



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Home Mission Offering
Passes \$15.5 Million Goal

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)—The 1980 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions surpassed its goal for the first time in four years, William G. Tanner, executive director-treasurer of the Home Mission Board, said.

Tanner told participants at Home Mission Week at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center the offering reached \$15,562,470.80 Aug. 11.

Tanner added giving was 4/10ths of a percent above the \$15.5 million goal. The projected total for the 1980 offering is \$16.2 million. "I am grateful Southern Baptists responded so well," Tanner said. "I don't think it's too much to say that God is blessing."

The last time the offering reached a goal was in 1976 when it exceeded the \$9.5 million goal by 1.6 percent. The offering annually provides about one half of the board's operating budget.

The additional funds insure missionary salary increases and new missionary appointments, according to Leonard Irwin, director of the board's planning section. He said the board will provide \$2 million in missionary salary increases in 1981 in an attempt to keep up with inflation.

"The money will also insure appointment of 33 new missionaries in 1981," he added.

This year's offering emphasis was delayed by a late Easter date and a snowstorm which blanketed parts of the southeast on the opening Sunday of Home Missions Week further slowed giving.

Because of the delays, Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Woman's Missionary Union, wrote a letter to each pastor requesting him to do "something special" to promote the offering.

In a telephone interview, Weatherford said: "I really didn't have enough faith that we would reach the goal after the bad weather, so this really encourages me."

"Response to the offering is an indication of increasing interest in missions at home, she said. With Saudi Arabia allocating several million dollars for Islamic missions in the United States, Weatherford added "home" missions has become "foreign" missions. "We are very slow to grasp this concept that those who need to hear the gospel are not just in foreign countries."

Irwin said despite troubled economy, "recession did not keep down the giving. I believe it says to us the churches are concerned about giving."

Evelyn Blount Heads
WMU Enlargement Plan

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Evelyn Blount, assistant to the Education Division director of Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention, has been named director of its National Enlargement Plan.

The WMU executive board adopted the plan last January. It will be formally launched in 1981.

In her new job, Miss Blount will have the responsibility of training a select group of approximately 110 women who will be known as STARTEAM. They will travel throughout the United States and contact pastors and key women in more than 11,000 Southern Baptist churches which have no WMU. They will interpret the purposes of WMU, and will give guidance on how to organize.

A native of Barrow County, Ga., Miss Blount is a graduate of the Woman's College of Georgia (now Georgia College at Milledgeville), and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Before coming to WMU, SBC, in 1973, Miss Blount was Acteens director for Georgia WMU. She has also served on church staffs in Kentucky and Alabama.

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Photo mailed separately to state Baptist newspaper editors by Woman's Missionary Union.

Associate of Divinity
Degree Is Accredited

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NEW ORLEANS (BP)—The associate of divinity degree, offered by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary for students who do not hold college degrees, has been given full accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, J. Hardee Kennedy, vice president for academic affairs of the seminary, said.

The first A.Div. degrees awarded at the seminary were presented at spring graduation ceremonies. Formerly, the seminary awarded diplomas for students who participated in the program. Participation is limited to students over 25 years old.

Students who received a diploma award under the program of the School of Christian Training since 1976 may exchange it for an associate degree. A nominal administrative fee is charged.

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Texas WMU Names
New Executive

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WACO, Texas (BP)—Joy Phillips Fenner, a former missionary to Japan, has been named executive director-treasurer of the Woman's Missionary Union of Texas, effective Jan. 1, 1981.

Fenner will succeed Eula Mae Henderson, who will retire at the end of 1980. Henderson has headed the Texas WMU for 34 years.

Woman's Missionary Union is a missions organization for women, girls and preschoolers in more than 3,000 Southern Baptist churches in Texas. The membership exceeds 125,000. The organization is an auxiliary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

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As executive, Fenner, 45, will administrate the activities of the missions organization, coordinate annual state meetings and provide general direction for future programming.

From 1967 to 1980, Mrs. Fenner and her husband, Charlie, were Southern Baptist missionaries in Fukuoka, Japan. She taught English Bible classes for university students and women, and he was an English teacher at the Seinan Gakuin Junior High School.

Mrs. Fenner was director of Girls' Auxiliary for Texas WMU from 1959 to 1966. A native of Avinger, Texas, Mrs. Fenner attended Paris Junior College and East Texas Baptist College.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Dallas bureau of Baptist Press.

Bible Needs No Defense
Seminary President Says

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GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — A warning against "gearing up on some crusade to defend the Bible," has been sounded by the president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Russell Dilday Jr., speaking at the annual student conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center, said discussions about the Bible have been a "hot item among Southern Baptists for the last two years," and added: "God's word will stand. We should stand by the Bible, but we do not always have to be on the defense."

Dilday told the 3,019 participants they should place first priority on allowing God to use them to win the world to Jesus Christ.

Dilday warned the students against efforts to support a single interpretation of Scriptures. "As Christians we all have the freedom of interpretation as long as that interpretation does not violate the great truths of the Scripture," he said.

Dilday called the Bible a human and divine book. He said he believes all of the Bible is inspired by God but that the personality and experience of each writer is evident through his writing.

He attributed some inconsistencies in the scriptures to reflections of personality differences among the authors. "I'd be suspicious if all the reports were the same," said Dilday.

"Like a watch, we must judge the Bible on the basis of what it is intended to do," he said. "The Bible is not a book of science and the criteria by which we judge infallibility is not the same as that by which we judge science."

Dilday emphasized Christians' ultimate authority "must be the sovereign God whose authority is revealed in Jesus Christ, communicated through the Bible and confirmed through the Holy Spirit within us."

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Summer Camping in Dark
Enlightening Experience

By Tim Nicholas

80-129

WEST POINT, Va. (BP)--Imagine a weekend of camping in total darkness. Imagine going swimming, canoeing and hiking without being able to see a thing.

It happens every summer at a unique camp for the blind held at Virginia Baptists' Camp Plankatank for Royal Ambassadors.

In 1972 the Virginia school for the blind and deaf asked Mike Haywood, a Southern Baptist home missionary who is youth and family services director for Virginia's Peninsula Baptist Association, to develop a camping program for its students.

The first summer's one-day outing was so successful that it was expanded the next year to three-day youth retreats. This summer, the program will include several three-day campouts.

Haywood says the camp experience benefits the sighted counselors as well as the blind participants because it exposes young people to work with the visually handicapped.

Haywood's program usually includes 20 to 30 blind people ranging in age from four to 49, with the majority ages 14 to 20, along with a slightly larger number of counselors. Haywood doesn't use the word "counselor" in camp because the goal is to relate to each person on that individual's level.

"We do a bit of everything," he says, "ranging from swimming at a pool, with a little teaching thrown in, to canoeing. Campers spend about two hours each day in a canoe, one blind in front and a sighted in back."

The blind campers also practice archery. They feel the target, string their bows and stand close enough to the target so they can hear the thud of the arrow. The counselor tells them where they hit.

"The only embarrassment," says Haywood, "is sometimes they outshoot the counselors."

A scuba enthusiast, Haywood also invites members of his scuba club to the camp to share underwater experiences. "In the shallow end of the pool," he hastens to add.

Blind campers play "Siamese softball" with a beeping ball donated by telephone company retirees called the Telephone Pioneers. Using a T-ball stand, the batter hits the ball off the stand and then takes the counselor's hand to run. Everyone on the field holds a hand except when at bat.

The program also includes a discovery time called "Touch Tour" where each counselor brings something unusual. Highlights have been a six-foot black snake, homing pigeons and a human skull from an archaeological dig.

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"We'll take a hike and try to catch a crab or a turtle," adds Haywood. "There's a talent show, and we have a creative worship service on Sunday morning, with devotionals during campfires. The most important thing is the interaction of our Christian young people with the blind young people."

Hand-picked counselors start meeting in December to plan for the summer camps. Haywood now has a core group of about 15 experienced counselors. For 90 percent of the first-time counselors, the camp is their first experience with blind persons.

Skip Butler, counselor for the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind in Richmond, notes that some of the counselors are not familiar with the needs of the visually handicapped.

But Butler gives the camp high marks. "They (the blind campers) come back really enthused about the program."

He says the enthusiastic comments include remarks such as "Boy, you should have seen me paddle that canoe!" or "I not only hit the target, but it was almost a bull's-eye!"

The latter comment could also apply to Mike Haywood. The ministry he started seven years ago is certainly hitting the target.

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Adapted from the July issue of World Mission Journal.

Lawyer Sings
For His Juries

Baptist Press
8/13/80

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) —Former attorney Kendall Moore no longer practices law, but he will still be facing juries.

The difference is that the new panel will be the music juries that all voice students in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's school of church music must face at each semester's end to test their vocal achievement.

The Louisville native says he realized that God had something other than law in store for him when, "I found that I was obtaining much more fulfillment and satisfaction from my church work than I was from my law practice, that I wanted to spend more time at my church and less time at my office."

Now a master of church music degree candidate at Southern, Moore, 33, says he is often questioned about the change he made, but he has no regrets.

"The statement that I received from many of my colleagues was, 'I wish that I had the courage to make the change,'" he says.

"The change" for Moore was a drastic one since he had no previous training in music and was entering a graduate school of music. "I'm in my third year of a two-year program," he says, laughing.

A graduate of Kentucky's Kenyon College and the University of Kentucky Law School, Moore is confident that he can use his previous education to help people solve their problems —a principle that led him to both the law profession and to Christian ministry.