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BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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BUREAU

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,
Telephone (615) 254-1631

716 August 22, 1967 90

Dear Editor:

During the next 10 days, The Baptist Sunday School Board Bureau of Baptist Press will be handling Baptist Press mailings. Both W. C. Fields and I will be out of town, and Lynn Davis has "volunteered" to handle the mailings.

Time period for mailings to be handled by the BSSB (BP) Bureau is Aug. 22-Sept. 1. If you have stories that develop during this period, please send them or call them to Lynn Davis at 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, 37203; telephone (615) 254-1631.

Central mailing service will be shifted back to our office on Tuesday, Sept. 5. Happy Labor Day.

Sincerely,



Jim Newton
Assistant Director

JN:vb

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August 22, 1967

Home Board Conference
Stresses Total Ministry

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Missions Conference here placed strong emphasis on a total approach to a christian ministry that unites Baptists' traditional concepts of evangelism with acts of social concern that demonstrate Christian love.

Arthur B. Rutledge, executive secretary of the Home Mission Board, capsuled the board's concept of ministry when he told the audience of nearly 3,000 pastors and church leaders:

"The Christian has something to offer in physical and material help as an expression of love and something to offer in spiritual help as he points men to Jesus Christ.

"This year of ministry is a year for us to capture again the spirit of our Lord, who was not only concerned about the souls of men but who was concerned about the human situation in which men find themselves. If we say we love a man's soul then we must be sympathetic to his burdens, his lacks, his frustrations, his hungers. This is the challenge of ministry."

Rutledge said that Christians need to widen their understanding of what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

"We're not talking about mere humanitarianism," he said. "We are talking about loving service to our fellowman in the name of Christ, because we are Christians and to honor him."

Relief from poverty, the mission executive said, is no guarantee a person will be relieved of spiritual poverty.

"Our efforts need to be directed toward helping men find him who will meet the deepest, deepest needs."

Baptists, because of their historic orientation to evangelism, too often have been afraid to go out and help the poor, less it contradict their evangelism concern, Rutledge said.

"We've been afraid to go to the underprivileged as if our choice was between loving deeds of kindness to those in need and evangelism," he said. "But actually, these are opposite sides of the same coin and we shall not be able to evangelize effectively unless we care for persons."

Rutledge said Baptists could not afford to be satisfied with full pews, big budgets and good annual reports--"What about the multitudes that never darken these doors?"

"We need to sympathize with people in their need, whatever their race, whatever their own responsibility for their plight, whatever their financial situation," he said. "If we care enough to show people we love them then they will come nearer listening when we point them to the Christ who has said that the greatest commandment is: 'Love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself'."

Nearly 3,000 pastors, missionaries and church leaders saw Christian concern translated into action during the week when Home Mission Board officials announced plans for helping Baptists in flood-stricken Fairbanks, Alaska.

An appeal was issued for 100 carpenters, masons, furnace workers and other such specialists to volunteer to help rebuild the nine flooded and severely damaged church buildings. Also, a moratorium was declared for three months on church loans interest and payments due for six congregations in the area that hold loans with the Home Mission Board.

The board has sent \$10,000 immediately, most of which was used to help evacuate the families of Baptist pastors. Paul Adkins of the Home Mission Board staff was sent into the city to investigate the extent of need.

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Conferences during the week, for both laymen and pastors and missionaries, included juvenile rehabilitation, weekday ministries, literacy classes, work with National Baptists, language missions and personal witnessing.

Harper Shannon, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dothan, Ala., was the conference pastor, preaching at services each evening. O. T. Binkley, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., taught the daily Bible study.

Registration for the annual conference fell slightly short of the expected 3,000 to 2,953, but the figure did represent a record for attendance at Ridgecrest Home Missions Week for those summers when Home Mission Board directors did not meet.

-30-

Texas Baptist Church Wins
Top Development Award

719

8/22/67

602

ATLANTA (BP)--"The people in our city learned very quickly that our church cares," said Tom Dyer, pastor of Plymouth Park Baptist Church, this year's national winner in Southern Baptists' church development awards program.

The 11-year-old suburban church in Irving, Tex., sponsored a day of recognition for local police, mission Bible schools and a kindergarten program which hopefully will lead to the development of a complete weekday ministry.

In the participation, each church usually starts with a survey of its ministries, its opportunities and its potential. Church members share in planning projects, staffing them, checking on progress and reporting to the church.

A "record of progress workbook" prepared by each participating church becomes the basis for judging. This year the administration of this program and its awards were transferred from the Home Mission Board's department of rural-urban missions to the Sunday School Board's church administration department.

Plymouth Park completed 184 of its 186 self-designed projects, and took top honors in the competition's category IV for churches with membership over 400.

Other category winners were Iglesia Bautista Oriente in Austin, Tex., J. W. Macon, pastor, category I for churches with membership of 90 or less; San Gabriel (Tex.) Baptist Church, Melvin Zornes, pastor, for the second consecutive year winner in category II for churches with membership of 100-199; and Pelahatchie (Miss.) Baptist Church, Carl Savell, pastor, category III for churches with membership of 200-399.

The awards were presented during Home Mission Weeks at Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Assemblies.

Plymouth church increased its membership in the year with a total of 432 additions, baptizing 125 new believers. Sunday School gained 713 new members.

"Since we entered this program in 1965, our church has had someone to unite with the church every Sunday," Dyer said.

This quick growth has created certain problems, according to Dyer, such as a need for more trained leadership. In an effort to combat these problems, a training program has been instituted including a one-time orientation session for new members, a 10-weeks (once a week) class for new Christians and classes on Sunday morning and Sunday night for teachers.

This church contributes majorly to the support of five other churches--one each in California, Utah and Wyoming, and two on Long Island, N.Y.

The members filled 140 boxes with Christmas gifts for servicemen in Vietnam and paid the shipping costs. In terms of finances, the present \$250,000 budget is an increase of \$64,000 over the previous year.

Consequently, the church's total gifts to missions have increased by 34 percent.

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The church is conducting duplicate Sunday School and worship services until the \$40,000 educational facility underway is completed. The 1,300-seat auditorium was completed recently.

Plymouth Park typifies the part youth has played in the rapid growth of this Dallas suburb. Of the total Sunday School enrolment, more than 2,000 are under 30 years of age.

"The quick easy success in the suburbs is over. There is a growing belief among young persons in the suburbs that the church doesn't hold the answer to the problems," said Dyer, who has been pastor in this church six years.

"We emphasize that we are interested in meeting their needs as a family, and not as a means of attaining numerical goals," he explained. He said that the church has developed an image, even as its pastor has.

Dyer said he visits every new family that moves into the community because he feels persons respond to this "extra concern" from the church's administrator. In the past three years, he has visited an average of 105 families per week.

Because he is called on so frequently for counseling, Dyer said it has become difficult to spend as much time in organized visiting.

A native of Gainesville, Tex., Dyer is a graduate of Baylor University (Baptist) in Waco, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Tex.

He has held other Texas pastorates in Killeen and Grandview.

In 1966, Plymouth Church and Dyer were named church and pastor of the year among Texas Baptists.

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Note: Churches receiving honorable mention in the awards program include Tramway Baptist Church in Sanford, N.C., pastor Norman Mitchell; Emmanuel Baptist Church in Greenville, Miss., pastor Robert Perry; Mt. Erie Baptist Association in Fairfield, Ill., pastor Charles Holland; Parkway Baptist Church in Indianapolis, Ind., pastor John Dorough; Oakdale Baptist Church in Moultrie, Ga., pastor Kenneth Long; Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Westville, Fla., pastor J. O. McClung Sr.; First Baptist Church in Colquitt, Ga., J. W. Howard, pastor; Union Church Baptist Church in Union Church, Miss., pastor Russell H. Naron; Charity Baptist Church in Carlenville, Ill., pastor James McCullen; First Baptist Church in Napoleonville, La., pastor William Rogers; Walnut Grove Baptist Church in Colfax, La., pastor Carroll Hammack; Meadowbrook Baptist Church in Waco, Tex., pastor Clifford Feeler; Bethel Hawley Baptist Church in Nash, Okla., Charles Curry, pastor.