

(BP)**-- BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Worship, Love, Dedication
Evident in Romanian Churches

ARAD, ROMANIA (BP)--Baptists in Romania live in a world of love, fellowship and constant observance by government informants. Southern Baptist missionaries Gene and Jacki Phillips, stationed in France, became a part of that world for one Sunday during a visit as tourists.

The church service in Speranta (hope) Baptist Church was packed and the Phillips family found seating only in the choir loft. Soon even the aisles were full as more than 1,200 people crowded in for the longer than two-hour worship service. "From time to time someone seated would nod and smile to someone standing, and they would change places," Mrs. Phillips said.

The choirs and orchestra were led by four directors, taking turns, and the people sang from memory because they had no hymnals. After greetings and a message by Gene Phillips, 31 people were baptized. Because only one baptism service is held each year, the Romanian Christian baptism takes on extra significance.

"The pastor's daughter told me that once a person decides to follow Jesus, his name is given to the government authorities and his persecution begins--things like having difficulty in classes at school, being shunned by classmates and maybe not getting a diploma," Mrs. Phillips said. "Or at work, Christians may be passed up for promotion and in the neighborhood, watched constantly by an informer."

The pastor asked candidates if they believed in Jesus Christ as Saviour and each person answered loud and clear, "Yes, I believe with all my heart."

"As each person came out of the baptismal waters, the crowd sang a couplet with a haunting tune, 'That one who believed, that one was baptized,'" Mrs. Phillips said. "And I blinked back the tears as I thought what faith and courage it takes to be a Christian in this Communist land."

After the service they were invited to the engagement dinner of a young couple who had given their testimonies during the baptismal service. Across from the Phillips family sat a government security person or informer. He had led the singing and read the Scripture and taken a major part in the morning worship, yet he was one of the informers in the church. "My heart sank as I tried to understand how a person could play on both teams," Mrs. Phillips said.

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President Establishes
World Hunger Commission

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WASHINGTON (BP)--President Jimmy Carter has established a Presidential Commission on World Hunger to discover the causes of world hunger and malnutrition as well as to assess the success of present efforts to meet the needs.

The role of the commission will be to "develop factual data as to the causes of world hunger and malnutrition" and to "assess the extent to which (present) programs are meeting their objectives." It will also develop recommendations "designed to significantly reduce world hunger and malnutrition" and "develop various options for harnessing available resources to carry out those recommendations."

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Carter assigned the commission the task of holding hearings and conducting studies as needed to develop policy options for government efforts and private organizations.

The commission will be composed of 20 members, 16 of whom will be appointed by the president. Two members from each house of Congress will also be named.

An interim report from the commission will be given to the president by July 31, 1979.

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Furloughing Missionaries
To Help Enlist 'The Called'

Baptist Press
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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist foreign missionaries are being enlisted to help recruit enough other missionaries to double the Foreign Mission Board overseas staff within the next two decades.

But in doing so, the board continues to emphasize its basic belief that the "calling out" of missionaries is the work of the Holy Spirit, says Bill Marshall, who directs the utilization of missionaries on furlough.

"Our work is to present career needs to people who could help meet those needs," he adds.

Marshall and his associates walk a fine line between what might be described as a recruitment program, which they insist it is not, and a program for communicating the opportunities for Christian service abroad.

He says the department seeks to enlist the 500 missionaries home on furlough at any one time to contact other Southern Baptists who, with God's leadership, will join them in a career of overseas service. The board has 2,858 now under appointment but resignations and retirement will trim that figure to require more than a doubling of appointments to reach the Bold Mission Thrust goal of 5,000 career missionaries by the end of the century.

Marshall points to a survey showing a foreign missionary "as the most influential person" in enlisting other missionaries. Surveys show about half the career missionaries made their contact with the Foreign Mission Board after hearing a missionary testimony about service opportunities.

Marshall is sensitive to any charge his program is "recruitment" to the extent there's any pressure for a commitment. Instead, he says "God often uses the missionary" as the "human vehicle" in leading others to overseas service. "Pressure from missionaries is inappropriate," he adds.

Foreign Mission Board leaders feel strongly that the responsibility for "calling out the called" rests with the local church, and especially with the pastor, who is the key person in this ministry of the Holy Spirit. Marshall believes that missionaries home on furlough, active in the enlistment program, provide "a unique and personal resource" to churches in this undertaking.

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Desbien Named PR
Director At Midwestern

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KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Robert L. Desbien, public relations consultant for the past two years at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been named director of public relations for the 21-year old school.

Prior to coming to Midwestern in 1976, Desbien, 29, was vice president of marketing and production at the Professional Advertiser, Inc., Manhattan, Kan., a television commercial syndicator. He spent six years as studio director and commercial producer at WIBW Television, part of Stauffer publications, based in Topeka, Kan.

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Educated at Washburn University, Topeka, Desbien, a native of Kansas, has won several broadcasting awards.

His wife, Phyllis, also works at Midwestern Seminary as professional services consultant.

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New Sunday Schools
Need People, Name

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
9/11/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--What do Sunrise and Sunset have in common?

Besides being times of day, they are the names of two of the more than 1,700 new Sunday Schools begun since Oct. 1, 1976, as part of a Southern Baptist effort to start 3,000 by Sept. 30, 1979.

In addition to selecting a site, enlisting leaders and knocking on doors to enroll persons for Bible study, one of the first thing participants in a new Sunday School do is give themselves a name, said James Lackey, Sunday School Board growth consultant, who receives reports of new starts.

Not surprisingly, biblical and theological names are popular--Agape, Faith, Hope, Love, Corinthians, and Grace and Truth.

Animals and birds are the inspiration for some. There's Little Eagle, Possum Kingdom, Whale's Belly, Big Bear and Skunk Holler.

"Why" is the name of a new Sunday School in Why, Ariz. When asked, "Why did you name it Why?" the reply was, "Why would anyone want to come to a place so hot?"

Historical personalities have not been left out. Constantine, Lincoln and Napoleon are also Sunday Schools. So are bodies of water like Tongue River, Lake Majestic, Dripping Springs, Island Pond and Indian Wells.

Some names conjure up colorful pictures: Rainbow Canyon, Lower Light, Enchanted Chapel and Rim Rock.

One wonders if the Rocky Mountain, Pulaski Pike and New Mount Gideon West Sunday Schools are as hard to climb to as their names imply.

"Whatever its name, a new Sunday School reaches people," said Lackey. According to figures he has compiled, after one year a new Sunday School has an average enrollment of 60, an average attendance of 40 and has witnessed 10 conversions.

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Village Engineer Uses
Skills to Win Hearing

Baptist Press
9/11/78

MORGANTOWN, N. C. (BP)--Cliff Staton builds bridges, roads and water systems, not in an American city, but in the rural villages of Africa.

The Statons are on furlough now and aren't sure where in Africa they'll be when they return. But Staton is sure of one thing--he wants to continue using his village-level engineering skills "to win a friendly hearing for Christ."

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The first and only village-level engineer now serving as a missionary with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Staton applies basic engineering knowledge to village life.

"We try to get the local people to sponsor the projects and work on them," Staton says. "We want to use locally available materials and keep it on a level that the local government and local people can afford."

At the invitation of village leaders, missionaries may initiate projects that will open up a witness opportunity in Ethiopia, where Staton worked until forced to leave because of political unrest. Staton's colleagues were involved in veterinary medicine, medical clinics, handcraft schools and agriculture. He built a footbridge, roads and clean water projects.

"I'm not a speaker, preacher or teacher," Staton says. "But I can share one-to-one about my belief. My ministry was to use my skills to build a platform for a preacher."

Staton believes missions work in Ethiopia could have been more effective if more emphasis had been put on evangelism and in nurturing new believers.

Now the Statons are in a holding pattern, praying about where they should go when they return to eastern Africa. Two missionary couples have returned to Ethiopia but permits to work in rural areas where the Statons served have not been granted.

"I want more than building," Staton says. "I don't want to give up evangelism."

Staton once was a civil engineer involved in construction and water and sewage treatment planning. "I had to agree with God to give up my engineering," Staton says of his call to missions. "God took it, polished it and handed it back to me to be used for him."

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CORRECTIONS: In (BP) story mailed Sept. 8 entitled "Editors Search for Solution to Escalating Postage Costs" please finish line four in paragraph two to read: Western Recorder editor C. R. Daley of Kentucky.

Please change paragraph 15, line two, to read: The highest individual rate is the \$4.55 charged by the California Southern Baptist. Tennessee's Baptist and Reflector editor, Al Shackelford, says "We have talked...etc."

Thanks, Baptist Press