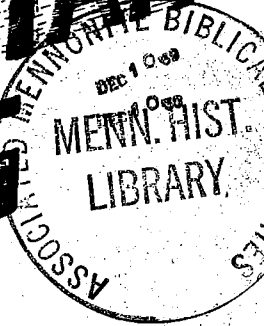


December 1, 1959

NUMBER TWENTY-FIVE

THIS IS A
CALL TO PRAYER
FOR
THE LORD'S WORK
IN
COLOMBIA

COLOMBIAN NEWS



Cachipay, Cund., Colombia, S. A.

INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE MENNONITE MISSION IN COLOMBIA

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"PRAISING GOD AND SAYING...."

"Glory to God in the highest," sang the angels to the humble shepherds gathered in the fields outside of Bethlehem on the first Christmas eve. And when the shepherds had seen the child of whom the angels sang, they too returned glorifying and praising God.

Once again, at this Christmas season, we would join with the chorus of angels praising God for what we have heard and seen in Colombia in this year, for there was joy in the presence of God whenever one repented and realized that Jesus was born to be the Savior of the world.

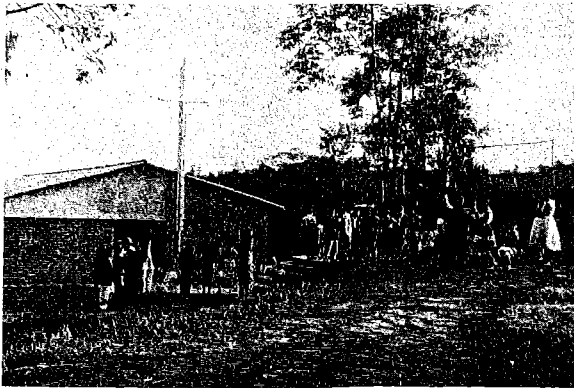
Join with us in glorifying Him, will you not, for you are our co-workers. We are grateful for your prayers and for your gifts, and with this we send our special thanks. With our thanks go also our greetings, praying that God's blessing may rest upon each of you at this Christmas tide. A Merry Christmas to you.

WHEN THE CHURCH PRAYED

A hush spread over the congregation as the announcement was made that Senora Rosa's husband had forbidden her to be baptized or ever to attend the evangelical services again. It was the second day of the annual retreat of the Colombian Mennonite Churches, and the attendance was excellent. The previous day the attendance had been more than expected, with almost two hundred and fifty present at the evening meeting.



A LARGE GROUP GATHERED



THE CHURCH PRAYED



ROSA (SECOND FROM RIGHT) WAS
BAPTIZED

A large group had just gathered for the morning Bible study, and the announcement came as a shock to them. Just the day before Rosa had been present and had participated in the Bible contest, representing the Anolaima church. In the months since she had become a Christian, she had shown a great interest in memorizing the Word of God, and she had completed the pre-baptism class. The day on which she was to have publicly given her testimony and be baptized was only two days away. This was a tragedy!

That afternoon one study period was spontaneously canceled and the time was devoted to prayer. One after another, for one hour, intercessory prayers were offered up to God in her behalf. "I have faith deep within myself," said one woman, "that Rosa will be baptized on Friday. I know that God will work it out."

Early the next morning Rosa was back at the retreat meetings. We were thrilled as she told of the way in which God had answered her prayers. At first she had protested when her husband refused to let her return, but when she saw it was useless, she decided, "may God's will be done." That night she awoke with a start hearing a noise in the small store in their house. She listened a moment, and then called her husband. He wanted to go out immediately, but she said to him, "Let's pray first." Suddenly the noise stopped, and they went out together. They found that the door had been forced, but that the thieves had fled without entering. As they returned to their room, her husband asked, "Do you still want to return to the meetings?"

So it was that Rosa was baptized. And no one was very surprised, because it was for this that the church had prayed in faith, and God had answered their prayers.

"THE LORD HATH DONE GREAT THINGS FOR US...."

"That which I had thought impossible, Thou has brought about in my heart," prayed Eliecer. To this we could add a hearty "Amen." Only two days before he had been raving with angry complaints against the church in La Mesa and everyone in it. He would never go back or be a part of it again, he had said. But he had not considered the power of the Holy Spirit when he said that.

During the entire week, the members of the church had been meeting together in special services of reconsecration to God. There had been many problems and fights among themand one of the thorns was Eliecer. Every morning was spent in prayer; every afternoon was dedicated to the study of I John, that great book of love; every evening there was a worship service.

From the very beginning God's presence and the moving of the Holy Spirit were felt. One by one those present felt led to confess their sins before their brothers in Christ, and before the Lord, and to ask forgiveness. Special prayer was made for those who were not present and who had been thorns in the flesh of the church. Eliecer was the flagrant example. On Friday, the last day of the meetings, he came and humbly confessed how completely wrong he had been and asked forgiveness of his brothers in Christ. So, one by one, God had broken down the barriers, and restored fellowship to His church.

The following Sunday was set aside as a day of praise and thanksgiving for what God had done. The Lord's Supper was celebrated in a spirit of love and companionship such as the church has not known in years. A fellowship luncheon was served at noon, and the afternoon and evening meetings were dedicated to praise to God for the great things which He has accomplished....whereof we are glad.

ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR ENDS

Throughout the morning, Friday, November 20, our children had their eager eyes fixed on the mission entrance gate. They were waiting for "Mi Mamacita" or "Mi Papacito" because they knew that they would bring them a new dress or a new suit. This special day marked the closing of another school year at El Recreo.



SCHOOL IS OVER...HAPPY VACATION DAYS

After exchanges of happy greetings, parents and relatives gathered in the chapel. They listened attentively as their sons and daughters sang hymns, recited Bible verses, and gave the message of the Bible stories in drama. To some of the hearers, the notes and messages were strange, because this is the only time that their thoughts are directed to the Bible as an open book and to Christ as a personal, living, loving Savior. At the close of the program, diplomas were given to sixteen children who have completed their five years of elementary training.

Finishing its third year in La Mesa at the same time was the Colegio Menno. We give thanks to God that His hand has been upon the work there, and that there have been no interruptions or difficulties.

In other years this school has had a turbulent history, marked by persecution and being unable to remain open. But God has undertaken, and during the past year Vernelle Yoder, with Berta Correa, a Colombian teacher, has lived in La Mesa and directed a successful school year. The closing program was presented before a large group of parents and visitors on November 19.



ANOTHER YEAR HAS PASSED

As our graduates leave us to further their education in other schools or to find work, our prayer and desire for them is expressed in the words of Paul to Timothy, "That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate that which they have been taught and that which they have experienced in their hearts." We trust that others will learn to know Christ through their testimony.

TO HEAL ALL MANNER OF SICKNESS

It is Tuesday afternoon, and lunch is just over. The mare has been saddled and is tied to the tree. This is the afternoon that the mission nurse makes her regular visit to a remote mountain area called La Estrella. It is quite a ride, for she must go up and down the mountains and ford three streams before arriving at her destination. There the women from several homes in the community are waiting for her to give her regular hygiene class and to consult with her about their health problems.

There, each week, the nurse, Janet Soldner, teaches them these things: all water should be boiled before being used; a baby should receive regular sunbaths; it is important to include an abundance of fruits and vegetables in the diet; a sick person should receive plenty of fresh air. These are new ideas to the women, for the water has always been used just as it comes from the creek, the same one in which they water the animals and wash the cloths; fruits and vegetables are to be sold in the market...not to be eaten in your own home; a room in which a sick person is lying should be closed up tight.

Then she teaches them what a thermometer is for, and how to use it. A few weeks later some of them had purchased thermometers; so she knew that they were taking the lessons seriously. The mother of one of the women is ill and will need regular injections for the rest of her life. The nurse teaches the woman to give the injections, for there is no one else to do it.

But always with the concern for physical health there is a concern for spiritual health as well. The Great Physician came to heal the sick and to save the lost. This His servant is following His commission to go and teach and to heal.

ONE DOZEN ORCHIDS

It was a dreary, rainy day, and yet there she stood outside our door with a gift in her hands. Out of necessity she had made a trip to a neighboring town and back.... two hours through the rain and mud....but still she had brought this gift with her. Such a gift would make any day seem brighter....a dozen orchids! There were deep purple ones, and paler ones with a dark throat centered with a bright yellow patch, and one was such a pale violet that it was almost white. What a gift!

But yet, knowing her as we do, we know that she possesses an even more precious and wonderful flower....the Fairest of Ten Thousand. Here was a life that has been transformed, cleansed, and made whole by Him Who is known as the Lily of the Valley. Is that not infinitely more valuable than one dozen orchids, beautiful as they may be?

"He's the Lily of the Valley in Him alone I see all I need to cleanse a and make me fully whole."

THE ORIGIN OF A TEACHER

From time to time we witness some stepping stones of progress in our mission program that bring us joy. This year for the first time in the history of the mission, two of our young people graduated from the Presbyterian Normal School in Ibague. The graduates, Beatriz Tarquino, a member of the La Mesa Church, and Virginia Terreros, a former worker at the Cachipay School, received scholarships from our mission to prepare themselves as teachers. In return for this assistance, these two will be helping in our school system next year.



CHRISTIAN TEACHERS FOR
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Unfortunately, the educational standards in Colombia are so low that in some schools teachers with only a year or a year and a half beyond the fifth grade are placed in charge of large classes (from forty to fifty pupils). To us this seems almost incredible; however, among a people where the illiteracy rate is still high, one realizes that it is better for the children to have the opportunity to learn to read and write under inferior circumstances than not to receive any education.

It is our aim to have teachers in our schools who have received the best preparation available. We try to select from our fifth grade the girls or boys who have an aptitude for learning, an interest in teaching, and an attitude of service, and these continue their study in advanced schools. We are grateful for those who have studied and are now serving. Our prayer and desire is that more may be challenged to serve in the teaching profession.

THIS AND THAT

Completing their third term of missionary service and departing for the U. S. on September 1 were Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Stucky and family. They are living at 423 Compromise, Berne, Indiana.

Arriving in Cachipay as the new pastor of the church was Mr. Miguel Pava, who for a number of years has been an untiring Christian lay-worker. For some time he has been a close friend of the Mennonite Mission, and two of his children graduated from our school this year.

Attending the Congress of Evangelical Communications held in Cali in September was Mrs. Arthur Keiser. Representatives from 23 countries were present. Outstanding writers, editors, and leaders in the field of Evangelical Literature and broadcasting from North and South America were in attendance.

During the Spiritual Emphasis Week, September 7-11, at the Colegio Americano (Presbyterian American School) in Bogota, Vernelle Yoder spoke to the children of the kindergarten through fifth grades. We rejoice in the faithful working of the Spirit in young hearts, and trust there will be more fruit from the seed that was sown.

Addressing the congregation of the Girardot Presbyterian Church in October in a series of special meetings sponsored by the Young People's Society of the church was Arthur Keiser.

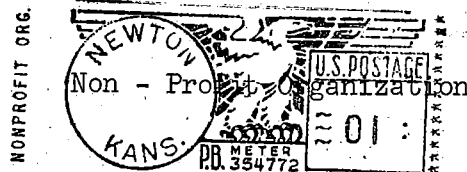
PRAYER AND PRAISE

PRAISE HIM for providing a worker in Miguel Pava and family, new pastor in Cachipay.
for bringing nurse Janet Soldner back to the field after her furlough.
for the successful completion of another schooldyear in Cachipay and La Mesa.
for opening new rural areas to the gospel.
for victories won in the La Mesa church.

PRAY that we may be able to open a new school in Anolaima for the Christian children there.
that God will supply the necessary teachers for three schools next year.
that the Glendon Klaassens may receive their permanent visa.
that He will call Colombian young people to His service.
that He will bring new missionary personnel to the growing field here.
that the Stucky family will have a blessed furlough.



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