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96-8

GEORGIA--'People Count' is '96 theme for season of home missions; clip art.

KENTUCKY--Danny Akin being considered for Southern v.p. vacancy.

GEORGIA--Abortion alternatives office gaining recognition, Boothe says.

OKLAHOMA CITY--BGCO board to decide Jan. 19 on Anthony Jordan as new exec.

OKLAHOMA CITY--Seniors recycle literature in worldwide ministry; photo.

VIRGINIA--Services cancelled, but ministry continues for Virginia Baptists.

'People Count' is '96 theme  
for season of home missions

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press  
1/17/96

ALPHARETTA, Ga (BP)--With an emphasis on chaplaincy and home missionaries, "People Count" is the theme of this year's season of home missions.

The season, from mid-February to mid-March, includes the Week of Prayer for Home Missions, church study materials on chaplaincy, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and a Sunday school emphasis day on home missions.

Woman's Missionary Union has adopted a \$42 million goal for the 1996 offering. Last year, the offering raised a record \$38.9 million.

The home mission study will focus on chaplains, who are endorsed by the HMB Chaplains Commission. With the title "Going Where Others Cannot Go," the study showcases ministries chaplains can accomplish often better than a traditional church congregation, said Joe Westbury, coordinator for the study.

"I learned that chaplains are in a lot more places than I'd imagined," he said. "I didn't realize there are a tremendous number of chaplains serving in business and industry."

This year's Week of Prayer for Home Missions will be March 3-10.

Missionaries whose work is profiled are:

-- Yolanda Barraza, associate director of The Baptist Clinic, El Paso, Texas.

-- Urban Green, teacher at the Baptist Education Center, Tulsa, Okla.

-- Ed Pope, director of evangelism for the Dakotas.

-- Williamor Marquez, Filipino church starter in Boston.

-- Grace Kirkpatrick, associate director of Richmond, Va., Oregon Hill Baptist Center.

-- Richard Lee, African American church starter in Jackson, Tenn.

-- Jonathan Campbell, church planter strategist in Riverside, Calif.

-- Joseph Boney, recent Mission Service Corps volunteer in Thompson Falls, Mont.

March 10 will be home missions day for Southern Baptist church Sunday schools.

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A list of the chaplains profiled in the home mission study, with their place of service, has been posted in the SBCNet News Room. People Count clip art was recently mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

**Danny Akin being considered  
for Southern v.p. vacancy**

**By Art Toalston**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Daniel "Danny" L. Akin is a candidate for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary posts of vice president for academic administration and dean of the school of theology.

Akin, 39, is to meet with the faculty the afternoon of Jan. 18 at Southern's Louisville, Ky., campus concerning the role that would involve oversight of the seminary's entire academic program.

Akin has worked at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., since 1992 as vice president of student services, dean of students and assistant professor of Christian theology.

Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr., in a Jan. 16 memo to faculty members, stated: "I am pleased to take this opportunity to invite you to a coffee/reception designed to introduce Dr. Daniel Akin to you as a candidate for the position of Vice President for Academic Administration and Dean of the School of Theology."

If tapped to fill the positions, Akin would succeed David S. Dockery, who is leaving the seminary to become president of Union University, Jackson, Tenn., June 1. Dockery has been theology school dean since 1992 and vice president for academic administration since 1993.

Both the vice presidency and deanship only require appointment by Mohler. Adding Akin to the faculty would require a trustee vote. The next trustee meeting is slated April 15-17.

Mohler wrote to faculty members that Akin and his wife, Charlotte, "will be on campus this week for a series of meetings related to our search process for this position."

Akin was professor of New Testament, theology and history at Criswell College from 1986-1992.

He was on the staff of First Baptist Church, Dallas, from 1977-1978 and 1988-92, and was associate pastor of Audelia Road Baptist Church, Dallas, 1985-88, and assistant pastor of Northlake Baptist Church, Dallas, 1978-84.

Akin, a 1980 graduate of Criswell College, Dallas, earned a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in 1983 and a doctorate from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1989.

With Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, Akin is coauthor of the upcoming New American Commentary volume on the Epistles of John, to be published by Broadman & Holman of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

He and his wife have four sons: Daniel Nathan and Jonathon David, both 15; Paul Micah, 14; and Timothy Michael, 10.

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**Abortion alternatives office  
gaining recognition, Boothe says**

**By David Winfrey & Sarah Zimmerman**

**Baptist Press  
1/17/96**

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)--Established eight years ago, the Home Mission Board's alternatives to abortion office offers resources and training to Southern Baptists interested in offering crisis pregnancy counseling.

Director Sylvia Boothe said the office has gained recognition, and work, as more people learn her office is available to help churches and associations respond to crisis pregnancies. "I think there's more awareness as we go along that there's something positive that we can do for these young women," she said.

"It's one thing to say no, that abortion's not the answer to an unplanned pregnancy," she added. "But we as Christians, I feel, are very strongly challenged to provide the resources needed by a young woman facing a crisis pregnancy. That's what a crisis pregnancy center does."

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The Alternatives to Abortion office offers 18-hour training sessions for churches and Baptist associations starting crisis pregnancy centers. Boothe also leads 12-hour conferences on other forms of ministries for crisis pregnancies. "The cry of people wanting to do something is coming from the pew and the local pastors," she said.

Nationally, about 1.5 million babies -- or one in every 2.8 conceived -- are aborted each year in America, Boothe said. Jan. 21 is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday for Southern Baptists.

The Alternatives to Abortion office offers two books and two videos as resources:

-- "Help, I'm Pregnant" is a 14-minute video introducing the concept of crisis pregnancy centers.

-- "Heart of the Matter" is a 24-minute video presenting ultra-sound pictures of a developing baby and explanations of abortion procedures and post-abortion trauma. Hosted by TV actress Lisa Whelchel, the video also includes interviews with women who have chosen abortion, adoption and single parenting.

-- "No Easy Choices" is a book written by Boothe, offering advice on how to minister to women in crisis pregnancies.

-- "Not An Easy Time," is another book written by Boothe. It is intended for young women who are pregnant. It includes information about personal care and where to find help. It also includes a message about God's love and forgiveness.

These resources can be purchased from HMB customer services by calling toll-free at (800) 634-2462. A fax order can be placed to 1-800-253-2823. "Help, I'm Pregnant" also is available from local Baptist associations.

More information is available from the Alternatives to Abortion office at 1-800-962-0851.

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BGCO board to decide Jan. 19  
on Anthony Jordan as new exec

By Dave Parker

Baptist Press  
1/17/96

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--The executive director search committee of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma has recommended for the post an Oklahoma City pastor and former president of the state convention.

Anthony Jordan, 46, will be presented to a special called meeting of the BGCO board of directors, planned for 10 a.m. Jan. 19 in the Baptist Building chapel.

If approved, he will succeed William G. Tanner as the convention's eighth executive. He will start work May 1 but must still be approved by messengers to the BGCO annual meeting in November.

Jordan has been pastor of Northwest Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, since 1982. He also is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

Tanner, who is retiring effective June 30, took the Oklahoma position in 1986 after 10 years as president of the Home Mission Board. He also previously served as president of Oklahoma Baptist University.

Keith Russell, search committee chairman and pastor of First Baptist Church, Elk City, said the committee felt God's leadership in calling Jordan.

"Our priority was to find the man we felt like God was leading us to, to lead Oklahoma Baptists," Russell said. "We feel like Anthony Jordan is that man. The committee feels real good about this recommendation and hopes and prays that Oklahoma Baptists will, too.

"A lot of people who have been in the state of Oklahoma very long know Anthony Jordan well," Russell said. "We know him to be a man of great integrity. We know him to be a strong conservative and also a man with a real gentle spirit, a tender heart, and somebody that identifies well with the rank and file of Oklahoma Baptists."

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During meetings held at Falls Creek Baptist Convention Center, near Davis, Okla., and across the state, Russell said Oklahoma Baptists noted certain qualities they wanted in their executive director: good leadership skills, a good communicator and a good administrator.

"The qualities that the people are looking for are the same qualities that Anthony Jordan has," Russell said.

Tanner said he was "personally delighted" the committee had selected Jordan.

"Not only has he been a good leader during the entire decade I have served in Oklahoma, but he is also a wonderful friend," Tanner said. "He is one of those rare combinations of an outstanding leader, dynamic preacher, excellent administrator and a person who cares deeply about others.

"Because of his service and tenure to the BGCO, I personally cannot think of anyone I know who is better prepared or qualified to serve as executive director-treasurer," Tanner said. "He and (his wife) Polla are examples of Christian leadership in their home with Alisha and Adrian, as well as a family who works at balancing its Christian commitment with living.

"I predict these will be some of the finest days in our history."

During Jordan's tenure at Northwest, the church has grown even though it is in an inner-city transitional area. According to figures published in the BGCO annual, from 1983-95 baptisms totalled 1,002, an average of 77.07 per year. Baptisms ranged from 50 in 1993 to 164 in 1984.

Church membership grew also, from 2,829 to 3,801. Cooperative Program giving rose from \$77,543 to \$129,333, with a low of \$73,830 in 1985 and high of \$134,289 in 1993. Total missions gifts grew from \$141,536 to \$184,552 in 1995, with a low of \$111,200 in 1987.

Beginning in 1987, the annual began printing average attendance and total tithes and offerings. During that time, attendance has grown from 769 to 857, with a low of 760 in 1988 and a high of 936 in 1992. Tithes and offerings have grown from \$1,211,155 to a high of \$1,734,726 in 1995, with a low of \$1,187,455 in 1989.

Northwest gives 10 percent of its undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program and 1.5 percent to Capital Baptist Association.

Before moving to Oklahoma, Jordan had been pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson, Mo., six years.

Jordan delivered a powerful message to the 1985 pastors' conference when he spoke out against abortion and presented his infant daughter Alisha as the "most precious of gifts" from a young woman who had chosen to give her baby up for adoption rather than aborting her.

Two months later, in January 1986, Jordan spoke at the dedication of the BGCO's first Crisis Pregnancy Center in Tulsa and led a rally against abortion on the steps of the State Capitol in Oklahoma City. The rally was held on the anniversary of the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

That initial rally attracted only 200 people, but by 1990 it drew more than 20,000 people from across the state. The last rally Jordan coordinated was in 1991, when between 15,000 and 17,000 attended.

Jordan also was a prime mover in getting the Oklahoma City Crisis Pregnancy Center opened in May 1986.

His stand on abortion and other moral issues led to Jordan's election as president of the BGCO pastors' conference in 1986, then as BGCO first vice president in 1988. He was re-elected to that post in 1989, then was elected BGCO president in 1990 and 1991.

During his presidency, the BGCO restructured its board of directors and spun off its Family Care Ministries into two separate agencies, Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children and Baptist Retirement Centers of Oklahoma.

In addition, Jordan was elected to the BGCO board of directors, where he served as chairman of the administrative committee.

Born in Ponca City, Okla., Jordan was raised in Skiatook, Okla., just north of Tulsa. A graduate of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., he has a master's degree and doctorate from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He also has an honorary doctorate from SBU.

When first elected president, Jordan said of all his possible titles, he preferred to be known as a father and a family man.

"I don't have any hobbies, I don't golf, fish or play tennis," he explained. "My free time is reserved for my family."

The Jordans have two children, Adrian Lynn, 17, and Alisha Suzanne, 10.

With the emergence of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and its affiliate in Oklahoma, Jordan has taken a strong stand on supporting the Cooperative Program and avoiding alternative funding methods.

In 1993, Jordan was named to the BGCO restructuring committee that has developed new BGCO goals and objectives. That committee is assigned to propose a new structure for the BGCO.

Russell said he felt that Jordan's work on the restructuring committee makes for a smooth transition to becoming executive director-treasurer.

Last year, when the board of directors elected a search committee for Tanner's replacement, Jordan received the most votes and therefore was elected chairman. He resigned from the committee when it decided to interview him for the position.

Jordan also serves on the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, a post he was elected to in 1992. While serving there, he approved the restructuring plan for the SBC, which was later approved by messengers at the 1995 convention.

Jordan also served on the SBC resolutions committee in 1994.

If elected, Jordan will become the third-youngest executive director-treasurer/corresponding secretary the BGCO has had.

Jordan will turn 47 just 11 days before assuming office May 1. That makes him three years younger than the average age of the first seven executives.

Jordan also will be the fourth executive who previously was elected president.

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**Seniors recycle literature  
in worldwide ministry**

By Linda Lawson

**Baptist Press  
1/17/96**

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--It used to bother I.C. McLendon that Southern Baptists dumped their used Sunday school quarterlies in the trash at the end of each quarter.

"The Word of God is the Word of God," the Oklahoma City physician reasoned. There must be individuals and churches in other parts of the world in need of Bible study helps who wouldn't care what date was on the lesson.

In the fall of 1992, McLendon joined forces with Jim Messick, his Sunday school teacher at Village Baptist Church, to begin a ministry sending recycled Sunday school literature, Bibles, tracts and magazines to Christians in Africa. At the end of each quarter, boxes are placed in the halls of the church where Sunday school members can place their old quarterlies.

In addition to recycling used literature, "Project Africa -- a Ministry with a Heart," is recycling senior adults who are finding new meaning in life by collecting literature, soliciting funds for postage and packing boxes for the foreign mission field.

By the end of 1995, about 1 million pieces of literature had been shipped to several African countries through the three-year-old project. More than 300 churches in 18 states -- Southern Baptists, United Methodists, Presbyterians and other denominations -- are providing used literature along with money for postage.

"The only cost we have is shipping," McLendon said.

A tract outlining how churches can become involved in Project Africa thus begins with the suggestion, "one quarter plus one used Sunday school quarterly equals foreign missions."

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While some churches send their recycled literature directly to churches in Africa, others collect and send it to Village Baptist for distribution.

McLendon cited a Kansas retiree who picks up used literature each quarter from five or six churches and brings a loaded van to Oklahoma City.

At Village, six to eight senior adults, mostly members of Messick's Gleaners Sunday school class or the married adult 5 department, gather each Tuesday and Thursday mornings to pack parcels of 11 to 66 pounds. Postage is 79 cents per pound. Packages take 10 to 14 weeks by surface mail to arrive in Africa.

The volunteers enjoy the fellowship with each other and one of the fruits of their labor -- pictures and letters they receive from grateful recipients. They also value the satisfaction of sending God's Word so others may hear and respond to the gospel.

Mickey Epperson, who retired as vice president of a furniture and office supply business, recalled helping Messick pack the first literature sent to Africa in 1992. "We packed four boxes and that was all the money we had," he laughed.

Beryl Baggett, retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, cited the "economy of using this material. It's the second-best thing to sending missionaries."

Bill Fleming, a member of the board of directors of Gleaners International which includes Project Africa and another effort to send Christian tapes to blind people around the world, called the literature effort "an opportunity to spread the gospel when I can't go."

First Baptist Church, Moore, Okla., became involved in Project Africa in January 1995 and ships materials directly to Ghana in West Africa. Joe Killingsworth, who has a lawn care business in the summer but is retired during other months, heads up the effort.

For him, Project Africa is "a reason to get up in the morning."

Messick, retired sales manager for a wholesale food distributor, has fought health problems since suffering a massive heart attack in 1987. He said establishing Project Africa "has been a large factor in revitalizing me physically, spiritually and mentally. I'm getting stronger all the time. So many older adults feel shoved aside."

Messick proudly wore a pin made from a gourd and shaped like a heart, containing the words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Joel Dadzie of Ghana sent several to Gleaners class members as an expression of gratitude for a Bible.

"You can't put a price on things like this," Messick said.

Begun as a project of one Sunday school class, McLendon said "this ministry has grown beyond our wildest dreams. We struggle to keep up with the requests."

"We have never been able to get caught up," Messick added. "We are probably behind 150 requests right now. If we had more postage money, we could send more."

News coverage in Oklahoma City, picked up by Associated Press in Oklahoma, has helped to spread the word. A 1994 article in the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger was picked up by several state Baptist papers. But many others hear about Project Africa from their friends.

McLendon recounted a recent call from a fellow physician who was moving and about to throw away some old Bibles when he remembered hearing something about McLendon's involvement in literature distribution. Those Bibles are now in use in Africa.

After her pastor-husband's death, a woman donated his entire library.

The Gleaners had received only one week earlier a request for commentaries and study Bibles, a request they had not been able to meet until the pastor's library arrived. They didn't find the timing coincidental.

"I don't think there's any limit to the future" of Project Africa, McLendon said. He, Messick and others plan to continue working hard not only to send recycled literature but also to involve others in the ministry.

"If you don't use the knowledge God's given you, it's sinful," McLendon said. "If he gives us the opportunity and we quit doing it, it's a waste."

Added Messick, "We could literally see million of people come to know Christ."

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(BP) photo (vertical) posted in the SBCNet News Room and mailed to state Baptist newspapers by BSSB bureau of Baptist Press. The cutline is posted in the News Room.

Services cancelled, but ministry  
continues for Virginia Baptists

Baptist Press

1/17/96

By Michael Clingenpeel

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The afternoon of Jan. 6, William J. Cumbie left his Falls Church, Va., townhouse for the 90-mile trip to Woodstock, in the northern end of Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. Cumbie, retired executive director of the Mount Vernon Baptist Association, was slated to preach at Woodstock's First Baptist Church the next morning and planned to stay the night at a motel near the church to beat a predicted winter storm.

He checked into the motel, made arrangements for Brian Fox, the church's chairman of deacons, to take him the next morning to a local radio station for a live broadcast if heavy snowfall forced cancellation of First Baptist's two morning services.

By Sunday morning Woodstock was buried under 30 inches of snow. Cumbie could not get to the church; Fox could not get to Cumbie. Finally on Monday afternoon the son of the motel's restaurant manager shoveled Cumbie's car free, and he trekked back across the snow-blanketed Blue Ridge Mountains to Northern Virginia.

Cumbie's tale of being stranded is only one experience that will be recounted by veterans of what many are calling "the Blizzard of '96," a major snowstorm that swept up the nation's Atlantic region the first weekend of 1996, halting business, government, schools and worship services in most Virginia Baptist churches.

Every area of the Commonwealth was affected by the storm, but no area was harder hit than Virginia's mountain regions. "I don't know of any of our churches that were open, and most didn't have Wednesday services," reported Robert Jackson, director of missions in the New River Baptist Association in southwest Virginia. Jackson said 26 inches of snow fell in Galax, closing his office until Wednesday.

Churches fared no better in the Shenandoah Valley. Clifton Hudgins, director of missions in the Augusta Baptist Association, said all of his churches canceled services on Jan. 7. "And some will not have services this Sunday (Jan. 14) because they cannot get their parking lots cleared." In Waynesboro 29 inches of snow fell, and Hudgins said snow in the parking lot at Fisherville Baptist Church measured almost four feet.

Hudgins, who served in Texas and Hawaii before moving to Virginia, arrived last spring -- the week torrential floods swamped central Virginia. "My wife and I were talking about it, and we decided we've seen everything but a tornado and a tidal wave," he said, adding, "looking back on it I should not have sold my snow shovel when I went to Hawaii."

Churches in Virginia's major urban centers of Roanoke, Richmond, Tidewater and Northern Virginia also shut down on Sunday. Every church in the Roanoke Valley Baptist Association canceled services, according to the association's executive director Kirk Lashley. "Everything shut down for two to three days," said Lashley, who used being snowbound as a time to call many of his association's pastors.

Roanoke's First Baptist Church has a policy that "we will be open," but was forced to close when Gov. George Allen announced a state of emergency and two-foot snow depths bogged down four-wheel drive vehicles. It was only the second time since 1961 First Baptist canceled services.

Only four Richmond Baptist Association churches met on Sunday, according to Charles Nunn, the association's executive director. None had more than 40 in attendance. Most also canceled Wednesday evening services and were struggling with whether to meet Jan. 14.

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Richmond measured only 14 inches of snow, but it was mixed with sleet, making travel treacherous and cleanup arduous.

Richmond's Grove Avenue Baptist Church remained open to televise its morning service, according to its minister of education, Mark Baldwin. "We had 12 to 15 in the choir, 15 in the congregation, 6 working cameras and several staff. Because we are on live TV it is necessary for us to get in. We have the opposite situation of most churches. We have a bigger congregation when the weather is bad. Almost everyone had to be picked up by 4-wheel drives, so we arranged a network of vehicles to pick up people, including the pastor, and get them to the service."

Grove Avenue's pastor, Ronald Boswell, had planned a "state of the union" address, but set it aside to preach a "basic salvation message," said Baldwin. "It was a tremendous opportunity the Lord allowed us. We know of about five people that got saved Sunday morning by watching the TV ministry. That makes it all worthwhile." Baldwin said the volume of calls "doubled or perhaps tripled" due to the size of the snowbound television audience.

Least affected by the snowfall was Virginia's Tidewater area. Norfolk Baptist Association's director of missions Marvin Settle reported about half of the association's churches canceled Sunday morning services, and "attendance was way down" in those that did not. The area had about three inches of snow on Saturday night, but mostly rain on Sunday.

Virginia Baptist agencies also felt the affects of the massive winter storm. The Virginia Baptist Building was closed three days, although employees of the Religious Herald, the state Baptist newsjournal, managed to produce a paper by its Monday afternoon deadline. Classes at the University of Richmond were called off two days; and at the mountainous campus of Bluefield College in Bluefield, the beginning of second semester classes was postponed for a week. Classes at other schools either went ahead as normal or were not scheduled to begin until Jan. 15.

Amid cancellations, postponements and frustrations created by what some observers have classified as one of the three worst winter storms this century, there have been positive moments. Hudgins noticed how the storm brought out the best in people. "The good thing about it was that neighbors got out and helped each other. People with four-wheel drive vehicles went and got groceries for each other."

Cumbie, a deacon at Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, said the blizzard prompted deacons at the church to make a concerted effort to call their deacon families during the week to learn if they had needs. And Cumbie even found blessings in being snowbound with strangers in Woodstock for almost 48 hours. He was able to affirm another pastor stranded while traveling to a conference in Pennsylvania and encouraged a Radford University student returning to school to attend First Baptist Church in Radford.

"The motel manager told me he had only one person who was unreasonable," during the storm, said Cumbie. "The waitstaff worked long hours, were jovial, neighborly. The storm brought out the best in us."

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