

February 22, 1962

Please observe release date.  
For release March 1, 1962Total 1961 Receipts  
Pass \$500 Million

NASHVILLE (BP)--Total gifts through Southern Baptist Convention churches in 1961 exceeded the \$500 million mark for the first time, according to the annual release of figures by the research and statistics department of the Baptist Sunday School Board here.

Total gifts of \$501,301,714 represented an increase of more than \$20 million over those in 1960. Included in these gifts was a record amount of \$84,434,006 for missions and benevolences, an increase of over \$2-1/2 million, or 3.1 per cent.

J. P. Edmunds, Nashville, research and statistics department secretary, and the denomination's statistician, pointed out the continued growth in Convention membership. For the fifth successive year, the membership gain exceeded 240,000; the net increase of 246,897 for 1961 pushed the final membership figure to 9,978,488.

It appeared the 10 million mark would be crossed in 1962.

Churches now number 32,598, an increase of 347. Churches and missions are located in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. These churches are classified by location as: open country, 15,624; village, 4,346; town 3,700; and city, 8,926.

Since 1955, the number of "part-time" churches has decreased from 8,318 to 5,339, while the number of "full-time" churches has grown from 21,657 to 27,244.

Sunday schools, reported by all but 409 churches, showed an enrolment of 7,506,846. The increase in enrolment of 124,296 exceeded that reported for the previous year. Southern Baptist Sunday school enrolment continues to be the largest of any denomination in the United States.

A "significant" increase in baptisms was reported for 1961, the figure reaching 403,315, or 16,846 more than reported for the previous year, Edmunds said.

Training Union, a Sunday evening study group for all ages, had an enrolment of 2,724,369, a gain of 59,639, or 2.2 per cent. Men's Brotherhood enrolment totalled 392,482, a slight decline, while Royal Ambassadors (boys) numbered 235,605. Woman's Missionary Union showed an enrolment of 1,496,634, up 12,045 over the total for 1960.

Vacation Bible school enrolment continued its steady climb, reaching 3,088,721, for a gain of 83,991. Choirs in the churches reported an enrolment of 715,104.

Churches again added significantly to their existing buildings. Church property value increased by \$180.8 million to a total of \$2,385,175,418. Whereas it took Southern Baptist Convention churches 108 years to accumulate a building investment of one billion dollars, the second billion dollars of property value was added in just six years.

This comparison reflects both the extreme inflation of monetary values and the recent enthusiasm of churches in remodeling and erecting church buildings, according to Edmunds.

-30-

Not to be released until March 1, 1962.  
Please observe.

(Statistical sheet attached)

February 22, 1962

2

Baptist Press

Please Observe  
For release March 1, 1962

	1961	1960	Change	Per C nt Change
Churches	32,598	32,251	347	-
Membership	9,978,488	9,731,591	246,897	2.5
Baptisms	403,315	386,469	16,846	4.4
Sunday school enrolment	7,506,846	7,382,550	124,296	1.7
Training Union enrolment	2,724,369	2,664,730	59,639	2.2
WMU enrolment	1,496,634	1,484,589	12,045	.8
Men's Brotherhood	392,482	395,487	-3,005	-.7
RA enrolment	235,605	223,618	11,987	5.4
VDS enrolment	3,088,721	3,004,730	83,991	2.8
Choir enrolment	715,104	646,696	68,408	10.6
Church property value	\$2,385,175,418	\$2,204,351,566	\$180,823,852	8.2
Mission gifts	\$84,434,006	\$81,924,906	\$2,509,100	3.1
Total gifts	\$501,301,714	\$480,608,972	\$20,692,742	4.3

-30-

Please observe release date of March 1, 1962.

Latin Refugee Problem  
People, Not Statistics

By Walker L. Knight

MIAMI (BP)--There's hardly a United States citizen anywhere who has not read of the thousands (100,000 approximately) of Latin Americans who have fled the growing Communistic influence in Cuba and other South and Central American countries.

They reach this sunny, tropical city at the rate of 1,600 to 2,000 a week. They come by any and every means--by 'plane direct from Havana or by way of other countries, by large and small boat, with their families or without them.

Miami has become a refugee funnel, with the big end turned toward Cuba and the small end toward the rest of the United States. And the funnel is about full, but only an outgoing trickle relieves the pressure on this generous city.

The best efforts of government, civic and religious groups have resettled only about 500 a week, leaving between 1,000 and 1,500 to swell the crowded facilities of Miami.

These are the statistics, but this is not a story about numbers. It concerns people. And a visit to Miami by a concerned person reveals the warmly human and touching plight of a proud, intelligent, educated people.

You quickly realize these are the better educated and the once prosperous middle class. You meet doctors, judges, ministers, salesmen, businessmen and other professional people.

Each 'plane is met by scores of friends and relatives already in the United States. The reunions are strongly emotional, as wives meet husbands, as children are smothered by tearful grandparents. There are few words at first, only a physical contact as though it were necessary to make certain it's really happening. Then there is the flood of explanation and instruction.

Who are these people? What do they do now?

There's 34-year-old Miguel Lopez, a thickset, friendly businessman who reached Miami less than three months ago. His attractive wife, Glauca, and two boys had come earlier.

Miguel left an adequate business which specialized in women's apparel, which his wife operated, and a highly successful position as a salesman for Procter and Gamble.

This family is second generation Baptist. Mrs Lopez's father was a pastor of Baptist churches for 40 years under the American Baptist Convention.

Today they are active in the Spanish department of the Flagler Street Baptist Church, where Miguel teaches the men's class.

He works three hours a day, studies English five hours a day and hopes for resettlement to another section of the country where he might find adequate employment.

But Miguel is one of the more fortunate of the refugees. He somehow managed to bring some money into the United States. Francisco Taracido, a judge in Cuba, did not; neither has he found employment.

He and his wife proudly show the visitor pictures of their attractive home in Havana, pictures which Francisco took as a better than average amateur photographer. His four children are quickly adjusting to Miami schools, but the adjustment for him is more difficult. He very much wants employment and resettlement.

Otoniel Martinez counts himself as fortunate indeed. He has found resettlement. In fact, he is one of the first to be re-located under the newly launched relief and resettlement program of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Martinez was a young pharmacist who fled Communist oppression in Cuba only to find it "fast-growing" in Colombia. He had worked for an American pharmaceutical firm, which transferred him to Cali, Colombia, where he sold drugs and taught in the university.

"The Communists were making such strong advances in Colombia I left," he said.

In Miami he contacted Robert Fricke, the Home Mission Board's director of relief and resettlement and a former missionary teacher in Cuba. Through Fricke and the Woodland Hills Baptist Church, where Otoniel's sister attends, he found employment at the Georgia Baptist Hospital.

Such stories can be told thousands of times, and Southern Baptists are a part of the story.

The Home Mission Board has assigned two workers to the problem--Fricke in Miami and R. G. Van Royen of Dallas, who is leading in the organization of state and associational committees for resettlement.

The board has provided \$20,000 for emergency relief, and Southern Baptists have been asked to give \$50,000 as a part of the \$2,900,000 goal for the Annie Armstrong Offering for home missions this March. All over and above the goal will be divided 50-50 to Latin relief and church site loan funds.

The Southern Baptist program is more than a material meeting of needs; it is also a spiritual ministry which already has resulted in the winning of many of the refugees to faith in Christ.

As layman Reno Garcia of Miami says, "God is providing us with the greatest mission opportunity of the century to win these people now and send them back to win Latin America."

-30-

Virginia Director  
Heads Student Men

(2-22-62)

MEMPHIS (BP)--W. H. "Bill" Jenkins, Richmond, state Baptist student director for Virginia, has been elected president of the State Baptist Student Directors Association.

The group includes directors of student work serving the state Baptist conventions and general associations cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Also elected at the meeting here was Aubrey L. Hawkins, Atlanta, director for Georgia Baptist Convention, as secretary. This was the third annual meeting for this group.

-30-

C O R R E C T I O N:

To story of 2-16-62, "Communism Series Suggested To Editors," in graph 6 line 2, please change copy to read under subitem (3)

(3) Communism and the Baptist people...making it "and" instead of "in" as sent.

Baptist Press, Nashville