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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 18, 1996

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Southwestern trustees OK plan
to aid ministers; rehire Corley By Brian Smith

Baptist Press
3/18/96

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Approval of a minister restoration plan, election of a new faculty member, selection of officers and adoption of a \$22.9 million budget for 1996-97 fiscal year topped the spring meeting of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's board of trustees March 11-13 in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Antioch Affection, a program to assist and restore pastors and church staff who have been terminated or are facing termination, was proposed by trustee Bob Anderson, pastor of Parkview Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, La. He has operated a similar plan in Baton Rouge for more than 20 years.

"We're going to be able to reach out to these who are hurting, these who are in trouble, these who have been terminated from the churches," Anderson said. "Surveys tell us that of those who graduate from seminary, one-half are out of the ministry after 10 years. That is a shocking discovery."

The program is designed not only to help ministers and church staff members, but also "to advance the seminary as a major player in the role of pastor/staff reclamation," said Jack D. Terry Jr., vice president for institutional advancement.

The plan involves "refuge churches," in which a pastor or staff member facing termination or other difficulties is brought on staff as an associate pastor or on another staff position. The minister or staff member then will be expected to build a Sunday school class from a prospect list. At the same time, he or she will attend classes through Southwestern and the seminary's office of continuing education designed to help deal with specific problems such as personal communication skills and husband/wife relationship issues.

To raise funds and publicize the program, "cardiology crusades" will be held in various cities across the Southern Baptist Convention. Goals for each crusade include enlisting "embracers" who will pledge \$600 a year to help fund the program; raising \$50,000 for apartments in which participating ministers and their families would live; and securing at least four refuge churches in that area.

"We've been testing the waters on this," Anderson noted, "and we've not been turned down by any church. They said, 'Give us five years -- 60 months -- and we can pay for an apartment.'"

The first "cardiology crusade" is scheduled for Sept. 30 at Castle Hills Baptist Church, San Antonio.

"We are in the redemptive business," said George Harris, pastor of the Castle Hills congregation. "But too often we don't think about redeeming the pastor."

The proposal was approved unanimously.

"I don't think we've taken any more meaningful action in a long while than to implement this program at Southwestern," said trustee chairman Ralph Pulley, a Dallas attorney. "It's shocking to me to hear some of these statistics. As a layman, I am appalled at what is transpiring."

In other action, trustees elected Bruce Corley to the faculty as professor of New Testament. He previously served as dean of Southwestern's school of theology from 1990-95. He resigned March 21, 1995, for a faculty post at George W. Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas.

A graduate of Southwestern, Corley will have several new books coming on the marketplace in the near future, including the volume on Hebrews in the New American Commentary. That series of commentaries, by Broadman & Holman Publishers, is based on the commitment that the Scriptures are the inerrant Word of God and requires the author to sign the Chicago statement on inerrancy, said seminary President Ken Hemphill.

Trustee Ollin Collins, pastor of Harvest Baptist Church, Watauga, Texas, said Corley's desire to return made a "loud statement about ... his desire to be a part of the direction that Southwestern is going."

"He believes in us and what we are doing," Collins said. "Like he said, from where he was, he could see that Southwestern was the flagship and always was going to be, and he wanted to be a part of that community."

In other action related to the academic arena, trustees approved a proposal to change Scotty Gray's title from executive vice president to vice president for academic administration and institutional planning, effective Aug. 1. The position will combine Gray's current duties with those of Bill Tolar, vice president for academic affairs. Tolar will remain as special advisor to the president but have a more active teaching role.

"The thing I love most and feel most called and trained to do is teach in the classroom, and be with my students on weekends," Tolar said.

Also in the report approved by the board was the school of religious education's approval of several name changes in its programs:

-- The social work department to "Department of Social Work and Ministry-Based Evangelism."

-- The master of arts in church social services degree to "Master of Arts in Church and Community Ministry."

-- The master of arts in religious education with social work concentration degree to "Master of Arts in Religious Education with Ministry-Based Evangelism Concentration."

The name changes "put in a very specific way our commitment to ministry and evangelism in these areas," Hemphill said.

Trustees also approved the 1996-97 budget for the seminary. The \$22,885,828 budget represents a 2.49 percent increase over the 1995-96 budget and includes a 3 percent salary increase for elected faculty, administrative/support staff and secretarial/clerical staff. "We are pleased to present a budget that comes without any red ink, without any student tuition increases and a raise for faculty, staff and administration," Hubert Martin, vice president for business affairs, said in his report to the board.

In addition, a salary increase of up to 2 percent was approved based on an increase in student population.

"If the student count goes up and it develops the revenue to support an additional 2 percent, they've authorized us to do that," Martin said. "But it's going to be dependent on what happens next fall and next spring. It was a real gesture to me of them saying, 'We recognize and we're trying to do something here.'"

Trustees also authorized the seminary to implement a \$30 per semester technology fee, to be implemented when such services as a computer instruction lab and Internet access terminals are available to students.

"There's no time frame relating to when we'll be able to get those services and what those services will be," Martin said. "Dr. Hemphill really feels the need for students to be involved in computer technology and using it in their ministry, whether through research or simply helping with the work of the church."

Pulley said the seminary is in "sound financial condition, and for that we're grateful. It's a tribute to our president, Mr. Martin and the support of our constituency."

In other business, trustees:

-- elected new officers. Fort Worth businessman Lee Weaver was elected chairman; Collins, vice chairman; and Arkansas pastor Ed Saucier, secretary.

-- Granted promotions to seven faculty members and tenure to four. Receiving promotions were Dan Crawford, professor; Theodore Dowell, senior professor; Wynona Elder, professor; G. Lacoste Munn, distinguished professor; Terrell Peace, associate professor; Robert Welch, associate professor; and Rick Yount, professor. Tenure was granted to Peace; Rick Johnson, associate professor of Old Testament; Grant Lovejoy, assistant professor of preaching; and Steve Lyon, professor of pastoral ministry.

-- Approved resolutions honoring Tolar; Carl Wrotenbery, dean of libraries, who announced his retirement effective May 31; Cal Guy, distinguished professor of missions, emeritus, who suffered a stroke Feb. 27 three days after his Fort Worth home burned to the ground; Jim Leitch, retired director of the physical plant who died Jan. 15; and Pulley, who served his final meeting of the board as chairman, a post he had held since 1992.

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Churches make 'easy targets'
for lawsuits, official warns

By Ken Walker

Baptist Press
3/18/96

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Despite horror stories about churches paying million-dollar judgments, a congregation's chances of being sued are only 1 in 100, according to John Dudley.

The bad news is those odds could mushroom in the next decade, said the vice president of property and casualty for the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

"Attorneys are being trained by the American Bar Association to sue churches," he commented, "and they're finding out churches are the worst-run businesses around. They make easy targets. Many are staffed by volunteers, and management is very loose."

Dudley was the keynote speaker for "Financial Issues for Ministers and Churches," a statewide series of seminars by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department in February.

Dudley opened his presentation with a cartoon that showed a woman telling a clergyman: "After three weeks of enjoying ... services, prayer, fellowship and counseling, I still feel a deep spiritual yearning. So I'm going to sue your socks off."

"It used to be that people would never sue a church," Dudley said. "But that mind-set is changing. There are a lot of frivolous claims that divert church funds and mission money to legal costs."

Some steps may realistically be too complex or time-consuming for smaller churches, he said, yet those congregations need to be aware of the need for public safety on their property.

Dudley outlined five ways for churches to reduce risks:

-- Incorporate and maintain corporate status. Advantages include removing liability from individuals, allowing the church to buy and sell property and making it easier to obtain loans.

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-- Adopt risk management strategies. Many don't cost a lot, Dudley said; they involve identifying risks like potholes in the parking lot or exposed inside wiring.

Other examples include a church with a bus ministry carrying proper insurance and screening the driving records of all vehicle operators. Or, to reduce the possibility of child molestation, screening staff members and volunteers. "I highly recommend doing reference and criminal background checks," Dudley said.

-- Carry adequate insurance. This varies by property and equipment owned, but policies should be the "all risk" type. A "named peril" policy will only cover risks specifically named, he explained.

"We find all the time that churches are underinsured," Dudley said. "They're doing it because the premiums are lower."

In addition, other coverage needed is a minimum \$1 million liability policy, workers' compensation insurance and professional malpractice insurance. He said the latter guards against claims arising from counseling and should be carried by both the church and the pastor.

-- Develop operating policies and procedures. He noted if a church develops written procedures, it must follow them or it can be charged with discrimination. Most smaller churches, he acknowledged, are unlikely to change informal operating methods.

-- Respond publicly when something bad happens.

Dudley reviewed the case of a Baptist church in Miami whose youth pastor was convicted of sexually molesting 12 boys. Although he later went to prison for 15 years, members rallied around the youth pastor and shunned the victims. Enraged, their parents sued and won a \$4.2 million judgment, quadruple the insurance coverage.

This case shows the need to minister to all parties if a problem arises in the church, Dudley said.

He also pointed out it is better for a church to initiate the release of bad news to the community, since it is going to come out anyway. However, he cautioned, a church must protect the privacy of those involved by not divulging personal information.

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Pastors, churches admonished:
Be 'squeaky clean' financially

By Ken Walker

Baptist Press
3/18/96

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The Internal Revenue Service has a rather schizophrenic view of ministers: It sees them as church employees for income-tax purposes, but expects them to pay self-employment Social Security taxes.

"It doesn't make sense," said Don Spencer, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department. "We're talking about the government. But I keep running into tax preparers who are (telling pastors), 'We'll just call you self-employed.'"

Pastors and churches should be "squeaky clean" in reporting income and expense reimbursements, Spencer said during a tax update he gave as part of "Financial Issues for Ministers and Churches," a statewide series of seminars by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department in February.

Ministerial audits have been a hot topic the past three years, Spencer reported, and churches can expect tighter government scrutiny in the future.

Although he expressed frustration about the complexities of the IRS code -- written at a level that requires a post-graduate reading comprehension -- Spencer said the agency now offers two publications tailored to clergy:

-- "The Tax Guide for Churches and Other Religious Organizations," which reviews existing provisions of tax laws affecting churches and clergy.

-- "Audit Technique Guide for Ministers."

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In determining whether a pastor is a church employee, the issue of employer control of the employee is the basic test, Spencer said. Even if that control is not tightly exercised, but the right exists, then the church has control, he said.

When it comes to Southern Baptist churches, most pastors are considered employees because congregations control who fills the pulpit, he said.

Special-occasion gifts, such as fees for weddings and funerals, are taxable income, Spencer said; so is a Christmas "love offering."

One primary area of concern for both pastors and churches is accountable plans for expense reimbursements, Spencer noted. To qualify as legally deductible expenses, the items must have a connection to church business, be substantiated in a reasonable amount of time (60 days), and excess amounts must be returned within 120 days, he said. This means if a pastor receives \$500 to attend the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, but can only document spending \$480, the \$20 difference must be returned or it will be considered income.

"If you have any questions about reimbursing expenses, ask yourself how XYZ business down the street would do it, and that will answer your questions. A business would never let an employee keep expense money he couldn't account for."

Nor are salary reductions designed as partial expense reimbursements allowed. A church can't pay a pastor \$500 a week, but one week call \$110 of that "expenses" and the rest "salary," then change the figures the next week, Spencer said.

Accountable reimbursement plans also will help pastors avoid the Deason Rule, a little-known item in the tax code, he said. Under this rule, the percentage of a pastor's housing allowance to overall salary reduces his deductible expenses by an equivalent percentage.

"With accountable reimbursement plans, churches and pastors can avoid the effects of the Deason Rule," Spencer said.

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Think you don't need a will?
Think again, attorney says

By Ken Walker

Baptist Press
3/18/96

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--While many people avoid estate planning because they don't want to face their own mortality, Laurie Valentine calls it an essential element of Christian stewardship.

"Probably half the people in the room today don't have wills," said the trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation after her seminar on Christian estate planning during "Financial Issues for Ministers and Churches," a statewide series of seminars by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department in February.

Valentine said the Bible "instructs us to take care of our families and provide for their (future) support. I think that includes the charitable causes you support during your lifetime."

One of the primary reasons for a will, she said, is that without one the state determines how your assets are distributed -- and that may not coincide with your wishes.

For example, the state has no provision for estate gifts to churches or other charitable causes and allows money to pass to minor children who may not be mature enough to spend it wisely.

"I think a lot of people, especially husbands and wives who own everything jointly, think they don't need a will," said Valentine, a University of Florida law school graduate. "But if they both die in an accident and don't have any children, then half goes to his family and half to hers."

Wills allow individuals to make specific bequests and provide for special needs, she said. They enable parents to establish a trust fund for their children and name someone to govern the fund until the parents feel the children will be old enough to manage it properly.

Wills also let an individual or couple choose who distributes the estate's assets instead of a court, and they can minimize death taxes, Valentine said.

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If someone draws up a will in another state before moving to Kentucky, it is still valid, she said. However, she advised reviewing the document every three to five years because circumstances change.

Proper estate planning is more than a will, she pointed out. It also involves planning for management and distribution of a person's assets while he or she is alive.

This can include such instruments as:

-- Durable power of attorney. This is different from a general power-of-attorney and can be changed at any time, she said. It allows individuals to appoint someone to manage financial and other matters if they become temporarily incapacitated by an accident or illness. When the individual recovers, he or she reassumes control.

-- Living wills. These documents designate the means a person chooses to prolong life in case of an accident or health crisis, such as feeding tubes, medication or various forms of life support. "The last thing your family wants (during a crisis) is to guess what you want," Valentine said. "I encourage you to make it and discuss it with your family."

-- Trusts. There are various kinds of trusts that can be established to oversee assets while a person is alive, or after their death, she said. Living trusts can manage assets in the event of incapacity, provide privacy and avoid probate court after death.

"All these incapacity documents are like fire insurance," the attorney said. "You pay the premium but hope you never have to use the policy."

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Baptist camps await vote
on Ala. lodging tax bill

By Jennifer Davis

Baptist Press
3/18/96

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--If a bill referred to as "Kiddie Tax Legislation" does not pass the Alabama legislature, all Baptist associational camps, as well as Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly, will be subject to imposing a tax to all overnight guests, according to Fritz Wilson, director of recreation at Shocco Springs.

"If a camp is providing a bed, then it is subject to a lodging tax," he said.

Buster Taylor, director of Shocco Springs, said, "If this bill were not to pass, the state legislature would be assessing a state tax on all children, youth, and adults that attend camps in the state of Alabama."

The bill, written under the guidance of the Association of Alabama Camps (AAC), came in response to the State Revenue Department's decision last year that camps should be assessed a lodging tax, Taylor said. "There is a misunderstanding about who camps can host in regard to for-profit or nonprofit status."

Allen McBride, president of AAC, said the Alabama 4-H Youth Center has gone to court over the Transient Occupancy Tax. "The Department of Revenue has decreed that the Alabama 4-H Youth Center, a nonprofit facility, must collect 9 percent county and state lodging tax on all adult groups," he said. "The 4-H Center must also collect 6 percent county and state tax on the portion of the fee applied to the meals furnished to adult groups. The cost of meals provided to children in 4-H camps is taxed at a lower rate.

"The 4-H Center is already collecting and paying these taxes and has also been ordered to pay two years' back lodgings taxes totaling over \$47,000," McBride noted.

"For Alabama camps to continue their mission of serving the people of this state without interference from the Department of Revenue, our proposed legislation must become law," he said.

"Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly, Blue Lake Methodist Camp and Methodist Camp Sumatanga have already been visited by officials from the Revenue Department.

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"The corrective legislation is the best and most probably the only way to insure that camps will not be required to collect this tax now or in the future," McBride said.

While the State Revenue Department ruled collection of this tax starts immediately, Rep. Pete Turnham, D.-Auburn, said the department has agreed to wait for the outcome of the bill.

Turnham, sponsor of the house bill, said it is scheduled to come out of the Ways and Means Committee soon. "We don't predict any problem with it coming out," he said.

The senate bill, sponsored by Sen. Dell Hill, R.-Alpine, passed the Senate March 7.

The proposed legislation, submitted as House Bill 420 and Senate Bill 19, addresses not only the Alabama 4-H Youth Center case but also the threatened audits of certain privately operated camps and other nonprofit conference facilities, he said.

The legislation would exempt from the lodgings tax three categories of individuals/users:

- children (defined as individuals under age 21.
- full-time students (using the same definition Internal Revenue Service uses for parents who claim a personal exemption for their children away at school).
- Members or guests of churches, schools and other nonprofit organizations that use either a privately owned or nonprofit camp or conference facility for seminars, retreats, etc. if the camp or conference center is itself nonprofit or restricts users to children, full-time students and members/guests of nonprofit organizations.

"The legislation is retroactive and 'clarifying' only," McBride stated.

Wilson said the original lodging tax was imposed by the State Revenue Department at the request of the hotel industry to help promote tourism.

"In fact," said McBride, "25 percent of the tax statewide goes into a fund for this purpose (promoting tourism). Camps have never asked for nor received any of this money to promote camping in our state."

The law the State Revenue Department interprets as requiring camps to collect the Transient Occupancy Tax states that a tax is imposed "... upon every person, firm or corporation engaging in the business of renting or furnishing any room or rooms, lodging or accommodations to transients in any hotel, motel, inn, tourist camp, tourist cabin, or any other place in which rooms, lodgings, or accommodations are regularly furnished to transients for a consideration."

According to McBride, the State Revenue Department's current ruling does not require Alabama camps to pay this tax.

"The State Revenue Department has basically changed the interpretation of the tax," Wilson said. "Up until recently it was never viewed as applying to camps and conference centers.

"The tax would be placed on the people who stay at the conference center, not the conference center itself," he said.

As far as the issue of loss of revenue, McBride said, "Camps have not imposed this tax in the past, so passage of this bill should not have a negative impact on the state treasury. The bill will not affect individuals or groups using commercial hotels or motels.

"Under our proposed legislation, nonprofit camps and retreat centers would for the first time collect the tax on business groups, so state revenues should actually increase," he commented.

"Some conference centers have chosen to accept for-profit groups, so that puts them in competition with hotels," Wilson said. "We are trying to define what a nonprofit conference center is."

Wilson said Shocco Springs deals only with nonprofit groups.

**Texas Baptist Men undertake
'win-win' project at SWBTS**

By Dena Dyer

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Charles Perkins stood in awe at the sight of several senior adult men putting a roof on a new church building. One week before, dirt and weeds occupied the site. As he marveled at the work that had been accomplished by retired Baptist volunteers, he distinctly heard God speaking to him about becoming involved with the group.

"Next to my salvation experience, my calling to this work was the most moving experience I've ever had," said Perkins, of Austin, a retired University of Texas engineering professor. He now travels every month with Texas Baptist Men, a group of volunteer builders affiliated with the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Currently, Perkins and other members of the organization are constructing two town houses containing 12 student apartments on Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Fort Worth campus. The men, ranging in age from 62 to 82, arrived at the seminary March 11 and will stay until the project is completed in April.

For 24 years, Texas Baptist Men have volunteered their time and services in various building projects around the world. On average, they build 30 to 40 churches a year, according to Wilton Davis, immediate past president of the Texas Baptist Men.

"Last summer, we had 402 volunteers who helped construct a multi-functional building for the Canadian Baptist Theological Seminary in Alberta," Davis said. "The men said it was one of the richest spiritual experiences of their lives, and we expect the same will be true of our time at Southwestern."

At a March 13 gumbo-and-cornbread luncheon provided by a local church, the men were joined by seminary trustees, who held their semiannual meeting March 11-13. The two groups were dressed differently -- work boots and overalls versus suits and ties -- but they found common ground in their appreciation of Southwestern and each other.

"We are thankful for the Texas Baptist Men's humble spirits and enthusiasm," said trustee Sid West, an Indiana pastor. "It's really quite contagious."

Trustee Charles Lawson, an engineer for Westinghouse Electric Corporation representing Maryland/Delaware, said his state convention doesn't have such an organization.

"Most people don't realize that seminaries have needs that have to be met, just like everyone else," Lawson said. "We can't do it alone."

Davis, a former building contractor and Dallas bank president, said the group was more than willing to help when they heard about the seminary's pressing need for additional student housing.

"This is really a win-win situation for everyone involved," he said. "Southwestern wins, because we are introducing the seminary to people who have never been here before, as well as building additional housing for students. And we win, because we have an opportunity to serve the Lord and receive the warm hospitality of Southwestern's administration, staff and students."

Southwestern is providing the building supplies for the project, and the men are residing in travel trailers during construction of the J. Howard Williams Student Village townhouses. Hubert Martin, Southwestern vice president for business affairs, said the volunteer builders will save the seminary more \$200,000.

Perkins said he has "never felt so welcomed and provided for as I have here at Southwestern. I was very moved when the students laid hands on us and prayed for us during chapel."

The warm welcome was not just from students, Perkins noted.

"On the Sunday afternoon we arrived, President Hemphill and his wife jogged over to where we are staying and welcomed us. It is so pleasant to actually come to Southwestern's campus and feel the camaraderie that exists here," he said.

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"And the men I'm working with are just tremendous. This is the sweetest, tightest fellowship I've been a part of."

Davis said the entire group is excited about the job.

"They do high-quality work -- and they do it because they truly enjoy it and feel called to it," he said. "We have retired doctors, engineers, lawyers and even CPAs. They're smart guys, and they are responsible, hard workers."

Trustee chairman Ralph Pulley, a Dallas attorney, said the Texas Baptist men are known all over the world for their work.

"For them to offer their services to us is wonderful. We couldn't have completed this project without them."

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(BP) photo available on SBCNet and on request from Southwestern's office of public relations.

Tower of prayer project
to memorialize missionary

Baptist Press
3/18/96

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--A tower of prayer to be erected at a Baptist camp in the mountains near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is to be a memorial to the late Rosalee Mills Appleby, a Southern Baptist missionary to Brazil from 1924-60.

The cornerstone for the tower was laid during a doctrinal seminar at Camp Mount Moriah in November 1995.

Among items placed in the cornerstone were Portuguese versions of Psalm 119:54 and Isaiah 56:7 and the Broadman Press book, "David Gomes: When Faith Triumphs" by Anne Washburn McWilliams of Clinton, Miss., retired associate editor of The Baptist Record, Mississippi Baptists' newsjournal.

The book contains a chapter on the history of Mount Moriah and is dedicated to Rosalee Appleby, a Mississippi native.

Appleby, who died in 1991 at age 96, went to Brazil with her husband, David, in 1924. A year later, he died after surgery for a stomach ulcer and, a few hours later, Appleby gave birth to a son, David.

Appleby stayed in Brazil 36 years, ministering through her writing, which included 24 books; children's work; and church starting, with 17 congregations still active. She lived in Canton, Miss., in retirement.

One Brazilian, Maryann Barbosa of Belo Horizonte, pointed out in Appleby's life prayer was fundamental, so a "tower of prayer should lift the whole of her life As a new generation arises, a memorial would open a way to tell about her works of love."

Camp Mount Moriah is sponsored by the Church of Hope in Rio de Janeiro and by the Bible School of the Air, of which David Gomes is the founder and director.

The shape of the camp's tract of land resembles someone kneeling with hands lifted in prayer. The prayer tower is to be built at the summit of the mountain. From the tower, one can view the sea and the highway that leads from Rio de Janeiro to Sao Paulo.

In addition to the tower of prayer, four other memorials are projected for the camp by the year 2000: a Pilgrim's Chapel and three dorms -- Faith, Hope and Love -- in different colors.

From its beginnings in 1974, Mount Moriah has been an encampment of faith, aided by gifts from individuals and churches. Volunteers from Florida and Texas built the chapel.

For more information on the Tower of Prayer project, contact McWilliams, U.S. project coordinator, 1006 Dogwood Drive, Clinton, MS 39056.

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