

(BP)**- - BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 26, 1979

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Religious Educators
Confront Church Growth

HOUSTON, Texas (BP)--Religious educators from across the United States will explore ways to get churches growing to undergird Southern Baptists' Bold Mission Thrust at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association, June 10-11, at First Baptist Church, Houston.

The meeting is one of several preceding the annual gathering of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 12-14, at the Summit and the Astrodome.

"If Bold Mission Thrust is to become a reality, religious educators must accept part of the responsibility to get our churches growing again," declared Charles Lowry, president of the association and director of church program services for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, Alexandria, La.

Referring to statistical reports which show declines in baptisms and church program organizations and a slowdown in SBC growth, Lowry said, "A tragic philosophy has been in practice. We've been willing to teach people who have showed up, but we must do more than that by going out and bringing people in. I began my ministry in the "Million More in '54" years (SBC theme in 1954), when outreach evangelism was a priority in the Sunday Schools," Lowry said. "We've come through a period of about two decades when that priority has become submerged in a number of things. If we're going to proclaim Christ's message to the whole world, as Bold Mission Thrust envisions, we must rediscover outreach evangelism."

A battery of speakers will explore the theme, "Religious Education: Key to Bold Mission," during the two-day gathering.

Jesse C. Fletcher, president of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas, will speak on "Discipleship: Basis for Bold Mission;" Peter Wagner, associate professor of church growth, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif., on "Religious Education: Its Role in Church Growth;" and William Pinson, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., on "The Religious Educator: Agent for Bold Mission."

Other program personnel include LeRoy Ford, professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, with three sessions on "Tips for Teaching and Training;" C. Winfield Rich, minister of education, Belmont Heights Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn.; and Crawford Howell, manager, Broadman sales, Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

Special features include a synopsis on the recent Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations by Neta Stewart, dean of women and director of student activities at Southwestern Seminary. Capsules on vocational guidance, training and keeping abreast of developments will be presented respectively by Alice Magill, vocational guidance specialist, Baptist Sunday School Board; Ferris Jordan of the faculty of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; and Gary Ellis, minister of education, Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala.

Christian actress Jeanette Clift George of Houston and The After Dinner Players will lead worship at three sessions and humorist Grady Nutt of Louisville, Ky., billed as "the prime minister of humor," will entertain at a 12:30 p.m. luncheon on Monday, June 11.

Registration is scheduled between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 10, with the session that day getting underway at 7 p.m. Other sessions are at 8:50 a.m. and 6:45 p.m., June 11.

Southern Baptist Religious Education Association
June 10-11, 1979
First Baptist Church
Houston, Texas

Theme: "Religious Education: Key to Bold Mission"

Sunday Afternoon, June 10

2:00-5:00 Registration

Sunday Evening, June 10

Charles Lowry, Alexandria, LA, presiding
Theme: Religious Education: Key to Bold Mission

7:00 Worship--Jeannette Clift George, Houston, TX, and The After Dinner Players
7:20 Welcome--Roy Lee Williams, Houston, TX
7:30 Tips for Teaching and Training--LeRoy Ford, Fort Worth, TX
7:50 Special Music
8:00 Discipleship: Basis for Bold Mission--Jesse Fletcher, Abilene, TX
8:45 Fellowship Hour--Houston and Texas Religious Education Associations, Hosts

Monday Morning, June 11

Hazel Morris, Fort Worth, TX, Presiding
Theme: "Growing Churches: Base for Bold Mission"

8:50 Worship--Jeannette Clift George, Houston, TX, and The After Dinner Players
9:10 Have Joys, Will Share--C. Winfield Rich, Nashville, TN
9:35 Tips for Teaching and Training--LeRoy Ford, Fort Worth, TX
9:55 Resources for Religious Educators--Crawford Howell, Nashville, TN
10:10 Synopsis: Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations--Neta Stewart, Fort Worth, TX
10:20 Break
10:45 Religious Education: Its Role in Church Growth--Peter Wagner, Pasadena, CA
11:30 Translations, Applications, Questions
12:15 Adjourn

Luncheon

Robert S. Cook, Jacksonville, FL, presiding

12:30 Program: Grady Nutt, Louisville, KY, "The Prime Minister of Humor"

Monday Evening, June 11

Lawrence Klempnauer, Fort Worth, TX, presiding
Theme: "Religious Education--Agent for Change"

6:45 Worship--Jeannette Clift George, Houston, TX, and The After Dinner Players
7:00 Tips for Teaching and Training--LeRoy Ford, Fort Worth, TX
7:20 Business Session
7:50 Three Capsules (Digests of longer research papers to be included in the proceedings)
 Vocational Guidance--Alice Magill, Nashville, TN
 Training--Ferris Jordan, New Orleans, LA
 Keeping Abreast--Gary Ellis, Birmingham, AL
8:30 The Religious Educator: Agent for Bold Mission--William Pinson, Mill Valley, CA

Religious Education Association Officers

Charles Lowry, president; director, church program services division, Louisiana Baptist Convention, Alexandria, LA

Lawrence R. Klempnauer, vice president and president elect; minister of education and administration, Travis Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Worth, TX

Robert S. Cook, vice president; church training secretary, Florida Baptist Convention, Jacksonville, FL

Hazel Morris, vice president; assistant professor of childhood education, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX

Melva Cook, secretary/treasurer; program consultant, family ministry department, Sunday School Board, Nashville, TN

Harriet Buff, assistant secretary/treasurer; minister of education, Eastern Heights Baptist Church, Columbus, GA

Radio-TV Commission
Installs New Studio

Baptist Press
3/26/79

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission recently dedicated a new radio studio which will enable the commission to eventually produce all of its seven major radio programs in stereo.

"It was a step we've needed to take for a long time," said Buddy Brown, technical supervisor/audio. "Many of the stations which carry our programs have been asking us to provide them with stereo tapes. This was something we had to do or many would have stopped using our shows. Also, AM radio stations across the nation have been anticipating a proposed switch from mono to stereo sound."

Jim Rupe, assistant vice president for radio, said the new studio will help make the shows more appealing to station managers. "And when you're competing with both religious and secular broadcasters for public service time you've got to be as good or better than the best," said Rupe.

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Hunger Response Good;
Relief Funds Needed

Baptist Press
3/26/79

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptists, in an "outstanding response to world hunger needs," have now provided their foreign mission board with the opportunity to deal with the issue on a much broader scale.

John R. Cheyne, associate consultant of relief ministries, said the record giving to relief ministries in 1978, plus new hunger fund utilization guidelines approved in December 1978, present the opportunity for dealing not only with crisis hunger but with chronic hunger.

Southern Baptists gave a record \$1.74 million for relief ministries in 1978. Of the total, \$1.55 million was designated by the donors for hunger and relief and only \$194,469 for world relief. More than \$1 million of the contributions was received during the last four months of the year following World Hunger Day and a convention-wide Convocation on World Hunger. The previous record was \$1.67 million in 1976.

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"In response to the challenge, extensive programs are now being planned or have already been initiated which will enable missionaries to work with local people in planning long-range development," Cheyne said.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board had appropriated more than \$843,000 of the year's giving by the end of 1978. In the first three months of 1979 the board appropriated another \$400,000 to hunger projects and \$126,000 to relief work. The record giving has continued in early 1979 with a total of \$278,214 being received in the first two months.

The strong upsurge in world hunger giving in recent months, resulting in a current balance of about \$1.4 million in this fund, has allowed the board to move ahead with some major projects which previously were ruled out because of cost.

Among these are several dams for irrigation of wide areas of chronic drought such as in Upper Volta and parts of Brazil. Several of these projects could conceivably involve more than a half million dollars each.

Other hunger and relief projects planned include food production assistance, food preservation by construction of grain silos, nutritional assistance and training, children's and well-baby clinic, and family planning centers.

Even though both hunger and relief funds are administered through the relief ministries office, the two types of contributions are kept separately. The board uses them to best advantage while honoring the designation of the donor.

This has presented another challenge in relief ministries planning--the depletion of funds available for general relief work. Relief funds in 1978 were used up as quickly as they were made available. In early 1979 the relief funds were virtually depleted with only a little over \$6,000 left. When a major flood hit Brazil, calling for about \$300,000 in aid, the relief fund total had barely reached \$20,000.

Some money was reallocated from other relief projects to help meet the Brazil emergency. But these funds will have to be replaced for the other projects to continue. To date, the board has provided \$285,000 to aid in the Brazil emergency.

Although the board had the hunger funds needed to aid the Brazil flood victims with food, it is still short on relief funds. Less than \$3,000 remained in undesignated general relief funds at the time of the March board meeting.

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(BP) Photo to be mailed to state Baptist papers by The Baptist Messenger, Okla., state paper.

President Attends First
Baptist Church, Elk City

Baptist Press
3/26/79

ELK CITY, Okla. (BP)--It was just a regular Sunday morning worship service March 25, at First Baptist, Elk City--with some few exceptions.

Those few exceptions were contained among visitors that included Jimmy Carter, about 75 secret service agents, a few hundred other law enforcement officers, and crowd of local and national news media.

The president attended Sunday School and worship services during the visit to Elk City, Okla., for the eighth in his series of town meetings held around the country.

John W. Dugger, pastor, preached a sermon from II Timothy 1:7-12 entitled "God's Keeping Power."

The pastor's wife, Mary, sat next to the president. The Duggers' sons, James, 7, and Mark, 5, were next to their mother. During the service, James reached passed his mother and shook the president's hand and said, "I'm glad to meet you."

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A. B. Lowry, retired building contractor, taught the Sunday School class Carter attended. He didn't know the president would be in his class until Saturday night.

Carter's original schedule called for him to attend the worship services only, but he revealed Saturday night that he would be also in Sunday School. "I was a little shaky Saturday night," Lowry revealed.

"But Sunday morning after he came in and we had prayer, I relaxed and taught the lesson. We had a better attendance than usual. We've been running about 15 but Sunday we had 25 there," Lowry said. "I didn't ask him to participate, but Mr. Carter quoted a scripture which related to our lesson."

Lowry added that he did point out a particular passage to the president from Romans 12:8 of the Living New Testament: "If God has given you administrative ability and put you in charge of work of others, take the responsibility seriously."

Most of the congregation in the worship service couldn't resist the temptation to turn and get a good look at the visitor. They were similarly impressed by the many secret service men that stood around the auditorium.

Even though it had been announced that only members of the church would be admitted, there were exceptions for this also. The town's mayor, Larry Wade, and his wife, not Baptists, attended and sat near Carter.

The president stood with arms folded and sang without a hymnal during the congregational singing. The church was practically full with 668 in attendance.

Dugger said his sermon was not particularly directed at the president but to the whole congregation. He closed by listing the synonyms for Christ from each book of the Bible. Later the president complimented him on the sermon and commented particularly on the listings of the synonyms for Christ.

Dugger steered clear of any political statements during his message, but at one point he noted, "that all the armaments, missiles, bombs and military power in the world are but a thimble full compared to God's power."

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Golden Gate Offers 'LIFE' Evangelism Support Teams

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--A "Living Investments in Field Evangelism," (LIFE) program, has been introduced at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary to help bolster evangelism support for churches in the west and northwest.

The purpose of the program, according to William M. Pinson Jr., president of Golden Gate, is to supply specially-trained student evangelists to churches which do not have the resources to secure evangelists and musicians for revival meetings and other events.

Each student member of a LIFE team will undergo extensive orientation and training before being sent on assignment.

LIFE teams will be selected by a faculty and student committee headed by G. William Schweer, the E. Hermond Westmoreland Professor of Evangelism at Golden Gate.

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March 26, 1979

New Parents Discover
Childbirth Evangelism

By Teresa Sanders

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Evangelism and childbirth don't exactly go together like Lottie Moon and foreign missions or Annie Armstrong and home missions.

If Steve and Kathy Spence carry out their proposed ministry, however, evangelism and childbirth could go hand-in-glove wherever they serve.

Though the idea was conceived two years ago while the Spences awaited the arrival of their first child, their somewhat unorthodox ministry won't officially be born until sometime after Spence receives a master of religious education degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in June.

Then, somewhere, they hope to begin a Cradle Club with pre- and post-natal courses and instruction for expectant parents. Club members also would become prospects for evangelism outreach.

According to Spence, he and his wife were frustrated because their church didn't offer some kind of ministry for parents-to-be two years ago. "We kept wondering where good childbirth classes were held," he said. "We discovered that the only available classes then were in a Catholic hospital."

Spence says his intended Cradle Club program will meet the crisis of childbirth by supplying needs and affording an opportunity to hear the gospel, all in a framework of friendship.

His wife, a registered nurse who teaches pre-natal classes, and is working toward certification in the Childbirth Educator Training Association, Inc., will play an important part.

A major thrust in the Cradle Club will be to prepare the parents-to-be for the birth of their offspring so that the event will be a positive experience for them.

As the pre-natal courses begin, the enrollees' names and information will be used as prospects for the evangelism program. As time draws near for the baby to be born, deacons or other laypeople in the church would visit the prospective parents and help them with needs such as locating furniture, clothing or other items.

The deacon also could go to the hospital with the nervous father and provide needed moral support during the floor-pacing phase of the delivery.

Spence's ministry doesn't end when the baby and mother go home from the hospital.

He hopes to set up a telephone answering service for the new parents' questions and problems. A church member whose offspring have made it through the throes of babyhood would be a resource person to answer questions and to calm fears and anxieties.

The seminary student also is working on a loose leaf book containing material for a daily devotional guide, developmental stages during the beginning of baby's life, names of doctors and hospitals and child abuse and child safety information.



March 26, 1979

Man Finds Friend Not
Crazy--Just Christian

By Jim Newton

LOS ANGELES (BP)--When Ernest Park knocked on Dan Moon's apartment door in Los Angeles 12 years ago, he was trying to find out if Moon was crazy or something.

And if anyone had told him that knocking on Moon's door would start a chain of events that would eventually lead Park to become pastor of one of the fastest growing Baptist churches in California, he'd probably have responded: "You're crazy!"

Today, Park is pastor of the Korean Baptist Mission in Santa Ana, Calif., and Moon is consultant on Asian Americans and Internationals for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board language missions department, and also language missions consultant for the SBC Brotherhood Commission.

Park and Moon had attended high school together in Seoul, Korea, and when Moon's parents found out Park was going to the United States 12 years ago, they asked him to visit their son.

Moon's parents were afraid their son had lost his sanity when he wrote saying he was planning to go to Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary to study for the ministry. They couldn't understand why such a smart young man with a promising future would want to become pastor of a Christian church.

Park soon realized Moon was not crazy, just deeply committed to a new-found faith in Jesus Christ. Four years later, after much prayer by friends and members of Berendo Street Baptist Church where Moon attended, Park found the same faith.

Now Park is pastor of the Korean Baptist mission at Bristol Street Baptist Church in Santa Ana. In the last two-and-a-half years, he has baptized more than 180 converts, almost all of them new immigrants from Korea. It is one of the fastest growing churches in California, ranking 14th in the state with 86 baptisms last year. About 230 regularly attend worship services.

Norman Ford, pastor of the Bristol Street church, has high words of praise for Park. "He works 26 hours a day, seven days a week," Ford says in amazement. "He does social work, serves as an interpreter, provides transportation to Koreans who can't drive, finds jobs for new arrivals, helps them fill out immigration papers and other legal documents, visits--he just does everything imaginable."

Even though the Korean church at Bristol Street is growing rapidly, it can hardly keep pace with the speed of immigration. Park estimates that between 200 and 500 Koreans arrive every day at Los Angeles International Airport. Most stay in the L. A. area. About 20,000 Koreans, he estimates, live in Orange County where Santa Ana is located, about 35 miles southwest of Los Angeles.

"The Korean people are very responsive, very willing to accept Christ," Park says. "They feel very alone when they first arrive here, and their minds are open to new things."

Once they become Christians, they are extremely dedicated, he adds. A dozen or more members of the Santa Ana Korean church meet every day at 5 a.m. for an early-morning prayer service. Usually, there is an all-night prayer meeting on Friday nights.

Not only are the people very evangelistic, they are strong supporters of the church financially. Faced with crowded conditions at the Bristol Street facilities, the Santa Ana Korean Baptist Mission members have pledged and given more than \$250,000 to a building fund to buy property and build a new building in Irvine, about 15 miles from Santa Ana.

Moon, Asian missions consultant for the Home Mission Board, says what is happening at the Santa Ana Korean church is typical of what is happening in Korean Baptist congregations throughout California and the rest of the nation.

Moon estimates there are at least five Korean Baptist congregations in California that are in the midst of fund campaigns or building programs to construct their own worship facilities. There are 24 Korean Baptist congregations in California, and all but four currently meet in shared facilities with another Baptist church.

There are about 100 Korean Baptist churches throughout the nation. "Korean Baptist mission work is booming," Moon declares. "It's like a modern-day Pentecost."

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Adapted from March 1979 World Mission Journal.

Louisiana Moves Quickly In Deaf Mission Ministry

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP)--The Louisiana Baptist Convention could have five of the first six deaf missions in the Southern Baptist Convention unless others move quickly.

Already four Louisiana Baptist churches have begun deaf missions and another, in Lafayette, is in the planning stage. Those churches that have sponsored missions are: Lakeview Baptist Church, Shreveport; Sale Street Baptist Church, Lake Charles; and First Baptist, Baton Rouge. The Lake Charles and Baton Rouge missions were both organized since the end of February.

The first deaf mission in the SBC, according to H. Larry Barnett, director of deaf ministries for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, was the Silent Friends Chapel, started by First Baptist Church, Dallas, in 1968.

There is a deaf church in Portland, Ore., First Baptist Deaf Church, that was never a mission. James Booth, who had been the deaf minister at First Baptist in New Orleans, is the pastor.

Why have deaf missions or churches just for the deaf? "Because they work so much better," says Barnett, himself the son of deaf parents.

Statistics support him. In 1978 the Lakeview and Shreveport deaf missions won 87 percent of all the deaf converts baptized in all 14 Louisiana Baptist Convention churches with deaf ministries. And, they just existed five months of the year.

It's a real breakthrough, Barnett says. In true missionary work, the objective is to develop natives who carry on the work themselves. Natives respond to natives better than they do to outsiders.

The same holds true for the deaf, Barnett says. Perhaps even more so with the deaf because deaf people, traditionally, have low opinions of themselves.

The deaf mission (church) provides self-respect, self-identity and self-determination, things that a mere deaf ministry can never bring about. That's the reason deaf missions are the hope of the future, Barnett added.

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