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News Service of the Southern Baptist ConventionNATIONAL OF  
SBC Executive Com  
901 Commerce  
Nashville, Tennessee  
(615) 244  
Herb Hollinger, Vice Pre  
Fax (615) 742  
CompuServe ID# 70-**BUREAUS**

ATLANTA Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522, CompuServe 70420,250  
 DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232, CompuServe 70420,115  
 NASHVILLE Linda Lawson, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300, CompuServe 70420,57  
 RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151, CompuServe 70420,72  
 WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223, CompuServe 71173,316

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96-99

VIRGINIA--Lottie Moon offering posts 3rd straight gain.  
 NEW ORLEANS--SBC news advisory.  
 NEW ORLEANS--Evangelism, revival key thrusts for Chuck Kelley at New Orleans.  
 TEXAS--President's wife takes advantage of overhead witness opportunity.

Lottie Moon offering  
 posts 3rd straight gain

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
 6/07/96

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions posted its third straight gain in as many years and came just shy of \$90 million when the books closed May 31.

The record 1995 offering of \$89,019,719.75 represented an increase over 1994 of more than \$3.1 million, or 3.59 percent. It amounted to about 99 percent of the figure on which the Foreign Mission Board based its 1996 basic budget.

The offering will fund about half of the board's entire \$193 million budget. Most of the other half will come from the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' unified giving plan.

"The Lottie Moon receipts, paired with record levels of giving to the Cooperative Program, will enable us to continue to send out and support unprecedented levels of missionary personnel," said board President Jerry Rankin.

The offering will provide about \$3.66 million in 1996 for capital spending needs such as new construction and vehicles. The previous two offerings provided \$2.57 million in 1995 and \$1.92 million in 1994.

Southern Baptists had set a challenge goal of \$100 million for the offering. The budget which board trustees approved last fall earmarked \$10 million for "White Harvest" efforts in former communist countries of Eastern Europe.

Though disappointed to fall short of that challenge goal, Rankin said he nonetheless was excited to hear of high levels of giving -- "exceeding \$200,000 in several churches" -- and of many small churches "which represent the mainstream of Southern Baptists who gave a few hundred dollars but exceeded their goals."

He also noted the largest percentage increases in Lottie Moon giving "came from smaller state conventions and fellowships which have so many needs in their own churches and programs." He lauded them for recognizing "we are compelled to reach the uttermost parts of the earth as well as our own Jerusalem and Judea."

He praised "the diligent work and faithful support of the Woman's Missionary Union. Along with a significant role of the Brotherhood Commission and Baptist Men's organizations, the WMU is responsible for keeping missions a high priority and responding to the needs of missionaries serving through the Foreign Mission Board."

The goal for the upcoming Lottie Moon offering, generally collected by churches in December, is \$100 million, a 12.3 percent increase from this year's receipts. That will fuel the board's dual focus on The Last Frontier, the part of the world that has had little, if any, access to the gospel, and harvest fields, more traditional areas of work showing response to the gospel.

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"We are moving deliberately to reach every people group with the gospel," Rankin said. "We are hopeful Southern Baptists will give even more sacrificially this year and reach that goal so this momentum will not be diminished."

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NEWS ADVISORY

Baptist Press  
6/07/96

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Baptist Press will post coverage of the 1996 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention and pre-SBC meetings on SBCNet in CompuServe daily, beginning Monday, June 10.

Coverage from the meetings in New Orleans will be posted in two ways:

1) Major stories will appear in the regular posting of Baptist Press, to appear on SBCNet by 4 p.m. Eastern daily.

2) Specific stories on various SBC news and events will be posted in an "SBC.96" section in SBCNet's Ministry Forum B several times daily.

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Evangelism, revival key thrusts  
for Chuck Kelley at New Orleans By Tammi Ledbetter

Baptist Press  
6/07/96

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--For the new president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, the motivation of years of conservative resurgence "has been wrapped up in whether we as a denomination are going to fulfill the Great Commission."

Charles S. "Chuck" Kelley, 43, was named seminary president Feb. 23 after serving as a professor of evangelism since 1983. He has chaired the pastoral ministries division, directed field education and, most recently, led the school's Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Growth.

While completing research for his dissertation at New Orleans, Kelley conducted a study of Southern Baptist evangelism. He noted that Southern Baptists baptized about 220,000 people in 1945 and within 10 years raised that number to about 415,000. But in the next decade they were unable to pass 450,000 in baptisms.

"After growing 200,000 in 10 years, we have not grown 35,000 in 40 years," Kelley noted. "It was a real puzzle to me and I came to the conclusion a part of the problem was theology. If we did not have our theology right, we could not have a driving sense of sharing our faith."

Kelley said he observed firsthand what liberal theology did to fellow students while attending Baylor University in Texas where he earned his bachelor's degree in 1974. "I can tell you the names of guys I watched change as a result of their study of liberal theology," Kelley said. "They lost their heart for evangelism."

When he enrolled at New Orleans, the seminary was "pretty healthy theologically," Kelley said. He recalled the visit by a delegation of the SBC Peace Committee during the years of his doctoral work. "They concluded there were no major theological problems," he noted, giving his predecessor, Landrum Leavell, much of the credit for correcting problems that existed earlier.

"Dr. Leavell was until recent years the most conservative of all the six seminary presidents," Kelley said. "He was known for that and for a great emphasis on evangelism and missions."

Kelley observed Leavell's attention to hiring of faculty; those who came to the school knew "they were coming to teach for a conservative president."

Leavell kept the focus "on our work of getting people ready for ministry," Kelley said, "rather than choosing a side in the controversy." At the seminary, he said, he knows "everybody doesn't believe the way I do," but is quick to add, "They're in close enough proximity."

He contrasted the situation with that of another seminary where a professor serving prior to a conservative administration prayed "dear heavenly Mother."

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"This controversy was about things like that, not New Orleans Seminary." Many of the well-known leaders of the conservative resurgence hold degrees from New Orleans, such as Adrian Rogers, Paige Patterson, Richard Land and Jerry Vines. "None of them came after New Orleans, because it was generally solid," Kelley said.

Kelley said he plans to keep a focus on ministry preparation, having issued a clear mission statement for the seminary "to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries."

In his first chapel address to the seminary March 27, Kelley outlined five core values for the seminary:

-- doctrinal integrity, represented in "our beliefs: We will be a school built on the Word of God;"

-- spiritual vitality shown by "our zeal: We will be a worshiping community;"

-- mission focus, evidenced in "our passion: We are not here to get an education or to give an education. We are here to change the world. Seminary is the place to get tools in your toolbox to change the world;"

-- characteristic excellence, revealed in "our effort: All we do we will do very well to bring glory to God;" and

-- servant leadership reflected in "our attitude: Christ's message was to serve; we will be a community of servants."

The three men who pastored his home church of First Baptist, Beaumont, Texas -- T.A. Patterson, Jaroy Webber and Dallas Bivins -- all emphasized evangelism and preaching, Kelley said, and those became the passions of his life and teaching ministry.

"Some of my earliest memories are of Dr. Pat when he was pastor, and later Dr. Weber, sitting down with my dad and some of the men of the church, watching football on TV together.

"Always without exception they would talk about the Lord and their vision for reaching our community for Christ."

The real catalyst to Kelley's practice of evangelism came from his brother-in-law, Paige Patterson. Claiming Patterson and his sister had dated since the second grade, Kelley said, "I don't have a memory when he wasn't hanging around our house."

He recalled riding along with Patterson in taxi cabs and hearing him share his faith in Christ.

"One time he asked the man if anyone had ever talked with him about how to become a Christian," Kelley recounted. When the cab driver expressed an interest, Patterson said, "My young friend here is going to explain that."

Through such experiences Kelley began to see that he could talk about Jesus to others. That became a nightly routine after his second year of college when he was asked to join the staff of the Baptist Student Union.

As he talked with students in the dorms about their faith, Kelley said, "God really solidified in my heart a passion for evangelism and motivating and equipping people. I knew my thrust was going to be an itinerant ministry.

Later, his father-in-law, Bob Harrington, began working with him in street evangelism and crusade preaching. "It felt like home to me and I realized that was what God had gifted me in and was preparing me to do."

Making the move into teaching was a traumatic decision for Kelley. Even as he started his doctoral work, he couldn't give a clear reason why he was doing it other than God's direction.

He supposed it would develop discipline for study and improve his preaching as he planned a ministry of full-time evangelism.

"But soon after joining the faculty of New Orleans Seminary, I began to understand why God put me in that place," Kelley said.

When he asked evangelism students on the first day of his first class how many witnessed regularly, 60 to 70 percent said seldom or never. "Thirty<sup>^^</sup>five to 40 percent could not give a clear plan of salvation."

As he sat at his desk going through responses to the survey, knowing God had called those men and women to commit their lives to ministry though many "did not have a clue of how to explain the gospel," Kelley said, "I got on my knees and told the Lord I understand why you called me.

"I'll do all I can to be sure students who graduate from here go out knowing how to share their faith."

Kelley said he plans to keep that promise and fervently prays for the realization of another dream -- a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the campus of the seminary.

"I've not been able to find a record of any sustained revival in New Orleans," Kelley said, in spite of it being one of the oldest cities in America.

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President's wife takes advantage  
of overhead witness opportunity By Dena Dyer

Baptist Press  
6/07/96

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Step onto the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary campus and you'll see them. They're in Naylor Student Center, eating in the cafeteria. They're on rooftops, baking in the hot Texas sun. They often speak little English and frequently are ignored by a busy seminary community.

They are construction workers. But Paula Hemphill, wife of Southwestern President Ken Hemphill, remembered that the construction workers roofing her house this spring were more than "warm bodies."

"I didn't want these men who worked on my house to leave Southwestern without a witness," she said.

So she called Bill Sullivan, seminary director of building trades, who coordinates all roof repairs on the Fort Worth, Texas, campus.

"Mrs. Hemphill called me and asked my permission to give the workers Spanish Bibles. I told her she didn't have to have my permission!"

Sullivan said Hemphill then went to the campus Baptist Book Store and bought Spanish Bibles, children's books and tracts with her own money. Sullivan arranged for doctoral student Esteban Missena to translate as she thanked the workers for roofing the house, gave her testimony and gave them the gospel materials.

"Over the years, I've done this with people who have worked on my house," she said. "We need to be aware that people who are here for other reasons might not have had anyone to witness to them. We can't assume that they have."

Missena, a native of Paraguay, said the workers "received what Mrs. Hemphill had to say very well. They were very open. I was glad to be part of the experience, because so many people come here to work and we often don't take time to share the gospel with them. It was a good reminder."

Hemphill emphasized that her actions were not extraordinary. "I just wanted them to know that the best gift I could give them was what Jesus had given me," she said. "I asked them to read the tract on their own, and they said they would. We didn't want to belabor it -- but we did want to at least share with them." Sullivan said he was changed by the episode.

"I had gotten so wrapped up in the job, I forgot what was important. The Holy Spirit convicted me about being concerned about their spiritual lives. I had just been concerned about whether they were doing the job well. Here's the president's wife, and she was not above sharing Christ with them."

"It's a good lesson for all of us that live and work around the seminary," he added. "These people come to us, and they need to hear about Jesus. We don't have to go off campus to share the gospel."

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