

Report of the United Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship to the
193rd General Assembly, Houston, 1981

I. Statement of Purpose. Following the lead of a daily prayer discipline we have discovered among tribal Presbyterians in Burma, the purpose of the United Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship has been to develop a faithful, devoted and knowledgeable constituency within the UPCUSA in support of efforts to establish an indigenous, corporate witness within the remaining 16,000 plus people groups which at our founding still awaited that special grace.

THE NATURE OF THE FRONTIERS

Such groups constitute the "frontiers" to which our name refers. The number of individuals included by "frontier" people groups was slightly over half the world's population at our founding. As defined by a world-level consultation in 1980, those who are part of such groups cannot be reached by the normal evangelistic outreach of existing congregations within their linguistic, cultural or sociological spheres, since it is the absence of such congregations within a people group which designates and defines the frontiers of which we speak. Western missionaries are not the only ones who can cross such frontiers, but to do so is essentially a missionary task whoever does it, and will not likely be done apart from special prayer and special efforts.

THE ROLE OF PRESENT MISSION EFFORTS

One urgent reason for special prayer and effort for frontiers is, ironically, a result of the awesomely successful missionary enterprise of the past 100 years. Almost everywhere missionaries have gone, the resulting flourishing growth of the "national" churches has come to consume all but roughly 5% of the missionary effort of all evangelical forces. The role of the United Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship is not to diminish nor divert attention from the people groups where work has earlier been established, but to open a new final era of mission funds to focus specifically upon the remaining frontiers.

THE SPECIFIC METHOD OF THE UPFF

We are touched by the meaning of the mealtime "handful of rice" Presbyterians in Burma are daily setting aside for mission outreach. We believe that even brief prayer and small sacrifice on a daily basis is the best of all methods whereby we can educate and rebuild a consciousness of the final frontiers among members of the UPCUSA. To this end we are eager to explore a daily "Loose Change" plan which is intended to function like the Burma custom. Since other groups outside the UPCUSA will shortly be appealing to UPCUSA membership for collaboration in their own version of this plan, it seems reasonable that both present and future UPCUSA involvement in outreach to Hidden People groups be presented to our membership by a Fellowship made up of UPCUSA members.

THE SPECIFIC GOALS OF THE UPFF

The United Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship seeks to attract not less than 100,000 United Presbyterians to a daily devotional discipline which will expose them, enlighten them, and educate them concerning mission frontiers. The financial dimension of this discipline is the giving of money daily--"loose change"--on an over-and-above basis to the cause of frontier missions. It may be assumed that the vast majority of this money will be channeled into our own Program Agency's frontier activities. However, in accord with general church policy, we do not

