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February 6, 1996

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**Commit to both NAMB, agency vision,
Williams tells Brotherhood leaders**

**Baptist Press
2/6/96**

By Steve Barber

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--State convention Brotherhood leaders were urged to support the proposal for a new North American Mission Board while continuing their commitment to ongoing Brotherhood Commission efforts at their annual meeting Jan. 31-Feb. 3.

"We must champion the vision for a brand new organization," said James D. Williams, Brotherhood Commission president, referring to the proposed merger of the Brotherhood Commission with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and Radio and Television Commission.

"If we withhold our support, doubt and fear will take hold. But we must also keep our own vision alive -- promote it, sell it and give it drama and excitement. To do that, we need the help of all state leadership. I call on you to build on the wonderful teamwork that has always characterized our work together."

Williams told the state leaders they would be a crucial element, what he called a "dream team" that, along with Brotherhood staff and trustees, could insure a successful transition to the new organization.

"We need to move forward, and I am confident ... that God will honor those among us who step forward," Williams said.

"The mastery of change implies leadership, and that in turn requires the ability to articulate as well as understand what God is doing. God is at work, and we need to be open to what God may have in store for his people called Southern Baptists. But above all else, we need to continue building a sense of teamship in this whole arena of missions education, missions involvement and commitment to raise up a generation of laypeople who will make a difference in our world."

In the meantime, "full steam ahead" will characterize the Brotherhood Commission's approach to its ongoing ministries and programs, according to Douglas Beggs, the agency's vice president of program services.

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"We're going to continue to do what we do well and we will continue to partner with you," Beggs said, pointing to the recent expansion of the Royal Ambassador program with the "EZRA" option and the resulting updates in materials, the enrichment of leadership materials for Men's Ministries and Challengers programs and the unveiling this summer of MissionKids, a coeducational missions education program for children.

"There's no sense of confusion about who we are and where we're going. The commission staff has a sense of direction," Beggs said.

In other action, the state leaders:

-- adopted a resolution expressing "profound gratitude to the staff and trustees of the Brotherhood Commission for their positive leadership during this period of transition" and pledging prayer for the staff, trustees and SBC leaders who will be "designing the structure of our convention to assure the most effective utilization of men, young men and boys in our efforts to carry out God's mission to his world."

-- heard remarks from Home Mission Board President Larry L. Lewis and Foreign Mission Board Executive Vice President Don Kammerdiener. The Brotherhood Commission is in the second year of an agreement with the Foreign Mission Board designating the agency as a primary recruiter for overseas missions volunteers.

-- honored retiring state Brotherhood directors Laddie Adams, Oklahoma, and Jim Jones, Michigan.

-- welcomed new state leaders Tim Bearden, Tennessee; Jim Brown, Florida; John Bullock, Texas; Buddy Day, Louisiana; and Jere Phillips, West Virginia.

The next Brotherhood Leadership Conference is scheduled Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 1997, at the Home Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga.

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(BP) photos of new and retiring state leaders with James D. Williams will be mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Brotherhood Commission.

Southern appoints Akin, Walker
to vice presidential positions

Baptist Press
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LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Daniel L. Akin has been named vice president for academic administration and dean of the school of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary effective June 1.

Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. announced his appointment of Akin, a professor and administrator at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, during a Feb. 6 chapel service at Southern Seminary's Louisville, Ky., campus. At the same service, Mohler said Douglas C. Walker III, the seminary's dean of students and vice president for student services since 1993, will become the school's vice president for institutional advancement effective immediately.

Akin has been dean of students and associate professor of theology at the Wake Forest, N.C., seminary since 1992. He previously taught at Criswell College in Dallas from 1986-92.

At Southern, Akin will oversee the seminary's entire academic program and give direct leadership to the school of theology, the largest and oldest of Southern's five graduate schools. Shortly after Mohler's announcement, Southern Seminary's trustee executive committee elected Akin associate professor of Christian theology.

He holds the B.A. degree from Criswell College; the M.Div. degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; and the Ph.D. degree from the University of Texas at Arlington.

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At Southern, he will succeed David S. Dockery, who becomes president of Union University, Jackson, Tenn., June. 1. Akin has written nine published articles and is coauthoring a commentary on the Epistles of John for Broadman & Holman's New American Commentary series. He has served as associate editor for the Criswell Theological Review and was the New Testament editor for The Criswell Study Bible (later revised and retitled The Believers Study Bible).

Walker was pastor of Ruhama Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala., prior to joining the seminary administrative staff. He also has held pastorates in Indiana and Georgia.

In his new role at Southern, Walker will direct the seminary's development, public relations and alumni relations efforts. He succeeds Thomas F. Mabe, who left the seminary in July to become director of development for the Virginia Baptist Homes.

Walker earned the B.S. degree from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa; M.Div. from Southwestern Seminary; and Ph.D. from Southern Seminary.

Mohler praised the credentials of both appointees. He said Akin will fill a critical position for Southern Seminary and Southern Baptist theological education.

"I have come to know Dr. Akin as a scholar and administrator, a leader, a minister, a motivator and a committed servant," said Mohler. "I am eager to have Dr. Akin, his wife, Charlotte, and their family join us as part of the Southern Seminary community. I am thankful for God's provision for us in his coming."

Mohler called Walker one the Southern's "most able and committed" senior administrators. "He has brought incredible gifts and unquestioned commitment to the executive cabinet and has led the transformation of the student services division which has been of such great benefit to our students," Mohler said.

Southeastern Seminary President Paige Patterson lamented the loss of Akin but complimented Southern and Mohler for Akin's appointment.

"Southern Seminary's choice of Dr. Akin is more like an amputation than like a mere loss to Southeastern and to me personally," Patterson said. "I will miss him profoundly. At the same time, I'm proud of Southern Seminary and of Dr. Mohler for making what in my estimation is the finest choice in the earth. I am proud of Dr. Akin as he assumes this critical role and very grateful to him for the inestimable contribution he has made here at Southeastern Seminary."

Patterson also commended Mohler for "the typical class that he showed in calling me before he approached Dr. Akin."

"I would like to express my appreciation to Dr. Patterson for his gracious and generous spirit," said Mohler. "Dr. Akin has made such a significant contribution to Southeastern Seminary and to the remarkable work of God that has taken place in the redirection of the seminary over the past several years. It is precisely because of the leadership role Dr. Akin had fulfilled at Southeastern Seminary that he commended himself to us for this important position at Southern Seminary."

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Retired missionary nurse,
clinic director, dies at 93

Baptist Press
2/6/96

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (BP)--Eva Mildred Sanders, a retired Southern Baptist missionary nurse who was honored by the British government during her 37 years in Nigeria, died Jan. 28 in Newport News, Va. She was 93.

Sanders, who started the Baptist Welfare Center and its midwifery school in Ire, Nigeria, delivered more than 14,000 babies during her career. The center specialized in maternity cases and child health and was sometimes referred to as "the baby factory." Sanders also was missionary adviser for women's groups in Nigerian Baptists' Bethel Association of 22 churches.

In 1954 England's Queen Elizabeth noted her contribution to Nigeria, then a British protectorate, by naming her an honorary member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

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A Roanoke, Va., native, Sanders was appointed a Foreign Mission Board missionary in 1931. At first she taught in Baptist schools and directed Baptist clinics. She moved to Ire in 1946 expecting to maintain an office there and travel to operate clinics and dispense medicines, but instead became involved in midwife training.

After retiring in 1968, she kept a steady stream of communication to Nigeria. Always a missionary, she taught a Friday Bible class and children's Sunday school class until her health no longer allowed it.

Beta Sigma Phi of the Roanoke Valley elected her Woman of the Year in 1973-74.

Her work overseas was the subject of two books. Combining interests in African music and kindergarten, she prepared several books of children's songs.

Sanders received nursing training from Jefferson Hospital School of Nursing in Roanoke. She graduated from Westhampton College of the University of Richmond (Va.) and Woman's Missionary Union Training School (now merged with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) in Louisville, Ky.

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**Growth among Haitian Baptists
fueled by Fla. refugee pastors** By Barbara Denman

**Baptist Press
2/6/96**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)--"Their faith is the most precious possession they have. When I think of those that hunger and thirst for righteousness, I think of the Haitians. They are hungry. When I think of the poor in spirit for they shall see God, I think of the Haitians. They have little, yet are truly blessed."

Alan Walker, media production coordinator for the Florida Baptist Convention, traveled to the island nation of Haiti last year to record sights and sounds of the churches there -- a trip he said he will not soon forget.

"The people are so caught up in worship. They are uninhibited," Walker said. "I wish I could take our typical Sunday worship crowd to Haiti to worship."

Walker, who grew up on the Caribbean mission field with his Southern Baptist missionary parents, said he had never been anywhere like Haiti. "The years of harsh living conditions, political unrest and economic poverty have robbed the people of everything but their spirit."

Perhaps it is that spirit which has touched the hearts of Florida Baptists.

During the past decade, Haitian refugees by the thousands have poured into Florida. Haitian Baptist pastors who had started churches in their homeland left their island nation for religious freedom. They started churches in Florida, creating the fastest-growing segment of the Florida Baptist family.

Yet their love for their homeland led them to continue sending money back to start new churches there. Over the years, their efforts resulted in more than 70 new churches and missions in Haiti.

Raul Vazquez, director of the convention's language missions division, explained this cycle. "As they go into the United States, these pastors take their families, but part of their hearts and minds remains in their home country. They are concerned for their communities and for their churches there. So naturally, as they have means available in the United States, they want to go back and minister to their home."

In 1994, the Florida Baptist Convention began forging a unique relationship with the 70 churches in Haiti by helping them establish a cooperative network, known as the Baptist Missionary Fellowship in Haiti.

"I think the reason we are making this sort of investment is because we have a sense of obligation to our churches, and we legitimately feel that these are our churches, started by Florida Baptist churches," Vazquez said. "We have inherited the obligation to nurture them and take care of them."

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The Florida Baptist Convention staff will provide resources for training and expertise in evangelism, church starting and church development, as well as equipping the Haitian leaders to serve their congregations. The Florida Haitian pastors will raise funds for use in meeting human needs such as feeding, clothing and education.

"We cannot meet all the needs of Haiti, but we can meet some needs, and the things we can meet, we must," Vazquez said.

Renaud Balzora, director of the Florida convention's Haitian church extension and development department and a native of Haiti, added, "We're not trying to go as ministers to do the job; we are going to help them help themselves."

According to Balzora, this is different than the way many faiths are seeking to reach the Haitian nation. "This is not a paternalistic approach. We are helping them to stand on their own feet. They realize the Lord did not create us just to receive." The results of that approach, he added, is an increasing financial commitment to the work in Haiti. "You are never too poor to give."

The Haitian fellowship has grown to include a national coordinator, four regional directors of missions and associations and 125 churches. Their enthusiasm is growing, too. Balzora reported one director of missions has found 64 places to start new work.

Early in February, John Sullivan, executive director-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, led a televised evangelistic crusade in Port Au Prince, capital of the island nation. He met with the mayor of the capital city. As a result of that effort, the Haitians hope to start 10 new churches.

Sullivan spent the rest of the trip visiting pastors and leaders in the churches who shared their concerns and visions with him.

"His presence was such an encouragement," said Balzora.

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Truck stop ministries face 7.5-million-driver challenge

By Jerry Pierce

Baptist Press
2/6/96

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--The TV lounge inside Oklahoma City's TA Truck Stop was almost full.

About 20 people, mostly truck drivers and a few church volunteers, sang joyfully from the Baptist hymnal. A driver from Pennsylvania, a Romanian immigrant named Mircea, wiped away tears as he hummed a heartfelt hymn.

"I love the church," Mircea said following the Sunday chapel service. "We (truck drivers) need that all the time."

For Mircea and other Christian truckers, a place to worship or a chaplain's encouraging words after a grinding day are pressing needs in a trade where fatigue and loneliness plague nearly every driver.

For those who minister to truckers, the challenges are just as great: There are about 2,000 full-service truck stops in the continental United States, and most have no Christian ministry, according to Mike Baker, a 32-year veteran truck driver.

Baker and his wife Sandra -- his road partner and fellow driver -- are truck stop ministry volunteers with the Mission Service Corps of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Where truck stop ministries exist, most are affiliated with one of three organizations: Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries of Dayton, Ohio; Transport for Christ (TFC) of Denver, Pa.; or Truckstop Ministries Inc., Jackson, Ga.

Combined, these ministries operate in more than 125 U.S. truck stops. Baker said it's impossible to know how many other truckers' ministries exist because most are not affiliated with any organization. Many more are needed, though, and local church involvement is crucial, he said.

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Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries and Truckstop Ministries Inc. rely heavily on local churches. TFC, while using many church volunteers, avoids association with particular churches or denominations.

Representatives of all three ministries, however, said they are committed to winning converts and teaching Christian discipleship.

Between destinations, the Bakers spend many Sundays speaking to Southern Baptist congregations about truck stop missions.

"The public awareness on the local level is just not there," Baker said. "We've got 7.5 million drivers out there. Ninety percent are unsaved and unchurched.

Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries has about 80 affiliated ministries throughout the country, most of them staffed by Southern Baptists, Baker recounted.

Glenn Cope, director of Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries, said requests for new ministries come from local churches, drivers and truck stop operators, who often see Christian ministries as vehicles for fighting vice on truck stop property.

When Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries begins working in a truck stop, Cope, a member of First Baptist Church, Enon, Ohio, asks a nearby Southern Baptist congregation to support it. If they can't or won't, he'll seek another congregation of like faith.

He said many churches simply overlook the spiritual needs of truck drivers.

"Churches have the means. If they just had the vision. Right now what's missing is the vision," Cope said.

Joe Hunter, president of Truckstop Ministries Inc., said involvement of churches helps him guide converts to quality congregations.

Truckstop Ministries Inc. operates in 34 locations across the country. He said Baptists work alongside Methodists, Presbyterians and others in an enthusiastic and loving atmosphere.

"We help truckers find a church if they want us to. We'll ask them if they have a denominational preference. I very carefully steer people toward solid, Bible-teaching churches," Hunter said.

"Once truckers accept Christ, helping them grow is difficult because of their mobile lifestyle."

Cope, Hunter and Bruce Prestidge, director of ministry development for TFC, agreed discipling converts is their biggest challenge.

Often, truck stop chaplains share the gospel with drivers they never see again; others they might see once or twice a year, Prestidge said.

"The more chapels we have, the better follow-up we have," he said. All three ministries prefer audiotapes to share the gospel and to help converts grow because truckers have plenty of listening time.

TFC's tapes feature Bible teaching, music, testimony and panel discussions, and the Home Mission Board's Baker said work is being done to get Henry Blackaby's "Experiencing God" study on audiotape.

At Oklahoma City's "First Church of the TA," as chaplain Jim Cary calls it, volunteers from Council Road Baptist Church offer chapel-goers a tape featuring a trucker's testimony and traditional gospel music.

Cary said the tapes use language and word pictures to which truckers can relate.

An associate minister at Council Road, Cary and his wife, Jackie, are at the truck stop most afternoons and evenings. His office is in a converted trailer in the parking lot.

"A lot of drivers will come in just because they need somebody to talk to," Cary said. "They may have a marital problem . . . They have the same problems we do."

Cary offers drivers a truck stop ministry directory, published by Truckers' Christian Chapel Ministries, so drivers can find a place to worship or get counseling. Christian truckers, particularly, need quality fellowship and encouragement, Cary said.

The pressure of reaching destinations quickly and separation from family leads to loneliness, burnout and a high divorce rate among drivers.

"It's rare to run across someone who's not been divorced," Hunter said. "Sometimes having a chaplain to talk to can make the difference in saving someone's marriage."

He added: "We're committed to winning the trucker to Christ and then taking care of their needs. If that means talking for three solid hours, that's what we do."

Baker said the challenges of truck stop ministry are changing as the profession changes. Increasingly, women are becoming drivers. Also, more non-English-speaking truckers are traveling America's highways.

In Texas, Baker's home state, Mexican drivers are becoming more frequent because the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has loosened commerce restrictions.

"We feel there's a need there that needs to be met," Baker said. "This is one area in which ethnic ministries can play a major role."

Truck stop ministries recorded approximately 1,100 conversions in 1994, Baker said.

"If we as Southern Baptists provide a good follow-up ministry, if we provide witnessing materials and discipleship, then we'll be conducting a good, well-rounded ministry.

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Further information on Southern Baptist involvement in truck stop ministry may be obtained from Frank Stark, HMB consultant on lifestyle ministries, at (417) 736-3073. Pierce is a writer in Oklahoma City.

After her truck jackknifed,
gospel message 'hit home'

By Jerry Pierce

Baptist Press
2/6/96

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--Just over 5 feet tall and 105 pounds soaking wet, 33-year-old Angela Barnes more closely resembles a jockey than a truck driver.

The Oklahoma City woman had been driving big rigs for two years when her truck nearly overturned during a partial "jackknife" on an icy bridge west of Lincoln, Neb., in February 1994.

During a jackknife, the truck trailer begins skidding independently of the cab, usually causing the entire rig to overturn.

Miraculously, Barnes said, her rig suddenly straightened out.

Shaken, she pulled into a truck stop a few miles ahead and received what she now considers a prophetic warning from a trucker who'd been trailing her.

"I don't know what God is trying to tell you, but maybe you'd better start listening," he said.

Four trucks already had overturned on the icy bridge that night.

"He said in his 43 years of driving he'd never seen anyone pull out of a jackknife," Barnes recalled.

After arriving in Oklahoma City the following Sunday morning, she parked her rig at its usual spot outside the TA Truck Stop and went inside.

Drawn by singing in the TV lounge, she went in, sat down and listened as Jim Cary and several volunteers from Council Road Baptist Church conducted a chapel service.

"It kind of hit home," Barnes said.

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Nancy Locke, a Council Road member and wife of a truck driver, talked to Barnes after the service about her close call on the icy bridge. Barnes was tight-lipped at first, but the more they talked, the more Barnes opened up, Locke said.

Barnes prayed to receive Christ later that morning; that night, Cary baptized her at Council Road.

"It was like I had to be there that day," Barnes said.

Locke said several other truckers were saved that same day.

"It was a very exciting Sunday," Locke recounted. "It was just an affirmation that we were doing what he wanted us to."

Since Barnes' conversion, her sister has recommitted her life to Christ and joined Council Road, and Barnes' parents have been visiting the church.

Barnes said she keeps a directory of truck stop chapels nearby when traveling.

"Come Friday or Saturday, I start looking for a place to worship on Sunday morning," she said.

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Florida board takes stance
against 'neo-pentecostalism'

By Barbara Denman

Baptist Press
2/6/96

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)--The Florida Baptist state board of missions has taken steps to deny credentials to three congregations that have been removed or have withdrawn voluntarily from the Alachua Baptist Association on issues of Baptist doctrine and practice.

The action related to the three churches was prompted by the Alachua association's unanimous recommendation that fellowship be withdrawn from the Citrus Christian Ministries of Homassassa Springs for teaching doctrinal beliefs in opposition to the Baptist Faith and Message. Two other churches subsequently withdrew from the association -- Riverside Christian Fellowship in Hernando and Main Street Church in Inverness.

During the state board of missions' Jan. 26 meeting at Lake Yale Assembly, John Sullivan, executive director-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, said the three churches were teaching "neo-pentecostalism." Sullivan cited papers the churches had submitted to the association outlining their doctrinal beliefs. These teachings include recognition of speaking in tongues as a measure of filling of the Holy Spirit, restoration of the office of the apostles and the "laughing" revival concept.

"I urge that we stand along with this association," Sullivan told board members prior to the vote. "You cannot just believe anything or everything and be Baptist."

A report from the board's program committee recommended the convention no longer receive Cooperative Program or any other mission gifts from the three churches, deny messenger credentials for the churches at the Florida Baptist State Convention and meet with the pastor of Main Street Church at his request.

But in the full board meeting, Glytee Harness of Elfers recommended board representatives meet with all three churches before recommending the board refuse to receive Cooperative Program funds. Not receiving the CP gifts would deny the affected church staff from participation in the SBC annuity program. "If we discover in the May (board) meeting, (the complaint) is valid, we will return their funds," Harness said. His motion was approved.

In other action, the board gave division status to the African American ministries and renamed the Woman's Missionary Union department as the women's missions and ministries department, expanding it to include women's enrichment ministries.

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God's care is central message
of woman's 'angel ministry'

By Sammie Jo Barstow

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Lace angels. Fabric angels. Porcelain angels. Shiny, glittery angels. Tall, short, smiling or pouting angels.

Especially during the holiday season, angels are everywhere. But they're not just for Christmas! At least, not according to Evelyn Knox.

For the past three years, Knox has followed God's leading in developing an "angel ministry" as part of the Heartfelt Women's Ministry at Roebuck Park Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala.

The director of Heartfelt, knowing Knox's love for crafts, asked her to devise a simple angel women could make in their crafts class -- something they could use to decorate their homes and be a reminder of God's care. Knox bought a simple craft broom as a model, dressing it with a lace skirt, a little hair and cloth wings.

Approximately 50 women met and made more than 150 angels. The women loved the angels and suggested some of them be distributed to nursing homes, hospitals and homebound church members as gifts of encouragement.

Many early experiences shaped the future of the angel ministry. In one instance, a friend asked Knox to take an angel to her mother in a nursing home.

Not knowing what to expect, Knox walked the long halls of the nursing home with a white lace angel. As she approached the bedside, the lady showed no response to Knox's presence. Unwrapping the angel, Knox explained she had brought a gift. Even though the older lady was unable to speak, she reached for the angel and held it close. Her eyes filled with tears.

"God pierced my heart. I knew that God was leading me to develop a ministry with these angels," Knox said.

During the next few weeks, she said, God kept up his gentle nudging. Everywhere Knox went, she saw something that reminded her of angels. In every conversation, she heard about someone who might be encouraged with an angel.

It was not long until she accepted God's call and got to work on her "angel ministry." In the past three years, Knox and a few helpers have made and distributed hundreds of angels.

With every angel goes a message: "For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" (Psalm 91:11). The message of the angels is that God cares about each person and sends Christian brothers and sisters to care, too.

Knowing the Bible says angels minister as God's messengers to comfort, remove fear, strengthen and guide, Knox said she believes the ministry is doing its work in the hearts of those who receive the angels.

It's still true most of the angels are delivered to people in circumstances involving sickness, death of a family member, or to elderly, homebound persons. But as the ministry developed, it took some unexpected turns.

Initially, Knox had no idea the angels would prove to be a tool for evangelism, but God has provided those opportunities. Many requests have come for an angel to be given to an unsaved person who needs a reminder of God's presence. On those occasions, Knox and her helpers may never know the results, but they know God's love and the love of Christian friends has been offered.

Sometimes the angels are given for happy occasions. An angel for an expectant or new mother says God is watching over the mother and her baby. A bridal angel lets a young couple know God blesses their marriage. Angels may be given to couples moving into a new home or to someone beginning a new job to remind them of God's faithful provision in their daily lives.

News about the angel ministry has spread, and Knox has been invited to teach women in other churches how to begin such an outreach. So, what began as a simple craft class for the women of Roebuck Park Baptist Church has expanded to provide hundreds of angels to men, women and children in need of a reminder of God's love.

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While God may lead each church or individual differently in developing their ministry, Knox listed several pointers she gives to women who may be led toward an angel ministry:

-- Begin with prayer. A conviction that God is leading is basic. The piercing of the heart she felt is essential to the beginning of this ministry or any other, Knox said.

-- Assess your resources. What has God revealed to you about the resources to be used in the ministry? How much money is available for supplies? Who may be led to make angels and to distribute them? How much time will be dedicated to the ministry?

-- Determine who will be involved. Although Knox's work began in a large gathering of women, she has found it best to have a few dedicated women make and deliver the angels. This ensures good craftsmanship and a personal commitment to the ministry, she said, and as the ministry grows, God will lead other women to participate.

-- Begin modestly. Develop five or six patterns for different kinds of angels. Angels may be beautiful, whimsical, cute or serene to fit different needs, Knox said. Some patterns may be made simply and with few supplies, while others require more skill and more expense. Knox advised beginning with a few simple patterns and expand as the ministry grows.

-- Have a system. Knox's church makes a request form available. The form requires the name of the person making the request, the name of the person to whom the angel will be given and the reason for requesting an angel. Sometimes the person making the request wants to deliver the angel personally. In that case, Knox provides the angel and the other person delivers it.

-- Always be open to God's leading. A person may have some purposes in mind for an angel ministry, but God may direct that ministry in unexpected ways, Knox noted. Pray that God will lead women to participate in the ministry and that those who need to receive an angel will be identified. Then pray that whatever message God has for the angel to deliver will be received.

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Barstow is a free-lance writer in Northport, Ala.

WMU names Acteens
panelists, top teens

By Teresa Dickens

Baptist Press
2/6/96

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Acteens from 16 states have been tapped by Woman's Missionary Union to serve on the 1996 National Acteens Panel and as 1996 Top Teens.

The 26 teenagers were selected from nearly 100 teenaged Acteens members nationwide who applied to serve on the national panel. Acteens is the missions organization sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union for girls in grades seven through 12.

Selected to serve on the six-member 1996 National Acteens Panel were Andrea Aldridge, New Johnsonville, Tenn.; Michele Banks, Jacksonville, Texas; April Grigg, Moweaqua, Ill.; Kristin Henson, Washington, Okla.; Kate Van Horn, Herndon, Va.; and Kellie Williams, Murray, Ky.

Twenty Acteens were named 1996 National Acteens Top Teens. They are, from Alabama, Leia Humber, Montgomery; Arkansas, Brandy Ussery, Marmaduke; Florida, Michelle Beasley, Plymouth; Louisiana, Beth Williams, Shreveport; Michigan, Jennie McClure, Flint; Mississippi, Leah Dedeaux, Jackson, and Keri Sullivan, Crystal Springs; Missouri, Andrea Elder, Trenton; North Carolina, Whitney Hartsell, Concord;

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From Oklahoma, Kelly Burrows, Bethany, and Leanne Sanders, Elgin; Pennsylvania, Sarah Williams, Mercersburg; Tennessee, Heather Hornsby, Jackson, and Mary Bea Skinner and Megan Taliaferro, both of Hendersonville; Texas, Anne Mitchell, Houston; Edith Osborne, Pampa, Aimee Perkinson, Sugar Land, and Zsila Sadighi, Austin; and Washington, Mika Beall, Puyallup.

"These girls represent the best of what the Acteens organization can help girls become," said Jan Turrentine, design editor of the Acteens magazine, Accent. "Their views of the world and its people are so refreshing and inspiring.

"Through their participation in all that the Acteens organization has to offer, they have acquired skills and developed personal talents and gifts," she noted. "They have learned that one person can make a difference when that person is committed and obedient to God and to the Christian lifestyle."

"Each application . . . was a portrait of a young person with a deep faith, a bold testimony and a strong missions commitment," added Becky Nelson, design editor for youth products at WMU. "Teens today must choose where to spend their free time and their choices are many. I am impressed by these young women who have chosen to use their time serving others and sharing their faith.

"Their excitement about Acteens is contagious," she continued, "and their involvement in ministry locally and globally is an example each of us should follow."

Selection of panelists and top teens is based on accomplishments in StudiAct, the individual achievement plan for Acteens; involvement in Acteens and other church activities; and achievements in school, scholastically and socially.

In addition to their applications and written testimonies, candidates had to be recommended by their pastor and Acteens leader.

The panelists and top teens were selected by WMU staff members and were announced during the WMU Jan. 7-11 executive board meeting.

The panelists will be featured in the April 1996 issue of Accent, with the top teens appearing in the June/July issue.

During 1996, panelists and top teens will provide leadership in state and associational WMU-related meetings. In addition, panelists will write for Accent and serve as pages at the June 9-10 WMU annual meeting and June 11-13 Southern Baptist Convention, both in New Orleans.

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Check with state WMU offices for photo possibilities.

CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "HMB study: Mega-churches the exception, not rule," dated 2/2/96, please change the sixth paragraph to read:

And while HMB researchers have no official definition for a "mega-church," Stanley said of the 39,571 Southern Baptist churches, only 504 have memberships of 2,500 and above. The median Southern Baptist church has 235 members, he added.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

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