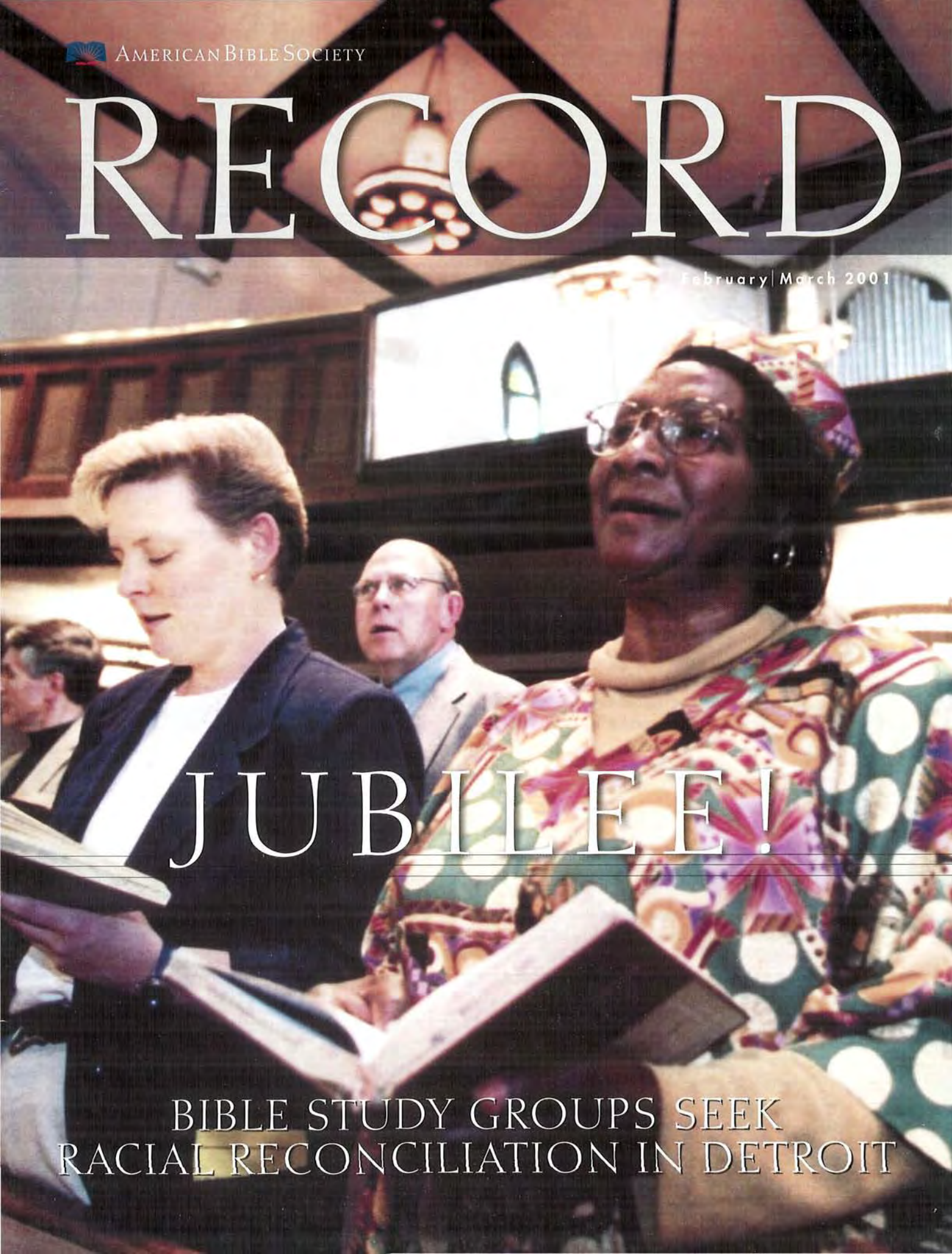
American Bible Society

RECORD

February | March 2001



JUBILEE!

BIBLE STUDY GROUPS SEEK RACIAL RECONCILIATION IN DETROIT

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Extending an Extended Family

If you love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples. —JOHN 13.35 TEV

More than 360 delegates from 138 Bible Societies around the world gathered last fall in Midrand, South Africa, for the fifth United Bible Societies (UBS) World Assembly. This diverse fellowship has always sought to provide Scriptures in the most effective languages and media formats — to equip churches from every confession with the Scriptures they need and in the formats to which they will be most responsive.

While affirming this, the UBS World Assembly went on to revise its purpose statement to reflect a new global emphasis "helping people interact" with the Word of God. Renewed emphasis was also placed on the interconfessional nature of Bible Society work.

As a leading member of the UBS, these new emphases align with our own vision at the American Bible Society.

Our new *Jubilee Bible* is a prime example. The African-American community has enriched the texture of our nation's spiritual heritage. The *Jubilee Bible* examines this legacy and the profound contributions blacks have made to the biblical record.

In colorful, richly illustrated detail, the *Jubilee Bible* pays honor to our black brothers and sisters with an inspired recounting of a heritage too long overlooked. Reading the 300-page *Jubilee* preface illuminates the moving power of God's love in the trials and triumphs of the African-American march to spiritual and political freedom and highlights the deep family ties among all believers through Christ.

The Bible Society's new *CEV Learning Bible*, likewise, helps us interact with God's Word. This 1,800-page treasure unravels the multiple layers of history, geography, and culture that form the context for Bible events, and traces the many interconnecting themes and references running through the Scriptures.

As we become immersed in Scripture, whether we acknowledge the radically redeeming justice of the Jubilee tradition or understand the cultural and social chasms Jesus crossed to embrace the whole family of God, we begin to appreciate yet another way in which the Good News frees us to embrace one another.

The Bible, when properly understood and followed, builds community even among strangers. Through knowing God's love we can forget ourselves enough to embrace others and pay homage to their differences.

Eugene B. Habecker

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RECORD

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The mission of the American Bible Society is to provide the Holy Scriptures to every man, woman and child in a language and form each can readily understand, and at a price each can easily afford. This purpose, undertaken without doctrinal note or comment, and without profit, is a cause which all Christians and all churches are urged to support. The Society is a member of the United Bible Societies, a partnership of Bible societies throughout the world cooperating to make Scriptures available to people everywhere in their own language.

Published continually since 1818, the *American Bible Society Record* is the official periodical of the American Bible Society and the second oldest continuous publication in the United States. It is published six times per year, and is sent to anyone contributing $4 or more each year to the Society. Postage is paid at New York, New York, and additional mailing offices. Other publications wishing to reproduce any of the articles contained herein are encouraged to do so. A credit line acknowledging the source of the material and a copy of the issue containing such material would be appreciated.

(ISSN 0006-801)

ON THE COVER: Heather Stiverson, left, and Anna Washington sing *We Shall Overcome* at *Jubilee Bible* Project worship service. (Photo by Kirthmon F. Dozier, *Detroit Free Press*)

RECORD

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

VOLUME 146, NUMBER 2

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We encourage you to send your letters to: Editor, American Bible Society Record, *1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505. Telephone: 212-408-8710. Reach ABS on the web at www.americanbible.org*

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY PROFILE

BRINGING TOGETHER A YOUTHFUL MOSAIC

When Jenelle Holder attends leadership retreats sponsored by *Seekers Christian Fellowship*, she sees more than a gorgeous mosaic of New York area high school youths gathered together in prayer and praise.

She also glimpses the Book of Revelation's promise that all nations will, one day, worship God together.

Tara Brown, left, and Jenelle Holder.

"These are kids who wouldn't be around each other at any other time," she says, noting that the *Seekers Christian Fellowship* is able to attract students of all ethnic groups and denominations in service to the Gospel.

The group began in 1970 and has ministered to public school students and area college students ever since. It is now under the umbrella of the *Urban Youth Alliance International*. Every spring it promotes a "Jesus Day" during which students are asked to witness for their faith.

During a break at a conference for youth ministers at the American Bible Society, Ms. Holder, 22, a recent graduate of New York University, and Tara Brown, 34, talked about the role of Seekers Christian Fellowship in ministering to urban young people.

Ms. Brown is a graduate of John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York. While a student there, she was active in many groups, including a fashion club and the black students' organization. Yet her focus remained on the faith life promoted by the *Seekers Christian Fellowship*, an organization she has worked with even after her student days. She promotes the organization at schools throughout the New York area.

"I was a Christian first of all. Everything else was second," she says.

Ms. Holder had always been a churchgoer, but never really made a commitment to her faith until she attended a *Seekers Christian* youth retreat where she saw the impact of Christianity in the life of a fellow student, a Korean-American young woman.

"I know she had something I didn't. She helped to transform my life," she says.

She found that the *Seekers Fellowship*, now active in more than 50 New York area high schools and colleges, provides support and Christian community for students in public institutions.

With the help of materials provided by the American Bible Society, the students are given a chance to learn about the Bible. Through the process, they are called forth to be leaders.

That leadership role is appreciated, particularly at her alma mater, the Bronx High School of Science, a highly-selective New York City public high school. There, she says, "you are considered to be a smart kid. You are challenged to be a leader now."

The presence of *Seekers* at such schools spreads the word that "Christianity is for people who think." It's a message, notes Ms. Holder, gleaned from the story of Daniel, the biblical prophet: "He was trained in the things of the world but he knew what he was."

{See page 22 for a full report on the recent ABS youth ministry leadership conference.}

Jacquelyn Sapiie
Associate Director of the ABS Library at Bible House

askjacquie

Readers are encouraged to submit their questions about the Bible to Jacquelyn Sapiie, associate director of the ABS library at Bible House in New York City. Questions can be forwarded to absrecord@americanbible.org, or Jacquelyn can be reached at 212-408-1203 or via regular mail at 1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023.

Q "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Matt. 19.24 and Mark 10.25) I have heard this is a reference to a small opening in a wall in Jerusalem used by late-arriving travelers, and not a sewing needle. Is that true? (J.D., Arizona)

A *The Interpreter's Bible Volume VII*, published by Abingdon Press, has several notes about this passage. For centuries people have tried to find various meanings for it. One is that the eye of the needle is really a wicket gate in a door or the low postern gate into Jerusalem. Some have proclaimed the word 'camel' to really be the Greek word for 'rope'.

There are passages in the Old Testament that regard material prosperity as a sign of divine favor (Psalm 112.3). The disciples apparently held that view as was expressed in Matthew 19.25. But Jesus took a stand in the debate and the exaggeration of Matthew 19.24 expresses the urgency with which he spoke. It was such an impossibility that the hearers would get the message. It also records a demand for undivided allegiance to the kingdom of God.

TRUSTEES

The Bible Difference

The Rev. Dennis C. Dickerson knows that no one emerges unchanged from an encounter with Jesus. Just look at Simon of Cyrene (Mark 15.29), he says.

An American Bible Society trustee since 1996 and director of the department of research and scholarship for the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, Rev. Dickerson has learned that truth from both study and personal experience.

He earned a doctorate in history from Washington University. While growing up in Duquesne, Pa., outside Pittsburgh, he recalls, "My love for history and the Church grew together."

Today he lives in Nashville and combines both passions in his work with the AME Church and as a professor of history at Vanderbilt University.

The Rev. Dennis C. Dickerson

Formally organized in 1816, the AME Church "has always identified with the poor, oppressed and marginalized people," notes Rev. Dickerson.

The year of the AME Church's founding coincides with the founding of the American Bible Society.

Rev. Dickerson knows that history and sees himself as part of it.

"What brings Christians together is the importance of the Scriptures and putting the Scriptures into the hands of as many people as possible," he says.

In his many travels around the country, he will frequently see people with ABS material.

The *Jubilee Bible*, for example, with its articles detailing the role of Africans in Christian history, draws praise.

Rev. Dickerson himself pointed out that relevance in a recent sermon on Simon of Cyrene. Simon was the African called upon to carry Jesus' cross.

The enigmatic figure is only mentioned in that one incident in the gospels. But, Rev. Dickerson says, "he must have been saved. Anyone who meets Jesus is never the same again."

PHOTOGRAPH BY THE *DETROIT FREE PRESS*

JUBILEE BI

GROUPS SEEK

By Peter Feuerherd

Looking for a warm, cuddly, mild-mannered Jesus?

If so, he wasn't to be found at a *Jubilee Bible* seminar last fall co-sponsored by the American Bible Society (ABS) and the Ecumenical Theological Seminary (ETS) of Detroit.

Participants at the seminar held at ETS culminated a seven-month process in which members of African-American and largely white churches came together and grappled with issues of race and class that have long plagued Metro Detroit. There they heard about the Jesus of Luke 4.16-19, who was almost killed by his hometown former friends after proclaiming *"the Lord's Spirit has come to me, because he has chosen me to tell the good news to the poor. The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, 'This is the year the Lord has chosen.'"* (*Contemporary English Version*)

That Scripture verse hearkens to another, Leviticus 25.8-10, which provides an explanation of the

Jubilee Bible Project participants listen to Nathaniel Leach speak about the Underground Railroad at Detroit's Second Baptist Church. (Photo by Kirthmon F. Dozier of the *Detroit Free Press*)

BLE

RACIAL RECONCILIATION IN DETROIT

ancient Hebrew practice of jubilee, a time every 50 years when the oppressed would be released from bondage.

The poor we will always have with us is a biblical truism more evident in Detroit than perhaps any other large American city. ETS, in a former Presbyterian Church located on Woodward Avenue in the heart of the city, is an oasis of spiritual support in a desert of abandoned buildings and easily-visible despair, jarringly juxtaposed just a short walk from Detroit's sparkling new ballpark and opera house.

Dr. Eugene L. Lowry, professor emeritus at St. Paul's Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., a United Methodist institution, was a keynote speaker at the event. During his talk, he indicated that those in today's world who proclaim the good news to the poor may find what Jesus experienced.

"You may be lucky to get away with your life," he said.

When representatives of ABS and ETS met last winter, the original plan was to sponsor a program that would promote the *Jubilee Bible*, an ABS publication that includes the Bible and some 300 pages of explanation on the role of Africans and African Americans in Christian history.

But the Detroiters wanted to go further. They looked around their region and saw, perhaps more starkly than anywhere in the United States, how black and white Christians, united by reverence for the Bible, often looked at the Word in very different ways. Why not bring these groups together, they wondered?

The result: a series of meetings began between members of partnering churches. White churches, mainly located in the suburbs, paired with churches with large African American congregations, most in the city of Detroit. Scores of meetings were held across the region, involving members of Catholic, Episcopal, Unitarian, Presbyterian, Baptist, and independent congregations, among others. A total of 14 churches got involved, sparking a model of racial reconciliation that ABS is attempting to duplicate in other cities, including Nashville, Los Angeles and Chicago.

Participants said the meetings resulted in increased understanding, leaping beyond social barriers.

The Rev. Chuck Booker-Hirsch, pastor of Northside Presbyterian Church, a largely-white congregation in the college town of Ann Arbor, was part of a church group that paired with black members of the Christian Love Fellowship in nearby Ypsilanti.

Rev. Booker-Hirsch noted that, despite years of theology training, he never realized the importance of the sin of Ham in the African American community, a story told in Genesis 9.18-29. The text has been used in the past to justify slavery and oppression of blacks. An article in the *Jubilee Bible* explores this painful history and describes that use of the story as inaccurate.

"I was never exposed to it," said Rev. Booker-Hirsch. "Most Caucasian churchgoers are just not aware of it." But through his discussion group, he heard how African Americans feel that interpretations of the story have stigmatized them.

He said the stories he heard from African Americans in his discussion group made him realize how often they encounter discrimination, even today. He noted that African Americans in the group recounted that, no matter how successful they are, they feel a need to prove they belong in American society.

Lynda Smith, a member of Unitarian Universalist Church in Detroit, was part of a group that paired with members of Our Lady Gate of Heaven Church, a largely African American Roman Catholic church in Detroit.

"As a white person I learned how easy it is to take on and off my racial identity. The message I got from African Americans is that they can't do it. They can't take it off and put it on when it suits them. It's always there."

"AS A WHITE PERSON I LEARNED HOW EASY IT IS TO TAKE ON AND OFF MY RACIAL IDENTITY. THE MESSAGE I GOT FROM AFRICAN AMERICANS IS THAT THEY CAN'T DO IT. THEY CAN'T TAKE IT OFF AND PUT IT ON WHEN IT SUITS THEM. IT'S ALWAYS THERE."

***The Creation* by Aaron Douglas, oil on canvas, 1935, used to illustrate *Jubilee Bible*. (Howard University Gallery of Art)**

She said she also learned about the biblical concept of jubilee, particularly the idea of forgiving debts and allowing the land to lie fallow for a time. That, she said, made her aware that the biblical concern for the earth also can be applied to human relationships.

"It had a healing, cleansing feel to it," she said.

Reanetta Waldman of Hartford Memorial Baptist Church in Detroit was in a group from her congregation that paired with Grosse Pointe Memorial Church.

"Our first session might have been a little reserved," she said, but, after four weeks, "we bonded." The group plans to continue meeting every month.

The use of the *Jubilee Bible,* she said, provided "a very powerful" tool for the group to grapple with social issues. "It helped us to get focused."

As a black person, Ms. Waldman said, she learned that whites in her group look at American history very differently.

Whites, she said, tend to see things individually rather than as a group and are sensitive to "being accused in the present time for something that happened in the past."

She looks at history differently. "My ancestors suffered so I still feel some of that suffering," she emphasized.

Dr. Edwina Wright, a professor of Hebrew at Union Theological Seminary in New York and author of an article written for the *Jubilee Bible*, congratulated the group on what they had accomplished in a short period.

"You are doing what very few people in the United States have the courage to do, to speak across the racial divide," she said during the seminar that gathered together members from all the participating congregations.

Yet, in keeping with the spirit of Luke 4.16-19, she offered the group a challenge.

"There are very few of the underclass in our midst," she said, noting that as an African American with a Harvard degree, she would never have progressed without the help of others. "I would not have had the opportunity if poor people did not suffer on my behalf," she said. She noted that, as in many church efforts bringing people of disparate backgrounds together, the Detroit sessions involved "the middle class who are talking to the middle class."

The Rev. Dr. Eugene L. Lowry

Dr. Edwina M. Wright

They need to move beyond that circle to be effective in promoting social change, Dr. Wright said.

"Our ultimate goal is the release of the captives, the liberation of the least advantaged in the United States," she proclaimed, her voice rising after a discourse on the prophetic tradition in the Scriptures.

Another speaker, following up on Dr. Wright's point, urged participants to be like Moses, a middle-class liberator sent by God to free captives.

The formal process concluded with a Sunday worship service at Second Baptist Church in Detroit, a historic Underground Railroad site where slaves were provided haven before finding freedom in nearby Canada. In the midst of song and preaching, those who participated in the process claimed that they will continue to work on healing the racial divide throughout the Detroit area.

The Rev. V. Bruce Rigdon, president of ETS, noted that the seminar and the worship service proved to be different than what was originally intended.

"This was to be a celebration of the conclusion of our community gathering. But they have only just begun. We do not celebrate its conclusion, we celebrate its beginning," he said.

Charlene Johnson, left, a member of Detroit Baptist Temple, engages in dialogue with Bobbie Renshaw, a member of Christ Episcopal Church, Cranbrook. (Photo by Robert Delaney)

IN A NEW TONGUE

Asian-American Christian Men

The Rev. Louis Lee

Not far from New York City's Shea Stadium, there's a body shop. It's one of the few in the downtown Flushing neighborhood featuring signs lacking Chinese or Korean characters.

Across the street sits the Queens Christian Alliance Church, whose flyer welcomes people in English, Chinese and Spanish. It's an appropriate setting for a conference for the Asian American Men's Conference, an initiative to a growing Christian population. The American Bible Society is there, offering God's Word.

During a workshop on balancing ministry and work, Peter Chung, a Korean American minister says, "Your love of God and his church cannot exceed your love of God's Word." He adds that a true faith must be grounded in daily prayer and Scripture reading.

Asian Americans are a diverse and important group in the United States. While Christians are a small minority among most Asian American groups, many Asians in the United States are becoming Christians. According to the Rev. Louis Lee, the organizer of the conference, a factor is the desire for true fulfillment. Mr. Lee leads MESA — Ministries for English Speaking Asians, a ministry he founded in 1988.

It is not uncommon for Asian Americans to make significant professional and academic achievements — but that can prompt a sense of emptiness. Some Asian Americans have found the true source of meaning in Christ. Many churches are springing up all across America to serve these new Asian American Christians.

Asian American Christians face a number of challenges. One simple and significant help the conference offered is the opportunity to meet others who share similar backgrounds and the same faith in the Lord and His Word. Mr. Lee said that Asian American Christians often don't meet other Christians from outside their own churches and denominations.

Another challenge Asian Americans face is the tensions that can grow out of different generations' expectations. Many adult Asian Americans who are recent immigrants will face difficulties in understanding their children as they grow up in America — a culture very different from their childhood homes.

Some of these tensions can be overcome, as Walbert Ng's experience shows. Mr. Ng, a Chinese American member of the Queens Christian Alliance Church, talked to the *Record* about how he came to faith. After his sister became a Christian, it provoked him to think about Christ.

Mr. Ng had been brought up with loving parents in a Buddhist household. When he asked his moth-

AND A NEW LAND

Find the Word a Solid Foundation

er about the reason for their religious rituals, she told him that it was the tradition. But to Mr. Ng, doing something "out of an emotional tradition" wasn't a good enough reason. He found the claims of Christ completely persuasive.

While there were some tensions about his conversion, Mr. Ng and his sister found his parents more accepting as he has grown older. "They're treating us more like adults." And he has found his church to be a great help; it "gave me room to grow without pressure and kept me accountable."

Mr. Ng's Queens Christian Alliance church is "a real melting pot." Chinese Americans worship there in Cantonese services and in English ones as well. This could well be a model for churches serving Asian American groups — offering worship in the heart language of newcomers, while offering English to those who have been living in this country for some time.

Mr. Lee sees this approach as becoming more common among churches, as the Asian American community is renewed by new immigrants with often-limited English, while earlier immigrants join in English-language worship.

The Rev. John Yong, a consultant for Chinese ministry who represented the American Bible Society at the men's conference, is very aware of this distinction. He is keen to make sure that God's Word is ever more available in Chinese and English for immigrants from China. "We use Chinese," he says, speaking of ABS outreach to Chinese speakers in America. "Don't forget that English is important," he adds.

John Zhang, men's meeting participant, left, and the Rev. John Yong.

Mr. Yong sees that serving the Chinese American community requires attention to the changes in language-speaking habits of this growing immigrant group.

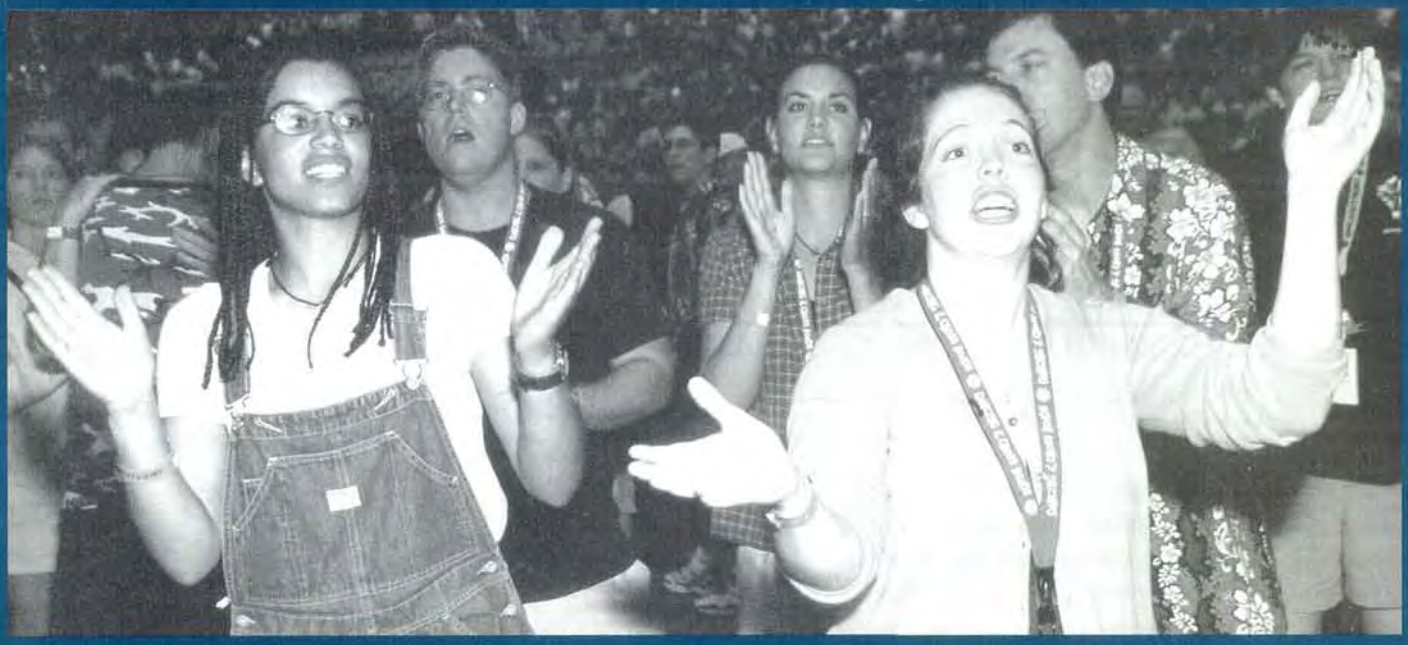
In either language, God's Word reaches out to touch the hearts of those who read the Scriptures. The Rev. Jukka Kaariainen, a man born to a Finnish family living in Taipei, ministers to Chinese Americans in New York. He says the Bible has a powerful impact on those he ministers to.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is especially poignant for Chinese people, Mr. Kaariainen says. The strong sense the Chinese have of the family melds with a new concept — Christ's announcement of God as a heavenly Father who unconditionally loves us and forgives our sins.

For those raised within the Chinese culture, which puts a strong emphasis on performing and succeeding, the story of the Prodigal Son offers hope of forgiveness and acceptance, Mr. Kaariainen said.

The characteristics of various Asian groups bring different gifts to the church, according to the Rev. David Ro, who spoke about what Korean Americans and Chinese Americans can learn from each other. According to Mr. Ro, who is of Korean-Chinese heritage, this means appreciating the more passionate Korean trust in God, while also treasuring the wise stewardship that is part of the Chinese tradition.

These gifts spring from reading and pondering God's Word — in Chinese, in Korean, in English — in any language. ■



THE SPIRIT IN ST. LOUIS

Scriptures Light Up Lutheran Youth Gathering

BY THOMAS D. SULLIVAN

St. Louis' humid summer presses moisture out of you like a slowly-squeezed sponge. The thousands of young Lutherans who gathered there in the heat, however, stayed cool with a source of spiritual refreshment — the Word of God.

In the massive TWA Dome and the huge hall next door, the teen-age Lutherans gave glory to God. They sang Jesus' praise with the passion of youth and the conviction of faith.

It wasn't your typical church gathering. Bible study featured flashing lights and stage explosions. But it was very much the same message: Jesus died to save us. He rose from the dead. He lives among us. Go tell the world this incredible good news.

Talking to teens there, it's clear the Bible reaches their hearts and shapes their lives. Josh Fredericks of New London, Minn., said the Bible is "really awesome," showing us what God had accomplished "for all of us and our lives."

Josh said that in today's society "people are afraid" to show their faith. The gathering was a great help, he said, reminding him and the other young Lutherans there that they have many brothers and sisters in faith.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Youth Gathering 2000 drew more than 35,000 young people to St. Louis over two weeks last summer. Upon arrival, the teens received a backpack containing the Gospel of Luke, part of the *CEV Learning Bible*, a Scripture filled with explanatory notes and artwork.

The *CEV Learning Bible*, developed by the American Bible Society, offers a wealth of information to support the understanding of the Word of God. The Scripture contains maps that show the geography of the Old and New Testament, descriptions of customs and culture of Scriptural times, and graphics that explain everything from the order of the books of the Bible to the design of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Heidi Jo Hagstrom, who works for the ELCA and directed the activities in the TWA Dome, said the Gospel has been "a huge hit" with the teens in St. Louis. "They can explore it better" than a typical Scripture text.

What the teens loved most about *The Learning Bible* was the way it offers explanations of details, from describing the various groups who dwelt in Bible lands to the value of coins mentioned in Scripture passages. "It's cool," said Angelicia Ventura of St. Croix in the Virgin Islands. *The Learning Bible* "breaks everything down" so you can understand it, she said. Her friend Cherisse Isaac, who also traveled from St. Croix to the gathering, loves the way it explains "everything."

Young Lutherans raise their hands in praise at worship service.

Those two young women look to God's word for guidance and comfort. Angelicia's favorite book is Revelation, while Cherisse looks to Psalm 100—

Shout praises to the Lord
Everyone on this earth.
Be joyful and sing
As you come in
to worship the Lord!

The young Lutherans lived up to those words in their Bible study and worship in St. Louis. Their joyful songs and praises rocked the walls of the TWA Dome. They danced in the aisles. They raised their hands and proclaimed God's wondrous deeds.

Tucked in the back of Luke's Gospel was a CD-ROM containing the entire Bible. When the Lutheran teens, members of the computer-savvy generation, came home, they loaded the entire Bible on their PCs. Not only the youngsters were eager to load the disks into their computers, "I can't wait to take the CD out," said the Rev. Susan Langhauser, a pastor in Olathe, Kan.

Along with the worship and Bible study, there were games and sports. In the huge convention center, the teens played volleyball, basketball and soccer. They climbed up a small man-made cliff set up inside. They tested their skill at creating and flying paper airplanes, testing them from an aircraft carrier deck made up of masking tape on the floor.

At the table where the teens folded their airplanes, Jaclyn Henry speaks of the Bible's consoling power. It's "really good to turn to" the Scriptures when you're having a tough time, said Jaclyn, who attends United Lutheran Church in Bella Vista, Ark. She finds great inspiration from Philippians 4.13: "Christ gives me the strength to face anything."

Jaclyn was inspired by the vigorous worship at the gathering. It was "really, really touching. The Holy Spirit is in the room," she said.

The Spirit was moving young people in quiet ways, too. In a prayer tent, groups of teens came with their pastors and leaders to pray quietly, taking their time to be still and be with the Lord. Outside the tent, Josh Fredericks spoke of how the Scriptures reveal God; they "give us an idea of everything he's accomplished."

A friend, Alex Ditmarson, added that the Bible has "a story for everything." For young and old. For all times. ■

The Scriptures as a Pathway to Peace

Like many Israelis and Palestinians, Doron Even Ari and Labib Madanat have a long history.

Mr. Ari, executive secretary of the Bible Society in Israel, once met up with Mr. Madanat's uncle in Jerusalem. It wasn't a social call, however. That day, they fought on opposite sides for the city that is a sacred place for three great world religions.

"There was enough hate produced that day to last for generations," recalled Mr. Ari.

Yet Mr. Ari and Mr. Madanat, executive secretary of the Palestinian Bible Society, have managed to avoid that hatred through their mutual affection for each other and God's word. Notes Mr. Madanat: "It is an illustration of the peace of Jesus Christ that brought us together. It is a peace stronger than any act of injustice, stronger than any bomb, stronger than any act of violence."

Mr. Ari agreed. "It takes two for reconciliation. And God does reconcile. He brings peace between individuals, between enemies. This is what brought Labib and me together — not only to work together, but to be melded together through the deliverance of our Lord Jesus Christ. Today we work together, we mourn together, we rejoice together because of God's reconciliation."

Thanks to your assistance, Bibles are being distributed in Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Gaza and the Palestinian Territories, providing hope to end bloodshed and hate.

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Your February gift will bring Bibles to people in Southeast Asia while your March offering will provide Scriptures in Southern Africa. To find out more about joining the Bible-a-Month Club, fill out the reply form below, or write:

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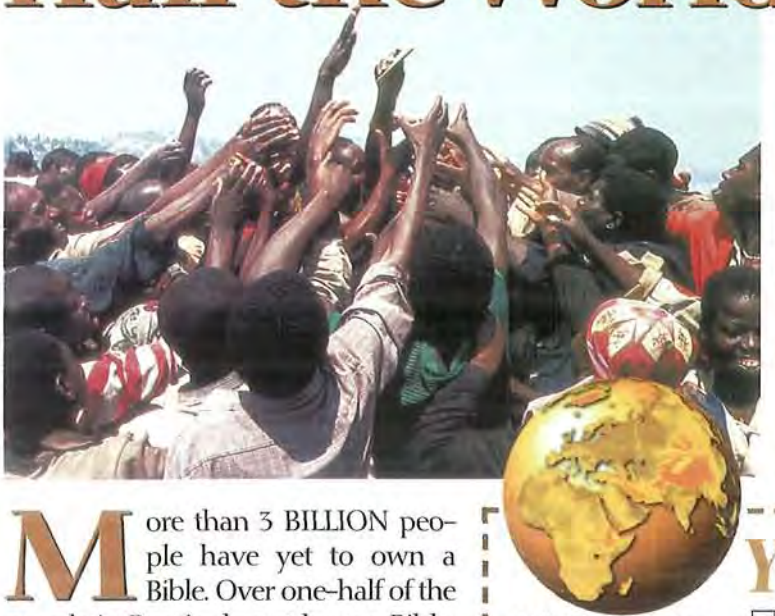

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02201REC

Gender and Genesis
(first in a series exploring much-talked about biblical passages)

BY BARCLAY M. NEWMAN

Adam *and* Eve

Genesis offers no hint that the narrative of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2.4b–3.24) was intended literally as a "true" story. On the other hand, the evidence is overwhelming that it should be understood figuratively as a "truth" story. For example, the naming of the animals and birds (2.15-17) — including everything from rats to robins, from crocodiles to cockatoos, from polar bears to parakeets, from elephants to emus — would have consumed several years, even if all subspecies of each species had not been included.

Would Adam have given them their scientific names or their more common names, and if so, in what language? Such a question, of course, misses the obvious intention of the passage, which is to affirm human authority over all animal and bird life and to serve as a transition to the creation of Eve from Adam's side (2.18-24).

This story of the naming of the animals has been told by conscientious parents and Sunday school teachers all over the world, and it frequently appears in children's coloring books, without a clue to its intended purpose. However, this failure has never inflicted damage upon the human race, as has an imposed literal interpretation of the events surrounding the creation of the woman in 2.18. Just as the naming of the animals explains their "social status" in the ancient cultural setting, so the remainder of the Eden narrative provides theological justification for the existence of a hostile universe, male domination, the woman's birth pangs, and the man's constant struggle as a food provider.

Traditional translations of Genesis 2.18 (*King James Version*: "a help meet for him"; *New International Version*: "a helper suitable for him") have both generated and perpetuated misconceptions of the woman's intended status in the created order. In the Hebrew Scriptures the word *ezra* (traditionally rendered "helper") is often used for God, who does for humans what they cannot do for themselves (Exodus 18.4; Deuteronomy 33.7; Psalm 33.20; 70.5; 115.9-11; 146.5). Thus it implies superiority, rather than inferiority, as with its English counterpart "helper".

The most appropriate English translation of the Hebrew phrase would be something like "suitable partner" (*Contemporary English Version*). Even if the author had intended to suggest an inferior role for the woman, the narrative is descriptive of an existing sociological order; it is not prescriptive of a divinely ordained role that must subsequently be imposed upon women at all times and in all cultures.

Genesis 1.27 affirms that God created humans in community and simultaneously, as both male and female, each fully in the image of Israel's Deity, and without distinction of worth. Whatever else is meant by "the image of God", the phrase implies something that transcends both gender and race. In fact, the very act of creation is the prototype for that of procreation, which requires participation by both genders.

According to the creation account of 1.1–2.4a, God stands at a distance and calls the universe into being at his command, while that of 2.4b–3.24 depicts a more "hands on" Deity. Neither account is intended literally, though it should be noticed that each scrupulously avoids any hint of sexual activity on the part of the Deity in the creative process.

in the G

The Garden of Eden with Eve Tempting Adam by Roelandt Savery (1576-1639).

Doubtless, this derives from an attempt to address indirectly the myths of the various fertility cults that were competing for Israel's loyalty, just as the sun is referred to simply as "a brighter light" (1.6) to discourage the worship of the sun.

To argue for the inferiority of one gender on the basis of Genesis 2.18 is tantamount to affirming the inequality of persons within the Trinity, which ultimately serves as the pattern for the human community of women and men. Although they are distinct and different, as are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, yet they each share equally in the image of their Creator, no less than each of the persons within the Trinity is equally God.

As with the parables of Jesus — themselves "truth" stories — that of Adam and Eve in the Garden must be interpreted in light of its cultural setting, but at the same time with eyes that see the truth behind the sociological scenery. At the very least, *ezra* in Genesis 2.18 denotes equality, in keeping with the undeniable affirmation of 1.26-27. To maintain that women must remain "helpers" instead of "partners" of men on the basis of Genesis 2.18 abuses both the biblical text and the entire human race, as well as its Creator.

(Barclay M. Newman is senior translations officer for the American Bible Society)

arden *of* Truth

FOR THE RECORD

100 YEARS AGO

Anxiety About China

In February 1901, the editors of the *American Bible Society Record* expressed anxiety about events in China in the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion, a widespread revolt against Western influences there that targeted Christians as well as European and American commercial interests.

One correspondent noted that the violence had abated, although concerns still existed.

Another correspondent noted that Bible Society materials were selling more briskly than ever, even though many foreign mission workers had been forced out and Bible Society facilities had been destroyed. The work continued, however, through the work of native Chinese Christians.

The editors called on their readers not to let the aftermath of the violence slacken their resolve to bring the Scriptures to China.

"While we hope that a just indemnity will be paid, it becomes the work of our Society not to let this work want for funds when they are needed," they said.

50 YEARS AGO

Scriptures for Soldiers in Korea

At the time, it hadn't yet earned the label of a "war." It was simply named a "crisis" by a chaplain requesting Bibles. But that didn't mean that American soldiers in Korea didn't desperately need the solace of Scriptures.

One Marine chaplain wrote requesting Scriptures: "Please excuse the informality and grime that will accompany this letter, but it is written from the field. In 20 days I have given 450 of the 500 Testaments to our Marines. I would appreciate your sending me 300 with the Marine emblem on the cover."

The chaplain's letter was part of an article pitching support for Bible distribution among servicemen. As part of that plea, the *Record* in February 1951 noted that ABS "is your time-tested, experienced, efficient organization for seeing to it that whenever a fighting man says, 'Chaplain, do you have a New Testament for me?' the chaplain, because of your help, can answer, 'Yes.'" ■

Japanese Folk Artist
explores biblical themes

A kimono-clad St. John baptizes Jesus in the Jordan; St. Peter, in the act of denying Jesus, wears the formal attire of a samurai; the Apostles, gathered with Jesus at the Last Supper, sit on a *tatami* mat while sharing a meal of rice, fish and sushi.

***The Last Supper*, Watanabe Sadao, 1981.**

These are among the 59 images in the exhibition *Printing the Word: The Art of Watanabe Sadao*, on view at The Gallery at the American Bible Society Feb. 9-May 19. Drawn from the collection of art historian Anne H.H. Pyle, the exhibition provides an overview of the art of Watanabe Sadao, an internationally recognized printmaker who expressed his Christian faith through the medium of a traditional Japanese art form: paste-resist stencil dyeing (*katazome*).

Born in Tokyo in 1913, the son of a printer, Watanabe Sadao was forced to leave school at age 10, following his father's death, and chose to be baptized as a Christian after his recovery from a life-threatening case of tuberculosis. To support himself, he took up the trade of textile dyeing and in 1937 became a follower of the master craftsman Keisuke Serizawa, a leading figure in the *mingei* (folk art) movement.

Under Mr. Serizawa's guidance, Watanabe learned the *katazome* method of paste-resist stencil dyeing, a tradition that had come from southern China to Okinawa in the 15th century. Hoping to "find a way of expressing my Christianity within a Japanese context," Watanabe began making katazome prints of biblical subjects.

Printing the Word: The Art of Watanabe Sadao is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue, featuring a foreward by curator Patricia Pongracz and a critical essay by Anne H.H. Pyle.

The Gallery at the American Bible Society is located at 1865 Broadway in New York City. Information about this exhibit can be obtained by calling 212-408-1500. ■

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RECFEB01

RETIREE WON'T QUIT SERVING OTHERS

BY PETER FEUERHERD

SIXTY-ONE YEAR OLD Robert G. Rippey is maybe a little young to be three years retired from a long career with the U.S. Forest Service. Still, sloth is not an option for the Vienna, Va., man, whose volunteer work fills his days, and then some. He finds he is now working harder for free than he did when he was gainfully employed.

Robert G. Rippey

"I have more volunteer jobs than I can keep up with," he says, noting his involvement as a volunteer for abused children; a food distributor for the poor in his area, and as superintendent of the Sunday School at the Wesley United Methodist Church in Vienna.

Perhaps his most important volunteer task is as an advocate for abused children for the Fairfax, Va., County Courts. He is a CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate). In that task, he attempts to help children pick up the pieces after their lives are shattered by parents unable or unwilling to care for them.

"The children often are fragile," he says, noting that the social workers and lawyers working on these cases often have more than 50 other cases going at the same time. His work is to apply a personal touch in tragic circumstances.

His goal: "to make sure that their needs are taken care of." It is not an easy task.

One current case involves a 15-year-old boy whose parents are alcoholics. His father left the home to avoid court action. The mother drank herself to death. He was fortunate enough to be placed with an aunt living out of state.

One attribute Mr. Rippey has is to look at these cases in a dispassionate manner. Without a little distance, he notes, the sadness in many of these children's lives could overwhelm their helpers.

"You can't become so emotionally involved that you lose your perspective," he says.

His ability to deal with such cases developed over many years in his work with the U.S. Forest Service, where he served throughout the eastern United States. His job was in human resources and many times he was called in to help assist troubled employees.

Mr. Rippey and his wife, Marianna, a pre-school director and educator, were stationed in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, until settling in Vienna, located near Washington, D.C. They have settled permanently there, with their four children and four grandchildren nearby.

In addition to his volunteer efforts, Mr. Rippey maintains an annuity with the American Bible Society. He sees his work and his support of the ABS mission as intertwined. ABS' mission is to get the Bible into the hands and hearts of those who wouldn't otherwise have access to it — Mr. Rippey's volunteer work is to deliver a personal helping hand to those in need.

"Christ expects us to spread his Word in whatever ways. It is all part of the same sharing of God's love," he says. ■

More information about planned giving programs sponsored by the American Bible Society can be obtained by calling the Major & Planned Gift Programs at 1-800-820-6227.

SCRIPTURES IN TODAY'S HEADLINES

BIBLE IN THE NEWS

Poll says fewer Americans are reading the Bible

■ *Catholic News Service* reports that a recent Gallup Poll indicates that American readership of the Bible has declined from 73 percent to 59 percent over the past decade.

The most likely Bible readers tend to be women, nonwhites, older people, Republicans and political conservatives, according to the Gallup survey.

Sixty-five percent of Americans agree that the Bible answers most of the basic questions about life. About half of those who feel that way claim to read the Bible at least once a week. Yet nearly a quarter in that group indicated that they rarely actually read the Bible.

About 75 percent of Americans say they are interested in deepening their understanding of the Bible, while another quarter indicated no interest. Those who indicate the highest level of interest in the Bible are women and Southerners. Fourteen percent of Americans report that they are part of a Bible study group. Asked to choose their favorite biblical books, survey respondents listed Psalms, Genesis, Matthew, John and Revelation, in that order.

Animal rights group says Jesus was a vegetarian

■ The online magazine *Slate* reports that People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has launched an advertising campaign claiming that Jesus was a vegetarian.

They make their case by arguing that Jesus was an Essene, a monastic, ancient Jewish community. Some scholars claim that Essenes eschewed meat and were responsible for the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Yet other scholars doubt the authenticity of the claim that Jesus was a vegetarian. Evidence more strongly points to John the Baptist, the desert prophet and cousin of Jesus, as being an Essene. And they note that Jesus apparently didn't have a problem with consuming fish (Luke 24.41-43).

Other scholars point out that as pious Jews, the Essenes would have celebrated the Passover with the killing of a lamb.

Some were not buying the argument that Jesus was a non-meat eater. "It's a lot of baloney, as far as I'm concerned," *Slate* quoted Father Joseph Fitzmeyer, professor of Biblical studies at Georgetown University.

Nobel Peace Prize winner credits Christian faith

■ *Catholic News Service* noted that South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, the winner of the 2000 Nobel Peace Prize, credits his Christian faith for assisting him during periods when he was tortured and imprisoned.

The South Korean president, 74, earned the prize for his efforts to win reconciliation between North Korea and his country. During the past year, the two Koreas, after the bloody Korean War and a tense armistice that lasted nearly half a century, have held family reunions, agreed to relink transportation lines and cleared landmines between their border.

During much of his life, Mr. Kim, a former opposition political leader in South Korea, was jailed for his dissident views. In 1971, he suffered a serious injury in an automobile accident, which was later acknowledged to have been an assassination attempt by the South Korean secret police.

A Catholic, he spoke at a church-sponsored lecture in 1995 on the theme of "Jesus Christ, Risen Lord and Reunification." During that talk, he outlined a process for reunification which, he said, could be accomplished by 2020.

The day after his election to the presidency in 1997 — he had been defeated in three previous attempts — Mr. Kim called for talks with the communist government of North Korea ■

update

NATIONAL

TEXAS

The American Bible Society (ABS), in conjunction with the Houston READ Commission, has announced a new literacy project.

The *Eleanor McCollum Faith Based Literacy Program* will use Bible materials to encourage both adults and children to read. Tutors are currently being trained for the program, which will focus on the *Contemporary English Version* Bible, and other faith-based aids.

The program will begin in Houston and plans call for it to spread to other Texas cities and then nationally.

During a recent event to launch the project, Mrs. McCollum, a Houston philanthropist, presented a grant of $25,000 to the Houston READ Commission to support the effort. Mrs. McCollum has served on the ABS board for more than 30 years.

Information on participating in the *Faith Based Literacy Program* can be obtained by calling 713-845-2527.

Steve Shanklin, executive director of the American Bible Society Houston office; Eleanor McCollum, and the Rev. Larry Hall, rector of St. John the Divine Episcopal Church in Houston, examine Scripture literacy materials with young parishioners, from left, Ben Mathews, Sarah Blair Matthews and Elizabeth Ford.

MISSOURI

The American Bible Society's Translation and Research Center, based in Springfield, Mo., has launched an online journal on Scripture and media issues. *Transformation: A Journal for Scripture and Media*, under the direction of Dr. Donald Johns, will publish articles relating to Bible translation, particularly translation into new media forms. The journal can be accessed at **www.transformationjournal.org**.

The intended readers for TJSM include scholars, students, as well as media professionals and others interested in biblical translation. Reader feedback via discussion forums will be encouraged.

The inaugural issue includes a piece by Patrick Cattrysse on the Hollywood biblical adaptations of the 1950s.

NEW YORK

Fifteen youth ministers came to Bible House in December to explore with American Bible Society staff ways to have an impact on young people with Bible-based programs.

The youth ministry leaders represented a wide-range of national Christian groups, including Campus Crusade for Christ, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, Boy Scouts and Metro Ministries, as well as New York area congregations and ministries. The meeting was hosted by the ABS Children and Youth Programs and Cultural Initiatives Program.

One participant noted, "It's not enough to simply hand kids a Bible. They need to know how to open the book so they can use it." Suggested topics for program ideas centered on family relationships, self-esteem, violence prevention, sexual abstinence and creating a "virtual youth community" on the Internet.

A second meeting, this one directed at Spanish-speaking youth ministers, is scheduled for Miami in February.

SOUTH KOREA

For 10 long years Christians in South Korea have been hoping, praying and donating money in the hope that when their neighbors in North Korea were ready for an opening to Christianity that they would be prepared with the Scriptures. It seems that the long wait may soon be over.

This year, the tearful reunions of families split for decades by their countries' heavily-guarded borders have aroused hopes. The Korean Bible Society has raised $2.1 million in its efforts to be prepared to shower North Korea with Bibles.

Won Suk Soh of the Korean Bible Society noted in a recent newsletter that Christian outreach to North Korea needs to be done cautiously.

"We should recognize that they (North Korean Christians) are not targets of our mission work but our colleagues. They have bravely held onto their faith in secret for more than 50 years, despite all kinds of oppression and suffering, and they are our co-workers for mission."

Mr. Soh notes that North Korea, hit by severe famines in recent years, may be seeking another kind of assistance.

"Now is the time for us to knock on North Korea's doors and move on from supplying food for the flesh to supplying food for the soul," he says.

ISRAEL/PALESTINEAN AUTHORITY

In the midst of continuing strife in the Middle East, Labib Madanat, executive secretary of the Palestinian Bible Society, said that the violence is providing "plentiful seeds for the perpetuation of hatred and revenge."

The Bible Society in the territory controlled by the Palestinian Authority is attempting efforts at reconciliation. It is working in cooperation with the Bible Society in Israel.

Projects include the Living Stones Bible Resource Center for students and young people in the West Bank as well as a Bible exhibition in Bethlehem. Mr. Madanat said that plans at the present time include focusing on Christian Palestinian children in Bethlehem. He noted that visits to the city by Christian pilgrims had been curtailed severely by the violence.

IRAQ

The first copies of the Mosul Bible, also called the Arabic Peshitta Bible, have arrived here. Father Yousef Touma, the visionary behind the project, was beside himself with joy when presented with the first copy.

The Roman Catholic Dominican Fathers began work on the translation, which was first published in 1885, in parts. It has never, until now, been published in a single volume. The original press run of 3,000 copies was done by the Lebanon Bible Society.

A military chaplain distributes pocket-size Bibles donated by the Korean Bible Society to South Korean soldiers. Hopes are increasing there that a Scripture outreach to North Korea can begin soon.

IN MEMORIAM

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My Nephew, David Webber
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My Uncle, Rev. Aaron Ferrel Webber
Given by: Dorinda Webber Kanzlarich-Rupe

Jules Weiss
Given by: J. Irene Weiss

My Husband, Luie Preston Whited
Given by: Frances Whited

My Aunt, Naomi D. Wolke
Given by: Dr. Sidney Lindsey

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Given by: Mr. & Mrs. Robert R. Zoeller

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For further details about the memorial program, please write to:
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to the editor

We welcome letters from our readers. Letters should be less than 300 words and focused on articles that have appeared in the Record. *We reserve the right to edit them for clarity or space considerations. You can send your letters to:* **Editor,** American Bible Society Record, *1865 Broadway, New York, NY 10023-7505. You can also reach us via e-mail at* ***pfeuerherd@americanbible.org***

Likes December *Record* issue

Wow! That was my first reaction to the December/January *Record*. I decided to give it a quick look but ended up reading most of the articles. I can hardly tell which one was the best, but it would probably be the one by David G. Burke on *Why the Hebrew Bible is Also for Christians*. It is, as Dr. Burke points out, "a huge depository of truth about God." I have found that the psalmists and Isaiah abound with glimpses of what the predicted Messiah would be like.

I wish he had said more about the apocryphal books. First Maccabees gives the inspiring story of a people struggling to keep their sacred customs. It also helps us to get a glimpse of the intertestamental period so we can better understand the conditions in Jesus' times.

I can remember when the *Record* was all in black ink. Now look! How much eye appeal! What valuable content! May He continue to bless the ABS!

Eugene Lincoln
Hagerstown, Md.

Helped by God's Word

I appreciate receiving the *Record*.

I firmly and truly believe in reading God's Word throughout the year. I will follow the guide you published in the December/January issue. It's a very different format. Thanks for taking the time to do that.

Georgia Schend
Kenosha, Wis.

Inspired by KidsGames article

I was truly inspired by the article (December/January *Record*) about KidsGames and the program's success in my state of Florida. I am very interested in introducing the program to my church's Children's Ministry and incorporating it into our summer session offerings.

Teri B. Lawler
Florida

More than 77 times

Thank you for your inspiring publication.

The article (December *Record*) *Beyond 77 Times* by Patricia Sinclair was timely and well done. However, I did find the numbers of forgiveness misleading. I have reread three versions of Matthew 18.21 and find "70 times 7" as the number stated by Jesus.

As we interpret this we are dealing with 490 times and possibly more. I would believe this makes an attitude of continuing forgiveness rather than a numerical end point. Thank you for making me realize another area for my spiritual growth.

Jerry Rilling
Port Huron, Mi.

Questions *Hebrew Bible* title

The December *Record* on the Old Testament was interesting. But why stress the phrase *Hebrew Bible* on the cover? Even Jewish scholars tell Christians to use Old Testament as they have for thousands of years!

The main thing that binds the two testaments together is the one true God: the Triune God of both testaments, but revealed in all its fullness in the New Testament in the incarnation of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Edwin T. Heyne
Milwaukee, Wis.

quiet time

We hope you will use this guide in your daily study of the Bible, and that you will write to tell us what you think of this feature and how you use it.

MARCH

Growing in Faith
and Praying for One Another

1 Matthew 6.1-15
2 Luke 11.1-13
3 Luke 18.1-14

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT
WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

4 Psalm 84
5 Psalm 74
6 Psalm 79
7 Psalm 80
8 1 Chronicles 16.7-36
9 1 Chronicles 17.16-27
10 1 Chronicles 29.10-22

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

11 2 Chronicles 1.1-13
12 2 Chronicles 6.12-27
13 2 Chronicles 6.28-42
14 Ezra 9.5-15
15 Nehemiah 1.1-11
16 Nehemiah 9.1-15
17 Nehemiah 9.16-37

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

18 Numbers 14.1-12
19 Numbers 14.13-25
20 1 Samuel 2.1-10
21 2 Samuel 22.1-16
22 2 Samuel 22.17-31
23 2 Samuel 22.32-51
24 Jeremiah 32.16-25

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

25 Jeremiah 32.26-44
26 Lamentations 3.1-33
27 Lamentations 3.34-66
28 Daniel 9.1-19
29 Daniel 9.20-27
30 Psalm 44
31 Colossians 4.2-18

APRIL

Growing in Faith
and Rejoicing in Hope

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

1 Philippians 1.1-30
2 Philippians 2.1-11
3 Philippians 2.12-30
4 Philippians 3.1—4.1
5 Philippians 4.2-23
6 Isaiah 52.1-12
7 Isaiah 52.13—53.12

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

8 Luke 19.28-48
9 Luke 20.1-26
10 Luke 20.27-47
11 Luke 22.1-30
12 Luke 22.31-71

GOOD FRIDAY

13 Luke 23.1-49
14 Luke 23.50-56

EASTER SUNDAY

15 Luke 24.1-12
16 Luke 24.13-35
17 Luke 24.36-53
18 1 Corinthians 15.1-11
19 1 Corinthians 15.12-34
20 1 Corinthians 15.35-58
21 1 Peter 1.1-12

SUNDAY

22 1 Peter 1.13-25
23 1 Peter 2.1-17
24 1 Peter 3.8-22
25 1 Peter 4.1-19
26 1 Peter 5.1-14
27 Revelation 1.1-20
28 Revelation 19.1-10

SUNDAY

29 Revelation 21.1-27
30 Revelation 22.1-21

PLEASE PRAY

JUBILEE BIBLE GROUPS – That Americans of all races who come together to study and reflect upon the contributions of African Americans to the growth of Christianity may have an impact in bridging divisions in our country. [See story on page 6]

ASIAN IMMIGRANTS – Pray that churches and various ministries will be able to develop a Christian outreach to newcomers seeking not only material comfort, but spiritual solace as well, in a sometimes confusing new culture. [See story on page 11]

ISRAELIS/PALESTINIANS – May God open eyes to the values of peace and justice in the Holy Land articulated through the Scriptures [See story on page 14]

BIBLICAL LITERACY – Pray that *Record* readers will find through this magazine a beginning point in developing their own knowledge and understanding of difficult Scripture passages. [See story on page 16]

SCRIPTURE INTEREST – That the decline in Bible reading in the U.S. be addressed by a renewed effort among Christians to promote the Scriptures. [See page 21]

PERU – May God grant peace and prosperity to this struggling country where Spanish-speaking and Native American speakers continue to hunger for the Word. [See story on page 27]

FAITH FLOWERS
AMIDST PERU'S POVERTY

PERU HAS BEEN A LAND OF CONTRASTS OVER THE PAST DECADE.

Its government regularly cites its achievements: a drastic cut in inflation, new highways, the fastest growing economy in the world and the taming of Shining Path, a brutal guerrilla dissident group.

But while the reduction in terrorism has helped bring considerable foreign investment to Peru — and brought back tourism — the autocratic means by which it has been achieved has caused a great deal of concern. Human rights groups allege that in its pursuit of the Shining Path, the government has kidnapped, murdered and tortured innocent civilians.

And much of Peru has yet to feel the impact of the growing economy. Nearly half of the 27 million people are officially classified as "poor" and between 16 and 20 percent of these are said to live in extreme poverty. Peru has been marked by a history replete with military coups, hyperinflation, food shortages and terrorism.

Amidst these problems there has been a growing faith presence among the people.

About 90 percent of Peruvians are Roman Catholics. There is also a growing evangelical Protestant population, now numbering about 8 percent of the population.

Samuel Escobar of the Peruvian Bible Society noted that the country has felt the impact of a growing charismatic church movement, "with a modern style, a simple language, and without theological complications."

The Bible continues to be promoted. There is a new emphasis among Catholics in Peru on reading and studying the Scriptures. Translation work into the native Quechua languages has continued. Many Indian villages have now been transformed by the power of God's Word in the local language, when it was formerly available only in Spanish.

Residents of the burgeoning metropolis of Lima have seen an advertising campaign featuring bus signs urging people to read the Bible. The result has been an increase in those attending Scripture study classes. A program supported by the Peruvian Bible Society feeds breakfast to more than 1,000 poor children everyday.

For Peru, with all its problems, there are budding signs of hope, thanks in part to the work of the Peruvian Bible Society.

▲ **Maria Conto Illesca reads the Bible in Quechua to her daughter, Callqui, in Ayacucho, Peru. Bible translation into native languages has been a focus of Bible work there. (Photo by Veronique Hoegger, United Bible Societies)**

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