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**Spiritual awakening convocations
gain affirmation, Elliff reports**

By Art Toalston

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--"I believe this call has touched a chord down deep in the heart of every concerned Southern Baptist," said Tom Elliff, president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The call -- to pastors and other Southern Baptist leaders -- is to join in any of several one-day convocations emphasizing the crucified life and prayer for spiritual awakening at Baptist seminary campuses slated from Aug. 29 through Sept. 12.

Elliff issued the call in a July 15 mailing of more than 40,000 letters. He assessed initial reaction to his call as "overwhelmingly supportive and encouraging." Elliff, elected SBC president at the convention's June 11-13 annual meeting in New Orleans, is pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, in suburban Oklahoma City.

Requests have come to add convocations at Baptist seminary branch campuses and for staff of the Home Mission Board in Atlanta, Elliff said, declaring, "If there's a way to work it out, we'll do it."

And Elliff has begun receiving letters voicing affirmation.

"I could not agree with you more," wrote Cole Farmer, pastor of First Baptist Church, Moran, Texas, "that revival is needed in the (Southern Baptist) Convention, releasing and recommitting God's people to evangelize a nation."

Farmer wrote he believes God "wants to do some wonderful things in the midst of the Convention, in our nation and in the world. To that end, I am prayerfully committed."

Claude Cone, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, added in a letter to Elliff, "My heart yearns and burns to see a great spiritual awakening in America. I personally believe that we are doomed for destruction if God does not intervene. ... For 11 1/2 years I have traveled this state and been in nearly all of our 284 churches. I know the people, and I know that New Mexico also longs for revival."

The one-day convocations will not boast a list of speakers, Elliff said, explaining, "We will be gathered to meet with God, not to be drawn to some noted personalities announced in advance." Prayer -- for Southern Baptists to turn to the crucified life with Jesus and for spiritual awakening -- will be emphasized, not just preaching or singing, Elliff said.

Elliff's July 15 mailing, a cooperative effort with the Baptist Sunday School Board, was directed to Southern Baptist pastors; state convention executive directors; state Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood and division directors; associational directors of missions; and other leaders.

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Labeled an "urgent invitation," Elliff said the 20th century "is rapidly drawing to a close. Tragically, this could be the first century in our nation's history to pass without a great, sweeping move of God. Will that be the case? Many of us believe the Lord is saying 'turn to me!' He is calling us to revival: calling us to the cross; calling us to the crucified life."

Elliff said the seminaries are opening their campuses for the day "when all energies and interests will be focused on revival." He urged Southern Baptists to find the nearest campus, "on the day most suited to your schedule."

Each convocation begins at 10 a.m.

Meeting dates and locations: Aug. 29, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; Sept. 3, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; Sept. 4, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif.; Sept. 10, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; Sept. 11, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.; and Sept. 12, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

A convocation also will be held Sept. 5 at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, Tenn., Elliff said.

"Come as early and stay as long as you like," Elliff wrote. "I urge you to begin praying now for a mighty moving of God during these days. Such a concerted effort, touching lives, churches and campuses, will be in vain 'unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down.'"

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(BP) graphic -- an information block for use in state Baptist newspapers and Baptist association and church newsletters -- to be posted in SBCNet News Room 7/25/96; mailed to Baptist state papers; and available upon request from Baptist Press' central office in Nashville, (615) 244-2355.

**Religion amendment debated
in House subcommittee hearing**

By Tom Strode

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Church-state specialists and religious leaders from the right and left argued about the need for a constitutional amendment to protect religious freedom in a sharply divided congressional hearing July 23.

Leaders from organizations such as the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission and the American Center for Law and Justice called for an amendment to combat hostility toward religious expression fostered by misguided courts and public officials. Meanwhile, representatives of such groups as the National Council of Churches and Americans United for Separation of Church and State said an amendment would harm religious liberty.

In addition, two supporters of an amendment said the proposal, House Joint Resolution 184, before the Constitution Subcommittee of the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee did not go far enough.

The hearing, the first on a specific religious freedom amendment in this session, came a year and nine months after Rep. Newt Gingrich, R.-Ga., promised a vote on a school prayer amendment if the Republicans gained control of the House and he became speaker.

Two proposals, one by Rep. Henry Hyde, R.-Ill., and another by Rep. Ernest Istook, R.-Okla., were introduced late last year, but the House leadership sought consensus around a single amendment when the new year started. The consensus never fully developed among the organizations or congressional sponsors pushing an amendment. Recently, the House leadership chose to move forward with a Hyde amendment revision, H.J. Res. 184, which was introduced by Majority Leader Dick Armey, R.-Texas.

The CLC's Land endorsed Armey's amendment and said it was necessary because the three decades since the Supreme Court banned state-sponsored Bible reading and official prayers in the public schools "have witnessed an ever more aggressive, secularizing neutrality which has been hostile to, and has discriminated against, the religious free exercise rights of students.

"Most Southern Baptists, and I believe most Americans, believe that this hostile censorship and suppression of the people's -- including public school students -- religious free exercise rights has gone way too far."

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The Supreme Court has "misconstrued the establishment clause of the First Amendment to require discrimination against people of faith," said Forest Montgomery, counsel for the National Association of Evangelicals.

Anna Doyle, a Rhode Island mother of six, testified her children would not return to public school next year because "they have been made to feel ashamed of their religion and embarrassed for trying to express it."

With two elementary-age daughters beside her as she testified, Doyle said one, Kathryn, had been told by her teacher a book, "Jesus My Love," which she had brought in for sharing time was "against the law." The teacher also prevented Kathryn from giving rosaries to two students who had admired hers. Another teacher confiscated Advent cards given by another daughter, Rebecca, to her classmates, Doyle said. The principal defended the action, she said.

While Elenora Giddings Ivory, director of the Washington office of the Presbyterian Church USA, refused to condemn the school's actions as violations of religious freedom, other opponents of an amendment did so but said the problem was not with the Constitution.

"The last thing America needs is a new First Amendment," said Oliver "Buzz" Thomas, special counsel for religious and civil liberties to the National Council of Churches. "A stronger role for religion in public life? Yes. A fairer and more respectful treatment of religion in schools? Certainly. But a new constitutional amendment on religion? God forbid."

Others harshly criticized the prospect of any amendment.

"This is not equality for people of faith. It's tyranny of the worst kind," said Americans United Executive Director Barry Lynn.

Jay Sekulow, chief counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice, said other solutions, such as the Clinton administration's 1995 guidelines on religion in the schools, have not worked. The effect of the guidelines has been "zero," Sekulow testified. Incidents of suppression of religious freedom reported to ACLJ from July 1994 to July 1995 totaled 304, he said. From the time the guidelines were announced in July 1995 until May 1996, incidents totaled 255, Sekulow said.

Witnesses disagreed on the impact of H.J. Res. 184, which reads:

"In order to secure the right of the people to acknowledge and serve God according to the dictates of conscience, neither the United States nor any state shall deny any person equal access to a benefit, or otherwise discriminate against any person, on account of religious belief, expression or exercise. This amendment does not authorize government to coerce or inhibit religious belief, expression or exercise."

Istook and Craig Parshall, a lawyer representing Concerned Women for America, said the language is insufficient. H.J. Res. 184 "is a good start, a very good start ... but it's an incomplete start, we believe," Parshall said.

Istook suggested the proposal be amended to include explicit language blocking prohibitions on school prayer and acknowledgments of religious heritage. He requested the subcommittee also vote out his amendment, H.J. Res. 127.

Organizations such as the CLC, ACLJ, NAE and Christian Legal Society endorsed the Arney language but not the Istook proposal.

Sekulow said he believes H.J. Res. 184 would overturn the Supreme Court's *Lee v. Weisman* decision, which banned a school-approved prayer by a rabbi at a middle school graduation. University of Missouri law professor Carl Esbeck, however, said he believes it will leave *Lee* intact.

Thomas said he thinks the amendment might overturn the high court's decisions prohibiting state-sponsored prayer and Bible reading, but Land said the CLC disagrees with that evaluation and "would not be supporting this amendment" if it did so.

Most Southern Baptists, "and I believe most Americans, do not want state subsidy or sponsorship of religion," Land said. "They do not want to go back to the days before the 1962 and 1963 Supreme Court decisions."

H.J. Res. 184 would not affect religious exemptions, including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and it would solidify equal access decisions, Esbeck said. It would overturn, however, a series of cases prohibiting equal access to public benefits, he said.

While critics of the amendment decried the "equal access to a benefit" language because it would open the way to school choice programs for religious schools, Thomas, former general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee, said, "I don't think the Supreme Court would strike down a properly drafted voucher system."

The government has prevented religious individuals and groups from participating in federal programs when they would otherwise be eligible were it not for religion, said Greg Baylor of the Christian Legal Society. Federal law is "literally saturated" with "examples of religious discrimination," Baylor said.

On the eve of the hearing, a coalition of amendment opponents, led by the Baptist Joint Committee, called the amendment unnecessary and a government endorsement of religion.

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**Historian Lynn May dies,
led SBC agency from 1971-95**

By Kim Medley

**Baptist Press
7/26/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Lynn E. May Jr., former executive director of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, died today from complications due to Parkinson's disease and congestive heart failure.

May, 66, served the commission for almost 40 years, 23 of which he was executive director.

"Southern Baptists and all Baptists have lost a loyal and faithful servant in the passing of Lynn E. May Jr.," noted fellow Baptist historian Slayden Yarbrough, interim executive director of the Historical Commission. "In the years to come, scholars, researchers, individuals and churches interested in the history and heritage of Baptist will continue to benefit enormously from his work, probably unaware of his commitment and ministry."

"In the years I served as a trustee of the Historical Commission, I gained a deep appreciation ... for Lynn's commitment to the preservation of Baptist history and heritage," said Marlene Rikard, professor of history at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., and former Historical Commission chair. "He assembled a staff who, with very modest resources, have created a library and archives that is a world-class treasure. ... He has left a legacy for the ages."

At the time of May's retirement in 1995, the commission staff had grown to 10 full-time and two part-time staff members -- the largest staff the agency had ever had -- with a Cooperative Program allocation of \$491,900. Over the years, May held down all staff salaries and benefits, including his own, so that more funds would be available for meeting the agency's responsibilities to Southern Baptists.

"Dr. Lynn May is one of the greatest Southern Baptist leaders I have known," said Leon McBeth, distinguished professor of church history at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, and former trustee and chairman of the Historical Commission. "He was known for his energy, management skills, impeccable integrity and single-minded devotion to the task of preserving ... and promoting the story of Baptists."

Under May's leadership, the commission has operated the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, a world center for the study of Baptist history, accessible not only to those who come to Nashville, Tenn., but also through CompuServe and Internet. May led the SBHLA to acquire more than 15,000 reels of microfilm containing more than 13 million pages of Baptist historical materials, more than 25,000 books, 300-plus current periodicals, the official records of several denominational agencies and more than 71,000 annuals of Baptist associations and conventions.

"Perhaps his greatest achievement was establishing the Southern Baptist Library and Archives as a separate entity," said Glen Clayton, curator/archivist for the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society and president of the Southern Baptist Library Association. "He helped build strong relationships between Baptist historical workers and collections at each state convention."

May's influence also is apparent in the commission's development of four pamphlet series, 19 videotapes, a quarterly newsletter and journal and annual meeting programs on topics that have impacted Baptist history.

Commented Timothy George, fellow church historian and dean of Samford University's Beeson Divinity School: "Cotton Mather once described the vocation of a church historian as that of 'the Lord's remembrance.' Dr. Lynn May lived out that calling among Southern Baptists with distinction and faithfulness. I shall always be grateful for his courtesy and encouragement to me."

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The Southern Baptist Historical Society, for many years an auxiliary of the SBC Historical Commission, also benefitted from May's leadership. "Lynn May was not only a good friend who gave valued support, but was a respected historian as well as a conscientious and careful custodian of the historical work of Southern Baptists. His legacy will long remain with us in ... the Southern Baptist Historical Society," said Albert Wardin, former professor of history at Nashville's Belmont University and director emeritus of the Southern Baptist Historical Society.

May was a graduate of Louisiana College, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Vanderbilt University. Named as a distinguished alumnus by Louisiana College in 1976 and by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1988, he was the 1990 recipient of the Mosaic Missions Award presented by the language church extension division of the Home Mission Board. In 1991, the Historical Commission honored him by establishing the Lynn E. May, Jr. Study Grant Fund, a program that has helped more than 50 students and professionals come to Nashville to do research in the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives.

More than a history scholar, May was also a choir member and deacon at Nashville's Crieveewood Baptist Church. Through Crieveewood, he volunteered with the church's Room at the Inn program which provides shelter and food for Nashville's homeless during the cold winter months. As part of this program, he often spent Sunday evenings staying with the homeless men housed in the church's recreation center; the next morning he would drive them back to the Union Rescue Mission shelter before coming to work.

His denominational leadership outside the Historical Commission included serving as program chairman of the Southern Baptist Business Officers Conference, 1973-74; chairman of the SBC Inter-Agency Council, 1976-78; and a member of the Baptist World Alliance Study Commission on Baptist Heritage, 1985-90.

"Lynn May has done historical work as a careful scholar and Christian gentleman: patient, persistent, fair, productive as a scholar; gracious, committed, servant-minded, faithful churchman as a Christian," noted Lloyd Elder, former president of the Baptist Sunday School Board and currently interim pastor of Crieveewood Baptist Church.

May served as interim pastor of Crieveewood as well as full-time pastorates in Louisiana (Prien Lake Mission and Willow Bayou Baptist) and Mississippi (Spring Hill Baptist). He also was the author of *The First Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee, 1820-1970*, *The Work of the Baptist Association: An Integrative Study*, editor of the commission's journal *Baptist History and Heritage* from 1971-95, and managing editor of Vol. 4 of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*.

He is survived by his wife, the former Alta Virginia Green, and two daughters, Deborah Virginia and Linda Diane (Mrs. Donald Skelton).

The family asked that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to the Southern Baptist Historical Society.

Funeral arrangements were to be announced later on July 24. Interested people may call the Historical Commission at 1-800-966-2278 for complete details.

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Bringing in the clowns leads to life-changing decisions

By Barbara Denman

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--The day of the Olympic Games' opening ceremonies found pastor Tom Rives standing in downtown Atlanta dressed in white makeup, a red curly haired wig and a red-and-white polka-dot costume and talking in a high-pitched voice.

Rives, pastor of the Carrollwood Baptist Church, Tampa, Fla., was completing a week of ministry dressed as his alter ego, Kokomo the Clown. While stationed outside the downtown Bottom Line ministry center that serves as the cornerstone mission site of the Atlanta International Ministries '96, Kokomo inflated and tied balloon animals, while handing out Interactive Pocket Guides.

The guides, produced by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, offered Olympic visitors a complete listing of the games' competitions to help readers tabulate scores. But most importantly, Rives said, the guides contained the plan of salvation.

If passersby stopped and listened, Rives gave them an Olympic pin produced by AIM '96. Because pin collecting is a favorite Olympic pastime, the pin was developed as an outline for the gospel presentation, using colors consistent with the guide. Rives and his congregation purchased and supplied the items he gave away.

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Perhaps one might question why a 50-year-old pastor would spend the dog days of summer sweating in a clown suit and the nights sleeping on a gymnasium floor.

Citing the apostle Paul as his example, Rives said, "I do whatever I can, whenever I can, to win some for Christ."

The pastor's efforts resulted in two people making professions of faith during the week, one accepting Christ as Savior right on the spot. The other made the same decision after reading the material Rives gave him and returned the next day to take a picture of the "clown" who shared the most important message of all. "That's been worth the trip," Rives noted.

During the four weeks of the Olympics and the following Paralympics, 21 clowns from the Southern Baptist clown fellowship will participate in the AIM effort which will involve nearly 8,000 Southern Baptist volunteers performing ministry-related tasks.

Rives was joined by clowns Sparky and Doodis, aka Sandra and Bill White of Palm Coast, Fla.

The most important thing in this type of ministry, Bill White said, is to "talk" with passersby, who don't seem to mind sharing portions of their lives with a clown. "They generally try to unload on you and will unload on a clown when they wouldn't on a civilian," he said.

Clowns can invade a person's sense of personal space, he added. As a result, "Clowns can go beyond where angels fear to tread."

As Sandra White explained, "We're just making balloons as a bridge to give people an opportunity to hear there's something in life more important than gold -- that's eternal life."

Not only did the clowns witness to persons walking down the sidewalk, but they also encouraged the crowds to stop in the ministry center for free water and the use of rest rooms -- a service which some vendors offered for \$2 -- and reasonably priced soft drinks and sandwiches. As the tourists sought comfort from the heat in the center and watched a big-screen television, other volunteers would strike up conversations and look for an opportunity to witness.

Jean White of Atlanta was one who took refuge from the heat and the hawking vendors lined up and down the Atlanta streets. "I just love this," she proclaimed. "With all these people out here for profit, somebody is giving away all this for Jesus."

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**Here, put on this apparel
& carry the Olympic torch**

By Barbara Denman

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga. (BP)--Although an axiom in resort missions states preparation will lead to ministry opportunities, US-2 missionary Missy Woodward never considered her best-laid plans would offer a thrill of a lifetime."

The night before the Olympic torch reached its final destination in Atlanta, a crowd of 10,000 people gathered to watch the flame pass through Stone Mountain, Ga., a tourist community on the outskirts of the capitol city. While they waited, the audience watched as some of Southern Baptists' most talented creative teams entertained the spectators.

For some time, Woodward and Beth Ann Mauney, a venue director for Southern Baptists' Olympic response known as AIM '96, had been working with Stone Mountain community leaders and churches to provide hospitality, information and entertainment services during the Summer Games. The Stone Mountain venue is hosting Olympic competitions in archery, cycling and track.

All of the services were designed for Southern Baptists to share the gospel message with tourists and residents alike.

Then several weeks ago, community leaders asked if AIM's creative arts teams could provide all of the entertainment for the torch event. The response was a definite yes!

The night of the torch run, AIM volunteers began performing their musical numbers for the crowds. "It was a great celebration," Woodward reported Woodward, a US-2 Home Mission Board volunteer and St. Louis native.

Woodward stayed backstage with Coca-Cola officials who sponsored the torch run to coordinate the evening's program. While she was there, she seized the opportunity to share the plan of salvation with the stage manager.

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That night, the flame's arrival was delayed for more than 50 minutes. Community leaders already had left the stage area to view the torch on their own.

When the caldron made its way to the stage, the sponsors realized the torch runner for that leg of the journey was missing.

"The stage manager threw me a bag of clothes" -- official apparel assigned for the torch carriers, Woodward said, "and told me to change."

When dressed appropriately, Woodward picked up the flame, accompanied by Georgia law enforcement officers and a six-car motorcade, and carried the torch to Stone Mountain's west gate.

"The people were cheering and screaming for me. It was awesome," she said.

The experience was an affirmation of her Olympic ministry, Woodward said. "You choose to serve God and sometimes it's not clear if you're doing the right thing. Then God chooses to bless you. He gives you the desires of your hearts."

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**Techwood Homes: between
the venues & the village**

By Josh Jackson

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--On one side stands Olympic Village, home to athletes from nearly every nation in the world. On the other is the largest concentration of Olympic venues in Atlanta. And in between, the oldest public housing development in the nation, Techwood Homes, will humbly show off its new look to the world.

After gaining a reputation as one of the most crime-ridden Atlanta housing projects, Techwood looks to become one of the few success stories in public housing. The three-story apartment buildings -- whose hallways were a haven for drug deals and other crimes -- have been razed to make way for an innovative neighborhood where public and private housing residents will live side by side.

One person who earlier pushed for revitalization of the neighborhood while attending Georgia Tech (which sits just across North Avenue from Techwood) is Eric Pinkney. In 1980, Pinkney was moved by his own experiences growing up in one of the worst housing projects in the Boston area to become involved in the lives of some of the children in the neighborhood.

"I had an official 'little brother' at Techwood," he said, but Pinkney usually spent his time with a whole group of his little brother's friends. "I kind of hung out and lived in the neighborhood. To tell you the truth, when I first went to Tech, I felt more comfortable in that neighborhood than I did at Tech."

Pinkney became increasingly involved with the Techwood community, meeting with the residents' association and creating a proposal for a class assignment that promoted Coca-Cola, Georgia Tech and Techwood as cooperating neighbors.

By the time he left Tech, however, opposing opinions among the residents' group had led to renovation of the buildings as opposed to rebuilding from the ground up. Following his graduation in 1986, Pinkney left with hopes the kids he had spent so much time with would be able to get out of public housing and go to college.

Three years later, he would return to Georgia Tech for graduate school, but his hopes for better living conditions for the residents were not fulfilled. The millions of dollars spent on renovation was far from the vast improvements residents had hoped for. In fact, in many regards the buildings were worse than ever.

What hit Pinkney the hardest, though, was seeing his friends again. "The kids that I'd been so involved with were the ones selling drugs," he said.

Pinkney had often seen Terry Moncrief in the neighborhood, but the two had not spent much time together. However, their involvement in the Techwood community had similar beginnings. Both were attracted to the neighborhood while attending Georgia Tech, and they shared the same goals of helping meet the needs of its residents.

In the summer of 1989, after a street corner revival, Pinkney had a personal experience of faith which renewed his fervor for the people of Techwood. "My transformation came not with my education from Georgia Tech, but from spiritual transition. When I first came to Tech, my solution was that (the kids) needed role models, so I tried to be a role model. When I came to Christ, I realized that I had been trying to do things my way, in my own power. I said, 'God, show me how to do this.'"

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As Pinkney's own life began to change, he saw changes in the neighborhood as well. Much of it was due to the efforts of the Techwood Baptist Center where Moncrief serves as pastor/director. Pinkney saw the gentle, caring man -- affectionately known to residents as "Rev. Moncrief" -- as a stabilizing factor in the arguments between the differing factions among the residents.

"Through all of the discussions over what we should do, there was the need for a neutral party," he said, "no bias, just a person and a place that cared about everyone's needs." Terry Moncrief was serving that role.

Moncrief has seen the community change immeasurably from within during his 24 years there. He is now seeing a parallel change on the outside as residents have taken much of the fate of the neighborhood into their own hands. The path toward change, however, has not been without obstacles and opponents. The biggest concerns have come from residents, all of whom will have to move out of their homes to other public housing communities or subsidized private apartments. Some fear they will not be able to move back; indeed, there will be fewer units available after rebuilding.

Still, the residents certainly welcome the needed changes to what had become a haven for crime and drugs. Each building had three flights of stairs with three apartments on each level and no outside locks. "Anyone could be sleeping in the stairwells," Moncrief explained. "You would get up in the morning and there was no telling what you might find on your steps or your landing."

Moncrief is excited to see Techwood becoming the first community in the nation to integrate public and private housing in this manner. "You won't know who's subsidized and who is private," Moncrief said. "It will provide housing that's not overly expensive for families that are becoming less and less dependent on government aid."

Previously, as couples have put their lives together, Moncrief explained, they have moved away rather than stay as good influences in the community. But now, "when people get jobs and go to work, they'll be able to have upward mobility within the neighborhood with the services here that will help them make it and not crash in times of crisis." He also hopes some people who have moved out of the neighborhood will be able to return.

There is still some apprehension in the area from residents who are looking for places to relocate. The biggest issue is knowing when and where they will have to move. "They're obviously more focused on their families and very practical, real issues right now," Moncrief said. "As far as I know, it's working out for everyone. It may take a little time, but it's working out."

Moncrief came to the ministry center in Techwood while a student at Georgia Tech, after seeing for the first time what he considered "people who were like what Christians should be like." He had grown up in the church, but began to reject his beliefs when he realized racial prejudice had been ingrained in his mind.

"I had a friend at Georgia Tech who was black. One day, after I had done badly on a test, I said, 'Don, what did you make on the college boards?' I thought I'd probably made better scores than him. He didn't want to talk about it because he was a pretty modest guy, but he made a 1600. He graduated from Tech in 12 straight quarters with a 3.8 (grade point average). I began to analyze what I was believing, and what I was believing was that because my skin was white, I would have done better than he did. I thought, 'Oh, how awful! How could I grow up with nobody challenging such junk?'"

After several trials in college -- including the death of his father -- Moncrief ended up working with his mother one summer at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. During a program emphasis on missions, he heard of men and women who were living out their faith by serving those in need. Moved by this new understanding, Moncrief made an honest commitment of faith in God.

"The man who actually led me to Christ was the director of the Baptist Center in Techwood. I asked him if there was any place in Atlanta where I might do volunteer mission work like I'd heard about that week. He said he directed a center just four blocks from where I went to school and he needed a football coach."

Moncrief volunteered at the center while he finished school. After moving away to complete a master's degree in social work at the University of Georgia, he was asked to return to Techwood and serve as director of the center.

For Moncrief, the center's greatest influence in the community resulted from adjustments made due to a fire in 1988. The roof of the center just off of Techwood Drive suffered significant damage, and plumbing and electrical systems were in disrepair. The doors were finally forced shut on the ministry center.

The staff quickly learned it wasn't the building that made the center a haven for residents. "This neighborhood took in our Bible studies," he said. "We wound up with 20 Bible studies all over the neighborhood. And then the Community Center said we could worship there, and the Housing Authority said we could do our emergency ministry out of their building."

Moncrief credited the Bible study groups scattered throughout Techwood with improving life in the community. As a result, a drug ring was forced out of the area and the crime rate dropped dramatically over a three-year period.

For now, Moncrief and others at the center spend much of their time visiting the remaining residents of neighboring Clark-Howell housing development. The Baptist Center continues to utilize volunteers in providing medical care, tutoring, emergency food and clothing, and many other needed services.

They await the day when the "new Techwood" community will be completed later this year. And when the community comes back to life, the people of Techwood can count on good friends like Eric Pinkney and Terry Moncrief to welcome them with hope and helping hands.

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Reprinted by permission of The E Street Journal, a new quarterly magazine published by The Christian Index, Georgia Baptists' newsjournal. Jackson is editor of PINdemonium, a trade magazine for Olympic pin collectors, and a freelance writer in Atlanta.

**Greater Come As You Are
is no traditional church**

By Joni B. Hannigan

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (BP)--"If my culture prohibits me from expressing love to a person of another culture," says pastor Anthony Payton, "that's not biblical."

Payton has a personal reason to celebrate the efforts of those who bypass cultural expectations to reach out to others in love.

"My coming to Christ was by a white man who came across the cultural barriers, and through the walls," says Payton, recounting his testimony. "Buck Mann was a retired Marine in Mississippi who didn't see me as a project, or himself as the great white hope. He saw himself as a servant of God who was mandated to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with whomever."

The Greater Come As You Are Baptist Church in southeast urban Fort Wayne, Ind., well describes the diverse nature of Payton's multi-ethnic congregation which has grown by leaps and bounds since he came there in July 1995.

With about 150 members, the church has increased more than 14-fold to be a predominantly black congregation, regularly attracting Anglos, Hispanics and others from the surrounding community to join in a "vibrant, open worship experience."

"I have no goal in leading, quote, 'a black church,'" Payton says. "That is not my goal for ministry. My goal is to be the church comprised of a local body of believers from various ethnic backgrounds."

"It is important from an evangelistic perspective that people see that all Christians legitimately love each other and are Christ's disciples."

To enhance the congregation's understanding of being inclusive, Greater Come As You Are's seeker-sensitive worship service includes special music by white groups or soloists, pulpit exchanges, church trips and purposeful exposure to culturally diverse situations.

The three E's -- edify, equip and evangelize -- are the focus of Payton's strategy. The church not only welcomes everyone, but aggressively seeks to "edify and equip" members to identify and use their gifts and be that "vibrant instrument in God's hand," he explains.

A weekly Bible study at a local McDonald's and an apartment complex ministry are examples of some of the church's more progressive ministries. A focus on women's, men's, youth and children's ministries are more traditional, while the prison and food bank ministries are a practical aspect of ministry to the community.

"Thrilled and happy" about the explosive growth, Payton also acknowledges an increased focus in providing leadership training to new members who are either brand-new converts or individuals who had left the church for a lengthy period of time.

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Working with Carroll Fowler, director of missions for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, Payton is training associate ministers Virgil Griffen, John Stallings, Ray Mack, Gerald King and Ricky Kendrick.

Building up members while tearing down barriers consumes much of Payton's time. Co-chairman of the racial reconciliation task force for Promise Keepers in Fort Wayne, Payton is a popular speaker on the topic. Calling this "one of the most glorious eras" for the church, Payton says he feels the hunger for racial reconciliation crosses denominational lines and gives hope for Christians to express their love to one another. The significance of men leading this movement is that historically most of the racial evils were fostered by men, he recounts.

Cautious about other movements that might look "practical," Payton nevertheless underscores his commitment to the Word of God. "Everything I am must be sifted through the Word. It's not my culture that gives clarity, but the Word."

Louis Farrakhan and Malcom X could not be role models for Payton, and he would not participate in the Million Man March on Washington, because "I can't put my Christ on a shelf ... to march with a black man because he is the same culturally. Christianity is not just something I participate in on Sunday morning from 11 until 12."

Payton involves his entire family in his church and Promise Keepers ministry. Traveling with him to conferences and events gives his wife, Sandra, and children, 8-year old Zackary and 7-year old Lydia, time to discuss racial issues, ask questions and participate in multicultural settings.

Traveling to a Promise Keeper event recently, Zackary asked his father what "reconciliation" meant. "To love one another in spite of our color and background," Payton replied.

"It was one of those moments where my son said, 'Ah, so that's what it means,'" Payton says. "We've had struggles. There was a time when he was 8 and wanted to talk about the other race. I said, 'I know you want to respond in the same way, but the proper way is not to do it.'"

Born and raised in Mississippi, Payton says it took Buck Mann to show him a "diametrically opposed position" to what some of his ideas and perceptions were as a result of his experiences and pain.

"Everybody is not just the same because of race. My experience with Buck, along with my Christian experience, demands that I deal with people individualistically. Not to put everyone in the same bag because of pain I've experience with that group of people.

"The importance of being united in Christ in love for one another is that the world will know," Payton says. "There are no cultural barriers. There are no color barriers. That's what the world needs to see from the church -- how much do you love one another."

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**Pastor says use of media
helps visibility of church**

By C.C. Risenhoover

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--In David Crosby's office on the morning of July 15, a young television reporter trusted Christ as his Savior.

"His salvation experience was a direct result of our media ministry," said Crosby, pastor of First Baptist Church, New Orleans.

Crosby, who for years has used media to proclaim the gospel, is among a large and growing number of Southern Baptist pastors who think a local church should make use of media a priority in its outreach.

"When a local church uses a medium like television to proclaim the gospel, there's accountability and trust," he said. "Obviously, that isn't always true of religious programs on television that have no local church affiliation or connection. Religious charlatans have used television to promote themselves and to proclaim false doctrine that has caused millions of people to distrust all Christian television. Most people, however, trust a pastor who is accountable to a congregation."

Because of irresponsible religious broadcasting, Crosby said, secular media are cynical about Christian use of all media.

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"The misuse of media has been like a disease," he said, "so the church has a lot to prove to the secular media. Of course, I think many people in the secular media already have an agenda that minimizes our faith. I also think that, from the standpoint of accuracy, the printed word is most often closer to truth than what we see and hear through electronic media."

Crosby, who said he probably has more respect for secular media than most pastors, majored in religion and journalism at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. He worked as a reporter for the New Orleans Times-Picayune as a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He also worked for the Temple (Texas) Daily-Telegram while in a doctoral program at Baylor.

"I'm glad the press is free in this country," he said. "If I have any complaint, it's that the secular media have not realized the power of religion in America."

Crosby said a local church should use all available media -- electronic and print -- to reach out to its community.

"Many of our churches are invisible to the people around them," he said. "They may be housed in fine buildings, but many people don't think of the church as a solution. Some people can live within blocks of a church, yet it may seem irrelevant to them. If you can't get them into your building, you have to go to them. So it's essential to use media to tie the life of your church into the life of the community."

From 1981-1987, Crosby was pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Gatesville, Texas, and helped bring ACTS (American Christian Television Service) to the area.

ACTS, carried on the Faith and Values Channel, is the cable broadcast service of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

As pastor of College Park Baptist Church, Houston, from 1987-91 and First Baptist Church, Temple, Texas, 1991-96, Crosby also was engaged in an active media ministry. But, while televised Sunday services gave the churches he led considerable visibility, he attributes the television spots he wrote and produced as achieving even greater visibility for his congregations.

"When I was in Temple, I probably did a minimum of 150 television spots," Crosby said. "I wrote all the spots myself and got a lot of feedback on them. They were very effective in calling attention to the importance of Jesus Christ in every situation in life. In a 60-second TV spot, you have to get right to the point. We did that, bringing the gospel to people right where they lived."

Crosby said First Baptist Church in Temple also had a 14-page web site on the Internet.

"We went on the Internet five months before I left," he said, "and during that period had more than 1,400 contacts. That's why First Baptist here in New Orleans is going on the Internet. It's another tool we can use to spread the gospel."

"As Christians, we're in the business of proclaiming the Word of God. And as long as we do that in an ethical and morally upright way, we need to use every tool available. I'm supportive of any tool we can use to proclaim Christ and reintroduce our churches to their communities."

Crosby said it is not just the pastor who is seen in a televised church service and then recognized on the street or in the work place.

"Viewers see choir members and others who participate in the service," he said. "And because they're seen, it's a subject of conversation that opens the door for them to witness."

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**'Greatest beneficiary' continues
4-decade Glorieta training habit**

By Charles Willis

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Carolyn Barrett is the self-proclaimed "greatest beneficiary" of Southern Baptist training, and she is still collecting on her inheritance.

A member of Woodward Park Baptist Church in suburban Fresno, Calif., Barrett cannot say with certainty how many years she has traveled to Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center for training. She knows she was at Glorieta as a youth, shortly after Glorieta opened, and she and her late husband, Duane, courted on the campus.

After their marriage in 1954, they continued to come to church music conferences, with a few years off for both of them to attend Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in California ("We were too poor!") and in 1982 when Duane Barrett had heart surgery. Both had music careers, and he was state music secretary for the California Southern Baptist Convention 14 years.

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"I've taken more notes than anyone else you ever met," she declared, "and I use the materials more than anyone else you've ever met. I've got almost every piece of material handed out in those conferences in files at home."

A music teacher for 33 years, Barrett said she has received professional recognitions which she credits to "the way I've been trained as a Southern Baptist." Today, she teaches music in two elementary schools, with four choirs in one school. At church, she leads the children's choir for grades one through six.

Her lengthy participation in Glorieta conferences stems from "what I've learned and what I'd take back with me, as well as the fabulous singing."

And she points to "the hands-on things I could use the very next day in my church and in my life."

When Duane Barrett died in December 1994, two days before their 40th wedding anniversary, she made a conscious decision to continue doing the things they had done together, believed in and loved. The following summer, she was back at Glorieta, arriving with a friend.

"When we drove on to the campus, I cried. I just lost it. I hadn't planned to. But I knew then how much this place had meant to us."

And this year she is back again teaching classes in younger children's choir leadership during the National Conference for Church Leadership.

"I love the fun, the laughter and the fellowship," she said.

National Conferences for Church Leadership, July 12-15 and July 15-19, focused training on leadership, ministry and worship and were sponsored by the BSSB's church leadership services division.

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Shepherd named director of B&H Bible publishing

**Baptist Press
7/24/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--David R. Shepherd, senior marketing manager for the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman Publishers, has been named director of the newly created B&H Bible publishing department, according to Ken Stephens, B&H publisher.

Shepherd, a three-year B&H employee, will head the largest of four B&H product lines. Other product lines are gifts and church supplies, trade books and videos.

"In the last two years, Bibles has grown to become our largest revenue producer. Creation of this department will enable us to free a team of people to give their undivided attention to Bible publishing," Stephens said. "David brings both leadership and creativity to this important new role."

Noting the board in 1979 purchased Holman Bible Publishers, the first Bible publisher in the United States, Shepherd said, "I'm pleased to be directing an operation with such a rich heritage that includes publishing the first Bible on American soil in 1743. The Bible publishing business has its unique challenges, but there are few things in life more rewarding than publishing a product that impacts lives the way the Bible does."

The work of the Bible publishing department will include every facet of the process from acquisition and product development to editorial, marketing and production, Stephens said. In addition to Bibles, the department will produce biblical reference books and commentaries.

Section managers include Ray Clendenen, manager of the editorial section; Wendell Overstreet, manager of the marketing section; and John Nehlig, production and procurement manager.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "BSSB editor Fernando Garcia dies boarding plane in Cuba," dated 7/19/96, please change the spelling of the first man mentioned in the fourth paragraph to Omar Fernandez.

Thanks,
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