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**Arson fund disbursement  
to states nears \$650,000****Baptist Press  
10/04/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Missouri and California became the 16th and 17th state conventions to receive funds from the Southern Baptist Convention's "Arson Fund" with the distribution of an additional \$179,020 Oct. 4, bringing the total to \$649,965.

The "Arson Fund" assists African American churches victimized by arsonists. Like the three earlier distributions July 3 of \$246,712 to 12 state conventions, \$50,000 on Aug. 2 to 14 conventions and \$177,198 Sept. 5 to 15 conventions, the Oct. 4 distribution is based on a formula developed by the Inter-Agency Council's Racial Reconciliation Task Force.

The "Arson Fund" was begun from an offering taken at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans in June. That offering came at the request of then-SBC President Jim Henry, an Orlando, Fla., pastor, and initially raised \$282,000 in pledges and cash gifts. Most of the gifts since then have been from SBC-related churches wanting to assist in the rebuilding of the burned churches, according to Jack Wilkerson, SBC Executive Committee vice president for business and finance.

More than 90 African American churches, most in the Southeast, have burned in the last year and a half, primarily as the result of arsonists. SBC officials said the formula of distribution is based on an in-hand count of arson-related African American church fires in the state as a percentage of the total number of churches impacted nationally.

The October distribution of \$179,020 went to: Alabama, \$13,426; Arizona, \$1,969; Arkansas, \$13,426; California, \$1,969; Florida, \$5,728; Georgia, \$3,938; Louisiana, \$17,185; Mississippi, \$17,185; Missouri, \$3,938; North Carolina, \$15,395; Ohio, \$1,969; Oklahoma, \$1,969; South Carolina, \$32,581; Tennessee, \$15,395; Texas, \$25,062; Virginia, \$3,938; and Northwest (Oregon-Washington), \$3,938.

According to Richard Land, SBC Christian Life Commission president, the funds are sent to the state conventions which then have responsibility to determine the amount of assistance each church will need.

The Inter-Agency Council, composed of the chief executives of the 19 SBC entities, created the task force to seek the eradication of racism within the convention as outlined in the Racial Reconciliation Resolution adopted by messengers to the 1995 SBC annual meeting in Atlanta.

In addition to the monies, Southern Baptist construction crews are volunteering to rebuild the burned churches. At least four state Baptist conventions have sent crews to churches in need and the SBC Brotherhood Commission is attempting to contact each of the fire-damaged congregations to assess the level of need.

Donations to the SBC Arson Fund may be sent directly to state Baptist convention offices or the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203.

**Missionaries don't go alone;  
God is 'already over there'**

**By James A. Smith Sr.**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Every Christian has an obligation to share the gospel with the world, missions leaders asserted during Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Global Missions Week.

Although not every Christian is called to missionary service overseas, many believers are resisting the missionary call and settling for comfortable service at home, speakers also said.

"It's imperative that we recognize in our calling, in the privilege of knowing him and his salvation, is the responsibility to go and to make the gospel known to the nations," said Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Rankin was joined by Don Kammerdiener, FMB executive vice president; Bill Cashion, consultant on human needs; and a team of nearly 30 missionaries and other FMB staff at the Kansas City, Mo., campus Oct. 1-3.

The week of missions activities included chapel messages by Rankin, Kammerdiener and Cashion, a fair with missionaries from across the world and five seminars about missionary needs and avenues of service. FMB leaders and missionaries also lectured in classes throughout the week.

With 1.7 billion people among 2,400 ethnic/language groups who have not heard the gospel, Rankin said American Christians have been blessed with the opportunity of hearing the gospel and, in turn, have an obligation to be "stewards" of that gospel to the rest of the world.

Rankin told the seminarians that while many people groups have not been exposed to the gospel, "God is breaking down the barriers ... opening the doors" to its message.

Rankin reminded the Midwestern students, "The Great Commission is given to every believer, to every church. God has not said that anyone is exempt from his purpose, his desire that all would know the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Noting people in certain nations can be imprisoned if they are caught without their formal identity documents, Kammerdiener asserted many believers and churches do not have their "spiritual identity documents" and, as a result, "do not know what they are."

Preaching from Isaiah 49:6, Kammerdiener said, "It's too small an understanding of who you are to think in any other terms than that God has saved you in terms of his love for the whole world."

In contrast, "it's wonderful, however, when you have that identity because it gives you direction in life," said Kammerdiener, a Midwestern alumnus.

The Isaiah passage, "I have given you as a light for the gentiles that you may bring my salvation to the end of the earth," includes an interesting grammatical construction, Kammerdiener noted.

Instead of "taking" the gospel, Kammerdiener noted the verse calls on Christians to "bring" the gospel "to the end of the earth."

"God is not only here with us, but he's already over there -- he's already all around the world," Kammerdiener said. "We don't go to places where God is not. We go to places where God is. He's already at work."

"When we have our identity straight, we understand that we are coming to join forces with what he is already doing."

Kammerdiener shared news concerning the surprising growth of Christianity in places that have been resistant to the gospel.

"God is at work in the Muslim world in a way that will startle this generation. Many of us prayed for the fall of the communist empire, perhaps believing that it would never really happen. Will we make the same mistake with the Muslim world?" Kammerdiener asked.

"The same cracks that brought down the communist world are beginning to appear in Islam," he said.

Kammerdiener decried the absence of missions education in many churches, especially at a time of increasing opportunity for missions in the world.

"There is no issue among Southern Baptists that is going to be decided this year or in the next year that will have a greater impact on our denomination than what we decide to do about missions education," Kammerdiener declared.

The "missionary mandate" must be integrated in everything churches and denominational institutions do, Kammerdiener said.

After asking the seminarians to make a list of all the countries of the world they would not be willing to go, Kammerdiener declared, "If there is any place on your list that you would not go for the service of our Lord, then there's something spiritually wrong with your identity document."

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**Laundromat evangelism  
helping church to grow**

**By Karen L. Willoughby**

**Baptist Press  
10/04/96**

WINTER PARK, Colo. (BP)—Church members here sidle up to strangers at a laundromat and plunk in quarters for their wash.

"Why did you do that?"

"Because Jesus loves you and this is our way of showing you that."

Not everyone in Colorado's resort towns has the money to buy \$1,000 ski trappings and to stay in \$300 motel rooms. Some people work at low wages to provide services for those with money.

It is this group of seasonal workers Fraser Valley Baptist Church has chosen to minister to through a laundry ministry.

"It started in our Sunday school," said Collette Schoenegge, a cook at Timberline Lodge, a Winter Park Christian resort. "We went through what the Bible says a church is, what it should do. We went through our four purpose statements and said, 'Are we meeting these? What can we do to share Christ with everyone we come in contact with, directly and indirectly?'"

"We were just throwing out ideas of how we could do this," Schoenegge continued. "I said, I would open a laundromat and let everyone use it for free. The church body said, 'Why don't we? Let's do it!' And we came up with the idea of a \$1 laundry night."

Mark McPherson, Marilyn Jernigan and Schoenegge developed the concept: A specific number of coupons would be passed out each month, each of which would provide for up to three loads of laundry washed and dried on the first Monday of each month at the Winter Park Laundry at a cost per coupon of \$1.

The \$1 cost was so that people wouldn't think they were being given charity, Schoenegge said.

"We pass out the coupons at low-income housing, at the ski lift (to workers) and to people we come across," Schoenegge said. "We get more opportunities to share Jesus by passing out the coupons than we do to those who come to do their laundry, even. They're a great witnessing tool!"

Church members pass out 30 dated coupons each month. About 15 are turned in.

"We meet them at the door and say, 'How are you doing?' We put quarters in the machines for them and talk to them," Schoenegge said. "What we're trying to do is make it not just a goodwill thing but to share Jesus Christ with people who otherwise wouldn't hear anything about him."

The laundry ministry began -- no fooling -- on April 1, Schoenegge said.

"It's starting to where we get repeat people," she said. "It's building a relationship. We stay there the whole time and almost all of them stay the whole time, too, which we hadn't expected. So, we talk to them the whole time!"

"It's mostly getting to know them, talking about things they want to talk about," Schoenegge said. "Everyone touched by this ministry is unchurched."

Two young men working on the church van were told about laundry night and that they could get coupons at the church. They came the next Sunday and have been to every laundry night since, though they haven't been back to church services.

The laundry ministry primarily touches seasonal workers in their early 20s, both men and women. One couple lives together.

"She said she wanted to go to church, but she didn't think anyone would accept her because of her lifestyle," Schoenegge said. "I got to give her my whole testimony, and I told her there's forgiveness and there's so much more."

Schoenegge and her husband, Pat O'Connell, lived together before he became a Christian and they married. She followed two years later after watching her husband grow in the Lord.

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O'Connell now is associate pastor at the church and leads preaching services near the ski lifts in the winter. This summer he started a Friday night worship service for those in the area who work Sunday and are unchurched.

Information about Fraser Valley Baptist is passed out before the people leave the laundromat. On it is the date for the next laundry night and words from Psalm 51: "Wash me and I will be whiter than snow."

"This winter we'll have Monday night football, pizza and laundry," Schoenegge said. "We're hoping it goes to two nights a month."

Fraser Valley Baptist Church, where Mark Smith is pastor, provides all the financial support for laundry night.

"What's so great about this ministry is that it was completely from the church body," Schoenegge said. "Everyone came up with it. We all worked together."

It's not coincidental that the church is growing, she added.

"The place is packed every Sunday, standing room only," Schoenegge said. "It's just amazing to see. It's so good to see. It's the Lord working in this valley. It is absolutely his doing."

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**BSSB expands drama effort;  
Tullos becomes design editor**

**By Charles Willis**

**Baptist Press  
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--National worship and drama consultant Matt Tullos has assumed responsibilities as a design editor for drama, worship and minister's family resources, as part of a staff redesign to provide additional drama personnel at the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Tullos will have editorial responsibility for "Let's Worship," "Minister's Family" and resources of the National Drama Service in the board's pastor-staff leadership department, which has the assignment for drama resources and services.

According to Mike Miller, director of the board's church leadership services division, a search is in progress for a drama consultant to succeed Tullos, who has carried responsibility for production of resources as well as consultative services since October 1994. Miller said the increased response to drama resources in recent years prompted the change. Orders for undated drama resources have increased more than 350 percent since 1992, and subscribers to the National Drama Service, which offers 20-25 dramatic scripts with photocopy rights for a range of church worship uses, also have increased more than 350 percent since 1994.

"Let's Worship," a quarterly worship resource journal integrating every element of worship, begins publication in April 1997. Content will include sermon outlines, drama sketches, creative invitations, complete thematic worship service resources, material for special celebrations, patterns for customized banners, reviews of new worship resources, lead-in material for worship music and interviews with worship leaders, among others.

"Minister's Family," a quarterly magazine which begins publication in January 1997, will provide ministers and their families with resources and support in their highly visible roles in the community, Tullos said. Content is designed to address the interests and needs of people in every type of ministry leadership role, along with those of spouses and children.

A native of Baton Rouge, La., Tullos began work at the board in 1992. Earlier, he was on the staff of Coulter Road Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, and First Baptist Church, Mandeville, La. He holds the B.A. degree in communications from Louisiana College, Pineville, and the M.A. degree in communications from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He is the author and editor of numerous Christian drama resources.

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**Learning of daughter's deafness,  
couple embraced new way of life**

**By Ken Walker**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--For Sharon and Jerry Fuelmer, having a deaf child served to remind them of what is most important in life.

On the day in 1994 their doctor confirmed Jocelyn's lack of hearing, Sharon remembers thinking that God had a plan in this unexpected change of circumstances.

"Once we understood what that meant, we jumped right in," she said. "A lot of families don't have it that easy. It's been God's grace. We just looked at it as she had to learn another language."

Jerry became emotional when he recalled how a service at the Louisville (Ky.) Baptist Deaf Church made clear their need to disciple Jocelyn, 3, and her brother, Isaac, 2.

During the service, twin brothers from Korea shared how they had seen the gospel explained in writing. But they told of being unable to understand salvation until they saw it delivered in sign language.

"That motivated us and opened our eyes to our calling -- to be able to communicate the gospel to our kids in whatever language," said Fuelmer, associate pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church in suburban Louisville.

A second-year student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Jerry and his wife were living in western Pennsylvania when their doctor diagnosed Jocelyn's deafness.

Immediately God turned that into a blessing. Though a woman in their congregation there was deaf, few people had shown an interest in communicating with her, he said.

However, after others heard about their daughter's condition, several decided to learn sign language, and it began to draw the older woman into the circle of communication.

Jerry soon saw God's hand at work in another way. The family intended to sell their home and move to Pittsburgh so he could enroll in a Presbyterian seminary. However, three times the sale fell through. Two days after he applied to Southern Seminary, it went through.

"I wasn't saved until I was 25," Jerry said, "and I worked in psychology, which is a very liberal field. But I picked Southern because I knew it had a conservative bent. I'm very glad I wasn't exposed to liberal theology."

Besides helping pastor a church and studying for a master of divinity in theology, Jerry tries to keep up with American Sign Language. Although the Fuelmers enrolled in classes two years ago, they are still learning.

Because of his responsibilities, Sharon handles the majority of the interpreting for their daughter. Her continuing education includes attending a specializing training course last summer and an upcoming advanced sign language class.

"She communicates a lot of (class instruction), but we discovered the way to learn sign language is to get into the deaf culture," Jerry said. "I socialize with the deaf students from Boyce Bible College to help me learn."

They also attend twice-monthly meetings of a local deaf club. When they aren't familiar with a term, they "hand spell" it so members can show them the correct movements.

Ironically, Isaac has picked up so much knowledge observing his mother communicate with Jocelyn that he too understands silent commands.

While Sundays are a busy day for all pastors' families, they are equally challenging for Sharon. She interprets twice for Jocelyn, during Sunday school and, later in the day, Awana club meetings. On Wednesday nights she teaches a preschoolers' discipleship class and simultaneously signs for her child. Those demands leave little time for her personal spiritual development, which is the main obstacle in what she said has been a fairly smooth transition to caring for a deaf child.

"My daughter needs a break from me taking that role," Sharon said. "I don't get frustrated, though, except with myself. I forget she's 3 and a half and the attention span isn't there. I want her to see everything and get everything (from classes), but I can't control that. When I relax and let her be, she does a lot better."

Academically, the 3-and-a-half-year-old girl has proven exceptional. Through the use of flash cards, a year ago she had mastered the alphabet and could count to 20.

Her abilities present them with a dilemma. They need to decide whether to enroll her in a deaf school, where communication and community are superior, Jerry said, or in a public school where she might get a broader education.

Not only has their daughter's condition changed their sensitivity to deaf ministry, she will affect their future plans. They will settle near the best school after Jerry completes his master of divinity in theology in December 1998.

"Her needs guide what we do," he said, "because we know if she doesn't have language she can't learn the gospel. With sign language and my ability to communicate with the deaf, something may open up. We're praying that God will show us when the time gets closer to graduation."

Meanwhile, though Jocelyn's deafness has changed their lives, it hasn't shaken their trust in the Lord.

"When the doctor told us, I thought, 'We'll meet a whole new world of people,' and we did," Sharon said. "It didn't negatively affect my faith. It has built and continues to be stable. God has shown us all along that this is right."

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**Samford Univ. not perturbed  
by 'stone-cold sober' label**

**Baptist Press  
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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Samford University, in the opinion of the Princeton Review, is the No. 7 "stone-cold sober school" in the nation.

Princeton Review, which garners publicity via its yearly list of the top "party" schools in the nation, also published a list of opposites this year.

"We party -- in an acceptable way," Mary Wimberly, a spokeswoman for the Baptist-related college, told The Birmingham (Ala.) News. "It's a nice honor. ... I'm sure the parents will be pleased."

Money magazine rated Samford as the 26th best college buy in the nation in August, while U.S. News & World Report rated it the 12th best value among southern schools in September.

Of the Princeton Review ranking, Wimberly said, "We're proud of this, too."

Hunter Brewer, president of Samford's Student Government Association, returned the favor, sort of, describing the Princeton Review as "very narrow minded."

"If they would spend even two days here, they'd come to the realization that we have a lot of fun," Brewer told the Birmingham Post-Herald.

The university, which lifted a ban on dancing in the late 1980s, maintains its ban on alcohol, even at fraternity and sorority parties. "You don't hear a lot of complaints from the students about it," Brewer said. "They seem to respect the rule."

Richard Traylor, associate dean of student affairs, said of the Princeton Review, "It's always nice to be perceived the way you project yourself. We project ourself to be a Christian institution that continues to live up to its ideals."

The New Jersey-based Princeton Review, which is not affiliated with Princeton University, included its rankings in its annual "Advantage Guide to the Best 310 Colleges."

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