounds and warmth of today's music and freedom in worship.

We visited MetroChurch on a Sunday evening. Along with 750 mostly young adults, we jammed a windowless, fan-shaped auditorium nestled under the live oaks on a 61-acre site it shares with educational buildings. A new 3,300-seat auditorium is under construction.

Songs with an end-of-time theme enrapture the audience; we feel the excitement as applause runs through the crowd. An "altar call" invites those who want prayer for healing; some stand in for others who can't be present.

In a later interview, Hogue tells us, "A lot of the life we're seeing in churches today is a result of the Jesus Movement."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

Reagan Says God Chose U.S.,
Urges Nation to 'Wake Up'

WB
Baptist Press
2/5/82

WASHINGTON (BP)--Saying the United States is a nation "set aside" by God, President Reagan told some 3,000 governmental and religious leaders at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington that the nation has nevertheless "strayed from God, as evidenced by Supreme Court rulings on school prayer and abortion.

Following a brief reference to the unsuccessful attempt on his life last March 31 and his conviction that "whatever days are left to me belong" to God, Reagan declared: "I also believe this blessed land was set apart in a very special way, a country created by men and women who came here not in search of gold, but in search of God. They would be free people, living under the law with faith in their Maker and their future.

"Sometimes, it seems we've strayed from that noble beginning, from our conviction that standards of right and wrong do exist and must be lived up to. God, the Source of our knowledge, has been expelled from the classroom. He gives us His great blessing, life, and yet many would condone the taking of innocent life. We expect Him to protect us in a crisis but turn away from Him too often in our day-to-day living. I wonder if He isn't waiting for us to wake up."

Reagan recalled his first appearance a year ago at the prayer breakfast, held annually at the Washington Hilton Hotel, and the assassination attempt less than two months later outside the same room where he spoke.

Quoting a Psalm declaring that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," the president thanked the assembled leaders "for Nancy and myself...for your faith and for all your prayers on our behalf."

He said further, "And now I know that whatever days are left to me belong to Him."

Reagan also appealed to churches and synagogues "to restore our spirit of neighbor caring for neighbor" and to individuals "to get personally involved" in solving human problems.

Referring to Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, he observed that the benevolent traveler "didn't just hurry on by into town and then look up a case worker and tell him there was a fellow back out on the road that looked like he might need help," but tended to his needs himself.

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Illinois Church Light
Through Midwest Storm

CO

MOUNT VERNON, Ill. (BP)--When another of the wearying succession of winter storms blasted Illinois, Logan Street Baptist Church in Mount Vernon cared for 225 motorists stranded when interstates were closed.

"They started coming in about 2 o'clock Sunday afternoon, and the last ones left at 7:30 Monday night," said pastor Keith Stanford. "We only had about four inches here, but heavy snow north and west of us closed I-74 west and I-57 north."

Mount Vernon is at the juncture of the two major interstate highways, which accounts for the high number of stranded motorists.

"We opened up our kitchen and prepared three full meals," Stanford said. "Sunday night, we served spaghetti and meatballs, filling in with some leftover roast beef. For Monday breakfast, we baked hot biscuits, sausage gravy, and eggs. Monday noon we made homemade soup and cheese sandwiches."

To Stanford's surprise, those stranded--on their own initiative--left donations which more than covered food costs.

"We had folks sleeping all over the place," Stanford said. "Some slept on the pews, others on the floor, with children and babies on our day-care cots."

Forty volunteers from the membership manned the two-day operation, and the Stanfords spent the entire night in the church.

"We registered everyone, and it was truly a good experience for our people, a real blessing," Stanford said. "The youngest were two babies, ages six weeks and seven weeks, and the oldest was a nearly 90-year-old woman on her way to see a daughter in Chicago."