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February 8, 1996

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Chuck Kelley nominated
for New Orleans presidency

Baptist Press
2/8/96

By Herb Hollinger & Debbie Moore

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Charles S. "Chuck" Kelley Jr., a New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary evangelism professor, has been nominated for president of the seminary. Trustees will meet on campus Feb. 22-23 to vote on the selection, according to Morris Anderson, chairman of the trustee presidential search committee.

Kelley, if elected, would be the eighth president of the 80-year-old seminary, the nation's third-largest, and would succeed Landrum P. Leavell II, who was president for 20 years until his retirement at the end of 1994.

The 12-member search committee reached a unanimous decision on Kelley in a meeting Feb. 6, said Anderson, pastor of First Baptist Church, Pigeon Forge, Tenn.

"I am excited about Dr. Kelley," Anderson told Baptist Press. "He's a scholar, without question, a church growth practitioner and has preached all over the world."

The rest of the 40-member trustee board was notified Feb. 8 by special mail of the Feb. 22-23 called trustee meeting. Anderson, who also is vice chairman of the NOBTS board of trustees, said trustees would meet with Kelley Feb. 22, followed by a short session on Feb. 23 and then the vote. Because Kelley is familiar to trustees, the sessions will probably not be long, Anderson said.

According to sources on the campus, Kelley's nomination will be popular with students, faculty and staff.

The selection process took about 14 months and was slowed by several top candidates who withdrew their names, including SBC President Jim Henry, an Orlando, Fla., pastor, and Fred L. Lowery, a Bossier City, La., pastor. Lowery, a seminary trustee, withdrew following his selection by the search committee but prior to a special called trustee meeting Nov. 8 to vote on his nomination. The search committee said it had received 25 to 30 recommendations during the year.

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Kelley, 43, has been director of the seminary's Center of Evangelism and Church Growth and chairman of the seminary's largest division, pastoral ministries, since 1993 as well as the Roland Q. Leavell Professor of Evangelism since 1983. He was the seminary's director of field education from 1983-93. He also has been director and an itinerant evangelist with Innovative Evangelism Inc., since 1975.

A much-requested public speaker throughout the Southern Baptist Convention, Kelley is recognized widely both for his evangelistic preaching and for his research in the area of "baby boomers" and "baby busters."

A native of Beaumont, Texas, Kelley received his theological doctorate in preaching from New Orleans Seminary in 1983, a master's degree in biblical studies in 1978, also from the seminary, and a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Baylor University, Waco, Texas, in 1974.

Kelley is the author of "How Did They Do It? The Story of Southern Baptist Evangelism" and four other books and writer of numerous evangelism training materials, including "The Roman Road" tract, teacher's guide, learner's guide and training video produced by the SBC Home Mission Board and used throughout the SBC during the 1995 "Here's Hope" nationwide evangelism campaign.

He is the brother of Dorothy Patterson, wife of Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

Kelley is married to the former Rhonda Harrington of Tuscaloosa, Ala., who is the daughter of the "Chaplain of Bourbon Street" Bob Harrington. An adjunct professor at the seminary, she earned a doctorate in special education and speech pathology from the University of New Orleans in 1983. From 1978-94, she worked and then directed the division of communicative disorders at Ochsner Clinic and Alton Ochsner Medical Foundation Hospital in New Orleans and now serves as a consultant for Ochsner's craniofacial team.

Rhonda Kelley was managing editor and contributor to the new Woman's Study Bible, produced at the end of 1995 by Thomas Nelson Publishers. Since 1989, she has been the host of "Woman to Woman," a weekly half-hour inspirational broadcast on the seminary's local FM Christian radio station and the local ACTS network, featuring interviews with various personalities on topics of interest to women. She also is associate director of Innovative Evangelism Inc.

Both have been active in Southern Baptist life and served on a number of denominational committees.

The Kelleys were married in 1974 and have no children.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by NOBTS' office of public relations.

**Former hostage in Kuwait
plans visit there in March**

By Erich Bridges

**Baptist Press
2/8/96**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Maurice Graham plans to return to Kuwait City in March, his first visit there since Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein allowed him and other American hostages to leave the U.S. Embassy five years ago.

The former Southern Baptist worker in Kuwait, now associate pastor of Bon Air Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., has been invited to participate in the dedication of a new embassy March 23. He also will take part in a eulogy for the old embassy compound, which will be torn down.

"It was our home when we were held hostage," he explained. "I guess that's my ministerial background. When something is laid to rest, you say a eulogy."

The building will become history, but the spiritual truths Graham learned while stranded there will live on in his heart. The experience still affects his life and the lives of his wife, Laurie, and sons Peter, 18, and Aaron, 15.

"It influences everything from how I see my children to how I interact with people in crisis," he reflected. "It's become a part of who I am."

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The Grahams, Southern Baptists' first and only workers in Kuwait, had been in the country less than three months when Iraq invaded Aug. 2, 1990. No strangers to turmoil, they had just transferred from ministry in Liberia, then being devastated by civil war. They came to work at the National Evangelical Church in Kuwait City, an international church that was -- and still is -- ministering to 30 language groups.

From their apartment in the church, the family heard gunfire and exploding bombs that terrible August day. They watched Iraqi forces storm Kuwait's national assembly building across the street. Then Iraqi soldiers entered their apartment four times, threatened them and began to ransack the church.

That's when the Grahams and their two sons, then 13 and 10, sought refuge at an American official's home and then the embassy. Graham became an unofficial chaplain to other Americans who fled to the compound. The couple helped start a nightly prayer service, a tiny oasis of calm in the chaos that raged around the embassy. They encouraged others (including Kuwait church members they counseled by phone), reassured their children -- and waited.

In early September, Laurie and the boys left Kuwait as part of a general exodus of foreign women and children allowed by Saddam Hussein. Graham and other men in the embassy were forced to remain behind, along with hundreds of other foreigners in Kuwait and Iraq -- pawns in Saddam's high-stakes game with U.S.-allied powers.

As war loomed in late 1990, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board launched a prayer and letter-writing campaign for the release of Graham and other foreigners in Kuwait and Iraq. Within days, Hussein pledged to release his foreign "guests." By Dec. 9, Graham was on his way home with more than 300 other Western hostages. Five weeks later, U.S.-led planes began bombing Iraq -- the beginning of the end of Iraq's adventure in Kuwait.

A decision by Hussein to hold on to the Western hostages in Iraq and Kuwait would have made an attack on him much more difficult. While watching recent TV news coverage marking the fifth anniversary of the war, Graham saw reporters ask former President George Bush why the hostages were freed.

Graham described Bush's basic response: "I don't have any idea. It doesn't make sense. It made my job a lot easier."

"He was right," Graham agreed. "It didn't make sense. But from a spiritual standpoint, I have no question in my mind that God changed the mind of Saddam Hussein to release us."

While in the embassy awaiting the unknown, Graham recorded a regular audio diary of events. He still listens to the tapes occasionally, and hears more in the tone of his voice than in the words themselves.

"Some days I would feel like ... I most likely will die," he recalled. "Other days I would think God has always been faithful to me and any day now I'll get out of here. Other days I would wonder how I would survive as a long-term hostage like Terry Anderson in Lebanon. Over four months you have a roller coaster of emotions, from being very hopeful ... to total despair."

Immediately after his release and reunion with his family, he recorded an additional 10-hour reflection on the experience for his family. It sits in a safe deposit box. Someday he, or perhaps one of the Graham sons, may develop the story more fully for public consumption. But the Grahams remain reluctant to talk about those days in great detail.

"It was sacred," Graham explained. "I don't know how else to say it. When it is ready to come out, if it ever is, then God will reveal it to me."

In the aftermath of the Kuwait ordeal, one of Graham's sons experienced significant symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Both boys had spent weeks stranded in Kuwait, followed by months of wondering if they would ever see their father again. For that and other family reasons, the Grahams opted not to return overseas. But once both boys are in college, their parents are open to follow wherever God may lead.

"Over the last five years, people have said to me, 'Boy, I bet you'll never go back to the Middle East,'" he said. "Most of the time I don't respond, but in my gut I feel just the opposite. I do want to go back, and even if I get in a situation like that again, God will be with me. When you've been through something that powerful, the sense of God's presence and love is overwhelming."

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(BP) photos (two horizontal) mailed 2/8/96 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outlines available in SBCNet News Room.

BSSB trustees vote to launch
conference center campaign

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
2/8/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Trustees of the Baptist Sunday School Board authorized a capital campaign to raise funds for Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist conference centers, pending approval by the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee during its Feb. 19-21 meeting.

The recommendation to proceed with a fund-raising effort was approved during the agency's trustee meeting in Nashville, Feb. 5-7, based on a feasibility study, development of program and facilities plans, development of a campaign plan and check-up interviews. Also, a blue-ribbon campaign advisory committee of trustees, pastors, laypersons and others developed a mission statement for the conference centers.

If the request to conduct a campaign is approved by the Executive Committee, the campaign, with a goal of at least \$20 million, will begin in March and continue through July 1997. Targeted to a limited number of about 500 donors able to make large gifts, the effort will not seek funds from churches or from personal resources that otherwise would be given to a local church or the Cooperative Program.

Resources obtained through the campaign would provide for needed repairs, upgrading and construction of new facilities required to serve current and future conference center guests into the 21st century, according to T. Michael Arrington, executive director of corporate affairs for the board.

Glorieta and Ridgecrest have histories as places where people have made life-changing spiritual decisions, BSSB President James T. Draper Jr. said, as well as places to receive training for service. He noted of the 1.8 million people who have attended the centers during the past 15 years, thousands of today's influential missionaries, pastors, denominational leaders and laypersons can point back to an experience at Glorieta or Ridgecrest as a spiritual turning point.

He said while this will be the first time the Sunday School Board has conducted a fund-raising campaign, the action "does not in any way suggest the board plans to raise funds for every ministry or program. The conference centers are unique in the ministry they provide."

He said a number of programming improvements, initiated by the board, will be introduced this summer. Registration for the new National Conference for Church Leadership, which in 1996 replaces Bible-Preaching conferences, already has exceeded combined attendance totals at both locations for those conferences in 1995.

In his opening session address to trustees, Draper announced the board's intention to provide help to ministers in crisis.

"One of the greatest heartaches I have personally is to see the chaos in churches around the convention," he said. Pastors and other church staff who are fired or are overcome with emotional, relational and moral difficulties need help in the areas of prevention, crisis ministry, restoration and transition to return to ministry or to another vocation, he said.

"It is my goal to have in place before the end of this year somebody who will lead us in this great ministry."

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He emphasized BSSB efforts to help ministers will be linked with those of state conventions, associations and churches.

"We will maximize our resources, not duplicate our efforts. We will be networking with others to see we do the best possible job.

"For the Sunday School Board to be the institution it can and must be into the 21st century, we must invest in relationships to do our work with the kind of energy that excites and challenges those with whom we relate," he said.

Relationships, materials produced and services provided to transform lives are the "abundant fruit" of the Sunday School Board, he continued. As the agency's staff struggled to move from operating in the red to the black during the last year, he acknowledged, people might have concluded the focus was only on money.

"While we must always seek to be the best possible stewards of our resources," he said, "dollars must only be a means to a greater end.

"Before we develop materials or services or ministries, we must focus on relationships, beginning with the one that is first in our lives, our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ."

In other matters, trustees:

-- received a first-quarter financial report of \$61.4 million in revenues, \$2.3 million above the same period last year.

-- heard plans to evaluate the objectives and clarify the business definition for Broadman & Holman Publishers before engaging in a search for a leader of the strategic business unit. According to Ted Warren, the board's executive vice president and chief operating officer, a personnel recommendation to fill the management vacancy is expected to be made in four to six months.

-- learned of production of a bimonthly magazine for ministers and their families. To be jointly produced with Focus on the Family, "Minister's Family" will be available by subscription beginning in October 1996. Modification of a quarterly magazine provided by the Evangelical Free Church of America was announced for use as an evangelistic resource to reach non-Christians in the "boomer," "buster" and "X" generations. "Pursuit" will be released beginning with the July-August-September issue. The change from magazine to newsletter format for "Experiencing God" was announced, effective July 1996.

-- approved a recommended church literature price increase of 3 percent be used in preparation of the 1996-97 budget.

-- responded to seven motions from the 1995 SBC annual meeting referred to the agency by the Executive Committee.

-- elected new officers, effective at the close of the meeting. Nick Garland, pastor of First Baptist Church, Broken Arrow, Okla., was elected chairman; Sid Nichols, pastor of Heritage Baptist Church, Dothan, Ala., recording secretary; and Gary MacManamy, pastor of Country Estates Baptist Church, Midwest City, Okla., was re-elected as vice chairman.

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HMB appoints first missionaries
affiliated with foreign agency By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
2/8/96

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)--A Brazilian couple working among Portuguese-speaking people in New York City are the first home missionaries jointly appointed by the Home Mission Board and Baptists in another country.

Sebastian Baptista and his wife, Ieda, were appointed Feb. 6 by the HMB executive committee. They also serve with the Brazilian Baptist Convention's World Mission Board. They are financially supported by Brazil's World Mission Board, the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Convention of New York.

The HMB executive committee also discussed the Southern Baptist Convention restructuring, noted highlights from last year, elected two men to staff positions, appointed two other missionaries and learned of 23 chaplain endorsements.

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Baptista earned degrees in theology from Bethel Theological Seminary in Brazil and business administration from Simonsen College in Brazil. In New York City he is a church starter in an area with 350,000 to 500,000 Portuguese-speaking people and three Portuguese-speaking churches. He has worked in the area since March and has started two congregations.

Joint appointments will help Southern Baptists reach more of the ethnic community in the United States, said Russell Begaye, HMB director of language church starting. Southern Baptists have yet to reach 3 percent of any ethnic group in the nation, he said.

Missionaries sent to the United States from abroad know where their countrymen live and how to contact them, Begaye said. Since they already know the language and culture of the ethnic group, they have fewer barriers in presenting the gospel, he added.

The Home Mission Board is considering joint appointments with Baptist groups in Korea, Romania, Argentina and other countries, Begaye added.

The proposed SBC restructuring involves reducing the number of SBC agencies from 19 to 12. It would eliminate the Home Mission Board and Brotherhood and Radio and Television commissions and create a North American Mission Board in their place. The three agencies to be dissolved have each created a transition committee. The chairmen of those committees, chairmen of each agency's board of trustees and presidents of the agencies have formed a coordinating committee.

Larry Lewis, HMB president, described the coordinating committee's first meeting as cordial and positive. Steve Swofford, chairman of the HMB board of directors, also called the meeting positive and urged HMB staff to be encouraged about the transition.

Lewis said he hoped the focus on restructuring would not deter the HMB from its priorities of evangelism, church starting and ministry.

Lewis called last year a "hallelujah year any way you look at it." He noted the celebration of the board's 150th anniversary, success of Southern Baptists' first simultaneous personal witnessing effort, moving to the new HMB headquarters, starting more than 1,300 churches and setting a record in gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

The only decrease Lewis noted was a 2 percent drop in Cooperative Program gifts compared to 1994. The Cooperative Program provides 35 percent of the HMB's income.

The executive committee also elected Tennessee native James Thompson as a financial analyst in church loans and South Carolina native David Putman as project development director in new church extension.

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Ministers wives network aims
to heal hurts, give nurture

By Kelli Williams

Baptist Press
2/8/96

ATLANTA (BP)--Often, the neediest people in churches today are the ministers' wives, acknowledged Catherine Hickem, co-director of the newly formed Ministry Wives Network International.

"We want to change that by equipping, educating, encouraging and empowering them," Hickem said of the support network, which aims to cross all cultural and denominational barriers. Its founding board members include well-known evangelicals Vonette Bright, Kay Arthur, Evelyn Christenson and Jill Briscoe.

"In many churches there's an either/or situation," said board member Kathryn Grant, a Southern Baptist pastor's wife 53 years. "Either you have a woman who is very committed, understands her role in the church and is happy in it, or you have a woman who doesn't understand her role or is very unhappy in the part she has been forced to play."

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The position of minister's wife in the Southern Baptist Convention and other denominations brings with it an array of unique challenges, concerns and opportunities, Hickem said. Many Christians would be surprised to learn of domestic abuse, infidelity and pornography in some clergy homes, she said, noting Ministry Wives Network International is dedicated to helping women face and solve such problems as well as realize their full potential as a Christian.

"Because of the nature of their husband's position, problems in the minister's home are often kept a silent secret," Hickem said. "Wives are afraid to share with others because they think their husband will lose his job.

"But we don't want to focus just on the problems," Hickem continued. "We want to help these women discover who they are as children of God and how he has gifted them as an individual. Then they can respond to God's call on their life as a Christian woman and not simply because of who they're married to."

The network began in March 1995 when Lynne Dugan, author of "Heart to Heart with Pastors' Wives," invited several of her book's contributors and others to Reston, Va., for a three-day brainstorming session on how to minister more directly to ministers' wives.

Grant, who contributed a chapter to Dugan's book, as did Hickem, knew the ministry would have to reach into every community, denomination and culture to be effective.

"My church, First Baptist in West Palm Beach, Fla., has 6,000 members and nine pastors' wives," Grant said, "and I've found that their problems and concerns are exactly the same as a woman in a 300-member Methodist church in the Midwest. We want them to realize the pressures and problems come from the position, not the denomination."

On Feb. 14-15, running concurrently with a national Promise Keepers pastors' conference in Atlanta, the Ministry Wives Network International will hold its first event, a series of four prayer sessions called "Turning Points in Prayer," where ministry wives can anonymously share concerns and needs individually with a volunteer prayer partner and with each other. "We want them to feel blessed and ministered to," said Hickem.

In August, Focus on the Family will host the Ministry Wives Network International leadership and training conference in Colorado. Ministry wives and others can learn how to establish a network in their community as a resource for local clergy wives of all denominations and cultures. "Our ministry is based on bridging those differences," said Hickem, who hopes to use the August conference to share ideas with other women who have already established local support networks.

"We're not going to reinvent the wheel; we're going to learn from the wheels that are already rolling," Hickem said.

Once the wheels are rolling, many more ministers' wives will know they aren't alone in their concerns and will find a base of support in each other, Grant said. "The one, almost universal characteristic of pastors' wives that I have seen is sadness," she said. "The church really has never learned or even thought about what is the role of the pastor's wife, but they have tremendous expectations for her and often for the children, too, and they are criticized if they don't live up to them. They are looked at and scanned rather than embraced."

These heavy, often unspoken, expectations can keep a woman from realizing her potential as a Christian and as a minister's wife, said Christenson, author of "What Happens When Women Pray."

"I see an incredible potential for a pastor's wife, but it's quite a neglected thing," Christenson said. "When I speak to clergy wives at conferences, most are very surprised when I say that."

Many women are unappreciated in their role by the church leaders and members, Grant said. "No one knows until they've been a pastor's wife what the telephone does!"

Teaching the skills of communication is therefore a top priority for the group. Once she is able to communicate God's call on her life to her husband, children and fellow church members, a minister's wife can begin to fulfill her potential as a Christian, Grant said.

"Some women don't feel called to the ministry, yet they're married to a man who is," said Hickem. They become entrenched in playing the role expected of them by the church, she said, and never seek what Christ would have them do for his kingdom.

"It's so much of a job for some women that they aren't even fed spiritually or feel free to worship on Sunday mornings," said Hickem, who knows these pressures from 38 years of experiences, first as a pastor's child then as a pastor's wife as well as a professional psychotherapist and conference speaker for her renewal ministry, Centerpeace.

"I was a good pastor's kid and a good pastor's wife but I didn't have any joy," Hickem said. "Then I let Christ fully empower everything about me and now my role of pastor's wife isn't based on my being good but on Christ and his goodness.

"The heart of what we're doing," Hickem said, "is helping women really understand their spiritual gifts and their value in the eyes of God for who they are called to be, not who they're expected to be. When they are at peace with themselves and strong in their relationship with Christ, typically other things will fall into place."

Hickem, Jane Berry, who also serves as the group's co-director, and other board members know the effect of their ministry could change the way the church serves the nation and the world.

"The ultimate impact we hope to make is to have women who are serving beside their husbands totally peaceful in their relationship with Jesus Christ and leading empowered lives for his kingdom," Hickem said.

"When that's done on a broad level, it's going to change the body of Christ as a whole. It's a ripple effect that starts at the top. The healthier the clergy marriage, the healthier the clergy family, the healthier the church, the healthier the body. That will allow Christ to use us all in a much more powerful way," Hickem said.

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Additional information about Ministry Wives Network International may be obtained by phoning 1-800-733-4712.

From dumpster to seminary dean,
Akin says it is all God's will By Dwayne Hastings

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2/8/96

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--In 1985, Danny Akin was cleaning out a dumpster behind a shopping center in McKinney, Texas. Just over a decade later, the Atlanta native is known across the Southern Baptist Convention as a gifted preacher and professor.

"I had a master's degree from Southwestern Seminary. I had served six and a half years on a church staff. I was in the midst of getting my Ph.D. But in July 1985, I was on the backside of a shopping center in McKinney, Texas, in 100-degree weather, pulling trash out of one dumpster and throwing it into another. I looked like Gehanna and smelled worse," recalled Akin, who on Feb. 6 was named vice president for academic administration and dean of the school of theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

The chore was not typically part of Akin's job as a courier -- the only job he could find after having been led of God to resign as associate pastor of a Texas church due to what he considered improper behavior by the pastor.

A trash container had overflowed and Akin's boss asked him to transfer some of the refuse into a second container. Yet it was in that dumpster, hip deep in trash, where Akin came to a clearer understanding that whatever God's will was -- it was to be enjoyed.

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As he stood in the dumpster, he had a heart-to-heart conversation with God: "I began to tell God that I thought that his ways were really messed up. I had been faithful. I had been true to his Word. Yet here I am stuck in a dumpster. What's the deal?" recounted Akin, currently vice president for student development and dean of students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. God spoke to his heart, Akin related, saying: "Danny, I want you to simply understand that if I want to -- it takes me no time to get you into a dumpster; I want you to also understand that if I put you in the dumpster, that's my will for your life. Can you be content with being in my will, no matter what?"

Akin said waiting on God's timing is worth the wait. Ten years, nearly to the month, after he was in the dumpster in Texas, Akin was preaching at the SBC Pastors' Conference in Atlanta's Georgia Dome.

"I know for a fact that if I had not been in the dumpster in 1985 making \$5.50 an hour, I never would have completed my Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Arlington," Akin said Feb. 7 in Southeastern's chapel service. "I never would have been called to Criswell College to teach; I would not be here today at Southeastern Seminary; and I never would have been asked to speak to the Pastors' Conference."

Akin acknowledged there are many people who feel like they, too, are in a dumpster -- emotionally and spiritually. "They don't understand what God is trying to do and where he is trying to take them," he said, explaining when he resigned from the church, he had nothing in the world to fall back on. "I couldn't even get pastor search committees for little churches to give me the time of day," Akin said, emphasizing his desperation as he confessed, "I would have served anywhere."

In searching for God's will in the midst of hopelessness, Akin cited Romans 12:1-2, wherein the apostle Paul says, "... present yourself to God as a living sacrifice." Agreeing with Paul, Akin said God's will is not only discovered in selling out to him, but God's will is also enjoyed -- no matter where his will leads.

"I have learned that in the midst of disappointment, betrayal, heartache and all manner of trials and difficulties, God's will is good," Akin said. "There is no place in all of life like being in the will of God.

"God wants all of you -- he's not interested in part, a portion, a majority -- he wants all of you," Akin continued. "He wants total consecration."

The results that transpire from giving oneself totally -- "100 percent with no strings attached" -- to Jesus Christ and his will are wonderful, Akin said.

Yet partial faithfulness is unfaithfulness; partial obedience is disobedience, Akin said. "God's expectation and his call upon our life is total commitment and consecration."

The greatest battles Christians fight are not those in the world, Akin said. Instead, the toughest fights are those fought between the ears -- in the believer's mind, he said. "That is the battlefield, the war zone where you will stand or fall in your commitment to Jesus Christ," Akin said. "Paul says you have to be changed, transformed, by the renewing of your mind."

Only by denying the conforming powers of the world and allowing the transforming powers of God's Word to be a reality in one's life will a person discover what God's will is, Akin explained.

"I didn't like being in the dumpster. I don't want to go back to the dumpster," Akin confessed. "But I can tell you this: There is no place like being in the will of God -- knowing that you have obeyed him, that you have honored him and that you have given everything you have as best you know how and trusted him with the rest."

SBC leader challenges Druin's
chapel remarks on SBC elections By Herb Hollinger

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Recent seminary chapel remarks by the editor of the Texas Baptist Standard have been called "off base" and an example of "historical forgetfulness" by a Southern Baptist Convention leader.

Toby Druin, in Jan. 30 chapel remarks at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, defended a recent editorial in the Standard which criticized the process by which Tom Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., was announced as a nominee for the SBC presidency. Druin said in his Baptist news reporting experience, which began 13 years before the controversy erupted in 1979, there was a time when the presidency was open to all Southern Baptists.

"Now, if you don't agree with the direction of the SBC over the last 16 years, you are judged to be ineligible before the nominations begin," Druin said. In his Jan. 17 editorial, Druin severely criticized SBC leadership which he said controls the process of selecting a president.

Bill Merrell, vice president for convention relations for the SBC Executive Committee, called Druin's remarks unfortunate and inaccurate.

Merrell said, "That Bro. Druin may hold an opinion on the suitability of this candidate or that one is perfectly satisfactory. However, for him to impugn democratic procedures used in choosing leaders is offbase. It is astonishing that he would use an invitation to speak in a Southern Baptist institution for the purpose of attacking convention processes and personalities. The lack of charity evidenced toward fellow Baptists is deeply disappointing. It is positively breathtaking that a well-informed person would assert that there is no longer an opportunity for all Southern Baptists to be involved in the process of electing a president.

"The fact is, any messenger to the SBC annual meeting can be nominated or can nominate any person they wish for president," Merrell said, "and that is precisely the way it has been over the history of the SBC."

As for the exercise of influence in the selection of leaders, Merrell said Druin seems to be practicing selective forgetfulness. "He appears to forget that the process he laments as politics was going on long before the 1979 conservative resurgence. Through the years, Baptists with different points of view and varied goals have used democratic processes to convince their brethren of the worthiness of their ideas or candidates. This system is not perfect but it is certainly not evil, and it is not necessary to demonize and impugn the motives of those who employ it.

"It seems to me the aboveboard public announcement of the intention to nominate Tom Elliff avoids the secretive manipulation C.R. Daley (retired state paper editor) openly acknowledged. I would argue that in the last 16 years messengers have known more about the beliefs, motivations and intentions of presidential candidates than in the previous generation.

"Messengers always make the final decision in electing those they wish to lead them. I believe their informed participation should be applauded, instead of being lamented. After all, if 'tell the people and trust the Lord' is to be our byword, we ought to be content with the result of so doing."

Merrell cited widely circulated remarks made by Daley, retired editor of Kentucky's Western Recorder, in a speech to an ethics class at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., in July 1984.

Daley, speaking to the class on "politics as practiced in the SBC, the ethical implications of those politics," told the class "in a sense they're (the conservatives/fundamentalists) right; prior to 1979, there had been behind the scene manipulations, in which a person whose time had arrived -- if you please -- was sort of agreed upon as being the candidate of the establishment."

Merfell, who furnished a tape of Daley's remarks to Baptist Press, said Daley made an unambiguous admission that manipulations were consciously practiced by the governing establishment prior to 1979 to help elect those the establishment agreed upon and to block those they did not wish to see elected.

Daley said in the tape: "(The establishment prior to 1979) did maintain something of a monopoly of this office (the presidency of the convention)."

Daley said Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova (suburban Memphis), Tenn., was seen by the establishment as a "grievous threat to the SBC as we had known it" in the mid-1970s.

Said Daley, "Some of us editors began to write and talk about leaders we needed for the SBC; it didn't take a great prophet to see that the kind of leader most of us felt was needed for president was like James Sullivan, retired Baptist Sunday School Board president. It was with my mind on him that I described paragraph after paragraph the kind of leader we needed for president of the convention. This was done by others.

"He was used by some of us to head off Adrian Rogers, if you please," Daley said.

Daley said Jimmy Allen, former Texas pastor and president of the SBC Radio and Television Commission, was the first person who openly asked to be supported for convention president.

"So it was not an inerrancy candidate who was the first one, actually, who went out seeking votes," Daley said. Knowing it would be either Allen or Rogers, Daley said with the support of state paper editorials, like the Western Recorder, Allen was elected in 1977.

In 1979, "the manipulations some of us thought were needed to head off the inerrancy movement bogged down," Daley said. Rogers was first in what became a succession of presidents supported by the conservative resurgence in the SBC.

In his class speech, Daley called his remarks "a confession on my part I participated in at least a three-year holdoff of the inerrancy move(ment)."

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Nancy Sullivan's heart for wives
translates into endowment fund By Barbara Denman

Baptist Press
2/8/96

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (BP)--Nancy Sullivan has a heart for ministers' wives. Although she can't meet their every need, she has found one way she can offer support.

Sullivan, wife of John Sullivan, executive director-treasurer of the Florida Baptist Convention, served as president of the Ministers' Wives of the Southern Baptist Convention when it met in Indianapolis in 1992.

This group sponsors the annual SBC Ministers' Wives Luncheon, the only time the women gather for a time of spiritual refreshment and encouragement and to support others with similar roles.

While she was leading the group, Sullivan became concerned by the cost of the luncheon tickets, which sometimes could amount to \$20 per person. "Many of the ministers' wives would not be able to justify spending \$20 for one meal when they're on their husband's expense account," Sullivan said.

Yet Sullivan is aware of how expensive it is to pay for the luncheon, subsidize the cost of the speaker and rent the facility. "You even have to pay \$100 to rent a piano for an hour," she added.

At one time SBC agencies helped with the cost, but many of them have had budget reductions and have had to decrease their annual subsidy.

Then the idea hit her. Why not establish an endowment and subsidize the cost of the luncheon tickets with the earnings of the principal? Which is exactly what she did.

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So for the past four years, Sullivan has been on a crusade of her own, asking friends, acquaintances, churches and agencies to contribute to the cause. One businessman gave her \$5,000. Others have given small amounts. She is quick to say every bit is appreciated.

"We hope to cut the price of the tickets to \$10-12 to make it more feasible for everyone to come," she said.

Since she began, she has raised \$55,000, but her goal is \$100,000.

Sullivan's love for the minister's wife goes beyond the annual meeting. When her husband was pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., the couple saw that every staff wife attended a statewide ministers' wives retreat -- and that the wives' husbands were available that weekend to care for the children. This year for the first time, Sullivan is planning with the women's missions and ministries department a retreat for all Florida Baptist ministers' wives.

Sullivan will continue receiving contributions to subsidize the SBC Ministers' Wives Luncheon. An endowment fund has been established at the Florida Baptist Credit Union. Contributions to the SBC Ministers' Wives Endowment Fund are received in care of the Executive Director-Treasurer's Office, Florida Baptist Convention, 1230 Hendricks Ave. Jacksonville, FL 32207.

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'Something different' needed
to reach 'busters,' he says

By C. Lacy Thompson

Baptist Press
2/8/96

PINEVILLE, La. (BP)--Dieter Zander recalls a conversation he had with one of the "baby buster" generation.

Zander asked the young person if he were interested in spiritual things. "Totally," the youth replied in typical buster fashion.

However, when Zander then asked if the young man was interested in church, he replied, "Not really."

Zander asked why that was so. "Because I don't think they're much interested in me," the young man answered.

"And my question to you is, are you?" Zander asked as he related the story at the Louisiana Baptist Evangelism Conference. "How interested are you? How interested is your church in the next generation? Because you need to know they are very interested in spiritual things."

That is not immediately obvious -- after all, baby busters are different -- really different -- from previous generations.

And that means it is going to take something different to reach them for Christ, insisted Zander, a minister to baby busters at Willow Creek Community Church in suburban Chicago who spoke about reaching busters during two sessions of the Jan. 22-23 conference at Louisiana College in Pineville. In both instances, Zander cited the importance of understanding, accepting and valuing busters.

Understanding means to realize what has shaped the generation, Zander noted. This can be seen in examining the differences between American generations.

"Builders" represent the older generation of Americans, 55 million strong, born from 1925-45. Their formative influences were the Great Depression, the rural lifestyle, two world wars, Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, no television, big band music, family, school and church. They are loyal, hardworking, patriotic, frugal and cautious.

"Boomers" represent the largest generation of Americans, 76 million strong, born from 1946-64. Their key influences include the Cold War, technological and educational advances, economic growth, the space race, the murders of John Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, television, rock and roll, Vietnam, Kent State, Watergate and the civil rights movement. They are independent, activist, cause-oriented and opportunistic.

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And then there are the "busters," about 42 million strong, born from 1965-80. They are marked by the Roe vs. Wade decision on abortion, divorce, blended families, the information explosion, the Challenger tragedy, video games, cable TV, fall of the Berlin Wall, the Persian Gulf War, terrorism and AIDS. They tend to feel alone, unconnected and tentative because world is not a sure place. They place high value on community and peers but are very cynical nonetheless.

"They just don't believe all that easily," Zander said. "A lot of the things that the builders and the boomers could still believe in, busters just don't, whether that's the political system, government, the church. They're basically saying, 'The only thing I can really believe in is who I am, what I'm about and what my friends are about.' That's about the extent of it."

While it may be easy to do so, however, Christians cannot ignore busters or the challenge of reaching them with the gospel, Zander said.

"Christianity is one generation away from extinction. Always has been. Always will be. ... And if we do not effectively and passionately share the gospel of Christ with this next generation and help them share the gospel with the generation to follow and so on, it will just stop."

Ensuring that it does not just stop with the buster generation, however, begins with understanding they are different, Zander said.

They process truth differently, he noted. They are children of the postmodern world and cannot be understood without understanding that major shift.

The Enlightenment Age -- with its emphasis on human reasoning and logic -- is ending, Zander said. Now, in the postmodern world, there is no source of truth beyond one's personal opinions. Now, the source of determining truth is through comparing stories. Now, busters decide what is right and wrong by getting together with friends and talking.

In like fashion, busters are different in what they look for from church. Previous generations came looking for direction and truth. Busters come looking for a place to belong, for community, Zander said. "When a buster comes to your church, what they're asking is, 'Can this be a place where I can belong?' ... That's more important than good music, good sermons, good coffee."

And that means acceptance is a key to reaching busters, Zander explained. Acceptance does not mean one has to like how a buster lives and thinks, he said, but it does mean following the biblical example of accepting them where they are. "After all, where would we be with Christ if God had said, 'OK, before I accept you, you need to become like this or this'? That's the whole idea of grace -- we were once lost but now we're found because of grace. That's the same thing we need to extend to busters. We have to say to them, 'I accept you where you are, with all your questions, with all your confusion, with your anger.'"

Having accepted them, Christians then must show the love of Christ to busters, demonstrating that Christ is real in their own lives and sharing the stories of how Christ impacts their lives, Zander explained.

Incarnation is key to reaching busters. "It's not what you say but how you live. That's always been true. But it is essential now. ... Incarnation. Being Christlike. Letting Christ show in your life. It's as simple as that. It's not easy. But it's essential."

Accepting also means embracing new ways for communicating to busters. They value interaction. Sitting and listening to a typical sermon does not connect with them.

Responding to that shows a buster they are valuable, Zander said. He urged churches seeking to reach busters to include them in services, to give them outlets for ministry and expression, to involve them in church life. In the past, people made a decision for Christ, then became involved in church life. For busters, the opposite is the key -- they need to experience church life first, which will help move them toward a decision for Christ.

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Zander noted busters do not feel good about themselves, which makes the task of communicating love to them more difficult. "They're going to have a hard time receiving love. They're going to have a hard time believing they are the beloved of God. But keep giving them that message. Because when that finally breaks through, it will transform their hearts just like it transformed yours and mine."

Some despair at reaching busters, Zander acknowledged. So many things will have to be done differently -- and so much remains to be understood, he said. Nevertheless, he maintained the generation is poised for revival -- and it will not be a particular formula or style that will reach them.

"I think there's a great deal of hope for this generation. ... But it isn't going to be a particular form that wins it. It's going to be the heart. It's going to be when a person finally says, 'I'm going to try as best I can to understand them and accept them and value them.' Then, you're already 75 yards down the field. Now, it's just a matter of adjusting a few other things."

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Zambia promises permits
for FMB missionaries

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
2/8/96

LUSAKA, Zambia (BP)--Zambia has promised to provide long-sought work permits for Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries who have decided to help a new breakaway group of Baptists there.

Immigration workers for the southern African nation had withheld permits at the direction of the Baptist Convention of Zambia since 1993. Since then some missionaries have transferred to other countries or resigned, while others are reapplying every 30 days to stay in the country.

But during a Feb. 2 meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, the country's chief immigration officer promised to renew permits that expire in February for two missionaries. The meeting included the executive secretary of the newly formed Baptist Fellowship of Zambia, which registered with the government in December and in January asked missionaries to help its member churches spread the gospel.

Also at the meeting were convention representatives and missionary Dan Sowell, the Foreign Mission Board's mission administrator for Zambia. This time the immigration officer gave Sowell the green light for FMB missionaries to keep working in Zambia.

"If you choose to leave because this other group is bullying you, then that's your decision," Sowell quoted the officer as saying after the meeting. "Who you choose to work with is up to you."

During the Feb. 2 meeting, Sowell told the immigration officer the 21 missionaries left could no longer work with the Zambian convention because of theological differences, he said. The convention has seen itself as a hierarchy with the power to discipline churches and dismiss pastors -- a departure from Southern Baptists' view upholding the right of churches to govern themselves.

The convention's general secretary contacted the government in August 1993 asking to control who received work permits. The organization of FMB missionaries in Zambia insisted the convention had no right to control mission personnel.

No answer to the standoff seemed forthcoming, until the fellowship formed. About 50 Baptist leaders who form the core of the fellowship walked out during the convention's annual general session in November.

The struggle between Zambian Baptists and the mission erupted unexpectedly as churches were growing and missionaries were implementing a model plan of nationalizing mission resources by the year 2000, turning over Baptist work to the convention. The mission still owns a seminary and its office buildings but has given up ownership of some church buildings.

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Mildred Lovegren dead at 76,
41-year missionary to Chinese

CHERRY GROVE, Ore. (BP)--Mildred E. Lovegren, a retired Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary who worked in ministry to Chinese overseas for 41 years, died Feb. 6. She was 76.

Lovegren was appointed to work in China in 1944 and lived one term there before the communist revolution. She worked the balance of her career in Hong Kong and nearby Macao, where she helped pioneer Southern Baptist mission work.

During recent years, as China opened some to the West, she traveled about once a year back to China. There she sought out former students she knew before the communist revolution.

"Thousands of churches in China are open again," she said after a trip to China in 1983. "The Lord God who opened those churches can also keep them open." She was planning to visit China again this summer.

She was born in China to missionary parents. The family was separated when her father, Levi A. Lovegren, was imprisoned by Chinese communists for about five years. He died in 1983. Her mother, Ida, died in 1972. Her brother, L. August Lovegren, was a Foreign Mission Board missionary physician and surgeon in Jordan for 36 years.

Lovegren spent her career working with students and youth. She grew up in Yachow (now Yaan), China, and after her appointment was assigned to Kweilin, China, in 1946. After the communist revolution forced missionaries out, she moved to Hong Kong in 1953, and then to Macao in 1978. She retired in 1985.

Lovegren also lived in Minnesota, where she finished high school and attended the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and Bethel College and Seminary in St. Paul.

She graduated from Howard College (now Samford University) in Birmingham, Ala., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Surviving her are two brothers, L. August Lovegren of Cedartown, Ga., and Norman Lovegren of New Orleans, and a sister, Edith Lambert of Highland, Calif. She was preceded in death by an older sister, Anna Louise, who died at age 7.

Services are scheduled Feb. 9 at First Baptist Church in New Orleans, and Feb. 13 in Oregon. Burial will be in Cherry Grove, Ore.

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