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**Southern Baptists go for gold
in Olympic evangelistic efforts**

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
8/5/96

ATLANTA (BP)--If Olympic gold medals were given for evangelistic effort, Southern Baptists would be top contenders.

Eighty percent of the Olympic games were held in a three-mile radius near downtown Atlanta known as the Olympic ring. The Southern Baptist organization Atlanta International Ministries '96 reported 790 professions of faith from its ministry sites within the Olympic ring. The ministry sites drew people by offering free water, a place to rest, entertainment and children's activities.

Southern Baptists' main witnessing tool was an interactive Olympic pocket guide listing Olympic champions in 43 sports and a six-page explanation of the gospel. The Home Mission Board sold 3 million pocket guides which used the "More Than Gold" theme to emphasize that a relationship with Jesus Christ is more valuable than a gold medal.

Most pocket guides included a response card for people to return to the Home Mission Board. By Aug. 5, the board had received 1,470 responses with 845 people indicating commitments to Jesus Christ and 625 requesting Bible study material. The total includes the 790 decisions from the AIM '96 downtown ministry sites and 55 responses of people from other countries, said Jack Smith of the HMB personal evangelism department.

In addition to attracting a record number of countries, this year's games in Atlanta drew a host of other evangelical groups including Youth With a Mission, Campus Crusade for Christ and the Salvation Army. It was hard to drive to Atlanta, go to a competition or visit a park without encountering some kind of Christian witness.

Chris Pieratt, a Fort Worth, Texas, volunteer with the interdenominational group Lay Witnesses for Christ, said he witnessed at subway stations and restaurants -- "anywhere you can find a bunch of people." He gave away copies of the gospel of John with a picture of Olympic athlete Carl Lewis on the cover. Most people were receptive, Pieratt said, but some tourists who had been in Atlanta a while had been approached by evangelicals several times.

Response to the HMB pocket guides can't be measured only by returned cards; some churches distributed guides without the cards, asking readers to respond to the church. First Baptist Church, Lilburn, Ga., mailed 18,000 guides to area residents; First Baptist Church of Jonesboro, Ga., gave away 6,400 copies of the guide the day the Olympic torch relay came through town; and First Baptist Church, Knightstown, Ind., took a guide to each household in its community.

At Olympic venues from Tennessee to Savannah, Ga., more than 100 Southern Baptist creative arts teams entertained crowds waiting for events to start. The teams also performed in city parks and shopping areas, drawing crowds with their talent and sharing the gospel as people gathered.

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Tourists driving to Atlanta for the games were likely to encounter the "More Than Gold" message at rest stops from Alabama to South Carolina. Baptist volunteers gave away plastic bags with lip balm, sunscreen and pocket guides to tourists from all 50 states and more than 100 countries.

Nearly 2,000 Atlanta families opened their homes to families and friends of athletes through an ecumenical program called Atlanta Host. Atlantans provided bed, breakfast and rides to public transportation, and Southern Baptist participants reported opportunities to share their faith and make life-long friends.

In addition to ministry among spectators, volunteers worked with security officers and athletes.

Lowell Lawson of the Home Mission Board chaplaincy staff organized a chaplaincy program for security officers plus matching security personnel with local volunteers who helped them experience local culture and cuisine while being a friend.

Danny Souder, pastor of Northlake Baptist Church in Dallas and volunteer chaplain, led a memorial service for the grandfather of a security officer from Holland. The grandfather died in Holland while the group was in the United States, and the officer could not return for the funeral.

The Baptist Student Union at Georgia Tech, located in the Olympic Village where athletes stayed, served as the primary religious activities building for athletes, coordinated by Elmer Goble of the Home Mission Board volunteer projects department. In addition to leading religious services, chaplains counseled athletes suffering from pre-competition stress and comforted injured athletes who could not compete.

Southern Baptist Bonnie Megowan worked in the village's salon where athletes could get free haircuts. She reported numerous opportunities to witness as athletes waited for sometimes more than an hour for the service.

Megowan said she trusts God to build on her witnessing encounters. "I don't know where the Holy Spirit will lead. Christians were bathing us in prayer. We were planting seeds and watering."

Roland Brown, pastor of First Baptist Church, Tallapoosa, Ga., worked at an interstate rest stop ministry near the Georgia-Alabama state line. He agreed with Megowan's summation of the Olympic ministry. "We've had several people pray to receive Christ here, but I think the greatest impact will be later. We've talked to people from all over the world."

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(BP) photos posted on SBCNet.

**Scissor mechanic makes
Olympic Village contacts**

By Sarah Zimmerman

**Baptist Press
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ATLANTA (BP)--Olympic athletes with appointments for a new look were likely to hear about new life.

The Olympic Village where athletes were housed was virtually a city unto itself. Athletes and workers with high-level security passes could eat at McDonald's, go bowling, swim, get a massage and drink all the Coca-Cola they wanted.

They could also have their hair cut and styled for free. When a group of Christian hair stylists was awarded the contract to provide salon services at the village, they asked Bonnie Megowan to work with them. The member of Atkinson Road Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Ga., is a scissor mechanic; her job is to keep scissors in top working order.

Considering the competition for the contract, Megowan said, "It's really miraculous that we got the bid at all."

Stylists at the Olympic Village salon gave an average of 400 haircuts a day, Megowan said. In addition to sharpening scissors, Megowan served as receptionist, garbage collector and shampoo person at the salon where some athletes waited for more than an hour to have their hair done.

While they waited, Megowan found many open doors to share the gospel.

"The Bible says go into all the world, and here the world is across town," Megowan said. "You wouldn't believe the people I've gotten to witness to. It's beyond once in a lifetime. It's once in forever," she said, trying to find words to express her enthusiasm.

When Megowan met a woman from Zaire, she told the athlete that children at her church were praying for her country. The woman was surprised and thankful. Megowan was familiar with Zaire because she leads Girls in Action, and they had studied the African country.

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Lapel pins with the "More Than Gold" logo that can be used to explain the plan of salvation were one of Megowan's favorite witnessing tools. Frequently athletes gave hair dressers souvenir Olympic pins from their countries as tips. "It was just so natural to give them a pin back and tell them what it means."

When the athlete didn't speak English, Megowan gave them a More Than Gold tract in their language to explain the pin. One Russian woman, who later won a gold medal, took a pin and read a tract in her language.

Megowan said she trusts God to build on the witnessing encounters she had at the salon. "I don't know where the Holy Spirit will lead. Christians were bathing us in prayer. We were planting seeds and watering."

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**Gold medalist Michael Johnson
pupil of Baylor's Clyde Hart**

**Baptist Press
8/5/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--Michael Johnson, who became the first man to win gold medals in the 200- and 400-meter sprints during Atlanta's Olympics, is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Texas.

In winning the 200 Aug. 1, Johnson shattered his own world record, finishing in 19.32 seconds. He won the 400 July 29.

The 28-year-old Johnson was featured in the cover story of this summer's Baylor Line alumni publication.

Johnson, in the interview, credited Baylor coach Clyde Hart, a member of First Baptist Church, Waco, as one of the reasons he chose to attend Baylor. Hart remains Johnson's personal coach. Hart has been at Baylor 33 years, a tenure longer than any coach of any sport in Southwest Conference history.

On choosing Baylor, Johnson said, "The main thing was Coach Hart's reputation of being a good 200-400 coach. Second, all the best sprinters at that time (mid-1980s) were in the Southwest Conference. And third, Baylor had a good business school."

Of the business school, Johnson elaborated, "Becoming a marketing major was probably one of the best moves I ever could have made. I didn't know it then, but I use that background now that I'm a professional athlete and dealing with companies' advertising and marketing departments. Basically just going through Baylor and being a marketing major, I have an understanding of how decisions are being made and what they're looking for and how to market myself."

Of Hart, Johnson said, "He's always been a good coach for me. We've always worked well together. He understands me as an athlete and as a person, and I understand how he works. We have a lot of the same philosophies as far as running is concerned."

Hart, who also is Baylor's assistant athletic director, said he feels a great deal of pride in his star pupil. "It's just like a teacher that had a good student who became a Rhodes scholar. You're always proud to see kids excel. I'm proud of Michael because he's more than just a runner. He was a legitimate college student who got his degree in marketing in normal time and never was a problem. He's just really too good to be true."

Hart has coached 14 NCAA champions and 79 athletes who have earned a total of 257 All-American awards. He was named NCAA indoor coach of the year in 1989.

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**Positive attitude critical
for 'when life squeezes you'**

By Chip Alford

**Baptist Press
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RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--The nature of things is "things go wrong."

To expect life to always go the way you want it is not only unrealistic but potentially damaging to the individual, a Christian psychologist told a crowd of several hundred church workers attending National Sunday School Leadership Training at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Speaking on the topic, "Lay Leadership on the Cutting Edge," Terry Cain of Brentwood, Tenn., said the key to effective leadership is not avoiding problems, but responding to them in a healthy, balanced way. And that requires getting control of your attitude.

Part of that process involves "putting positive in your tube," or learning positive self-talk, Cain said.

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"We all talk to ourselves at a rate of approximately 1,200 words a minute. That's self-talk or thinking. And your subconscious mind is five times more susceptible to negative input than positive input." Reason enough, Cain said, for "putting positive in your tube. ... Because what you're putting in, when life squeezes you, will come out."

Cain said a person's contentment depends on his attitude. "And you can change your attitude, the way you choose to see things."

The apostle Paul, for example, was beaten, jailed, stoned and run out of town, but he learned to be content whatever the circumstances (Philippians 4:11). His contentment, Cain said, "was based on the certainty of God's truth."

Like Paul, Cain said Christians today should have "an inner knowledge, as sure as if your life depends on it, that regardless of circumstances, with God's help, you can triumph IN your trials and suffering if not OVER them."

"If my heart is right with God, I will not have an attitude problem ... nor will you. It will start overruling the attitude that is put there by the world."

Cain encouraged lay leaders to build and maintain healthy relationships.

"At its deepest level, a relationship is spirit to spirit. When we have an open spirit, things go well. When we have a closed spirit, walls come up in the relationship."

"It's a fact of life that in every relationship there will be offenses," Cain said. "The key to harmony is to clear up each offense quickly."

"Life is difficult," Cain said. "But it's supposed to be that way. There is resistance in your life to make you strong. ... Muscles atrophy without resistance. We're like that, too."

Effective leaders also learn to recognize and deal with stress and burnout.

"Burnout happens to high achievers. They are hurting emotionally, psychologically, physically and spiritually," Cain said, adding common symptoms include loss of energy, a feeling of being overwhelmed, being overly harsh and critical, and wanting to be alone.

He said leaders burn out when they:

- begin to feel driven instead of called.
- fail to pace themselves.
- try to do it all themselves.
- have excessive contact with people problems.
- major on the minors.
- have unrealistic expectations.
- develop too many routines.
- have an inappropriate view of God's priorities.
- are in poor physical condition.
- experience continuous rejection.

Steps to recovery, he said, might include separating yourself from the source of the problem, finding time for rest and relaxation, rebuilding your self-confidence, developing a consistent exercise program and developing a new purpose and vision for your life.

A balanced life is another key to effective leadership, Cain said, adding becoming "out of balance" will make people physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally sick.

How do you get in balance? "Again, it's your attitude," he said. "You can talk yourself into problems. You can talk yourself out of them. It's that simple."

Cain said leaders also should keep in mind the three questions every child comes into the world asking:

- Am I loved?
- Am I acceptable?
- Am I secure?

"People coming in the doors of your church will be asking the same questions. Your job is to help them answer 'yes'" to all three, he said.

National Sunday School Leadership Training was sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division.

Christian psychologist lists traits of 'balanced winners'

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Terry Cain, a Christian psychologist from Brentwood, Tenn., shared the following "characteristics of balanced winners," during a July 31 session on "Lay Leadership on the Cutting Edge" at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center:

- 1) They know their best weapon is their attitude.
- 2) They know how to focus on the essentials.
- 3) They know it is not easy sometimes to win with integrity. They also know it is impossible to win without it.
- 4) They know they need to care for their body as well as their mind.
- 5) They are not afraid to base their life on their faith in God. They are afraid not to.
- 6) They know they can achieve a sense of security that will help them look at their problems calmly.
- 7) They know they will never outgrow their need to learn. They are usually lovers of books.
- 8) They know they have made mistakes in the past, but they never allow the past to control the future.
- 9) They know enough to take others with them when they succeed.
- 10) They know they need to be accountable to another person. It is not easy.
- 11) They know they must be honest to themselves about their strengths and weaknesses.
- 12) They maintain realistic expectations.

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3 special awards highlight Covenant awards ceremony

By C.C. Risenhoover

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Larry Poland, Michael Warren and the CBS television program "Touched By An Angel" received special "Covenant" awards at the third annual Covenant Awards Ceremony Aug. 2.

Covenant is an RTVC ministry that produces and promotes Christian family values programming. FamilyNet and ACTS are the RTVC's broadcast and cable television services, which telecast the ceremony live RTVC studios in Fort Worth, Texas.

The program was hosted by stage, screen and recording artist John Schneider, best known for his role as "Bo" on the long-running television series, "The Dukes of Hazzard." The Christian singing group Sierra performed songs from their new album, "Devotion," and a special song written for Covenant, "God is on Our Side."

Award recipient Poland is founder of Mastermedia International, a nonprofit Christian organization that works with media leaders in Hollywood and New York.

"Through a decade of persistence and dedication, Larry Poland has helped build trust relationships with executives from more than 100 New York and Hollywood media corporations," said Deborah Key, who presented the award. Key, RTVC vice president of network operations, is also general manager of FamilyNet and ACTS.

"Through Mastermedia's intensive one-on-one and small-group strategies," she said, "more than 100 men and women ... vice presidents or higher from four television networks and seven major film studios ... are involved in prayer, Bible study and support groups. These people collectively have produced more than 70 made-for-TV movies, scores of feature films, thousands of hours of prime-time television programs and six series currently on network TV.

"Having identified by name the thousand most powerful people in film and television, Mastermedia mobilizes prayer for, and ministry to, those individuals," Key said. "While taking on this monumental task, Dr. Poland also keeps responsible Americans informed about the treatment of spiritual and moral issues in the media through publications like the 'Mediator.'"

Warren received his award for his role in bringing moral values to prime-time television through programs like "Family Matters."

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Presenter Ted Baehr, founder of the Christian Film and Television Commission, said, "I've long been aware of the work of Michael Warren. Born and reared in a Christian family, Michael got serious about his faith in his early 20s. And those Christian values have been a driving force behind his career."

Baehr said Warren's creative touch has been felt on some of TV's most popular series -- "Happy Days," "The Love Boat," "Perfect Strangers," "Step by Step," and now in its eighth season, "Family Matters."

About "Family Matters," Baehr said, "Large audiences tune in each week to see three generations of fictional Winslows, all living together under one roof, with visits from the lovable nerd Steve Urkel, a Michael Warren character who never gives up and is never daunted, though often ridiculed and stepped on. Viewers of 'Family Matters' see people who face moral dilemmas and find courage to do the right thing. They see family members working out their problems. And, most of all, they see imperfect people who accept each other as they are."

"The success of programs like 'Family Matters' proves there is a place in Hollywood for committed Christians like Michael (Warren) and his partner Bill Bickley, who he met for the first time at church. And by helping create entertaining and popular programs without profanity, nudity or adult situations, Michael has been a shining example of moral integrity in a secular marketplace."

The award to "Touched By An Angel" was presented by Schneider, who appeared in one of last season's episodes.

In making the presentation, Schneider said, "I'm happy to be able to recognize a unique program and the committed producer who made it happen. If things had gone according to network norms, some of us would never have heard of 'Touched By An Angel.' Entering the 1994-95 television season, the show had three strikes against it.

"First, the topic. How could a show about angels fly when most successful shows featured dysfunctional families, dysfunctional friends or single people looking for love?

"Strike two, the time slot ... up against ABC's then-heavyweight ratings champion, 'Roseanne.'

"And third, the show's pilot wasn't completed until days before its debut, raising suspicions that it must be really bad.

"Enter Martha Williamson, a committed Christian who CBS asked to write and produce the show. She accepted the assignment on strict conditions about how God and his angels would be portrayed. She created a show theology based on her own, in which God exists, he has a plan, he knows what he is doing and he doesn't make mistakes."

Schneider said CBS did not make a mistake, either, because Williamson helped "Touched By An Angel" survive its shaky first year.

"Now," he said, "the dedicated staff, crew and cast, featuring talented lead angels Della Reese and Roma Downey, receive 2,000 letters a week from loyal viewers whose lives are being touched by the program's message of God's love, healing and forgiveness. And in only its second year, 'Touched By An Angel' has surprised critics by becoming a fixture on prime-time television."

"Covenant" award winners for national network/syndication were "Church Commercial Series," Ingram Media Group, Tulsa, Okla. (spot category); "Talk to Me: Sex in the '90s," Crossroads Christian Communications, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada (youth category); "Day of Discovery: When Violence Comes Home," Radio Bible Class Ministries, Grand Rapids, Mich. (family values category); "The Story of Silent Night," Phil Cooke Pictures, Inc. and Questar Video, Burbank, Calif. (faith/inspiration special category); and "Zola Levitt: The First Christians," Kenneth Berg Productions, Dallas (faith/inspiration series category).

For local church programming, "Covenant" awards went to "L.I.F.E. Rock," Monticello United Methodist Church, Monticello, Ind. (youth category), and "4 HIM: The Ride," First Baptist Church, Perrine, Fla. (faith/inspirational category).

"Covenant" award winners for local broadcast programming were "Among Friends," WCFC TV-38, Chicago (weekly series) and "AIDS: The Heart of the Matter," WTLW TV-44, Lima, Ohio (special program).

For non-broadcast video, Covenant award winners were "Veggie Tales: Rack, Shack & Benny," Big Idea Productions, Chicago (youth category), and "Prison to Praise," Foundation of Praise, Escondido, Calif. (faith/inspiration category).

Churches must reduce risk of sexual abuse of minors

By Chip Alford

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--How important is it for churches to establish procedures for screening preschool, children and youth workers?

Ask the hundreds of congregations who have paid out millions of dollars in damages after paid or volunteer church workers were convicted of physically and/or sexually abusing a minor.

"Needless to say, this can devastate a church, to say nothing of the families and the children involved. And this isn't only happening to large churches. It can happen to small churches, too," Zadabeth Uland, a preschool field consultant for the Baptist Sunday School Board, told a group of church leaders attending National Sunday School Leadership Training July 29-Aug. 2 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

According to the Church Law & Tax Report, the first litigation involving child sexual abuse and a church occurred in 1984. Since then, hundreds of cases have occurred with juries awarding plaintiffs sums as high as \$10 million. In some cases, punitive damages are being assessed.

"In one instance, every member of the church was named in the suit," Uland said. "It's not the world that we as Christian people like to think that it is. We have to take precautions."

The first concern, Uland said, "should be for the health and safety of the children we are teaching in our churches. Second, we have to be concerned about our workers. And, finally, we have to think about our church."

A key factor in most cases, Uland said, is "intent."

"We have to show that we intended to protect our children and workers. We need to have procedures in place."

First, Uland said, if one is not already in place, a church should form a task force to study the issues of safety of minors and the screening of paid and volunteer teachers who work with them. She recommended involving the church attorney and the congregation's insurance agent in the process.

"Some insurance companies won't carry churches who don't have policies and procedures like these in place. Others are requiring existing policyholders to develop them."

Policies and procedures should be brought to the church and voted on for approval, Uland said.

At University Baptist Church in Houston where Uland earlier served on staff, all paid and volunteer workers who work with minors are required to fill out a screening application. Included on the form are questions such as:

- Have you had any painful experiences in your life that have better equipped you or may hinder you from a productive ministry with children? Would you like to meet with a pastor regarding this circumstance?
- Have you ever been convicted for use or sale of drugs?
- Have you ever been accused, arrested or convicted for any sexually related crimes?

The applicant also must sign a statement agreeing to have a criminal records check through the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"This costs about \$35 per person, so every church may not be able to afford the records check. But every church ought to ask for at least three references, and they must check them out," Uland said.

University Baptist also developed a list of safety and hygiene practices and trained workers in how to follow them. Policies included requirements such as:

- refusing to accept into a preschool department any child who appears ill or has been ill in the preceding 24 hours.
- refusing to allow teachers to give medication to any minor.
- never leaving preschoolers alone in a room.
- constantly examining toys and furnishings for sharp edges.

Developing safety and hygiene and worker screening policies may take several months or years, Uland said, adding churches can take several steps immediately to reduce the risk of abuse, such as:

- always having two adult teachers in every room.
- making sure there are glass panes on all classroom doors.
- training workers to use the "open door" policy when taking a child to the rest room.

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Uland recommended several resources for churches interested in developing safety/hygiene and screening procedures for those working with minors. "Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church," a reference book with accompanying videotape and training manual, can be ordered from the Church Law & Tax Report by calling 1-800-222-1840. "Toward 2000: Leading Preschoolers in Sunday School," an administrative book available from the Baptist Sunday School Board, includes a section on how to screen potential workers, and a training pack by the same name includes a sample screening application. Both products can be ordered by calling 1-800-458-2772.

National Sunday School Leadership Training was sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division.

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**University-hosted Mission-Fuge
tackling 430 mission projects**

By Erin Will

**Baptist Press
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MOBILE, Ala. (BP)--The sounds of hammering and sawing are echoing throughout Mobile, Ala., this summer -- but these aren't your typical construction workers. They are teenagers from across the United States volunteering their time during Mission-Fuge camp at the University of Mobile.

Approximately 300 campers per week have attended the University of Mobile Mission-Fuge camp helping with construction sites, ministering through recreational sports to underprivileged children and visiting the elderly. Campers in grades seven through 12 gather from throughout the States to form a new mission team each week at the Baptist Sunday School Board-sponsored summer camp.

This year is the first year the University of Mobile is playing host to Mission-Fuge. It is only the second year of Mission-Fuge's existence. In years prior, the university hosted Centrifuge, a Christian summer camp from which the Mission-Fuge spark originated.

Amy Jacober of Phoenix, Mission-Fuge site director at the University of Mobile, began organizing sites for the camp in February. She contacted nonprofit organizations, churches and agencies about mission work opportunities. By May, all sites were finalized.

"There are about 65 different mission sites where campers work each week," Jacober said. "About 430 projects will be completed in and around the city of Mobile during the eight weeks of camp. The variety of mission sites allows the campers the opportunity to explore several choices of mission work, from performing drama and music to building a house or teaching Backyard Bible Club."

One project for some of the campers is building a Habitat for Humanity home in Mobile. Campers from as far as Missouri spend a week at a time working on the house. One house was constructed in four and a half weeks. Another one is being built during the last half of camp.

Regina Johnson of Mobile, a member of True Light Missionary Baptist Church in Mobile, said she cannot wait to see the finished product of her Habitat for Humanity home built by Mission-Fuge campers. "I feel it is a blessing from God. I can't stop thanking God for providing a new house for me and my three children. I've been waiting two years for this, and it is beautiful," Johnson said.

Habitat for Humanity is an international nonprofit organization providing housing for people in need. Volunteers, such as Mission-Fuge campers and local construction engineers, donate their time to construct a house from start to finish.

Construction materials are donated by local companies and funded by current Habitat for Humanity homeowners. Rent from current Habitat for Humanity homes funds building supplies for new Habitat for Humanity homes.

Mike Thedford of Newport News, Va., on staff with Mission-Fuge at the University of Mobile, works construction with the Habitat for Humanity projects. He attended Centrifuge as a camper several years ago and worked with the first Mission-Fuge site last summer in West Palm Beach, Fla.

"People do not always get to physically see the results of their labor, but you do in construction," Thedford said.

One of the campers working construction on the Habitat house, Whitney Richardson, a member of Highland Baptist Church, Vicksburg, Miss., said, "Building this house is so awesome. I always wanted to do this, but never had the chance until now. It's a great feeling to see the progress of the house."

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Mission-Fuge campers spend the day working at their choice of sites at camp, so they will have the experience to take home to their communities and pursue missions there. "At the end of the week we ask each church group to make a commitment to specific mission work of their choice. We commission them to their mission field, then it is up to them to do their mission work when they return home," Jacober said.

Campers are not at Mission-Fuge just to do mission work in the mission field. They are also here to renew themselves spiritually. They start the day with worship and church group devotions, discussing what their goals are for the day and praying for those whose lives they will touch. Then they are off to their mission sites.

When they return to the University of Mobile campus in the afternoon, they have Bible study with their team and share experiences from the mission site. After a hard day of labor, the campers are able to enjoy the rest of the afternoon with games and free time.

In the evening, hymns, contemporary music and songs fill the air with sounds of praise during the worship service.

"We like to involve the campers in our worship time," Jacober said. "We have them share testimonies, perform skits, read Scripture, pray and fellowship."

There is a "Mission Moment" each night, where a video is shown to the campers that highlights the specific place where missions offerings are sent. Another video the campers watch nightly reviews the day's missions activities. Video footage is taken at several camp sites each day and is edited into a contemporary video with Christian music to show each night. "It is a time for campers to see how they are being effective in the mission field," Jacober said.

After a missions-based message is preached, Mission-Fuge staffers give a challenge to each church group as they dismiss for church group devotions.

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50-member Waikiki church relies on God for resources

By Karen L. Willoughby

**Baptist Press
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HONOLULU (BP)--God provides the people. Southern Baptists provide the ministry.

About 20,000 people live in the Waikiki area of Honolulu -- an area on Oahu that is seven-tenths of a mile long and no more than a third that wide.

Another 30,000 work here. They labor in soaring high-rises and hotels, in bustling convenience shops, tourist treasure troves or at Mo-ped rental sites.

And, on any given day, at least 30,000 people visit. They come from the mainland, from Asia, from all over the world to experience for themselves the famed sandy beaches guarded by swaying palm trees and dwarfed by the Diamond Head crater.

Perhaps 600 or more island visitors in peak winter months find their way Sunday mornings to Waikiki Baptist Church, where they join in one of two worship services with about 50 active members, led since April by pastor Karl S. Ragan.

Like islanders all over Hawaii, Waikiki Baptist finds itself sacrificing its resources to be hospitable to guests.

The church's square building a half-block off the main Kuhio Avenue and sandwiched between two high-rise condominiums is not large, though a Japanese-style sharply arched roof provides an air of spaciousness inside and architectural interest outside. Sunday school space in the lower level has been sacrificed to provide parking for about 40 vehicles. Ten small classrooms upstairs are accessible from an exterior stairwell.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about Waikiki Baptist's building is that it has one. Southern Baptists have the only evangelical church on Waikiki. There is a Catholic church, and a group of about six Lutherans meet at an area hotel. Except for these, Waikiki Baptist and a Korean congregation it hosts are the only Christian churches on this part of the island.

The church, established in the mid-1950s, built its present structure in 1969 under the direction of then-pastor Herman Ray Sr. Now 88, he still leads in one of the ministries he established -- worship services at area hotels.

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"This church was built with tourists in mind," present pastor Ragan said in an interview in his office. "It is the only Southern Baptist church on the island with air conditioning."

Meeting the needs of tourists taxes the meager resources of Waikiki Baptist's membership, since those who are not retired work two or more jobs to have sufficient income to live in Hawaii. Sunday school materials and outreach programs are sacrificed in order to provide worship bulletins, air conditioning and building maintenance.

His "number cruncher" at the church has figured out that 98 cents per visitor goes into the offering plate, Ragan said. This in a place where the average hotel room price is \$180, where a luau is \$40 and where an Aloha shirt goes for \$35.

Part of the reason for the token offerings could be that the church gives an impression of affluence, Ragan said. There are so many people in the services that individuals don't realize they're mostly visitors; the baby grand piano was a gift, as was the stained glass window.

But, raising money is not the reason Waikiki Baptist exists, the pastor said.

"God provides all that is needed to accomplish what he wants done," he said. "If we are faithful and good stewards of our resources, God will provide."

A tear-off part of the Sunday bulletin provides a place for people to write down prayer requests. The requests are prayed for Monday morning at E'Pule Kakou (gathering in prayer) by members whose ministry is in intercessory prayer.

"In the mail we get prayer requests from all over the world, from people who have been here and from people who have heard about this ministry," Ragan said. "God listens when these people pray."

Kahi Kokua (place of help) ministry provides food and clothing to all who request. Directed and staffed by co-leaders John Sheehan and full-blooded Hawaiian Roy Akau, both in their 70s, it is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of each week from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in an upstairs classroom at Waikiki Baptist. The plan of salvation is provided to everyone who comes.

This ministry also provides airfare to the mainland for those who become stranded on the island. They connect with the church in a time of brokenness, perhaps after surfacing from a drug- or alcohol-induced haze.

"Many have accepted Christ. Several have been baptized. They then get their lives back together and decide they want to go home," Ragan said. "If we can verify there's family to meet them and care for them, we buy tickets."

Some people first connect with the church at the recommendation of the city, which knows of Waikiki Baptist's counseling, food and clothing ministry. Street kids are invited to the church every Thursday for Bible study and pizza by member Brian Taylor.

Others meet the pastor during his every-other-day walks up and down the streets of Waikiki.

"They've gotten to know me so well that the guys who hand out flyers don't even try to give me one anymore," Ragan said. "My goal is to one day be recognized as the pastor of the people of Waikiki."

"We have all the problems of a neighborhood church, and all the baggage of a resort ministry," Ragan said. "Hawaii is not paradise if you're coming here to live." He was referring to the "Hawaii -- an island paradise" tourism slogan that draws people like a magnet to the state ringed by the Pacific Ocean.

"We have hunger, broken homes, people working two, three and four jobs, no family life, people stressed out ..." Ragan's voice faded as his mouth twisted in a grimace.

"What I see in high rise after high rise is people who have hurts, who are just existing," the pastor continued. "This is our mission field. In becoming more of a local church, we've changed our emphasis. We used to try and make the tourists feel at home. Now we do our best to make the local visitors feel welcome. Tourists? We're glad you're here. Local visitors? We're really glad you came. We want to be your church."

Korean Baptist Church, a congregation of about 100, also uses the facilities owned by Waikiki Baptist. Led by Pastor Paul W. Chang, this congregation focuses on meeting the needs of Koreans in Waikiki. About 25 of them meet at 5 a.m. every day at the church for prayer.

"I'm trying to figure out ways to use the building more," Ragan said. "A condo association uses it for their meetings. None of them are members, but they're getting used to coming in the building, and if they have a need for ministry, they call like I'm their pastor."

"We have a couple of Bible studies in condos and I'm trying to figure out how to reach the children," the pastor continued. "I'm learning when the shift changes are. Maybe we can have a 30-minute service with coffee and bagels just before they go to work, and do it again an hour later for those just getting off."

"You try these things, and if something doesn't work, it doesn't work," Ragan said. "How does a church of 50 people minister? Our God will provide if we wait and pray for his leadership."

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