

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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February 13, 1975

75-24

**Foreign Board Strengthens
 Disaster Response Structure**

RICHMOND (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board took steps during its February meeting to strengthen the structure of the world's largest missionary-sending agency for administering world relief.

A disaster response coordinator was named, each overseas mission organization will be asked to designate a disaster response coordinator and a relief committee, and a board sub-committee of five was appointed as a special committee on world hunger and relief.

"For many years the board has administered relief," said Baker J. Cauthen, executive secretary, "but the world hunger situation is about to plunge the world into new problems which will likely be beyond the problems we now see before us. It's obvious that we must increase our structure in order to handle the larger amounts of money which undoubtedly will come from the churches and the conventions on a continuing basis as we face the future."

Documenting his point, Cauthen read a resolution signed by 22 Baptist state executive secretaries, reaffirming the role of the board, which has more than 2,600 missionaries in 82 countries, as a channel for overseas relief. They encouraged the board in its efforts to administer relief to the world's needy people.

Eugene Grubbs, the board's consultant on laymen overseas, was named disaster response coordinator. In addition to his regular responsibilities, Grubbs will head a disaster response committee comprised of selected members of the agency's home office staff.

The newly-appointed sub-committee on world hunger and relief will help evaluate relief needs and bring recommendations concerning ways to respond.

The relief committees on the field will evaluate relief needs and supervise relief ministries.

"News commentators almost daily are reminding us of the serious crisis upon the world, calculated to become more serious as the world's population continues growing rapidly and the production of food continues to lag behind," Cauthen said.

He cited examples of the increasing awareness among Southern Baptists about the problem and their determination to respond.

In other action, the board appropriated \$9,000 from relief funds to aid flood victims in South Thailand, recognized a retired minister who will fill a short-term assignment in Norway, and reappointed four missionaries.

James Middleton, who served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Shreveport, La., for more than 22 years, recently was invited by the board to go to Stavanger, Norway, for a period of service as pastor of an English-language Baptist congregation there. During the February meeting, Cauthen led a prayer of dedication, "setting him apart" for a ministry in Norway. Middleton will minister among Americans who work in the oil fields in the North Sea off Norway's coast.

Reappointed were Mr. and Mrs. James H. Green, previously missionaries to Mexico. They will serve in Panama, effective May 1. Mr. and Mrs. Richard E. Walker were reappointed for missionary service in Equatorial Brazil, where they served before resigning in 1972.

Kans.-Neb. Baptists Top
Half-Million Dollar Mark

Baptist Press
2/13/75

WICHITA, Kan. (BP)--The Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, for the first time in its 28-year history, has topped the half-million-dollar mark in giving through its state-level Cooperative Program unified budget in 1974.

The convention, comprised of 200 churches, with 59,629 members, reported \$502,616 in Cooperative Program gifts or \$74,283 in excess of 1973 receipts. The Kansas-Nebraska Convention gives 19 percent of its Cooperative Program receipts through the national Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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SBC Room Assignments Top
4,700 for Miami Beach

Baptist Press
2/13/75

MIAMI BEACH (BP)--With more than 16,000 registered "messengers" expected at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention here, June 10-12, 4,736 rooms have already been assigned by the SBC Housing Bureau.

"We are fortunate the convention is meeting in a place such as Miami Beach where an adequate room supply is available," said John Williams of Nashville, director of financial planning and assistant to the treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee.

Williams said persons wishing hotel or motel rooms or light house-keeping rooms should write as soon as possible to the SBC Housing Bureau, 555--17th St., Miami Beach, Fla. 33139, giving a definite date and approximate hour of arrival and including names and addresses of all persons who will occupy rooms requested. The Housing Bureau, he said, should be notified immediately if a cancellation is necessary.

At least four choices of hotels or motels are desirable, Williams said, and reservations will be filled in order of date of receipt. If accommodation of the hotel or motel of a person's choice are not available, the housing bureau will make a reservation elsewhere as near the request as possible. Confirmation will come direct from the hotel or motel.

Room application forms have been provided to state Baptist executive secretaries, and a limited supply is available through the Housing Bureau.

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U. S. Government Honors
Missionary to Honduras

Baptist Press
2/13/75

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (BP)--Dr David Harms, Southern Baptist Missionary physician stationed here, has received a tribute of appreciation from the U. S. State Department in recognition of his "organization, direction and distribution of medical aid" to victims of Hurricane Fifi.

Phillip V. Sanchez, U. S. Ambassador to Honduras, presented the official certificate to Harms "on behalf of the U. S. government and all embassy personnel in Honduras."

"Without your voluntary participation in the planning and execution of medically oriented disaster relief operations," Sanchez said, "the effectiveness of the overall United States effort would have been seriously diminished."

"Your tireless efforts in the organization, direction and distribution of medical support to the victims of this tragic disaster are a source of pride to all of us," Sanchez commented.

Soon after Hurricane Fifi hit Honduras in mid-September, Harms was named coordinator for the relief efforts of the Medical Assistance Program (MAP), a voluntary, international Christian organization that sends help to missionary physicians.

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All-Daytime Sunday Services
Cuts Cost, Church Says

FRESNO, Calif. (BP)--The concept of an "all daytime" church on Sundays has been adopted by Bethel Southern Baptist Church here to save energy--and it reportedly works.

The plan, which concludes all the church's Sunday activities by 3 p.m., represents a departure from the traditional approach in Southern Baptist churches of morning and evening activities, according to the California Southern Baptist newsmagazine.

Under the new concept, the all daytime program begins with the morning Sunday School and worship service activities as usual, followed by lunch at the church and then the "evening" activities, beginning with Training Union at 1 p.m. and the worship service at 2 p.m. It's all over by 3 p.m.

Already the 217-member church, has projected a \$200 to \$240 annual drop in utility costs, "due in part to the fact that the equipment doesn't have to run all afternoon and into the evening on Sundays," the newsmagazine reports.

Members have discovered, also, that their gasoline bills to and from church are cut in half--"not to mention reduced wear and tear on tires, car and persons."

The all daytime concept, which is now permanent after a six-month trial, not only saves money, fuel and energy, but "it offers an additional advantage of permitting elderly people, who might be unable to get out at night, to partake of the full range of Sunday worship services."

As for lunch between "morning" and "evening" activities, several plans have been tried, including "pot-luck and brown-bagging." Some go to restaurants, and some go home and return in time for the 1 p.m. program.

Attendance is about the same in the morning service but the "evening" service has been helped.

But a church spokesman notes: "Baptists are the world's greatest inventors--inventors of excuses, that is. Those who didn't support evening services at the regular hours don't support them now. The earlier hour knocked out some standard excuses but spawned such novel ones as . . . 'can't stay in one place too long.'

"Supporters of the idea, however, are most enthusiastic and may never vote to return to the more traditional hours," the spokesman said. In wintertime, it is much too pleasant not to have to get out in the evening in inclement weather. The 3 p.m. benediction during summer's long daylight hours makes the "day of rest" more real."

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SBC Brotherhood Commission
Slashes Staff By 25 Per Cent

Baptist Press
2/13/75

MEMPHIS (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Convention's Brotherhood Commission--faced with a growing financial deficit--have voted to cut the agency's 50-person staff by 25 percent and make other program cuts.

The action, eliminating eight members of the executive staff and four clerical-level personnel effective March 7, was taken in response to a recommendation by Glendon McCullough, executive director, and the agency's administrative committee.

"We feel we must balance the budget during this fiscal year and eliminate a \$146,933 deficit, and this action represents the only way to do it in our judgement," said McCullough.

Among those effected in the staff reduction were comptroller, E. M. (Buddy) Coleman, an employee of 23 years; Baptist Men's division director, W. J. (Doc) Isbell, a seven-year employee; Royal Ambassador division director, Jay Chance, 11 years; mission support department director, Ben J. Connell, eight years; operations department director John Pate, 13 years; staff artist, Jim Frazier, three-years; order processing supervisor, Dennis Murray, two-years; and an associate World Mission Journal editor, Steve Wall, a four-year employee who has been on a leave-of-absence since Oct. 1.

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McCullough said the commission, which had a current operating budget of \$1.4 million voted last August, accumulated the budget deficit this way:

"During recent years, particularly the last two, the strategy of the commission has been to try to make major program achievements without the money in hand, but with the expectation the additional income needed to fund these projects would follow.

"Instead, inflation has reduced income from periodicals, and the small increases in (SBC) Cooperative Program (unified budget) allocations recommended by the SBC Executive Committee are not adequate to cover the costs of this higher level of program services provided to Southern Baptists," McCullough said.

In regard to the services provided by the commission, which gives guidance in missions education to 461,080 men and Royal Ambassador boys in 14,425 Southern Baptist churches across 50 states, McCullough noted evidences of program achievements.

He cited Brotherhood enrollment increases for the last four years, a renewal program "enjoying growing acceptance by thousands of Baptist churches," an increased emphasis on world missions conferences, expanded promotion of home and foreign missions and the Cooperative Program, introduction of a new missions publication (World Mission Journal), and "a new level of visibility in Brotherhood work generally."

Porter Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the Executive Committee, expressing deep regret over the Brotherhood Commission's plight, noted that the commission received a 14.54 per cent increase (\$45,702) in the basic Cooperative Program allocation for 1974-75. That compares, he said, to a 5.88 per cent (\$2 million) overall operating increase for the total Cooperative Program basic budget.

The increase for the 1973-74 year for the Brotherhood Commission from the SBC Cooperative Program receipts, he said, amounted to 13.38 per cent (\$40,411), compared to 12.43 per cent increase (\$4,203,878) for the Cooperative Program as a whole.

"Both years, the per cent of increase for the Brotherhood Commission has been larger than the cost of living increase," Routh said, "The Brotherhood Commission's problems concern all Southern Baptists deeply, but any significant increase in Brotherhood funds would have to come largely from funds now allotted to foreign missions, home missions or theological education."

Routh expressed gratitude for the continued support of Southern Baptists to the Cooperative Program, which produced a record month of more than \$4 million in receipts in January on a national level. He also noted gratitude that none of the other 19 SBC national agencies operated last year at a deficit.

In terms of the overall financial picture of other SBC agencies, none appear faced with drastic cutbacks, but--in the face of inflation and recession--agency executives have initiated belt-tightening procedures.

At the SBC's largest agency, the Sunday School Board, for example, the 1974-75 sales budget has been revised downward by about \$2 million, from \$59,588,000 to \$57,675,000, in anticipation of a drop in sales revenue which the board depends upon for its operation.

"We continue to monitor the operations of the Sunday School Board in light of the uncertain national economic situation," states Grady C. Cothen, president. "As a result of actions already taken, we appear to be in good condition. We project some reduction in sales and have taken steps to minimize the impact."

Besides sales budget reduction, other steps include a freeze at the Sunday School Board on filling personnel vacancies, adding new jobs or transferring personnel within the board unless there are exceptional reasons for doing so.

Discussing Brotherhood Commission commitments, McCullough emphasized the agency would continue to maintain its usual broad range of services to state Baptist conventions, associations and churches at the highest level possible with a reduced staff.

"I have asked all remaining staff members to assume additional responsibilities of a temporary nature to insure the continued operation of all divisions without interruptions," McCullough said.

Bob Banks, McCullough's executive assistant for planning and promotion, will work with state Baptist leaders to attempt to fulfill commitments of former staffers.



BAPTIST PRESS

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FEB 14 1975

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