

The Rural Church Program
OF
Kentucky Baptists
AND
The Rural Church Revival



BY

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"I Will Build My Church"
"—Christ also loved the church and gave
Himself for it—"

Kentucky Baptist State Board of Missions
127 E. Broadway, Louisville 2, Ky.

The Rural Church Program of Kentucky Baptist

The need for a Rural Church Program was felt by some of the pastors and leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention for a long time. When the Rural Church Program was launched in 1944 by the Home Mission Board in cooperation with the State Mission Boards, there were eight objectives set forth by the Cooperating Boards. They are:

1. A pastor living on the field or near enough to render pastoral service.
2. A perennial Sunday School.
3. At least one revival meeting a year, and a mission revival if a destitute field is a part of the local church field.
4. Best possible use of church property with proper care of house and grounds.
5. A scriptural plan of church and Kingdom finance.
6. A church prayer meeting.
7. Cooperation in denominational activities including personal representation in the District Association meeting with a report from the church.
8. Enlistment of all the members of the local church in her program of work.

The above outline is built around four essential needs of the average church, which are: first, a knowledge of the church field, (by this is meant the actual geographical area that the members live in); second, a knowledge of the people that live on this field, who they are, what they are religiously, and what church they are attending; third, a knowledge of the kind of church program they have had in the past; and fourth, a knowledge of the financial strength of the church.

Every church has a sphere of influence; the size of this sphere is determined by the type of program the church has had in the past. There are destitute fields near every church; every Missionary Baptist in Kentucky lives in walking distance of a mission field. The half-way mark between the churches of our state is not being reached. We must minister to the people who live on the half-way line. The plotting of the church fields, sponsored by the Rural Church Department in Kentucky shows that one-fourth to one-half of our state is not being reached. There are churches in all parts of the state, but between the churches there are areas that need our immediate attention.

Kentucky has five men in the Rural Church Department; four Regional Workers, and one State-wide Worker. The purpose of this arrangement is to place a Rural Man in reach of all parts of the rural areas of Kentucky. The task of these Rural Men is to study rural churches, stand by the rural churches and the rural pastors, helping them get the benefit of every help Kentucky Baptists have for them in promoting the Kingdom of God in their separate fields. They

are to specialize in the work of the **Rural Church Revival**, and they are eager to go to any rural pastor or missionary to help in arranging for, or putting on the Rural Church Revival.

The need is evident for a promotional program of work, which would enable the worker to go on a church field and in a few days present to that local church a complete picture of their church field, the number of people to be reached, and the potential financial strength. This kind of program has been worked out in detail. It is the combined thinking of several men, among them being Dr. John D. Freeman, Rev. D. Arthur Dailey, and the Rural Church Workers in Kentucky.

THE RURAL CHURCH REVIVAL

1. What is the Rural Church Revival?

The Rural Church Revival is a program of work, eight days in length, extending from Sunday morning through the following Sunday night.

2. What is done in these eight days?

There are four definite objectives to be accomplished in these eight days:

First, a complete survey of the church field is made. This survey is a comprehensive study of the field as to the number of people that live in this area, their religious preference, what they are reading, their economic and spiritual condition, and how well the Bible plan of stewardship has been taught.

Second, each home in the community is visited by some member of the church; a religious service is held in the homes of the aged and shut-ins.

Third, the facts found by the survey are presented to the church each night, Monday through Thursday.

Fourth, the Bible plan of work for a New Testament church is presented.

3. What churches should put on the Rural Church Revival?

This program is planned for Rural or Country churches, but any church, regardless of size or location, could receive a great deal of help from these eight days of intensive study and work. The church or churches desiring to make an intensive study of their church field and spend eight days analyzing this information, as to how they may apply the commission of Jesus Christ to their own situation, can put this program on in their church.

4. How is the Rural Church Revival put on?

(1) The plan

The church in regular business session, after the pastor has presented the facts concerning this program, votes to have a Rural Church Revival. The clerk or the pastor communicates with their missionary, or R. B. Hooks, 127 E. Broadway, Louisville 2, Kentucky. A date is agreed upon which is acceptable to the church. The help of one of the Rural Workers, or a pastor who has put the Rural

Church Revival on in his own church, will be secured. The survey cards and the summary sheets are furnished to rural churches free of charge.

The pastor, with the help of the Sunday School Superintendent and other interested members of the church, makes a map of the church field showing all the roads. This map is divided into at least four equal parts; if it is a large community, it should be divided into six or eight parts. There should not be over 10 or 15 homes in each of the sections.

A survey team for each section of the map should be secured; each team should have three members, a captain, a secretary, and a soul winner. The members of these teams should be made up of men, women, and older intermediate boys and girls, who have dedicated themselves to God and the progress of His kingdom's work. These workers should know what they believe and why they believe it. They should understand the purpose of the Rural Church Revival. They are not trying to make Baptists out of the people, but visiting in the name of Christ and his Church.

(2) Putting on the Program

The date has been set, the help and materials, such as survey cards, summary sheets, and tracts to be distributed have been secured, the map of the church field has been made, and a survey team for each territory has been organized.

Day by Day plan of work for the eight days.

Sunday Morning:

Visiting minister will have charge of the worship service; the Sunday school will be conducted as usual.

Sunday Afternoon:

The pastor, visiting minister and the interested members of the church will visit the sick and shut-ins, holding a service for those who desire a service in their home. A list of these should be made up the week prior to this meeting and the family where the service is to be held can invite their neighbors in for the service.

Monday:

Survey the church field. The workers meet at the church for final instructions, to ask any questions, and for prayer together. This survey should be completed within two or three hours. **This is important.** Divide the church field so it can be done. Monday through Thursday, the night service will be used to present the survey and emphasize each phase of the Great Commission. The days will be used in tabulating the survey, visiting the lost people, and unaffiliated Baptists. It would be fine if a day service could be held at the church.

when the visiting minister would bring a series of messages on the great doctrines of the Bible.

Monday Night:

Survey facts presented, and a message by the visiting minister, on the subject, "The Church Teaching the Word of God."

- a. The church has been commissioned to teach the Word.
- b. The church can teach the Word of God.
- c. The church must teach the Word of God.

Tuesday Night:

Survey facts presented, and a message by the visiting minister, on the subject, "The Church Guiding her Members in Spiritual Growth."

- a. The Lord added to the Church daily those that were saved.
- b. Watch over the flock.
- c. Feed my sheep.

Wednesday Night:

Survey facts presented, and a message by the visiting minister, on the subject, "The Church and her Stewardship Obligation, and Opportunity."

- a. God is the owner of all wealth, and it is He that giveth us strength to get wealth.
- b. The Church that practices the Bible plan of giving will share in the Bible plan of receiving.
- c. A giving church can never die.

Thursday Night:

Survey facts presented, and a message by the visiting minister, on the subject, "The Members of a Local New Testament Church are God's Ambassadors Beseeking the Lost To Be Reconciled to Christ."

- a. Christ died for our sins and for the sins of the world.
- b. All men must come to God through Jesus Christ.
- c. Those who refuse Him are eternally doomed.

Friday Night through Saturday Night:

Evangelistic services and personal soul winning. We know who the lost are, and where they live. This is the test of the first four days of our work. Here is where the church proves to Christ and the world their love for Him.

5. How is this Program financed?

When one of the Rural Workers is used, the only finance needed is for the traveling expense of the

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worker from his home to the field and back, plus whatever materials are used. This expense can be taken care of by a free-will offering. After the expenses are paid, the remainder of the offering will go to State Missions.

When a pastor is asked to help in a program, the church will be expected to furnish his pulpit with a supply for the Sundays he is away, plus an honorarium for his services. There will be no stipulated amount set for the honorarium; the amount for the supply will vary for different churches.

6. Final Word.

The Rural Church Revival is already past the experimental state. It will work if the members of the local church and their pastor are in dead earnest about moving forward. The Rural Men can give some of the results that have been accomplished by this Program of work. The regional men are Rev. G. R. Pendergraph, Eddyville, Kentucky, Western Region; Rev. Buell T. Wells, Bowling Green, Kentucky, Southern Region; Rev. H. L. Carter, Bardstown, Kentucky, Central Region; and Rev. George Grubbs, Carlisle, Kentucky, North Eastern Region. There is a list of pastors who can give you something of the good this program has done in their fields.

The Rural Church Revival is a **Church Centered Program**, designed to help the local church get a vision of its own particular field of service. There are other programs that are designed to lead the church to coordinate its work with other churches in a World Mission Program, but there is no other program, so far as I know, that meets the particular needs of the rural church, as the Rural Church Revival Program does.