



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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81-195

Christmas Comes Early
For Vietnamese Family

By Stan Hasty

WASHINGTON (BP)--Christmas 1981 came one week early for Southern Baptist home missionary An Minh Phan and his family.

Phan, who works on the staff of the Mount Vernon Baptist Association in suburban northern Virginia under SBC Home Mission Board sponsorship, became a U.S. citizen, as did his wife and four of their children, Dec. 18, in Fayetteville, N.C.

Hours later, after flying back to Washington, the Phans were reunited with their other three children, who had been left behind in Vietnam six years ago when the nation fell to the communists.

In an emotional scene at Dulles International Airport, the Phans embraced, caressed, wept, and finally sang together of their faith. Local television cameras captured their moving rendition of "Jesus Loves Me, This I know," in Vietnamese.

As though their big Dec. 18 were not enough, An Minh Phan and his wife Nang Thi Vo Phan, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary Christmas Day.

Phan, who became a Baptist after arriving in the United States in 1975, came to his northern Virginia post from Fayetteville, N.C., where he had organized and served as pastor of a Vietnamese mission sponsored by that city's Lafayette Baptist Church.

In coming earlier this year to Mount Vernon Association, he joined a team headed by executive director William J. Cumble. The association has helped in the resettlement of more than 1,000 Vietnamese. Cumble, who has been in his post for the past 25 years, said the 66 churches in the association have responded well to the challenge of helping Vietnamese find new lives in their communities.

Phan is described as a "catalytic" missionary to Asians in the Washington area. The nation's capital has become one of the primary havens for southeast Asian refugees.

For now, however, Phan's main ministry is with his own family, split apart suddenly when South Vietnam fell in 1975. In the haste of departure from their war-torn native land, the Phans had to leave behind a 10-year-old son, Hien, and 8-year-old twin daughters, Huyen Thi and Hang Thi Cam. They were left in Da Nang "for safekeeping" with Phan's mother and brother.

Now 16 and 14, respectively, the three Phan children were plainly overwhelmed at the reunion with their parents and brothers and sisters.

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Of the four the Phans managed to bring out of Vietnam in 1975, 22-year-old daughter Hoa works for Church World Service in Atlanta, 20-year-old son Hoi is a student at the University of North Carolina, 18-year-old son Hal studies at North Carolina State University, and 8-year-old daughter Huong attends elementary school in Fairfax County.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Mount Vernon Baptist Association.

Moral Issues Leader
L. D. Johnson Dies

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GREENVILLE, S.C. (BP)--L. D. Johnson, 65, one of Southern Baptists' best known speakers and writers on moral, social and theological issues, died Dec. 20, after a long battle with cancer.

Johnson, chaplain of Furman University and former pastor of churches in South Carolina and Virginia, was author of five books and a frequent speaker on moral and social issues. He also wrote a weekly column which appeared in four newspapers. He gave a series of addresses last March to the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission annual workshop, and had addressed the group at its meeting in 1975.

During the November convention of the Baptist Convention of South Carolina, he was chairman of the resolutions committee. He was active during the convention, and had returned home and entered the hospital.

Johnson had been chaplain of Furman and professor of religion since 1967. He was pastor of First Baptist Church, Greenville, S. C., 1962-67. Prior to that he was pastor of First Baptist Church, Danville, Va., for 19 years, and was chairman of the religion department of the University of Richmond from 1959 to 1962.

Survivors include his wife; a daughter, Elaine Yeatts of Richmond; a son, Rev. Roland Johnson, pastor of a church in Jefferson, Ga.; and five grandchildren.

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Dinner Honors C. B. Hastings,
Baptist Expert On Catholics

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ATLANTA (BP)--A framed 13th century Bible manuscript in Latin quoting Jesus' prayer for unity was presented to C. Brownlow Hastings of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board inter-faith witness department by Catholic bishop James Niedergesus during a retirement dinner for Hastings.

The Nashville, Tenn., bishop was one of a long string of Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Southern Baptist leaders who paid tribute to Hastings for his contributions to improved relations between Baptists and other religious groups during the dinner.

Hastings retires Dec. 31 after 11 years as associate in the department. He has been responsible for Baptist relationships with Catholics and Greek Orthodox.

In presenting the manuscript of the 16th, 17th and 18th chapters of the gospel of John found in a French monastery, Bishop Niedergesus quoted from Jesus' prayer for unity in John 17:20-21, saying the prayer was especially appropriate to honor Hastings.

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In that prayer, Jesus said: "I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in me through their word; that they may all be one, even as thou, father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (New American Standard Version).

Bishop Niedergesuss, the liaison with Southern Baptists for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, praised Hastings for his role in seeking to help Baptists and Catholics better understand each other.

"Hastings has helped us to pray together, worship together, and dialogue together about our differences with honesty, openness and mutual respect," the bishop said.

Tributes to Hastings' role in improved relations between Baptists and others were also brought by Homer P. Goumenis, pastor of the Cathedral of Annunciation in Atlanta and ecumenical officer for the Greek Orthodox Diocese; Joe Witmer, associate director of the Roman Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs; Joe O'Donnell, director of the Glenmary Missioner's Southern Regional Office and representative of the Bishops' Committee of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs; and Gerald Palmer, vice president of the SBC Home Mission Board.

Glenn Igleheart, director of the HMB interfaith witness department, presented a plaque in appreciation for his service to the denomination on behalf of the Home Mission Board. A bound volume of letters expressing appreciation for his work was also presented by Lloyd Whyte and George Sheridan, HMB interfaith witness department regional directors.

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PowerSource Selected To Sing
At World's Fair SBC Pavilion

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12/22/81

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Twenty college and seminary students have been selected for the musical-drama group "PowerSource" which will perform 10 times daily at the Southern Baptist Pavilion at the 1982 World's Fair.

PowerSource will perform a musical-drama commissioned especially for the premier at the pavilion, which will carry out the theme, "The Word Is. . .Energy."

Entitled "Love, You Spoke A Word," the musical-drama is being written by Ken Medema of San Francisco and Craig McNair Wilson of New York City. Medema is a blind Southern Baptist composer and entertainer. Wilson is a Christian entertainer and writer.

PowerSource will include two separate octets, plus two technicians and two resident directors. Each octet will perform the musical at the Baptist Pavilion five times daily on a split schedule.

The 20 students were selected by a special World's Fair Baptist Ministries panel after auditions of more than 115 Baptist students from throughout the nation. Auditions were held in Dallas, Atlanta and Knoxville.

PowerSource will be directed by Keith and LeeAnn Martin of Decatur, Ala., students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. They are graduates of Samford University, Birmingham, and former summer missionaries for the SBC Home Mission Board.

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Six of the 20 students are natives of Tennessee, host state for the World's Fair, and are students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and Carson-Newman (Baptist) College in nearby Jefferson City, Tenn.

UT students are Katrin Hall, soprano, and Roy McNeil, bass, both of Knoxville, and Greg Broughton, tenor, of Oak Ridge, Tenn. Gene Hurley, bass, Sheri Parker, soprano, and Jay McCluskey, tenor--all of Knoxville--are students from Carson-Newman College.

The group also includes two students from Texas and Oklahoma, plus students from South Carolina, California, Virginia, Louisiana, Alabama, Ohio, Iowa and Wisconsin.

Oklahoma students include Mickey Daniel, bass, from Stonewall, and Leah Merrick, alto, from Bartlesville, both students at East Central University in Ada.

Texans include Danny Grant, bass from Lubbock, a student at Texas Tech University; and Louis May of Fort Worth, student at Southwestern Seminary.

May will join Jerry Myers of Fairborn, Ohio, a student at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, as lighting and sound technicians for the performances.

Other members of PowerSource include Diane Poole of Milwaukee, soprano from University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee; Ginny McLemore, soprano from Montgomery, Ala., and recent graduate of Samford University; Edna Alvarez of Whittier, Calif., alto from California State University, Long Beach; Judy Deal of Lafayette, La., alto from University of Southwestern Louisiana; Jennifer Cosby, alto from Greenville, S.C., and recent graduate of Samford University; Mark Newcom of Waterloo, Iowa, tenor from University of Northern Iowa; and D. Ray Davis of Chester, Va., tenor from Albany Junior College, Albany, Ga.

The 20 students were selected by the panel composed of Larry Brooks, minister of music for Central Baptist Church, Fountain City, just outside Knoxville, and chairman of the program committee for Baptist Ministries at the World's Fair; June Hunt, Christian entertainer and speaker from Dallas; Gail Benfield, campus minister at New York City University; and Bill Lee, associate in the special mission ministries department at the SBC Home Mission Board, Atlanta.

Each of the 20 students will serve as semester missionaries for the Home Mission Board.

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Carters To Receive
Christian Life Award

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalyn, will receive the annual Distinguished Service Awards from the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The awards, which are given for the Carters' outstanding contribution in Christian social ethics, including their private and public support for strong families, will be given during the CLC annual seminar in Atlanta, March 22-24, 1982.

The Carters, strong Southern Baptists, will be present to receive the awards and will make a response during the meeting.

The national seminar will help kick off a three-year denominational Bold Mission Thrust emphasis on "Strengthening Families."

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Leading family and marriage specialists David Mace, Joyce Landorf, James Dobson and Dorothy Sample will present ways to strengthen families during the three-day meeting.

Mace, a world renowned author and family and marriage counselor, will present six theme interpretations during the seminar. Mrs. Landorf, a novelist and family authority featured in a new film series, will speak on the family and spiritual nurture.

Dobson, author of books and motivational films on marriage and the family, will speak on parenting. Dorothy Sample, president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, will speak on women in the family.

Other family specialists slated for the seminar are U.S. Congressman Claude Pepper of Florida, chairman of the Select Committee on Aging and long-time advocate of the poor and elderly; Wayne Oates, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the Louisville University School of Medicine; and former Vice-President Walter Mondale, who will speak on the family and citizenship.

Other seminar speakers include Kenneth Chafin, author and pastor of South Main Baptist Church, Houston; Charles Petty, executive director for the North Carolina Governor's Office of Citizen Affairs and a popular family conference leader; and David Edens, director of family and community studies at Stephens College, Columbia, Mo., and prominent author.

Foy Valentine, executive director of the commission, said: "The seminar is a vital step for Southern Baptists in preparing for the denomination-wide Bold Mission Thrust emphasis on strengthening families scheduled for 1982 to 1985. These program personalities represent a brilliant array of Christian family experts. We think it will be one of the finest family conferences ever put together in this country."

Harry Hollis, director of family and special moral concerns for the commission and director of the seminar, said the conference, which will be at the Dunfey Hotel in Atlanta, is open to all interested Southern Baptists.

Hollis said the seminar will go beyond a mere analysis of the current crisis in family life. "A correct analysis of family problems is important but analysis must be accompanied by practical solutions to family problems," Hollis said. "The conference will present specific ways Southern Baptists can strengthen their own families."

Additional information on the three-day conference may be obtained from the Christian Life Commission, 460 James Robertson Parkway, Nashville, Tenn. 37219.