



BAPTIST PRESS

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5 of 6 Personnel Requests Unfilled, Cobbs Says

RICHMOND (BP)--Only one out of every six requests for new missionary personnel is now being filled because of the limited number of persons volunteering for overseas service, Louis Cobbs told the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board at its September meeting here.

Cobbs, secretary for the board's department of missionary personnel, said that thus far in 1977 the board has reviewed 307 applications and recommended 204 career missionaries, missionary associates, journeymen, special project workers and medical receptors for appointment. Some 100 other applications are expected to be reviewed before the end of this year, he said.

"This is great," he commented, "but we need and we would like to have twice that number or three times that number." Cobbs noted that his department has the capability of processing such increased numbers "if we had the applications to process."

Requests for new missionaries originate on the mission fields as missionaries survey needs in the 88 countries where Southern Baptists now have work. The requests totaled more than 1,300 during the past year. "It seems that five requests are left unfilled for every one we are able to fill," Cobbs said, "and that's not right."

The critical need for more missionaries also was underscored in two other reports given at the board meeting.

Gottfried B. Osei-Mensah of Nairobi, Kenya, executive secretary of the Lausanne Continuing Committee on World Evangelization, here as a guest of the Foreign Mission Board, observed that the "spirit of God is moving" all around the world today and it is more imperative than ever before to send out missionaries to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Two-thirds of the world's people still have not yet heard the gospel, he said, and there's no way to reach more than 70 percent of these except by the sending of missionaries. Only about 30 percent of the unreached people could be won by their neighboring Christian countries, he said, because so many of the world's people have no near Christian neighbors.

Churches throughout the world "seem to want to be obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ" to win others, he noted. He pointed to the evangelistic stirrings in such populous countries as India, where young Indian Christian leaders have set a goal of reaching that country's 620 million people for Christ by the end of the century.

"You and I," he said, "are involved in an enterprise that cannot fail."

George H. Hays, Foreign Mission Board secretary for East Asia, pointed out the urgent need for more missionaries in his area. Japan, he said, has 193 cities with a population of more than 100,000. Of these, 90 have one or more Baptist churches, 20 have a mission, and 83 have no Baptist services of any kind. According to the 1977 statistics in Christian Yearbook, only 1.937 percent of Japan's 113,500,000 people are Christians, Hays pointed out.

In the 30 Post-World War II years of its history, the Japan Baptist Convention has grown from 16 churches with 500 members to 175 churches and 76 missions with 24,345 members, Hays said. He reported that during the convention's recent 30th anniversary celebration one speaker said, "Southern Baptists, through their missionaries, brought to us the spirit of evangelism."

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But Hays noted that much work yet remains to be done. The city of Osaka, for example, has only two churches and one mission for a population of 2,752,706.

In Okinawa, Hays said, the president of the Okinawa Baptist Convention recently requested three new missionaries. After several years of waiting, one couple was appointed and now is in orientation. But this couple will replace another couple retiring in October 1978, leaving the need for the three new missionaries still unmet.

During its Sept. 13 meeting, the board employed two registered nurses as special project workers who will spend a year overseas to meet special medical needs in Gaza and East Africa. Rheta Perry of Dublin, Ga., will go to Gaza to fill an urgent need for medical personnel and Jean Smith of Vance, Miss., will go to Tanzania.

Miss Smith has an identical twin sister, Barbara Jo Smith, who is on a two-year stint as a missionary journeyman teaching missionary children in Mbeya, Tanzania. Jean will work at a Baptist hospital in the same city.

Among the 188 recommendations which the board's administrative committee presented were motions authorizing payment of travel expenses of 16 volunteers going overseas to spend at least a year in various responsibilities.

The increasing number of volunteers indicates the gradual increase in volunteer involvement overseas on an extended basis, according to W. L. (Wimpy) Smith, associate in the office of the consultant on laymen overseas.

Smith attributed the increase to the fact that organizations of missionaries overseas are becoming more aware that these extended workers can fill the gap when a missionary comes on furlough. And Southern Baptists, he added, also are becoming more aware of these opportunities to serve.

"The reason we pay transportation is that the cost cannot be met out of a retirement salary," Smith said, "but when the organization of missionaries provides lodging and the board provides transportation the volunteers' retirement income will take care of their basic needs."

In other actions, the board voted \$8,750 as its 25 percent share of the budget for helping to implement the denomination's new Missions Education Council, approved \$66,610 for relief work and \$41,570 in projects to alleviate world hunger, and provided funds to help Ethiopian missionary families get set up in housekeeping again. These families had to leave behind their household goods and personal effects when forced to leave Ethiopia earlier this year.

In an effort to help all missionaries, the board approved a new cost of living supplement of \$360 for each child of missionaries while their families are on furlough in the United States unless they are already covered by the board's Margaret Fund support for college students.

The new Missions Education Council is a cooperative project designed to coordinate planning for a comprehensive missions education strategy by the Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood Commission, Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board. Its steering committee, meeting Aug. 31 in Nashville, set up a \$35,000 budget to cover salary, office, and travel expenses of a staff assistant. The group asked Katharine Bryan, former director of Baptist Women for the Texas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, to lead in designing and launching cooperative projects of the new missions education group.

R. Keith Parks, director of the Foreign Mission Board's mission support division and its representative on the steering committee, said the new council "has the potential of becoming the vehicle which will enable the five agencies to make a significant united impact on Southern Baptists in a way that has not been possible in the recent past at least."

Executive Director Baker J. Cauthen reported to the board that relief and hunger contributions channeled through the Foreign Mission Board so far this fiscal year total approximately \$600,000. This is about half the amounts received for the same periods in the past two years but far above the average of \$50,000 a year received before natural disasters in Guatemala, Honduras and other areas awakened Southern Baptists to the need for such contributions.

"Without any special promotion and with no major natural disasters having occurred this year," Cauthen said, "these contributions have continued to come in, in a very good way."

During the meeting the board approved using \$38,570 in hunger funds for monthly distributions of food to 600 families in North Brazil in a project sponsored by the Goodwill Center in Recife, and voted \$3,000 for agricultural items needed to help improve food production on the island of Antigua in the Caribbean.

From relief funds, the board authorized use of \$32,142 for the Recife center to use in a pilot project aimed at continual education of children in poverty areas. These funds will be used for purchase of school supplies, uniforms, shoes and socks for 1,000 grade school and 300 high school students.

In projects under this same center, the board voted \$5,000 in relief funds for minimal house repairs for people in poverty areas and \$1,000 to help Brazilians obtain documents and photos required for employment in their country.

These projects were set up as the result of tours made earlier in the year by W. Eugene Grubbs, the board's coordinator of hunger relief and disaster response.

Other relief appropriations included \$5,867 for equipment to teach domestic and professional skills courses at Mt. Tabor Baptist Church in Salvador in North Brazil; \$10,721 to buy equipment for professional courses for the poor through the Kate White Domestic School in Salvador; \$500 to provide milk for children through a day care center in Benin in West Africa; \$5,000 for a social ministries program near the central market in Tegucigalpa, Honduras; \$1,380 for distribution of 100,000 pounds of corn for a needy agriculture area in Southern Honduras; and \$5,000 for helping Angolan refugees in Zambia.

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OBU Names Eugene
Hall to Presidency

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SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--Eugene Hall, academic vice president at Louisiana College, Pineville, has been elected 12th president of Oklahoma Baptist University here, effective Oct. 15.

Hall, 45, succeeds William G. Tanner, who resigned in Sept. 1976 to become executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

A native of Mansfield, La., Hall has served as chairman of the speech department, academic dean and academic vice president in two different periods at Louisiana College, totaling seven years. He was the school's interim president, Nov. 1974-June 1975, when Robert L. Lynn, vice president for administration at Oklahoma Baptist University, accepted the presidency.

Hall, who has also been serving as interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Natchitoches, La., was previously assistant professor of speech and later chairman of the speech department at Georgetown (Ky.) College; associate professor of speech and staff assistant to the dean of the college of arts and humanities at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green; graduate assistant at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; and lieutenant in the Navy Chaplains Corps.

He is a graduate of Louisiana College and earned a bachelor of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, and master of arts and doctor of philosophy degrees from Louisiana State University.

He is married to the former Reba Frances Hobby, who is a graduate of Baylor University and Southern Seminary. They have three teenage children.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers by Oklahoma Baptist University.

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Hewitt, Dale to Teach At
Southeastern Seminary

WAKE FOREST, N. C. (BP)--T. Furman Hewitt and Robert D. Dale have been named to the faculty of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

A native of Columbia, S. C., Hewitt will become associate professor of Christian ethics; and Dale, from Neosho, associate professor of pastoral leadership and church ministries.

Hewitt comes to Southeastern from Duke University where he was instructor in the department of religion. He holds the doctor of philosophy degree from Southern Baptist Seminary, Louisville.

Dale was consultant and supervisor in the church administration department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville, before coming to Southeastern. He holds the doctor of philosophy degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.