

BAKER, HELEN FERN

J.C.M.P.

Foreign Missionary
Argentina
Educational

80-1 20/

Miss Baker is at the present time a contract worker for the Foreign Division, she wishes to be transferred to the Woman's Division and accepted as a full time missionary.

PERSONAL DATA

- Name- Miss Helen Fern Baker
Present Address- Avenida Pellegrini 1352, Rosario, Argentina
Permanent Address- 1710 South Fourth Avenue, Sioux Falls, S. Dakota
Present Occupation - Contract worker for Foreign Division
- Date and Place of Birth- Laurens, Iowa October 19, 1891⁴⁹
- Marital Relationship- Divorced ^{12/5}
- Church Relationship- The Methodist Church in Cochabamba, Bolivia
- Ready to begin work - I'm already here!

EDUCATION

- | 6. Schools | Dates | Degree | Courses |
|--------------------|------------|--------|---------------------|
| Nebraska Wesleyan | '16-'19 | B.A. | English |
| University of Neb. | Summer '21 | M.A. | English |
| " Wis. | '26-'27 | | English |
| " Iowa | 'summers | | English and Spanish |
| " Mexico | 1943-44 | | Spanish |
- Language Ability- German - two years in high school and major of twenty-four hours in college; Spanish, college minor, additional graduate work. Can converse in Spanish.
 - Recent Reading and Leaders who Influenced the Candidate
(a) Chalmers, several including, High Wind at Noon, Sholem Asch, The Apostle, The Robe
Summarized version of Toynbee. The Atlantic Monthly, World Outlook, Methodist Woman, Readers' Digest.
(b) Chalmers, Jones; Roy Smith; Bishop Oxnam (He is nothing short of a beacon for us down here); Vasquez (Buenos Aires); Sockman; Steele in the church at SMU, many others.
 - Experience:
Working in our school and church and community in Cochabamba; now in our school in Rosario.

Reference Summary

Mr. J. B. Gregg, 309 N. Wuluth, Sioux Falls, S. Dakota, - President of Board of Education

Rated qualifications as High and gave summary rating of EXCEPTIONAL.

Mr. R. W. Beck, Washington High School, Sioux Falls, S. Dakota - Employer

Rated qualifications as High and gave summary rating of AVERAGE.

Mr. R. W. Pielski, 306 East 31st., Sioux Falls, S. Dakota - Friend

Rated qualifications as Highest and High and gave summary rating of EXCEPTIONAL.

(J.C.P., June '19)

~~Olweig Lundgren~~
Helen F. Baker

REFERENCE summary continued:

Mrs. R. A. Beck, 1815 S. Norton, Sioux Falls, N. Dakota

Rated qualifications as High and gave summary rating of GOOD.

Miss Rae Westmore, 95N, Sioux City, Iowa - Friend

Rated qualifications as Highest and High and gave summary rating of A RARE FIND.

Rev. Alvin Maberry, First Methodist Church, Shenandoah, Iowa * Friend

Rated qualifications as Highest and gave summary rating of EXCEPTIONAL.

Miss Ruth Potter, 311 North Hawthorn, Sioux Falls, N. Dakota- Friend

Rated qualifications as High and gave summary rating of EXCEPTIONAL.

1- Rare Find
1- Exceptional
1- Good
1- Average

June '19 JC

Beely -

What you speak concerning work -
I have not read it - I am going to read it
and the class that have been to
be sure to get back with them if.

W
L
H

1949
1903
6

(2 (1919) June 1919)

~~Olivia Lundgren~~
Helen F. Baker

REFERENCE summary continued:

Mrs. R. A. Beck, 1815 S. Norton, Sioux Falls, N. Dakota

Rated qualifications as High and gave summary rating of GOOD.

Miss Rae Westmore, 95N, Sioux City, Iowa - Friend

Rated qualifications as Highest and High and gave summary rating of A RARE FIND.

Rev. Alvin Maberry, First Methodist Church, Shenandoah, Iowa * Friend

Rated qualifications as Highest and gave summary rating of EXCEPTIONAL.

Miss Ruth Potter, 311 North Hawthorn, Sioux Falls, N. Dakota - Friend

Rated qualifications as High and gave summary rating of EXCEPTIONAL.

- 1- Rare Find
- 1- Exceptional
- 1- Good
- 1- Average

June 19 1919 JC

BOARD OF MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION
OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
150 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 11, N. Y.

PERSONAL INFORMATION BLANK

(This is not an application blank and submitting it involves no obligation. It is a form designed to secure information that will help the Personnel Secretaries know you better and advise you more intelligently.)

Date October 7, 1946

INTRODUCTORY

1. Name (Rev., Mr., Dr., Miss, Mrs.) Helen Fern Baker

2. Present Address 510 West Thirteenth, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

3. Address that will always reach you Washington High School, Sioux Falls, S.D.

4. Present Occupation Teacher of Spanish in Washington High School

5. Present Citizenship American Race White

If naturalized, when and where? XXXXX

6. Birthplace Laurens, Iowa Date of Birth October 19, 1891

7. What type of work do you wish to do? I probably could be worth most at teaching.

8. In what country or section do you prefer to work? Uruguay; or any place in Latin America

Why do you prefer that country or section? I have some knowledge of Spanish, an insatiable desire to be of use to those folks, and I saw Miss Reid's SOS.

9. Would you accept appointment elsewhere? Naturally - whenever the need is that I might fill.

FAMILY AND MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS

10. Give information regarding your parents as requested below.

(If either parent is deceased, please supply the information as requested and give date of death. If there are step-parents or guardians, give this information in the column to the right.)

	Father	Mother
Name	<u>P. J. Baker</u>	<u>Lanthe Brownlee Baker</u>
Address	<u>both deceased; Father, Feb., 1940; mother, June 1940</u>	
Occupation	<u>Farmer</u>	
Nationality	<u>American</u>	<u>Scotch Irish</u>
Year of Birth	<u>1850</u>	<u>1852</u>
Member of what Church	<u>Methodist</u>	<u>Methodist</u>

11. Give ages and occupations of your brothers and sisters. ... age 39; retired farmer; S.D., 64 garage man; Adaline, 61, head nurse in St. Paul's home for aged in Chicago.

12. Who of your relatives are now (or have been) employed in missionary or full-time church work? Give relation, name and work.

None, I regret to say.

13. Describe your family's interest in missions. Are your parents in sympathy with your missionary purpose?

My parents are, of course, not here. The remaining members of my family are not particularly interested in any phase of church. They are members, but not very active.

14. Underline to indicate whether you are single, engaged, married, divorced, widowed.
If engaged or married, give the following information about husband, wife, or betrothed.

Name Nationality

Address

Date of Birth Date of Marriage.....
(If engaged, give probable date of marriage.)

Occupation

Education

Attitude towards your missionary purpose

15. If you have children, give name, sex, date of birth, and general health condition of each.

EDUCATION

16. Summarize your school history below.

Name and Location of High School, College and Special Schools attended	Date of Entrance	Date of Leaving	Date of Graduation	Degree or Certificate Received, or Semester Hrs. Completed	Major	Course or Minor
Primghar, Iowa			1908	Diploma		
Nebraska Wesleyan	1916	1919	1919	B.A.	Eng.	{ Education German Spanish
University of Wis.	Summer	1921		6	Eng.	
" " Nebraska	1926		1927	M.A.	Eng.	
" " Iowa	Summers			6	Eng. and Spanish	
" " Mexico	"	1943 and	1944	6 each	summer, in Spanish	

What has been your academic standing in high school? A ... College? A ... Graduate school? A ...
(average grade or class rank)

17. What part did you take in extracurricular activities in high school? Note particularly any work done in 4H Clubs (give projects), Scouting, Hi-Y, Girl Reserves, or other school-community organizations.

When I was in high school there were few extracurricular projects. Our church, however, furnished us with perfect opportunities in Epworth League, missionary work, and in the Sunday school-- and I took advantage of them.

18. List below your participation and offices in extracurricular activities in college: student government, public speaking, music, publications, fraternities, athletics, honor societies, departmental or professional clubs, social action or study groups, Christian Associations, church groups and other religious activities.

Y.W.C.A. both on and off-campus activities; various scholastic clubs in the English, biology, and language departments; much work with such committees as hospital, especially work in the orthopedic hospital, and with Mexicans in classes learning English; Church School classes; Epworth League work; work in the First Centenary program.

19. What plans do you have for further study and how do you expect to finance it?

Studying Spanish, in associating with the people whose language it is.
My salary

WORK EXPERIENCE

38. List below all positions in which you have received remuneration, including your present position. If a student or a recent graduate, include full-time jobs held for as long as two months and part-time jobs held for a school year.

From - To	Title, Nature of Position and Employing Organization	Salary
e.g. 9/39 - 7/41 9/39 - 6/41	Asst. Pastor and Director of Youth Work, Community Church, Newark, N. J. Teacher—4th Grade, Public Schools, Rome, Georgia.	
9-29 - date	Teacher, first of English, last six years of Spanish in Washington High School,	\$ 2500 now
9-28 - June 29	Teacher in our school at Mathiston, Mississippi; called home by illness of parents	\$ 600 (I think)
9/1919 - 6 - 23	Teacher in Fremont, Nebraska, high school, stopped to complete master's degree work.	\$ 1600
7/23 - 1927	Principal of small high school in Hammond, Nebraska; stopped to complete master's -	\$ 2100
	Rural teacher previous to college work -	Probably \$500 as no.

RELIGIOUS AND LIFEWORK INTERESTS

39. Of what local church are you a member? (Give exact name, denomination, location and Conference.)
First Methodist, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Dakot. Conference

When did you first unite with the church? When I was eleven years old.

40. What are your present Conference relations? Layman

If not ordained, do you plan to be? ... When? ... Where?

41. What part have you taken in the work of the church in addition to that described under your student experiences?

W.S.C.S. missionary chairman; teacher in church school; youth groups; work in our S.C.S. field; family with many sisters; work in church for Christ (District of Columbia).

42. What experience have you had in interdenominational projects or relationships?

Interdenominational youth groups, chiefly. Some work with women's societies, and considerable work in the Y..C.A.

43. What are your personal habits of prayer and devotional Bible study? The early morning—from six to seven—for prayer and meditation; after breakfast, our Upper Room; before bed, the bible, -not very systematically studied, rather read and absorbed, and prayer. This daily, and added study with books such as those of Huntington, Laubach, Clark, Jones, Kelly, Mary Ellen Chase as I can read and study them.

44. What college, seminary or other accredited courses have you had in Bible, theology, or other religious subjects?

Little beyond the more or less customary courses in religion, which we had at Nebraska Wesleyan.

45. Give the names of the teachers, writers, or leaders (indicate which) who have most influenced your religious thinking and experience.

Laubach—and his intimate and workable idea of prayer; Huntington and his ideas of making our Christianity function in our daily life; Kelly, his Testament of Devotion; Chalmers, especially The Commonsense - Real; Schweitzer; Na.awa; Dr. Amstutz; Daniel Foster; Weatherhead.

46. What does Jesus Christ mean to you personally? The One - person, to whom I can commit my life wholly, in the supremest confidence that insofar as I am sincere, and insofar as that commitment is complete, my life will bear fruit for his kingdom. He gives meaning to life; makes of living an amazing adventure; and keeps one's heart brimful of the joy that was his. He makes possible the bearing of heavy burdens, the carrying of others' loads, and the keeping of one's eyes on his values and Spirit.

47. In what ways have you helped others to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ? With my pupils, it is often so easy to show them the beauty and strength of living with Christ. Soon they come to know where they may go to find the way. One of my loveliest experiences was when I was chaperone for one

48. What influences led you to consider missionary service? [of our school parties - at the party] The conviction that I wanted, poignantly wanted, to give all I had to His service in places where perhaps it might be difficult to find others to go. How long have you been considering it? Since I studied Spanish in Nebraska Wesleyan.

Are you considering such service as a lifework? So happy if it could be to the very end of my days.

49. Are you a member of the Student Volunteer Movement? No. If so, when and where did you join?

50. What is your missionary purpose? To bring some of our abundant life, the life of the Master of life to folks who do not know him, or know him imperfectly. To share the joy of Christ - the Love of God with folks who have not had the privilege of knowing him.

CONDITIONS RELATING TO APPOINTMENT

51. Have you applied for missionary service to any other Board? No - not exactly. The Harcers and I wrote in about 1942 or 3. Which? ... Results? Well, my age seemed to count against me.

52. Please list your financial obligations, including debts, insurance, pledges, and other items for which you must make provision.

Nature of the Obligation	Total Amount	Annual Payment	Plan for meeting it
New York Life		\$198.00 yrs. \$14, 7th.	I have some money saved

53. If appointed, would you have financial responsibilities for parents or other relatives? No. If so, please give pertinent facts.

54. Do you have any domestic or personal problem which might necessitate your withdrawal from, or prevent your entering, missionary service? No. If so, specify.

55. Are there any other facts—assets, limitations or problems—that the Board ought to know? No, I am prepared to give myself, openhanded, with no reservations.

56. If accepted, when would you be ready to begin work? AS SOON AS I could. give my board have fair notice - in January would be a good time.
Please enclose a recent picture or snapshot of yourself, signing and giving date when taken.
Signature Helen A. [unclear]

Return to: Department of Missionary Personnel
150 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, New York

20. What foreign languages have you studied, and for how long? German, two years in high school and a major of twenty-four hours in college; Spanish, college minor; additional graduate work at the University of Iowa; twelve hours at the University of Mexico.

In which can you converse? In Spanish only

Do you acquire languages readily? Yes, I believe folks would say I learn readily.

21. What active cultural interests (e.g. music, art, literature) do you have and how do you express such interests?

Music, participating in playing my own songs of worship; concerts of beautiful music; literature, knowing and sharing the beautiful in all forms. My writing is perhaps too humble to mention.

22. What books of all types (except, for students, texts and required references) have you read during the past twelve months?

This summer my reading included: Shean, This House against This House; Pope, Maxim Litvinoff; Mary Ellen Chase, The Bible and the Common Reader; Buttrick, Christ and Man's Dilemma (Given to me by one of the Youth groups at the Okoboji conference); DeLaurier, The King's General; Asch's The Apostles, for the second time; Bromfield's beautiful Pleasant Valley; many books on Mexico and South America; I enjoyed especially Hudson Strode's South by Thunderbird; Earth Could Be Fair. I have spent a few hours with lighter books as Penthouse in Bogotá, Green Fire, Green Mansions, and Green Hell. Christ of the American Road made a big contribution to my thinking.

23. What periodicals of all types do you read with fair regularity? The Reader's Digest, of course, and sometimes in Spanish; The Atlantic from kiver to kiver, through the years; our World Outlook, Methodist Woman, and the Advocate for our section. My professional magazines include the State Journal, fairly poor which I do not always read; our excellent National Journal; and the Spanish Journal. I read no others regularly - out now and then dip into the Post, Harper's, and our South Dakota poetry magazine.

HEALTH AND RECREATION

24. How do you appraise your present health: robust and vigorous, fairly good, somewhat below par?

Explain. *As I look at my in front of "robust" it seems a bit strong. But I have "way above" "fairly good" health.*

25. What is your height? 5 ft. 6 Weight? 128 Recent changes? No

Do you have any chronic ailment? No Any physical disability? No If so, specify.

26. List any serious illnesses you have had, giving dates. None recently; rather had case of flu which kept me in the hospital a week or so in 1941. Years ago, an appendectomy.

Have you ever had a nervous breakdown? No If so, give particulars.

27. Have your parents, grandparents, brothers or sisters had tuberculosis, or nervous or mental disorder? No, my father. If so, specify. *was nearly blind, stroke at age 80, and other ailments.*

28. In some parts of the world certain foods cannot be easily avoided, such as fish in Japan, rice in east Asia, and olive

oil in Syria. Have you any serious allergies or absolute dislikes about any foods? No If so, specify.

No, I avoided the highly spiced foods during my visits in Mexico, and ate rather conservatively of new foods, but merely on general principles rather than from allergies!

29. What are your favorite forms of recreation? Following such hobbies as birds, walking out of doors; reading; visiting shut ins; having guests for dinners or meals; (I have even fried chicken for Bishop Magee. I wonder if he would recall it?) Association with my friends in such organizations as Knife and Fork club; P.S.O.; picnics with my students.
What hobbies do you have? Studying birds; poems; people; books; handwork; gardening; flowers.

30. How well do you swim? Not at all How well do you play tennis? Not at all
31. Do you use tobacco? No Alcoholic beverages? No

GROUP AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

32. Was your early life (through junior high school or age fifteen) spent in city, town or country? Note the different localities in which you lived and tell briefly what urban, industrial, or farm experiences you had and which type of environment seemed dominant during this period.

My childhood and early adolescence was spent on my father's farm, with profitable and happy work to do after school and on holidays. Then we moved into a town of some one thousand souls, where I completed my high school. Later years, I have lived in Lincoln, Nebraska, most happily through my college undergraduate years; in towns like Harvard and Fremont where I began my teaching; and for these last seventeen years have been living in this city where I now am, the population of which is about forty thousand. It is a friendly town, with fine churches and excellent schools.

33. List any experiences you have had in vacation or other projects such as work camps, deputations or caravans, peace service, migrant work, social and industrial study groups, conferences or fellowships.

My outstandingly happy vacations have those spent in Mexico, and those in my cabin on the shores of Lake Coocji, where we have our yearly Bible Conference. Since my work there has been all but wholly unofficial, it has consisted in giving programs to the various Youth groups, personal conferences, etc. (I wonder if Miss Hollowell recalls, by any miracle, our contacts. She was at my cabin for an informal tea, and one morning I gave a short discussion for her at a women's meeting.)

34. Describe any contacts you have had with rural or labor groups. None, officially. Since my family is predominantly farmer, I have had much opportunity to know our Iowa farm folks well.

35. What contacts have you had with people of other races or nationalities that lead you to believe you can work harmoniously with them? My weeks of associating with Mexicans in Lincoln, Nebraska; my months in Mexico; and every contact I have ever had with these people make me sure of cordial assistance.

36. Do you have any reservations about working under the direction of leaders of another race? Not at all--
all belong to the Great Race: the human race.

37. What part have you taken in the activities of your community and to what organizations of a civic, political, or community nature have you belonged? I belong to too many I am afraid. Knife and Fork; various church groups--missionary, P.S.O., Youth groups, church school, Girl Reserve, P.S.O. (Oh, dear, isn't that enough?)

BOARD OF MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION
OF THE METHODIST CHURCH
150 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 11, N. Y.

RECEIVED BY	
KD	
(DATE)	
MAR 16 1948	
TO — RECEIVED —	DATE
BY — ANSWERED —	DATE
BY — PASSED TO FILE —	DATE
BY — FILED —	DATE

Application for Missionary Service

Having fully and prayerfully considered my lifework and desiring to give myself in service to Christ and to share with my fellow men the inestimable values of His Gospel, I hereby make application for appointment to foreign missionary service.

Name Helen Fern Baker

Address 510 West Thirteenth Street

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Date March 15, 1948

TO THE APPLICANT:

The following questions are designed to help you make clear your motivation and convictions concerning Christian service abroad. If any points are not clear, or if you desire to study further the issues raised, the secretaries gladly offer their counsel.

You will understand that you formally enter into the above relationship only when affirmative action has been taken by the Board.

THE AIM OF MISSIONS AND YOUR MISSIONARY PURPOSE

1. What is your attitude toward the statement that the supreme and controlling aim of foreign missions is to make Jesus Christ known to all men as their Saviour and Lord?

Fundamentally, and perhaps finally, it is in harmony with our Master's, "Go ye into all the world;" it should be the aim of all Christians here at home, hence taking it to other countries is merely going unto others as we would be come by; it is the basis for bringing life abundant to others; and it is incomparably the greatest joy that can come to the one giving.

2. What do you consider the function of the educational, health and social services rendered by missions?

I am not quite sure I understand this question. If I do interpret it correctly, I should say that the entire program of our Church, home or abroad, within the church or within the school, or any field, is to implement the aim mentioned in question 1. The function, then, would be to bring Christ into our lives by the most - perhaps best in particular circumstances.

3. How are these educational, health and social services related to the aim of making Christ known to men?

Other things being equal, a healthy, educated, socially adjusted person will serve more effectively than an illiterate invalid. By the same token, also, one can better teach Christ's message to a well body, an awakened mind, and a person within his own social unit.

4. What should the missionary do to further social justice and world order?

As I see it from the familiar point of view, the greatest thing any missionary can do in furthering social justice is to preach the gospel of Christ, His message of brotherhood, and of love for all.

5. What should be the work of the missionary in relation (a) to the church of his denomination on the mission field, and (b) to the ecumenical movement in both its world-wide and local aspects of interdenominational cooperation?

In the specific, (a) as a minister, I should understand, know, believe in, interpret, and teach the fundamentals of the faith. (b) But I should do this in a manner and spirit that relates my church to the world church; that makes of my church a sector of God's world plan; that reveals my church as one phase of the ecumenical movement; and that recognizes such denominations as being in the same divine purpose as we.

6. Describe your lifework purpose, explaining how you expect to carry it out through your chosen type of work, i.e., as pastor, doctor, teacher, homemaker, etc.

Since I can remember I have had the obsession: to be a Christian. To tell others how wonderful Christ is. Since the impact of mind on mind has always stimulated me, I seem to have things wanted to teach, - being the grandest approach: one of revealing truth and revealing it in its own attractive way.

RELATIONSHIP TO PEOPLES OF OTHER RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL AND NATIONAL BACKGROUNDS

7. What is your attitude towards other religions, particularly those in the country of your preference?

I believe in the "Holy Catholic Church"; I believe that God calls through many religions, comforts by all. But I do believe that there are many sad and disturbing fallacies taught by the Roman Catholic church, that it often limits rather than releases, and that as God truly leads and opens blind eyes, these fallacies and fears should be replaced by Truth and Faith.

8. What would be your general approach to people of another religious and cultural background?

One must first and in all honesty recognize that anyone's religion means much to him; that there is truth, much, doubtless, to live by in his faith. On that basis of loving understanding and recognition of values, it is surely possible to build the 'more stable relations', to find the faith that brings the freedom from fears, -superstitions, and that reveals God.

9. What is your attitude towards the view that missionaries frankly and without apology should seek to persuade men to become disciples of Jesus Christ?

That they should do just so. Why should I apologize for showing the way to a richer, fuller, freer life? I am amplily proud of having received the message to be passed on proudly, not apologetically.

10. What is your mission in a country where Roman Catholicism or Greek Orthodoxy is the prevailing religion?

Have I answered this in my reply to number 8? One should cooperate to the fullest extent consistent with one's own belief; one should never be needlessly contentious, nor seek argument for argument's sake. All of which does not prevent one from firmly and lovingly living, -- and witnessing to the truth as he sees it.

11. What is your attitude toward working (a) in full partnership with Christian nationals of the country you wish to serve; (b) under the direction of such nationals?

(a) In my brief but most happy associations with the Christian nationals in Mexico, invariably I was the one who profited from their profounder knowledge of their own people; from their deeper insight into the psychology-- the expected reactions, so to speak-- of their people; and from their eagerness to hold all possible of the new to their own stock of the old. (b) Since I would be the stranger, I would expect the directive to come from the national, with mutually helpful results.

12. What is your attitude as to the relative capacity of different races?

All recent material research by desk tends to disprove the theory of racial superiorities or inferiorities. Given equal opportunities, equal generations in environment, and of heredity, races are probably about equal.

13. In what ways should missionaries identify themselves with the people they would serve?

Every possible way, at all possible times and occasions, within the fellowship of their work, play, sorrows, joys, ambitions, privations, even in sleep, with all kinds of conditions.

Name Helen Fern Baker

A SKETCH OF YOUR LIFE

Write simply and directly the story of your life in home, school, and community, including the development of your Christian experience and sense of mission.

A Northwest Iowa farmhouse was my birthplace. My parents were pioneer farmers, whose strength of character had been tested again and again by the hardships of sub-zero winters, crop failures, hog cholera, summer droughts, and finally by me! I was the 1st one of our seven. (Two children died in very ^{early} childhood, one beloved sister ten years ago, leaving four of us to carry on the traditions and ideals so deeply imbedded in us during those years of association with Father and Mother.)

A small aside would include the remark that not the least gift to me from my parents is a sprig of my Father's dry, Pennsylvania Dutch humor, and a generous helping of my Scotch-Irish Mother's rollicking wit.

Because we were farmers, four miles from town, and because Father would be horrified at the thought of his work horses being driven on Sunday, we rarely attended church. Summers, Mother would have a Sunday school in our one-room country school house, and it was there that my vague gropings began to assume shape, and I came to know the intensity of hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Then to me, to be a Christian meant to become a church member. How I wished I could be a Church member!

About that time, Father in order to give us better schools, moved us to the small town of Costana, Iowa, because it did have a superior normal school. My sister and I entered high school. How wonderful! I was only eleven, but precocious, and studies were play. Besides, now we could go to Sunday School! Then, more wonderful still, there was a revival that first winter in the Town Hall. Mother let us attend.

Goodness, how I wanted to go "down front"! In a vague way, I thought one had to go "Down front" to make things official. And I wished--wished--that someone would ask us. Sure enough, one night, a lovely neighbor-- incidentally a "punkard"-- stepped up to me and said, "wouldn't you like to give yourself to Christ?" I didn't stop to explain that I had already done that but I was so happy to know that at least the business arrangements were really being properly made, I breathed, "O, yes!" The joy that came to us as we knelt at the rough altar that night has never left us. We were Christians!

Running as a bright thread through all the tapestry of my high school, country school teaching, college, and to some extent, later high school teaching, has been the intense desire to serve--to do whatever I could--to do whatever I would do--for Christ.

This would seem to be where young folks have their greatest advantages. When time is tried, something beyond my church life is sought. And I have seen more than richly blessed in my college days with our high school young people-- both in secular and in church activities. But by and by it has burned within me at each call for more missionaries; my mind has said, "why don't you go?"; and my devotion to my Master has dictated the decision to ask you to let me serve in some needy field. And that is about all I can say until you write back to me from where.

Sincerely,

Helen Baker

RELATIONSHIP TO PEOPLES OF OTHER RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL AND NATIONAL BACKGROUNDS

7. What is your attitude towards other religions, particularly those in the country of your preference?

I believe in the "Holy Catholic Church"; I believe that God calls through many religions, comforts by all. But I do believe that there are many sad and disturbing fallacies taught by the Roman Catholic Church, that it often limits rather than releases, and that as God truly leads and opens blind eyes, these fallacies and fears should be replaced by Truth and Faith.

8. What would be your general approach to people of another religious and cultural background?

One must first and in all honesty recognize that anyone's religion means much to him; that there is truth, such, doubtless, to live by in his faith. On that basis of loving understanding and recognition of values, it is surely possible to build the 'more stable relations', to find the faith that brings the freedom from fears, -superstitions, and that reveals God.

9. What is your attitude towards the view that missionaries frankly and without apology should seek to persuade men to become disciples of Jesus Christ?

That they should do just so. Why should I apologize for showing the way to a richer, fuller, freer life? I am proudly proud of having received the message to be passed on proudly, not apologetically.

10. What is your mission in a country where Roman Catholicism or Greek Orthodoxy is the prevailing religion?

Have I answered this in my reply to number 8? One should co-operate to the fullest extent consistent with one's own belief; one should never be needlessly contentious, nor seek argument for argument's sake. All of which does not prevent one from firmly and lovingly living, -- and witnessing to the truth as he sees it.

11. What is your attitude toward working (a) in full partnership with Christian nationals of the country you wish to serve; (b) under the direction of such nationals?

(a) In my brief but most happy associations with the Christian nationals in Mexico, invariably I was the one who profited from their profounder knowledge of their own people; from their deeper insight into the psychology-- the expected reactions, so to speak-- of their people; and from their eagerness to weld all possible of the new to their own stock of the old. (b) Since I would be the stranger, I would expect the directive to come from the national, with mutually helpful results.

12. What is your attitude as to the relative capacity of different races?

All recent material reaching my desk tends to disprove the theory of racial superiorities or inferiorities. Given equal opportunities and equal generations in environment, and of heredity, races are probably about equal.

13. In what ways should missionaries identify themselves with the people they would serve?

Every possible way, at all possible times and occasions, within the fellowship of their work, play, sorrows, joys, ambitions, privations, even in some cases, with the identification of ambitions.

14. What should missionaries do about accepting the protection of the naval and military forces alien to the country in which they are serving?

I cannot answer this. My own feeling has always been that to identify ourselves with the military is to dis-associate ourselves from dependence on God. In a given situation, however, as I see it from this distance, I would expect myself to seek and follow the direction of my District Superintendent or Bishop.

15. In working in an area governed or supervised from abroad, what should be the attitude of the missionary toward the governing or supervising authority and toward the nationalistic aspirations of the people?

Again I confess to ignorance. It would seem to me that one should most carefully and prayerfully inform oneself about the entire situation, seek God's plan, and decide one's program on the basis of God's will for both people, supervisors as well as supervised. Officers in the field should be able to give invaluable advice to newcomers.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONDITIONS OF MISSIONARY LIFE

16. Missionary life often involves difficulties of which the following are typical:

Living without modern conveniences
Working in an isolated community
Educating one's own children
Facing health hazards

Managing on a limited income
Adjusting to new and strange environments
Enduring separation from friends and loved ones
Assuming heavy personal and group responsibilities

Do you seek missionary appointment with the full knowledge of such possibilities and with a readiness to meet them to the best of your ability?

Oh, yes. I had thought all that out before applying.

17. Missionary life also often involves reaching official decisions by a majority vote. Does your past experience lead you to believe that you could cooperate in carrying out such a majority decision even if you were of the minority?

A teacher who seeks to be Christian in a modern American high school has had such practice in carrying out majority decisions in which she did not participate. Yes, I can do this.

18. Would you be willing to give up any personal habits which might lessen your influence as a missionary?

Oh, yes.

19. Are your doctrinal beliefs and views of church government such that you can cordially cooperate with the officers and missionaries of your denomination?

Yes, I believe I am considered 'quite sound'.

20. Are you in complete accord with the aim of missions as stated in *The Discipline of The Methodist Church*?

Yes, I am.

Enclose a recent photograph of yourself, unless you have already sent one taken within the past twelve months.

Signature

William James Baker

Return to: Department of Missionary Personnel
150 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, New York

Helen F. Baker

BOARD OF MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION
OF THE METHODIST CHURCH

150 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK 11, N. Y.

PERSONAL INFORMATION BLANK—SUPPLEMENT

You filled in a Personal Information Blank on _____
Please supply up-to-date information on the following questions.

JUN 5 1949
RECEIVED — DATE
ADMISSION — UNIT
DATE

1. Name Helen Fern Baker Date May 31, 1949
2. Present Address Avenida Pellegrini 1352, Rosario, Argentina
3. Address that will always reach you 1710 South Fourth Avenue, Sioux Falls, S. Dakota
4. Please indicate for this period (from the date on which you filled in the Personal Information Blank to the present) any changes in your parents' health, occupation, or attitude towards your missionary purpose.

XXXXXXXX

5. Underline to indicate whether you are single, engaged, married, divorced, widowed.
If you have children, give name, sex, date of birth, and general health condition of each.

XXXXXXXX

6. What educational work have you completed during this period? Give name and location of institution, dates, course, and degree or credit received.

Language study in German and Spanish, without credit

List here significant experiences in extracurricular activities.

The most exciting was when one of my girls instead of reading the prayer prayed one of her own. Interesting work with committee having their first experiences with democratic procedures.

What plans do you have for further study?

None until in December, when I hope to go to Buenos Aires for their language school.

7. Describe briefly any experiences you have had during this period (1) in work camps, caravans or deputations, conferences or fellowships, (2) with rural or labor groups, (3) in international or interracial relations.

XXXXXX

8. List below all positions for which you have received remuneration during this period, other than those in your professional field which are to be described in your Professional Information Blank. If a student or a recent graduate, include full-time jobs held for as long as two months and part-time jobs held for a school year.

From — To	Name and Location of Employing Organization	Title and Nature of Position	Salary

9. List (1) the periodicals of all types which you read with fair regularity, and (2) the books (except, for students, required texts and references) which you have read in the past twelve months.

The Atlantic Monthly; World Outlook; Methodist Women; Reverend Digest; Chalmers, several including High Wind at Noon. Sholem Asch, several including another reading of The Apostle. The summarized version of Tombee. The Robber Cain.

10. Of what local church are you now a member? (Give exact name, denomination, location and Conference.)

The Methodist church in Cochabamba, Bolivia

What are your present Conference relations? ... ?? I can't answer this... a lay member, perhaps

If not ordained, do you plan to be? When? Where?

11. What part have you taken in the work of the church during this period, in addition to that described under your student or employment experiences?

Working in our school and church and community in Cochabamba; now in our school in Rosario

12. What are your present habits of prayer and devotional Bible study?

I still like my six o'clock hour in the morning. The Jones books have helped me immensely, and the thinking in the various church papers, which I sometimes use as a topical study for a week or whatever time is needed.

13. What college, seminary or other accredited courses in Bible, theology or other religious subjects have you completed during this period?

XXXX

14. Give the names of teachers, writers, or leaders (indicate which) whom you now believe have most influenced your religious thinking and experience.

Walmer; Jones; Roy Smith; Bishop Oxman (He is nothing short of a beacon for us down here.) Vasquez (Buenos Aires); Paez Canargo; Sockman; Steele in the church at SUU - many others.

15. Have you applied for missionary service to any other Board? No. When?

Which? Results?

16. Please list your financial obligations, including debts, insurance, pledges, and other items for which you must make provision.

Nature of the Obligation	Total Amount	Annual Payment	Plan for meeting it
Two insurance policies	199.00 214.00		Check from my salary

17. If appointed, would you have financial responsibilities for parents or other relatives? No. If so, please give pertinent facts.

18. Do you have any domestic or personal problem which might necessitate your withdrawal from, or prevent your entering missionary service? No. If so, specify.

19. Are there any other facts, assets, limitations or problems, not previously reported, that the Board ought to know?

No

20. If accepted, when would you be ready to begin work? I'm already here!

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

Return to: Department of Missionary Personnel
150 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, New York

Photographs from this
file have not been
included but are
available upon request.
For more information
please contact
research@gcah.org