



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Golden Gate Names Continuing Education Man

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Jerry M. Stubblefield has been named coordinator of the continuing education program at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

Stubblefield, associate professor of religious education, will be responsible for planning conferences, short term courses, and programs to help staff members keep up to date on church ministry.

"We will work with staff members of churches, associations, state conventions, and Southern Baptist Convention agencies in bringing the best of continuing education to persons in the West," Stubblefield said. "Our goal is to help churches be as effective as possible in bringing people to Christ and leading them to spiritual maturity."

Stubblefield joined the Golden Gate faculty in 1977 following a five-year tenure as minister of education at the First Baptist Church of Greenville, S. C., and two years as director of the church-community ministry in Greenville. Prior to that, he taught religious education for eight years at Norman College in Normal Park, Ga. He is a graduate of Belmont College, George Peabody College for Teachers, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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South Carolina Baptists Plan Attack on World Hunger

Baptist Press
7/9/79

COLUMBIA, S. C. (BP)--The South Carolina Baptist Convention is preparing a battle plan against world hunger, part of which calls for using plastic ricebowls in Baptist homes to collect money for meeting hunger needs.

"We hope to have one of these ricebowls on every Baptist table in South Carolina," said Alastair C. Walker, pastor of First Baptist Church in Spartanburg and president of the convention.

An appeal during Walker's church's televised worship service raised \$31,559 to pave the way for distribution of bowls to the state's more than 649,000 Southern Baptists.

Last year the state's Southern Baptists contributed more than \$73,000 through convention churches to combat hunger, but convention leaders hope many times that amount can be raised through the new system.

Walker said the ricebowl, designed to receive money, will be a tangible reminder to Baptists of the world hunger situation. Money from the bowls will be given to members' churches and transferred via the convention's office in Columbia to SBC mission boards in Atlanta and Richmond for use by missionaries on the field.

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Four Groups Decide
Baptist Beliefs, Pastor Says

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Four types of people make key input into what Southern Baptist congregations believe, a North Carolina pastor told a Baptist Heritage Conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist Historical Commission.

"I do not see the congregation deciding what they believe," Cecil Sherman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Asheville, N. C., said at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center. "Somebody else is making a lot of input."

He identified them as the clergy (pastors in particular), teachers from colleges and seminaries, the Sunday School Board staff, and free lance writers.

"For the most part, the Bible says what the pastor says it says," Sherman continued. "Most laity do not wish to challenge the pastor as the Bible interpreter."

"More and more of our pastors and professional clergy are being trained and hopefully schooled by our Baptist colleges and seminaries," he added. "An inordinate influence upon those pastors is the teaching of a relatively small number of teachers.

"In large measure the Sunday School Board shapes what Baptists believe," he asserted. "It is the material of the Sunday School Board that really gets into the study time of the Baptist layman who is thinking about the meaning of the Bible... The board decides which person will create lessons and draws heavily on pastors and Bible teachers to create their material," he said.

"Free lance input" also plays a role in "who decides what Baptists believe," Sherman stated. He then pointed to the influence of religious authors, such as Hal Lindsey, Billy Graham, and Keith Miller, and of religious programs on radio and TV, such as those of Oral Roberts and Rex Humbard.

Sherman said the four deciding groups of people have more input than people realize--even more input than individual biblical interpretation.

"I do not see congregations who will spend much time searching the New Testament to decide how that congregation is going to order its life... only in rarest times have I seen the congregation really function" like that, he said.

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Prefab Buildings Cut Cost
For SBC Congregations

By Theo Sommerkamp

Baptist Press
7/9/79

DAYTON, Ohio (BP)--A prefabricated church building erected in Dayton, Ohio, as a pilot project is expected to be the model for many other such efforts across the Southern Baptist Convention.

The prefab, designed for churches with attendances of less than 350, was put up for Forest Ridge Chapel, a mission of Dayton's Far Hills Baptist Church.

The prefab, sometimes called "premanufactured," was erected by National Homes Corp. of Lafayette, Ind., in cooperation with the church architecture department at the Baptist Sunday School Board.

The firm has already put up buildings for numerous other churches, including several Southern Baptist churches, but Forest Ridge is the first one on which the church architecture department has served as consultant.

The church architecture department makes sure that the building design conforms to the needs of churches in the SBC educational program. Under an agreement, National Homes will erect buildings for SBC congregations only after plans have been forwarded to the church architecture department for a program analysis and floor plan approval.

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After plans have been approved by the department, National Homes will proceed with the project, said Tom Ryan, National sales representative who serves as liaison with Southern Baptists.

Clearing construction through the church architecture department also paves the way to ask for a loan from the SBC Home Mission Board. "Forest Ridge is using this method," said Curt Cole, Forest Ridge pastor.

The prefab structure saves time and cost, Ryan said, noting that "churches can save up to \$3 a square foot." Cole confirmed his congregation is saving about \$15,000 on its 5,000 square feet of space.

Prefab buildings have certain limitations, but within those limitations National Homes seeks to tailor its buildings to meet differing needs of congregations, Ryan added.

Using the National Homes prefab process also permits the church to build without hiring a general contractor. National Homes includes architectural help within the package price. It sends a supervisor to spend four days on location when building starts.

The building provided by National Homes is meant to be a basic structure or "starter unit," although it can also be used as an auxiliary unit.

National's package includes all windows and all doors, all walls, insulation, trusses, gables, conduits and roofing, Ryan said. National also recognizes that many SBC congregations rely on volunteer help to save even more money.

"We can provide a prefab on any site east of the Rocky Mountains," Ryan continued. "The prefab route cuts the time from concept to completing the structure from about 13 months to about five months, oftentimes less."

Rowland E. Crowder, secretary of the church architecture department, said his personnel visited National's plant and were impressed with product quality and workmanship.

Forest Ridge is buying its steeple and baptistry from Broadman supplies, also a unit of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

For \$50 National Homes will provide a plan and elevation study, checklist and preliminary price based on the church architecture department's recommendation. For \$200 more, it will provide a complete set of drawings with a firm price. National also asks any client church to supply copies of the state and local building codes. The prefab is designed to meet those standards.

"In neither case is the church under any further obligation to National Homes," Ryan said. "If the church goes the prefab route, National applies the \$250 to the price charged."

The company guarantees the building for one year, and individual components have warranties from the suppliers, Ryan says.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story mailed 7/6/79 entitled "SBC Challenged to Resettle 1,000 Indo-Chinese Families," please change commitment date in first paragraph from Oct. 1 to Nov. 1.

Nicaraguan Refugees:
'The Needs are Many'

Baptist Press
7/9/79

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (BP)--On first sight San Marcos de Colon is a quiet little town nestled on the mountainside along the Pan American Highway in southern Honduras.

Usually it is, but since last September, when intensive fighting broke out between the Sandinista National Liberation Front and National Guard troops of neighboring Nicaragua, San Marcos has become a refuge for Nicaraguans fleeing from the dangers and fears brought on by the civil war.

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Normally a town of less than 7,000 inhabitants, San Marcos has nearly tripled in population during recent weeks--to almost 20,000. It's now the largest refugee center for Nicaraguans who have crossed the border just five miles away into southern Honduras.

More Nicaraguans than Hondurans stroll along the cobblestone streets, and more Nicaraguan license plates than Honduran are counted among the cars.

The needs are many. The situation is critical. The Honduras Baptist Convention and the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Honduras are looking for effective ways to minister. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., will send John R. Cheyne, associate consultant for relief ministries, to help in the planning. Earlier this year, the board sent \$5,000 to assist in the refugee needs.

While hunger funds are available, the board's general relief money has been exhausted and many needs that fall in this category cannot be met, W. Eugene Grubbs, relief ministries consultant for the Foreign Mission Board, said in Richmond.

But meanwhile, Nicaraguans are everywhere in Honduras.

Five families may live in one house. Schools sometimes become centers for refugees, or Nicaraguans may fill all the cabins of a motel.

Only those refugees better off financially have cars or can rent a house. The bulk of refugees are dependent on the hospitality of their Honduran neighbors to receive them into their homes and give them a corner of their scantily furnished houses to settle into, often sharing common facilities.

Every imaginable building or living space has been commandeered into service to provide for the refugees. These are most often dark and dank with nothing more than a dirt floor, adobe walls and a tile roof to offer protection for the fleeing.

Not only are housing facilities taxed beyond capacity, but all public services and the local economy are strained to accommodate the Nicaraguan guests. This story is repeated in nearly a dozen other towns near the Honduran-Nicaraguan border.

To meet the crisis, the Honduran Red Cross, with the assistance of several international agencies, has tried to locate the refugees in centers ranging from private homes, to tents, to a barracks settlement at Yusguari. They have even used empty grain storage bins--anywhere a hammock can be hung or a "petate" (straw sleeping mat) can be thrown.

Marco Aurelio Rojas, the affable young president of the San Marcos Emergency Committee, illustrated the problem:

"Yesterday before I left to go to Choluteca for food provisions, the refugee population of San Marcos was 7,036. When I returned in the afternoon it had grown to 7,700. Now, it numbers over 8,000. All those people you saw outside are new arrivals waiting to be admitted. I just don't have anywhere to put them. Every available space is taken. The priest has even facilitated several communal houses, but they're all full--the situation is critical."

While he spoke, volunteers were unloading 100-pound sacks of flour, sugar, beans, corn and rice. The food was facilitated through the Choluteca Red Cross, which cares for over 20,000 refugees in at least six centers. Provisions for five days are given to the refugees who stand long hours in food lines awaiting their turn.

Urgent needs exist for attention to expectant mothers; for clothing and blankets; and for medical supplies. Most of the refugees arrive with what they wear and can carry in their hands. Rojas told of one woman who crossed the border in a cold downpour of rain with a baby in her arms. Both mother and baby were soaking wet and had nothing else to protect them. They were taken in by another Nicaraguan family.

Most of the people sleep on the floor, which contributes to a high incidence of pneumonia and other respiratory disease. Malaria and gastrointestinal infections also assault the refugees.

They also have spiritual needs. "These people surely need any kind of spiritual help," said a young Austrian nurse serving as a volunteer among the refugees at Yusguari. Missionary Ralph Wilson said several Nicaraguans attend services at Baptist congregations in San Marcos and Choluteca. Some of these are from Baptist churches in Nicaragua.