



BAPTIST PRESS

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80-42

Hunger Consultant Post Receives HMB Funding

ATLANTA (BP)--Funding for a national consultant on domestic hunger and disaster relief has been approved at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"We have approved funding for nine months and hope to be able to bring a person to you for appointment by June," Executive Director-Treasurer William G. Tanner told directors at the board's Spring meeting. He added that creation of the consultant position in Christian social ministries does not require board approval, but that appointment of a person to fill the job does.

"I'm happy to tell you this news. I believe we need to get on with the business of reaching out to the people of this land," he said. "Domestic hunger has an innocuous sound; it slips off the tongue, but it is one of the most serious, critical, urgent and pressing needs of our land. People are hungry, suffering, malnourished."

He added: "I know we cannot feed the nation, but we can light a light."

Tanner reported to directors that letters have been mailed to all of the members of the U.S. Congress, urging them to fund and implement a domestic hunger survey. "The letters were sent at your direction," he said, recalling a unanimously adopted resolution at the October 1979 meeting.

In response to the reminder about domestic hunger, directors also approved plans for a "voluntary" observance of the hunger issue at their Summer meeting--scheduled for July. Directors were urged to miss the noon meal and to contribute the funds to hunger relief.

Tanner said creation of the consultant position recognizes the authority of the Scripture. "God's word demands that we be advocates of the poor and hungry."

"I don't know all we can do, but I know that we can do more than we are doing," he added.

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New HMB Evangelism Job
Highlights Awakening

Baptist Press
3/13/80

ATLANTA (BP)--Spiritual awakening will receive increased attention through assignment of a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board staffer to focus on preparation for awakening.

Glenn L. Sheppard Jr., director of the department of personal evangelism, was named by the board to become special assistant in spiritual awakening.

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Sheppard, 36, has been at the agency since Jan. 1, 1979, coming from the pastorate of Central Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Ga.

"We have been concerned with the need for a genuine spiritual awakening for some time," said C.B. Hogue, director of the evangelism section. "There's a growing interest in and concern for spiritual awakening."

To focus attention on awakening, Hogue asked directors to create a new position, and to consolidate the jobs of director of personal evangelism and director of witness training.

Howard Ramsey, currently director of witness training, will become director of the combined responsibility, working in both personal evangelism and witness training.

"These changes will highlight the need for greater visibility and catalytic action for awakening and also strengthen the department of personal evangelism," Hogue added.

The emphasis on spiritual awakening will not be done through specific programming, according to Sheppard. "To propose programs would be to presuppose that an individual or group could program the sovereign work of God in spiritual awakening," he said. "Therefore, the key effort will center in climatization through prayer," he said.

"I believe we're cresting toward spiritual awakening," he added. "I extend a call to all Southern Baptists and other evangelical Christians to join in united, concerted, extraordinary prayer for God to send another great awakening."

The shift in the evangelism section was one of three reorganizations approved by directors during their Spring board meeting. Directors also okayed title and job responsibility changes in the language missions and chaplaincy divisions.

"In the Summer meeting of directors, language missions was elevated from a department to a division. At that time, a review of the structure was requested," said Oscar Romo, division director.

The study recommended realignments in job responsibilities. Previously staffers were assistant directors. Under the realignment, James N. Lewis Jr., is associate director; Ramon Martinez, director of ethnic resource correlation; Rodney M. Webb Jr., director of multi-ethnic ministries; Hubert O. Hurt, director of trans-cultural outreach, and Fermin Whittaker, director of ethnic church growth.

In the chaplaincy division, the titles and job descriptions were altered to redefine the responsibilities of each job. Previously, each staffer carried the title of associate director.

Under the change approved by directors, Carl Hart will remain division director; Pat Davis will become director of military chaplaincy and Huey Perry will be director of institutional chaplaincy. One vacant position will become director of hospital and business-industrial chaplaincy.

HMB Emphasizes Cooperative Program, Annie Armstrong

ATLANTA (BP)--The need for both the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions and the Cooperative Program was emphasized at the Spring meeting of directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer, said the Home Mission Board must have funds from both channels of support if it is to operate. About half of the operating budget comes from each fund.

"So far, we have received about two percent of the Annie Armstrong Offering, but the funds we have received represent a 16 percent increase over last year," he said.

Tanner told directors the preliminary receipts were good, despite bad weather in the southeastern United States causing many church services to be cancelled on the first Sunday of the Week of Prayer for Home Missions (March 2).

"I hope the churches will realize the loss of the first Sunday could cut into the offering and will carry on until they reach their goals," Tanner said.

The missions leader noted the goal for the 1980 offering is \$15.5 million. "I am prayerful that the goal will be exceeded," he said. "We desperately need the funds if we are to work toward reaching the goals of Bold Mission Thrust."

Tanner commented on the inroads inflation is making on missions contributions and noted the increasing cost of living, gasoline prices and travel outlay.

He also mentioned the impact of the economic crunch on the appointment of Home Mission Board workers. "This year, we had 123 applicants for the US-2 missions program. Of them, about 70 were approved for appointment. We have funds only to appoint about 25 of them," he said.

Tanner added: "Without the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, we would have to cut our work in half. And, because of the economy, we are currently funding more of our program with Annie Armstrong funds than with the Cooperative Program."

He challenged directors to "do everything you can to promote the Cooperative Program. The Cooperative Program is the basic fiber, the cord, which binds our denomination together. We need to re-emphasize the Cooperative Program and the value of doing cooperatively what we cannot do separately."

He pledged to directors that "our agency is going to do everything it can to support and promote the Cooperative Program."

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Baptist Church Collapses
In Brazil Flood; Injures 21

By Jennifer Anderson

Baptist Press
3/13/80

ALAGOINHAS, Bahia, Brazil (BP)--A Baptist church in the rain-soaked and flooded state of Bahia, Brazil, caved in on 60 people participating in a Sunday evening training session, injuring 21--none seriously--and hospitalizing 14.

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Rains, which have not let up in more than a month, apparently saturated the building tiles of Second Baptist Church in Alagoinhas, Bahia, causing the 12-by-20-meter building to collapse, March 9. No Southern Baptist missionaries work in Alagoinhas.

Pews, a pump organ and most other items in the church were destroyed--everything but the pulpit, said Jerry Smyth, Southern Baptist missionary to North Brazil, in a March 12 telephone call to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

Smyth added that 200 people would have been present had the building caved in during the worship hour. Following the collapse, the congregation held a service in the rain, giving thanks to God for sparing lives.

No monetary estimate of damage has been made, but the Foreign Mission Board will be contacted when the needs are known, said Thurmon E. Bryant, the board's secretary for Eastern South America.

Flooding has struck not only Bahia, but also the states of Goias, Minas Gerais and the southern portion of Piaul, Bryant said. He told of missionary Ernest Wilson, who flew over a flooded area of many square miles where cattle were standing with only their necks above water.

Certain that people were in the same situation, Wilson continued searching the area. He spotted a group huddled on an "island" in a flooded section. He assessed needs and had the plane carry food and other supplies to aid them until water receded.

"The flooding situation is still extremely serious," Bryant said, "but because of high water and continuing rains missionaries have not been able to enter much of the flooded areas to survey damage." He said one lake in the flood region has been receiving up to 11,300 cubic meters of water per second.

The Foreign Mission Board already has made available \$73,000 for flood relief to Baptists in Brazil and Bryant expects the figure to increase as missionaries assess additional needs.

Last year the board appropriated more than \$300,000 for flood relief in Brazil. Bryant said the number of casualties seems lower this year, but the devastation to crops and animals may exceed last year's losses.

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Home Board Approves
46 for Mission Work

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3/13/80

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board elected Howard Cockrum as chairman and approved 46 persons for mission service during their March meeting.

Cockrum, a contractor and land developer and Baptist deacon from Knoxville, Tenn., succeeds Robert L. Deneen of Darlington, S.C.

Persons appointed for mission service were eight missionaries, 12 missionary associates, and 26 individuals to receive pastoral aid.

Named missionaries were Atlas and Gecina de Souza of Mobile, Ala.; Tom and Martha Moncrief of Indianapolis, Ind.; John and Earle Stair of Indiana, Pa.; and Billy and Betty Scrivner of Fort Wayne, Ind.

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Named missionary associates were Chuck and Carole Dooley of Houston, Texas; Andy and Deanna Gee of Louisville, Ky.; Jerry and Kim Little of Sparta, Wis.; Billy Bob and Althea Moore of Portland, Texas; Henry and Patricia Smart of Tempe, Ariz.; and Don and Lavern Warden of Austin, Texas.

The de Souzas will continue to live in Mobile, where he will be a catalytic missionary to internationals and seamen. He has been director of international ministries with the Mobile Baptist Association since 1979. De Souza was a professor at Equatorial Baptist Seminary and a pastor in his native country of Brazil. Since 1976 he has been chaplain in New Orleans at Orleans Prison, Southern Baptist Hospital, and New Orleans Seaman's Service. He is a graduate of Equatorial Baptist Seminary, Federal University of Paraguay, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. de Souza, also a native of Brazil, has attended Colegio Estadual U.S. Franco, Delgado Junior College, and New Orleans Seminary.

The Moncriefs will move to Connecticut where he will be director of metropolitan missions for the Southeastern and Western Connecticut Association. Moncrief, a Tennessee native, has been pastor of churches in Indiana, Louisiana and Tennessee since 1951 and has received church pastoral assistance at two of his Indiana pastorates. He is a graduate of Union University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Moncrief, a native of Illinois, teaches elementary school.

The Stairs will continue to live in Indiana, Pa., where he will be a rural-urban director for the Conemaugh Valley Baptist Association. He's been pastor of churches in Pennsylvania, Georgia and Tennessee since 1949. The Harriman, Tenn., native is a graduate of Carson-Newman College and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Stair is a native of Millen, Ga.

The Scrivners will move to Nashville, Ind., where he will be a pastoral missionary for the Home Mission Board department of church extension. Scrivner, a native of DeSoto, Mo., has been pastor of churches in Indiana, Colorado and Louisiana since 1955. Mrs. Scrivner, a native of Springfield, Mo., studied at the Martin Conservatory of Music and has been organist at various conferences and conventions nationwide.

The Dooleys will continue to live in Houston where he will be a church starter for the Home Mission Board department of church extension. The San Antonio native has been pastor of Texas churches since 1955. The Dooleys are graduates of the University of Corpus Christi and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Dooley is a native of Atascosa County, Texas.

The Gees, natives of Tennessee, will move to Conyers, Ga., where he will be a church planter apprentice. He has been minister of Christian training in Louisville and previously has worked in Tennessee as psychology instructor, counselor, assistant pastor, minister of music, children's minister, and bus ministry director. He's a graduate of Tennessee Temple College, the University of Tennessee, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Littles will continue to live in Sparta where he will be a church planter apprentice. A native of Tallapoosa, Ga., Little has been pastor of Gospel Baptist Church in Sparta since 1978, and previously served as youth minister in Georgia and North Carolina churches. He graduated from Berry College and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Little, a native of Athens, Ga., is a teacher's aide in the Sparta school system.

The Moores will move to Vidor, Texas, where he will be a church starter. He has done pastoral work in Texas churches since 1954, except from 1967-1970 when he was a missionary with the Foreign Mission Board in Uganda and Kenya, and from 1975-77 when he served in Trinidad, West Indies. A native of El Dorado, Ariz., he's a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary. Mrs. Moore is a graduate of Texas Christian University, Baylor University and Lamar University. She's a native of Glen Rose, Texas.

The Smarts will continue to live in Tempe where he will be a church extension director for Central Association, Phoenix, Ariz. The Terrell, Texas, native has been pastor of churches in Arizona, Kansas, Texas and Missouri since 1954. He's a graduate of Southwest Baptist College, Baylor University and Southwestern Seminary. Mrs. Warden, a native of Ava, Mo., has a degree in elementary education from Texas A & I University.

Approved for church pastoral assistance were:

Dennis and Norma Cleveland of Saline, Mich.; Larry and Judy Cochrane of Polson, Mont.; Kerry and Sandra Groce of Saratoga, Wyo.; James and Mary Jones of Hardin, Mont.; Ray and Linda Maynard of Rapid City, S.D.; Elmer and Rheva Mundy of Olympia, Wash.; John and Judy Myklebust of Oakridge, Ore.; Kenneth and Carol Ann Nelson of Naples, Fla.; and Terry and Elizabeth Robertson of Grand Island, N.Y.

Students approved for church pastoral assistance were: Richard and Deborah Butler of Olathe, Kans., and Robert and Theresa Williams of Pocatello, Idaho.

Peter and Hannah Park of Portland, Ore., were approved for language pastoral assistance.

Han Ki and Yun Sin Byon of Fairfield, Calif., were approved as students for language pastoral assistance.

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English Nurse Receives
Pair of Royal Pardons

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3/13/80

BANGKOK, Thailand (BP)--Rita Nightingale believes God had her released from prison, and Southern Baptist missionary Gladys Martin, who witnessed to her while she was in prison, agrees.

An English nurse who loved to travel, Miss Nightingale met and fell in love with a man on one of her vacations. They discussed marriage and decided she should return to England to begin the arrangements. He would join her later.

He bought her a new set of luggage so she could carry some of his belongings with her. But Bangkok airport officials found secret compartments in the new luggage and about seven-and-a-half pounds of heroin.

Arrested, Miss Nightingale denied knowledge of the drugs. Officials told her the sentence would be cut in half if she admitted her part in the plan. She maintained her innocence and was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

That's when Gladys Martin, who regularly conducts Bible studies in the prison, met her. Miss Nightingale was not a Christian, but she reached out for Mrs. Martin's support and the love she talked about. After about six months Miss Nightingale accepted Christ as her saviour.

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In November 1979, after Miss Nightingale had been in prison about two and a half years, Mrs. Martin met with Walter Coleshill, the British consul, to talk about the Englishwoman. He said he had seen a great change in her life since she had become a Christian and would try to have her released.

Mrs. Martin said God would get her out in his own time. Coleshill replied dubiously that she should do what she could and he'd do what he could.

Two months passed, then on a January morning Coleshill read in the Bangkok English-language newspaper that Miss Nightingale would be released that week. She had received a royal pardon from the king of Thailand--the first time a foreign female has ever received a pardon and only the second time for any foreigner.

At a luncheon Coleshill gave after she was released, he acknowledged the release did not come from any of his own efforts. "Two months ago you told me this was going to happen," he said to Mrs. Martin. "It was your faith and not mine."

Mrs. Martin says she knew he was admitting that God was the only one responsible for Miss Nightingale's release.

Now the English nurse has received two royal pardons: one from the king of Thailand and one from the King of Kings.

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Parker Joins Southern
Baptist Seminary Staff

Baptist Press
3/13/80

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Hankins F. Parker, former pastor of churches in Florida and Kentucky, has been named director of estate planning at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He will also serve as associate director of Southern Seminary Foundation, a non-profit corporation that manages charitable trusts for donors who wish to receive income from their gifts to the seminary.

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Baptists Distribute Bibles
To Strengthen Ethiopian Church

Baptist Press
3/13/80

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary V. Lynn Groce didn't know the surprises in store for him when he decided to visit the largest Ethiopian Orthodox church in Addis Ababa's heavily populated market area.

Instead of the usual sparsely attended early morning mass, he saw the sanctuary filled. A monk preached a fiery sermon in a question-and-answer style that demanded vocal responses from the traditionally shy Orthodox participants.

Groce left 500 Bible society Scripture tracts at the church that day. Later he delivered another three sets of 2,000 tracts each, on the subjects of Easter, the way of salvation and new life in Christ, for the church to distribute after early morning services.

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Those 6,500 tracts were just a part of the 156,500 tracts the Baptist mission organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Ethiopia distributed in 1979 alone. Through Bible distribution and personal discipleship of individual believers, the missionaries are trying to prepare the church for the future in a Marxist country.

Groce, an agriculturalist who now serves as mission administrator in the capital, and his wife Suzanne work with Southern Baptist missionaries Jerry Bedsole, a veterinarian, and his wife Rosie in carrying out Bible and developmental ministries. They work alongside the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the dominant church today in this country where Christianity dates back to the fourth century.

In the marketplace church, Groce saw many things that were not typical of Ethiopian Orthodoxy, which has more ties with Judaism than to most Christian churches.

Bible studies were very well attended by youth in the morning and adults in the afternoon, although traditional Orthodox churches do not promote Bible study even by church leaders. Orthodox sanctuaries, modeled on Jewish temples, are considered very holy places, so Bible studies and other meetings are usually held out-of-doors or in other church buildings.

Groce noted that the few Bibles scattered around were obviously well used by people apparently very familiar with the Scriptures.

The monk led the study that day from Revelations 3:1-6, the message to the church at Sardis: "I don't know that you have the reputation of being alive, even though you are dead: so wake up, and strengthen what you have before it dies completely." This was his message to his own congregation.

He also turned to John 3:16 and preached Jesus Christ as the only means of salvation. "None of these things we do here mean anything by comparison--only belief in Jesus will save you," he said. He then challenged the adults to educate their children in Christian things before it was too late.

After the Bible study, Groce and the monk met with a development planning committee of laymen who want to have a handcraft school to help support the church and some of its poorer members. Groce formerly worked alongside Southern Baptist missionaries who operated a handcraft school in the rural Menz district. The planning committee asked Groce's advice and help with their project and requested more Bibles to use during Bible study periods.

While Groce distributes Scriptures to churches and through other outlets, Bedsole gives Scripture portions to each person who brings an animal for treatment in his daily clinics.

By working together the Groces and Bedsoles distributed almost 7,000 Bibles or New Testaments and 27,700 Scripture portions in addition to the tracts in 1979. The Bible Society of Ethiopia provided 136,500 of those tracts.

A mandatory literacy campaign in Ethiopia has made their job easier. The newly literate are hungry for simple reading material. Quite often, as a result of a policy by the former regime to suppress languages other than the national language, Amharic people could not get any reading material in their own language.

After years of struggle in translation work, the Bible Society of Ethiopia has a number of new materials coming out in tribal languages. Most important are those materials designed for new readers. The Baptist mission has been able to distribute only 2,000 of these because they are sold to eager readers within a matter of hours after they come from the publishers.