



BAPTIST PRESS
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March 23, 1972

Mexican Laymen to Tour
 Stateside Baptist Work

MEXICO CITY (BP)--Thirty Mexican Baptist laymen will study Southern Baptist work in Texas and Tennessee, April 22-May 6, in what might be called a turn-about tour.

The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission has sponsored numerous mission study excursions to Mexico. Last year Mexican laymen proposed such a tour in reverse so they could study methods in stateside Baptist men's work with a view to strengthening their own.

Stopping first in San Antonio to sightsee, the party will proceed to Fort Worth to visit Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the SBC Radio and Television Commission. They will attend a Brotherhood meeting in Dallas and visit state convention offices there.

In Memphis, the men will see a Baptist children's home and attend a regional Brotherhood training institute. Highlights in Nashville will be the SBC Sunday School Board and denominational executive offices.

Two furloughing missionaries will interpret for the Mexicans.

"We think these men can profit greatly from the tour," said William H. Gray, Southern Baptist representative in Mexico, "and will return to share what they have learned with their churches."

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Illinois Baptist Enlists
 Black Writer as Columnist

3/23/72

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (BP)--The first black writer to have a regular weekly column in one of the 33 Baptist state papers of the Southern Baptist Convention has been enlisted by the Illinois Baptist here.

Donald L. Sharp, pastor of the Faith Tabernacle Baptist Church in Chicago, has been assigned to write the state paper's Life and Work Sunday School lesson comments for April through June.

Editor Robert J. Hastings said Sharp is the first black writer to have a weekly column in the 67-year history of the Illinois Baptist, and that Sharp is probably the first such black writer for any of the 33 Southern Baptist state papers.

Sharp's ministry bridges three Baptist denominations. Currently pastor of a Southern Baptist church in Chicago, he was converted in a National Baptist Church and attended Judson College, an American Baptist school.

Faith Tabernacle shares a building with a white Southern Baptist congregation--Cornell Avenue Baptist Church. Cornell Avenue has early worship services. The two churches have simultaneous Sunday schools. And then Faith Tabernacle has worship services.

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Atlanta Baptist College
 Gets \$1 Million Donation

3/23/72

ATLANTA (BP)--Atlanta Baptist College here has received a \$1 million gift, one of the largest single donations ever given a Georgia Baptist institution.

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The contribution came from Arthur T. Davis, a trustee of the school and official of the Davis Food Service, Inc., which operates 129 Davis Brothers Cafeterias and fried chicken outlets across the Southeast.

Davis, a member of Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta, did not specify how the \$1 million is to be used.

Monroe F. Swilley, president of Atlanta Baptist College, said that use of the funds will be determined by Davis and the trustees. Swilley said the gift would "strengthen immeasurably the financial foundation of the school and will lift the level of confidence in the future of this institution."

At a trustee dinner when the gift from Davis was announced, Swilley also reported that the Sylvester Baptist Church of Atlanta, located in an area of racial change, had voted to disband and to give its property to Atlanta Baptist College. Swilley said the sale of the property is expected to bring about \$150,000.

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Actor George C. Scott Buys
Baptist Film on Pollution

3/23/72

FORT WORTH (BP)--Actor George C. Scott, who refused an Oscar for his performance in Patton and is an avid collector of "fine films," has purchased a copy of a Southern Baptist produced documentary film on pollution for his private film collection.

James Holcomb, head of marketing services for the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, was sitting in his office when a representative of the famed actor called from New York.

Scott had seen the documentary on ecology entitled "Home," on the American Broadcasting Co. (ABC-TV) network and was so impressed he wanted to buy a print for his personal film collection, the actor's representative told Holcomb.

The documentary film depicts pollution as a life-threatening evil stemming from man's loss of the spiritual perspective in regard to his environment, a commission official said. Scenes of modern man-made pollution are presented in stark contrast to an Indian chief's poetic description of the worth and beauty of nature.

A columnist for the Fort Worth Star Telegram here, Elston Brooks, reported Scott's desire to purchase the film, asking "what better tribute" could be given the film.

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Baptists Take Top Prizes
In Hymn-Writing Contest

3/23/72

QUITO, Ecuador (BP)--In the first national festival of Ecuadoran evangelical hymns, an inter-denominational panel of musicians and pastors awarded first, second and third-place honors to Baptist musicians.

The hymn festival, intended as an annual event, attracted 30 original hymns from musicians of several evangelical denominations in Ecuador. Performances in two evening sessions at University Baptist Church here drew crowds of about 300 each night.

Basing their decisions on originality, spiritual content and worshipfulness, judges awarded first place to Miguel Mesias, pastor of Central Baptist Church here, for his hymn-carol, "Vamos Todos a Belen" ("Come, Let's All Go to Bethlehem").

Pastor Guillermo Vasquez of University Church won second place with his hymn "Gloria Cantamos a Ti" ("Glory We Sing to Thee").

Timoteo Guerrero, young son of a Baptist pastor in Guayaquil, claimed third place for his hymn "Dios Es Amor" ("God Is Love").

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All three are accomplished musicians, according to Southern Baptist mission press representative Stanley D. Stamps. Mesias and Vasquez have written a number of songs which have been published.

Central Baptist Church sponsored the festival as part of its 20th anniversary celebration. Founded March 11, 1952, Central was Ecuador's first Baptist church.

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Lee Roy Till, SBC Musician,
In Coma with Encephalopathy

3/23/72

DALLAS (BP)--A mystery illness which struck one of Southern Baptists' best known musicians in February, leaving him in a semi-coma, has been described as encephalopathy by physicians at Baylor Medical Center here.

Lee Roy Till, minister of music at 16,000-member First Baptist Church, Dallas, has slept almost constantly since he was stricken. Neurologists and neuro-surgeons believe he will gradually improve over the next several weeks.

Till was stricken during a revival in Kerrville, Tex. At first physicians thought he had suffered a stroke, or a viral disease. After extensive tests, they believe the encephalopathy is being caused by a malfunction of the brain.

In Till's absence, Tommy Brinkley, associate in the church's music program, is in charge of the music program which includes 26 choirs with 1,700 members. Billy Hilbun, president of Crescendo Music Co. here, and a member of the church, is leading the music for the three Sunday services at the church, the largest in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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