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October 18, 1971

**Weems Elected Head  
Of Meredith College**

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)--John Edgar Weems, vice president for finance and administration at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tenn., has been elected president of Meredith College, a Baptist school for women here.

Weems, 39, will assume the position effective Jan. 1, 1972. He will succeed E. Bruce Heilman, now president of University of Richmond, who resigned as Meredith's president in September of 1970.

Allen Burris, vice president and dean of Meredith, will continue to serve as acting president until Weems moves to Raleigh at the end of the year.

Announcement of Weems' election was made by the chairman of the board of trustees, C. C. Cameron of Charlotte, N. C., following a special called meeting of Meredith's board.

"We feel fortunate in securing a man of Dr. Weems' experience and expertise in the field of higher education who can continue to lead Meredith toward academic excellence, financial stability and service," Cameron said.

Before becoming vice president for finance and administration at Middle Tennessee State University, Weems was dean of admissions and records at the Tennessee school in Murfreesboro, located about 30 miles southeast of Nashville.

Previously, he was dean of admissions at Kentucky Wesleyan, Owensboro, Ky., from 1959-61. Prior to 1959, he was dean of admissions at Atlantic Christian College, Wilson, N.C., where he also taught business and economics.

He earned the bachelor of science, master of arts and doctor of education degrees from George Peabody College, Nashville, and was for two years an executive trainee for Proctor and Gamble.

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**Fire Destroys 70-Year-Old  
Oregon Baptist Auditorium**

10/18/71

KLAMATH FALLS, Oregon (BP)--A fire that blazed for nearly four hours destroyed the 70-year-old auditorium of First Baptist Church here.

The fire was reported at 2:00 p.m. on a Sunday afternoon, and firemen worked all night in an effort to salvage the building.

Fire Chief Gino Gheller said that remodeling and rebuilding after a fire 22 years ago apparently left pockets in the walls that permitted the fire to spread rapidly. He said it was an extremely difficult fire to contain.

Although estimated losses were not immediately available, insurance covered most of the loss. Pastor A. Wade Thomas said that the church not only lost its auditorium, but also about 500 hymnals, the church library and a large music library. Most of the office and education space added to the building about 20 years ago was saved.

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Organized in 1884, the church is the oldest in the Northwest Baptist Convention. It is also the birthplace of the Pacific Coast Baptist, official publication of the Northwest Baptist Convention, composed of Southern Baptist churches in Oregon and Washington.

Since the fire, the congregation has been meeting for worship at a Seventh Day Adventist church. Thomas said the church plans to rebuild on the same location.

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Larry Bryson Assumes  
Rural-Urban Mission Post

10/18/71

ATLANTA (BP)--Larry Bryson, associate secretary for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's department of missionary education, has been named assistant director of rural-urban missions in the Home Mission Board's Division of Associational Services here.

A Trion, Ga., native, Bryson will be responsible for designing and conducting rural-urban missions programs, including directing research, conducting field services and participating in the preparation of the budget in the division.

A graduate of Furman University, Greenville, S. C., and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N. C., Bryson is a former associational consultant for the SBC Baptist Brotherhood Commission, and secretary of Cherokee Indian ministry in Cherokee, N. C. He also served as missionary of the Cullom Association in Norlina, N. C. Bryson served on church staffs in South Carolina and North Carolina.

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Criswell Cited for RA  
Service by Brotherhood

10/18/71

DALLAS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission has cited W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Church here, for "outstanding service to Royal Ambassadors."

Jay Chance, the commission's Royal Ambassador director, presented a certificate to the former Southern Baptist Convention president here during observance of Criswell's 27th anniversary as pastor of the 15,000 member church.

Criswell said that the Royal Ambassador program has played a major role in building leaders at his church and in churches around the SBC.

"You don't have to convince boys who have come up through the RA program about missions, giving and living the Christian life," he said. "They make outstanding church leaders."

First Baptist Church's RA program currently has more than 350 boys enrolled. Jim Fox, a fulltime staffer at the church, leads the program, which has involved boys in a wide range of mission action, mission education and personal witnessing projects.

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###BP PHOTO MAILED TO STATE PAPER EDITORS.

Foreign Board Outlines  
1972 Missionary Requests

10/18/71

RICHMOND (BP)--The American dollar may have been "devalued" abroad, but the demand for Southern Baptist foreign missionaries has not decreased, according to a consensus reached by Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board area and personnel secretaries following their annual review of requests for personnel overseas.

Mission organizations and national Baptist groups in 76 countries requested 464 new missionary couples and single persons for 1972, they reported. The highest number of missionaries ever appointed in a single year by the Southern Baptist agency was 261 in 1969.

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The premium remains on general evangelists, according to Louis R. Cobbs, secretary of the board's department of missionary personnel. Of the requests for new missionaries, 233 call for college and theologically trained men and women to serve as general evangelists, long regarded the backbone of the missionary force.

Proliferating ministries to human need continue to be reflected in requests for 31 physicians, nine agriculturalists, six dentists, 29 nurses, 11 paramedical personnel and nine social workers, Cobbs said.

New forms of evangelism were reflected in calls for 18 student workers along with specialists in radio and TV, book store personnel, publication specialists, camp directors and musicians.

Church development ministries for the growing churches, associations and conventions abroad include theological teachers, religious education workers, music promotion personnel, men and boys workers and Woman's Missionary Union workers.

Educational ministries continue to need teachers both in secondary situations (15) and college situations (26). Three school administrators and a kindergarten worker also are being requested.

Cobbs, who estimates that 1971 appointments will total nearly 225, said that despite the dollar crunch, the sending of missionaries is still the most important thing Baptists do in their overseas work.

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Michigan Names Oakley  
To Training, Music Post

10/18/71

DETROIT (BP)--William P. Oakley of Detroit has been named state director of church training and church music by the Baptist State Convention of Michigan here.

Oakley comes to the state convention position from the pastorate of Grosse Pointe Baptist Church, Detroit.

He has served churches in Tennessee, Mississippi, Florida, California and Michigan.

Born in Dyersburg, Tenn., Oakley studied at Union University, Jackson Tenn.; Detroit Bible College and William Carey College, Hattiesburg, Miss. He also attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Oakley will begin his duties with the Michigan convention Nov. 1.

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Baptist Women Slate World-Wide,  
Around-the-Clock Prayer, Nov. 1

10/18/71

WACO, Tex. (BP)--Baptist women of the world will pray around the clock on Monday, Nov. 1, during "Baptist Women's Day of Prayer" sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance.

Mrs. R. L. Mathis, president of the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance, said that women have been asked to gather in their churches or homes for a program of study and prayer for each other and for Christian advance in all countries.

A program for the meetings has been translated and published in 100 languages and dialects and distributed in 73 countries where the Baptist World Alliance has members and where member conventions have mission work involving women.

Much of the program is comprised of testimonies from women who attended the 1970 Baptist World Congress in Tokyo. The writer is Mrs. Robert Fling of Pleasantville, N. Y.

Mrs. Mathis said that an offering taken at the meetings will be used for financing continental and worldwide women's meetings and for Baptist world relief.

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The Baptist Women's Day of Prayer originated in Europe in 1948, when Baptist women leaders on that continent discovered their people were torn by hatred and dissension following World War II. They decided the best way to bring harmony would be by prayer for one another. The plan was adopted by the Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance when the Baptist World Congress met in Cleveland in 1950.

Mrs. Mathis estimated that 20,000 to 30,000 Baptist Women's Day of Prayer services will be held in American churches this year, and that the number probably will be doubled for the world.

"We are further delighted," she said, "by the number of city-wide interracial meetings that are being scheduled this year." She mentioned particularly Atlanta and Fort Worth.

Mrs. Mathis said that 100,000 copies of the program have been distributed this year to women's groups in English speaking countries, and that "translation copies" were sent to leaders in 100 other groups for translation and distribution in native tongues.

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Radio-TV Commission Hears  
Report on Use of Programs

10/18/71

FORT WORTH (BP)--Members of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, gathered here for their annual meeting, heard reports on use of programs produced by the commission showing major progress in almost every area of the agency's work.

The total number of commission-produced broadcasts aired during the agency's fiscal year ending September 30 reached a record high of 186,316, according to the report presented by Paul M. Stevens, executive director.

The number of weekly broadcasts stood at 2,949, also a year-end high.

A new mark of 600 was reached in number of stations carrying a single commission program. The program is "Powerline," a weekly, half-hour, rock music show aimed at the teenage radio audience.

A total of 2,175 stations were carrying at least one of the commission's 28 weekly productions at year-end, the report showed. The figure included 1,971 domestic stations, about one-fourth of the radio and one-third of the TV stations in the country.

Audience response to the four major radio programs also increased significantly, according to the report.

"Country Crossroads," whose host is Bill Mack, Fort Worth WBAP Radio personality, led in radio response with 30,131 letters, triple the number received during the previous year. Only two years old, the show is now on 360 stations.

"Powerline" response also tripled. "Baptist Hour" letters doubled and there was an increase of 2,000 in letters to "MasterControl", second most popular program with 560 stations.

In direct-mail follow-up with those who wrote letters responding to the programs, the commission received from 30 to 50 signed commitments to Christ from persons in the listening and viewing audience each month, the report indicated.

Commercial stations devoted more than \$5,070,000 worth of time during the 12-month period to the airing of commission productions, which are offered for public service broadcast.

Stevens pointed out that this figure does not take into account the value of more than 19 half-hours of commission-produced programming carried by the three major networks.

The 36 commission members, equivalent to a board of directors for the agency, represent the geographic areas in which Southern Baptists are strongest.

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Jesus Movement Reaches  
Alaska, Baptists Report

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (BP)--The "Jesus Movement" has come to Alaska, with a "spiritual explosion" at Muldoon Road Baptist Church here, according to the executive secretary of the Alaska Baptist Convention.

The "explosion" came during a revival meeting at the Anchorage church in which 112 persons were converted, reported Troy Prince, executive secretary of the convention. Young people led the way in the revival, he added.

V. A. Chron, pastor of the church, said that there were 131 additions to the church, with 102 requesting baptism, seven dedicating their lives to vocational Christian service, and "hundreds" making life commitments.

During the revival, led by Evangelist Bill Penley of Asheville, N. C., the church set an all-time Alaska record of 775 persons attending Sunday School. Record crowds were reported in almost every service.

Penley also preached in five other Alaska Baptist churches. At a little mission in King Salmon, Alaska, which normally has an attendance of 35 in Sunday School, there were 21 professions of faith.

Overflow crowds and 21 professions of faith were also reported at First Baptist Church, Birchwood, Alaska, a small rural congregation.