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MINNEAPOLIS--Graham targets 2.5 billion via global TV series in '96.
MISSISSIPPI--Baptist churches bolster Mississippi reconciliation.
TENNESSEE--RNA ranks SBC race apology as 4th most important in '95.
BELGIUM--Missionary's culinary skills stir up interest in gospel.

Graham targets 2.5 billion
via global TV series in '96

Baptist Press
1/03/96

MINNEAPOLIS (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham announced Jan. 3 that the Global Television Series -- to be broadcast at prime time during the month of April in every country of the world -- will bring the gospel to more people on a single day, April 14, than on any previous day in history.

"Through the Global Television Series, we anticipate reaching 2.5 billion people, most of whom we could never reach in our usual crusade ministry," Graham said. "I believe this will have a far greater impact than anything we have ever done before."

A special evangelistic preaching program featuring Graham will be broadcast in 42 languages on national television networks in more than 160 countries. It will also be broadcast on two of the largest intercontinental satellite networks in the world, STAR-TV and BSKYB, which cover approximately two-thirds of the world's population -- including some countries traditionally opposed to the proclamation of the gospel.

STAR-TV in Hong Kong will first broadcast the program to East Asia, from the Philippines and Vietnam through China and Nepal to Pakistan. Another broadcast on a separate channel will reach viewers from Indonesia to India and the Middle East. Later that day, the program will be transmitted across Europe's Sky Television network, reaching a potential viewing audience of 65 million homes from as far north as Finland and as far south as Egypt.

The telecast will include cameo testimonies by former President Jimmy Carter and U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young.

This outreach represents a natural progression in Graham's recent ministry. Beginning with Mission '89 meetings in London, crusade meetings were transmitted via satellite to 12 African countries. The next step, in 1990, 1991 and 1993, was to transmit a crusade from a major city in Asia, South America and Europe respectively, to remote crusade locations and national television networks across each continent.

Finally, in 1995, 10 million people attending 3,000 actual Global Mission locations in 185 countries received satellite transmissions from a Billy Graham crusade in Puerto Rico. In addition, a worldwide television audience of more than 1 billion people viewed a special Global Mission telecast at prime time on their national television network.

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Two weeks before the upcoming preaching program is aired in April, each national TV network also will broadcast at prime time one of two hour-long dramatic Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) feature films, interpreted into the same languages. The earlier film broadcasts will include promotional announcements for the preaching program. Many countries are providing free air time in exchange for their use of the feature films, which will often be aired several times.

National church leaders around the world have organized to participate in the Global Television Series. One million churches, which have worked with BGEA on recent evangelistic programs, have been invited to participate in this outreach, mobilizing their members in a program called Operation Matthew.

Three million homes are expected to take part in this program, which is based on the biblical account of the tax collector who -- following his life-changing encounter with Christ -- invited colleagues and friends to his home to meet Jesus, his honored guest.

Rather than focusing on bringing people to an urban stadium or church, the goal of Global Television Series is to empower church pastors and lay leaders. This paradigm shift is expected to characterize the profile of the church in the 21st century, as churches in the traditional mission fields of developing countries themselves become increasingly mission-minded.

During the month of April, national churches will take advantage of the high ratio of VCRs to television sets in developing countries -- due to a scarcity of television programming -- and the appeal of being invited to a home to watch a video. Christians will also tape the program when it is broadcast, for later use in their video house parties.

The two hour-long, dramatic films to be used in this outreach, "Cry From the Mountain" and "PowerPlay," are evangelistic in their orientation. "Cry from the Mountain," set in the Alaskan outdoors -- the story of a man preparing to tell his ten-year-old son of his pending divorce -- will be shown in developing countries. Countries oriented toward the West will air the film "PowerPlay" -- the story of a young attorney and a professional ice hockey star who struggle to find meaning in their lives while caught up in the demands of their affluent lifestyle.

In addition to arranging for the television broadcasts in multiple editions, BGEA will also coordinate the distribution of 445 million pieces of literature, including house party discussion guides and follow-up materials in many languages, which are appropriate for intercultural use.

"Pastors participating in the Global Television Series see it as a powerful tool to help their own church members have a dynamic witness for Jesus Christ," said Bob Williams, BGEA director of international ministries. "The more than 1 million pastors and church leaders who have committed themselves to this program are more enthusiastic about it than they have been for any other program we've initiated. This time we can go not only to churches in the large population centers, but to every church in a country."

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Baptist churches bolster
Mississippi reconciliation

By Jo Kadlecek

Baptist Press
1/03/96

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--On a normal Mississippi Sunday afternoon last August, members from several Southern Baptist churches braved the summer heat and joined several hundred other churchgoers for a picnic. The crowd consumed dozens of hot dogs and hamburgers, kids sat still long enough to have their faces painted and families laughed together in a shaded park pavilion as they listened to Christian music over a portable tape player.

By all external appearances, this was a normal church picnic -- except for the black and white faces sitting side by side.

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The picnic purposefully brought together African American and white Christians from a variety of churches and denominations throughout Jackson for one simple reason: Christian unity.

The multi-church picnic is just one example of how Mission Mississippi is helping the state change these days in regard to racial matters. Three years ago, Mission Mississippi rallied across racial and denominational lines to launch a ministry committed to reconciliation. Local residents call the group's efforts nothing short of "radical."

Their vision of unity encourages black and white Christians to come together "so that the message of Christ can be better seen in our communities throughout Mississippi," according to Lee Paris, chairman of Mission Mississippi's state board of directors.

"Reconciliation and unity does not happen by rallies," says Jarvis Ward, Mission Mississippi's executive director, "but rather, by right relationships -- first people who are rightly related to the one living and true God through faith in Jesus Christ alone, and then to each other."

To help foster such relationships, Jarvis and his staff of volunteers organize a variety of creative gatherings throughout the year, including weekly prayer meetings at one of the 100-plus churches participating in Mission Mississippi, 50 percent of which are African American and 50 percent white, representing a dozen denominations.

Each Thursday morning, an average of 30 to 50 pastors, leaders and supporters gather for prayer, devotions, fellowship and breakfast. If participants miss the Thursday morning meeting, they are invited to a Friday morning prayer meeting at the Salvation Army headquarters.

"The first Thursday morning prayer breakfast was held May 6, 1993," says Portia McGehee, co-chair of the Mission Mississippi prayer committee. "Since that time, we have prayed in 50 locations. Alternating between black and white churches has been enriching."

In addition to the interracial prayer breakfasts, Mission Mississippi holds an annual citywide rally in Jackson. Last Oct. 18-19, for example, 6,000 Christians from throughout the state attended the third annual, worship-oriented Mission Mississippi Reconciliation Rally at the Mississippi Coliseum.

Black pastor E.V. Hill of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles, called by Time magazine as "one of the most outstanding preachers in the United States," addressed the interracial crowd, along with Frank Pollard, pastor of Jackson's First Baptist Church.

The Baptist pastors shared messages focusing on grace and brotherly love. Pollard discussed how Christ's journey to the cross and his subsequent death are the key reasons how he can love his brother, E.V. Hill, as he did. "Our friendship is based on Christ and grounded in his love," Pollard said of his long friendship with Hill.

Hill's message centered on his early racist attitudes and how God removed his hatred of white people through the unconditional love of one man. "If God could break my heart, there is no person that God could not change," he said. Hill then called the audience to stand and repent of any racist attitudes they had ever had. Hundreds confessed their sin and accepted the challenge to meet with someone of another race on a regular basis.

The interracial Mission Mississippi Mass Choir sang at the rally, under the direction of a host of local choir leaders. Mississippi First Lady Pat Fordice even admonished the audience to stay involved in politics and to pray for their governmental leaders. "We cannot afford to lose this great nation," she said. "We must pray for God to heal our land."

Along with contemporary recording artist, Kathy Troccoli, motivational speaker Joseph Jennings, a former gang leader and drug addict, spoke to Jackson youth in local schools and at the rally services. "I understand the extremes of desperation induced by drugs, crime and illicit sex," said the 6-foot-11-inch, 280-pound Jennings who kept the attention of the teen-agers.

According to Gary Maze, Mission Mississippi youth committee chairman, more than 260 youth recorded decisions for Christ as a result of a featured youth night. Organizers are planning a similar reconciliation rally for youth and families next fall and each year after until, says Paris, "Mississippi is known for its love."

But annual rallies and weekly prayer meetings aren't the only thing Mission Mississippi is about. In addition to several interracial, multi-church picnics with free food and family entertainment, each Christmas participants are invited to their City Wide Christmas Party for food, music and fellowship. Throughout the year, supporters are encouraged to attend cross-denominational Bible studies as a part of the mission's efforts to promote racial harmony. They also are encouraged to go out to dinner with friends of a different race to help build relationships; consequently, a dozen local restaurants have even begun giving "Mission Mississippi" discounts.

Individual congregations also are challenged to build relationships across cultural lines. For instance, Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, a predominantly African American church in inner-city Jackson, worshiped with Crossgates Baptist Church, a predominantly white church in Brandon, a suburb just outside of Jackson. The exchange was a natural event for the two pastors who had been meeting for lunch regularly during the past few years.

Horace Buckley, Cade Chapel's pastor, and Barry Clingan of Crossgates Baptist have been building a unique friendship in their common desire to see the body of Christ unite. Their churches' "Pulpit Swap" Sunday was sponsored by Mission Mississippi, and several other churches have followed suit. And last August, the Crossgates church made to a surprise offering Cade Chapel's building program.

The efforts of Mission Mississippi have so impressed local residents and political representatives that Mississippi Gov. Kirk Fordice even declared October as Mission Mississippi Month.

Local and national press coverage has highlighted Mission Mississippi's efforts perhaps, says Ward, because "a model is being built to be a blessing from Mississippi to the entire nation."

For this to take place, Christians must draw from that source, Jesus Christ, who "alone reconciles sinners to God and who has given to the church the 'ministry of reconciliation,'" Ward says, citing the words in Scripture from 2 Corinthians 5:19.

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Kadlecek is a free-lance writer in Jackson, Miss., and is coauthor with John Perkins of "Resurrecting Hope: Powerful Stories of How God Is Moving to Reach Our Cities," published by Regal Books.

RNA ranks SBC race apology
as 4th most important in '95

Baptist Press
1/03/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention's apology to African Americans for its part in racism and slavery has been voted by the Religion Newswriters Association as the fourth most significant religion story of 1995.

The top story, according to the annual year-end vote by RNA members, was the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Rounding out the top-10 stories:

2) The Million Man March in Washington, D.C., led by Louis Farrakhan, African American leader of Nation of Islam, coupled with the growing Promise Keepers movement, which has drawn about 850,000 men to evangelical rallies across the country.

3) A statement by Pope John Paul prohibiting women from ordination as priests, but stopping short of a claim of papal infallibility. In an earlier letter, the pope had endorsed "real equality" between men and women and apologized for Catholic leaders who had contributed to the oppression of women.

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4) The SBC apology to African Americans.

5) The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's board action to honor the 77-year-old Graham's request that his son, Franklin, be named first vice chairman, to succeed him if he becomes incapacitated.

6) Pope John Paul II's five-day U.S. visit, during which he repeated calls for Americans to defend life "from conception to natural death," to care for the poor and to strengthen families and marriages.

7) The Christian Coalition's "Contract with the American Family" and its move to consolidate its leadership role in nearly two dozen state Republican caucuses, after playing a key role in the GOP's sweeping mid-term election successes in 1994.

8) The NATO-backed peace agreement signed by presidents of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia after years of bloody ethnic and religious warfare, to be enforced by 60,000 troops, including 20,000 from the United States.

9) The embezzlement of \$2.2 million from the Episcopal Church by treasurer Ellen Cooke, with the church filing two civil suits to recover the funds.

10) Encyclicals by the pope urging leaders of other churches -- especially the Orthodox -- to help him re-think the meaning of the papacy and preaching against abortion and a growing "culture of death" in the modern world.

The SBC's 18-paragraph "Resolution on Racial Reconciliation," adopted during the convention's June sesquicentennial in Atlanta, stated, "... we apologize to all African-Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime; and we genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously."

The resolution described racism as "deplorable sin" and stated, "... we lament and repudiate historic acts of evil such as slavery from which we continue to reap a bitter harvest."

The resolution drew widespread media coverage, including CNN, the front page of The New York Times and numerous other newspapers and comment from such columnists as Carl Rowan.

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This story includes reporting by Terry Mattingly, who writes a weekly column for the Scripps Howard News Service.

**Missionary's culinary skills
stir up interest in gospel**

By Keith Hinson

**Baptist Press
1/03/96**

BORNEM, Belgium (BP)--Classes in breadmaking can serve as an opportunity to share about Jesus, the bread of life as the Bible calls him, according to Laurie Ingram, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary to Belgium.

"There was a store in downtown Antwerp called Home Baking, which had a demonstration kitchen. I rented the kitchen," Ingram recounted, "and offered two different eight-week classes in American cooking."

In the first course, Ingram taught her students how to make cornbread, biscuits and banana bread. In the other course, she offered instruction on cooking American desserts, such as chocolate cake and apple pie.

"During each class, I would have a five-minute devotional and talk about my faith in Christ and the personal relationship I have with him," Ingram said.

Though she hasn't seen any converts yet, the Illinois native plans to offer the class again in her family's new city of residence. "I have just been asked to offer it here at the local cultural center in Bornem where we just moved this past summer," she noted.

Ingram's love for cooking led her to collect recipes from other foreign missionaries and to publish them in a new book, "There's A Missionary Loose in the Kitchen" (Birmingham: New Hope, 1995).

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"When I was still in the States, I was very involved in Woman's Missionary Union," Ingram said. "For years, I wished there was a resource which included recipes and information from various countries which I knew was reliable."

Ingram gathered the recipes by putting a notice in Intercom, a publication for FMB missionaries, and by writing to missionaries around the world. The book's chapters are divided according to nine geographical regions with recipes from several continents and nations.

"Our family tried all of the recipes before they went into the book -- a full year of international flavors. The kids would come home from school and ask, 'What country are we eating tonight, Mom?'" Ingram said with a chuckle.

Ingram described her husband, Clif, and her three children, Caleb, 9, Bethany, 7, and Joel, 5, as people who will eat quite a wide range of foods.

Asked if she had prepared any recipe they would not eat, Ingram said, "There were a couple. The ones they absolutely refused to eat didn't make it into the book. I figured if our group of adventurous eaters wouldn't eat it, not many others would either."

Even now, Ingram said her family still tries "two to three new recipes a week. ... If we don't try something new, they want to know what's wrong."

Ingram said she believes cooking classes could be an effective means of outreach for American churches. "I think it would especially be beneficial in a culture where people have at least some religious background and where Baptists are not seen as a cult as they are in Belgium," she said.

When people in Belgium learn she and her family are Baptist, "the first question we get is, 'Are you a Jehovah's Witness?' ... Most people wonder how such nice people like us got trapped in a cult. They never heard of Baptists."

Evangelical Christians are only one-half of 1 percent of the population in Belgium, Ingram noted. "Belgium is about 90 percent Roman Catholic. However, statistics show that less than 10 percent ever attend mass. The predominant religion is humanism and materialism."

The attitude of many people in Belgium is that "religion is something which was good in history, but that they are way beyond that now and they have progressed beyond the need for religion," Ingram said.

Ingram nevertheless remains undaunted in sharing her faith in Christ. "Through my church I gained an understanding of what it means to have a relationship with Jesus Christ and how important it is to share that message with others," she writes in the introduction to the cookbook.

Ingram credits her grandmother with helping nurture a love for cooking. "My father's mother was the world's best cook and baker. ... Her homemade noodles are the world's best. Mostly instead of specific recipes, I gained a love of just being in the kitchen and trying lots of different recipes," Ingram said.

The recipes in Ingram's book include such dishes as "Pumpkin Soup" from the Cayman Islands, "Cabbage with Ground Nuts" from Zambia, "Corn Pie" from Chile, "Soy Lemon Chicken Wings" from Hong Kong, "Spiced Coconut Custard" from Sri Lanka, "Paprika Chicken" from Hungary and "Sesame Seed Cookies" from Jordan.

Ingram's book can be purchased by calling Woman's Missionary Union's Customer Service (1-800-968-7301) or at local Baptist Book Stores.

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