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Pastor's Field of Ministry
10,000-acres Resort Area

By Walker Knight

FAIRFIELD BAY, Ark. (BP)--Hilton Lane is the only full-time minister for this developing 10,000 acres resort community, which with its attractions would make many ministers eager to work and live here.

Fairfield Bay--with its marina, golf course, campsites, racquet club, community center, stables and miniature golf--is a haven for vacationers and retirees alike. Situated on the shores of Greers Ferry Lake in the Ozarks hills of Northwestern Arkansas, the community has facilities for 1,000 families and hosts 25,000 people annually.

Homes range from \$20,000 two-bedroom cottages to a \$70,000 mansion built by a retired Episcopal priest. Almost 300 families live permanently in the development, which is less than 10-years-old. Some have purchased condominiums near the town center and recreational facilities.

The lake dominates life. Many seek frontage or at least a view of the water, or a lot convenient to a dock for easy access with a boat.

Resort communities in Arkansas have boomed in the past decade, and Baptists are making efforts to minister in these areas. Fairfield Bay has one of seven resort ministries sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist Convention and supported by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB).

Now pastor-director in church extension, Lane became aware of the need for a full-time pastor in Fairfield Bay several years ago and began his resort ministry in 1972 with encouragement from two Arkansas Baptists.

One was R. H. Dorris, director of missions for the Arkansas Baptist Convention, who has led Arkansas Baptists to try to begin 50 new congregations within two years. By October of the first year, he had 12.

He encouraged David Miller, director of associational missions for the area, to establish a resort ministry at Fairfield Bay.

Miller knew of Lane's interest in holding mission Bible schools in the area and told Lane they wanted a two-pronged effort--first, to establish a congregation and second, ministries to the resort community.

Lane was then pastor of Hazen (Ark.) Baptist Church and planned along with Miller for a youth mission project at Fairfield Bay, an outlet for the church's young people. The Hazen pastor then offered his services full-time to the Fairfield Bay Company, developers of the townsite. They realized their need for a pastor and accepted. Lane is the only full-time minister in the growing community and says his job is challenging:

"It's a lot easier to witness to a fellow beneath your level of income or education than to walk up to a \$50,000 vacation home and recognize that the fellow in there--maybe a millionaire--has just as grave a spiritual need as the fellows all tattered and dirty."

Land values have risen rapidly, and area natives have developed some resentment toward the newcomers. New residents have kept the school at nearby Shirley, a town with a population of 340, from consolidation.

But Lane says some rapport has been established between families with children in school, working together in activities such as PTA or community musicals.

In some communities friction between groups might hinder a new congregation's growth but not at Fairfield Bay. After just three years Lane's congregation has a new stone building and plans to be self-supporting in two to three years.

However, Lane has had to overcome several obstacles, among them the fact that few in the area were familiar with Southern Baptists.

"This has to be pioneer missions for Southern Baptists," he explains. "Those who were affiliated with churches were Catholics, Lutherans and Methodists--all strong in the north central states. A lot of people are not religiously oriented at all, and most of these are retirees from the metropolitan areas of the north. What this means also is that they were unfamiliar with Southern Baptists.

"I write a personal note to all visitors to the chapel and enclose a little brochure on 'Get Acquainted with Southern Baptists.' Sometimes this gets hectic when I have to write 50 notes in a week. I also give them a fact sheet about the Baptist chapel that tells what Baptists are doing and how we work together," Lane says.

The developers have 17 lots designed for churches, and they promised the congregation a prominent site when they were ready to build. Until then, they let the church meet in the civic center, as do the Catholics and Lutherans.

As the congregation grew, a building fund was begun, associations provided some money for a building and the sponsoring Pulaski Heights Baptist Church in Little Rock underwrote the financing for the first unit. The developers provided a 2.9-acre site in the center of the entire development, next to the condominiums and across the street from the planned development for the new town center.

Because Fairfield Bay is a privately owned community, Lane realized the need for a good relationship with the planners and directors. Everything must have company approval, and Lane works closely with directors to make sure they understand the direction he's taking and can give their approval for what he wants to do.

Although there is a large turnover in residents, guests and employees, he says the congregation is growing and building a strong core of workers and leaders.

"We need people who are doctrinally sound," says Lane, one of seven missionaries featured in a new HMB photo-textbook, "Seven Beginnings." People are needed, Lane says, "who have a basic understanding of the scriptures and concepts of mission outreach.

"As we become self-supporting and independent of the Home Mission Board and the state convention, we'll need a strong nucleus of people committed to the idea of resort missions.

"We are going to be in resort missions from now on."

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers

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High Court Again Hears
Death Penalty Arguments

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By Stan L. Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)--Does the death penalty amount to cruel and unusual punishment in violation of the U. S. Constitution?

That's the question the U. S. Supreme Court must decide after listening to more than five hours of arguments here.

The high court faces one of the most controversial choices in its history in deciding whether more than 500 inmates currently on death row may be executed.

Four years ago the court ruled in a narrow 5-4 decision that the death penalty as it was then being applied in the states was invalid because of its uneven and arbitrary administration. One of the main arguments against capital punishment then was that members of racial minorities were more subject to being sentenced to death than were whites.

Not since 1967 has the Supreme Court set aside so much time to consider arguments on one issue. The justices heard capital cases from five states which had enacted new death penalty laws in the wake of the 1972 decision.

A law professor at Stanford University, Anthony G. Amsterdam, argued cases for three of the convicted murderers. His principal arguments were that the death penalty is arbitrarily applied and is excessively cruel in violation of the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution.

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Since the limited ruling four years ago outlawing capital punishment as then practiced, 35 states and the U. S. Congress have enacted new mandatory death penalty laws.

At one point during Amsterdam's presentation, Justice Potter Stewart asked him if he was not actually arguing that the entire system of criminal justice is itself selective and arbitrary. Amsterdam's reply was an emphatic "No."

He then said, "If you do not accept the proposition that the death penalty is different, then we lose this case--it's that simple." Amsterdam said that "death is different--it is irremedial."

Justice Lewis F. Powell asked the Stanford professor if he would approve of capital punishment in any instance. When Amsterdam answered in the negative, Powell asked him if that view would hold even if World War II-type atrocities were repeated or if someone set off a hydrogen bomb destroying New York City. Even then, however, Amsterdam would not budge.

Attorneys arguing the other side included two state attorneys general, three assistant attorneys general, an assistant district attorney, and the chief lawyer for the U. S. Department of Justice.

John L. Hill, Texas' attorney general, argued that it would be "an anomaly" for the high court to decide that the death penalty is unconstitutional when the Constitution itself makes provisions for it. He was referring specifically to the Fifth Amendment which states that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

Hill also warned the justices that there is no legal precedent for interpreting the death penalty as cruel and unusual punishment. "This court," he said, "is not a superlegislature" nor a "keeper of the social values and morals of the people of this country."

Similarly, the assistant attorney general for California, William E. James, argued that only Congress and state legislatures should decide whether to abolish the death penalty.

Another assistant attorney general, Sidney S. Eagles Jr., of North Carolina, advanced the frequently-used argument that the death penalty has a deterrent value. He called it society's "ultimate weapon" in dealing with "ultimate crimes." He told the court that to decide against capital punishment would mean a failure "to stem the tide of burglary and murder" in the country.

U. S. Solicitor General Robert H. Bork, the federal government's top lawyer, appeared as a friend of the court on behalf of the five states whose death penalties are being challenged. He said that the Supreme Court must look to the state legislatures and to Congress and not to "the more enlightened professors" in reaching a decision. His remark was apparently aimed at Amsterdam.

Bork argued that because 35 state legislatures and Congress have found the death penalty "both moral and necessary," the high court should not find otherwise. He also argued that "common sense" teaches the deterrent value of capital punishment.

In addition, Bork said that "the men who framed the Eighth Amendment . . . did not intend to outlaw capital punishment in the meaning of the Eighth Amendment."

The nation's highest court must now decide that very question. Last year, it heard similar arguments in a North Carolina case which eventually was held over to the current term.

Last fall, in something of a surprise move, the justices decided to take on representative cases from five states instead. One reason offered by many court observers for the delay was that the tribunal was evenly split, 4-4, with former Justice William O. Douglas unable because of illness to cast the deciding vote.

The court is now at full strength and will presumably decide the matter before adjournment in late June.

Missions Evangelism Leaders
Plan 'Bold Mission Thrust'

By Walker Knight

CRAWFORDSVILLE, Ind. (BP)--Southern Baptist state directors of missions and evangelism projected plans here for a four year "Bold Mission Thrust" for the nation in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board.

The emphasis seeks to enlist the 12.7-million-member denomination in evangelizing and "congregationalizing" the nation. Its goal is, first, to let every person have an opportunity to hear and accept the gospel of Jesus Christ and, second, have an opportunity to share in the witness and ministry of a New Testament fellowship of believers. Coordinated by the board's evangelism and missions sections, the emphasis is part of a larger "Bold Mission" effort of the SBC, the nation's largest Protestant denomination.

The larger emphasis also stresses Bible teaching, mission action, and world mission concerns, in addition to witnessing and starting congregations. While the Bold Mission Thrust (BMT) emphasis is vitally related to the ongoing work of the SBC, "it seeks to be dramatically different," according to Gerald Palmer of Atlanta, director of the missions section of the Home Mission Board.

"We are going to put our resources where the objectives
"and we are asking Southern Baptists to fund this effort boldly.

"The BMT focuses the total effort of the programs of the Home Mission Board on the two objectives," he added.

"We have projected a greater degree of cooperation between our missions and evangelism forces in this effort than in any that I have seen in the past," added Bill Hogue, the board's evangelism section director, who joins Palmer in BMT leadership.

To emphasize the commitment of missions to evangelism and evangelism to missions, Palmer and Hogue each stepped into the other's role in one session here. Hogue spoke on the centrality of the church, and Palmer spoke on the imperative of evangelism.

The emphasis will include four target areas of concern:

- Counties without an effective evangelistic witness. (At least 600 counties in the U. S. have no type of Southern Baptist witness.)
- Key cities with large numbers of unevangelized and unchurched persons.
- Cultural and life style groups which are bypassed by the churches.
- Churches in crisis in transitional communities.

BMT, now in the planning stage, begins in 1977 and goes through 1980. BMT task forces will be established at the Home Mission Board and in most states to identify needs, to plan for the period, and to aid in the channeling of resources.

John Havlik of the board's evangelism staff said, "We start out with stars in our eyes but we end up with the same old thing. We need a commitment to a bold mission--to believe that God is going to let us win our land to Christ in our time."

And Charles Chaney, director of missions for Illinois Baptists, said, "As I look at these objectives, I feel that they are big enough that if they are accomplished we will have to give the credit to God."

The meeting here surfaced some tension between the state leaders and the Home Mission Board on the need for both a bold projection of needs and the availability of funds and other resources.

Ralph Longshore, director of missions for California Baptists, said, "After this much talking if we do not come through with anything bold we will find ourselves going backward." At this point, Palmer emphasized that the Home Mission Board is committed to use the resources given by Southern Baptists for "bold missions."

The Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union is projecting a dramatic increase in the goal for the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, primarily to fund the Bold Mission Thrust, according to Palmer. Heavy emphasis was placed on the fact that BMT must exceed budgeting concern in the mobilization of forces for the evangelization and the congregationalizing of the nation.

BMT is expected to provide a channel for the 1,000s of volunteers who will be part of the resources for the effort.