



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

REGIONAL OFFICES

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor/161 Spring Street, N.W./Atlanta, Georgia 30303/Telephone (404) 523-2593
DALLAS R. T. McCartney, Editor/103 Baptist Building/Dallas, Texas 75201/Telephone (214) RI 1-1996
WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor/200 Maryland Ave., N.E./Washington, D.C. 20002/Telephone (202) 544-4226

July 6, 1966

40,000 Decisions Made In Graham London Meet

LONDON (BP)--Evangelist Billy Graham ended his month-long London crusade, his biggest ever, with more than 40,000 estimated decisions reported.

During the month of June, the famed Baptist evangelist preached to nearly one million people, a record for Graham.

Most of the services were held at Earls Court in London, with the closing session at Wembley Stadium. More than 94,000 attended the closing service, billed as "a massive demonstration . . . to faith in God."

Closed-circuit television relayed the services to halls, and auditoriums in eight cities throughout England--Leeds, Leicester, Southampton, Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield, Norwich, and Birmingham.

Graham said the crusade drew special interest among the youth of England, reporting that nearly 70 per cent of each night's audience was made up of young people under 25 years of age.

Final count on attendance was 946,359. The Graham team did not officially announce exact totals on the number of "decisions," but reported that more than 40,000 had come forward as "inquirers."

The crowds filled the 18,000-seat main arena at Earls Court every night after the first three services. One night, more than 5,000 people were not able to get in, so Graham left the rostrum to speak to those outside.

Extensive press coverage accompanied the crusade, which stimulated some controversy in England. Graham was sometimes denounced in the press for "gimmickery" techniques.

But most London opinion appeared favorable toward the crusade, observed one news correspondent covering the event.

Aides to Graham said that it will be ten years before the results of the crusade, described as the largest month-long crusade in history, are really known.

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SBC Missions Gifts Top \$29 Million

7/6/66

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists, during the first half of 1966, have given more than \$29 million to world missions causes, a mid-year report from the denomination's Executive Committee here has disclosed.

During the six-month period, more than \$11.5 million has been contributed through the convention's Cooperative Program unified budget plan, and nearly \$17.5 million has been given to designated Southern Baptist mission causes.

The record contributions exceeded gifts for the same period in 1965 by \$2.6 million, an increase of 10.12 per cent.

Biggest increase for the six-month period came in designated giving, with an increase of \$1,891,305 or 12.12 per cent reported over the same period in 1965.

Undesignated contributions through the Cooperative Program budget increased \$781,814 over the same period last year, or 7.24 per cent.

If missions contributions continue for the second half of the year as they have for the first half, the denomination should go over its \$21.8 million Cooperative Program budget goal, observers here said.

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During the month of June, Southern Baptists gave \$1,860,109 in undesignated missions contributions, and \$858,570 to designated causes.

Most of the \$29 million total for the six-month period went to the SBC Foreign Mission Board, which received \$19,301,665. The SBC Home Mission Board has received \$5,698,533.

Texas continued to lead the 29 Baptist state conventions in contributions, with \$1.9 million channeled to SBC mission causes through the budget, and an additional \$3.8 million given to designated causes.

The figures reported by the SBC Executive Committee include only amounts given to support SBC world-wide causes, and do not include gifts to support local and state-wide Baptist mission efforts.

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Air-Assault Chaplain Completes Combat Tour

7/6/66

AN KHE, Viet Nam (BP)--Major (Chaplain) Weldon F. Wright, a Southern Baptist who became the Army's first air-assault brigade chaplain, returns to the United States this month after a year with the Air Cavalry Division's 1st Airborne Brigade.

The 44-year-old paratrooper chaplain, who saw the birth of the air-assault concept of transporting Army fighting men into battle with helicopters, is leaving the Air Cavalry brigade which pioneered the concept. He says he has mixed emotions about leaving.

Commenting on his three years with the Air Cavalry 1st Brigade, during which time he became a qualified Army parachutist, Chaplain Wright said:

"The combat soldier has become a part of my life. I have a deep and lasting admiration and respect for the soldier on the line.

"My theology in a combat environment is very simple--a man should always be ready to die and at any time be ready to stand before God.

"My experiences with the dying and wounded have made a lasting impression upon my life. Their sacrifices have caused me to wear the uniform with a great deal of pride and honor," he said.

Chaplain Wright entered the United States Navy in 1942 as an aviation cadet, and after being commissioned as a fighter pilot in 1943, served in the Pacific where he logged about 2,000 hours flying time.

On his return to the United States, he served as an aviation-cadet instructor until his discharge in 1946.

He then attended Baylor University in Waco, Tex, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, graduating in 1954.

From 1954-1957, he served as a National Guard chaplain, becoming an Army Chaplain. He has been on active duty since then.

During his stay in Viet Nam, Chaplain Wright has been awarded the Army's Air Medal, the Republic of Viet Nam Service Medal, the Vietnamese Parachutist Badge, and he has been recommended for the Award of the Bronze Star Medal and the Army Commendation Medal.

The Chaplain's wife, Mrs. Dorothy Wright, and a daughter and son live in Lawton, Okla. Another daughter, Mrs. Karen Tyson, is married to Army 1st Lt. William Tyson, now serving in Germany.

Chaplain Wright's parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Wright, live in Burkburnett, Tex.

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Time Calls De Bakey
Hero of Science

NEW YORK (BP)--An essay in Time magazine published here has cited Dr. Michael De Bakey, a professor at Baylor University College of Medicine (Baptist) in Houston, as a "latter day" hero of science in the field of medicine.

De Bakey, famed heart surgeon who teaches at the Baptist-owned medical school, is classified by Time along with Dr. Jonas Salk of Polio vaccine fame, Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of penicillin, and Dr. Paul Dudley White, the heart specialist.

All were called "latter day" heroes of science in the field of medicine by the Time essay, which dealt with the difficulty of being a hero in the world today.

The essay twice quoted the late historian Dixon Wecter, a graduate of Baylor University, as it developed the theme. Wecter, a historian at the University of California, Los Angeles, was author of "The Hero in America," and eight other books. He died in 1950 at the age of 44.