

RECONCILIATION MINISTRIES NETWORK, INC.

Reconciliation Report

Effects of Few Missionaries



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*Researching, Teaching,
Mobilizing, for the Name—
Serving Primarily African-
Americans*

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www.RMNI.org

WebWatch:

- Www.gmi.org/products/worldvue.htm 500+ Great Commission Maps & graphs for publications & teaching —\$40 on CD
- Www.miserlymoms.com Tips for the frugal & link to old recipes
- Www.generousgiving.org Plethora of resources—books, conferences, stats, tapes
- AfAm missions resources: www.urbana.org/feat.aamission.links.cfu
- Www.Calebproject.org

The Black church has suffered so

much from slavery and its effects for many, many decades, I hesitate to write anything that may be construed as another burden. However, she is sorely needed on the world's mission fields. Over a quarter of the earth's population is still unevangelized (1,653,901,000 people)¹. The number of longterm (over 4 years) missionaries from North America is slowly declining², as the total number of missionaries globally increased to 434,000, a 1.07 increase over 2000³. It was too small a thing for God to save only Israel⁴, and Jesus gave a mandate to venture beyond one's own Jerusalem and Judea⁵.

If God has called, and of 36 million African Americans only 250-300 have responded (RMNI has begun a new survey to update that number), there must be consequences. What are they? First we have many unpaid "associate ministers" sitting on the "platform," who are underemployed in ministry. These could start ministering crossculturally short or longterm or in the housing projects. Preachers are plentiful—preaching is often a Black gift—perhaps contributing to the plethora of preaching opportunities created by special church services, including various and sometimes extended "anniversaries" and revival services. But there are only so many pulpits for associates.

The AfAm community is among the most religious on the globe, based upon percentages believing in God⁶. In the US 94% of Blacks compared to 72% of Whites stated that having a close relationship to God was very desirable⁷. Significant pockets needing Christ exist, such as housing developments. You'll notice many churches in the Black neighborhoods. Yet new churches spring up like crocuses. Some associate ministers plant them. I asked one young man starting a church in the midst of a community already blooming with small Black churches and a sharply lower population due to folks leaving welfare why he was doing it there. He appeared offended. He said he was responding to a clear call of God.

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2002 Director's REPORT

"LORD, you establish peace for us;

all that we have accomplished you have done for us." (Isaiah 26:12 NIV). I'm grateful for what God has allowed us to accomplish in 2002 by His grace, with your support as a major sign. The year began with a ruptured disc and exactly 1 year later without surgery I could pull 150 lbs. at a rowing exercise, again by grace. With each year the focus is sharper and the core ministry of assisting the Black church in global missions more in focus. Those most faithful in Westside evangelism/discipleship served first in Uganda, and now a church has a regular ministry there—Greater Friendship Missionary Baptist, whose pastor plans to go to Uganda in 2003! God continues to provide all our needs, now for the 26th year, and kindly keeps us depending upon Him. Significantly more teaching opportunities came in 2002, and we had the largest Uganda team to date. God convicts me of much within needing change, but He condescends to give fresh opportunity. Except by hope from prayer and God's grace, I would not be able to continue. In hope, together with an excellent and wise Board of Directors, and your partnership, I look forward to completing the work God gives.

Research:

AfAm denominational missions programs investigated; assisted 3 researchers; pre-

(Continued on page 2)

pared new survey as we locate current AfAm missionaries; studied AfAm missions and general history

Teaching:

Prepared PowerPoint seminars on: Finances for Black Churches, Global Missions, AfAm Missions Seminar & Marriage and Parenting; Financial teachings: 13 sessions; 2 sessions on personal evangelism; 2 sessions on Marriage and Parenting; 6 workshops on AfAm missions; Taught on 4 subjects to a total of 280 leaders in Africa; preached once + 1 SS class; Presentation on AfAm missions to 50 at COMINAD (network for AfAm missions mobilizers)

Missions Mobilizing:

Negotiated with Lookout Mtn. Pres. for \$40,000 for Uganda graduate seminary land and \$10,900 for 3 Sudanese Christian elementary schools; PowerPoint Uganda presentation shown 3 times; Assisted AfAm missions organization and 2 AfAms seeking longer term missions; Organized Uganda and Dominica teams; Secretary of Africa Christian Training Institute; Organized free professional services at missions conf.; gave 2 mission article interviews; 1 radio interview on reconciliation; AfAm missions committee handbook almost completed

Urban Ministry:

Westside street ministry: 43 ministry occasions, with total of 14 volunteers; processed 10 study scholarships for Black pastors; Attended 19 Urban Ministers Network meetings; Fund raising for AfAm Ph.D. student

Counseling:

13 \$ counseling sessions; 6 phone \$ counseling; 5 general counseling; 14 ministry/career counseling

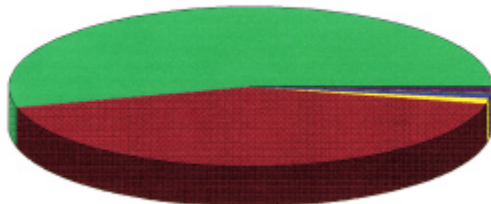
Administration:

Handled all financials, including receipting, payroll, tax reporting, banking and monthly reports to Treasurer; produced and distributed 7 Reconciliation Reports and other donor reports; revised and updated website and RMN brochure; hosted 4 Board meetings; various software/hardware upgrades

Other:

Hospital/visits to sick: 9; 22 visits to Black churches

2002 EXPENSES—\$68,554.59



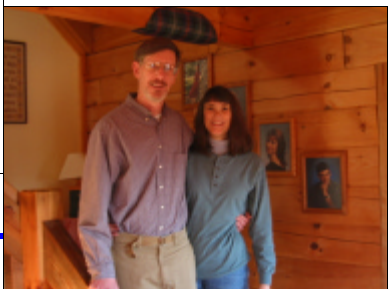
Payroll Expenses	% 54
Program Expense	43
Telephone	1
Office Supplies	1
Postage	.4
Board expense	.2
Professional Fees	.2
Printing/reproduction	.1
Dues/subscriptions	.1
Bank service charges	.1
Other	.1

UGANDA 2003 TRIP:
JULY
LIFE CHANGING
COST: APPROX. \$3,000
CALL FOR AN APPLICATION AND INFORMATION.

2002 INCOME—\$69,961.28



Individuals' gifts	% 54
Church gifts	42
Foundations	4
Rebate/refund	.1
Interest income	.1



2003 ?

The primary goal of RMNI is to be a catalyst for the African American (AfAm) church to fully engage global missions. I was told by a consultant that longrange plans don't motivate me, and he's right. My ToDo list has 26 items. But God puts a burden on my heart, or I receive a request for help, or a need emerges and the list waits a bit. A pastor asked me how to start a missions committee and since nothing is available for black churches (of which I'm aware) the course adjusted to provide that tool for his and other churches. This church may well become a magnate for missions teaching. I'd like to publish in some form information about AfAm missionary recruitment and AfAm missionary support. We're at the front end of locating current AfAm missionaries—a very large project—one that could no longer be ignored. Evangelism/discipleship at the Westside always proves personal inadequacy and yet God is convicting through us. Judi and I plan to continue visiting AfAm churches on Sunday mornings to see what emerges. We're recruiting the July Uganda team and will soon prepare in earnest for the upcoming Dominica marriage conference, with wife Judi and Sister Bertha Lloyd. We hope to bring the AfAm Missions Seminar to Black churches—one is planned for March. Please pray that God will give many new opportunities to please Him in ministry and for enduring fruit in 2003.

Why so many Black churches? Some churches are largely of one extended family—finding it compelling to have church together. Some seem to be bastions of ethnic advocacy. Not a few are pastored by liberal pastors uninterested in the Great Commission or in scriptural authority, partly because evangelical schools were slow to welcome Blacks. Independent churches with evangelical pastors also emerge, some by taking over traditional church pulpits.

Overabundant churches drain enormous resources⁸. Members naturally want to fix up their church. They want a church van, choir robes, AC and a sound system and keyboard. They want to honor their pastor with a good salary and prestigious car and maybe a bus for the choir. In some respects they may be copying the White community in the emphasis upon new buildings. New wine skins are justified when churches become religious societies. But the multiplicity of churches sponge up almost all human and financial resources--resources that could be shared reaching the unevangelized and supporting missionaries.

Are these many churches convicting reminders of those not emerging on foreign fields? Are traditional and liberal AfAm churches becoming spiritually stagnant because they focus so much inwardly? Have ingrown AfAm churches reached a spiritual plateau for which only missions will provide the outlet to release and steward their underemployed spiritual energies? New evangelical Black "wine skins" are needed in housing projects and elsewhere whose members come primarily from genuine conversions, rather than from membership transfer. The Westside in Chattanooga could use such a church, since Sunday transportation is a problem. Such folk may not be highly sought, and tend to drain the budget rather than fund it. The hardest cases may be there among them, based sometimes upon encountering "church folk." Love Fellowship in Chattanooga has its origin in ministry in a housing project, whose founding pastor also ministers in Ghana.

The AfAm community needs ongoing ministry, as does every ethnic community. But is "churchianity" competing with the Gospel mandate? Send the associates crossculturally. Leave or change existing churches preaching a modicum of truth with maximum emotions or the health/wealth/prosperity half-truths. Advocate missions, find godly pastors, and plant new churches only where needs are obvious. Otherwise plant churches crossculturally. Instead of over-planting, resulting in stunted churches, and a draining competition for members and money, plant them where there is little competition and incredible need. The King can be trusted to care for those who care for the gospel of His Son.

- 1- Barrett, David B. and Todd M. Johnson, "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 2003," *International bulletin of missionary research*, January 2003, p. 25.
- 2- 33,074 in 1996 to 32,957 in 1999. Siewert, John A. and Dotsey Welliver, eds. *Mission handbook: US and Canadian ministries overseas 2001-2003*, p. 34.
- 3- Barrett, p. 25.
- 4- Is. 49:6
- 5- Acts 1:8
- 6- "In 1981, for example, Gallup International organizations conducted surveys on religious beliefs in twenty-three nations. One question asked respondents to rank the importance of God in their lives, with 10 the top score. The highest score recorded was by American blacks--9.04." Gallup, George, Jr., and Jim Castelli. 1989. *The people's religion: American faith in the 90's*. New York, N.Y.: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- 7- George Barna, "African-American Adults and Faith: A National Perspective," Part II, Table 2.2.2, 1996.
- 8- AfAms have given a larger proportion of their gift income to "religious charities" than have whites—Hodgkinson, V. and M. Weitzman. 1990. *Giving and volunteering in the US: Findings from a national survey*. Gallup Organization. Washington, D.C.: Independent Sector, p. 41.

Prayer and Praise



↑ Please pray for God's anointing upon the upcoming Marriage Conference in Dominica, and that the 3 of us going will serve as befits Christ.

↑ Judi's migraines are less frequent & she thanks you!

↑ Pray for Ellis who professed Christ very openly on 1/9/03. Your prayers were evident. Tiffany also needs growth and her boyfriend needs salvation.

↑ Please pray for the Lord of the

Harvest to recruit workers for the Uganda July 2003 Team. After years of praying we now have our first AfAm pastor signed on.

↑ Wisdom and discipline in research is needed, and for ways to best disseminate the work. Please pray that we'll locate the great majority of AfAm cross-cultural missionaries and for their help with a survey.

↑ Son Tim graduates in May and needs an en-

gineering job. Susanna did very well her first Master's semester—please pray for good health. God is surely working on Ethan—please pray that He will make a way for our son. Naomi is growing much spiritually.

↑ Please pray for new volunteers for evangelism and for open doors to serve. More opened in 2002 than 2001. Pray that we'll be productive and very loving.