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March 15, 1973

Baptist Groups Cite Special Support for Home Missions

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptists, during the annual week of prayer and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, prayed into high gear a drive for \$6.6 million to help support mission work in the United States.

In addition to the usual Home Mission Week of Prayer observances through prayer meetings, study sessions, dialogues and mission fairs, some groups launched high-visibility special events.

In Daffney, N.C., eight staff members from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here led the Broad River Baptist Association in a four-day mission emphasis highlighted with a commissioning service for Paul and Lucy Turner as home missionaries.

Turner, pastor of the Hopewell Baptist Church in the association was recently appointed superintendent of missions of the Delaware Baptist Association in Delaware.

The four-day emphasis in Gaffney attracted more than 4,000 people. More than 2,000 crowded into the Cherokee National Country Club to see a missions fair with 21 booths. The displays, which depicted home missions, were built by 250 local youth.

In Atlanta, home base for the mission board, events for the week of prayer were kicked off with a Governor's Prayer Breakfast in support of home missions and the Annie Armstrong Offering. More than 1,000 laymen and pastors attended.

Arthur B. Rutledge, executive secretary of the SBC Home Mission Board, said that participation of more than 1,000 men indicated that Baptist men are deeply concerned about the spiritual life of the nation.

"Home missions doesn't begin with the Home Mission Board--it begins with the local church," Rutledge said. "It is time to challenge all of us in helping turn this nation into a land that loves the Lord."

The prayer breakfast was jointly sponsored by Georgia's Governor Jimmy Carter, the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, and the Georgia Baptist Convention's Brotherhood department.

In addition to the prayer breakfast for laymen, more than 2,300 visitors came to the offices of the SBC Home Mission Board for tours during the week.

More than 95 per cent of the visitors were "first-timers" to see the board's office here. Groups came from Greenville, S.C.; Chattanooga, Tenn.; Leesburg, Ga., as well as from the Atlanta area.

A call to prayer by Dorothy Pryor, Georgia Baptist Women's Missionary Union executive secretary, and a message by C. Brownlow Hastings, interfaith witness leader for the board, were presented to 10 visiting groups. Rutledge was on hand to greet the guests.

In addition to the 2,300 personal visits, more than 2,000 persons dialed the Home Mission Board's "Hotline" (area code 404, 875-7701) and received a recorded message concerning home missions.

Many of the churches in the SBC preceded the week by studying the board's graded series books, which this year emphasized witnessing to people of other faiths. M. Thomas Starks,

secretary of the board's interfaith witness department, is author of the book, No Man Goes Alone.

During the week, Starkes led an interfaith dialogue at Atlanta's Wieuca Road Baptist Church, involving religious leaders from Jewish, Mormon, and Catholic faiths. More than 500 persons attended.

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BWA Reconciliation Mission
To Involve 95 Baptist Bodies

3/15/73

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Baptist World Alliance's 1973-75 emphasis on "World Mission of Reconciliation through Jesus Christ" will involve 95 Baptist bodies in 84 nations of the world, the alliance's administrative committee was told here.

Joseph B. Underwood, general chairman of the program and a staff member of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, said that evangelistic outreach and special ministries of Christian services are being intensified by each of the 95 Baptist bodies participating.

The program emphasizes both proclamation of the gospel, through lay witnessing and from the pulpit, coupled with special demonstrations of Christian love, reconciling men to men and seeking a focus on human dignity.

Underwood said he had travelled 200,000 miles, visiting Baptists on every continent, during 1972 to promote the program. Underwood heads steering and advisory committees numbering 52 persons in 32 countries.

Underwood cited special emphases in youth involvement in Great Britain, and on prayer in Hong Kong, as "especially notable." In addition, community meetings crossing racial, cultural and denominational lines have been held in many areas, Underwood said.

Underwood added that emphasis on lay involvement in witnessing comes at a time when laymen in the churches are more greatly involved in witnessing than "at any time since New Testament history."

"We believe that there is a tremendous potential for reconciliation of man with God, and of man with man, and we pray for maximum involvement of all Baptists everywhere," Underwood said.

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SBC Business Officers
Praise Media POW Coverage

3/15/73

DALLAS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Business Officers Conference commended the national news media for its "compassionate and considerate coverage" of the homecomings of the prisoners of war.

In a special resolution, the business officers, praised the news media for enabling "all of us to share the tender moments of reunion but at the same time preserve the privacy of the individuals involved."

The resolution came during the closing session of the conference's 11th annual meeting held at the SBC Annuity Board here.

"We join millions of our countrymen in thanking God for the ending of the war in Vietnam and the return of American prisoners of war to their families and friends," the resolution said.

"We contemplate with solemn gratitude the sacrifices made by these men and their comrades in the service of our country."

The business officers group represents different Southern Baptist Convention agencies and state conventions.

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Leon P. Spencer, Raleigh, N.C., representing the North Carolina Baptist Convention, was elected general chairman. He succeeds John H. Williams, financial planning secretary, Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville.

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Home Mission Board
Elects Two New Staffers

3/15/73

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board elected two new staff members and created two new planning and coordination staff positions during the mission agency's spring meeting here.

Elected as new staffers were Joseph A. Gatlin former Foreign Mission Board volunteer to Africa, as secretary of purchasing services, and Maxie Burns Jr., a native of Jenkins County, Ga., as secretary of records processing.

The board did not elect a new director of evangelism, a post that has been vacant since the resignation last year of Kenneth Chafin, now a pastor in Houston.

Arthur B. Rutledge, executive secretary-treasurer of the board, said the evangelism director will probably be elected at a special called full board meeting before the June session of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Gatlin, a Rockdale County, Ga., native has served for two years in Nairobi, Kenya, where he worked as customs and immigration representative, business manager, and director of the Baptist Mission of East Africa. Prior to working in Kenya, he was director and business manager of the community center in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

A graduate of Truett-McConnell Junior College, Cleveland, Ga., and Mercer University, Macon, Ga., he received a bachelor of divinity degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. After seminary graduation in 1961, Gatlin was pastor of Fernwood Baptist Church in Gulfport, Miss. He served as associate pastor in churches in Decatur, and Macon, Ga.

In his position at the Home Mission Board, Gatlin will be responsible for arrangement for materials, supplies and facilities necessary to conduct activities of the board. He will assume his position Aug. 1.

Burns will be replacing William Ard as secretary of records processing. A graduate of Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, he has been working part time in the board's department of planning service in the operation and programming of calculation system.

Burns will be responsible for programing and operation of data processing and the design and supervision of a systematic procedure for records retention and control relating to microfilm.

The board members voted to eliminate the department of planning services from the planning and coordination section and that two new staff positions, research consultant and planning consultant, he added.

Tommy R. Coy, associate secretary of the planning services department, was transferred to the new position of planning consultant, effective immediately. Coy provides consultative services in the field of planning to state conventions and leaders. Formerly a mission pastor in California and Arizona, Coy came to the Home Mission Board in 1968.

Also elected at the spring meeting were the board officers including incumbent president Jack P. Lowndes, pastor of Memorial Baptist Church, Arlington, Va.; first vice president, Mrs. Mary Gellerstedt of Atlanta; second vice president, Andrew Tampling, pastor of First Baptist Church, Sylacauga, Ala.; recording secretary, Mrs. Sidny Kingry of Decatur.

Longtime home mission supporter W.A. Duncan of East Point, Ga., was presented a resolution of appreciation by the board. Duncan was first elected in 1939 to serve as a board member. He has served four terms, totaling more than 20 years. He served two terms as president of the board and three terms of vice-president. A native of Georgia, Duncan is a retired minister.

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