

October 1, 1964

Gospel Rolls Its Way
Across South Louisiana

By Mary Lane Powell

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--It looks like a bus, but is more. It holds also equipment for a portable worship service, complete with organ, record player and public address system. It's manned by five to 15 preachers.

From September through July, six missions-on-wheels roll weekly onto sugar cane plantations and waterfront docks in south Louisiana to proclaim with portable aids the same message heard in the large downtown churches. The buses are owned by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Seminary students operate them.

With the seminary's new school term underway, the vehicles have been tuned and okayed for another year of steady use. Last year the buses traveled more than 13,600 miles on field missions assignments.

Field missions, a ministry of the seminary since its inception in 1917, places students in areas of mission opportunity throughout New Orleans, south Louisiana and neighboring states. Students may choose assignments ranging from Good Will Center work to street preaching.

The seminary buses are used on more than 20 trips a week. Students take their own cars, with the school paying mileage, when a bus is not available.

Mission buses were purchased with contributions from hundreds of seminary alumni and friends. One bus was donated by a man who had two sons studying at the seminary and learned of the buses' importance through his sons.

Extra equipment, such as the public address systems, is largely from war surplus purchases and is not the most modern available. Although still in use, one portable organ is more than 16 years old and requires the coordinated efforts of three people to produce music in the wintertime.

"The keys stick in the cold," explained a student who knew by experience. "While one person plays, two others must pull up the cold keys. Still, we can't do without the music the little organ provides," he added.

Buses and portable worship services were a necessity in the beginning years of field missions work. "The Baptist Evangel," a spoke-wheeled black bus, with crank motor and roll-up window curtains, was a familiar New Orleans sight during the 1920's. Standard equipment in the early vehicles included a camp stove and a large tent for outdoor meetings.

Although these two items have long been discarded, the original idea remains in operation--and it will, as long as there are seminary students with buses and people without churches.

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(Picture mailed to Baptist state papers)

Mississippi Budget
Nears \$3 Million

PASS CHRISTIAN, Miss. (BP)--A record Cooperative Program budget of almost \$3 million has been adopted by the executive board of Mississippi Baptist Convention here to support its work during 1965.

The \$2,998,000 budget will be presented to the convention proper in its annual session in November. It tops the 1964 budget by \$212,000.

Southern Baptist Convention agencies will receive \$989,000 through the Cooperative Program distribution of the proposed 1965 budget. This compares with \$919,500 under the current budget.

Capital needs in Mississippi will receive \$334,600 in 1965, the same they have received this year. The largest part of the budget, \$1,674,000, is for operating the missionary and educational activities of Baptists in the state.

Two phases of the state board's work, evangelism and stewardship, will be divided and placed in newly created departments, effective Nov. 1. The office of associate executive secretary, whose assignment has covered these fields, will be discontinued.

L. Gordon Sansing of Jackson, who has been the associate executive secretary, will become secretary of the department of evangelism. John D. Alexander of Jackson, an associate secretary of the Sunday school department, is being promoted to secretary of the new department of stewardship.

With the addition of these two, the convention board will have nine departments.

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Professors Contrast
Culture And Church

(10-1-64)

NASHVILLE (BP)--The effect of culture on the church and its voice in matters of Christian social ethics was described here by two seminary professors.

T. B. Maston of Fort Worth and Wayne E. Oates of Louisville spoke of the tensions between the culture and the denomination, its churches and the Christians who belong to them.

They said the tension affects not just Southern Baptists, but other religious groups as well. They told the 175 people attending the Southern Baptist Counseling and Guidance Conference here that race is a major issue of Christian social ethics.

Maston said it has become popular to be identified with "religion in general." As a result, the church has become a captive of the culture. "The standards of the secular world have become superficially sacred. The church may become an impressive institution but not a powerful one."

Oates traced the history of Southern Baptists' relationship to the culture in which the denomination has grown to be the largest evangelical group in the United States.

Maston retired a year ago as professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Oates teaches psychology of religion at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Public education's effect on both the Negro and the white was described by Oates. "If we wanted to keep the Negro under our heel, we should never have given him a bite of education," he declared.

School consolidation made pupils aware of conditions outside their own neighborhoods. This helped abolish the isolationism in the culture, according to Oates.

Two world wars, strides in public transportation and improvements in the printing industry increased the breakdown of this isolation.

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As Negroes make progress, they become increasingly aware of the American dream and how that dream does not apply to them as Negroes, Maston said. "The realization that Negroes and others are treated as second class citizens raises questions as to how long our dream can exist."

The Texan said the dilemma over race affects white and Negro. It affects the church as an institution as well as individual Christians. The church's quandary comes from its divine-human nature. "There is no realm where the church feels more its twofold nature than in the race issue," he said.

An officer of one Southern Baptist church told Maston his church had been spiritually dead since it voted a few years ago to exclude Negroes from its worship services, Maston reported.

Quoting James' epistle for scriptural support, Maston said "within the fellowship of the redeemed there should be no respect of persons, no partiality, no snobbery."

"How tragic it would be if the churches became the last bulwark of segregation!" Maston declared.

The Southern Baptist Counseling and Guidance Conference meets yearly here. It is made up of several smaller organizations. These include an Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, an Association for Pastoral Care, a Social Service Association, a section on marriage and family counseling, and a section on vocational guidance.

Participants come from organizations inside and outside the denomination. They include welfare workers with public agencies, church social workers, hospital chaplains, pastors, college and seminary professors, vocational guidance counselors, children's workers, marriage and family counselors, and professional workers with Southern Baptist Convention agencies in other fields.

Three Southern Baptist Convention agencies help support the conference financially--the Foreign Mission Board, the Home Mission Board and the Sunday School Board. A fourth, the Christian Life Commission, helps to plan the conference and provide secretarial service for it through the year.

The conference will meet again the last week in September, 1965. The theme of next year's conference will be "The Nature of the Church and Helping Ministries."

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Counseling, Guidance
Groups Pick Officers

(10-1-64)

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Counseling and Guidance Conference here has chosen a Louisville, Ky., hospital chaplain as its new president-elect. This means he takes office at the 1965 conference.

He is John Boyle, executive chaplain, Louisville General Hospital and Medical Center. Succeeding to the presidency this year is John M. Price Jr., New Orleans, dean of the school of religious education at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Reelected to other conference positions were Miss Velma Darbo of Nashville as recording secretary and Foy Valentine of Nashville as secretary-treasurer.

Miss Darbo is editor of Upward, a youth publication of the Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board here. Valentine is executive secretary of the SBC Christian Life Commission here. The Sunday School Board and Christian Life Commission are among sponsors of the conference.

The conference has five subgroups or sections. Chairmen of them are: clinical pastoral education, G. Howard Linton, chaplain, Baptist Memorial Hospital, San Antonio, Tex., reelected; marriage and family counseling, Albert L. Cardwell, pastor, First Baptist Church, Macon, Ga., reelected; pastoral care, Dan Laird, minister of youth, First Baptist Church, Gainesville, Fla.; social work, L. W. Crews, juvenile rehabilitation officer with the SBC Home Mission Board, Atlanta, reelected, and vocational guidance, Lee Garner, associate in the Training Union department for Texas Baptists, Dallas.

Other sponsors of the conference are the Convention's Foreign and Home Mission Boards.

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Cutline (accompanies feature) October 1, 1964

Baptist Press Photo

MISSION-ON-WHEELS: Loading a bus for their weekly field mission assignment are two students from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Six of these missions-on-wheels roll out on weekends from the seminary to sugar plantations and waterfront docks in south Louisiana to proclaim God's word. (BP) Photo