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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355W. C. Fields, Director  
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor  
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor**BUREAUS****ATLANTA** Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041**DALLAS** \_\_\_\_\_, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996**MEMPHIS** Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461**NASHVILLE** (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2798**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151**WASHINGTON** Stan L. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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80-88

Baptists Cleaning Up  
After Mt. St. Helens

By Herb Hollinger

PORTLAND, Ore. (BP)--Mount St. Helens caused billions of dollars in property damage and loss of life in Washington but Northwest Baptist churches report little apparent damage.

However, a massive cleanup has just begun.

Scores of churches cancelled services when the mountain erupted with fury Sunday morning, May 18, and a gigantic cloud of pumice-like ash covered nearly the entire eastern part of Washington and northern Idaho. First in the path of the cloud were churches in the fruit-growing Yakima area with several cancelling Sunday morning services as the billowing grey clouds approached. First Southern, Yakima, was not able to meet for two weeks because city officials restricted travel downtown as equipment tried to remove more than four inches of ash from the streets.

Yakima association missionary H. Max Dayley said heavy blowing ash caused the biggest headache. He had an appointment to preach the week following the initial eruption but was forced to cancel because of travel restrictions.

Two weeks after the volcano erupted there had not been any requests from churches for aid from the state convention, however, according to Northwest Baptist Convention interim executive William K. Peters.

About one-half inch of ash fell on Spokane, Wash., more than 250 miles northeast of the mountain, creating massive traffic problems. Many church services were cancelled and county officials ruled all public buildings, including churches, would have to have their parking lots cleared before the buildings could be used. Members of the Sunset Hill Baptist Church spent most of the Saturday following the big blast cleaning the parking lot, hosing off sidewalks and sweeping ash in order to have services Sunday.

Rain in eastern Washington has created more problems since wet ash becomes very heavy and cement-like. But the blowing ash remains one of the biggest problems in the cleanup.

"It is worse than any west Texas sand storm," said Terry Posey, pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church in Moscow, Idaho, which received about two inches from the first eruption. "I grew up in Texas and this beats anything I've ever been in before."

Posey said schools in the area dismissed three weeks early for the summer vacation and face masks were still being worn the second week after the cloud passed.

A second large eruption of the mountain came exactly a week later causing disruption of church services in cities and towns in western Washington. Southwest Washington association missionary David Bandy said his area was spared ash problems from the first eruption because of the prevailing winds but the second blast left Longview and Kelso with more than an inch of the ash.

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With Sunday morning services obviously cancelled, Bandy organized a service in the apartment building in which he lived and led a worship hour with 40 people in attendance.

Just 50 miles south of the active volcano, Portland received a skiff of ash creating some traffic problems and at least two downtown Baptist churches cancelled evening services when the blowing ash caused travel problems. Most Portland area churches reported attendance about one-half normal for their Sunday services with many older members avoiding the hazardous driving conditions and possible respiratory problems when venturing outside.

One of the hardest hit areas was Castle Rock, Wash., which is on the banks of the Toutle River. Flooding and massive mud flows took their toll of the small community but Louis Minner, pastor of First Baptist Church, said dikes on the east side of the river kept the raging waters from most of the central part of town and the church building. Although many homes along the river were swept away, Minner said none of the church's members reported any heavy damage to their homes. Recurring smaller blasts from the volcano have brought more blowing ash to the area.

Strangely enough, the heavily populated areas of Seattle and Tacoma, directly north of the volcano, have been spared even the blowing ash. Hardest hit was a small community in eastern Washington, Ritzville, just 60 miles south of Spokane which recorded seven inches of the ash. National Guardsmen continue to help in the cleanup there where at one time several thousand travelers were stranded, outnumbering the residents.

Two weeks after the big blast the mountain continues to make ominous noises and small earthquakes are registered daily. Scientists are unsure what the mountain will do in the future but more eruptions are a real possibility.

With one eye on the volatile mountain in southwest Washington, Baptists in the Northwest are beginning the massive and costly job of cleaning up the mess.

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\$15,000 Sent to Assist  
Brazil Flood Victims

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RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--Brazilian Baptist churches, assisted by a \$15,000 emergency allocation from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, are helping to provide relief for flood victims in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul in south Brazil.

Southern Baptist missionary Fred L. Hawkins Jr., relief coordinator for south Brazil, said flooding of the Parana and Paraguay rivers has caused many families to leave their homes.

The Foreign Mission Board released \$15,000 in hunger relief funds given by Southern Baptists to help 80 families near Corumba and a like number in the city of Eldorado who need food, clothing and shelter.

Missionary Elbert Deaderick is assisting churches of the Brazilian Baptist Convention in the relief work.

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## Church Remains Strong In Midst of Violence

MIAMI (BP)--While flames lit by the worst American racial violence in a decade devoured buildings around them, black and white members of 79th Street Baptist Church worshipped together in love.

The 289 resident members of the church in Liberty City, where the violence was centered, did not cancel any services. "Though life was in jeopardy, they have stood by the church and its mission," said white pastor Baxter Phillips of his congregation. "I could tell you that all my members are afraid to come out. But I'm not going to tell you that. It's not so."

"The one thing that our church has to do is present a positive faith to the world and not one of fear," Phillips explained. "We have to demonstrate a confession of faith in Jesus Christ; what he has done personally and what he wants to do for those who will listen to what the church and the Word have to say."

Phillips said churches should find some means of ministering to the younger blacks in the community. One way is to help restore respect for authority among all races.

"I think the real secret lies in communicating with the 18 to 35 year-old age group in the black community," he said. "I suggest we put them to work by giving them places of employment, give them places of responsibility in the government and give them a place where their voice is heard."

"I think the crowning phase of it will come if our churches will continue to minister instead of selling the property and running," Phillips said. "We're going to stand right there in the midst of the change and preach the glamor and glory of the gospel, and make it stick."

The pastor believes there is much Southern Baptists can do to minister to his community.

"You can send us some missionaries, finances and equipment," Phillips said. "We need people who are courageous enough to be missionaries in Miami. We have the greatest mission field in the world."

"Our most serious problems are not having adequate personnel to staff the church administration and missionaries to go out there and do some things in a weekday form of ministry where the people live."

Phillips hopes the worst is over, but he isn't sure. "We do not know if this is the end of this particular spasm of violence," he said. "It may be that next weekend we may not be able to have services. We'll just have to wait and see."

May Cooperative Program  
Resumes Strong Schedule

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--May gifts through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program resumed a schedule that will meet the 1980 operating and capital needs budgets after a low month in April.

Southern Baptists contributed \$6,229,079 in undesignated gifts for the missions and educational enterprises of the convention, an increase of 22 percent over May 1979. April's increase over April 1979 was just 2.6 percent.

Undesignated gifts for the first eight months of the fiscal year total \$47,867,714, a 13.9 percent increase over the same period last year.

May's designated gifts of \$8,836,734 are a 47.2 percent increase over May 1979. The month's total designated and undesignated gifts are nearly \$4 million or 35.6 percent more than May 1979.

Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, called May's giving "gratifying" and said "Southern Baptists are to be commended for their continuing interest in world missions and their commitment to total stewardship."

Bennett noted that one of the results of the increased giving was the attainment of the goal of \$40.5 million for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering for foreign missions, the first time since 1975 the goal has actually been reached.

Total undesignated and designated contributions for the first eight months of the fiscal year are \$101,808,590, an increase of 15.76 percent over the same period in 1979.

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Drumwright New Arkansas  
Executive Secretary

Baptist Press  
6/3/80

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--Huber L. Drumwright Jr., dean of the school of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been elected executive secretary-treasurer of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Drumwright, 56, was dean of the school for seven years and a New Testament professor for 28 years, including his time as dean. He will succeed the retired Charles H. Ashcraft by Sept. 1.

Drumwright has been pastor of churches in Allen, Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas, and in Ada, Okla. While teaching at Southwestern, he was interim pastor of 21 churches for a combined total of approximately 15 years.

He was a naval officer in WW II and he graduated from Baylor University after his return to the states. He earned bachelor of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern and has done study and research at Princeton Seminary and at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece.

Drumwright is a native of Oklahoma and is married to the former Minette Williams of San Antonio, Texas.

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He has written extensively for Sunday School lessons, Bible study guides, magazines, Wycliffe, Tyndale and Zondervan and for Broadman, with authorship or contributions to over 20 books.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspaper editors.

Lottie Moon Goal Met;  
Offering Up 13 Percent

By Irma Duke

Baptist Press  
6/3/80

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions has surpassed its 1979 goal of \$40.5 million and shown the largest increase in the offering in six years.

With the Southern Baptist offering total at \$40,597,113, the 1979 goal will be the first one met since 1975. This offering is a 13.02 percent increase over the 1978 total of \$35,919,605.

"We are grateful to the Lord for this giant step forward," said Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, which promotes the Southern Baptist mission offering.

"With runaway inflation and accelerated efforts to appoint more missionaries, increased financial support is a necessity, not a choice," she explained.

Christine Gregory, president of WMU, interpreted the giving as a proof of priority. "To have given this much in a single offering is a good indication that Southern Baptists still believe that missions should be our top priority," said Mrs. Gregory.

R. Keith Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, said there is "great significance in an offering of such size at this time." He said it "enables Southern Baptists to maintain momentum in sharing the gospel with a lost world. Shouts of praise will be lifted in 94 countries besides our own as this staggering sum is announced." The board has missionaries assigned to 94 countries.

This year's increase was the largest percentage gain since the 1973 offering, when a 13.05 percent increase was reported.

The Lottie Moon offering provides nearly half the budget for Southern Baptists' foreign missions enterprise. The 1980 offering is \$45 million.

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