

**BAPTIST PRESS**

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Home Missions Meeting Told**

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Denominational leaders are alarmed at the rapid exodus of some of their best trained clergymen, with some estimates as high as 10,000 pastors and priests leaving churches of American denominations each year, the chief of chaplains at Georgia Baptist Hospital, Atlanta, said here.

E. A. Vordery of Atlanta outlined causes of the ministerial exodus from the pastorate in an address to association leaders and ministers during Home Missions week at Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly here.

Vordery said that in the Southern Baptist Convention, the associations within the states can help meet the needs of the pastors in helping them grapple with the problems they face in the pastorate which cause them to consider resigning.

"Some of the most prevalent explanations include lack of adequate financial remuneration, lack of privacy for oneself and family, general apathy of the congregation, an unreasonable expectation for the pastor to make the church prosper and pressure from denominational headquarters and administrative offices," Vordery said.

While there are many other ministers who remain in the pastorate for every one who leaves, a majority of pastors interviewed by one Baptist state paper editor recently expressed a desire for a change and would welcome a call to another field, Vordery said.

"The pastors who continue their work in the local church frequently feel drained physically, emotionally and spiritually," he continued. "The demands made upon them by the church and community leave the feeling they have attempted an impossible task.

"Faced with myriad expectations of a widely divergent congregation and recognizing the impossibility of pleasing the entire membership the pastor may become angry or depressed," he said.

"Depression is at the root of many physical ailments," the Baptist chaplain said. "It motivates many people to resort to the use of alcohol and anti-depressant drugs."

He added that depression is associated with a low level of self-esteem and arises in part out of the sense of being deserted and forsaken.

Depression can be counteracted, Vordery observed, by a feeling of being nurtured and nourished, of being valued and esteemed. "Seeking to shame a depressed pastor or telling him to have faith and to pray is to compound the problem," he said.

Vordery said most pastors need to discover a place of emotional and spiritual feeding if he is to be the source of feeding for large numbers of other people.

"He may look for help through his prayer life, but for many in the dark nights of the soul, God can seem far away. He cannot turn to the congregation when members expect him to be feeding them. If he turns to fellow pastors for understanding he may feel rejected because in most instances they may feel as drained as he."

By doctrine and policy, Baptist churches have no strong, stated authority figure to whom a pastor may turn. However, he said, "Human nature requires each of us find a resource to whom we can turn in particular times of stress or crisis.

"God may use this human instrumentality to make known his love and personalize his presence with us. One does not necessarily deny his faith in God when he acknowledges his need of a fellow human being," Vordery said.

Baptist associations in each state can help meet the needs of pastors by seeking to understand the pastor as a person and by providing a resource in psychotherapy, Vordery said.

To understand him as a person, the pastor must be recognized as a work-oriented person who frequently has little or no tangible results to show for his efforts in counseling the troubled, in witnessing to his faith, or for results of long hours of study, he added.

"Like the assembly-line worker, he feels much of his effort is non-rewarding because he rarely sees his part of the finished product," he said.

Often they feel guilty and inadequate, and demand verbal and financial reassurances from the congregation, he observed. And if they do not receive it, a feeling of punishment for failure sets in.

"Unless a minister grows beyond the guilt-punishment level of living to one of forgiveness and self-acceptance, he will likely encourage others to misuse and abuse him in an unconscious way of appeasing for his sins," Vordery said.

"Understanding some of the needs of the pastor prompts us to ask how his need can be met. My response is that we must feed him! Unless the pastor has experienced love from others he will be unable to love others meaningfully. If the pastor feels another human being respects and values him as a person he will find it natural to treat others respectfully and to value them," Vordery said.

Suggesting the possibility of Baptist associations providing resources in psychotherapy for pastors, Vordery warned that both the pastor and the psychiatrist must be able to look beyond their differences in language and methodology and focus on the real person.

The associational missionary or superintendent of missions seems to be the most natural resource for the Baptist association to use in personalizing its concerns for the pastor, he said. Special seminars and training sessions may be needed to help associational missionaries tap inner resources and to discover new ones in an effort to meet these needs, he added.

In addition, some denominational agencies are considering providing missionaries financial support and leave of absences from major work loads in order to permit them to study in clinical pastoral education centers, he said.

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Woodfin Named Liquidator
Of SBC Hospital Agency

8/23/71

PONTE VEDRA, Fla. (BP)--R. Lamar Woodfin of New Orleans, vice president of Avondale Shipyards, was named here as liquidator of the Hospital Agency of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The agency is an interim counseling body formed after the Southern Baptist Convention voted in 1970 to discontinue Southern Baptist Hospitals, Inc., as a denominational agency, and to release for private operation the Southern Baptist hospitals at New Orleans and Jacksonville, Fla.

Woodfin, a Baptist layman and a director of the hospital agency will supervise the legal and financial aspects involved in dissolving the agency at the convention's request.

In its 1971 annual meeting in St. Louis, the convention asked that the charter, files and assets of the agency be transferred to the denomination's Executive Committee on Sept. 1, 1971.

Although it is no longer affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, Southern Baptist Hospital Inc., continues to operate Baptist Memorial Hospital in Jacksonville and Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans as private institutions.

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At the St. Louis meeting, the convention requested that names of the hospitals and their controlling boards be changed to indicate that they are no longer institutions or agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention or of Baptist state conventions.

The name change request is now under study by a committee of the hospital group, hospital officials said.

Dr. Bryant A. Bloss, a physician from Evansville, Ind., is president of the board of trustees for Southern Baptist Hospitals, Inc. Ben Goodwin, an attorney from Tyler, Tex., was named vice president of the board and chairman of its executive committee.

Hardy M. Harrell of Jacksonville, Fla., continues as executive secretary-treasurer, a position he held when the agency was affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Illinois Baptist Offices
Move to Springfield Sept. 1

8/23/71

CARBONDALE, Ill. (BP)--After 41 years in this Southern Illinois city, the offices of the Illinois Baptist State Association moved to the state capital city, Springfield, Ill., opening its doors at a new headquarters building on Sept. 1.

The new \$1.5 million Baptist Building is located on a three-acre site at 3085 Stevenson Drive, just off Interstate 55 which connects St. Louis and Chicago. Springfield is 160 miles northwest of Carbondale.

Baptist offices will occupy the first floor of the contemporary tri-foil design building and the second and third floors will be leased to other tenants.

The new building will be financed by income from the leased property, plus proceeds from the sale of the Baptist Building in Carbondale, Ill.

Supplies and equipment were scheduled to be loaded on trucks in Carbondale on Thursday and Friday, August 26-27, and unloaded in Springfield on Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 30-31. The offices were scheduled to open on Sept. 1.

New address for the state offices will be P. O. Box 3486, Springfield, Ill., 62708, and the new telephone number will be (area code 217) 629-1086.

Offices for the association have been located in Carbondale since 1930, when the headquarters was moved from DuQuoin, Ill., where the state Baptist association was located from the time of its founding, 1907, until the 1930 move to Carbondale.

Located in rented space in Carbondale for 24 years, the association moved into its quarters at 306 W. Main in 1954.

In 1966, the state association named a committee to study the possibility of moving the state offices and the association approved the committee recommendations to move, but agreed on no site. In 1968, Springfield was chosen as the headquarters city.

Sentiment for moving to a more central location began as Southern Baptist work expanded upstate in Illinois. The association was originally made up of churches in Southern Illinois, with 226 participating churches in 1907. Today there are nearly 900 churches, with 400 of them organized since 1950.

"We are glad to be in Springfield," said James H. Smith, executive secretary of the association. "Not because we are indifferent to Southern Illinois, but because we want to be accessible to all the state."

Primary contractor for the new Springfield building which includes a parking lot for 200 cars, was the R. D. Lawrence Construction Co.

The Sapp Realty Co., which is under contract to lease the second and third floors, said that the Federal Bureau of Roads will occupy the entire second floor of the new building.

Tenants on the third floor include Prudential Insurance Co.; Marathon Oil; Lewis Sprague Corp.; Illinois Liquefied Petroleum Gas Assoc.; Jet Permits Services, Inc.; Physicians Mutual Life Insurance Co.; the Hoover Co.; and Castlewatchers, Inc.

Formal dedication and open house will be during the 65th annual session of the Illinois Baptist State Association, which meets in Springfield, Nov. 9-11.

The Baptist Building in Carbondale has been on the market for some time, but the association's administrative committee has authorized leasing the building for at least one year, or until a buyer can be found. John R. Parrish has the contract for leasing the Carbondale building.

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