

(BP)**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Virginia Pastor Selected
For Regional Personnel Post

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has elected a Virginia pastor, Roger L. Thompson, as regional personnel representative for the Atlantic Coast states.

Thompson, pastor of Union Chapel Baptist Church, Clarksville, Va., will work with candidates in coastal states from New England to Florida and at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C. His home base will be in North Carolina, probably in the Raleigh vicinity.

He will counsel with persons and groups interested in foreign mission service and channel qualified volunteers into screening procedures leading toward missionary appointment.

Increased mission interest in the area prompted Thompson's election. Although there was a representative in Raleigh from 1972-1974, no fulltime representative has been there since then.

"The groundswell of mission interest, the concern about Bold Mission Thrust, the growth in seminary enrollment at Southeastern, and the concern on the part of the Foreign Mission Board to respond to God's leadership in missions combine to make this recommendation one of great importance for all of us," said Louis R. Cobbs, secretary for missionary personnel.

North Carolina, where Thompson will be stationed, provided more new missionaries last year than any other state east of the Mississippi River, and eight graduates of Southeastern Seminary were appointed. Thompson will begin work with more than 200 families interested in missionary service.

A native of Brookville, Pa., he received the bachelor of arts degree from University of Maryland and the master of divinity degree from Southeastern Seminary, where he was a grader for J. Leo Green, professor of Old Testament interpretation.

While in seminary, he was interim pastor of Liberty Lake Baptist Church, Randallstown, Md. An Army veteran, Thompson has also worked as a machine operator in Odenton, Md., and as supervisor for an airline company in Baltimore.

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

Federal Agency Ponders
Religious Discrimination

By Carol Franklin

Baptist Press
4/12/79

WASHINGTON (BP)--Religious discrimination in employment and the prison system is generally less severe than it was 15 to 20 years ago, witnesses before the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights agreed at a consultation in Washington.

W. Melvin Adams, director of public affairs and religious liberty for the National Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, said we have come "two steps forward with some slippage."

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"Judeo-Christian groups usually get a hearing," Adams told the commissioners at a two-day hearing on religious discrimination in jobs and prisons. "Prejudice to non-Christian groups, however, is still a problem."

Larry Taylor, warden of the federal correctional institution at Lompoc, Calif., said that "lack of knowledge is the greatest barrier to the free exercise of religion" in prisons. Taylor cited his study of native American religions as an example of the problem. "There is a lack of documented history," he said. "We had many questions about sweat lodges. Anything private that we can't inspect is suspicious. In our business we get a little paranoid."

Several witnesses discussed the problems of Sabbath observers in getting employer accommodation for their needs on Friday evenings and Saturdays. Federal contractors are required to accommodate Sabbatarians unless it would create undue hardship.

Lee Boothby, attorney for the National Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, suggested that Congress pass "remedial legislation" to ensure that the rights of Sabbatarians are upheld. Such legislation might require temporary accommodation while permanent arrangements are made. He also suggested that legislation include the requirement that any collective bargaining agreement reached by a union must make provision for accommodation of religious needs.

David Brody, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, told the commissioners it is "wholesome for lawsuits to be brought in appropriate cases." "It puts them(employers) on notice that they are responsible for religious discrimination," he said.

Laws already on the books prohibiting religious discrimination are not fully utilized by the victims, according to Homer C. Floyd, executive director of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. Few organizations on the local level are helping victims of religious discrimination, he said, unlike the victims of racial discrimination.

Also discussed before the commission was discrimination at the executive level. Representatives of Jewish, Catholic, and Humanist organizations told the commissioners that members of their groups have been discriminated against in promotion and hiring because of their religion or lack of it.

Michael Schwartz, Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, said that Catholic educational and economic status has risen to a rather high level but they are not proportionately represented in the executive suite. "The only explanation for this lack must be religious discrimination," Schwartz said.

Charles A. Reams Jr., a Humanist Association spokesman, said the theological orientation of Humanists has kept some from being hired. "Atheists and agnostics in the executive suite are in the closet because they fear for their jobs," Reams said.

An Equal Employment Opportunity Commission official, Daniel E. Leach, told the commissioners he has filed a formal charge against an industry which he could not name for a pattern and practice of discrimination against Jews. He noted that Sen. William Proxmire, D-Wis., chairman of the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, has been investigating the same industry. Observers at the consultation said they thought he was referring to the banking industry.

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Elderly Need Coordination
Of Church, Government

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
4/12/79

NASHVILLE (BP)--The need for coordinated efforts between the government and the religious community to aid the elderly topped a wide-ranging list of issues discussed by the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (NICA) meeting here.

Members of the interdenominational group, meeting at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, spent the bulk of their two-day meeting drafting recommendations on future aging needs and the role of the religious sector in the 1981 White House Conference on Aging.

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They also heard status reports from executives of the federal Administration on Aging, the Social Security Administration and the former staff director of the U. S. Senate Special Committee on Aging.

Martin Sicker, deputy commissioner for program development of the Administration on Aging, said churches and government can play a joint role in aiding the majority of older persons who are in good health.

"If 85 percent of the elderly are well, we should do everything in our power to help them stay well," he said, urging NICA members to make health promotion a priority.

Sicker also called for religious groups to take the lead in "revaluing the elderly." He said many problems related to older persons are caused by negative attitudes and stereotypes. For example, he said, when people talk about how to make retirement productive, they are usually linking productivity with earning money.

"No group is more capable than the religious community of looking at how we think about, value and categorize the elderly in our community," said Sicker.

William Oriol, former staff director of the U. S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, also called for a more positive approach to aging. "It is not the aging problem but the aging adventure," Oriol said. "Aging is living."

He also said the role of the church in aging "must be much more clearly defined."

Gary Cook, administrative coordinator of the gerontology program at Baylor University, said in an interview, "The first role of the church is to do what we're uniquely called to do--minister to and with older persons in Christ's name. If we ever forget that, we'll become nothing but a social service agency."

Cook, who in 1973 presented a resolution to the Southern Baptist Convention which resulted in the first denominational conference on aging in 1974, praised the progress made in recent years.

"I feel like we've made more progress than any denomination since 1974," he said.

Recommendations on future aging needs included suggestions that NICA step up efforts to serve as an advocate for older people in the community and the church and a request for a survey of adults over 30 to find out what they think constitutes a desirable old-age lifestyle.

Members voted to set up a special task force to prepare for the White House Conference on Aging.

Paul Adkins, director of Christian social ministries at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta, said he hopes the 1981 conference will emphasize a more holistic approach to ministry.

"This concept should permeate all services to older persons so we don't dichotomize people into body and soul," said Adkins.

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

Baptists Urged to Give Through
Own Channels; New Fund Set Up

Baptist Press
4/12/79

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--The outgoing president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board drew applause as he warned Southern Baptist church members to beware of channeling their giving through parachurch groups.

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William L. Self of Atlanta, Ga., who ended two years as president at the board's April meeting in Kansas City, said Southern Baptists must realize they have evangelistic and aid programs through the Foreign Mission Board and other agencies that excel those offered by the nondenominational, or parachurch, organizations.

Many different parachurch groups are competing today for Southern Baptist dollars that ought to be flowing through the Cooperative Program to strengthen our own programs, said Self, pastor of Atlanta's Wieuca Road Baptist Church.

Self's warning came after a business session in which the board had set up a special fund as a channel for big givers wanting to assist in building new churches overseas.

Executive Director Baker J. Cauthen told the board that item VI under the Southern Baptist Convention's Business and Financial Plan places clear restrictions on agencies' solicitation of funds, but allows an approach to individuals for gifts to meet capital needs. With increasing expenses required to support the growing numbers of Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, the board has proportionately less and less money to meet capital requests from Baptists overseas.

"About \$7 million a year in such requests go unmet," Cauthen pointed out.

Morris G. Cobb of Amarillo, Texas, a member of the special committee which proposed the new fund, said he believes many individuals would like to support such capital projects as a means of implementing the Bold Mission Thrust goal of tenfold multiplication of overseas churches by the year 2000.

He said the money made available through the fund would not discourage individual church members overseas from first doing all that they could to provide for their own needs. When the congregation has done all it can and when the national Baptist agencies and the mission organization for that country have contributed to their limits, then the new fund could "cap off" the project by providing the necessary money to make the work possible, he explained.

Other major items at the board's semiannual meeting included appointment of 20 missionaries, presentation of a profile for the board's next executive director, election of a Richmond pastor as new president, and approval of a plan to consider developing a new missionary orientation center in the Richmond area.

An estimated 7,500 Baptists from the sponsoring Missouri and Kansas-Nebraska Baptist Conventions heard testimonies by the new missionaries in Kansas City's Municipal Auditorium and gave a standing ovation to Cauthen when he was introduced by Self as "Mr. Foreign Missions."

Responding to Cauthen's invitation at the end of the service, 228 persons came forward to commit their lives to special Christian service.

The 15-member search committee presented a three-part profile of the type person being sought to succeed Cauthen when he retires at the end of this year. The profile indicated the new chief executive should be one who has "unquestioned commitment to foreign missions, with a broad knowledge and understanding of missions, preferably including missionary service."

In other action the board elected a new president, John W. Patterson, former missionary to Colombia who now serves as pastor of Hatcher Memorial Baptist Church in Richmond.

Moving toward the Bold Mission goal of 5,000 missionaries overseas by the end of the century, the board adopted a motion saying it "looks with favor toward developing its own orientation center in the Richmond area. A committee will be appointed to plan development of the program and do a financial feasibility study.

Since 1969 new missionaries have received a 14-week orientation under a board program conducted at Callaway Gardens, located about 75 miles southwest of Atlanta in Pine Mountain, Ga. But further expansion of the program at Callaway is limited because the board can utilize the summer resort facility only in its "off" season, Overseas Division Director Winston Crawley explained.

Moving the center to the Richmond area would provide accessibility to the home offices and would open up the possibility of a facility with multiple uses, he said.

Southern Baptist Convention President Jimmy Allen asked the Foreign Mission Board and leaders from the three states to pray for the special dedication service planned for the Astrodome on the Wednesday night of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston.

About 1,100 who have committed themselves to missions since January 1, 1978, will be dedicated in the service, where evangelist Billy Graham will speak. Proxies will stand in for many of those who are already on their fields of service, and another 1,100 will represent those who support these record numbers at home and abroad.

Allen said he believes the special service, to be shared through satellite communication with Baptist groups meeting from California to the east coast, will provide "a new spark of missionary inspiration and challenge."

He also asked prayer that the convention would not see a "shift in our agenda" which would divert Southern Baptists from their Bold Mission Thrust goal of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people of the world by the year 2000.

"There are those who would like to change the agenda of Southern Baptist life from missions to orthodoxy," he said. "Such a shift of attention would be tragic because it would make us miss God's initiatives at a time when we are in a position to be at the flash point of spiritual awakening."

Board members approved an additional \$8 million in allocations from the 1978 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for projects in eight geographical areas around the world. Last October, \$25 million was allocated as part of the 1979 budget for overseas purposes. Books on the offering, which already has topped \$34 million or 85 percent of the \$40 million goal, won't close until May 31.

In a report on the role of women in the Richmond staff, Sidney C. Reber, director of the management services division, said that the percentage of women in staff managerial and professional positions had increased from 25 percent in 1968 to 35 percent at this time.

The board member who had asked for the special study, Elizabeth (Mrs. Ross S.) Shearer of Arlington, Va., urged that competent women in the organization or elsewhere in Southern Baptist life not be overlooked when key positions are being filled.

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Lamm Elected to Head
Uniform Series Group

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Wilbur Lamm, editor of adult Convention Uniform materials in the Baptist Sunday School Board's Sunday School department, has been elected chairman of the Committee on the Uniform Series.

The committee, made up of representatives from 24 denominations, meets annually to develop frameworks for the International Sunday School Lessons. From those frameworks, Southern Baptist editors of Convention Uniform Materials evaluate and revise the outlines for denominational use.

Lamm is only the third Southern Baptist elected chairman since the committee was formed in 1872. The other two were the late president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, John R. Sampey, 1915-42, and retired Sunday School Board staffer, Clifton J. Allen, 1963-68, both of whom served before the current limitation to three years of service. Lamm's three-year term will begin in 1980.

Lamm has served as an editor at the Sunday School Board and as a committee member since 1955. "During the past 24 years he has edited materials that have gone to more people than those of any other Sunday School Board editor," said Robert J. Dean, editorial and curriculum specialist in the board's church services and materials coordination unit.

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Before the Life and Work Series was begun in 1966, Lamm edited all Southern Baptist Sunday School materials for adults. He has helped begin and served as first editor of four periodicals: The Adult Teacher, Sunday School Young Adults, Sunday School Senior Adults and Sunday School Lessons Simplified.

He also designed and edited the first two years of adult Vacation Bible School materials and numerous undated curriculum pieces.

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

Mark Short Joins
Louisiana Baptists

Baptist Press
4/12/79

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP)--Mark Short has been named associate director of the church program services division of the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

Short, associate pastor and administrator for South Main Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, formerly managed at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

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Churches Asked
To Critique Preachers

Baptist Press
4/12/79

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Churches close to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary are being asked to do critiques on the preacher--not their regular pastor, but seminary students who participate in a new church seminary program called the Cooperative Education Program in Preaching.

Developed as a part of the seminary's Formation in Ministry Program, the new project "invites churches to join the seminary in preparing students to preach," according to Charles Dorman, Director of Student/field Ministries. "By opening their pulpits to the students and supportively criticizing their performances," Dorman said, "the churches help the students to cultivate a very important skill."

The new program is open to churches within 100 miles of Southeastern Seminary. Depending on the specific arrangements with each church, a group of students will rotate from church to church. Although the individual student may preach regularly, a church would participate about once a month.

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