



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

**---FEATURES**  
produced by Baptist Press

460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
Telephone (615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

November 8, 1973

**Baptist Astronaut Goes  
After Dual Space Record**

By James Lee Young

NASSAU BAY, Tex. (BP)--Southern Baptist astronaut William R. Pogue will shoot for at least two duration records as he zooms through outer space as pilot of the Skylab 3 mission.

Pogue, a member of Nassau Bay (Tex.) Baptist Church, in a Houston suburb, will be the second Southern Baptist astronaut to journey from the earth on a manned space flight.

The Skylab 3 crew will not only attempt men's longest manned space mission of 85 days, if all goes well, but Pogue, an Air Force colonel and deacon, will automatically have the longest time in space of any Baptist.

Apollo 15 astronaut Jim Irwin, the first Baptist to set foot on the moon, spent July 26-August 7 traveling in outer space. Irwin is now president of High Flight Foundation, a non-profit, world-wide missionary foundation in Colorado Springs, Colo.

The Skylab 3 project was initially delayed five days when hairline cracks were discovered in eight stabilizing fins on the first stage of the Saturn 1B rocket. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) moved the launch date from Nov. 10 to Nov. 15.

"Bill was disappointed and frustrated," Pogue's wife, Helen, said of the delay. "He was eager to get on with it," she said via telephone from their home near Houston.

Mrs. Pogue, the former Miss Helen Dittmar of Shawnee, Okla., said she and the Pogue's three children have experienced no apprehensions about his venture in space. "We are all excited," she said.

"The children are very interested in the scientific experiments to be conducted on Skylab 3," she added.

"Bill has been working toward this mission for years and years," Mrs. Pogue said. "He has always been interested in the space program. It was something gradual, not a big shock," she said of his eventual entry into the NASA program.

Involvement in the NASA program, and particularly preparation for Skylab 3, have cut deeply into the Pogue family's church attendance and active participation the past year, Mrs. Pogue said.

"We hope to be more active when this is over," she added. Pogue has served as a deacon for the Nassau Bay Baptist church and as Sunday School Superintendent. Pastor of the church, Bill Darnell, has been there only a short time and has not met Pogue, according to reports.

The minister who has probably known Pogue best as an astronaut is William H. Rittenhouse, former pastor of the church, now vice-president and executive director of High Flight. He resigned the church in 1972.

"Bill was already an ordained deacon when he came to the Houston area... Since we had to go to two Sunday Schools, we made him one of the Sunday School superintendents."

"He did an excellent job with the Sunday School and in Training Union (Southern Baptists' Sunday evening program of Christian education) so we put him on the active board of deacons," Rittenhouse said.

Rittenhouse continued, "In the Training Union, he had the ears of the young engineers. This type of person and couples responded to him in a magnificent way, not just because he was an astronaut but because he could present information in an enlightening way." Pogue was also faithful in the church's Brotherhood program (for Baptist Men and Royal Ambassador boys) and "he was in attendance always," Rittenhouse added.

Irwin agreed with Rittenhouse that Pogue's life as a Christian is exemplary. "Bill sets a wonderful example the way he lives his life. You can tell he's a Christian." Irwin said Pogue influenced his decision to become a member of Nassau Bay Baptist Church.

The two astronauts were chosen "about the same time in 1966 for the NASA program, Irwin said. "We went through training together...but I usually saw more of him (Pogue) in church than on the job."

Pogue has done some work with High Flight in terms of "guidance in some materials expressing the purpose of High Flight"--including design of the foundation's logo.

Irwin described his friend as "a very warm, outgoing, not particularly quiet" individual, who "can speak eloquently on a variety of subjects."

Pogue gave an account of his Christian experience in a written statement for High Flight.

"...At a time and place I cannot remember, I became convinced that Christ was indeed the Saviour, and upon making a statement to this effect, I accepted and was baptized into the church.

"To me, faith in God through Christ is not an intellectual concession or a periodically renewable emotional trauma but an instrument useful in daily living..."

A native of Okemah, Okla., Pogue's Baptist roots are deep. His father, Alex W. Pogue, and Pogue's brother, James, are deacons in Sand Springs, Okla. (near Tulsa), Rittenhouse said.

Mrs. Pogue is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin L. Dittmar of Hugo, Okla. He is a retired associational missionary in Oklahoma, now serving as interim pastor for Southside Baptist Church and chaplain for the Golden Gate Home, both in Hugo.

Pogue received the bachelor of science degree from Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, in 1951 and the master of science degree in 1960 from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

He enlisted in the Air Force in 1951, was commissioned in 1952, and served with the Fifth Air Force during the Korean conflict, flying 43 combat missions. From 1955-57, he flew with the elite USAF Thunderbirds.



**BUREAUS**

**ATLANTA** Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041

**DALLAS** Orville Scott, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996

**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) Gomer Lesch, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203, Telephone (615) 254-5461

**RICHMOND** Jesse C. Fletcher, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (703) 353-0151

**WASHINGTON** W. Barry Garrett, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

November 8, 1973

**Oates and Four Others Join  
Southeastern Seminary Ranks**

WAKE FOREST, N. C. (BP)--Five men, including Wayne E. Oates of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, have joined the faculty and staff of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

Besides Oates, current professor of the psychology of religion at Southern Seminary, they are Robert L. Richardson Jr., who will serve in three capacities; J. Colin Harris, assistant professor of Christian education; Dwight L. Baker, furloughing Southern Baptist foreign missionary, visiting professor of missions and history; and David W. Lee, superintendent of building and grounds.

Oates will join the Southeastern faculty in August, 1974, as Distinguished Professor of Psychology of Religion and Pastoral Counseling.

Author of 21 books in the field of pastoral care, Oates, a native South Carolinian, has served as an instructor at Wake Forest College and visiting professor of pastoral counseling at Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Princeton (N. J.) Theological Seminary.

He has also served as a pastor, religious counselor, and chaplain and theological consultant for hospitals and a clinic.

Richardson, current assistant professor of religion at Atlantic Christian College, will serve as associate director of field education, assistant professor of field education and director of advanced professional studies at Southeastern Seminary.

A native of Stuart, Va., he is former director of religious activities and associate professor of religion at Belmont College, Nashville, and has done pastoral work in Virginia.

Harris, a native of Decatur, Ga., comes from Meredith College, Raleigh, N. C., where he has served as a member of the instructional staff of the department of religion and philosophy. He has held church staff positions in Georgia and North Carolina.

Baker, a native of Bolivar, Mo., is on furlough from Israel, where he serves as director of Christian service training and editor of the Arabic language Baptist paper, Al-Jama'ah at Haifa.

Lee, a native of Danville, Va., has served as an assistant buyer and office manager with Thalhimers Department Store, Richmond, Va., and as an associate pastor for a church in Winchester, Va.

Harris, Richardson and Lee are all graduates of Southeastern Seminary.

Foreign Mission Board  
Names 15 Missionaries

RICHMOND (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointed 15 new missionaries to work in seven countries and heard a report urging that interest in personal overseas mission involvement be developed along lines which would enhance the overall missionary efforts of Southern Baptists.

During its November meeting in the newly-named Baker James Cauthen Chapel, the board also heard a special report on mission projects in Middle America and the Carribean and a report from Baker J. Cauthen, the board's executive secretary.

Overseas Division Director Winston Crawley, noting increasing desire among Southern Baptists for direct personal involvement in overseas missions, appealed to Southern Baptists to develop special projects "in ways that will best help our missionaries in their ministries."

He said many fine things can be done through independent agencies or uncoordinated special projects but that Southern Baptist missionaries engage on a continuing basis in the same kinds of ministries and need all resources that can be made available.

Illustrating the kind of special projects available through the Foreign Mission Board for direct involvement overseas, Charles Bryan, area secretary for Middle America and the Caribbean, gave an optimistic report of the contributions made thus far during 1973 by 319 individuals who participated in special mission projects in Middle America and the Caribbean.

Dental and medical projects, construction projects, music ministries and other special services were conducted by these individuals representing 40 Southern Baptist churches.

Coordination of these projects was through three of the board's staff consultants: W. Eugene Grubbs, consultant on laymen overseas, Joseph B. Underwood, consultant in evangelism and church development, and Franklin T. Fowler, medical consultant.

In his report, Cauthen expressed gratitude for gifts and expressions of appreciation given him and Mrs. Cauthen in October in honor of his 20th anniversary as executive secretary. He also paid tribute to board president W. Douglas Hudgins, who will be honored in Mississippi upon his retirement as that state's executive secretary.

In other action, the board approved a recommendation that the Foreign Mission Board-sponsored missions musical team, "Grain," be continued until June 1, 1974. The board's committee on missionary personnel presented the recommendation after evaluating the ministry and effectiveness of the team during the past two months.

"Grain," a five-member group of young people with overseas missions experience, will continue traveling to college and seminary campuses and churches interpreting missions through dialogue, music and personal sharing.

The 15 new missionaries bring the board's overseas force to 2,536 missionary personnel in 77 countries.

Appointed as missionaries were Mr. and Mrs. Don L. Bliss of Kansas and Oklahoma, to East Africa; Mr. and Mrs. Glen L. Grosdidier of Texas, to the Philippines; Miss Peggie E. Harmon of South Carolina, to North Brazil; and Mr. and Mrs. Donald B. Highfill of Oklahoma and Missouri, to South Brazil.

Also, Mr. and Mrs. D. R. (Danny) Hill of Georgia and Texas, to Bangladesh; Dr. and Mrs. Otis M. Hill of South Carolina, to Colombia; and Mr. and Mrs. Jerry W. Squyres of Louisiana, to Taiwan.

Employed as missionary associates to Ghana were Mr. and Mrs. Dean E. Richardson of Texas.