

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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May 14, 1969

Home Mission Board  
Adds 15 Missionaries

ATLANTA (BP)--Fifteen persons--including two former foreign missionaries, several international natives and a former Southern Baptist Home Mission Board staff member---have been appointed recently as career missionaries by the denomination's homeland missions agency here.

More than half will work under the leadership of the agency's department of language missions. They are Mr. and Mrs. Theo Patnaik working with internationals in the San Jose, Calif., area; Mr. and Mrs. Cass Vincent who will work with the Polish in St. Paul, Minn.; Mr. and Mrs. William Edward Arnold who will direct work with internationals in Baltimore; and Mr. and Mrs. David Donald Benham who are working with Indians in Tuba City, Ariz.

Beverly Hammack of Southwest City, Mo., is being assigned temporarily to the Sellers Home for Unwed Mothers and Adoption Center in New Orleans. Miss Hammack later will be re-assigned, probably as an area director of Christian social ministries.

Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Isaac Armitage have been assigned to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he will direct youth and family services.

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Ewing Chandler were appointed to Fresno, Calif., where he will serve as superintendent of missions of the Mid-Valley Baptist Association.

Mr. and Mrs. Dick Brogan of Mississippi are working with National Baptists in the Mound Bayou, Miss., area.

A native of Calcutta, India, Patnaik is a graduate of William Jennings Bryan College in Dayton, Tenn.; Conservative Baptist Seminary in Denver, Colo.; and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

He had been working with internationals two years as a student missionary.

Mrs. Patnaik, the former Sonai Maria Neves of Argentina, was educated in Rio De Janeiro and is studying music at Golden Gate Seminary.

Also a former student missionary, Vincent is a graduate of Simpson Bible College in San Francisco and of Golden Gate Seminary.

A native of England, Mrs. Vincent also graduated from Simpson Bible College and Golden Gate Seminary.

A native of Louisville, Ky., and a former Kentucky pastor, Arnold for 11 years was a Southern Baptist missionary in West Africa. He is a graduate of Georgetown (Ky.) College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Mrs. Arnold, a native of Bowling Green, Ky., attended Georgetown College and also was a missionary in West Africa.

Benham is a graduate of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. A native of Fayetteville, he was a public school teacher in Fort Smith, Ark. He served in 1966 as a student summer missionary to Arizona.

While attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, recently, he served as pastor of the Fort Worth Indian mission.

A native of Fort Smith, Ark., Mrs. Benham attended Westark Junior College, there. She also was student summer mission to Arizona in 1966.

A graduate of Hardin-Simmons University (Baptist) in Abilene, Tex., and Southwestern Seminary, Chandler has been pastor of four Texas churches and one in California. He is a native of Shreveport, La.

Mrs. Chandler, a native of Dallas, also is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons. She has worked as a church secretary and also with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

A native of Laurel, Miss., Brogan is a graduate of Mississippi College (Baptist) in Clinton, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He has been a pastor in Arkansas and Mississippi, and now works as a teacher-missionary.

The former Catherine Dunn of Magnolia, Miss., Mrs. Brogan also is a graduate of Mississippi College. For the past 10 years she has been a public school teacher in Mississippi schools.

A native of Southwest City, Mo., Miss Hammack is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and of Southwestern Seminary.

In 1967 she left the Home Mission Board staff where she had served since 1961 in the mission agency's department of special mission ministries to attend Tulane University in New Orleans, where she recently earned a masters degree in social work.

She formerly served as a student summer missionary, worked one year in the Rachel Sims Mission in New Orleans and served as Woman's Missionary Union Youth director for Kansas Baptists.

Armitage has served as a pastor in Indiana and Ohio. He also was a social worker in Hamilton, Ohio, and a rehabilitation counselor for the Ohio State Bureau. A native of Richford, N.Y., he is a graduate of the University of Missouri in Columbia and Southern Seminary.

A native of Collbran, Colo., Mrs. Armitage also is a graduate of the University of Missouri and is a registered nurse.

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Baptist Church Leases Building;  
Uses Old Facilities in Ministry

5/14/69

DECATUR, Ga. (BP)--A Baptist church which has struggled for 10 years to minister in a racially-changing neighborhood has voted to abandon plans for a move to new buildings, and center its ministries in old facilities.

Oakhurst Baptist Church, here, signed a 10-year lease with Southern Bell Telephone Co., for a \$400,000 building which the church had occupied since 1960. It was designed to be the first unit of a sanctuary-educational complex, the plans for which have now been abandoned.

The phone company will pay the church \$54,000 per year on a 10-year lease, with options to purchase the buildings on the first, fifth or 10th anniversaries of the lease.

Pastor John Nichol said the \$54,000 will pay the church's annual debt payment, plus taxes, and give a \$10,000 cushion for the church budget.

Renovation has already begun on the church's older facilities, one block south of the new facilities. "We hope to renovate our old building in such a way as to insure adequacy for our long range program."

The older building has been the center of an extensive weekday ministry which Oakhurst church has maintained for about 10 years. The church has many Negro and Spanish-speaking members, including several Cuban refugees.

In an editorial praising the action of the Oakhurst congregation, Editor Jack U. Harwell of The Christian Index said, "Congratulations, Oakhurst, on your failure to complete your building program!"

The Georgia Baptist editor added: "Would to God more churches would capture some of the sacrificial spirit of the Oakhurst people. Would to God more pastors would lead their flocks to see racial change as an opportunity to witness instead of a warning to flee. Would to God more laymen would come to know their role as creators of a Christian rather than custodians of property."

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Sunday School Board Tax  
Exempt Status Removed

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has been denied tax exempt status for its property under a ruling by the Metropolitan tax assessor here.

The Baptist board was one of six Nashville-based national religious agencies that fell under the tax assessor's ruling. Others were two Methodist, two National Baptist, and Seventh Day Adventist organizations.

Asked what action the Sunday School Board would take, Executive Secretary James L. Sullivan said, "we will appeal."

"However," added Sullivan, "the nature of our appeal is uncertain at this time. We will need time to study the assessor's decision."

The board has been officially notified by the assessor's office that an assessment is forthcoming.

Board officials said that every assurance has been given the assessor's office that the board wishes to cooperate, but that assurance of cooperation should not be interpreted as an agreement to the removal of its tax exempt status.

Local news media reported that the assessor's decision resulted from a letter from the Metropolitan (Nashville) legal department which recommended "that these properties be assessed and that your office deny the applications" for tax exempt status.

The ruling apparently would apply to all Nashville physical facilities owned by the Sunday School Board and the other five religious agencies.

"We want to follow and support the law, but the laws are vague," said Sullivan. He expressed a desire to help "all we can in interpreting the law."

It was on the point of clarification of the law that the Metropolitan law director based his decision to recommend removal of tax exempt status.

The board has, since its beginning in 1891, paid property tax on all properties it owns which are not used for activities related to the charter purposes of the institution. In 1968, nearly \$40,000 was paid to Metropolitan Nashville in such taxes.

Officials have interpreted the laws of the State of Tennessee, however, as granting exemption from tax on properties used for charter purposes because the board is a religious and educational agency.

"Most of the board's properties are used for charter purposes in work directly related to Southern Baptist Churches," Sullivan said. "A few properties are held for future expansion needs," he added.

The six nation-wide religious agencies denied property tax exemption status, in addition to the Sunday School Board, are the Methodist Publishing House, the Methodist Board of Evangelism, the Southern Publishing Association (Seventh Day Adventist), the National Baptist Publishing Board and the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

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Oklahoma Church Leads  
SBC In '68 Conversions

5/14/69

NASHVILLE (BP)--The First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., led the Southern Baptist Convention in the number of baptisms (conversions) for the second year in a row, a statistical summary prepared by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board here disclosed.

The statistical summary listed a total of 131 Southern Baptist churches with more than 100 conversions during 1968, 12 churches with more than 200, and three churches with more than 300 conversions.

The Del City, Okla., church where John Bisagno is pastor topped the list with a total of 344 baptisms during the year.

Second on the list was First Baptist Church, Dallas, with 310 conversions (baptisms) during 1968. W. A. Criswell, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is pastor.

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Also reporting more than 300 baptisms during 1968 was First Church, DeRidder, La., where Emory Wallace is pastor. The Louisiana church listed 303 baptisms.

The research and statistics department of the SBC Sunday School Board which prepared the report made no comment or interpretation of the summary, releasing only the data.

Some Southern Baptists feel that the number of baptisms is an indication of the spiritual state of a church, while others feel you cannot measure quality or spirituality by quantity of baptisms.

The statistical report was prepared on the basis of a standard statistical summary mailed to the convention office here by each church in the denomination.

Other SBC churches listed in the top ten in number of baptisms (conversions) are:

Fourth, Mid City Church, New Orleans, La., 271; fifth, Beth Haven Church, Valley Station, Ky., 270; sixth, First Church, Lubbock, Tex., 255; seventh, First Baptist Church, Merritt Island, Fla., 242; eighth, Northwest Church, Miami, Fla., 238; Calvary Church, Colorado Springs, Colo., 230; and Clear Lake Church, Cocea, Fla., 220.