

(BP)---FEATURES

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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

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California Is Prime
Target of Project 500

By Roy Jennings
For The Baptist Press

Large sections of the United States are mushrooming completely void of the influence of organized Christianity, and Southern Baptists are trying to do something about it.

One big target is California, where Southern Baptists plan to concentrate a large share of attention in establishing 500 new churches during the next two years.

Through a two-year effort known as Project 500, the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board hopes to begin new work in the most strategic locations in states where organized Southern Baptist work is less than 20 years old.

Preliminary plans already include locations for 25 Project 500 churches in California.

Major emphasis is being put on the "strategic" value of Project 500 locations, since normal Southern Baptist growth probably would add 500 new churches or church-type missions within two years.

This effort, which may cost more than \$25 million eventually, is aimed particularly at underchurched areas in capitals, port cities, transportation and business hubs, and educational centers--locations from which a Southern Baptist church could have an effect on the largest possible number of people and influence the beginnings of new work in the broadest possible area.

California is where the population explosion is becoming a reality and the ratio of church goers to non-church goers ranks among the lowest in the nation, Southern Baptist surveyors contend.

The state is also a key target area because of its growing number of adherents to Oriental religions and the large number of religious sects, said J. N. Evans, secretary of the department of metropolitan missions of the Home Mission Board, who is coordinating plans for the prospective churches.

Just how deprived is California in terms of an organized Christian witness, specifically Southern Baptists?

If the Cordova Meadows community in the suburbs of Sacramento benefits from an organized Christian witness, it will be because Southern Baptists will put a church there, Evans said.

Located near Mather Air Force Base, the community contains 5,000 inhabitants now and will reach 20,000 within the next eight years. No churches of any denomination serve the area.

Evans said he hopes to find Baptist families in the community who will agree to start Christian fellowships in their homes and from this interest to develop churches.

However, Cordova Meadows isn't an isolated case. In the populous Mountain View section of California at the south end of San Francisco Bay 50,000 people live without an organized Baptist witness. They include the families of many of the 6,000 airmen stationed at nearby Moffett Field.

Then there is Fig Garden community in the northwest section of Fresno which is expected to swell from the present 12,000 population to 70,000 in 18 years.

Made up largely of persons of Catholic background, many of Fresno's civic and business leaders as well as the faculty at two colleges have built their homes in this section, also known as Bullard.

Building sites open at \$20,000 and a building to accommodate 100 worshipers costs a minimum of \$30,000, Evans said.

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January 4, 1968

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Baptist Press Feature

The Bishop community on the California-Nevada line south of Reno offers Southern Baptists an opportunity in resort missions, Evans said. Here 7,500 Indians and English-speaking persons cater to tourists interested in skiing, hunting, and mountain climbing.

One of the most challenging mission sites, Evans said, is in Agoura community in the Malibu Beach section of northwest Los Angeles where the present 6,000 population is expected to increase to 75,000 within eight years.

Presently without a single Baptist church, about 30 percent of the inhabitants are of Catholic background and 60 percent attend no church, Evans said. Many are research scientists and technologists. Land sells there at \$20,000 an acre.

How will Southern Baptists put a Christian witness in these areas?

One major way is through the Annie Armstrong offering for Home Missions in March, Evans said. From the total offering of \$5,500,000 the last \$1,500,000 will be used to get the best-trained missionary pastors on the Project 500 fields, he said.



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W. C. Fields, Director
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REGIONAL OFFICES

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

BUREAU

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

January 4, 1968

Total SBC World Missions
Gifts Pass \$45 Million Mark

NASHVILLE (BP)--Gifts to world missions through the Southern Baptist Convention exceeded \$45 million during 1967, making 1967 a record year of giving in the denomination.

The \$45 million total surpassed last year's record high by more than \$2 million, an end-of-the-year financial summary from the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee reported.

Also for the first time, the convention exceeded \$25 million in contributions through the Cooperative Program unified budget plan, which supports almost all SBC causes.

The \$25,169,804 contributed through the Cooperative Program topped the \$24.2 million budget goal by slightly less than \$1 million, and exceeded Cooperative Program gifts of 1966 by \$1.1 million.

Under convention procedure, the \$969,804 amount in excess of the budget was distributed two-thirds to foreign missions, and one-third to home missions.

Baptist leaders in Nashville said they were elated over the record year of giving to missions support.

Porter W. Routh, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee which distributes the funds to 21 Southern Baptist agencies, said the \$45 million in total gifts was extremely significant.

Forty years ago, in 1927 when the Cooperative Program budget plan was just getting started, the total gifts distributed to SBC causes was a little more than \$3.3 million, Routh said.

The \$45 million figure is more than 10 times the amount given to world missions 40 years ago, Routh said.

Merrill D. Moore, executive secretary of the SBC Stewardship Commission, said that Baptists ought not to forget that this success would never have been achieved without the Cooperative Program budget plan. He called the report "very gratifying."

Routh said that Southern Baptist missions support during 1967 represents both a growing concern on the part of Baptist church members for missions, and a continuing concern on the part of state Baptist conventions for a wider missionary outreach.

"It is encouraging to note that 23 out of the 29 state conventions reported increases in 1967 over 1966 contributions," Routh said.

John H. Williams, financial planning secretary for the SBC Executive Committee, pointed out however, that the percentage increase in Cooperative Program contributions this year was 4.8 per cent, while the increase in the cost of living was 3.2 per cent. "We are just barely keeping up with inflation," he said.

The 4.85 per cent increase compares with a percentage increase in 1966 of about 6 per cent in Cooperative Program giving. Designated contributions increased 5 per cent in 1967.

Of the \$45 million total contributions in 1967, \$25.1 million was contributed through the Cooperative Program budget, and \$19.9 million came in the form of designated gifts to specific missions causes, primarily home and foreign missions.

The SBC Foreign Mission Board in Richmond received a total of \$27.8 million in designated and Cooperative Program gifts during 1967, and the SBC Home Mission Board in Atlanta received \$9.7 million.

Six theological seminaries owned and operated by the SBC received a total of nearly \$4.7 million, and the SBC Radio and Television Commission received nearly \$1.2 million.

A total of 21 Southern Baptist Convention agencies and organizations received financial support through the Cooperative Program unified budget, which is set by the Southern Baptist Convention in annual session. Two major SBC agencies, the Sunday School Board and the Woman's Missionary Union Auxiliary, are self-supporting and do not receive Cooperative Program funds.

Baptist Asks Freedom For College Religious Groups

URBANA, Ill. (BP)--A Baptist leader told over 200 college faculty members here that separation of church and state should not prohibit the use of state university and college facilities by student religious groups.

Walfred H. Peterson, director of research services for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Washington, D. C., spoke to a faculty luncheon during the eighth Inter-Varsity Missionary Convention on the campus of the University of Illinois.

The question addressed by Peterson was: "On the basis of the law of church-state relations, are there grounds for prohibiting or limiting the use of campus facilities by student religious groups?"

After reviewing a number of Supreme Court cases on the relation of religion to education, Peterson concluded that these cases should not be interpreted in such a way as to prohibit student religious activity on state college and university campuses.

"Church-state separation is not a doctrine that should be taken in a rigidly literal or absolute sense," he declared. "Church-state separation must finally be a matter of pragmatic judgement related to and subordinate to the high goal of the free exercise of religion," he continued.

While religious activity on state campuses is permissible under separation of church and state, Peterson said, this does not mean that student groups have "a right" to use such facilities. Such activities come under the category of "privileges," he pointed out, and thus religious activities on the campus "are a matter of the free grace of the college."

Practices and policies are not uniform in the various states, Peterson reported. He earlier wrote to 25 selected attorney generals and at least one university in each of these states. Eighteen attorney generals and 14 universities responded.

Of the states that answered his questionnaire, four restrict school facilities from religious use either by administrative, legal or constitutional provisions.

California's rule is that "university facilities shall not be used for the purpose of religious worship, exercise or conversion."

Both the University of Utah and the University of Washington are restricted by the state constitutions. These say that "no public money or property shall be appropriated for or applied to any religious worship, exercise or instruction."

However, both schools reported that for other purposes the use of facilities by religious groups is acceptable, Peterson said.

Virginia is the lone exception in the East and South. The state restricts group religious activities on its college campuses under a policy originally defined by Thomas Jefferson.

Many other universities "apparently give student religious groups the same opportunity to use campus facilities as is given to other registered student groups," he discovered.

The University of Massachusetts, he reported, recognizes student religious groups, provides some with office space, and employs chaplains for the "three major faiths."

The University of Minnesota does not separate religious groups from others, he said. The university has an office called "co-ordinator of religious activities."

The University of Illinois recognizes student organizations and cooperates with student religious foundations adjacent to the campus.

Cooperation between student religious groups and the university was also found in Alabama, Arizona, Hawaii, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Texas.

Peterson advised the faculty student leaders to develop their own church-state policy. He cautioned that "this policy should be informed by balanced interpretations of relevant federal and state law and by the peculiar circumstances of each campus."

"Ideally, at the heart of this policy should be devotion to religious liberty--first for the person, then for the group," he said. "Liberty to hear, to respond, to join, to assemble, to support, to organize, to teach, to witness, to print, to contact, ect.," were included in his list of freedoms for which student groups should work.

The purpose of the Inter-Varsity Missionary Convention is to stimulate student interest in foreign missions. It meets every three years.

Over 7,000 attended the eighth convention which met during the Christmas-New Year Holidays. This campus student missionary movement is sponsored by the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, a non-denominational, conservative, evangelical organization.

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Illinois Convention Tops
Budget in 60th Anniversary

1/4/68

CARBONDALE, Ill. (BP)--The Illinois Baptist State Association exceeded its \$1 million goal for the Cooperative Program unified budget during 1967, noting its 60th anniversary as a state convention.

Total receipts for the convention for 1967 were \$1,008,057. Although the initial goal was set at \$950,000, state convention leaders decided to try for \$1 million when receipts early in the year climbed higher than expected.

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China Missionary, Retired
Seminary Professor, Dies

1/4/68

WAKE FOREST, N. C. (BP)--John B. Hipps, 83, veteran Southern Baptist missionary to China and retired professor of missions at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary here, died at Wake Forest Branch Hospital Dec. 30.

Funeral services were held at Wake Forest Baptist Church, with interment at the Southeastern Seminary cemetery here.

In 1913 he was appointed a missionary to China where for 36 years he was connected with the University of Shanghai. He became professor at Southeastern Seminary here in 1951, retiring in 1957.

He was a graduate of Mars Hill College, Mars Hill, N. C.; Wake Forest College, now in Winston-Salem, N. C.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Columbia University, New York. In 1935 he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Wake Forest College, and was named Mars Hill College's "outstanding alumnus" in 1965.

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Baylor Dental
Names New Dean

1/4/68

DALLAS (BP)--Kenneth V. Randolph, dean of West Virginia University's School of Dentistry, has been named dean of Baylor University College of Dentistry, effective Aug. 1, 1968. He will succeed Harry B. McCarthy, who will retire during the summer.

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Two Texas Officials
Named To Interim Posts

1/4/68

DALLAS (BP)-- R. A. Springer, treasurer of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has been named interim director of public relations for Texas Baptists.

He will serve until a successor is named to succeed R. T. McCartney, who resigned Dec. 31 to accept a position with Arthur Davenport Associates in Oklahoma City, Okla.

James M. Dunn has been named interim secretary of the Texas convention's Christian Life Commission, effective Jan. 28, when Jimmy R. Allen, the secretary, leaves to become pastor of the First Baptist Church of San Antonio.

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Carson-Newman College
President To Retire

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. (BP)--The president of Carson-Newman College here, Harley Fite, has announced plans to retire July 31 after 20 years as president of the Baptist School.

Fite, in his letter of resignation to the board of trustees, said that he was tempted to remain as president as long as the college is progressing. "I believe, however, the unselfish thing to do is to retire while the progress of the school is at its highest, to let the new president come on the scene without handicaps."

Fite said that his 20 years as president have been strenuous ones but happy years. "I am indeed grateful for the opportunity of serving my Lord, the Baptist denomination, the community, and a great host of fine young people through Carson-Newman College," he said.

The Baptist school here reported a fall enrollment of 1,727 regular students in 1967, an increase in enrollment of 65 over the previous fall enrollment.

Fite's annual report listed 25 new buildings erected during his 20-year administration, along with the purchase of 17 acres of land and 23 dwellings. Total worth of the buildings is \$10 3/4 million.

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Hardin-Simmons Receives
\$375,000 in Gifts, Trusts

1/4/68

ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--New gifts, trusts and bequests to Hardin-Simmons University totalling more than \$375,000 have been received since mid-November, 1967, Elwin L. Skiles, president, announced.

An initial major gift of \$50,000 on what will be a much larger project has been added to the endowment fund.

Two graduates of the university have set up a \$100,000 trust with the Baptist Foundation of Texas for Hardin-Simmons.

Rupert H. Johnson of New York City has established the Carl Coke Rister Scholarship Fund with an initial gift of \$5,000. Rister, a nationally known historian, was a Hardin-Simmons professor and graduate. His widow has recently returned to Abilene to live.

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