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VIET NAM A REPORT

**A Beginning
Has Been
Made**

Stripped of the oriental pride of fatherhood before 12 children and his wife... unable to provide the barest rations of rice for mouths dumb with hunger... the disgraced father entered a street of Saigon to find the solution dictated by the centuries.

With five gallons of gasoline and a match, his unbearable disgrace ended — his children's hounding hunger would no longer stalk him.

Out of the fumes and heat one pathetic soul fled. Behind, however, were left 12 mournfully knotted, hunger-bloated stomachs. They were left, but not to starve. Fortunately, the grieving mother found missionaries of the church in Saigon who immediately placed five of the children needing foster care into the home of a Vietnamese Christian.



The church faces human need and suffering

Elsewhere on the streets of Saigon, 50,000 homeless orphans of the war wander the streets, dazed, diseased, unloved — forced to eat garbage and sleep on curbs. They do not understand why they are deserted or why no one seems to care or why the pain of infection finally numbs their senses.

And every day more and more refugees from North Viet Nam glut the sidewalks, alleyways, and teeming refugee centers. In their haste to escape the rain of bullets and mortar shells, they have only scurried into paper shelters filled with hunger, despair, and multiplied miseries. Thirty-three thousand amputees in Saigon alone hobble and fumble through a meaningless existence.

The war in Viet Nam has become a new symbol of modern man's inability to live peaceably with his fellows. The spirit of distrust and bad faith generates mounting tensions. Fighting can promise only extended agony... bloodshed... and crushed spirits. In war, the spectrum of human suffering stands out in bold relief. Bodies are shattered. The old, the feminine, the tender children become spattered with filth and blood — the despair of the moment and the squalor of seeking safety. Life itself becomes a cruel folly perpetrated on such a disintegrating people.

Viet Nam then, is a graphic, more harshly lighted, stronger symbol of man's iniquity to man. Viet Nam marks the high point of fever in man's growing inner infection. There is a greater cure to be sought — a more effective healing than the momentary reversal of a high fever.

This brief report tells of an effort to turn back the mounting fever in Viet Nam. It is intended to inform Christians everywhere of the overwhelming need for a unified and massive expression of compassion and concern to fulfill the ministry of Christ in Viet Nam.

**Preaching
and
Teaching**

**Orphan Care
and Refugee
Relief**

**A Beginning
Has Been
Made**

The mission of the church of Christ was begun in Viet Nam by United States Navy Lieutenant Joe Hale of Midland, Texas, in his home near the Tan San Nhut Air Base near Saigon in 1962. Sergeant Ken Wilson of Bakersfield, California, also assisted.

In February, 1964, at the request of the elders of the Royal Oak Church of Christ in Royal Oak, Michigan, Brother and Sister Maurice C. Hall, former missionaries to Germany and France, then teaching at Michigan Christian Junior College, went to Saigon to begin the present mission effort in South Viet Nam. They were joined by Brother Philip Carpenter, a 1963 graduate of Michigan Christian College from Mount Dora, Florida, who is supported by the Averill Avenue Church of Christ in Flint, Michigan. Since their arrival in 1964, the church in South Viet Nam has grown to some 655 members including 55 American servicemen and seven U. S. missionaries. Eleven congregations have been established — five in the Saigon area, two in the Rach Gia area, and four others in Da Nang, Hoi An, Tam Ky, and Nha Trang.

suffering...

**Preaching
and
Teaching**

Ten Vietnamese preachers and seven American adult workers are leading the effort among 16 million people in South Viet Nam. The Americans include: the Halls; Carpenter; Brother Lynn Yocum of Beloit, Kansas, a graduate of Oklahoma Christian College; Brother and Sister Leonard Blake, formerly associated with the Shults-Lewis Children's Home in Valparaiso, Indiana, both graduates of Michigan Christian College; and Brother Gene Conner, a graduate of Harding College from Little Rock, Arkansas.

Twelve native preachers have been trained in a program which began in 1964 soon after the arrival of the Halls and Carpenter.

Brother and Sister Phil Nhon, Vietnamese, who have served as translators for the American Bible Society and who were converted by Brother Hall, are leading the church's radio evangelism on Network C, a 5,000-watt station covering all of South Viet Nam and two 1,000-watt stations in Hue and Sedec. These activities are being underwritten by the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, Louisiana, which is the congregation directing activities of World Radio.

A program of newspaper evangelism is placing teaching ads in six newspapers with a combined circulation of 60,000. The ads average 20 column inches in size and cost from \$5 to \$10 per insertion.

Begun in February, 1965, with five children whose mother could not support them, the child care program has grown to include a total of 68 orphans and neglected children in the various foster homes of Vietnamese Christians. Food, medical care, clothing, education, and other necessities are being provided these children from contributions of \$10 per month from individuals in the United States. There is a need for more financial support and personnel to include many such pitiful children.

**Orphan Care
and Refugee
Relief**

Through aid from the Protestant Relief Committee, the church in Saigon was provided 10,000 pounds of wheat to distribute to refugees and poverty stricken people. The Greenville, Mississippi, Church of Christ assisted by sister congregations in that area, shipped two tons of clothing, food, and cleaning goods to the church in Saigon for distribution. This significant relief work can be expanded with additional supplies, personnel, and funds.

Evangelism Through Educational Activities

At the request of a number of wealthy and influential Vietnamese whose children had been left without a school when the American Community School closed in Saigon in February, 1965, Maurice Hall and Philip Carpenter opened a self-supporting school to teach English to 87 students. Opening the school aside from the normal activities of the church in Saigon provided excellent opportunities to reach many leading citizens of Saigon for Christ. These people whose children are students in the American-Vietnamese International School, as it is known, include ambassadors to Viet Nam from Korea, Australia, and China, as well as professional people in various fields.

Profits from the operation of the school will support up to seven free schools in which Bible and other subjects can be taught to students who do not have financial capability to go to school. The school also provides a means of supporting vocational missionaries who wish to teach English during school hours and work for the church in spare time. Strong, efficient schools are respected by the Vietnamese and can be valuable assets to the church's work in South Viet Nam.

Will Our Response Match Our Opportunity?

Perhaps in the twentieth century there has been no opportunity equal to that presented the churches of Christ in Viet Nam. Because the attention of the world is focused on the war and the problems of Viet Nam, no positive humanitarian action can escape the attention or fail to capture the emotions of millions of people. And, no such action could be better timed for those who need physical and spiritual help than now!

Prayerfully, our fellowship will see the opportunity in Viet Nam. Hopefully, they will apply their talents, imagination, resources and belief in Jesus' teachings to a dramatic advancement of the cause of Christ in Viet Nam. It is this kind of positive action that will manifest redeemed lives, compassionately minister to human needs, glorify God, and save souls!

You can help the Viet Nam mission in five ways:

1. Request a full, illustrated presentation of the Viet Nam Report to your own congregation in the near future.
2. Arrange for the Viet Nam Report Exhibit to be shown in your area. Minimal freight charges and available dates can be quoted on request.
3. Indicate your desire to aid the work in Viet Nam either in your own area or as a preacher, teacher, or worker in Viet Nam. Check the way you wish to help on the attached self-addressed card and return it.
4. Support the Viet Nam effort financially. Your unrestricted contribution is desperately needed. Your gift is tax deductible. Checks should be made to "Elders, Royal Oak Church of Christ" and marked "For Viet Nam Mission."

Send to 115 South Campbell, Royal Oak, Michigan

5. Pray for the work in Viet Nam and tell others of the exciting opportunities for the church in this war-torn country.