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November 13, 1967

SBC Mounting Intense
Church-Extension Drive

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist agencies are consolidating forces for a two-year push that may utilize up to \$25 million to start new churches in 500 carefully-defined strategic locations.

Tagged "Project 500," the 1969 effort will involve virtually all denominational agencies and will draw lay volunteers and funds from strong "helper" churches to initiate the new work.

The project will concentrate on such strategic locations as capitals, port cities, transportation and business hubs, and educational centers in areas of the nation entered since 1940 by Southern Baptists, which means primarily the Northeast and parts of the West and Midwest.

More than \$2 million in anticipated 1968 and 1969 Annie Armstrong (Home Mission) offering receipts plus specially allocated funds in the Home Mission Board budgets will be earmarked for the project.

About \$12 million in anticipated church loan funds and money generated by the new congregations will add up eventually to an anticipated \$25 million.

The SBC Brotherhood Commission and the Woman's Missionary Union will major on the campaign, and Sunday School Board materials will be aimed at generating concern and support.

The Home Mission Board's Christian Service Corps will be used to recruit both long-term and short-term lay volunteers to aid the fledgling "Project 500" congregations.

From 1964-66, the net gain in churches was reported as 262, 409 and 152 annually, respectively. Aside from the mathematics of churches consolidating and closing, most of the increases can be accounted for as new churches (which normally sprout up where a handful of Baptist families exist).

"Project 500," however, will examine factors such as geography, political influence, communications and transportation, population patterns and strengths of existing Christian witness to determine the most strategic locations.

"We expect 'Project 500' to be above and beyond normal growth," said Loyd Corder of the Home Mission Board, who will oversee the project.

"The normal growth that occurs when neighborhoods are in need of a church, or when enough Baptists are together to merit a new work, should continue. What 'Project 500' will do is strengthen Baptist witness at the most strategic locations in terms of long-range influence and church growth development."

In short, "Project 500" will lay the foundations for a generation of church growth in the newer areas of Baptist work.

The Home Mission Board's program of establishing new churches and church-type missions under the direction of Corder, already has selected about 300 of the "Project 500" locations, using a process of elimination system that begins with local area missionaries.

A diverse pattern has developed, ranging from downtown locations to populous suburban communities. The locations also are covering a range of economic and racial makeups.

Pullman, Wash., is one of the sites selected. It is a town of slightly more than 20,000, and home for Washington State University, which has 335 foreign students enrolled among more than 10,000 students.

Also, just a few miles across the border in Moscow, Idaho is the University of Idaho. Pullman also is a farming and ranching community in a farming and ranching region of the state.

In the Northeast, Worcester, Mass., and New Haven, Conn., serve as prime examples.

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The Worcester work is underway in that metropolitan area of 600,000. The city is a financial and industrial center and is home for three colleges: Becker College, Worcester Junior College and Clark University.

The mission that is underway is in an inner-city community, and the presence of ethnic groups such as Canadians, Irishmen, Italians, Russians and Swedes constitutes the need for a diverse language ministry.

Worcester is the second largest city in Massachusetts.

New Haven, home of Yale University and Southern Connecticut State College, has a population of 278,000 and is a manufacturing and merchandising center.

A detailed community study form has been prepared for local missionaries to fill out on recommended locations, which considers population breakdowns by ethnic origin, language and religious affiliation. It also determines the economy and influence of the community itself and details the needs for a Baptist witness.

The system for choosing the locations allows for about 1,100 recommendations from the field. State mission executives and the Home Mission Board will pare down the recommendations to total about 500 of the most strategic locations.

Sponsoring churches will be enlisted near the "Project 500" locations to serve as coordinating agents between the local congregations and the associations, state conventions and Home Mission Board.

The sponsor churches also will provide counsel and guidance through their mission committees as well as resources such as manpower and finances.

"Helper" churches from more distant areas will enlist volunteers who will be willing to donate vacation time or more extended periods to go to the "Project 500" locations as Christian Service Corp workers.

Radio and television spot announcements, handbills, hymn festivals, public lectures, family life conferences, literacy and language classes, letter and telephone campaigns, home fellowships and a variety of other community-type ministries will intensify the initial beginnings of the new congregations.

Home Mission Board staff members representing metropolitan missions, pioneer missions and rural-urban missions will visit the "Project 500" locations to offer encouragement and mission impetus.

These three departments, along with language missions, comprise the program of establishing new churches and church-type missions.

Local missionaries are making their recommendations for the strategic locations, using, in order of priority, the following criteria for "strategic."

A geographic community with great unmet needs that could be met by the ministry and witness of a new church.

A location from which a new church could wield the strongest possible influence for God in a surrounding area.

"A city that is a business or political center, for example, could have highways and railroads and a good airport and may even be a recreation center," Corder said. "A church would have contact with a larger community than it serves directly and thus exert more influence."

A community surrounded by areas of need, so that a church established now could establish actively new missions later.

A location through which a church would minister to people who would convey the gospel message to other parts of the nation and world.

"Port cities, academic communities, tourist areas, military areas, etc., all would be considered under this point," Corder said.

A healthy prospect for developing sufficient strength to accomplish these goals.

"Usually the prospect of becoming self-supporting is the first criteria stated," Corder said. "We think it's important, but we are considering it fifth on the list of priorities."

A good potential for strengthening the state and national work of Southern Baptists.

"Some locations for a church would not particularly affect the influence of the state or national convention," Corder said, "but a capital city location, for example, would."

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BP PHOTOS to be mailed to Baptist state papers

SBC Holding Dialogues
With College Students

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention program leaders are beginning a year of denominational dialogues that are giving college students a chance to "talk back" about their convention.

After the first series of dialogues on three Texas campuses last month, the effort seems headed for success.

The purpose of the program, according to R. H. Falwell Jr., of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board here is to "help guide Southern Baptists in more effective planning."

Falwell, program director of the board's student department said the method of the dialogues is for the leaders to listen to the opinions and suggestions of the students, then attempt to relate the denomination's interests to them.

"Information received from reaction and suggestions for future Baptist work will be shared with Southern Baptist and state convention leaders," Falwell said.

Falwell said some very definite reactions were noticed at the first series of conferences held at North Texas State University in Denton, Tex., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth and Baylor University in Waco, Tex.

More reactions will come from three other denominational dialogues, each held at several colleges near Southern Baptist-owned seminaries. Dialogue sessions are scheduled in the New Orleans area in January; in the San Francisco area in March; and in the Wake Forest, N.C., area in April.

At the Texas college dialogue sessions, most of the suggestions urged church programs that deal with current issues and life problems, said Falwell.

The students also called for an earlier introduction of real theology and current issues in Sunday School and Training Union organizations. Many of them felt their spiritual preparation for college was inadequate.

"We weren't prepared for college-level thinking," they said. "When we were challenged by other beliefs, or by those who had no beliefs, we felt at a loss. We didn't have the background to be competent witness on campus."

Their reaction was that their church teachers should be better trained so they could adequately prepare their students for life.

"Most of us don't know what 'Baptist' means," said one student. "We need to know what Baptists stand for."

Falwell said most students seemed to have a stereotype view of Southern Baptists as people who didn't know what the real issues were. He said some were frustrated because they couldn't receive answers from an authoritative viewpoint.

"They would ask when the convention was going to change its 'position' on ecumenism and fraternities. But they didn't understand the nature of the convention," Falwell added. He said they didn't seem to know that the convention is for service to the churches and is not an authoritarian group.

Some were critical of the lack of youth in the programming organizations of the convention, and wanted selected students to be placed in convention planning groups.

Falwell said there was general praise for the dialogue approach, both from Baptist students and those of other denominations.

"Some students from other faiths were surprised that denominational leaders would submit their programs to criticism from students," he said.

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"Our students didn't think we would come and ask them what they thought. As one student put it, it was gratifying to find out our leaders would come and listen rather than bludgeon the students," Falwell said.

But one young man, he said, made the trip worth the effort in one statement.

"This day has helped me," he said. "All my life the Sunday School Board has been just a great white heaven. Now I feel they care about me."

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Oklahoma Student Magazine
Draws Preachers' Protests

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SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--An unofficial student publication at Oklahoma Baptist University has brought public protest from a group of about 20 ministers from Oklahoma City.

The controversy flared into headlines in major Oklahoma newspapers when the ministers met with Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) President Grady C. Cothen to demand "an explanation of the student magazine."

Target of the dispute is an independent publication called "The Pluralist" circulated and sold among the Baptist school's students by a panel of four students who edit it.

Content of the essay and poetry-format magazine has included opinions of the war in Vietnam, and has been critical of the Baptist school's administration and state Baptist leaders.

Smoldering opposition to "The Pluralist" was fanned into a flame by the cover of the current issue, which pictured a shapely OBU student clad in a bikini, a guitarist, and a hippy standing behind a communion table. The caption read: "Where Is The Church?"

The magazine also carried an article by an OBU student entitled "How I Spent My Somber Vacation", describing a speaker at the Oklahoma Baptist assembly as "one of those neon-lighted beffons generally as extinct as a dodo bird."

In a letter written to all Oklahoma Baptist pastors, Cothen issued a plea for understanding of the students involved in the publication, but also emphasized that their opinions did not represent the position of the institution.

He asked that fellow Baptists remember that "these are students, that they are seeking, that they are trying to find the answer to their own needs in a very complex world."

The editor of The Pluralist issued a statement expressing "regret that the intentions of the present issue have been misconstrued by some of those outside the university."

In the heat of the controversy, one of the four editors of The Pluralist, Grady Cothen Jr., resigned in order "to eliminate the personal factor." He is the son of the college president, and is a senior government major at OBU.

In another development, the president of the Oklahoma Baptist University Alumni Association issued a statement endorsing "the right of free inquiry."

Some observers are saying that it boils down to a dispute between advocates of academic freedom and proponents of tight administrative control.

Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla., has experienced recent demonstrations against administrative controls.

The controversies erupted one week before the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, which owns Oklahoma Baptist University as its only school.

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Loren Williams Named
Music Sales Specialist

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NASHVILLE (BP)--Loren R. Williams has been named music sales specialist for the wholesale sales department of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

A 15-year veteran of the board, Williams is the first music sales specialist to serve in the board's publishing division.

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Williams' main responsibilities will be to seek and develop new ideas for promoting Broadman music products. He will be available within the division for consultation on matters relating to music--advertising, sales, displays, catalogs, etc.

Williams, who had served in the board's church music department since 1952, will work with state music secretaries, and college and seminary faculty members in presenting and interpreting Broadman music products. He will also seek to develop new markets through general music and book stores and will promote the use of Broadman music in public schools.

A graduate of State College in Springfield, Mo., Williams received his master of music and doctor of music education degrees from Mt. Vernon University, Washington, D. C. He has a diploma in voice and a diploma in string instruments from the University Conservatory of Music in Chicago.

Before coming to the board he served as minister of music in churches in Missouri, Kentucky, and Oklahoma. He has served as music supervisor and principal for several public schools.

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BP PHOTO mailed to state Baptist papers.

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Ohio Convention Warns
Against Urge to Merge

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AKRON, Ohio (BP)--A resolution warning that the "ecumenical urge to merge" might tempt some Baptists into compromising conformity was adopted here by the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio during their annual session.

The resolution stated that the ecumenical urge to merge is prevalent and popular in both liberal ecumenicity and in evangelical alliance, and warned that "many are tempted into compromising conformity."

Although the resolution did not specifically state that Baptists should avoid the ecumenical movement, it implied such, depending on interpretation. The brief resolution concluded by saying:

"Therefore, be it resolved that the messengers to this convention declare themselves as committee unequivocally to the practice of New Testament principles traditionally and historically adhered to by the God-blessed people called Baptists."

Another resolution adopted by the convention called upon every church and association in the Ohio fellowship to commit themselves to total involvement in the Crusade of the Americas.

In major business action, the convention adopted a 1968 budget of \$1,108,019, allocating 33 per cent to Southern Baptist Convention world mission causes.

Amendments to the budget recommended by the finance committee added \$4,000 for scholarships for Baptist students, and changed a policy on the salaries of office secretaries and tenure for staff members.

During a pre-convention meeting of the convention's Executive Board, William H. Slagle of Indianapolis, Ind., was elected director of the Ohio Convention's Brotherhood department.

Slagle, secretary of evangelism and Brotherhood for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana for the past two years, will succeed Darty F. Stowe, who has been elected Ohio's associate executive secretary in charge of annuity and foundation promotion. Stowe previously served in a dual capacity, promoting both Brotherhood and annuity work in Ohio.

Re-elected as president of the convention was Clay I. Frazier of Vermilion, Ohio. The 1968 convention will meet in Columbus, Ohio.

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Alaska Holds Convention
Earlier Postponed By Flood

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ANCHORAGE, Alaska (BP)--The Alaska Baptist Convention, which attempted to meet in Fairbanks in August but was postponed because of the devastating floods there, met here three months later to conduct its annual business sessions.

In a report to the convention, Executive Secretary E. W. Hunke Jr., said that in excess of \$57,000 in relief funds for the flood-stricken Fairbanks area have been received by the convention.

A state-wide budget of \$223,936, an increase of 15 per cent over the previous budget, was adopted by the convention, allocating 28½ per cent of undesignated receipts to Southern Baptist world mission causes.

The new budget also makes provision for employment of a state missions secretary in the convention offices here, and a salary increase for field missionaries working among the state's native peoples.

Newly-elected president of the convention is Edward E. Wolfe, pastor of Faith Baptist Church of Spenard, Alaska. He is a native of Missouri and Alaska.

A resolution was adopted opposing the issuance of a liquor license by the Alaska Beverage Control Board to a restaurant located near the Muldoon Baptist Church in Anchorage. The pastor of the church, V. A. Chron, has led a vigorous protest against the granting of the license, claiming that the board did not have a majority of the residents' approval as required by law.

Seven new members were elected to the convention's Executive Board, including two Negro pastors, an Eskimo layman, an Air Force sergeant, a banker and two pastors.

The 1968 convention will meet in Fairbanks on Aug. 13-15.

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Pastoral Care Director
Named For New Hospital

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AMARILLO, Tex. (BP)--Robert H. Lloyd of Houston has been named director of the department of pastoral care at the new High Plains Baptist Hospital here scheduled to open on Feb. 20, 1968.

Lloyd has been serving as a chaplain supervisor at the Memorial Baptist Hospital in Houston and Ben Taub General Hospital.

The new High Plains Baptist Hospital will open with five clinical divisions and 241 patient beds, according to Emmett Johnson, the hospital's administrator.

Under Lloyd's direction, the newly formed pastoral care department will conduct hospital chaplain internships and educational programs to assist ministers in pastoral counseling.

Ministers of all faiths will be urged to participate in the programs, which will be conducted on several levels. Lloyd said that the purpose of the program is to work with physicians, not apart from them, to provide total health care.

In addition, Lloyd will plan, coordinate and implement programs to assist hospital health care teams in effective ministry to the spiritual needs of patients and their families.

Lloyd is a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He has completed two years of study at the Institute of Religion in the Texas Medical Center, and is certified as a supervisor for Clinical Pastoral Education. He has also completed residence requirements for a Master of Theology degree.

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