

March 13, 1974

Harlem Storefront Program
Provides Seminary Training

NEW YORK (BP)--If the students can't go to a regular seminary, take the seminary to them.

That's exactly what the Southern Baptist Seminary Extension Department and Home Mission Board teamed up to do, when pastors in Harlem sought to further their own theological education, and that of their laymen.

The pastors are members of the Central Harlem Association of Neighborhood Churches Endeavor (CHANCE), an organization of storefront churches in the black New York community.

Three of the pastors are the first anywhere to complete a new Seminary Extension curriculum designed for easier reading and study.

At the same time the pastors were seeking educational help, the Seminary Extension Department was developing the special curriculum series for persons needing easy-to-read materials.

The new, basic curriculum would accompany the department's already existing college level and continuing education series.

Thus, with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board augmenting registration fees, the Harlem group enrolled for study.

March, 1974, saw the first graduating class from the CHANCE extension center in a Harlem storefront building.

Three pastors--one a woman who is minister for a Southern Baptist-affiliated church--received the center's first Certificates of Merit.

Receiving the certificates, which amount to two and a half years work per student, were Mrs. Druecillar Fordham, the pastor of the Southern Baptist-affiliated Christ Temple Baptist Church; Walter Harding, the pastor of St. Luke's Baptist Church; and Ellison Davis, who died recently following a heart attack. Davis' certificate was awarded posthumously.

To earn the Certificate of Merit, students at the CHANCE Center must complete the 10 courses taught by Kenneth R. Lyle, superintendent of missions for the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association, and other instructors.

Response to the CHANCE Center program has been good. "They devoured the new curriculum material as soon as it could be written," said Raymond M. Rigdon, director of Seminary Extension, Nashville.

"We sent them copies of the study guide manuscripts even before they were printed," Rigdon added.

Mrs. Fordham, who may be the first woman to be pastor of a Southern Baptist church, praised the education program: "The courses have helped me prepare my people and broaden the leadership of my church."

She recently taught an evangelism course to 10 young people, using what she learned at the CHANCE Center.

"People say my preaching has improved an awful lot too," she added.

Classes for the 18-week semesters are normally held on Tuesday evenings, for about two dozen pastors and half as many laymen.

Lyle said that since Southern Baptists have become involved in CHANCE, four of the organization's churches have chosen to affiliate with the Metropolitan Association and Southern Baptists.

But he emphasized that the black churches are dually aligned with National Baptists. "We didn't come into this (program) so they would become Southern Baptists," Lyle said.

"This cooperation has helped us--blacks and whites--understand each other as people. These courses have opened doors for fellowship and joint interracial efforts here in New York," he said.

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(BP) PHOTO mailed to Baptist state papers

Youths Hike, Bike
For Missions Causes

3/13/74

By Baptist Press

A group of 214 Baptist youths raised \$3,400 for Southern Baptists' Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions by walking an 11-mile route in Memphis, Tenn.

Baptist Student Union (BSU) members from Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, rode bicycles for nine days on a cross-country "biking for missions" tour.

The hikers were participating in the second annual Royal Ambassador-Acteen "Hike for Home Missions," sponsored by Union Avenue Baptist Church in Memphis.

The youths, members of Royal Ambassadors, Acteens and Girls Auxiliary (GA), missionary groups from sixteen Baptist churches in Memphis, solicited sponsors who agreed to pay a set amount of money for each mile walked.

The BSU bikers used a similar method of raising \$1,500 in funds to pay for their mission activities, plus offerings from various churches. The bikers braved cold, blowing winds, snow and rain in their nine-day, 300-mile tour, which included nightly stopovers at Baptist churches from Cookeville to Memphis. They conducted inspirational services for the churches each evening.

Purpose of the BSU project, according to student Eddie Gambrell who served as project coordinator, was to raise money for summer missions and to "share a witness about Jesus Christ."

In the hiking project, the Memphis youths were joined by 37 Royal Ambassadors from a Nashville church.

Outstanding hiker was Miss Beth McCullough, 12-year-old GA from Union Avenue Baptist Church in Memphis and daughter of Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. Miss McCullough's 70 sponsors pledged \$92.84. Her father challenged the hikers in a brief home missions message prior to the hike.

During last year's hike less than 100 youths raised \$2,400 for the WMU-sponsored Annie Armstrong Offering. The Baptist Brotherhood Commission cooperates in sponsoring the special annual offering for home missions.

A motorcycle policeman, assigned to escort the hikers said, "This is the best group of youth I have ever worked with."

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Trulove Named Director
Of Arkansas Foundation

LITTLE ROCK (BP)--Harry D. Trulove of Dallas, Tex., will become executive director of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation May 1. He is presently secretary of the state stewardship department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

A native of Rome, Ga., he is a graduate of Mercer University, Macon, Ga., and of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He has held four pastorates in Oklahoma and Texas.

Trulove will be the first full-time executive director of the foundation in over two years, when Ed McDonald resigned that position. Since that time, Roy F. Lewis of the state convention staff has served the foundation on a part-time basis as acting executive director.

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No "Christian America"
Any Longer, Mabry Says

3/13/74

DALLAS (BP)--The term "Christian America" has a hollow ring to the ears of Don Mabry.

Mabry is director of the department of survey and special studies for the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board, operating out of Atlanta, Ga.

He visited Dallas recently, surveying a deteriorating area in the near-downtown area at the request of Highland Baptist Church, whose pastor is Harold Freeman.

"Those who believe in and practice the Christian faith in America today are in the minority. The term 'Christian America' simply isn't true anymore," Mabry said.

America is largely peopled with those "whose lifestyle simply has no room for spiritual things. They are busy making money or doing the things they think are bringing them happiness. But they are among the most frustrated of people," he added.

"Man, some areas of our country are literally exporting young people to the metropolitan areas. These young people are migrating to the established urban areas in tremendous numbers," he said.

Mabry cited statistics which show 75 per cent of the people in America today live in metropolitan areas. By the year 2000, he said, that figure will leap to 95 per cent.

"People dream of the rural, pastoral lifestyle of the country, but at the same time want all of the amenities of the city," he laughed.

A peculiarity of the rush to the city is that many city churches--inner city, near downtown, neighborhood and suburban--are in crisis. Many are closing their doors, he said.

"In Atlanta, ten years ago, there were 160 churches. Now there are only 119. That's a loss of 41 churches in the last ten years," he said.

"Ten years ago, there were 24 churches in and around the central business district. Today, there are six. Another one went out of business just three weeks ago," he added.

"The reason is not because there aren't any people. There were more people when they closed than when they opened," Mabry said.

He noted that the depressing statistics are repeated across the nation--Birmingham, Houston, Dallas, among others. Churches in the cities are closing while people flock to the urban areas, he said.

Recent statistics on Dallas indicate that in the past several years--a time of tremendous growth--Dallas County has actually had a net loss of one church.

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"It's a real challenge," Mabry said, "reaching the great metropolitan areas for Christ."

The way the trend will be reversed is old fashioned evangelism, coupled with modern methods of reaching people, he added.

"The old methods are effective and we want to use them, but new methods are sought. Lay evangelism is very effective. The one thing that will really work is a faithful, believing Christian sharing his faith on a one-to-one basis," Mabry said.

People in the cities will have to "be home missions on the street where they live," Mabry concluded.

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FMB Hears Financial Report;
Designates Relief for Niger

3/13/74

RICHMOND (BP)--In its March meeting here, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board responded again to the continuing needs resulting from the drought-created famine in West Africa and heard an optimistic report from its executive secretary concerning receipts from the Cooperative Program (unified budget) and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Responding to requests from the board's missionaries in the Republic of Niger, the board approved the recommendation that Dr. Walter M. Moore, missionary to Ghana, and missionary journeyman Rachel Bandy, be transferred temporarily to the Niger Republic in order to meet emergency medical needs among about 24,000 famine-stricken refugees at Maradi, Niger.

The board also appropriated \$6,900 from relief funds to purchase food and drugs to help Maradi's refugees. In February, \$5,000 in relief funds was sent to Niger. In previous months, smaller amounts had been contributed toward famine relief in West Africa.

In his report to the board, Baker J. Cauthen, executive secretary, made reference to a special committee, named at the February meeting of the Executive Committee in Nashville, to work out a proposal to challenge Southern Baptists in the final quarter of this century in bold mission advance.

"It is our hope and prayer that out of this development may come a new thrust in missionary commitment in the face of the vast needs which must be confronted in the years ahead," he stated.

Cauthen expressed appreciation for reports from Nashville of an increase of more than 15 per cent in receipts through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program from October through February over the same period last year.

"Today the Foreign Mission Board is even more reliant upon the Cooperative Program than in 1948 when the Foreign Mission Advance Program was launched," Cauthen said. "In 1948, the Cooperative Program brought 42.41 per cent of all gifts received by the Foreign Mission Board. In 1973 the percentage was 43.45," he said.

Cauthen also reported that \$17,662,404.12 has been received so far from the 1973 Woman's Missionary Union-sponsored Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Books on the offering will remain open through April, Cauthen said.

The board also heard a detailed report about the West African drought. H. Cornell Goerner, secretary for West Africa, told board members how the famine is affecting people in the six countries that border the Sahara Desert. He explained that Southern Baptist relief will be concentrated in the Republic of Niger, since that is the only West African country where Southern Baptist missionaries are directly involved in relief efforts.

"We shall await recommendations of the newly-strengthened Niger Republic Mission concerning any possible expansion of the relief program in that country," Goerner said, "and shall remain open to requests for additional funds or even personnel to meet future needs in Upper Volta and Senegal."

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Baptists Respond to Needs In Drought-Stricken Niger

MARADI, Niger (BP)--The distressing cry for help thunders louder and more desperate here as famine and disease daily claim scores of lives.

Among those responding to the cry are Southern Baptists, whose missionaries have witnessed first hand the drought and the resulting needs of the famine-stricken people.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in its March meeting approved the transfer of a missionary doctor and nurse to meet emergency medical needs and to assist the two missionary couples stationed here.

In addition, the board appropriated \$6,900 to purchase needed medical supplies and food for the Niger Republic. In February, \$5,000 had been designated for relief. H. Cornell Goerner, the board's secretary for West Africa, reported the needs of the five West African nations hardest hit by the famine and recommended aid be sent here since Southern Baptist personnel are available to help.

The Agricultural Missions Foundation based at Yazoo City, Miss., has contributed \$6,000 to be used to purchase a small pick-up truck for distribution of food and medicine.

Dr. Walter M. Moore, presently stationed at the Baptist Medical Center in Nalerigu, Ghana, will be transferred to the Niger Republic. Dr. Moore recently toured the area with John E. Mills, field representative to West Africa.

Miss Rachel Bandy, Southern Baptist missionary journeyman with public health training, will assist Dr. Moore. She also is currently stationed in Nalerigu.

The drought-created famine began last year, but the impact of it is worse now than ever. In the words of Oumarou Youssoufou, Niger Republic official who was influential in the opening of Baptist work here, "Last year we lost half of our cattle. This year it is the people who are dying."

According to 1972 figures, 90 per cent of the Republic of Niger's four million people are dependent on agriculture and livestock for their existence. The drought means these people must now turn to nomadic-like wandering in search of food.

Because Maradi is one of the best watered and best cultivated sections of the republic it has become one of the major centers for refugees forced by the famine to leave their homes to live in cornstalk huts. The influx of 24,000 homeless and starving put the final unbearable strain on the already hungry people here.

Now the number of those starving to death and dying of malnutrition-related disease is estimated by Dr. Moore to be about 100 daily, mostly babies, pre-school children, expectant and nursing mothers and the elderly.

"Ever time we go among the cornstalk houses, people come from all areas and ask us to come to their 'house' and help their children," said missionary Mrs. H. Jerold Palmer Jr. "Mothers by the score come with their babies. A large majority need medical help now or will need it in a few days. It is hard to know which ones can wait until another day.

"After so long a time we simply have to leave and tell them 'until tomorrow,'" Mrs. Palmer reports. "When tomorrow comes, we wonder which place we should go--to the same place we went yesterday, or to some area where we have not been."

The harvest, if the rain comes, will not be until August. Grain to feed the refugees is being brought to this area from the capital city, Niamey, 400 miles to the west. Youssoufou was among those who opened the way for grain to be shipped in adequate quantities from Niamey. The problem of distribution will be solved partially by the pick-up truck to be purchased.

An order for an estimated month's supply of drugs has already been placed with the medical assistance program and is being sent by air freight as early as possible. Dr. Franklin T. Fowler, the board's medical consultant, composed the list of need drugs which included penicillin, vitamins, cod liver oil and vaccines.

Goerner, in his report to the Foreign Mission Board, stated "The famine and consequent population dislocations in West Africa cannot be ignored. Every means must be explored, not only to meet the immediate crisis and avert mass starvation, but to take steps toward changing the total ecological pattern of Northwest Africa.

"We shall await recommendations of the newly-strengthened Niger Republic Mission concerning any possible expansion of the relief program in that country," Goerner continued, "and shall remain open to requests for additional funds or even personnel to meet future needs in Upper Volta and Senegal."

While decision are made and help is being found, four Southern Baptist missionaries to Niger, the Palmers and Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. Williams are working nearly around the clock to distribute food and care for the sick. They write that there is more work than they can possibly do, but say they won't give up.

They were sent to the Republic of Niger, the 77th Southern Baptist mission field, to help develop a Christian trade school.

For them, the additional help will mean the school again can be their principal job, but for the people of Maradi the job is still the same, simply a matter of survival.

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(BP) Photos mailed to Baptist state papers.

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CORRECTION

In Baptist Press story mailed 3/11/74, headlined "McClellan Notes Changes in Retirement Plans Emphasis," in the ninth graph, first line, please change the line to read--\$80 million-- (instead of \$80 billion).

--Thanks,
Baptist Press