

(BP)

-- BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE:

SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2350
Herb Hollinger, Vice President
Fax (615) 742-8910
CompuServe ID# 70420,1

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522, CompuServe 70420,250
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232, CompuServe 70420,115
NASHVILLE Linda Lawson, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300, CompuServe 70420,57
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151, CompuServe 70420,72
WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223, CompuServe 71173,316

June 24, 1996

96-109

TENNESSEE--Pastor of burned church credits Baptists for changed outlook.
TENNESSEE--BSSB division reorganizes to add new SBC assignments.
VIRGINIA--FMB, 'friendship families' seek to reach internationals.
INDIANA--1 American, 13 internationals meet 'Friend to Friend' weekly.
MISSISSIPPI--567 Campers on Mission hold 25th annual rally.
DALLAS--Each year they pray; soon they see answers.
ILLINOIS--Former auto mechanic, 73, surrenders to preaching.

Pastor of burned church credits
Baptists for changed outlook

By Jon Walker

Baptist Press
6/24/96

FRUITLAND, Tenn. (BP)--Dan Donaldson will never forget the date of Dec. 30, 1995. It is the day his church, Salem Baptist in Fruitland, Tenn., burned to the ground.

"I do not have the words to adequately explain the feeling I had that day," said Donaldson, Salem's pastor. "But the Lord helped us to realize that we must pick up and move on. The building is gone, let's make preparations for the future."

And that future included an outpouring of Southern Baptist support to help rebuild Salem Baptist Church. The Beulah Baptist Association's Mississippi River Ministry is coordinating the efforts of Southern Baptist mission teams as they help rebuild the church, with plans to have the congregation in their new facility by Aug. 1. The mission teams include Southern Baptist volunteer construction crews from all over the country.

"Their actions have, in essence, told me, 'Even though your church was burned, it is now our problem,'" Donaldson said. "'At one time we might have turned our backs, but no more. Let's come together.'"

Donaldson said this outpouring has been a blessing both physically and spiritually. "If the people who burned our church had known what the Lord was going to do, that he was going to send people in here to build us back bigger and stronger than we've ever been, then those people would have never burned our building. They meant it for bad, but God meant it for good."

The support of mission teams has been so great that the overflow is being sent to another church destroyed by fire. "We're going to try to connect the mission teams with a church in Tigreth, Tenn., because the help we have received is far more than what we need to rebuild one church," said James Kensey, coordinator of the Mississippi River Ministry and pastor of Sunswept Baptist Church, Union City, Tenn., a congregation that has taken a long-term interest in Salem Baptist's rebuilding.

"When God's doing something, he invites us to participate," Kensey said. "He's doing something here, and it's good that he would just allow us to participate."

In addition to the volunteer labor, Southern Baptists are providing about two-thirds of the money necessary for the rebuilding, part coming from the Mississippi River Ministry and part from the "Arson Fund" initiated by former SBC President Jim Henry.

--more--

Southern Baptist churches are encouraged to send their gifts through the regular channel with their state conventions. The designated gifts should be marked "Arson Fund" when sent to the state convention office.

Contributions from other than Southern Baptist churches, marked "Arson Fund," can be sent to the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203. For more information, call the Executive Committee convention relations office at (615) 244-2355.

In addition, those wishing to be part of volunteer construction crews are encouraged to contact the Brotherhood Commission at 1-800-280-1891. The commission is located at 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104.

--30--

BSSB division reorganizes
to add new SBC assignments

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
6/24/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Baptist Sunday School Board's church leadership services division has announced a reorganization to incorporate assignments from the Southern Baptist Convention as a part of the "Covenant for a New Century."

Two new departments will assimilate stewardship education, church history and heritage education, capital fund-raising and assisting churches with Christian school and home school ministries, according to Mike Miller, division director. At the same time, an existing department will be eliminated, merging its program assignments with those of the new components.

The church services department, which included the church media library program and church architecture services, will merge with the new Christian schools and media services department and the church stewardship and architectural services department.

Mancil Ezell, who was director of the church services department, will continue as associate director of the division and will direct the Christian schools and media services department, including the church media program (formerly church media library program), Christian schools, home schooling and church weekday early education. Church history and heritage education will be assumed by the church media program.

Dennis Conniff, who directed the church media library program, will lead the church stewardship and architectural services department, including church architecture services, Together We Build (capital fund-raising) and church stewardship services. Davis Byrd will continue to lead church architecture services.

The pastor-staff leadership, music ministries and multicultural leadership departments do not assume new assignments.

David Tiller, a 15-year employee of the board, will become director for the church media program. He has been training coordinator for the board's national chain of bookstores since 1993 and earlier was a trainer in the board's corporate human resources department. He has been a consultant and a video production editor for the board. Prior to coming to the board, he was a minister of education and taught in public school.

He is the author of "Instructional Media for Churches -- The Mastery of Video" and is a prolific writer for magazines, including "The Church Media Library Magazine."

He holds the B.S. degree from Gardner-Webb College, Boiling Springs, N.C., and the M.R.E. degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. He has done additional doctoral study at Tennessee State University, Nashville.

Miller said announcement of staffing for Christian schools, home schooling, weekday early education, capital fund-raising and church stewardship services will be made later this year.

--more--

The division reorganization follows a leadership change announced earlier in the month for the church recreation program. Tommy Yessick, who has led the church recreation program since 1992, assumed leadership of wellness services for LeaderCare, the board's strategy to assist ministers in personal development. Yessick, whose background includes formal training and experience in wellness, proposed the expansion of recreation ministry into the LeaderCare strategy to educate pastors and other ministers in the value of wellness issues.

John Garner, who has been field service projects coordinator for church recreation since 1990, has become church recreation program director, coordinating general recreation ministries with LeaderCare wellness, Centrifuge, Crosspoint and drama. Garner also will direct the work of contract consultants across the United States.

--30--

FMB, 'friendship families'
seek to reach internationals

By Mike Trice

Baptist Press
6/24/96

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Nearly 20 million people from foreign countries are living in the United States temporarily, many from countries closed to Baptist missionaries.

That is why the Foreign Mission Board has begun an effort to reach internationals in the United States temporarily for education, business or other reasons, said Bill Wakefield, FMB vice president of international outreach.

The program is based on matching internationals with "friendship families." The families are recruited from among retired and former foreign missionaries, missionary kids and others with cross-cultural experience. The "friendship family" helps internationals get adjusted to their new environment and then befriends them while they are in the United States.

"The broad attraction for (the international) would be the opportunity to experience American family life and culture," said Helen Bond, who along with her husband, Clayton, serves as Louisiana's international outreach representative.

She said many internationals are interested in such a relationship with an American family. "I think that is evident in the fact that more students are requesting families than there are families to assign them to."

As the program is designed, friendship families meet with their international friend(s) monthly and contact them weekly. They also make themselves available to answer questions or help with problems in adjusting to life in the United States.

"It is important that the relationship be based on friendship," Bond said, "and let the opportunities to witness to them evolve out of this friendship."

"The objective is always to evangelize," she said. But internationals of other faiths may be slow to accept new faiths, she added. "It takes time. They need to see Christ in practice. ... You don't always see the results and the result are not always immediate."

The program is not designed as a "Christian" program, but rather an "American" or "community" program, said Wakefield in a report to the FMB last winter. "This community-based program appeals to the Muslim, the atheist and others who would not respond to a Christian program," he said.

He also noted in his report that universities and other institutions with internationals welcome the community program because it is "a valuable aid to internationals in adjusting to America and learning how to cope with lifestyles here."

Clayton Bond said the impact of the program is twofold. "It is important because of the benefit the individual derives from it, but also the impact they may have when they return to their country."

The Bonds, retired missionaries who served in Ghana and Togo, noted many of the internationals in the country temporarily are from nations closed to Southern Baptists.

--more--

Wakefield's report also pointed out the influence these internationals have on their home countries when they return. In the past few years, 37 internationals who were students in the United States have become a head of state.

Bond recalled a story of a student from a nation with no missionary presence who was befriended by a Baptist couple. He became employed in the nation's government, and because of the friendship he had with this family, helped Baptist missionaries obtain visas to enter the country.

Bond said reaching "unreached" countries is only one of the reasons the FMB has established a program for internationals in the United States.

"Missionaries in the U.S. have experience with cross-cultural relationships," he said, with his wife adding, "They have felt that feeling of being a stranger in another land."

Also, "The Foreign Mission Board has the ability to network back to the country from which the internationals came," Clayton Bond said, noting that such contact is done only at the request of the international. "If they are interested in continuing contact with a Christian, we can relay that information to the missionaries in that area."

The program is intended to assist Home Mission Board and state convention efforts to reach internationals, Bond. "State leaders are very helpful and very encouraged by the program," he said. "We're not offering a separate program. We want to reinforce what is already being done."

He and his wife have been traveling across the state learning what is currently being done to reach the target group, as well as introduce the program. "We're learning more right now than contributing," he said. The couple began serving at the beginning of the year.

The couple said they found a number of areas where outreach to internationals was already in place. "We see that they've already seen the need," she said of several areas they have visited.

Clayton Bond recommended anyone interested in ministering to internationals should begin by contacting their associational director of missions or nearest Baptist Student Union to find out about ministries already in place.

--30--

1 American, 13 internationals
meet 'Friend to Friend' weekly By Deborah P. Brunt

Baptist Press
6/24/96

MUNCIE, Ind. (BP)--Fourteen women sit in chairs around five card tables set up end to end. Nine preschoolers roam the large room, carrying or dragging assorted toys. Talking, laughing, the women are about to tackle a project that is new to them. Today, they will color Easter eggs. Today, some will hear about the resurrection of Jesus Christ for the first time.

Only one among this group is a native of the United States. She stands at the head of the table, guiding the women in their project. Her name is Louise Welty.

Every Thursday morning from 10 to noon, Welty meets with women from around the world. They gather in Muncie, Ind., in the community center of Ball State University's Scheidler Apartments. Most are wives of Ball State students.

Each week, Welty teaches them to make a craft or to cook an American dish. Each week, she shows Christian love and stands ready, should the opportunity arise, to talk about her Christian beliefs. Welty is spearheading "Friend to Friend," a ministry to international women sponsored by East Central Indiana Baptist Association.

The Thursday before Easter, for example, Welty arrives at the Scheidler Community Center shortly before 10 a.m. With the help of Mi Jeong, Welty carries several large grocery bags of supplies into the center's meeting room. Once inside, she, Mi Jeong and two ladies from China set up tables and chairs. They pull a box of toys from a wooden cabinet and spread the toys on top of a pale yellow blanket.

--more--

Then Welty steps into the small adjoining kitchen to begin preparing for the day's activity. One of two ladies joins her. Others, with tots in tow, begin congregating and chatting in the large room.

Helping her three small children out of their coats, Sandra, from Guatemala, volunteers, "We enjoy this activity because it gives us a chance to talk, to practice English and to learn to cook different things."

Wearing the traditional robe and head covering of her country, Fatin of Yemen says, "My favorite part is gathering with people from all parts of the world, knowing their ways of living. I enjoy learning. I come also because of Louise. She's really nice."

A few minutes later, with the women now seated at the tables, Welty picks up a large picture book, open to a picture of Christ on the cross.

"While the eggs are boiling, I want to tell you a little about Easter," she says. Meeting on university property, Welty cannot push religion. Her initial letter to the women states, "These meetings will not have a religious focus but are intended to help you with English and learn more about American ways." During the year, Welty keeps that promise. However, when Christian holidays roll around, she can explain them.

"Easter is a Christian holiday. It's perhaps the most important day in the Christian's year." Briefly, she tells women from Finland, China, Korea, Chile, Colombia and Yemen the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. As she talks, she shows pictures from the book. She speaks over the noise of pull-toys and children's clamor, as well as women talking among themselves. Some, who speak English fairly well, may be telling others what she is saying.

She concludes, "Eggs mean new life. Springs is the season of new life. Christians have new life. When we're Christian, we'll raise from the dead as Jesus did."

Then, it's project time. Giving each woman four hot eggs, a coffee mug, spoon and crayons for writing on the eggs, Welty explains egg coloring step-by-step.

"Put one teaspoon of vinegar in your cup," she instructs. Next, she guides the women to add food coloring and hot water poured from a kettle.

While most of the women are busy designing their eggs, one Chinese woman sits quietly, studying the book with pictures of Jesus. After the meeting, she asks Welty for more information about the resurrection. Welty gladly gives it.

--30--

Brunt is a free-lance writer in Yorktown, Ind.

567 Campers on Mission
hold 25th annual rally

By Tim Nicholas

Baptist Press
6/24/96

GREENWOOD, Miss. (BP)--More than 250 recreational vehicles packing 567 people spent June 18-21 on the parking lot of the civic center at Greenwood, Miss., for the 25th annual National Campers on Mission Rally.

The tradeoff for camping on a parking lot was that the campers could have their rally in the air conditioned civic center, beating the 95-degree summer heat.

Participants swapped mission work stories, ate barbecue and catfish, took classes in such disparate subjects as juggling and developing a golf ministry, and enjoyed the company of people who love to camp and do mission work at the same time.

In a campground setting where people are relaxed and friendly, "there's hardly a bobble between talking about the natural and supernatural of life," said speaker John McBride, director of missions for Shelby County, Tenn., and one of the people who dreamed up Campers on Mission 25 years earlier.

--more--

The stories of witness and mission participation abounded. Joel Land, associate director of the Home Mission Board's special ministries department, said the American Bible Society reported to him that Campers on Mission distribute more Scripture than any group they have contact with.

Besides being a featured speaker reminiscing on the first national COM rally held in 1972 at Land Between the Lakes, Ky, Land held a seminar on leading in a campground worship walk. "It's a short hike where you stop by a pre-selected site along the way and tell a parable like Jesus did that relates to Scriptures and to life."

Charles Mitchell, a retired railroad worker who organized a COM chapter in Indiana in 1980, fell off a ladder on a mission trip to build a pastorium in Shelbyville, Ky., a few years back.

It was more than a year later that Mitchell's headaches got so bad his doctor sent him for X-rays. He had fractured his neck -- a hangman's break, with his doctor saying, "Don't move! You're supposed to be paralyzed from the neck down."

Eventually his neck healed and just last month he was project director for the building of some student housing at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, Ky.

Harry Stinson of Orlando introduced people to his "attack dog," a toy poodle he held in his arms which he said is his greatest witnessing tool. "I use her as bait," said the retired Baptist minister who noted that people are constantly saying, "What a cute little dog," and wanting to pet her. That gives him the opportunity to tell of his relationship with Jesus Christ.

A high point of the meeting was when 71-year-old Walter Kinkeade of Wayland, Mo., took his Olympic torch to the podium to tell of his torch run.

One of hundreds of citizens chosen to carry a torch because of their contributions to society, Kinkeade said part of his being chosen was because he'd been on more than 50 mission trips with Campers on Mission.

Other contributions, he said, included giving away "a couple hundred" blue bird houses and saving a woman in a restaurant from choking on a piece of apple salad. He applied the Heimlich maneuver on the woman and she "shot that apple out" about 10 yards.

The rally was just a stopping place for many. Charles and Betty Peeples of Jacksonville, Fla., were on their way to Cutbank, Mont., with five other couples to spend three months helping revitalize a Baptist church. They will be leading in revivals, doing day camps and gathering surveys, Peeples said.

Peeples said he retired in '71, '81, '91 and again in '94 when he joined Campers on Mission and has been traveling ever since.

A group of four Mississippi couples were heading for Alaska after the rally for a mission project.

Billy and Catherine Whitaker of Quitman, Miss., got involved in COM after being assigned near a group of them on a camping trip to Arkansas last September. "We heard they were going to have a worship service, so we joined them," said Whitaker, pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church at Shubuta.

"We love to camp and we're very mission-minded," he said. At the end of the national rally at Greenwood, Whitaker said he was looking into other volunteer projects.

The national rally took planning and physical effort. The Mississippians who planned the event had to go to Greenwood two weeks early to work with the city in setting up electrical and water hookups for the RVs. Families came from 19 states plus Ontario, Canada, where a chapter of COM has been organized.

COM is Baptist-oriented but any Christian campers can join. There is no charge for membership and opportunities for Christian service are constant.

The 1997 National Campers on Mission Rally will take place June 10-13 at Hutchinson, Kan.

Each year they pray;
soon they see answers

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (BP)--For nine years, director of missions Ed Wiggins has led a mission tour each May of the North Central Area, a group of Texas Baptist associations. But he has considered changing its name to a "prayer tour."

"Praying for specific requests at each stop we make is an important part of what we do," he said. "We've seen God answer so many of our prayers through the years."

Wiggins has no trouble pointing to answered prayers along the tour route each year during Associational Emphasis Week:

-- In 1988, a group from North Central Area joined hands around an abandoned church building in rural Jack Baptist Association, praying that God would open its doors again. Two years later, mission tour participants knelt at an old-fashioned mourners bench inside Wizard Wells Baptist Church, giving thanks that the reopened church had baptized its first new members in two decades.

-- Several years ago, a mission tour group joined in prayer at the clubhouse of the Runaway Bay Golf and Country Club. They asked God to provide a permanent home for the satellite congregation of First Baptist Church, Bridgeport, that was meeting there. Now First Baptist Church of Runaway Bay is a self-supporting church in its own building overlooking scenic Lake Bridgeport.

-- Three years ago, a mission tour group joined hands in front of a dairy barn across the road from what had been Keeter Baptist Church. A pastor had come to the church and declared it to be independent of any associational or convention ties. Eventually he alienated all his members, but he refused to leave the parsonage or relinquish the church building.

With the support of the former church's deacons, Wiggins secured a court ruling that returned the church to Southern Baptists in that rural community. Last year, the revived Keeter church was in the top 25 churches in per capita giving to missions through the Cooperative Program.

-- A few years ago, tour group members prayed across the road from a liquor store near Newark. A Bible study group met nearby in a mobile chapel for the first time in February 1992. After a few setbacks, Avondale Baptist Church began anew earlier this year, and it already is self-sufficient.

Pastor Doug Acklie wants to reach residents of the 130-plus mobile homes and other houses in the area, to begin a ministry to truckers and to move from the mobile chapel into a permanent facility.

"But when God's people come together, it doesn't matter if it's in a trailer house or a great cathedral, God's presence is there," he said. "It's church."

-- Also as a result of prayer, a washateria in Rhome and a feed store near Newark are now the homes of the Rhome Hispanic Baptist Church and Victory Baptist Church of Newark.

On this year's mission tour, May 21, Wiggins led the group in prayer at a vacant lot in Gainesville where there is a large concentration of Hispanics with no Baptist church.

The tour group also prayed for the south satellite congregation of First Baptist Church, Rhome. The group is slated to begin meeting in early August at the Seven Hills School, where First Baptist, Rhome, sponsors an after-school ministry for children in grades one through five.

The group prayed that God would call out volunteers for the Southside Apartment Ministry in Gainesville's Lexington Apartments complex, that Bowie Mission would find a pastor, that Emmanuel Hispanic Baptist Church in Bowie would be able to move from the association's mobile chapel into a permanent building and that Nueva Vida Mission in Nocona would move into a new facility.

--more--

Each stop along the way, Wiggins reminded the group to give thanks for Texas Baptists' gifts to the Mary Hill Davis Offering for State Missions and for their support through the Cooperative Program that made so many new mission sites possible.

And this time next year, Wiggins plans to point out a new batch of answered prayers.

--30--

Former auto mechanic, 73,
surrenders to preaching

By Ferrell Foster

Baptist Press
6/24/96

McLEANSBORO, Ill. (BP)--Helen Adams, during an invitation at First Baptist Church, McLeansboro, Ill., looked down and noticed her husband's knuckles had turned white while he gripped the back of the pew in front of them.

"I just kept singing," she said.

Moments later, William "Bill" Adams, a 73-year-old Sunday school teacher, walked to the front of the auditorium to tell pastor Jerry Parmley that God is calling him to preach.

"It was a surprise, a little shocking," Parmley said, "but a good surprise, because I knew Bill."

"I was shocked," said Helen Adams. "I kind of down deep knew that there was something bothering him. I really thought that it was his physical problem." (Her husband has undergone back surgery since that Sunday.)

A retired auto mechanic and custodian for the church, Adams said: "It was as much a surprise to me as it was to everybody else. Myself and the Lord, I guess we talked about this for three months, maybe four."

"I gave him every reason I could think of why this shouldn't be, as far as I was concerned," Adams continued. But he became convinced that God wants him to preach.

On that Sunday morning in April when he walked forward during the invitation, his wife didn't know her husband had been sensing such a call from God.

"I wanted to be sure before I told anybody," Adams said. "I intended to tell her before I went down, but when (Parmley) gave the invitation, I had to go."

Adams and his pastor did not share the news with the congregation that morning. Instead Adams went home and told his wife, then told the church later in April.

On May 5, during the Sunday evening worship service, Adams preached his first sermon. He "preached salvation" using various biblical texts.

"When I got up I was nervous," he said. But "after a few minutes the nervousness left." Adams said he enjoyed it -- "very much."

"He's still getting compliments," noted his wife.

The call to ministry has given Adams "a different outlook on what I was looking forward to the rest of my life," he said. "I always felt I wanted to be very active as long as I could be. I didn't think it would be a good idea to stay home and sit down." Now he sees that his activity is going to include preaching.

Adams does not know yet if God wants him to be a pastor. "I'm willing to take a church (as pastor) if that's what God wants me to do," he said. All he knows is that God wants him to "preach the gospel."

Because of his age, Adams feels a sense of urgency about preaching. "I don't have as much time as someone that generally is called. I've got to get started doing what he wants me to do."

--30--

HOUSE MAIL

(BP)	BAPTIST PRESS 901 Commerce #750 Nashville, TN 37234
	F I R S T C L A S S
Southern Baptist Library and Archives	