



BAPTIST PRESS

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November

150 Laymen Needed For Honduras Work

MEMPHIS (BP)--Two Southern Baptist denominational leaders issued a call for up to 150 laymen to contribute their construction skills and time toward building a school, a church and some homes in hurricane-ravaged Honduras.

The call for help came from W. Eugene Grubbs, consultant for laymen overseas for the Foreign Mission Board, and Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission.

Grubbs, who is serving as the denominational liaison in the United States for the disaster relief project, said the men are needed during the next four months to help construct an elementary school building, a Baptist church building for a mission congregation and a large number of homes.

The building projects are now on the drawing boards, Grubbs said, and await the response of Southern Baptist concrete block masons, carpenters, and electricians who will donate their services and care for their transportation to and from Honduras.

McCullough urged volunteers to get in touch with the Brotherhood department in their state Baptist convention for details about the projects.

The current timetable calls for the building projects to be completed by March 1.

Southern Baptists are concentrating their relief efforts mainly in the suburbs of San Pedro Sula, a city of 150,000 about 40 miles inland from the north coast of the Central American country.

Hurricane Fifi struck Honduras on September 19, killing 10,000 and leaving 129,000 homeless.

Within hours after the tragedy, Southern Baptist missionaries in Honduras and surrounding countries responded with emergency medical assistance.

Later, six Baptist physicians and a nurse from the United States spent stints of up to four weeks providing medical relief.

A Texas Baptist disaster relief unit began providing hot food for the hurricane victims on a daily basis on October 27 and served 110,000 meals.

Robert E. Dixon, executive secretary of Texas Baptist Men, who is supervising the operation of the relief unit, said the unit will be moved to the site of the building projects and used as a mobile hotel for the work crews.

The unit will remain in Honduras until at least February, Dixon said.

During a one-week stay in November, six laymen from Virginia and Louisiana built 200 cots of wood and canvas for hurricane victims living in tents and sleeping on the ground, Grubbs said.

"Now we are ready for the more permanent construction," Grubbs said, "and that depends largely on the response of Southern Baptists with construction skills."

Wood, the pastor of the host First Baptist Church here, as president.

Kentucky Baptists' executive board brought the \$7 million budget goal as an "emergency recommendation." Earlier the board adopted a \$5.2 million goal but Executive Secretary Franklin Owen asked the board members to reconsider the budget goal in light of the Southern Baptist effort to raise \$150 million in connection with the 50th anniversary of the Cooperative Program.

The new budget year for Kentucky Baptists will begin Sept. 1, 1975. Their portion of the \$150 million goal will be \$7 million.

The budget, adopted unanimously by messengers, specifies that 32.1 percent of all undesignated receipts will go for national Southern Baptist causes, through the Cooperative Program.

By an 11-vote margin, the 1,600 messengers inserted a "call for fasting" to a resolutions committee report asking Kentucky Baptists to miss one meal each week and donate the funds for that meal to emergency relief through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Other resolutions called attention to television programming and the national election procedure. Messengers deplored television programs "displaying violence, profanity and sordid sex."

The resolution asked Baptists to express their concern to local stations, sponsors and to the Federal Communications Commission.

Messengers also pledged support to "legislation designed to clean up the corrupt practices in our election system."

A resolution asking for a Baptist lobbyist in the state's capital was referred to the convention's executive board for action.

The 1975 Kentucky convention will meet Nov. 11-13, Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

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Directors Are Missionaries
First, Contends Bennett

11/22/74

SHOCCO SPRINGS, Ala. (BP)--Directors of missions for associations of Southern Baptist churches are missionaries first and then administrators or representatives of Southern Baptist programs, F. Russell Bennett Jr. said here this week.

Bennett, director of associational administration service for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, made his remarks during orientation for some 50 new home missionaries. He was responding to recent inquiries to his office about the role of the director (superintendent, associational missionary) of associational missions.

"The director is first a missionary," Bennett said, "more he is a catalyst for the first-line missionaries in the local church."

Bennett said he recognizes the director of associational missions has a significant education aspect to his duties and a responsibility to relate all Southern Baptist programs to his churches.

"But the central thrust of the director's role should be in evangelism and missions," he said.

Bennett said the growth of the staff of some metropolitan Baptist associations and the resulting role of the director as administrator of those staffs has been accepted by some Southern Baptists "as the norm," but, he said, this is untenable in areas and associations with scarce resources.

Churches in pioneer, or newer areas of Southern Baptist work, want a director of missions, he said, who meets the primary need of starting new churches, not one who acts only as administrator.

In areas where little need exists for beginning new churches, the director can focus more on other mission ministries, coordinating associational affairs and contributing to the organizational and educational development of congregations.

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But both the Gulfshore Conference in 1963 and the May, 1974 National Convocation on the Southern Baptist Association underscored the conviction that the director's primary role is "missions," Bennett said.

"The director has an overseer's task for the multiple programs of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the various state conventions," Bennett observed. "But he must not let himself be trapped into the untenable role of representing one or two programs in the association

"Rather, he should help the association as a whole decide its priorities and deal with respective programs from that stance."

He also cautioned against the temptation a director faces in trying to be an interim pastor for every mission or vacant pulpit.

"The director has a preaching task," Bennett said, "but it is his task to multiply his strength by enlisting others. He is to be a leader."

Bennett pointed out that the director's primary denominational relationship is with the state convention. But his ministerial relationship is with the churches of the association. That relationship is damaged if he is viewed as the "agent of the state convention," and he may be less effective in leading the churches to grow in indigenous strength.

A director's functions will vary accordingly to local needs, Bennett said, but he should be committed to helping the churches accomplish their mission in their setting.

What he does and leads others to do to accomplish their mission should be dictated by 1) his job descriptions; 2) the needs of his total field; and 3) the number, types, relationships and strength of the churches in the association.

"In any case," Bennett said, "the director's administrative task is to lead Baptists and their churches in that association to fulfill their mission to Christ."

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Church Drive to Help
Dallas Baptist College

11/22/74

DALLAS (BP)--Baptist churches in this area are planning to raise \$935,000 to help alleviate pressing immediate needs at Dallas Baptist College (DBC), the school's trustees were told.

Carl Duck, the pastor of Lakeside Baptist Church, chairman of the fund drive, told the DBC trustees that the 230 churches of the Dallas Baptist Association will raise the money in a special offering January 19.

Duck said the offering will pay off a loan to Civic Savings and Loan Association of Irving.

"The most important immediate result of the churches' campaign is that it will release \$103,000 a year that the school is paying in interest which can then be used in giving students a quality, Christian education," Duck added.

Dallas businessman Ron Linam, who was elected chairman of the DBC trustees at the recent meeting, called the fund drive "a united front between the community, the Dallas Baptist Association and the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT)."

Linam said the college's financial situation was improved greatly by a \$586,000 emergency allocation in July by the BGCT executive board. The school has enjoyed a 2 percent increase in new students this fall, bring enrollment to 1,331.

Rumors were running rampant last summer that a merger between Dallas Baptist College and Baylor University in Waco would be requested to solve financial problems.

But, in a called meeting in July, the Texas Baptist executive board delayed the possibility of a merger by advancing the emergency funds and naming a special task force to study methods of permanently solving the school's financial difficulties.

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The school's problems were explained at that time to include an enrollment which had never come up to expectation, failure to attract capital gifts and a \$7.3 million debt which requires nearly \$500,000 each year in debt service.

The school moved to its southwest Dallas campus from the small north Texas town of Decatur in 1965 and shortly thereafter changed from a two-year institution to four year status.

"I've yet to see any event in recent times generate the enthusiasm of this drive," said Duck.

"Naturally, we are elated," said Linam. "Besides being a financial shot in the arm, the gifts say to individual supporters of the school that we have the full support of the Baptist constituency."

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Brazilian Baptists Blitz
Trans-Amazon Highway Area

11/22/74

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--At the same time that Southern Baptists observe the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions in December, Brazilian Baptists will be saturating a fast-growing area near the Amazon River with the Gospel.

Twenty "witnessing" teams of five people each will try to reach settlers along the Trans-Amazon Highway, a major road currently under construction. The highway will run east-west across Brazil's Amazon region and is part of a government effort to move people into Brazil's interior.

The witnessing effort, called Operation Transtotal and planned for December 15, is sponsored by the Brazilian Baptist Home Mission Board. It will involve house-to-house visitation, evangelistic meetings and census-taking.

One member of each team will stay in the area after the initial impact to nurture the new growth, according to Roberta Hampton, Southern Baptist missionary.

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Baptist Observer Sees
Pope Paul Retrenching

11/22/74

By C. B. Hastings

ROME (BP)--The optimists blew it. Down the drain into the murky Tiber went the effort of 207 Roman Catholic bishops to influence Pope Paul on a new strategy of evangelizing the nations.

At the end of 30 days of speeches, long group discussions and reportings from five countries, the Pope told the 1974 Synod of Bishops, in effect, "Thanks for the effort, but I'm still in charge."

How do you balance the good news and the bad news coming out of this Fourth Synod since the Second Vatican Council?

This reporter hoped to compare the synod's findings with that of the "Lausanne Covenant," produced by evangelicals at the International Congress on World Evangelization held in Switzerland in July. No such luck.

Two days before the Pope closed the synod with his message of polite rebuke, the bishops voted down the report prepared by two of its commission members. The majority did not like the parts dealing with "evangelization and human promotion" and "evangelization as the work of the entire church." Only the theology section on "evangelization in itself" was approved.

The bishops seemed to feel the report, written largely by the same men who drafted the initial working paper, did not reflect the hard thinking which had come out during small language group meetings.

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Furthermore, they wanted specific and practical guidelines for making evangelization pastorally effective. The report was too much a stew of platitudes, and it was too late to send it back to new writers.

The task was entrusted then to the newly elected commission that would serve in the interim until the next synod in 1977.

What says the balance sheet, then, after three weeks?

First, collegiality suffered a major blow. The prospect of Vatican II that the Pope would practice a greater sharing of the decision-making of the Roman Catholic Church with the bishops now seems dimmer than ever.

He had already rejected their commissions' recommendations that the agenda for 1974 be on family life--a very urgent concern in the light of world problems of population control, decay of family solidarity and religious education in mixed marriages.

Previously, in 1968, he had rejected his own appointed panel of experts and opted for the hard, traditional stance on birth control in his famous encyclical, "Humanae Vitae."

Now he was saying to those "Third World" voices, who were asking for more autonomy in adapting the gospel to widely differing cultural situations, "No, we say with trepidation, by reason of the respect that falls upon us, that the successor of Peter is and remains the ordinary pastor of the church in his unity and entirety."

He rejected the call for diversification as tending toward "diversified" theologies--"the content of the faith is either catholic ("universal") or it is not. All of us have received the faith as a constant tradition; Peter and Paul did not transform it to adapt into the Jewish, Greek or Roman world."

It would be interesting to see how Pope Paul's rejection of collegiality sits with two groups: the Anglicans and the Eastern Rite Patriarchs.

The Anglicans, at least among some of their ecumenists, were about ready to accept the papacy as a kind of British constitutional monarch and world spokesman for Christendom. This Pope is not about to accept any limitation or delegation of the power of Peter in the church.

The Eastern-Rite Patriarchs own allegiance to the Pope but maintain their own rites and rules. Will they see Pope Paul's latest actions as a threat to their privileged position?

The second "bad news" is that the synod did little, if anything, toward relieving the tension between two ideas of evangelization.

Some see evangelization as "converting the heathen." Others are demanding that it include "liberation of the poor and the oppressed" from political and economic power systems with which the church has traditionally tended to be allied.

Roman Catholics are not alone in this dilemma which crosses most denominational lines in mission strategy.

A minor piece of "bad news" is that everyone seems to be unhappy with procedures at the synod. The bishops were unhappy that the stilted form of presenting "interventions" in Latin inhibits true debate.

The press was unhappy that sessions are still closed and panel press conferences tend to be devised.

Further, *Osservatore Romano*, the semi-official Vatican paper, handled all the mimeographed summaries of the interventions. Its translators were caught several times "doctoring" some speeches to soften some bishops' criticisms of the curia. And the Pope seemed unhappy that some of his bishops were using the synod as a world platform for near-unorthodox ideas.

Small wonder that many European reporters filled some dull gaps with speculations on the next Pope.

There strong rumors that Pope Paul may retire at the close of 1975's "Holy Year" because of health. If so, he will be first in modern times to step down.

Some definite pluses resulted, however.

First of all are the resounding voices of the Third World. Though the bishops from Africa, India and Latin America are still without much power--they tried not to appear as a voting bloc--yet they are being heard in ever-increasing volume.

A heartening feature to an evangelical is the wide-spread evidence of spiritual stirrings moving in almost every country of the world. These small groups meet for prayer, Bible study, experiments in informal worship, mutual support--even social action. They often are very loyal to the church, but they are not initiated by the church and sometimes prove unsettling to its leaders.

Finally, an interview with one of Europe's greatest Catholic theologians, the Dominican Yves Congar in Paris, proved most enlightening. A gracious man, his writings in the 1950's prepared the way for many of the reforms of Vatican II. Now he is writing a major biblical work on "salvation-history."

He looks forward to seeing the church with younger and more progressive leaders in the future. It's tempting to a Baptist "Catholic Watcher" to offer to nominate the next Pope. An incurable optimist, he too would probably blow it. So, so long until the synod of 1977.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the fourth and last article on the Roman Catholic Synod of Bishops. Dr. Hastings is a staff member of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta.

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Church Request to Withdraw
Honored by Ark. Baptists

11/22/74

LITTLE ROCK (BP)--The Arkansas Baptist Convention voted unanimously to accept the request of a church's "messengers" to withdraw from the participation in this year's meeting of the state body "to keep down controversy," rather than to provoke a debate on "alien immersion."

The issue concerned the First Baptist Church of Russellville and its stated membership policy of accepting "alien immersion," baptism by non-Baptists. The church's constitution differs with the Arkansas convention's constitution on this subject, a convention spokesman said.

In other action, the convention approved a resolution calling for a study on ways of helping pastors and church staff members experiencing physical and emotional needs, approved a record \$4.2 million Cooperative Program (unified budget of Southern Baptists) budget for 1975 and approved an executive board recommendation to accept a \$500,000 challenge grant for Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia.

Don Moore, the pastor of Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Smith, Ark., was re-elected to his second term as convention president.

The Russellville controversy goes back several years, the convention spokesman said, reaching a point where at one time the church was "put out of the state convention a number of years ago."

Convention President Don Moore said the Russellville church's constitution provides a means of accepting people by "alien immersion" (baptism by immersion by groups other than Baptist), which is prohibited in the Arkansas convention's constitution. The Russellville church, however, doesn't accept members who haven't been baptized by a Baptist fellowship, Moore noted.

The convention's credentials committee recommended that the church's "messengers" remain as a part of the convention. But the messengers from Russellville asked that the state Baptist body allow them to withdraw.

A deacon from the church said, "Our pastor is just as Southern Baptist as anyone here. As we withdraw, it is not out of anger or animosity but simply to keep down controversy. We will continue to support the Cooperative Program and to work with the brethren in every way

possible," he said.

The unanimous vote accepting the messengers' withdrawal followed.

The resolution to study ways to help meet stress met with some opposition, the spokesman noted. One pastor said stress is part of the ministry and added that the solution was to "go to God in prayer," the spokesman said.

Another "messenger" feared the committee would be composed of men who did not have spiritual insight to deal with "this spiritual matter."

A. T. Williams, president emeritus of Southern Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, pointed out that the resolution was only to study the problem of stress in the ministry. He observed that, at the current rate of pastoral dropouts, some assistance must be given in the near future. The resolution "clearly" passed, the spokesman said.

A 16-member committee was appointed by Moore to conduct the study and report to the 1975 Arkansas convention.

The record \$4.2 Cooperative Program budget of Arkansas Baptists provides for 40 percent of receipts to go to national Southern Baptist causes.

The convention also unanimously approved an executive board recommendation for a challenge grant of \$500,000 from the Mabee Foundation of Tulsa, Okla. to Ouachita Baptist University and encouraged churches and individuals to help match the amount.

Next year's Arkansas convention will meet November 18-20 in Ft. Smith.