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August 26, 1986

86-122

Allegations Hurt  
Salvadoran Baptists

By Erich Bridges

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (BP)--Sweeping accusations by a former human rights activist have disrupted the refugee relief work in El Salvador of several religious groups, including Baptists.

The charges, widely publicized but later called into question by the Salvadoran government and the U.S. Embassy, have resulted in arrests, death threats, deportations, a reported abduction of one Baptist and the temporary flight of another and the renewal of old fears and suspicions.

Luz Janet Alfaro, 23, an official of the non-government Human Rights Commission, was arrested May 20. She appeared at a news conference 10 days later in San Salvador, following her release. There she alleged the leftist-oriented commission and several other human rights groups were infiltrated and controlled by the Marxist guerrilla front fighting to overthrow the government in El Salvador's long civil war.

Alfaro expanded her accusations to include dozens of agencies and individuals, including religious groups. She charged Salvadoran Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Baptist relief workers with secretly funneling international aid money intended for war refugees to the guerrillas.

The religious workers have strongly denied the charges. And so far, Alfaro has produced no solid evidence against them, according to Salvadoran and U.S. officials.

Southern Baptists, who support six missionaries in El Salvador, contributed \$195,000 in hunger and relief funds to El Salvador last year, mostly for refugee assistance. The missionaries administered the funds through an evangelical relief agency not named in Alfaro's charges.

Charges against Baptists centered almost exclusively on Emmanuel Baptist Church in San Salvador, which has been the object of government suspicion in the past because of its wide-ranging relief and social ministries. In 1984 Emmanuel's pastor, Miguel Castro Garcia, was arrested and deported for alleged ties to the guerrillas. He now lives in Canada.

Emmanuel church distributes food to war refugees, operates development programs, nutrition centers and clinics, and runs an orphanage in San Salvador.

The new allegations against the church have produced trouble. According to the Los Angeles Times, a Baptist worker at Emmanuel was kidnapped in June by unidentified armed men, beaten, taken across the Guatemalan border and warned not to come back.

He has not returned, said a Salvadoran Baptist official who identified the worker as Hugo Byron Lopez, a Guatemalan citizen. If he did "his life would be in danger," the official said.

Juan Antonio Sanchez, a deacon of the church and head of its refugee program, was accused of being a guerrilla by Alfaro. Sanchez has fled the country.

Mary Kalil, president of the 55-church Baptist Association of El Salvador, reported Sanchez may be in Panama but plans to return. He left El Salvador because "his health was not well," said Kalil. "You have to come here and live to know what this means to be labeled with names. It's not very safe...if you are being pointed out publicly in the media. I don't think he could take it, so he decided to leave."

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**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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Carlos Sanchez, a former pastor of Emmanuel who now is executive secretary of the Baptist association, also was among the dozens of people accused by Alfaro of subversion or guerrilla sympathies.

Only nine human rights workers named by Alfaro were arrested. They included Alfaro's sister, also a worker at the commission, and Dora Angelica Campos, a member of another rights group. These two women were released after confessing their groups were controlled by the guerrillas. The other seven have been charged and await trial, according to the U.S. State Department.

International religious and human rights groups flooded the government with protests about a possible smear campaign against religious relief workers. The government and the U.S. Embassy, both of which gave initial support to Alfaro's charges against her own Human Rights Commission colleagues, later expressed doubt about her attacks on religious groups.

Alfaro and Campos "both turned state's evidence against people they worked with," said Valentino Martinez, El Salvador desk officer at the U.S. State Department, in an interview with Baptist Press. "Those people were arrested and they've been charged with a crime and they will go to trial. Now that's one thing. It's another thing to make much broader charges against church workers that we don't think, unless evidence is presented, should be made publicly.... We don't find that very sound at all. In fact, it's disturbing."

In the wake of the accusations, a shadow of fear spread as religious relief workers reported receiving death threats. Others said they closed their doors for weeks at a time, went into hiding or varied their travel routes to escape possible attack.

The original uproar surrounding the allegations died down following meetings between religious groups, the government and the U.S. Embassy. But new controversy erupted in July and August. Two Lutheran women were arrested July 30. According to the Washington Post, Salvadoran police said the two admitted, under interrogation, they were communist guerrillas.

The government also deported 23 foreign religious activists after officials said they illegally entered a war zone with refugees returning to their homes. Six other foreigners working in Chalatenango Province, another area of frequent fighting, were threatened with deportation. The activities of such groups are making it harder for missionaries who live in El Salvador to renew residence permits and do their work, said one veteran missionary.

Some observers say religious groups trying to help refugees are caught in the middle. On one side are the government and the armed forces, who want to isolate the guerrillas in the countryside. On the other side are the guerrillas themselves, who can easily infiltrate refugee camps.

The situation is confused because many foreign and domestic religious groups involved in relief work in El Salvador represent nearly every shade of political opinion.

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Bible Publishing,  
Distribution Needed

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press  
8/26/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—While the Bible continues to be a best seller in many parts of the world, perhaps fewer than 1 billion of the world's 5 billion persons own any portion of Christian Scripture.

That is the assessment of Johnnie Godwin, director of the Holman Bible publishing division of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. It also is a driving force in his efforts to spearhead new publishing ventures and to facilitate increased efforts to distribute Scripture to people who have never heard the gospel message.

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The decision of the board's trustees in 1979 to buy the A.J. Holman Company, the nation's first Bible publisher then based in Philadelphia, has been good for the board and the denomination, Godwin says.

"Holman has given us an opportunity not only to say we're a Bible board but to give a priority to Bible publishing," he says. "Part of the heart of what Southern Baptists seem to agree on is a high priority on the importance of the Bible."

One of the first new undertakings of the new boards 's Holman division was to begin producing low-cost New Testaments for mass distribution by churches. The response is evident in numbers--Texas churches bought and distributed one million copies in 1984 and churches throughout the Southern Baptist Convention bought and gave away 10 million copies in 1985-86 through Good News America simultaneous revival campaigns.

"For mass Scripture distribution projects, it definitely helps the denomination to have its own Bible publisher," says Godwin. "They are available at cost and can be distributed through all our churches." He notes that for a nationwide project in 1989-90, he hopes to have a single distribution point from which churches can order all supplies.

A related new venture has been the production of customized editions of Scripture portions, such as a special edition of the book of Ephesians to be used in MasterDesign, a new 13-week inductive Bible study course being introduced by the board's church training department.

Upgrading the product line of Holman has been another priority of Godwin's. New items have included a "Read to Me Bible" with 44 Bible stories which parents and church workers can use with preschoolers and children.

A Bible in the planning stages is the Disciple's Study Bible, an annotated doctrine study Bible to be released in the spring of 1988.

"This is an attempt to have a systematic theology identified page by page as it relates to the Bible text," says Godwin. "The Bible also will contain new book outlines, which are theological rather than chronological."

While Godwin earlier had favored coming out with a whole new translation of the Bible through Holman, he now believes the best approach is to concentrate on obtaining licenses to publish existing translations most popular among Southern Baptists.

Holman now publishes the King James Version, New American Standard Version, New International Version (limited license), Revised Standard Version, Good News Bible (limited license) and Williams New Testament (exclusive license).

"Any new Bible translation is a multi-million dollar project that takes numerous scholars and many years to accomplish. I concluded this was not a good stewardship of resources for Southern Baptists. The translation waterfront seemed well covered," says Godwin.

About 50 percent of Holman sales this year have been the King James Version, with the New American Standard Version totalling about 30 percent, he says. Holman editions of the New International Version released this year are expected to sell well, he adds.

"Many people want to compare a contemporary translation with the King James Version. And among the contemporary translations, some are word-for-word translations while others are translated thought for thought. These approaches cause us to look at different ones for different kinds of light," says Godwin.

In contrast to mass Scripture distribution editions where the emphasis is on low cost, Holman also produces higher quality Bibles designed to last a lifetime.

People expect to pay higher prices for a better quality Bible, says Godwin, but they also have higher expectations. These include genuine leather, durable paper that will not yellow, bindings that do not come apart, readable type, choice of colors, limberness and family record sheets, he says.

Thin Bibles also are popular, and Holman will release in September an ultra-thin edition of the New International Version printed on 14 1/2 pound paper and using a German type that takes up 20 percent less space.

Meeting people's specifications for a Bible can be difficult, Godwin acknowledges. "What they really want is giant type in a vest-pocket edition," he quips.

For the future, as the language continues to change there will be a need to consider new translations, says Godwin.

"Each generation has to translate the faith of its fathers into the language of its children," he adds.

And with perhaps 4 billion people who have never read or held a portion of Holy Scripture in their hands, Godwin dreams of linking up partnership missions and Christian Scripture distribution organizations to launch a worldwide distribution effort, a kind of Good News World campaign.

"Just imagine an effort to put Scripture in the hands of every person on the face of the earth," he says.

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

Adapt To The Times,  
Prof Tells Parents

By Karen Benson

Baptist Press  
8/26/86

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Christian parents and teachers need to get with the times if they expect to meet the needs of children today, claimed a Southern Baptist professor of education.

Speaking to members of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, Norma Stevens, professor at Belmont College in Nashville, Tenn., urged adults to realize "the needs of children today are tremendously different—significantly different—than what they were a generation ago."

Unless adults are willing to adapt to the times, to be open to new ways of teaching children and to even change their own thinking patterns, the special needs of children will go unmet, she said.

Modern-day adults are being confronted with children who are more wise to the ways of the world than children were even a few decades ago, Stevens said: "They're sophisticated, yes. Educated, no."

The information age, the breakup of families, intense scholastic and athletic competition and other social trends are blending to strip children of their innocence during the very years they need to experience love, security and a sense of belonging, she said.

"Our children are being threatened by the prospect of losing their childhood. Unless we realize that this is a new day and age, we're not going to do much to help meet a child's need, emotionally or otherwise," Stevens stressed.

This new age has brought with it an "information revolution" that is just as big and powerful—and life-changing—as the industrial revolution was years ago, she said.

"Our children have a tremendous job ahead of them" if they are to succeed in the years ahead, she added. "Today's children must have education as a lifelong goal if they are going to survive. No longer will 16 years of education be enough. There is no way."

But the need for lifelong educational patterns is foreign to most adults because they grew up in an age when being educated meant literally knowing everything there was to know, she said.

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But now, being educated means being a specialist in one field or discipline, she said: "Most of what we know today has been learned within the last 50 years. There has been a geometrical progression of knowledge. What makes it worse is that what I know today will be completely out of use and out of date tomorrow. We just cannot learn everything we need to know."

To survive in the information age calls for constant reading and constant study, Stevens said. And it is up to adults to show children that such learning—lifetime learning—can be fun.

"Learning itself is one of the most fruitful, enjoyable endeavors we will ever do. And learning is one of the most natural things that we do," she said.

While learning takes place naturally each day of an infant's life, on through the child's early years, "somewhere, we turn children off to learning. So, we hear them say, 'Oh, yuk!' instead of, 'Get out of my way and let me learn!'"

Helping children to enjoy studying and reading may mean parents and teachers must reconsider how they teach, Stevens said.

She urged the WMU women to try the discovery method of learning, in which children are urged to ask questions until they discover a solution, rather than simply being told information to memorize.

"This method contrasts with the teaching styles of yesteryear, when education came through direct teaching and through modeling—we either taught or we showed," she said.

"What makes me act the way I act?" and "What would it take to change it?" should become natural questions that children ask of themselves, Stevens said.

"We must teach them how they can go about finding answers to problems. There is no way we can simply share the information. We must teach them how to think, how to adapt, how to think about materials in different ways. We've got to help them learn to ask questions.

"If we don't, we're going to find ourselves at the end of the world."

Armed Men Attempt Takeover  
Of Bangladesh Goat Project

SAVAR, Bangladesh (BP)—A Bangladesh cabinet official was scheduled to visit the Baptist-run development center in Gazipur District in late August to quell trouble that started when a group of armed men tried to take control.

The minister of fisheries and livestock planned his trip to show support and interest in the Southern Baptist project, where goats and ducks are raised for the people of Bangladesh. The minister also hoped his visit would help thwart the efforts of more than 20 local men who have said they intend to run the center themselves.

The men gathered outside of the center several days in July and raised a racket by beating on the houses where hypersensitive ducks are being raised. Then they charged onto the grounds with weapons and ran off employees. Employees were kidnapped and beaten. Government guards are protecting the center now, and police have apprehended several of the accused men.

One of the center's guards was beaten on his way to work after two men armed with daggers attacked him. A passerby rescued him from what he thought would be certain death in a nearby wooded area.

"The best we can understand, this is a group of men who want soft jobs—no work and full pay—and the right to name at least half the employees of the center," said missionary Jim McKinley of Louisville, Ky., chairman of Southern Baptist work in the nation.

Seven of the men in the mob are former employees who walked off their jobs several months ago. "When we hired them we were not aware that some of these men had a background of causing trouble in other places," said McKinley. "They were expecting to come in here and more or less take over. Sometimes that happens to expatriate organizations. It's not necessarily unusual."

In addition to his regular duties as general evangelist and mission chairman, McKinley recently has been driving 50 minutes each way to survey the situation daily at the center.

He plans to use the center to help set up a private duck farm in every district by offering training and supplying ducks. He expects the number of goats will increase from 400 to 800 within the next 10 months. Fish also are being raised there.

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Churches Face Legal, Moral  
Copyright Issue, Author Warns

By C. Lacy Thompson

Baptist Press  
8/26/86

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP)—Churches are not exempt from copyright laws in the use of audio and video tapes and have a moral obligation not to violate such measurers, Chip Turner warned.

"I would encourage churches not to assume anything in this area" of copyright laws, urged Turner, Louisiana Baptists' media services director. "My concern is with churches who think they can tape anything and use it in any way."

While churches have become increasingly aware of measures prohibiting the copying of copyright material, such as musical scores, they also must become knowledgeable in the field of audio and video tapes, asserted Turner, author of "The Church Video Answer Book: A Non-technical Guide For Ministers and Laypersons."

"There are a lot of unclear areas and a lot of disagreement, but you need to be careful," he noted.

Such practices as renting a videotape to show to a youth gathering probably is a violation of the law unless the tape is licensed for public performance, Turner pointed out. "If you're renting from an established library that supplies tapes to institutions, you're probably covered. My biggest concern would be in the use of tapes designed for in-home use only."

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If a tape is marketed or rented for in-home use only, it is illegal to show it to a public gathering. Only distributors, who have been granted permission to rent copyrighted material for public performances, may supply tapes for such events, Turner said.

To make sure of what is permissible in reference to a particular tape, check with the firm renting the tape to see if it has the authority to grant public performance rights, Turner said. Most local sources do not have that authority, he added.

Buying a tape for public performance also may pose a problem if the program is not licensed for public use, he said.

Even taping a program from television to show to a group is a concern, he noted. The law allows taping of a broadcast signal for personal usage, but the law does not allow that program to be shown at a public gathering.

A person can tape from television for use in an educational setting, but that tape can only be used for about a month, Turner said. Then it must be erased.

"In an educational setting, there is some leeway, but it has to be a purely educational setting," he explained.

This would allow the use of such tapes in a Sunday school setting, he suggested. "That is a structured, educational setting," he said. Still, the tape has limited duration. Generally, churches are allowed to tape from the Baptist Telecommunication Network and the American Christian Television System, Turner said.

"With BTN, you're paying a fee, and that fee allows you to make a tape. The whole idea is taping, and you have that right," he added.

Another area of concern for churches is in taping and use of music soundtracks, Turner continued.

If a church uses a prerecorded music soundtrack in a service that is broadcast live, the music probably is covered through the broadcast station, Turner said.

"There is a serious question, however, as it relates to tape-delay broadcasts, especially on cable," he added. "I would caution churches not to use prerecorded soundtracks on tape-delay broadcasts."

Performing a musical score from purchased sheet music during a broadcast service poses no problem, Turner said, but taping music without copyright permission during a service does.

"A church that tapes their entire service and reproduces it for shut-ins, for example—that's a violation of the law," Turner explained. "Churches should not duplicate any audio tape of music."

The law allows a church to make one archival tape of its complete services, but that tape cannot be copied or distributed.

Turner even urged churches to receive permission from guest speakers before taping their addresses for distribution.

While there are "a lot of unclear areas and a lot of disagreement" concerning the copyright laws, Turner warned churches have been prosecuted for violation of the measures. The fines for violation work on a per copy basis, which means they can be considerable, he said.

Churches always should check for possible copyright violations prior to public broadcast or taping of music. This can be done by contacting the publisher or licensing agent of a particular musical selection. When doing so, request written permission, he warned, even if a verbal agreement is reached by telephone.

For churches, the bottom line always is to check before using copyrighted materials, Turner emphasized. And the issue is not only a legal one but a moral one.

"It would be a moral issue from the standpoint of the fact you are using the material of another without paying that one for that," Turner said. "I find people who just rationalize it away, but that doesn't make it right."

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Fast Preacher Races  
Time Between Churches

By Norman Jameson

Baptist Press  
8/26/86

KENTON, Okla. (BP)--Preachers drive fast, at least by reputation. But no one passes Galen Smith.

Smith, pastor of two churches in Oklahoma's far western panhandle, skims the 18 miles of dirt road between them in less than a breath, leaving Wheelless Baptist Church at 11:30 a.m. and arriving at Kenton Baptist Church by 11.

Smith is aided in flight by a 1980 Ford Pinto with 130,000 miles on it--and a quirk of geography that puts the two churches in different time zones.

The eastern edge of the Mountain Time Zone slices down Oklahoma's short panhandle border and carves eastward two miles to annex Kenton. Wheelless, slightly east and south of Kenton, remains in the Central Time Zone.

Smith cannot linger long after the services at Wheelless, but there are few other problems with the time zone difference. The time glitch actually eases the potential problem about which church observes the traditional Sunday worship hour. They both do.

Smith alternates between the two churches on Sunday and Wednesday nights.

The two churches, in a joint meeting but with separate votes, called Smith 7 1/2 years ago as he was about to complete his doctor of philosophy degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Wheelless, organized in 1958, had been closed five years and reopened only six months before it called Smith.

He suspects both would like to have full-time pastors if they could afford it. But neither Kenton, with 33 resident members, nor Wheelless, with 36, can.

Even together, they receive help from two nearby churches to support Smith and his family, who live in a modern log parsonage behind Kenton, in the valley below Black Mesa, Oklahoma's highest point.

Smith's wife, Danna, is a part-time medical technician at Cimarron Memorial Hospital in Boise City.

Kenton area residents ranch, although the land is so desolate it takes 35 to 50 acres to support a cow-calf pair. Wheelless, out of the valley and on the high plains and open range, is farm country.

Kenton thrived with 400 residents when Oklahoma Territory became a state. Today just 15 people live in the cluster of homes around the Baptist church and the store. It's officially a ghost town.

Still, an "absurd" four churches serve the town, says Smith. The Baptist and Methodist churches were established in the 1890s, a Church of Christ church was established in the 1950s and a charismatic fellowship began 10 years ago.

What keeps a man with two young children and a Ph.D. in town?

"I feel that more important than anything else is being where the Lord wants you," says Smith, 43. "They need extended ministry from someone who will stay and work with them."

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The intimacy gained from so long in so small a place can both free and bind the pastor. On one hand he knows the people's needs and can preach specifically. On the other hand, it is difficult for people to turn a new page in a small group setting where their lives are an open book.

"As I prepare a message, I sometimes think so-and-so needs to hear that," Smith says. "I try not to think about that, but it's hard."

Smith never can preach "in a vacuum" because the people know him, too. It helps that they know him so well, he feels, but it can be emotionally draining because people "expect more of a pastor in a small situation."

There is just one church in Wheelless, the Baptist church where about half the attendance is children. A Methodist pastor who leads a church nearby lives in Felt, where he has another church.

Smith feels isolated. "Panhandle people in general feel like the rest of Oklahoma doesn't know they exist," he says.

Panhandle Baptist Association is 180 miles long. Smith drives 100 miles to the associational office in Guymon.

"It's just so far to go anywhere to do anything," he says. "One of my biggest frustrations is that I spend so much time driving. When I get out to visit and find someone not home, it's easy to get discouraged in a hurry."

It's not uncommon for his family to drive 45,000 miles in a year. His church field includes six school districts in three states: Felt and Boise City in Oklahoma, Pritchett and Campo in Colorado and Des Moines and Clayton in New Mexico.

One side of the valley gets Colorado Springs, Colo., television. The other gets Amarillo, Texas.

With a field so spread and resources so tight, Smith truly does race time.

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Pastor Runs Florida Coastline  
To Help Pay Off Church's Debt

By Greg Warner

Baptist Press  
8/26/86

WEST PEMBROKE PINES, Fla. (BP)—Faced with the unique problems of building a church in South Florida, Lon Chenowith has adopted some unique tactics—like running around the state to pay the church's debts.

In late August, Chenowith began jogging around the coastal perimeter of Florida—1,086 miles—to help pay the \$250,000 debt of the two-year-old First Baptist Church of West Pembroke Pines, where Chenowith is pastor.

At a pace of 15 to 18 miles a day, six days a week, the 27-year-old diabetic estimates it will take him until Nov. 20 (86 days) to complete the arduous trek.

"That's the easy part," says Chenowith, who has been running that daily distance for three months in preparation for the adventure. "It's the details that make it hard."

Details like where he and his family will stay along the way concern the young pastor. He says he had hoped to borrow a camper so his wife and two sons (ages eight months and three years) could follow him during the 12-week trip, but no camper has been found. He will be away from his pulpit for all but two of the Sundays of his journey; a seminary student and a retired pastor will fill in for him.

Beginning at the Alabama border, his route follows the Gulf of Mexico eastward, then south down the western coast of Florida and across the Everglades to Miami. There he will head north to the Georgia border.

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Chenowith wants to raise \$250,000 by asking supporters to pledge a small amount per mile. About \$6,500 has been promised so far, he says, but success will depend on the generosity of people he meets on the way or who read about his exploits. He hopes to witness to spectators and preach in churches along the route.

The money is not the main objective, Chenowith says. "Our first purpose is for souls to be saved, then to inspire our people and to raise funds."

Chenowith has been pastor of the West Pembroke Pines church in southwestern Broward County since it first met Jan. 8, 1984. Located between Miami and Fort Lauderdale and marked for rapid growth, West Pembroke Pines is still mostly rural Everglades land. About 6,000 people live in the area, Chenowith estimates, but "80,000 people are coming our direction in the next decade," he predicts.

The struggling, 50-member church still meets in the clubhouse of Holly Lake Mobile Home Park. It has accumulated a \$250,000 debt and has yet to break ground for its first building, due to high real estate costs and elaborate building restrictions.

The money raised from the pastor's run will pay back loans used to buy the land, raise it to a usable elevation and pay road assessments. For those purposes, \$250,000 was borrowed from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Florida Baptist Convention and the congregation's sponsoring church, Taft Street Baptist Church in Hollywood, Fla.

Chenowith says the debt is preventing the church from realizing its potential, noting, "If we go on without something happening, we won't get into our first building for five or six years and won't be ready for the growth." He estimates the first building will cost another \$250,000.

Chenowith, who says he's always had an adventurous bent, admits his fund-raising techniques are unorthodox by Southern Baptist standards and have met some resistance. Even among his own church members, the idea "took some time to sink in," he says. He's convinced the run is God's answer to the church's dilemma, however, and he's won some believers.

"I admire the man for what he's going to do," Gene Cole, a Dade County fireman and fellow church member, told the Sun-Tattler of Broward County. Cole is one of three men from First Church and Taft Street Church who, alternately for a week at a time, will follow Chenowith in a car.

"I know the need for assistance is there and I want to help," Cole says. "It's definitely worthwhile."

Chenowith is inviting other runners to join him for portions of the trip. He will carry a Bible while he runs and encourages any who join him to do the same "to give a message to Florida: The Bible has the answer."

A native of Arkansas, Chenowith has been a long-distance runner since high school. Despite that experience, he has sought the help of a Miami physical therapist, who has counseled him about what to expect from his run and how to train for it.

The three months of training also have reduced his blood sugar, and therefore his need for insulin has decreased, the diabetic says.

Chenowith likens his love for running to that of Eric Liddell, the British Olympic sprinter made famous by the movie "Chariots of Fire."

"It's a pleasure to run," Chenowith says.

If after 1,086 miles of Florida scenery he doesn't change his mind, few people will doubt him.



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