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**Needed A Baptismal--
Now Theirs Is Portable**

By John Whitman

MAYWOOD, Ill. (BP)--A Baptist congregation in this Chicago suburb got tired of going to another church in another neighborhood to baptize its new members, so they built their own.

That idea may not be unusual, but their new baptistry sure is. It's portable and mobile--made of two-by-fours and thick plywood, fastened by machine bolts, and lined with heavy vinyl.

Broadview Baptist Church is one of about 15 black congregations affiliated with the Chicago Metropolitan Baptist Association and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Pastor C.W. Hopson said they usually baptize the first Sunday of each month and had been going to Faith Baptist Church in nearby Melrose Park.

"But that took away from the service," he admitted. "Many of our people didn't know why we baptize, and most didn't bother to go to watch. At that time our building also housed the associational offices, and since it wasn't ours, we were not free to tear out a wall and build a permanent baptistry."

An idea came to deacon William Rorer, and he began to pray about it.

"I knew we needed something we could take apart and store after using it on Sundays. But I'm no artist. I don't even think artistically," said Rorer, a data processor for the Veterans Administration.

"God laid a design on my heart, and I sat down and sketched it," Rorer recalled. "He showed me it could be done. I showed the sketch to Bro. Hopson, and we began looking for someone to build it.

"We started going through the Yellow Pages in the phone book, looking for crates or boxes. I called one man--way on the South Side--who seemed to be waiting," said Rorer.

"'We don't do anything like that,' the man said, 'but come on down and we'll work something out.'"

The lining was another problem. Should it be metal, epoxy, or what? Rorer knew about backyard swimming pools that have a heavy vinyl lining so looked up "plastics" in the phone book, and again there was somehow, someone else waiting on the other end. So he went to the company.

"We figured the dimensions--4 feet deep, and 6 by 8 feet wide--and the plastics company made the liner within the tolerances of their product," the deacon said. "And we didn't even have the box yet.

"I took my sketch to the box company. They made a few refinements, checked it out for engineering to make sure it would hold the weight of several hundred gallons of water, and said they'd build it. When I went to pick it up, I asked how much it cost."

"'If you don't hear from us, don't pay us anything,' the man answered." They haven't heard.

"This baptistry is the only one of its kind," says pastor Hopson, "and it's an answer to prayer. The associational offices have moved to Oak Park, but the baptistry is still adequate.

"We didn't really have in mind that it would go to other churches. But another church has come here to use it, and the Berea Baptist Church in Oak Park has taken it to their church."

"And we know it will hold water," Rorer added. "It got full once and ran over."

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**NABF Told of Elements
Which Hamper Growth**

ARLINGTON, Va. (BP)-- Non-denominational organizations, the charismatic movement, and the appeal of the Unification Church to youth were described here as divisive elements which may hamper the growth pattern of Baptists in North America.

Carl W. Tiller, an associate secretary of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), made those observations during the annual meeting of the general committee of the North American Baptist Fellowship (NABF).

The comments were made in the context of a report to 50 representatives of seven North American Baptist denominations that Baptists have shown continued growth in membership and stewardship.

"The increased pull that non-denominational organizations have upon our people and their purses," the growth of the charismatic movement, and the appeal of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church to young people represent a potential problem, said Tiller.

Many Baptist people, Tiller reported, are responding to "the expensive advertising and promotional efforts" of faith missions, famine relief organizations and disaster relief bodies, "seemingly unaware that our own Baptist denominational bodies are doing an effective work toward accomplishing the same objectives."

Tiller said that the neo-Pentecostal or charismatic movement "often unites its adherents across denominational lines and often divides people in the local church."

The Unification Church, he said, appeals to youth "with its high powered promotion, 'surface' statements that closely resemble the sayings of Jesus, and its hidden bundle of false doctrines that are taught the unsuspecting."

Some of these same concerns were reflected by Archibald Goldie of the Baptist Federation of Canada, reporting on a group conference by mission administrators. He urged increased communication and promotion of Baptist mission activities, so that Baptists will support denominational, rather than non-Baptist, mission projects.

Ernest K. Bee Jr., moderator of the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Washington, D. C., was elected chairman of the NABF for the coming year, succeeding Robert C. Campbell, general secretary of American Baptist Churches in the USA, who has served two one-year terms as chairman.

Mrs. Dolores Duck, executive director of Woman's Mission Board in the General Association of General Baptists, Poplar Bluff, Mo., was named vice chairman, succeeding Floyd W. Harris, a Southern Baptist layman. Tiller serves as secretary and Fred B. Rhodes of Washington as treasurer.

NABF, one of five regional fellowships operating under the BWA umbrella, is a voluntary organization of nine North American bodies with more than 19 million members.

The two day meeting in Arlington, a Washington suburb, featured a program of understanding and sharing, continuing a pattern of past years for small sharing sessions by leaders in special interest areas. Discussions dealt with church and society, missions administration, services to the churches, disaster preparedness, and the work of executive secretaries.

Dialogue on ecclesiological and theological similarities and differences included spokesmen for American Baptist Canadian Baptists, Seventh Day Baptists and Southern

Baptists, relating the heritage and doctrinal views of their respective groups. Other member groups of the fellowship will be heard at next year's session.

The dialogue was an outgrowth of a proposal in 1975 that the fellowship respond to an invitation from the Lutheran Council in the USA for theological discussions. "Why don't we discuss our own similarities and differences first?" someone asked.

In reports of the various sharing sessions, the meeting of executive secretaries expressed hope of "finding ways within the church" to accommodate people with varying points of view on the charismatic movement.

A group on services to the churches reported a need for additional aids for churches in evangelism, church growth, and enlistment of absentee members.

And a group on disaster preparedness told of establishment of a "manpower bank" under Southern Baptist direction to process men and skills for emergency service at times of natural disaster. The manpower bank will be opened for participation by other Baptist bodies.