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WASHINGTON--Kuwaiti Christian flees to U.S. for protection.
ATLANTA--Downsizing is 'fact of life,' with economic, spiritual impact.
TENNESSEE--Denominational study reveals lack of stewardship vision.
TENNESSEE--BSSB study exploring possible name change.
ALASKA--Alaskans conclude anniversary, appeal for worker permit changes.
NORTH CAROLINA--Chapman to Southeasterners: 'Don't compromise calling.'
MISSOURI--Southwest Baptist University names C. Pat Taylor president.
CONNECTICUT--He had to go on-line to reach Coast Guard Academy prospects.
NEW MEXICO--Commissioning service reflects Southern Baptist cooperation.
NORTH CAROLINA--First-Person: Her Alzheimer's struggle ended with a look of glory.
TEXAS--RTVC broadcasts averaging 1,000-plus responses monthly.

**Kuwaiti Christian flees
to U.S. for protection**

By Marty Croll

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Kuwaiti businessman sentenced to die in a Muslim court arrived at Dulles Airport Saturday, Aug. 17, and was whisked away in a private vehicle to an undisclosed location far away from the nation's capital.

Robert Hussein, the Kuwaiti, fled his homeland with a valid passport and a six-month visa to the United States. "He is now a free man in a free country," said Jim Jacobson, who met him at Dulles and arranged for his asylum.

Jacobson, president of Christian Solidarity International, had corresponded with Hussein for some time. Hussein had told Jacobson he wanted to stay in Kuwait, but about 10 days ago he asked for help to flee.

"We responded to a cry for help. He wanted to go, and he wanted to go as soon as possible," Jacobson said.

"Robert has been given a very precious gift of coming to America," he added. "We don't have many success stories as far as getting someone out who has been charged with apostasy and sentenced to die."

Jacobson would not say where Hussein was hiding, only that he is "in a place of safety far away." And, "he needs time to recuperate ... and pray," Jacobson said.

In late June, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin joined a cacophony of voices -- including congressmen and human rights advocates -- calling for the Kuwait government to protect Hussein.

About a month ago Hussein told Baptist Press by cellular phone that since he declared in Muslim court his allegiance to Jesus Christ, police had quit protecting him from extremist Muslims who raided and destroyed his home and raped his wife.

After an intense outcry from the international community -- much of it converging on the Kuwaiti crown prince through his private fax machine -- Kuwait's Ministry of Justice responded July 22.

The Kuwaiti ambassador to the United States said Kuwait issued a public statement affirming "unequivocally" Hussein's right to practice any religion he chooses. The ambassador also quoted the statement as saying that Kuwaiti authorities should protect him against threats, harassment or abuse.

"Justice, liberty and equality for all citizens are not only guaranteed by the constitution, but Kuwait has had and continues to have a very long-standing tradition of religious tolerance and acceptance," said Ambassador Mohammed S. Al-Sabah in a letter to U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran of Mississippi.

Hussein, however, felt his life was in danger and had been hiding with expatriates in Kuwait for several months.

Formerly a contractor, Hussein, 44, was stripped by Kuwait's Muslim family courts of the custody of his children and his inheritance. In a statement in June, Judge Jaafar Al-Qazveeni ruled Islamic law calls for Muslim leaders to execute Hussein for apostasy.

Like many nations, Kuwait declares by its constitution that it allows freedom of religion, while its Muslim-dominated court system contends the constitution gets its power only from Islamic law -- which does not allow conversion from Islam.

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Human rights advocates say the line in Kuwait between the two power structures -- constitutional law and Muslim, or Sharia, law -- is fuzzy at best. One sentiment among Kuwaiti legislators is calling for the full adoption of Sharia. Elections for parliament are in October.

Although Muslim lawyers said their case against Hussein stayed within legal limits of disinheritance and family matters under Muslim law, it nonetheless gave them the opportunity to inflame mass sentiment against Hussein -- and offered the judge a chance to invite execution.

With the help of the U.S.-based Rutherford Institute, Hussein filed an appeal set to be heard Sept. 15. It is unclear now whether he will appear for that hearing or whether it will proceed without him.

The moderate Kuwait government runs the risk of stirring the wrath of extremist fundamentalists if it has to publicly rule that the constitution stands over Muslim law. As recently as last week several Kuwaiti parliament members were reported to be publicly asking why Hussein had not been put to death yet.

Evangelical Christians and human rights advocates have seen Hussein as a test case for Christian conversion in Muslim nations that claim to practice freedom under internationally accepted constitutional guidelines. A decision in favor of freedom for Hussein could pave the way for Kuwait and other Arab nations to allow Christians to worship freely and to offer protection from radical Muslims.

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**Downsizing is 'fact of life,'
with economic, spiritual impact** **By Clay Renick**

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--Jim Dunbar made six figures one year and minimum wage the next.

"We had no money and massive debts," he said about his two-year job search.

Dunbar worked with institutional finances. But he lost his job in a corporate downsizing. Now he's a church loan officer at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Still, "We're wondering where the Lord is going to take us."

"God does provide," he tells others. "Even in the moments where you don't think you'll make it."

Downsizing -- when companies trim costs by reducing their work force, expecting more work from remaining staff -- has had a society-wide impact. More than 43 million American jobs have been terminated since 1979, according to the New York Times.

Approximately 5.5 million people lost jobs in 1991-92. Only one third found work at the same pay, according to a Labor Department survey of displaced workers. About 24 percent were jobless, and 28 percent settled in a position at less pay than before. The others worked part time or were self-employed.

That's shown in the rise of temporary workers. According to USA Today, the number of temps has increased 89 percent since 1990.

Some industries are hit harder than others. The New York Times, recapping corporate layoffs in the last four years, reported AT&T had an announced cut of 123,000 workers; General Motors, 99,400; and Boeing, 61,000.

But the projections aren't always right. AT&T planned to lay off 40,000 workers last year and later revised that figure to 18,000 workers who will leave the company involuntarily, said spokesperson Ruthlyn Newell.

"We restructured into three companies," she explained. "There are new jobs being created that require new skills."

"Downsizings will continue," said Bill Elliott, an outplacement consultant in Houston. "It's a fact of corporate life."

Elliott is a member of South Main Baptist Church who has spent 25 years in human resources. He expects more layoffs as companies adjust for competition.

But, he noted, workers can improve their career options.

"The best protection is to maintain your technical expertise in whatever you do," he said.

He also advises good relationships with peers, subordinates and supervisors. And use professional associations to "network."

Companies started to downsize back in the late 1970s, he explained. But most of those released were in labor jobs. And many were subject to recall.

Now the trend includes professional workers. And there is no call back.

"I'm seeing a lot of people downsized out of a job two or three times," Elliott said.

The pattern is affecting churches, said Lynn Gillory, a human resources director for Cobo Resources, an oil company. He's a member of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas and helps teach a career seminar there.

"In every church across America," he said, "there are about 4 to 5 percent of the people out of work."

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Ray Lindsey has been on both sides of the problem. He's a member of Second Baptist Church in Houston. He had to release 1,000 workers as a corporate vice president. Then, last year, his own job ended.

"There isn't such a thing as guaranteed employment," he said. "The only alternative is to prepare yourself for a changing market."

Sammy Cantrell had to outplace 40 workers at a software company in Texas. He said he hesitated with the news because, until the last minute, "you don't know how many people you'll have to lay off."

Cantrell later lost that job in a downsizing and now is an information officer for a hospital group in Birmingham, Ala. Many staff members there have been downsized also.

And that news came without warning. So the workers formed their own reason for why it happened.

"What we're creating is very nervous people," Cantrell said.

He delivered an award to one of his employees recently. It was during office hours and the man was busy. But he turned pale as Cantrell approached.

"I thought you were coming in to fire me," the man said.

Another employee who took part in a meeting -- but didn't have a big part -- later called and started sobbing on the phone, Cantrell recounted.

"You didn't look at me one time in that meeting," the woman said. "I thought you were going to fire me."

Isolation can be one of the most difficult aspects of unemployment, so some churches use support groups for people affected.

Fairview Baptist Church, Greer, S.C., has a team of human resource workers in the congregation. They help with resumes and contacts when members face layoffs.

Some congregations, however, don't react until after the problem.

"When I first went to work, I thought this was one of the most secure jobs around," explained Ed Rainer, a Southern Baptist in Springfield, Ill., who works as a chemical engineer for a public utility.

They recently merged with another company. And that led to staff cuts.

"It's the not knowing that gets to people," he said about the workers affected.

One of his co-workers, a supervisor, was a Baptist Sunday school teacher. Many people under him were losing their jobs.

"He was not going to be able to protect those people," Rainer said. "He just got to the breaking point."

The man went out to his garage and closed the door. Then he turned on the car and died from carbon monoxide poisoning.

"You can't believe it's happening, even now," Rainer said of the tragedy.

Job loss certainly can affect one's faith, said Mary Beth Fehr who was working for the University of Houston when a lack of funding ended her position, forcing her to sell her house.

She called a church prayer line before one interview. The man on the other end knew of her story and offered her a job. She's now an outplacement counselor.

"You have to stop relying on the company to be there," she tells unemployed workers. "See how the Lord can work."

John McDorman developed the career workshop at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, which has helped 4,200 people in the past four and a half years. They encourage the mix of faith and practical skills on a job hunt.

McDorman is a career consultant who has lost three jobs. He said there are some things you can do to prepare for downsizing.

"All bills need to be brought to a present status," he stated.

He said it takes about one month to find work for every \$10,000 you expect to make.

Increase your resources if you don't have it in savings, he added. That might involve a side job.

Then look at your career focus, he explained. Start with God's will in the Scriptures but also examine your abilities.

Finally, look for fellowship and evaluate your faith.

"In business, people say network," he noted. "You do that by helping others. The support will be there when you need it."

"Do it now while you have a job."

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**Denominational study reveals
lack of stewardship vision**

By Herb Hollinger

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A study of 13 denominations in America, including Southern Baptists, revealed "most church members do not want the pastor to know how much individual members contribute to the church."

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Also, congregations do not have a clear vision to help them improve their stewardship, which most see simply as meeting the budget, a study by Illinois researchers found and documented in a book: "Behind the Stained Glass Windows: Money Dynamics in the Church."

According to Jim Austin, SBC Stewardship Commission vice president, the study by John and Sylvia Ronsvalle, Champaign, Ill., also cited a similar survey which revealed the giving of 30 million members in 29 denominations has declined, compared to generations ago, from 3.01 percent to 2.5 percent.

"The study showed that Americans are over 200 percent richer after taxes and after inflation than in the 1930s and yet give a smaller portion of this income to their churches," Austin said. "While we have access to more discretionary money, we are choosing to spend it on ourselves. Leisure activities have been one of the rising expenditures absorbing the increased incomes."

The Ronsvalles research was funded by a three-year \$311,887 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. Their work, through their "empty tomb, inc." organization, has focused on helping the church fulfill its potential for helping a hurting world in Jesus' name, Austin said.

The SBC, through the Stewardship Commission, participated in the National Money for Mission project with 12 other denominations: Catholic Church USA, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), Church of the Brethren, Church of the Nazarene, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Covenant Church, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church USA, United Church of Christ and United Methodist Church.

Austin said the objective of the study was to help church members decide, with God's help, to do what they could to help move their congregations toward meeting the goal of providing money for missions.

Current conventional wisdom insists fewer people trying to buy a house can afford to live like their parents, but the Ronsvalles' study found if people were willing to buy a starter home now equal to one many of their parents began in, they would have none of the amenities taken for granted today, like air conditioning, color television, automatic washer and dryer, swimming pool and personal computer.

Despite 2,000 biblical references about a person's relationship to possessions, the Ronsvalles found many pastors are struggling with the challenge of a laity bent toward increasing consumerism, Austin said.

"They also encountered laity leadership who discourage teaching or preaching about increased giving rather than risk a power shift in the congregation," Austin said. "They learned that if pastors overcome their distaste for preaching about money, it is usually to talk about bills that need to be paid, rather than how members can deepen their financial stewardship."

The Ronsvalles interacted with more than 500 congregations, talked with pastors and more than 100 denominational officials, including Southern Baptist leaders at the state and national levels.

Other findings of the study: More than 78 percent of the pastors surveyed felt "The pastor's knowledge of what individual members give to the church can be a helpful assessment tool of individual members' spiritual health;" 83 percent of the pastors agreed "Most church members do not want the pastor to know how much individual members contribute to the church;" 81 percent of the pastors said "Congregations do not have a clear overarching vision with which to challenge their members to improve their stewardship;" and 84 percent of the pastors agreed "In most congregations, the goal of stewardship is defined as meeting the budget."

Other topics considered in the book include pastoral counseling related to money issues, control dynamics that keep pastors and less-involved congregation members from deeper interaction with current congregational leaders, and major cultural shifts that have affected mission outreach.

One chapter, Austin said, looks at "Signs of Hope." The Southern Baptist stewardship materials, including the computer program that helps organize household finances and includes the tithe, are cited as one positive direction church leaders have taken to help church members develop a more Christian mind-set about how they approach their money.

Austin said the Ronsvalles are scheduled to meet with stewardship and Cooperative Program directors representing all state Baptist conventions at a Stewardship Development Process meeting sponsored by the SBC Stewardship Commission in Nashville, Tenn., Sept. 16-17.

The Ronsvalles' book, published by Baker Book House, will be available in bookstores Sept. 1.

**BSSB study exploring
possible name change**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--As a continuing step in preparing for its 21st-century ministry, the Baptist Sunday School Board has named a 19-member employee committee and contracted with an outside consultant to study the name of the board, according to BSSB President James T. Draper Jr.

"We are entering this process with no preconceived ideas about whether our name should be changed," Draper said.

In the last five years, he said, the board has introduced a new vision statement, core values, operating principles and business and financial objectives. Also, the board has been restructured and processes are being re-tooled to continuously improve products and services.

"Evaluating our name and making a conscious decision to retain it or make a change is a logical next step," Draper said. "With the Southern Baptist Convention undergoing major restructuring, including name changes for several denominational entities, this seems to be the right time to look at our name."

He said Mike Arrington, executive director for corporate affairs, is coordinating the project. Anspach Grossman Enterprise, a nationally known firm specializing in identity and name change, has been selected to work with the committee.

Representatives of Anspach Grossman have interviewed members of the BSSB executive management group and are beginning interviews of BSSB customers, employees and stakeholders (trustees, SBC leaders, media representatives and employees of companies that regularly do business with the board).

Based on the research, Arrington said the committee will formulate a recommendation to Draper and Ted Warren, executive vice president, in September on whether to retain the present name or move forward to identify options for adapting or changing the name.

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**Alaskans conclude anniversary,
appeal for worker permit changes**

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (BP)--Alaska Baptists, concluding their 50th-anniversary year, framed their annual meeting with the theme, "Sound the Trumpet in the Year of Jubilee."

Messenger registration totaled 199, representing the 65 churches and 23 missions in the state Baptist convention.

The convention's 50-year history, "This Is the Work of God" compiled and edited by retired Alaska home missionary Louise Yarbrough, was published in time for the Aug. 6-7 gathering at First Baptist Church, Anchorage.

The sessions were marked by "unanimity in business sessions, inspiration in messages and challenges to action," said LaVerne Bradshaw, convention recording secretary and assistant editor of the Alaska Baptist Messenger newsletter.

A volunteer-related concern was voiced in one of the resolutions adopted by messengers, urging the Alaska commissioner of labor to: "Seek changes in regulations that would allow temporary permits be issued to allow licensed electricians and plumbers from other states who volunteer their time and labor without compensation to work on Alaska churches under the supervision of an Alaskan administrator."

The messengers stated "it is often not convenient or possible for (the volunteers) to take the Alaskan test to qualify for an Alaskan electrical and plumbing license."

The resolution reminded that Alaska Baptist churches "often do not have funds to enter into construction projects on a turnkey contract" and thus "often must rely on volunteer labor," including "highly qualified licensed electricians and plumbers from Baptist churches in other states ... available and willing to travel to Alaska for one or two weeks to volunteer their time and labor."

Messengers also adopted a resolution supporting the Southern Baptist Convention's potential boycott of the Walt Disney Company if anti-family trends in the corporation continue.

The Alaska resolution said the SBC resolution, adopted last June, "noted many valid concerns over the recent performance of the Disney Corporation in such areas as the production of lewd, immoral and anti-Christian motion pictures and the promotion of the homosexual way of life."

The Alaska messengers said they "endorse, support, and join the boycott of Disney."

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They added: "... we covenant to pray daily for our nation that is rushing toward moral decay and national decline" and "we reassert our number one priority, personal evangelism, as the way God desires to turn a lost world to Him, and commit to invest ourselves daily in reaching and winning our neighbors and acquaintances unto Jesus Christ."

In officer elections, Wally Smith, pastor of Faith Baptist Church, Fairbanks, is new president, winning a ballot over Marvin Owen, pastor of First Baptist Church, Anchorage. Elected unanimously were Terry Hill, pastor of Rabbit Creek Community Church, Anchorage, first vice president and Jim Clark, First Baptist Church, Palmer, second vice president.

Messengers approved a 1997 budget of \$1,599,438, a decrease of \$93,679 or 5.5 percent. In Cooperative Program giving from the churches, \$568,000 is anticipated, a .049 percent decrease from the current year, with 33 percent to continue to be forwarded to national and international SBC ministries.

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**Chapman to Southeasterners:
'Don't compromise calling'**

By Lee Weeks

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Like Nehemiah, who refused to abandon his assignment from God to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem despite incessant interruptions by critics and naysayers, so must Christians hold fast to God's call to ministry in their lives.

"Don't ever compromise your calling," said Morris Chapman during an Aug. 20 convocation address at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

"Never has there been a generation which needs so desperately to see integrity in the church, in the Christian and in the ministry," said Chapman, president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

"Throughout your lives you will be among those who try to call you down from the wall. Call you down to a lesser purpose. Don't ever go down. Don't ever go down off the wall," Chapman admonished the near-capacity Binkley Chapel audience.

When the ministry seems impossible, Chapman said, remember Nehemiah's resolve and commitment to his task and how God honored his faithfulness by raising the walls around Jerusalem from rubbish in just 52 days.

"The work to which God has called you is the work of the impossible -- that which would not be done except that you're empowered by the Holy Spirit of God," Chapman said.

For Nehemiah, Chapman said, his task of rebuilding the walls around Jerusalem was not just a job, but it was a ministry that called for sacrifice.

"Responsibilities didn't break his spirit," Chapman said. "The privileges didn't build his ego. Like all good leaders, he carried more than his share of the burden and took less of his share of the credit."

Chapman called for pastors who have strayed from preaching God's Word to return to the sacred Scriptures of the Holy Spirit-inspired Bible.

"Preach the Word," Chapman exhorted, "not book reviews, not politics, not economy, not the current events of the day, not the philosophy of life, not unproved theories of science, but preach the Word of God."

In other convocation activities, Gary Galeotti, professor of Old Testament, was presented the Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award. Galeotti, at Southeastern since 1993, has taught at Criswell College in Dallas; Southwest Baptist University in Missouri; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Three new professors signed Southeastern's Abstract of Principles, or articles of faith, which call for adherence to the belief that the Bible is the infallible and inherent Word of God: N. Allan Moseley, associate professor of pastoral leadership, vice president for student services and dean of students; Mark F. Rooker, associate professor of Old Testament; and J. Gregory Lawson, assistant professor of Christian education.

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**Southwest Baptist University
names C. Pat Taylor president**

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

BOLIVAR, Mo. (BP)--C. Pat Taylor of Shawnee, Okla., was elected 24th president of Southwest Baptist University Aug. 20 in a special meeting of trustees at the Bolivar, Mo., campus.

Taylor, 50, currently serves as provost at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee. He will succeed Roy Blunt, SBU president since 1993, who is seeking Missouri's 7th District congressional seat in the November general election. Blunt had announced he would leave the university presidency by Dec. 31.

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Taylor's starting date with SBU will be determined according to a process approved by trustees in February. Taylor, Blunt and trustee chairman Walter Rarrick will "agree on a timetable for transition," but Rarrick said he hoped Taylor could be on campus by the middle of the fall semester.

Rarrick, a Springfield, Mo., businessman, noted Taylor's election allows for "a smooth transition prior to President Blunt's departure. Roy had encouraged us to find the best person as the university's next president and was very willing to work with us on an exact starting date. As we had hoped when the process began, the timing of the election allows Dr. Taylor and Dr. Blunt to work together in the next few weeks to ensure a strong, positive leadership transition."

Taylor expressed excitement and optimism about the SBU presidency. "Southwest Baptist University long has been a leader in Christian higher education. With that strong heritage and especially the positive accomplishments of the past few months, I believe the university is poised as one of the leading international Baptist universities," he said. "Judy and I look forward to working with the university's constituents to make that happen."

Taylor's election culminates a seven-month search by an 11-member search committee. Blunt had encouraged the board to begin the search process last February to "provide for the best possible transition."

Rarrick said Taylor's name emerged from an original list of more than 40 "viable" candidates. Taylor was one of two candidates who visited the campus for final interviews. He was the unanimous recommendation of the search committee, Rarrick added.

"The similarities between SBU and OBU made him attractive to the committee," Rarrick said. "The size and scope of the student bodies, similarities in budget and program, when combined with his academic and administrative record, were strong points in our consideration."

A native of Kentucky, Taylor has served as chief academic officer at Oklahoma Baptist University since 1986. In addition, he has been a professor of education. Earlier he served in several academic and administrative roles at Union University, a Baptist institution in Jackson, Tenn., and Belmont University, a Baptist institution in Nashville, Tenn. He also has been a community college and high school teacher and coach.

He has a doctor of education degree from Memphis State University, a master of arts degree from Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green; and a bachelor of science degree from the University of Tennessee, Martin.

"Dr. Taylor comes to SBU at a time of unparalleled opportunity," Rarrick said. "Under President Blunt's leadership, we have accomplished significant things in the past four years that provide a wonderful foundation on which the new president can build."

Recently SBU received the maximum 10-year reaccreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and was selected for inclusion in the Student's Guide to America's 100 Best College Buys for 1997-98. Also under Blunt's leadership, the university completed a successful \$11 million capital campaign, and graduate enrollment grew from 300 to more than 1,500 students.

Taylor's wife, Judith, is assistant professor of education and director of field services at OBU. Their daughter, Marijo, is a 1994 OBU graduate and is with KPMG accounting firm in Tulsa, Okla. Daughter Charla is a sophomore pre-physical therapy major at OBU. Because of teaching commitments, Taylor's wife will not move to Bolivar until the end of the fall 1996 semester but will be available for some key university activities, Rarrick said.

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**He had to go on-line to reach
Coast Guard Academy prospects**

By Dan Nicholas

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

NEW LONDON, Conn. (BP)--Jamie Mackey is particularly attracted to the New London (Conn.) Harborlight, which has been shining brightly since 1761.

The 24-year-old native of Alabama had never seen a lighthouse before moving to the Connecticut shore in September 1994 to do campus ministry at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and Connecticut College.

Now Mackey draws inspiration from the rugged lighthouses dotting New England's coastline, saying, "Our relationship as Christians is to be a 'beacon of hope' into a community of people who do not know Christ."

Mackey, with the help of computer technology, has built a solid foundation in New London over the past two years. From a two-bedroom, second-floor, inner-city apartment, he has developed a ministry to some of the 2,800 academy cadets and college students who jam New London each year.

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Like the lighthouse that fascinates Mackey, his multifaceted outreach has become a beacon of hope in the community. For example, when Katie, a fourth-class (freshman) cadet, needed prayer for a grandfather facing heart surgery in Florida, she immediately sent Mackey a computer e-mail message. He returned an encouraging note that served Katie as a beacon of hope during the difficult time.

When a 19-year-old third-class (sophomore) cadet from California named Kevin died last September of a heart attack while practicing soccer, Mackey offered "a shoulder for cadets to cry on" numerous hours that week. Kevin had been an outspoken Christian and active member of Mackey's Saturday Bible study for cadet men.

When Mackey arrived in New London fresh from Alabama's Jacksonville State University, where he studied secondary education and history, "I knew how to type," he said of his limited computer ability. Within a year, though, he was on-line sending dozens of messages weekly to the computer-literate cadets and students who comprise his two target groups. A Coast Guard cadet may have a personal computer with a modem but is not allowed a telephone in the dorm room. Mackey's calls to the campus can take more than five minutes before a particular cadet is called to a phone. Before he learned electronic mail, he had contact with the cadets only on weekends.

Most unusually for a minister, every member of Mackey's Bible discussion groups -- and every prospect, for that matter -- is wired to the information superhighway. In fact, Mackey is launching a World Wide Web home page through the Connecticut College chaplain's office.

He often receives special prayer requests by e-mail before ever talking with a cadet or student on the telephone. Consequently, Mackey checks his computer for messages at least five times a day, the way other ministers check their phone answering machines. Occasionally, a student at the academy, reading the Bible late in the evening, will fire off a theological question to Mackey, who now calls himself a "techno-missionary."

Mission trips to other states have played an important role in Mackey's Christian life. In 1992, for example, he was a summer missionary in fast-paced Orange County, Calif., an experience he calls "10 weeks of culture shock." While serving several churches in that Los Angeles suburb, he "accepted God's call to ministry." A year later, after another summer of missions, this time in Colorado, Mackey was challenged to consider full-time campus ministry in New England.

"I had never been north of North Carolina before and I thought New Englanders were rude, fast, business-like Yankees," he reflected. After a short while, Mackey's opinion changed: "Now I have learned that the relationships we can build here in New England are as deep and as strong as you'd find anywhere."

On his most recent missions trip, Mackey, six academy cadets, a Connecticut College student and college students from Syracuse and Providence traveled last spring to Baltimore for a week of construction and outreach. Mackey and three others visited an inner-city homeless shelter and played cards with the men. There they met Anthony Davis, an alcoholic and drug addict in his 30s who talked openly about his troubles. Mackey led Davis to ask forgiveness for his sins and profess faith in Christ, the first person he had brought to faith in Christ since becoming a Christian at age 9. The next day Davis received a Bible and said he slept peacefully for the first time in years.

The experience of leading someone to Christ for the first time "made me say 'Wow!' We were awestruck. It was hard to grasp what just happened and we were thrilled to death. We shouldn't even have been talking with Anthony. We should have been playing cards," Mackey said.

Helping someone profess faith in Christ "renewed my awareness of verbal evangelism. Equal to the joy I received from leading Anthony to Jesus Christ was the joy I felt of doing that with a student from my ministry sitting there."

Since then, the cadet who shared in the witnessing, First-class (Senior) Zach Malinoski, has been more intentional about sharing his faith at the academy. "To see someone come to Christ ... is something I will never forget," Malinoski said in the BCNE campus ministries April newsletter, appropriately named "The Lighthouse."

As a missionary, Mackey estimates the average tuition paid by the students with whom he ministers is double what he is paid per year. "It's just part of the sacrifice," he said, "of going on mission."

Although his commitment as a US-2 missionary with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board has ended, Mackey is continuing his campus ministry a third year. Then in September 1997, when Mackey intends to enter seminary or move to ministry on another campus, the Baptist Convention of New England intends to fund a career-track campus minister in New London, who also will coordinate student ministry throughout the Southeastern New England Baptist Association. The convention will utilize \$4,000 in support from its Beulah Peoples Mission Offering, with the balance to come from the Home Mission Board.

**Commissioning service reflects
Southern Baptist cooperation**

By John Loudat

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--The cooperative nature of Southern Baptist work was celebrated during the commissioning of 22 US-2 missionaries at Sandia Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N.M., Aug. 11.

Participating in the service were Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board; Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC; and Mike Day, executive vice president, Brotherhood Commission.

Representing local churches, associations and state conventions involved in home mission ministries were Sandia pastor Bob Butler; Reggie Thomas, director of missions, Central Baptist Association; and Baptist Convention of New Mexico Executive Director Claude Cone.

The 22 new US-2 missionaries are college graduates age 30 or younger who will serve the next two years in a variety of HMB assignments.

The young adults began their service Aug. 1 and spent the next week attending Student Week at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center as part of the preparation for their new assignments.

The commissioning service began with a moving procession of flags, carried by young people from the church, as the congregation sang "Shine, Jesus, Shine."

William C. Graham, director of the HMB missionary personnel department, said the flags of the places where the HMB is at work represent the more than 180 million lost people in those states and countries.

The new "US-2ers," Graham said, come from 15 states and one foreign country and will spend the next two years on assignments in 17 different states.

Lewis presented miniature sets of flags to Butler, Thomas and Cone in recognition of the support local churches, associations and state conventions give home missionaries.

Butler told HMB's newest missionaries, "We honor your commitment to Christ," and pledged Sandia's commitment to pray for them and their work.

Cone began his remarks by calling Sandia Baptist Church "a missionary-minded church," noting it gives 13 percent of undesignated gifts to the Cooperative Program.

He then noted the state of New Mexico, which is 50 percent Anglo and 50 percent ethnic, is a mission state.

Since the birth of the state convention in 1912, Cone said, it has worked in partnership with the HMB.

Currently, he explained, the HMB provides "75 cents for every 25 cents" the state convention spends in mission work in the state. Last year, the HMB contributed a little over \$800,000 toward reaching the state, which includes 135,000 Native Americans and 700,000 Hispanics.

"We couldn't do this if we didn't have the Home Mission Board to help us," Cone said.

Thomas specifically cited two US-2 missionaries who had recently completed assignments in Central Baptist Association, Jerome Bell at the Baptist Neighborhood Center in Albuquerque and Jay Sparks, who worked with Hispanic youth in the association.

The US-2 program, Thomas said, "allows us to extend the ministries of our local churches."

Thomas also affirmed the partnership with the state convention and HMB, saying, "It is a joy that as Southern Baptists we have that kind of network."

Before the US-2 missionaries introduced themselves to the congregation, Graham encouraged church members to pick one of the young people to pray for during the next two years.

After all the new missionaries identified themselves and their assignments, three of them gave brief testimonies.

Steven Moltz, from Georgia, who will be serving as a student worker in the Bronx, N.Y., said, "I want to live a life worthy of the Lord" and challenged the congregation to do the same.

Alabaman Margaret Chaffin said she expects her work as a church planter strategist in Indianapolis to be "an adventure."

La Her, who was born in Laos and came to experience new life in Christ when he came to his new home in America, described how an automobile accident in 1989 marked a turning point in his life. He said, through all he has experienced, God has had a purpose, one Her is confident God will continue to work out in his student work assignment in Minneapolis.

Following a prayer of dedication by WMU's O'Brien, the HMB's Lewis brought a challenge to the young missionaries and the church.

Lewis told how someone once asked the late pastor and SBC President R.G. Lee what Southern Baptists need more than anything else. Lee responded, "More than anything else, Southern Baptists simply need to be like Jesus."

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Using Matthew 9:35-38 as his text, he urged the young adults to share in "the three-fold ministry of Jesus" of teaching, preaching and healing, and to see the estimated 184 million lost people in America today through the eyes of Jesus.

"If we're going to be like Jesus," he said, "we can't be indifferent to the needs around us."

During the invitation time, the 22 new missionaries knelt across the front of Sandia's auditorium, while friends, family and Sandia members came and prayed for them.

The service concluded with a benediction prayer by Harland Cason, a US-2 missionary who completed his US-2 assignment one week earlier and said he was now "passing on the torch" to the new group.

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FIRST-PERSON

**Her Alzheimer's struggle
ended with a look of glory**

By Harriett Jones

**Baptist Press
8/21/96**

DURHAM, N.C. (BP)--My mother and I had just returned from one of several visits to her doctor. We sat at the kitchen table, knowing we must talk.

Her shoulders were bent, her face clouded with uncertainty as I told her the doctor had said she could no longer live alone. She did not want to leave her home, having lived there most of her 76 years. Yet there was a look of relief in her eyes at the thought of having someone to care for her. The burden had become too heavy. She was willing to come home with me for a while.

With the family history of Alzheimer's disease, I knew something of what the future would hold. I did not know that in the midst of many tears and much sorrow there would be moments of indescribable glory.

We placed her in Baptist Retirement Homes, knowing that excellent, loving care would be provided. At first, Mother thought she was back in her college dormitory and would declare from time to time she had learned everything she needed to know and was ready to go home. Whenever I prepared to leave after a visit, she would say, "I'll go home with you."

Before she forgot how to write and read, we would receive letters written in her beautiful schoolteacher's hand. She forgot the names of her children. The grandchildren, who lovingly called her "Markie," became "that nice boy" or "that little girl." Even the memory of her husband, who had died four years before the onset of her illness, was lost to her. She had always said, "He was the best man in the world."

For several years after entering the retirement home, she played the piano for Sunday school and sang the old songs in her sweet soprano voice. When those gifts were taken from her memory, she still responded in some way to music.

One day, noticing that several pages had been torn from her Bible, I took it home with me for safekeeping. As I turned the pages, searching for passages of Scripture which she had underlined, I came across a verse in the 21st chapter of John. As Jesus spoke to Peter, he said: "When you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish" (NKJV).

Puzzled, I wondered why Mother had underlined that verse. Then I knew, and my heart filled with sadness. But as I looked at the top of that same page, written in a trembling hand, there were the words, "Trust in Jesus." My heart was lifted by this message of faith which she had left for me.

Her longing for home remained, but her trust in Jesus would sustain her.

For 15 years, the cruelty of Alzheimer's gradually took away the person she had been. In her last years, she lay locked in a fetal position, unable to move or speak.

I had prayed that, when the time came, she would not die alone. God answered my prayers, enabling us to be at her side for two days and two nights before the end came. On the last night of her earthly life, my sister and I and our husbands sat by her bedside, singing the songs she loved so well. The kind nurses assured us our singing was welcomed and we would disturb no one.

At midnight, quietly and peacefully, she drew her last breath. I said to my sister, "Look at her face." At the age of 91, her skin was smooth and clear, but now there was a glow, a luminous, pearl-like glow, a look of glory!

Standing there in awe of this beauty, in those moments we knew she was seeing the One whom she had trusted all those long years. At last, she was truly home.

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Jones is a laywoman in Durham, N.C. Her husband, Crate, is a retired minister now serving as interim pastor at the Crabtree Valley Baptist Church, Raleigh.

**RTVC broadcasts averaging
1,000-plus responses monthly**

By C.C. Risenhoover

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--During the first 10 months of its fiscal year, the counseling department of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission reported 12,063 letters or phone calls resulting from RTVC-produced or sponsored radio and television programs and its pages on the Internet.

The RTVC fiscal year is Oct. 1-Sept. 30.

"Of the numbers we're reporting, 238 received Christ as Savior, 113 inquired about salvation and 367 received referral to a local church," said Pat Wooley, RTVC director of counseling.

"Invitation to Life," featuring the preaching of Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark., received the most response. Counselors at the church handled 6,598 telephone calls. RTVC staff counselors corresponded with 776 of the callers who had specific problems requiring follow-up.

FamilyNet carries the RTVC-sponsored "Invitation to Life" on Thursday at 10 p.m. Eastern and ACTS, through the Faith and Values Channel (F&V), carries it on Sunday at 1 p.m. Eastern. FamilyNet and ACTS are the RTVC's broadcast and cable television services, respectively.

"The Baptist Hour" television program, which features the preaching of Frank Pollard, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., received the second-largest number of responses. The program generated 1,790 telephone calls, of which 541 required correspondence follow-up by RTVC staff. Volunteers at four Fort Worth, Texas, churches staff the phone bank for "The Baptist Hour."

"The Baptist Hour" is telecast on FamilyNet at 8 p.m. Eastern each Sunday and at 10 a.m. Eastern each Sunday on ACTS.

Other RTVC-produced television programs generating response were "COPE," 915 letters; "Country Crossroads," 112 letters; and "Home Life," three letters.

Special TV programming accounted for one letter and 276 telephone calls. Eleven letters could not be attributed to any specific TV program.

Letters attributed to five RTVC-produced radio programs were as follows: "The Baptist Hour," 79; "Country Crossroads," 239; "MasterControl," 80; "On Track," 20; and "Powerline," 309.

There were 13 letters that could not be attributed to any specific radio program.

RTVC staff counselors responded to 61 people on the World Wide Web and handled 239 miscellaneous pieces of correspondence.

FamilyNet and ACTS also carry numerous ministry programs that handle their own correspondence and telephone calls and are not included in any of the RTVC totals.

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