

**(BP)****BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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October 12, 1979

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Baptist Campuses: The Resource
Pool for Bold Mission Thrust

ATLANTA (BP)--The missionaries needed for proclaiming the message of Christ to the nation by the year 2000 are on Baptist campuses now.

That's the view of William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, as he leads efforts to gear up the board's part in the Bold Mission Thrust goal of Southern Baptists to reach the entire world by 2000.

The Home Mission Board and Mississippi College, Clinton, one of 72 Southern Baptist schools in the U.S., recently completed a week-long emphasis--Home Missions Experience--aimed at letting students experience the heartbeat of missions.

Following up an earlier experiment at East Texas Baptist College, Marshall, the board put the people, places and work of the Home Mission Board on display for Mississippi College students and central Mississippi residents.

Home Missions Experience in 1980 will be taken to the campus of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., another of the 72 Baptist campuses which have a combined enrollment of more than 165,000 students.

The week-long round of speeches, workshops, multi-media, drama, musical and personal conferences "was a tremendous opportunity for the college, the community and the region to get a kaleidoscopic view of home missions," said Lewis Nobles, president of Mississippi College. "All too often the people in the churches see only one facet of home missions, but this program was extremely helpful in exemplifying the outreach of missions to the end of the world."

"The expression of missions concern by Mississippi College, by participation in Home Missions Experience, is most encouraging to me," said Tanner. "The kind of cooperation between a Baptist college and a mission agency which has been shown is the kind we must have if we are going to have the personnel to reach the goals of Bold Mission Thrust."

"The program is like taking (missions meetings at) Glorieta or Ridgecrest (Baptist Conference Centers) to the college campus," said Ed Seabough, who coordinated the program for the board. "We tried to fill it as full as possible with missions experiences, giving students and area residents an opportunity to learn about and to feel the pulse of home missions.

"The purpose of the week was to tell the Home Mission Board story in this area to local church members and to college students," he added. "But that is not all. We wanted to offer them an opportunity to participate personally in missions.

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"With the emphasis on volunteer involvement in missions, we also were interested in telling people how they can become a part of the missions effort," he said.

"We think the student participation this year has been super. The interest of the students has been very high. You don't often find that kind of interest," said Sam Worley, a missionary in Lake Tahoe, Calif.

"I have been at Mississippi College since 1951, and this is one of the richest experiences we have ever had," added Van Quick, vice president for student affairs and coordinator for the event. "It was successful because of the number of lives touched. A lot of students will look back on this as one of the most significant events in their lives," he added.

The highlight of the week was a commissioning service for four US-2 missionaries. Commissioned were Tanya Ann Waters, who will serve as director of weekday ministries at First Baptist Church in Chelsea, Mass.; Tina Marie Fogle, who will work in resort ministries in Hot Springs, Ark.; Kit Han Vivian Fong, who will work with internationals in Little Rock, Ark.; and Bill Mead, who will be involved in resort ministries in Wilmington, N.C.

Tanner, in his charge to the young missionaries, told them they will face opposition and see spiritual need as they serve.

"It is good to be on the mountain of inspiration, but we must remember we serve in the valley of need," he said. "You will see suffering and failure, but you will have an opportunity to give of yourselves."

The event was the first commissioning of home missionaries in Mississippi in many years and the first ever on the campus of Mississippi College.

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Benin Eases Restrictions
To Let Baptists Buy Land

Baptist Press
10/12/79

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Following long delays, Southern Baptist missionaries in Benin have purchased land for a missionary residence in Abomey and have promising prospects of purchasing additional land.

John E. Mills, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's secretary for West Africa, said that with signed papers in hand, construction of the residence should begin soon. The house most likely will be occupied by the Dutton Bonnells.

For about three years development of Baptist work in Benin has been slow because of the inability to secure land, Mills said. Work has moved ahead, he added, "but not with the thrust we would like."

A church is located in Abomey, where Bonnell is pastor, and also a center which serves as headquarters for a reading room, and the Bible Way Correspondence Course, where both he and his wife work.

Now that missionaries have been able to purchase land in Abomey, Mills said that prospects look good for securing land in Cotonou for missionary residences and for a dental clinic and student work.

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Mills said he feels that the restrictions on land purchase are easing as the Marxist government in Benin sees the validation of the Foreign Mission Board policy of noninterference in local politics.

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Thanksgiving Proclamation
Urges Gratitude, Generosity

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Jimmy Carter's 1979 Thanksgiving Day proclamation calls on the people "to give thanks...for the blessings almighty God has bestowed upon us, and seek to be good stewards of what we have received."

The proclamation recalls several of the nation's most difficult occasions, including the plight of colonists who were uncertain that the crops for which they gave thanks would be sufficient to see them through the winter. The statement also singles out those who fought the Revolutionary War and went through the agony of the Civil War, during which President Lincoln issued the first Thanksgiving Day proclamation.

"The ensuing years have multiplied our nation's blessings," Carter's statement declared. "We have been delivered from repeated perils, and we have been blessed with abundance beyond the imaginings of those who offered thanks in the chill of approaching winter more than three-and-one-half centuries ago.

"Succeeding generations have broadened the freedom they cherished and the opportunity they sought, and built a mighty nation on the strong foundations they laid. In this two hundred and fourth year of our independence, we have good reasons for gratitude: for liberty in a world where repression is common, for peace in a world of threats and terror and war, for a bounteous harvest in a world where hunger and despair still stalk much of mankind.

"Like those who came before us, we come to give thanks for our singular deliverances and blessings, in a time of both danger and great promise. May we be thankful in proportion to that which we have received, trusting not in our wealth and comforts, but in the strength of our purpose, that all nations might be similarly blessed with liberty and abundance and live in peace."

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Bullet Wound Leads To
Witnessing, Work Permit

By May Morris

Baptist Press
10/12/79

SINGAPORE (BP)--A bullet wound in the abdomen is not the type of experience many people can praise God for. But Mike Manning is an unusual person.

He used his convalescence in a Singapore hospital to witness his faith in Christ to doctors and nurses and the policemen investigating the shooting. The experience even brought a work permit he'd been trying to get.

Mike, an Eurasian from India, came to Singapore in 1975 as a student at Singapore Bible College. By graduation time he felt God wanted him to be the pastor of a small Baptist church there. He told the congregation he would accept the position if the government granted him a work permit.

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But soon his student visa ran out and he hadn't received a work permit. He couldn't stay in Singapore waiting for the permit. However, Logos, a ship outfitted with Christian literature and manned by Christian young people from many countries, was in port, and Mike decided to spend his waiting time on the floating bookstore.

When Logos returned to Singapore Mike eagerly checked the status of his work permit. Because it hadn't been granted, he disappointedly began making plans to sail again.

One evening, as he and a friend hailed a taxi to return to the ship, the driver whispered that he'd just been robbed and pointed out the culprit. Mike took off down the street after the man. When he was only a few feet behind him, the thief turned and shot Mike in the abdomen. But Mike was so close by that time, that as he fell, he bumped into the man, knocking the gun from his hand.

After a few critical days in the hospital, Mike began improving and witnessing to his doctors and nurses, who began calling him "the pastor." The police inspector working on the case was so impressed with Mike and his attitude that he wrote to immigration, suggesting that Mike was the kind of man Singapore needed.

His work permit was granted.

Mike said he praises God for his wound and the witnessing opportunities it led to. He has been promised an opportunity to see and witness to the captured thief before his trial. Armed robbery is a hanging offense in Singapore.

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May (Mrs. Russell A.) Morris is the Southern Baptist missionary press representative in Singapore.

Hard Work, Prayer Required
To Start New Sunday School

By Jerilynn W. Armstrong

Baptist Press
10/12/79

WOODSON, Ill. (BP)--The 3,000th Sunday School started in the Southern Baptist Convention in three years was begun on Sunday, Sept. 30, in the home of Clark Llewelyn in Woodson, Ill.

It culminated a year of hard work and prayer for the sponsoring church, Lincoln Avenue Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Ill. It also marked the achievement of a three-year goal initiated by the Sunday School department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board to start mission Sunday Schools aimed at evolving into churches.

Starting 3,000 Sunday Schools in three years represents a tripling of the 909 Southern Baptists began in the previous three years.

"We were notified a few days before Sept. 30 that the Sunday School in Woodson would be number 3,000, but we were not aware of it during our months of planning. It was an unexpected joy and surprise," said Howard Duer, associate pastor of Lincoln Avenue.

The first Sunday's attendance was seven which represented three families from Woodson, a town of approximately 500 residents.

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"I was pleased with the turnout and expect the attendance to grow steadily over the next few weeks," said Llewelyn, the mission pastor, who moved to Woodson to start the Sunday School. "There were several families who could not attend and many others who have expressed an interest."

Lincoln Avenue Baptist Church, as the sponsoring church of the new Sunday School, has spent the past year conducting surveys, backyard Bible clubs and Vacation Bible Schools in Woodson to see if there was a need for a Southern Baptist church in the community.

"We discovered that Woodson is a growing town with a wide cross section of ages from children to senior adults," Duer said. "The community only has one active church with an attendance between 35 and 50 and many have expressed a desire for another church."

"With this information, our church decided to help form a Sunday School and hopefully a church to reach the townspeople of Woodson and eventually the surrounding communities," Duer said.

The mission Sunday School is supported financially by Lincoln Avenue, the Metro East St. Louis Association and the Illinois Baptist State Association.

"The cooperation for financial as well as physical needs has been phenomenal," Llewelyn said. "When our family arrived in September the townspeople were warm and friendly and members of Lincoln Avenue brought us food, cut our grass and made our move as easy as possible. We thought we had died and gone to Heaven."

"The starting of a new Sunday School has also been an uplifting experience for our church," Duer said. "Through this project our congregation was able to have a firsthand experience in missions which drew us all closer together."

The enthusiasm is high at Woodson and the future prospects rosy.

"In six to eight weeks we hope to move from my home to the mission church building for our Sunday meetings," Llewelyn said. "We are beginning slowly to establish a strong foundation that we hope will continue for years to come."

NOTE TO EDITORS: This feature on the church which established the 3,000th new Sunday School is a follow-up to a recent news story on establishment of 3,000 new Sunday Schools in the past three years.