

January 30, 1965

**'Operation Prayerlift'
Answers Brazilian Plea**

MEMPHIS (BP)--An appeal to pray for the success of the nationwide Brazilian Baptist revivals has been accepted in behalf of church Brotherhoods by the Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood Commission here.

"This is an opportunity for Christian men to show concern for people in other lands in an unusual way," said George W. Schroeder, Memphis, executive secretary of the commission.

The prayer project, expected to involve thousands of church Brotherhoods, has been titled "Operation Prayerlift." It will be conducted March through May, during which time the Brazilian revivals will be in progress.

Here is the way it came about.

When Brazilian Baptists were making their plans for the crusade to start 300 new churches and win to Christ 250,000 persons during a three month period, they were asked what Baptists in the United States could do.

"Pray," replied Rubens Lopes of Sao Paulo, president of the Brazilian Baptist Convention.

Baker J. Cauthen, Richmond, executive secretary of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, which supervises the work of 247 missionaries in Brazil, echoed this need. Said he:

"While it is true that we need gifts for Brazil, we need the prayers of Southern Baptists more for this cause."

Schroeder made these suggestions for churches wishing to participate in the South American crusade through prayer.

The Brotherhood Commission will provide the names of individual Brazilian churches to these Brotherhood presidents and pastors (if the church has no Brotherhood) who request them.

These leaders may write the pastor of the Brazilian church for specific things that church wants them to pray for.

Schroeder suggested the two church leaders also may arrange by mail for a simultaneous prayer period involving members of both churches although they are thousands of miles apart.

Persons requesting names of churches as prayer objects also will receive suggestions for conducting prayer periods, Schroeder said.

Schroeder suggested the midweek prayer service, regular Brotherhood meetings and special prayer breakfasts as possible times for participating in "Operation Prayerlift."

About 2,000 Brazilian Baptist churches and 4,000 preaching points will take part in the crusade. Missionaries and national pastors will conduct the services in Portuguese.

Revivals will begin in south Brazil in March, central Brazil in April and north Brazil in May. The final meetings come in June.

Houston Coed Wins
Lowndes Cash Award

BIRMINGHAM (BP)--Eunice Urbina of Houston, Tex., is the winner of the 1964 Elizabeth Lowndes Award.

The \$200 cash award is given annually by Woman's Missionary Union, Southern Baptist Convention auxiliary here, to a graduating senior who during college years has been noted for scholarship, leadership and character and has maintained a "B" grade average or better. Only children of home and foreign missionaries are eligible.

Miss Urbina is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Urbina, missionaries to Spanish-speaking people of Texas. She graduated magna cum laude from Howard Payne College (Baptist), Brownwood, Tex.

-30-

Asheville Church Turns
Down Negro Applicant

1-30-65

ASHEVILLE, N. C. (BP)--Although the First Baptist Church here voted 2 to 1 in favor of admitting Miss Carol Chaney, a young Negro high school music teacher, into membership, her application was rejected since unanimous votes are required on acceptance.

Miss Chaney and four white people presented themselves at a Sunday morning worship service, all requesting membership by transfer of letters.

Under church procedure, all five applications were referred to a church fellowship committee. Each applicant was interviewed. In the case of Miss Chaney, the fellowship committee recommended approval of her application by an 8 to 2 vote with one committee member not voting.

All five applications were presented to the Wednesday night prayer service three days after their applications. The four white applicants were received by unanimous vote.

Pastor Cecil E. Sherman, who had made a personal plea that no one vote against Miss Chaney, said the issue was not debated at the Wednesday evening service. The five names were read one by one and votes taken on each one separately. About 225 people were present at the service.

Normally, applicants are presented as a group and voted on as a group.

Miss Chaney did not attend the meeting at which her application was rejected. She told Sherman and the fellowship committee she would continue to attend the church even if her membership request were turned down, Sherman said.

She has regularly attended the morning worship service during the school year, but does not attend Sunday school or other organizations. She is usually accompanied by a group of up to a dozen Negro girls who attend Allen High School, a Methodist boarding school in Asheville.

Although none of the Negro high school girls had applied for membership, there was some indication they would apply if Miss Chaney were received.

Miss Chaney first expressed an interest in membership in January, 1964. At that time, an interim pastor was serving the church because W. Perry Crouch had left the pastorate to become general secretary of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention.

Miss Chaney was advised to wait till the church called its new pastor. Sherman came to the church a short time ago from denominational work with Texas Baptists. The Negro woman renewed her private inquiry about membership after Sherman came as pastor.

In December, an attempt was made to change the policy requiring a unanimous vote to accept new members. Proposed in its place was a policy that would grant membership status if 75 per cent of the vote favored it.

While a majority of the church voted in favor of the revision, it failed to carry since it, too, required a 75 per cent approval. The 408 to 250 vote favoring the policy change was only 62 per cent.

-more-

Sherman said earlier Miss Chaney "has not tried to pressure the church to accept her as a member, and has demonstrated a Christian spirit and attitude throughout the entire matter."

In his pastor's column in the church bulletin, Sherman predicted the unanimous vote requirement would be changed some day. He explained why he felt this was a "poor way" to decide on accepting or rejecting applicants for membership.

First Baptist Church has a resident membership of 2200.

-30-

Annuity Board Okays New Health Program

DALLAS (BP)--A health program to be administered by the Southern Baptist Annuity Board and to be underwritten by Group Hospital Services, Inc. of Dallas was approved by the board during its annual meeting here.

The health program which will be offered to ministers, and to church and denominational employees was one of three recommendations the board approved, R. Alton Reed, executive secretary of the board, said.

The board also authorized the use of electronic data processing as soon as possible. It voted to credit 4 per cent to actuarial reserves in the pooled plans and 4-1/2 per cent to purchased plans, the highest ever paid. Previous highs were in 1963, when 4 and 4-3/8 per cent were credited to the respective plans.

Reed said the reason for the difference in interest credit is due to the cost of administration of plans.

"It costs more to administer the pooled plans but does not affect the benefits," Reed said.

The pooled plans are plans such as the Minister's Retirement Plan and the Southern Baptist Protection Plan, in which benefits are based upon salary and length of service.

Purchased plans are plans such as the Age Security Plan and agency plans, in which benefits are based on the amount of money that is paid for annuity purposes and the age at which such an annuity begins.

The Variable Annuity Fund is not included in this crediting since it is a separated fund built around common stocks. Dividends and earnings from such stocks are put back into this fund. The Variable Annuity Fund rose to \$1,913,875, an increase of \$709,912 over 1963, Reed said.

Reed said the health program will provide plans to offer hospitalization-surgical-major medical benefits.

He said the board will direct the promotion of the program and will bill members for dues. Group Hospital Services (Blue Cross-Blue Shield), the underwriting company, will handle and pay all claims.

Reed said a special committee of the Baptist Hospital Association has worked cooperatively for over 10 years with the Annuity Board to bring about this health program.

The committee, whose chairman is Frank S. Groner, business administrator of Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis, Tenn., recommended the board's health program to the association during its meeting in Chicago in January.

Reed said details of the program are now being drafted with promotion of it to start in early spring. The board hopes to have the health program in operation by Oct. 1, he said.

The health program is one phase of the Annuity Board's protection program structure adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1962.

Reed said the recommendation to install electronic data processing followed an extensive study which was made to find the most feasible and economical method for operating the board's program.

-more-

In his report to the trustees, Reed highlighted the board's work during 1964. He said \$3,450,470 was paid in benefits to annuitants. Of this amount \$182,558 went to relief beneficiaries. This brought the total paid in benefits by the board since its beginning in 1918 to more than \$47 million.

Reed said funds held in trust for more than 35,000 ministers and church and denominational employees rose to \$135,354,421, an increase of \$15,807,642 over 1963.

Last year, 1392 persons and 589 churches joined the Southern Baptist Protection Plan, less of an increase than came in 1963, Reed said. This decrease had been expected, however, Reed added.

"We have reached the leveling off plateau created by previous enlistment of most of the larger churches. Consequently, new members added in this plan are less this year, and probably will continue to be smaller in number in the future," he said.

Reed said 125 of the 176 agencies in the denomination now have retirement plans for their employees, an increase of seven over 1963.

Relief beneficiaries decreased from 722 in 1963 to 645 in 1964, Reed said.

-30-

Bassett Reelected
By Annuity Board

1-30-65

DALLAS (BP)-- Wallace Bassett, pastor of Cliff Temple Baptist Church, Dallas, was reelected president of the Southern Baptist Convention Annuity Board during the annual meeting here.

Newly elected to serve as vice-president was E. Hermond Westmoreland, pastor, South Main Baptist Church, Houston. Reelected as vice-presidents were H. J. Blackwell, Gus Berry, both laymen from Dallas; W. A. Criswell, pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas, and Carlton S. Prickett, pastor, First Baptist Church, Burlington, N. C.

Bassett has served on the board since its beginning in 1918.

R. Alton Reed, executive secretary, and other staff officers were reelected also.

-30-

Hospital Chaplains
Choose Kentuckian

1-30-65

CHICAGO (BP)--Henry A. Buchanan, chaplain at Central Baptist Hospital, Lexington, Ky., has been chosen president-elect of the Southern Baptist Association of Hospital Chaplains. This means Buchanan will assume the presidency in 1966.

Taking over as president of the association is Harry McCartney, chaplain, Baptist Memorial Hospital, Jacksonville, Fla. John B. Cheshire Jr., chaplain, Baptist Hospital, Pensacola, Fla., is secretary-treasurer.

Officers were elected at the hospital chaplains' annual meeting here. The association also decided to hold its 1966 meeting in Dallas, during the week of American Protestant Hospital Association meetings.

The association discussed pastoral institutes to be developed locally by individual chaplains and conducted under sponsorship of the hospital employing each chaplain.

-30-