

OUR KINGDOM SERVICE

DECEMBER 1976

Vol. 19, No. 12
FOR UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Bible's Message in Reach of Everyone

Dear Kingdom Publishers:

We are now in position to review with you what has been accomplished during the 1976 service year. A vast amount of work was done in preaching the good news of the Kingdom for a witness and in aiding persons to know the way that leads to life. And more have been sharing in the preaching work, as there was a 2-percent increase in the U.S.A. on the average.

The analysis shows that there have been decreases in most averages—hours, magazines, return visits and Bible studies. While this is of much concern to us, and we all look for ways to do better in Jehovah's service, there is reason to be encouraged regarding our future activity.

The congregations in the United States have now increased to 7,375, and there are 334 circuits and 35 districts. The publisher-to-population ratio is now a favorable 1 to 370. Many congregations are covering their assigned territory frequently, and during 1976, as was the case every year since 1970, all the unassigned territory was covered. So Jehovah is blessing the efforts of his people to widen out the proclamation of the good news even deep into this time of the end.

The monthly average of 17,251 regular pioneers was down from 20,385 last year. But we feel sure that many are now planning to take up pioneer privileges in the present service year or to enter the auxiliary pioneer service.

Since our hours have decreased on the average from 9.6 in 1975 to 9.1 (or close to 8 million fewer hours), this is a good time to think about ways we can personally reverse this trend. Our each spending just one additional hour in Jehovah's service each month would put the average over 10 again, and think of what praise to Jehovah could be accomplished by all of us together putting in this additional

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¹ As we would reasonably expect in the case of an inspired guide provided by the Creator for people of all races, the Bible has been widely distributed. It is available, the whole or in part, in languages spoken by 97 percent of the world's population. Modern printing has made it possible for millions and millions of copies to be distributed each year.

² One of the reasons for the Bible's popularity is that it touches the heart of the reader today just as it has done all through the centuries, because it deals with human problems. It makes no difference what kind of society—farming, seafaring, or industrial—all persons can grasp its message. Human nature has not changed, and the Bible deals with real problems that affect humans wherever and whenever they live.

³ Have you sat down and just read the Bible itself for an hour or two—for example, the Gospel accounts, the book of Acts or the books of Samuel or of Kings? When you do, note how you begin to feel that you are living at that time. Your heart is touched. Such reading is a spiritually uplifting experience.

LET THE BIBLE SPEAK

⁴ When we go to the people, it is our aim to get them to read the Bible. Most people never read it. That is why there is so much

lack of faith, with increased trouble and sorrow.

⁵ In December we will be presenting the *New World Translation*. But our first objective is to talk about the Bible, to get people to see its value and their need for its wisdom. How can we better help them, or encourage them to read the Bible, and show them something it contains?

⁶ To get the conversation started, you might first ask them if they have a Bible. You may find that many already do have one. In this case, ask them if they find time in this busy world to read it. Do they have any problem in understanding it? Often this will give you the opportunity to go farther and help them to get right into the Bible. You might even ask that they get their own copy so that they can read from it.

⁷ For example, reference might be made to Psalm 37:37, 38, in showing what is ahead for those who are upright in God's sight in comparison with the outcome for the wicked. The Bible shows that God will soon clear away wickedness and wicked people, and then those who love God and their neighbors will be able to live in peace and happiness.

⁸ Then you might tell them of the special Bible study arrangement Jehovah's Witnesses are in—
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Help to Improve Your Teaching

¹ Do you find that you need a helping hand to improve in presenting the good news? Assistance is available right in your congregation. Do not be hesitant to seek this assistance from more experienced publishers. There are many things that can be learned from preparing together and then working together, even if you merely observe for a few calls.

² Perhaps your experience in the field service has been limited up to this point to distributing tracts or sharing in the magazine distribution. Commendably you are arranging to have some share in telling others of Jehovah's means of salvation. Would you like to take another important step now in making your preaching and teaching work more effective and productive? Remember, the commission that Jesus gave to his disciples included the 'making of disciples of people of all the na-

tions, baptizing them.' (Matt. 28: 19, 20) The command given later at Revelation 22:17 was that "anyone hearing" the good news should say: 'Come and take of life's water free.' The making of disciples requires that we be teachers, and to this end we invite you to take this next step toward disciple-making by engaging in the return visit and home Bible study work.

WHERE TO GET HELP

³ Speak to your book study conductor or any one of the elders and tell him that you would like this help to improve your teaching. Very likely he will be able to arrange for one of the experienced publishers in your congregation who has a service schedule similar to yours to work with you for a few weeks. You may wish first to gain some experience in house-to-house work, using the

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YOUR SERVICE MEETINGS

WEEK STARTING NOVEMBER 28

17 min: Song 100. Discuss with audience by questions and answers the article "The Bible's Message in Reach of Everyone." (Exclude paragraph 10, which will be handled in next part.) Demonstrate presentation in paragraphs 6-9.

12 min: Demonstrate how a study might be started on the first call by using the *Good News* book, as discussed in paragraph 10 of article "The Bible's Message in Reach of Everyone." Stress the objective, in any approach, of starting a Bible study, if possible. Include field service announcements.

13 min: Encourage all, particularly young folks and others who will have some time off during December, to consider possibility of being auxiliary pioneers. Several of those planning to be auxiliary pioneers might tell how they are arranging their affairs to do so and invite others to share with them. Call attention to new schedule for book studies. Any other announcements.

18 min: Talk on article "Self-Control—A Safeguard Against Disaster" in September 1 *Watchtower*. Develop so these main points stand out: Why one cannot be lax in cultivating self-control; why recognize our limitations due to sin and imperfection; what it means to pray, "Do not bring us into temptation"; what results, according to James 1:14, 15, if we neglect to continue cultivating self-control; how young people particularly are put to test in exercising self-control; and how self-control is developed and maintained. Song 75.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 5

15 min: Song 74. Field overseer discusses Branch Letter and includes some significant trends in the congregation so far during service year. Include Theocratic News and local announcements.

20 min: "Presenting the Good News—With the Bible and *Good News* Book." Discussion with audience. Conclude with demonstration, using suggested texts at Luke 2:8-11 or Luke 2:13, 14.

25 min: Talk, with some audience discussion, on article "Approaching God in Prayer." (September 15, 1976, *Watchtower*) Main points to stress: Confidence in approaching Jehovah; proper manner and spirit in approaching Jehovah in prayer; why offered in Jesus' name (whether name is used at beginning, at end, or both, is optional); meaning of "Amen" and all joining in saying; Bible examples of various forms of and occasions for prayer; why should be specific and fit the occasion; meaning of Romans 8:26; order of importance in Jesus' model prayer; repetitious prayers and use of Jehovah's name; Bible examples of posture; no special posture in prayer required (yet not wrong to invite our brothers to assume a certain posture or to stand if circumstances make it appropriate); appropriate at mealtimes; power of prayer (Jas. 5:16-18); and why we can confidently expect Jehovah to hear our individual prayers. Song 42.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 12

15 min: Song 110. Welcome all in spirit of Hebrews 10:24, 25. Read and discuss article "You Had a Visitor." Announcements, including local announcements. Briefly consider accounts report.

15 min: Question-and-answer discussion of article "Help to Improve Your

Teaching." Presiding overseer might handle and outline to congregation various ways assistance will be made available to those needing help.

15 min: Talk, with some audience participation, on article "Counsel—Will You Profit from It?", appearing in September 15 *Watchtower*. The following questions may be helpful in stressing main points: What human tendency often manifests itself when counsel is given, as illustrated in the case of Adam and Eve? How did David show the proper attitude after Nathan confronted him with his sins? How should we react if counsel is given but we have broken no law? How might this be illustrated? What factors involving the counselor might cause resentment when counsel is given? Why is pride the root cause? Why is an attitude of being "always right" a dangerous one? What harm is done when counsel is rejected? What line benefits come to one who accepts counsel? (Remind all to study the article "Why a God of Love Gives Reproof" in the December 1, 1976, issue of *The Watchtower*, and to bring this issue to the service meeting next week.)

15 min: Holiday Witnessing: Field overseer might handle this part. Tell audience what arrangements have been made for special witnessing activities on December 25 (and possibly December 24, if this is a legal holiday in your community). Group witnessing might be planned from the book study locations for several hours of service. A good opportunity for entire family to go in service together. With everything planned in advance, such as territory to be worked and brothers to take the lead, should be fine day in Jehovah's service. Discuss with audience what might be said appropriately in introducing the offer on this holiday. What might be said if person wishes publisher "Merry Christmas"? Without making an issue of this, publisher might say in return: "Thank you"; "And I wish you a good day"; or something similar. Sample presentation might be featured. (It is suggested that these points be reviewed at the meetings for service this week.) Song 107.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 19

15 min: Song 108. Using Luke 6:45 and Romans 10:10, show why Jehovah's people rejoice to speak of their heavenly Father out of the abundance of their hearts. They delight to share the good news with others. Local announcements.

30 min: "Why a God of Love Gives Reproof." Audience discussion of article appearing in December 1, 1976, *Watchtower*, using the following questions: Paragraphs 1-3: What does the Bible tell us regarding God's concern for mankind, and the need for reproof and discipline? Paragraphs 4, 5: Why should we be grateful for divine correction? Paragraphs 6-8: In what ways should love and patience be reflected in the disciplining of children by parents? Paragraphs 9, 10: What shows that these desirable parental qualifications find their origin in Jehovah himself? What is the objective of God's discipline? Paragraph 11: Why does Jehovah hate sin and what motivates his anger as regards sinning? Paragraphs 12, 13: How is Jehovah's approach to the matter of discipline illustrated at Isaiah 28:23-29? What lesson do we learn from this? Paragraphs 14, 15: What appealing example did Jesus set

for Christian shepherds? What attitude did he show toward repentant sinners? Paragraphs 16, 17: What should motivate a Christian elder in giving reproof, and what is the Scriptural way to deal with an erring one? Paragraph 18: How can reluctance to talk be dealt with, and what is it important to keep in mind even though strong measures must be taken? Referring to closing paragraph, briefly mention what questions will be taken up in future *Watchtower* studies as the subsequent articles are discussed.

15 min: What Impressed You that This Is the Truth? Interview of a few brothers and sisters, telling specific points that convinced them that Jehovah's Witnesses have the truth and are God's true servants. Should prepare for this part in advance. Chairman invites all to be particularly alert to what first got the interest of those relating the experiences and what barriers or problems had to be overcome. Song 109.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 26

15 min: Song 10. Show how 1976 year-text has been of great encouragement to Jehovah's people during the past year. Include discussion of Question Box; also any local announcements.

15 min: Presenting the offer for January. The January 1 and 15 issues of *The Watchtower* will feature in the opening articles an appropriate Scripture text that can be used in Bible discussions preliminary to offering the subscription. Using the January 1 issue, demonstrate presentation that might be used in your community. Encourage all to work toward obtaining at least one subscription during the first month of the campaign. The campaign this year will be during three months: January, April and July.

30 min: Prepare locally, taking up some specific need of the congregation. Song 13.

Announcements

● Literature offer, December: *New World Translation* (b12) and *Good News—to Make You Happy*, for \$1.25. January: *Watchtower* subscription, with three booklets, for \$1.50, or subscriptions for both *Watchtower* and *Awake!*, with 6 booklets, for \$3.00. If the subscription is not accepted, we can offer a pocket-size book (25c) along with two magazines for 35c. February: *Holy Spirit* book for 25c. March: Any one of the large (50c) books with two free booklets; when all large books have been placed, offer any pocket-size (25c) book.

● The Memorial for 1977 will be held on Sunday, April 3, after sundown. Where more than one congregation uses the Kingdom Hall, it will be permissible, if necessary, to start the first talk before sundown, but the serving of the emblems should always be after sundown. The following may help in determining this time:

The local sunset time will be about a minute different from what it was for April 3, 1976. That time may have been given with the weather report in the local newspaper, which may be on file in the local public library or newspaper office. Or a nearby weather bureau may have a record of it.

If this time cannot be ascertained locally, perhaps it can be obtained from a nearby city. If you get the April 3,

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"YOU HAD A VISITOR"

More and more reports are received from the field telling that many people are not at home when publishers call. Even when people are not at home, it takes time and energy to go from door to door. When we do not find people at home we might feel that we have not really accomplished much, but if we could leave a message that would aid them to learn about the truth, that would give us greater satisfaction.

It is a pleasure to inform you that a small slip has been prepared entitled "You Had a Visitor." This slip is about the size of a handbill and should be folded before it is left under a door. The message it contains should stimulate the thinking of those who find it when they return home. It has a coupon offering a free booklet and invites people to contact the local Kingdom Hall.

Orders may be placed now by congregations. These slips are \$1.00 per thousand. When ordering them, ask for NOT HOME SLIPS. We hope this will prove to be a means of giving a further witness throughout the field.

Announcements

(Cont'd)

1976, sunset time for a location (in the same time zone) within 75 miles of where you are, sunset in your locality will be within about 10 minutes of that time. Determining this information now will permit you to order your Memorial invitations well in advance. These may be ordered in lots of 250 for 50c, 500 for \$1, or 1,000 for \$2. Please use the special order blank provided for ordering Memorial invitations and remit with the order.

For future reference, you may wish to keep a record of local sunset times for the period of March 22 through April 19, 1977, since Memorial always falls within this period.

● A special talk will be given the week of March 27, before Memorial, in all congregations. The subject will be "The Faith That Means Survival." A manuscript for this talk will be sent in due time. No special handbills for this talk will be printed. The regular handbills, showing the times of meetings, should be used, and publishers can personally make special mention of this lecture.

● After January 1, 1977, congregations may submit orders for the 1976 bound volumes of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* These will be available in English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Volumes are \$2.50 each. There are no pioneer rates. These are cash items and so payment along with a Remittance and Credit Request form must accompany all orders.

● New Publications Available:

The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life —Persian
Bible Price: \$5.70 —Hindi

● Out of Stock in U.S.A.:

Crampon Bible —French
Second Bible —French

The Bible's Message

(Cont'd)

roducing to their neighbors, also showing them the *New World Translation* and the *Good News* book. Since the *New World Translation* is in modern speech and has other fine features, they may wish to obtain a copy along with the *Good News* book. But if they decline, perhaps being content with the translation they already have, then we can enthusiastically encourage them to read their copy of the Bible. And in doing so, we can direct attention now to the *Good News* book.

9 Again, let it be apparent that you are there to help the person appreciate God's Word. The *Good News* book is an aid to help in understanding the Bible. In it we learn of God's new system where war, hunger, sickness and even death will be eliminated. You might refer to the happy scene on page 4 and ask the one with whom you are speaking if he or she would like to pick up a newspaper and read one of the headlines mentioned in paragraph 3 of page 5. Who would not like to read, "No Housing Shortage—Secure Jobs for Everyone" or "Disease and Old Age Eliminated—Hospitals and Funeral Parlors Closed Down"? Does that sound like a dream? No, it will be a reality, you can point out, because God has promised it. And this purpose of God and other vital subjects are discussed fully in the *Good News* book.

10 If the person is listening well, you might briefly point out how the book is arranged to help people understand the Bible, and then demonstrate this with several paragraphs. Show them how the Bible is referred to repeatedly as proof of the things written. (Note, too, that often scriptures are cited at the end of a question at the bottom of the page. It is recommended that these be read in addition to those in the paragraphs above.) Cover a few paragraphs, such as those on page 5, and suggest returning at a convenient time.

11 If the one with whom you are speaking does not have a Bible, this is added reason for him to obtain a copy of the *New World Translation*. Discussing a few of its features may be helpful.

12 How grateful we are that Jehovah is seeing to it that the Bible's vital message is in reach of all who are searching for the truth and the way of life! His patience has permitted our learning of the way of salvation. Let us do our part as message bearers in spreading the good news of his Word to still others while there is still time.

Improve Your Teaching

(Cont'd)

Bible with a brief presentation of the offer. This will lay the foundation for some return visits with the objective of starting a Bible study. Or, the one working with you may already have some calls and would be happy to take you along when making them.

4 Of course, before going into the field service it is advisable to prepare something to say that is pointed and interest-catching. This will also help you in gaining confidence, if you are a little unsure of yourself. There is no reason to be afraid or to hold back because you feel that you need more knowledge or experience. Going right ahead while putting your confidence and trust in Jehovah will bring you many blessings. Soon it may be your privilege to conduct a Bible study regularly.

5 Parents, have you recently analyzed what the next step might be for your children in progressively working toward the goal of being disciple-makers? If they are now sharing in tract work or magazine service, would their age and ability make it possible for you to assist them to progress further and use the Bible in their presentations? With your help, could they share in developing the interest they locate in their preaching work? Could a Bible study be started? Many young servants of Jehovah effectively share in conducting studies, especially among young folks of their age.

6 At their quarterly meeting to be held in December, elders are invited to review how they can make loving assistance available to those who need it. This would be a good time also to review what has been done to implement the suggestions on page 7 of the March 1976 *Our Kingdom Service* to improve arrangements for giving assistance at the book studies under the supervision of the book study conductor. In giving assistance, build in the hearts of the brothers and sisters a desire to share in Jehovah's service so that they get joy from it and want to do it regularly.

SEPTEMBER SERVICE REPORT

	Pubs.	Av. Hrs.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bi.St.	Av. Mags.
Sp'l Pios.	690	135.5	49.7	4.5	131.2
Pios.	15,768	85.8	33.1	2.9	82.1
Aux. Pios.	16,388	58.1	19.1	1.1	55.8
Pubs.	500,820	8.6	3.9	.4	10.9
TOTAL	533,666				

Newly Dedicated Ones Baptized: 2,055

UNITED STATES GOAL FOR 1977

599,108 Publishers

PRESENTING THE GOOD NEWS

—With the Bible and “Good News” Book

¹ December will be the first time that the *Good News* book will be specially featured for the benefit of the public. It is a fitting companion to offer with the Bible, because it deals with the Bible's inspiration, what the Bible contains, how it was preserved, and its value. Remember that the full title of the book is “Good News—to Make You Happy.” Happiness can be stressed, for people find it hard to be happy today.

² In the presentation, try to get into a discussion of the Bible first, if possible. You may wish then to feature the *New World Translation*, or in certain cases circumstances may indicate that it would be preferable to offer the book first.

³ During the holiday season, Luke 2:8-11 or just Luke 2:13 and 14 will often awaken a hearing ear. Then the note from “The Publishers” on page 2 of the *Good News* book may be read, leading into chapter 1, page 5.

⁴ If, after the Bible discussion, you lead into the book, there are many good points to use. We will here suggest some transitions from the Bible discussion to the book, and some features that you may find to be appealing to many people.

⁵ You might say, “Have you wondered how a book written by men could really be a pure message from God?” Then point to the illustrations on pages 16 and 17, showing the different ways that God used to see that what he wanted in his Word was written down, and how he did oversee its accuracy. You might add that it is certainly heartwarming and meaningful for us to read the writings and follow the lives of men who served God, persons who had the same feelings and often the same problems that we have. To see how men of faith stood firm for God and to see how God dealt justly and mercifully with people means much to us; examples are often better than mere words. We can place ourselves in their posi-

tion. How much better than a book of cold facts and commands, and just as authentic!

⁶ Other features that we could well use are one or more of the historical charts on pages 12, 21 and 26, because many people are confused as to the age of the Bible, and as to when certain Bible personalities lived—before or after the Flood, before or after Christ, and so forth. It helps much in Bible reading to know these things. We also have the chart of prophecies fulfilled in Christ (page 145), a study of which strengthens faith in the Bible's authenticity and in Jesus' Messiahship.

⁷ In our opening Bible discussion we may have spoken about God's kindness, his mercy, his justice. In certain localities where people may be turned away from faith in God because of the hypocrisy they have observed in the false religious systems, we may be able to use the pictures on pages 104 and 105 to show that the clergy of Christendom misrepresent God and the Bible.

⁸ Of course, the theme of happiness is usually a welcome one. If there are children in the home, leafing through chapter 19 will be appealing. If you start a conversation by the use of Revelation 21:3, 4, chapter 17 of the book, particularly pages 158 and 159, should bring good cheer to the householder. The security mentioned on pages 5 and 6 will also, no doubt, appeal to some persons.

⁹ If you cannot succeed at first in getting into the Bible, you may accomplish your purpose by using the scriptures from the “Sermon on the Mount,” page 32.

¹⁰ The *Good News* book, when placed in the hands of people, is a good instrument for a Bible study. It should be helpful in bringing many persons to a knowledge of the truth, and may reach some who were not reached with the *Truth* book. Those who already have the *Truth* book will appreciate reading the *Good News* book also.

Schedule for congregation book studies in *Peace and Security* book:

Dec. 5: Pages 5 to 13*
Dec. 12: Pages 13 to 21
Dec. 19: Pages 22 to 31*
Dec. 26: Pages 31 to 36

* To subheading.

THEOCRATIC NEWS

◆ Cuba reports increased persecution as searches of homes are made to stop the flow of spiritual food. Our brothers are faithfully enduring despite false charge that they are agents of a foreign government.

◆ Conditions in Benin are relatively quiet now. Of those remaining in the country, 1,159 reported field service in July. Those who fled to neighboring countries have been cared for and are now able to look after themselves.

◆ Mozambique was pleased to report 10,032 publishers for August.

Question Box

● Should each Kingdom Hall display the yeartext?

It is recommended that the yeartext be displayed in the Kingdom Hall in countries where this can be done without difficulties resulting. The yeartext is selected each year to provide timely encouragement for Jehovah's people from the Scriptures. And when newly interested people visit us at the Kingdom Hall they are usually impressed when they see a verse or two from God's Word featured as a reminder. From time to time in meetings, specific reference can be made to the yeartext, especially when parts on the meetings are related to this theme.

Often it is best to display the yeartext at the front or side of the hall so it can be seen easily. If meetings in another language are held in the same hall, a yeartext in this language also could be featured. The size of the letters and the makeup of the sign itself should be appropriate and tasteful. Obviously one that is gaudy, with letters uneven or one that does not fit in with the decor, would not be appropriate. When it is time to design the yeartext, there may be someone in the congregation who has some decorating ability who might provide some suggestions on design and makeup. When the Kingdom Hall is in a home or a rented hall used by other groups, the elders can decide if it is practical to have a yeartext sign. If so, it may be necessary to construct it in such a way that it can be put up and taken down easily for each meeting.

Branch Letter

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tional 8 million hours. And our return visits, our Bible studies and our placements would show corresponding improvements.

During the year, 43,900 persons were baptized in the U.S.A. We rejoice with these new servants of Jehovah in their stand for true worship and look forward to aiding them to press on to Christian maturity. Since Jehovah continues to show patience, let us imitate him and keep busy extending knowledge of the way of salvation to all who will hear.

It is a pleasure to be working with you in holding high Jehovah's great name in these momentous last days.

Your fellow servants,

BROOKLYN BRANCH OFFICE

Suggested Presentation

Discussion of one or more verses from Psalm 37:37, 38 or use of one or more verses from Luke 2:8-14.