

Fleming

NARRATIVE REPORT for 1966
BAHNAR WORK

1966 has been our best year yet. We have seen the Lord work in a number of ways. The number of believers has grown from 77 to 230 and the number of baptized Christians from 3 to 58. Last year we had 3 groups of Christians, now we have six.

The greatest thrill has been to see God preparing people to receive the Gospel. For years we have had intermittent contact with the Bahnar villages between Pleiku and Ankhe. We have witnessed in most of these villages at one time or another and in some we have preached many times. Though most of the people were friendly and some were interested, the only place where we saw any real response was in the village of Dolol, where the people began to turn to the Lord in 1963. At that time they were only thirty^{or}-some people who had recently come out to the road-side as refugees from the communist dominated hills. Several of them were afflicted with leprosy and this was the means of contacting them. Dave Frazier began treating lepers in the newly established village and preaching the gospel. Soon they decided as a group that they would like to be Christian and were lead to pray. Since then most of these people have personally committed their lives to Christ and have been baptized.

In the mean time their relatives and former villagers were leaving the hills and joining them until now there are around 250 people in 45 separate households who originally came from 3 separate villages in Dolol. Now in Dolol, there are 130 believers, 45 of whom have been baptized.

Refugees have also come out to other villages along the road (Highway #19). Some of those who went to Dak Ja were related to people in Dolol. This resulted in an invitation to come and preach the Gospel in Dak Ja. We had attempted to preach there many times in the past without any response. Some times they even shut themselves in their houses and refused to come out. We hold regular weekly meetings there now and in the past few months 31 people in Dak Ja have believed. In addition 8 people from the village of Kon Brung have turned to the Lord. Kon Brung is not yet accessible to us because it is in an insecure area, but interested people walk out and attend the meetings in Dak Ja. The Lord is working and we are trusting Him to raise up a Church in Kon Brung.

It seems as though we had been knocking on a people's front door and they have visited us through the door, but did not receive our message. Then God sent friends to them through the back door to prepare their hearts until now they have invited us to come in and minister to them.

Further down the road from Dolol is the village of Kon Chrah. A young man from there went to the Leprosarium at Banmethuot and was saved. He has grown in the Lord and is now in his second year at the Banmethuot Bible School preparing to come back and minister to his own people. In recent months there has been a turning to the Lord in this village. There are now 28 believers there, 8 of them have been baptized.

These three groups of Christians, in the villages of Kon Chrah, Dolol and Dak Ja, take an offering each week in their meeting and send a portion at the end of every month to Poh in Bible School. We believe that when he returns to pastor these people they will be ready to support him.

The Golar are the Bahnar people nearest to Pleiku. The first Bahnar preacher, Grup, comes from this area. His village, Polei Bia, has been up and down this year. In the spring several who had professed to believe in former years and had fallen away, came back to the Lord. They had great enthusiasm. In all 63 people, about 12 families, were professing salvation and seemed sincere, but before the end of the year most of them had again gone back to their old ways. This was a disappointment to Grup and to us. Neighboring villages show some interest in the Gospel but the vacillation of the people in Polei Bia has been a hindrance. There are several believers in Polei Brel Dor, the leading village in the Golar area. They are all young people; we still do not have one Christian family in that village and the Christians lack leadership.

Long, Dave Frazier's old language teacher, is from Polei Brel Dor. He is a faithful Christian and a good witness, but he seldom gets to the village since he works in the Christian hospital in Pleiku. He lives with his wife in our guest house and witnesses to those who stay overnight there. He too is concerned about the Golar people. This area needs much prayer--we are asking God to give us a Church in one of these villages as an opening to the whole area.

Two short term Bible schools were held for Bahnar believers during the year. Attendance at the first was 31 and at the second 47. A three day conference for adult men was held. At that time we introduced some Helps for Leaders, forms of worship to help laymen take the leadership of Christian groups and carry out the necessary activities.

This year the young people from Polei Dolol came to Pleiku for a week and prepared a Christmas pageant. We travelled with them to five villages to present their program. It provided an opportunity to preach the Gospel to many hundreds of people.

In the field of translation and literature we have made a start, but much remains to be done.

All through the year the Lord has blessed us and we praise Him. We look forward, in dependence upon Him to greater things.