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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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August 29, 1978

78-141

**Cabinet To Run Brotherhood  
 Commission During Interim**

**MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)**--The executive committee of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission has authorized the four-member cabinet of the late Glendon McCullough, executive director, to operate the agency until a new director is chosen.

Chairman William Hardy Jr. of Columbus, Miss., who shared the plan with commission staff, identified the cabinet members as Norman Godfrey, director of the ministries section; Bob Banks, director of the program section; Lynette Oliver, director of the business section; and Roy Jennings, administrative assistant.

Hardy said trustees of the agency will choose a committee to recommend an executive director when they meet in semi-annual session, November 8-10, at the commission's offices in Memphis, Tenn.

Godfrey will convene the cabinet, Hardy said, and Jennings will supervise the communications section during the interim. He emphasized that the cabinet would serve as the interim director and make decisions based on consensus. He said that he would work with the cabinet when they needed his services.

As cabinet convenor, Godfrey will receive all inquiries relating to the general work of the agency and route them, if necessary, Hardy explained.

"During the interim, we have no intention of changing the method of operations of the commission which Dr. McCullough started," Hardy told the staff. "We're not going to bring in anyone from the outside as interim director. We have the utmost confidence in you."

The staff is reviewing McCullough's calendar of commitments and each will be honored by a staff member if the parties involved so desire, Hardy said.

McCullough, 56, killed August 23 in a three-car crash during the afternoon rush hour on a Memphis street, had headed the commission since 1971.

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Two 'Bars'  
 Make a Cross

Baptist Press  
 8/29/78

**GRENADA (BP)**--Tony Ambrose is serving nine years for manslaughter. It happened in a barroom brawl. Today that same place--Grenada's Soursop Bar and Restaurant owned by Ambrose--is a church.

"That was the scene where a man lost his life," related Ambrose, "and now we want it to be a place where others might find life."

An inmate at the Richmond Hill Prison in Grenada, Ambrose became a Christian through the weekly Bible study ministry led by Southern Baptist Missionary Manget Herrin.

Following his request for membership in St. George's Baptist Church, the inmate and his wife Iola approached Herrin. The couple if God wanted them to give their business place in the town of Victoria to Grenada Baptists.

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The large two-story structure is on the main road in the west coast town.

Services are conducted by a police corporal who is a Grenada Baptist. The corporal was transferred to Victoria one week after the building donation was made.

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers by Richmond Bureau of Baptist Press.

Church Offers Building  
To Secure Jail Bond

By Norman Jameson

Baptist Press  
8/29/78

DECATUR, Ga. (BP)--Members of the Oakhurst Baptist Church have offered their building as security to cover a \$30,000 bond to free a recaptured convict until he can have an extradition hearing.

The man, who has been living under the name of Charles Harris since he walked away from an Indiana prison farm 10 years ago, was discovered by Atlanta police recently and has been jailed, pending extradition hearings that would send him back to Indiana.

Harris has served 25 years of a life term for the murder of a policeman in Wabash, Ind., in 1943.

According to Mike Weaver, associate pastor at Oakhurst, Harris was a model prisoner, a trustee on a prison farm. But because of controversy surrounding the policeman's murder, Harris' requests for parole were continually denied. When he realized he would never get out of prison, he simply walked away.

He went to Atlanta, changed his name, married and found work as a carpenter. His employer says he can have his job back immediately if he can avoid extradition to Indiana.

Much controversy surrounded the death of the young policeman, who had been a star athlete in the local high school. Weaver says enough evidence exists to suspect handling of the case. Harris, whose real name is Mosie Harriell, had begun his life prison term for the murder before the dead policeman was buried.

Harris maintains, according to Weaver who has spoken with him in jail, that he saw a court appointed lawyer for only five minutes in 1943. The lawyer supposedly told him he had murdered a policeman and his only chance to live was to admit it and accept a life prison term.

The church's offer of bond security has not been accepted by DeKalb County officials, who would be in a predicament should Harris break bail. Could the county foreclose on a church?

Oakhurst has not avoided controversy in the past. It was one of the first Southern Baptist churches to integrate and has not moved out of its transitional community. It has ordained women and two members, Gary Gunderson and Andy Loving, have been instrumental in increasing Baptist awareness of world hunger through their group called "Seeds."

Weaver says his church's actions say that although Georgia prisons, where two inmates were recently murdered, and prisons throughout the country are in bad shape, Harris is one example of the rehabilitation system working.

"If in fact he did kill the policeman in Indiana," Weaver says, "he's had a new birth of a sort and has proved that by living in our city as a productive citizen." Weaver encourages people to call Harris by that name and not Harriell, because "the man is not who he was."

Oakhurst members have put up their \$200,000 building to illustrate their genuine concern for Harris. They want the city of Atlanta, or Georgia Governor George Busbee, to petition Indiana, asking that Harris be allowed to continue to live in Atlanta on parole.

"We are running the risk of doing what the gospel says for the sake of others," Weaver says.

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**-- FEATURES**  
produced by Baptist Press

August 29, 1978

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Faith Necessary  
In Bleak Alaska

By Celeste Loucks

SELAWIK, Alaska (BP)--A vigorous, trusting faith is basic to Harley Shield, who packed his wife and six children to Alaska, determined to stay as Southern Baptist missionaries.

"It will take people who stay, who grow up with the natives," to have an effective ministry the Shields say.

Traveling by bush plane and snowmobile, the Shields cover about 25,000 miles each year, maintaining work in five villages located just above the Arctic Circle. In winter, they function amid temperatures hovering 30-40 degrees below zero. All year long they face a mission field hard to reach, sometimes unyielding. "Sunday after Sunday, nobody moves," says Martha Shield.

The couple lives in a three-room residence in the back of First Baptist Church in Selawik, one of a group of islands located east of the Kotzebue Sound. Martha keeps house without a dishwasher or clothes dryer, running water or plumbing, and the nearest grocery is 70 miles southwest in Kotzebue.

The couple has learned, like natives, to adapt. A closet of assorted mittens, boots, hats, fur ruffs and parkas, shows they constantly hunt for warmer, more efficient clothes. Their work shows the same struggle. Says Shield, "We're experimenting all the time."

No superhighways or roads connect Selawik with the other mission sites: Kobuk, Kiana, Ambler and Shungnak, all perched on the banks of the Kobuk River. The Shields travel by plane--often taking off and landing on ice-covered lakes and rivers, and on short, snowy airstrips--or by snowmobile, with Martha in a sled behind.

At times, the Shields are overwhelmed by the needs. Much of their ministry involves alcoholics or borderline alcoholics.

But they express a deep appreciation for the natives. "They are not neurotic," Martha says. "They are such friendly, relaxed people."

Adds Shield: "They are friendly, they survive, they have stamina. In a spiritual sense, they have what it takes to come to grips. Out on the trail, hunting, boating and fishing, you can't beat them. In town, they're fish out of water, gasping."

The Shields realize native leaders must be developed if the work in the arctic is to have any degree of permanence.

Shield prays, "We need wisdom how best to use our time and energy...help us to be patient...lay it on the Eskimos' hearts to reach their own people."

Years ago, Shield considered starting a school to train native pastors. "I found you can't be a traveling missionary and a training missionary," he says. "I felt a burden for the villages. I decided to travel."

Much of the Shields' work begins with relationships. "We have established a rapport. They sense we're genuine. They trust us," he says. "When they want to know our Lord, perhaps they will come to us."

Because Sunday School lesson examples often are aimed at urban Americans, and because many natives have trouble with English, Shield translates scripture into arctic terms.

Shield paid his own way from California to explore possibilities of doing mission work in Alaska. Despite discouragement from others, he brought his family to the arctic.

"When we came out here, people thought our kids wouldn't adjust," Shield says smiling. Four of their children have married natives and live in Alaska. "I guess they did adjust."

The future of missions, they admit, sometimes looks dismal. Yet Shield says softly, "Our prayer is our children who have married natives will have an entree to the natives. That's our vision, our dream."

The couple plans to retire to a small home they've built on a "piece of tundra" in Kotzebue. "I wouldn't want to live in the city," says Martha. "We've lived in the bush for so long. Even if something happens to Harley--I'll stay."

In the meantime, the couple forges ahead. "We're like seeds, underground," says Shield. "We really don't know what all is happening--yet."

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(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist newspapers by the Atlanta Bureau of Baptist Press.

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AUG. 30 1978