



-- FEATURES

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Scottish Baptist Pastors
Seek SBC Help in Growth

By Charles Willis

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A group of 30 Baptist pastors from Scotland found larger churches and different practices than they are accustomed to during a month-long look at Southern Baptists.

The pastors visited regions teeming with Southern Baptists, meeting people who could not imagine what they encounter as a minor denomination in Scotland.

Jim Heron, Ron Swanson and Ron Scott know what it is like to work as a religious minority as Baptists in Scotland are overshadowed approximately 16,000 to one million by the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian). But the pastors and their fellow Baptists are determined to narrow the ratio through a three-year plan to stimulate and achieve growth.

Heron, past president of the Baptist Union of Scotland; Swanson, a pioneer pastor; and Scott, assistant secretary of the Baptist Union, recently spent four weeks in this country studying Southern Baptist life. They, along with 27 other Scottish pastors, visited in Virginia, Georgia, Oklahoma and Tennessee under the sponsorship of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and at the invitation of several SBC agencies and churches.

Scott said the purpose of the visit is to achieve a "widened vision of our ministry and to adopt at least some of the ways here."

Using a "give-and-take" approach to their visit, the pastors spent a week in Virginia and a week in Oklahoma on loan to local churches. Some pastors preached, while others taught Sunday School classes and Bible study groups, spoke to civic clubs, kept dinner engagements and appeared on local radio and television shows.

The "take" portion of the visit came not only through their experiences in local churches, but in organized seminars provided by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the Sunday School Board.

Seminars at the Home Mission Board focused on church growth and evangelism, while at the Sunday School Board, studies centered on church administration, church music, Sunday School and church training.

Reflecting on the differences between Baptist life in Scotland and in the United States, the men cited congregation size, pastoral roles, education programs and membership practices.

"Being in large churches has been very refreshing," said Swanson. "Average membership for a Baptist church in Scotland is about 150 persons. A large church would have about 300 members, and, on the other end of the scale, some churches have only six to ten members."

"In Scotland," said Scott, "the pastor does virtually everything. There are no full-time ministers of music or education. It's traditional that the pastors do a great deal of the work alone. The role of the pastor is certainly different here. The responsibilities are better shared."

Heron, noting great differences in Bible study programs, said, "Sunday Schools in Scotland are conducted only from September through May. The program is geared for children ages three through 12, and Sunday School activities generally are held concurrently with the worship service. Adults have not been interested in attending Sunday School themselves because of its tradition as a juvenile activity." Thus, a 60 percent failure rate is the record for "all-age" Sunday Schools in Scotland.

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The pastors say that tradition is not their only obstacle in starting Sunday Schools for all age groups. Public transportation, which many church members use to attend services, is not available early in the day. Additionally, most churches in Scotland lack adequate facilities for an all-age program, and there is a great shortage of people willing and able to teach. Scott said some churches do provide educational opportunities for all age groups sometime in the seek.

The pastors were surprised at the early age that persons in the United States are baptized.

"It is rare that anyone under 14 would be baptized in Scotland," said Heron. "Churches there would be uneasy over baptism at an earlier age. That kind of decision needs to be made by someone of maturity."

Swanson voiced surprise that "churches here accept people for membership 'on the spot.' In Scotland, this doesn't happen until after members have interviewed the people."

Despite the differences, the pastors expressed their delight with the "depth of fellowship, hospitality and generosity" shown to them as they stayed in private homes or were guests in local motels. One particular form of Southern Baptist fellowship impressed the pastors so much that some said they would like to see it adopted in Scotland--that is the traditional Wednesday night church supper before prayer meeting.

The men plan to use information and experiences gleaned from Southern Baptists not only in their own churches, but also for the good of the entire Baptist Union when they return home. An "all-Scotland" conference is scheduled in June to plan for enlarged structure and life for the denomination.

Evidence that the growth plan will work is apparent at home, they say, by a "sense of new life in the church, vision, drive and the sparkle of Christian activity."

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers by the Sunday School Board Bureau of Baptist Press.

Clayton Named Editor
Of Louisiana Baptist Paper

Baptist Press

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP)--Lynn Clayton, editor of the state newspaper of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, has been elected editor of the Baptist Message, state newspaper of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

Clayton, editor of the Baptist Digest with offices in Topeka, Kans., since 1974, succeeds Jim Cole, who resigned last December after serving as editor of the Baptist Message for 20 years. Cole is executive vice president of the Baylor University Alumni Association in Waco, Texas.

Clayton received the bachelor of arts degree from Baylor University and the master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is studying for the master of communications degree at Wichita State University.

The Baptist Digest won first place in the news publication category of the Southern Baptist Public Relations Association competition in 1976 and 1977.

Clayton has been a weekly columnist for the Waco News Tribune, has written for several Southern Baptist publications and is author of "No Second Class Christians," published by Broadman Press in 1976.

He has served on the Southern Baptist Convention's committee on committees, and is a trustee of Southwestern Seminary. He served on the recent seminary presidential search committee.

Clayton, 37, is a native of Seminole, Texas, and is married to the former Brenda Joy Webster of Dallas. They are parents of a son and a daughter. He is listed in Who's Who in Religion, Outstanding Young Men of America and Notable Americans.

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SBC Contributions Continue
To Show Marked Increase

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--National Southern Baptist Convention receipts total \$33,108,261 in Cooperative Program budget contributions and \$68,982,905 in total contributions after the first seven months of the 1977-78 fiscal year.

Contributions are running slightly ahead of what's needed to meet the 1977-78 operating and capital needs budget of \$55.08 million but are only running at 89.5 percent of the budget when the \$8.32 million Bold Advance challenge goal for unmet missions needs is included.

April's undesignated Cooperative Program receipts were up 10.31 percent over the same period last year and designated gifts were up 35.52 percent. Total contributions, made up of undesignated contributions for world mission needs of SBC agencies and another \$35,874,644 in designated receipts, are up 11.79 percent over the same period last year.

During April, Cooperative Program contributions totaled \$4,838,855, or 10.31 percent ahead of April, 1977, and total gifts amounted to \$9,557,478, or 21.46 percent ahead of last April. The total gifts included \$4,718,623 in designated gifts, a 35.52 percent increase over last April.

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Home Mission Board Plans
Open House During SBC

Baptist Press
5/1/78

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors and staff of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board will host an open house at the board offices at 1350 Spring Street during the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting.

The reception honoring home missionaries will be Wednesday, June 14, from 2 to 5 p.m., on the free afternoon scheduled during the June 13-15 convention at the Atlanta World Congress Center.

A yellow and white canopy, pink lemonade, homemade cookies and ice cream cones will greet SBC visitors behind the seven-story brick headquarters. Although the building will be open to messengers all week, William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer, and members of the board of directors will be there to welcome visitors only on Wednesday.

The Home Mission Board supports over 2,500 missionaries in the 50 states, Puerto Rico and American Samoa. Strategy affecting the future of home missions originates from the offices housing 275 employees, located just off the downtown interstate connector.

A short visual presentation about the work of the board will precede self-paced tours of the building. Displays on each floor will illustrate the programs of work and a representative in each office will be available to answer questions.

Artifacts from home missionaries and people affected by home missions will fill viewing cases. Visitors will see such things as:

Myla Guard's engagement ring, donated to home missions in a dying gesture last year; a hand-stitched lap pillow, made by the Virginia widow who donated \$50,000 for a Puerto Rican seminary; a quilt made by an Appalachian Baptist and artwork by Baptist ethnics; and Annie Armstrong's wardrobe and the cornerstone of the old Home Mission Board building.

Buses running to hotels in north Atlanta from the Congress Center every few minutes will stop at the Home Mission Board building, about three miles from downtown, on Wednesday afternoon.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers by the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

Recording Secretary's
Mother Dies

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Mrs. Hazel Porter, mother of Lee Porter, the registration secretary for the Southern Baptist Convention, died April 22. She was 75.

Mrs. Porter was a lifelong resident of Wellsville, Mo., and member of Wellsville Baptist Church where she served in many local and associational capacities. She is survived by sons Dean, Anchorage, Ala.; James of Wellsville; and Lee, who is also senior adult consultant in the Sunday School Department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

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Brotherhood Leaders Plan
Church Program Action

Baptist Press
5/1/78

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--State and national Southern Baptist Brotherhood leaders sketched long range plans for Baptist men and boys to participate in a series of evangelism projects, increase support of the Cooperative Program, recruit mission volunteers, and pray for missions during the annual Brotherhood Leadership Conference.

During 1979-80 the leaders agreed to introduce new materials supporting study and action plans for church and associational Brotherhood units and to expand a leader training program.

Plans for 1980-82 call for Brotherhood units to take part in lifestyle stewardship projects, special mission ministries involving prisoners, retirees, and Bible distribution, and growth projects designed to increase the number of men and boys involved in missions through Brotherhood.

In the area of missionary recruitment, the planners agreed to focus on finding volunteers and sponsors for the Mission Service Corps, the SBC plan for putting 5,000 volunteers on mission fields for one and two year periods by 1982.

Brotherhood leaders called for research into projects designed to make lay people more aware of their responsibilities as Christian ministers and to encourage couples to utilize their spiritual gifts as a husband and wife team.

Glendon McCullough, executive director of the Brotherhood Commission which hosted the conference, said the long-range plans represented Brotherhood commitment to the Bold Mission Thrust emphasis of the Southern Baptist Convention which seeks to present the gospel to every person in the world by the year 2000.

McCullough challenged planners to increase the visibility of Brotherhood work through men's and boy's meetings and disaster relief. He also urged them to sharply define Brotherhood priorities and to communicate them through quality meetings and materials.

"We also need to expand our assistance to ethnic churches," McCullough said. "I've not seen a response to lay work like I have seen in ethnic Baptist churches."

Brotherhood leaders also need to intensify their efforts to cooperate with other state convention and SBC agency leaders, McCullough added.

"Our success the next few years will be measured on the basis of how well we work together," he said. "Southern Baptists are tired of people who are trying to build their own little kingdoms."

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CORRECTION: In headline dated April 28 entitled "Affect of History Traced by Baptists," change Affect to Effect. Thanks, (BP).

(BP)

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