

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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May 3, 1976

76-76

**Asia Retains Second Place in
Baptist World Statistics**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Baptists of Asia rank second internationally in total church members, with more than 1.3 million, according to figures released here by the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).

Asia, second only to North America, retained the second place ranking it gained last year, when it moved ahead of Europe for the first time. BWA statistics for 1976 report 1,338,837 Asian Baptists, up from last year's 1,292,058.

Highlights of the newly-released data are:

--South Vietnam and Laos were dropped from the list of places with a Baptist witness. Last year they had 21 churches and 2 churches respectively.

"A breakdown in communications prevents us from knowing whether the churches are still alive," said Carl W. Tiller, BWA statistician, "but we hope that before another year passes, we shall have information to enable us to restore these places to our roster."

--India continues to have more than twice as many Baptists as any other place on the continent, with 749,738. In the world as a whole, only the United States exceeds the Baptist population of India, where 24 Baptist groups are at work.

India's membership data is a little below last year's, Tiller said, primarily because a correction made for about 50,000 church members, inadvertently counted twice in 1975 because they were covered in reports from two different groups.

--Korean numbers reflect a much larger membership than previously reported, perhaps due in part to a spirit of revival there, but also due to the fact that earlier reports were missing data for some of the churches, and this year the Baptist Convention of Korea has estimated figures for the unreporting congregations.

--A sizeable increase in the numbers for Thailand, and smaller increases in some other countries, are attributed to the inclusion now of more complete data for the Orebro mission, a Baptist body of Sweden, not a member of the Alliance. The BWA had previously used data for the Orebro missions which had not been fully updated until 1976.

--The Philippines have been moved from BWA's "Oceania" group into its Asian group of countries, and corresponding adjustments have been made in the older continental totals. Even without the Philippines, however, Asian Baptists outnumbered Europeans in both 1975 and 1976.

The substantial growth in Baptist data for Asia, Tiller said, is reflected by comparing the new membership data with figures for other recent years: 1969, 1,001,928; 1970, 1,169,986; 1971, 1,186,774; 1972, 1,130,795; 1973, 1,194,345; and 1974, 1,239,035.

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<u>Nations</u> ^d	<u>BAPTISTS IN ASIA</u> ^a			
	1976 ^b		1975	
	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Members</u>
Afghanistan	0	0	0	0
Bangladesh	258	19,292	277	16,151
Bhutan	0	0	0	0
Burma	2,748	314,302	2,733	308,095
China, People's Republic	0	0	0	0
India	5,778	749,738	6,205	760,853
Japan	383	36,357	334	33,020
Kampuchea	0	0	0	0
Korea, Democratic People's Repub.	0	0	0	0
Korea, Republic of	606	68,699	476	23,615
Laos	0	0	2	41
Maldives	0	0	0	0
Malaysia	30	3,811	41	4,579
Mongolia	0	0	0	0
Nepal	0	0	0	0
Pakistan	30	3,024	24	2,253
Philippines	813	77,747	790	86,515
Singapore	11	2,000	11	1,624
Vietnam, Democ. Repub.	0	0	21	1,817
Sri Lanka	21	2,023	21	2,010
Taiwan (Rep. of China)	85	14,003	84	13,115
Thailand	152	17,192	87	7,988
<u>Dependencies</u> ^d				
Hong Kong	53	27,250	53	26,878
Macao	3	620	3	620
Ryukyu Islands	<u>30</u>	<u>2,779</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>2,884</u>
TOTALS	11,001	1,338,837	11,194^c	1,292,058^c

^aExcludes the Asian portion of the Soviet Union, and excludes the Middle East.

^bSubject to revision

^cAdjusted from figures published last year to include the Philippines, formerly classified in "Oceania" rather than Asia.

^dNo Baptist churches are known to exist in the nations of Afghanistan, Bhutan, the People's Republic of China, Kampuchea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, or the Democratic Republic of Vietnam; or in the dependencies of Brunei, Christmas Island, or the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

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Cooperative Program 16.45%
Ahead After Seven Months

Baptist Press
5/3/76

NASHVILLE (BP)--Bouyed by the fourth \$4 million month in history, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) national Cooperative Program unified budget has topped \$27.75 million with five months to go in the 1975-76 fiscal year.

That represents a 16.45 percent increase over the same period last year, when Southern Baptists gave \$23.84 million to the Cooperative Program.

"If the increased giving continues at this pace, we will keep abreast of or be ahead of inflation for the first time in several years," said Billy D. Malesovas, director of financial planning and assistant to the treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee.

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Some 35,000 churches in 50 states in the nation's largest Protestant body contributed \$29.47 million in designated contributions. Combined with the Cooperative Program figure, that totals \$57.23 million through the first seven months, a 14.06 percent increase over \$50.17 million given at the same point last year.

Cooperative Program contributions for April totaled \$4,270,687--a 29.64 percent increase over April of 1975. Other \$4 million months have come in January, 1976 (\$4.87 million), Feb. 1976 (\$4.46 million) and January, 1975 (\$4.30 million).

Designated giving in April totaled \$3,942,232--a 24.11 percent rise over April 1975. Total giving for the month, Cooperative Program and designated, was \$8,212,919. That represents a 26.93 percent increase over more than \$6.47 million given in April 1975.

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SBC Resolutions Committee
Sets Public Meeting

Baptist Press
5/3/76

NORFOLK (BP)--Members of the 1976 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) resolutions committee will hold an open public meeting at 7:30 p.m., Monday, June 14, at the Norfolk Scope Convention Center in the Resolutions Committee Room (room number M-1 on the lower concourse).

Anyone with a resolution to discuss or present is welcome to attend, according to Andrew Tampling of Birmingham, chairman of the resolutions committee. Tampling requests that copies of resolutions be sent to him at First Baptist Church, 517 22nd St., No., Birmingham, Ala. 35203.

The 1976 resolutions committee membership has been completed. Members are Harold Coble, Midway, Calif.; Nelson Duke, Jefferson City, Mo.; Joseph B. Flowers, Hampton, Va.; Milton Gardner Jr., Thomasville, Ga.; Jack Harwell, Atlanta, Ga.; Jim Martin, Omaha, Neb.; Frank Minton, Dayton, Ohio; Charles B. Nunn, Bluefield, W. Va.; Ronald Prince, Minden, La.; Quinn Pugh, Bel Air, Md.; William Self, Atlanta, Ga.; and Edwin Young, Columbia, S. C.

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General Evangelists Needed
In Responsive Asian Areas

Baptist Press
5/3/76

RICHMOND (BP)--General evangelists are greatly needed in Asia where "responsiveness characterizes the mission opportunities in many areas," according to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board area secretaries for East and Southeast Asia.

But, at present, "There are no 'preacher' missionary candidates for Southeast Asia," J. Winston Crawley, director of the Foreign Mission Board's overseas division, related. "In recent years, East Asia has been reinforced with fewer missionary evangelists than any other area," Crawley said. "These are areas of urgent needs."

Insecurity, caused by the threat of Communist neighbors, brings about greater openness for the gospel, mission board officials report.

Southern Baptists need to "make good use of the situation for God and intensify efforts while it is possible," according to William R. Wakefield, area secretary for Southeast Asia. "We need to work while it is yet day, for the night is coming," he urged, in reference to a Biblical admonition.

Many of these areas welcome missionaries, especially Thailand, Korea and Taiwan. "In Korea and Taiwan, we're having an especially responsive time," George H. Hays, area secretary for East Asia, said. "We wish we already had more missionaries on the field, but even if we had personnel volunteer today, it would be two years before they would actually be serving on the field."

Japan has 10 major cities (population 100,000 or more) with no missionaries who are general evangelists. In January, a general evangelist transferred to Japan from Madagascar--the first new missionary evangelist there in four years, according to Hays.

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Some 26 requests for missionary evangelists have been made for East Asia. Japan is asking for 11 of those, according to Hays. Southeast Asia needs 24 general evangelists, with Thailand making the most requests.

Wakefield listed the number one priority in Southeast Asia as either a theological teacher at Mindanao Baptist Bible School, Davao City, or a general evangelist and church developer for Thailand. At the Bible school, there is only one missionary couple, along with a Filipino couple, to work with an enrollment of over 60 couples.

According to Hays, the most urgent single need in East Asia is for an evangelistic couple for Okinawa to replace the William R. Medlings, who will retire in 1978. "We hoped to have had two already in training," Hays explained. But no one has applied.

Wakefield mentioned some other high priority personnel needs for his area. A doctor is needed to serve at the Bangkok Baptist Hospital in Thailand, where there are 3,000 in-patients and 19,000 out-patients a year and only one missionary doctor. A couple in mass communications is needed for the Baptist Communication Center in Indonesia, as well as a doctor for the Kediri Baptist Hospital on Sumatra.

The Philippines needs an evangelistic couple for the Cagayan De Oro area, which has been very receptive in recent months. A pastor for the Calvary Baptist Church, primarily a military related congregation, is needed in Guam.

Hays said that he would like to see three or four more couples in Taiwan, where the people have been very responsive since former President Chiang Kai-Shek's Christian funeral last year at which a Baptist minister officiated. Two theological teachers are also needed in Taiwan for the seminary there.

Mission board leaders see some encouragement in both areas, however. Three couples and two singles are on the projection list for Japan, according to Hays, who is also encouraged by a good working relationship between nationals (even non-Baptists) and missionaries. Japan has virtually no visa problems or demonstrations against Americans.

Missionaries transferring from South Vietnam and Laos--and now in language study--will fill some of the vital personnel needs in Southeast Asia. "They have distributed themselves and will contribute greatly," Wakefield said.

But even with encouragements, mission board leaders, citing Romans 10:14 ("... how shall they hear without a preacher?"), emphasize the need for those "preacher" missionaries "to respond to overwhelming opportunities" in the heavily-populated Orient.

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Dawson Named President
Of Baptist College

Baptist Press
5/3/76

MARSHALL, Tex. (BP)--Jerry F. Dawson, a professor and dean at Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, was elected president of East Texas Baptist College here.

Dawson, 42, will succeed Howard C. Bennett, Aug. 1. Bennett, president of the college since 1960, has reached retirement age.

A native of Borger, Tex., Dawson has been dean of the graduate school and professor of history at Southwest Texas State since 1971 and has been in charge of research efforts and expenditures which exceed \$1 million annually.

He has also served on the history faculties of Texas A & M University, College Station, and Wayland Baptist College, Plainview, Tex.; visiting professor at Mississippi College, Clinton, and the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colo.; and pastor of First Baptist Church, McDade, Tex., while earning a doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Texas, Austin.

He also has held at least 35 interim pastorates and has preached across Texas for Texas Alcohol Narcotics Education (TANE), Inc.

Dawson attended Wayland, earned a bachelor's degree from Mississippi College and master and doctor of philosophy degrees from the University of Texas.

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