



# -- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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January 19, 1982

82-09

## Wrapup

Theologians Seek Answers  
To Problems of Secularism

By Linda Lawson

BSSB

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--"Secularism--people living their lives as if there were no God"-- is one of the biggest problems facing Christians today, Grady C. Cothen told 70 theological educators from 28 nations.

Cothen, chairman of the Baptist World Alliance ad hoc committee on theological education which convened a four-day conference, said, "We are in all parts of the world being plagued with a new assault of secularism which threatens our understanding of the Christian faith."

He said the purpose of the meeting, the first of its kind sponsored by the BWA, was to enable participants to recognize common problems and "the responsibility we bear for trying to understand problems and emphasize Christian solutions."

As an example, Cothen noted, "We must come to an understanding of what the gospel says to the oppressed peoples of the world."

Cothen, who also is president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Tenn., emphasized the importance of theological education in dealing with secularism, calling for a sharing of ideas and resources and the formation of "a bond of fellowship and mutual love that will enable us to help each other."

The conference program included reports on the status of theological education from five continents and small-group sharing sessions as well as major addresses by theologians from Switzerland, England, Nigeria and Sri Lanka.

Thorwald Lorenzen, professor of systematic theology and ethics at the Baptist Theological Seminary, Ruschlikon, Switzerland, said he believes most Christians are "practical atheists" because God plays an unimportant role in their daily lives.

"We have forgotten that God loves the world," said Lorenzen. "We often go to the altar but we have forgotten that we must first be reconciled with our fellow human beings."

The role of Christians is to be credible witnesses of the truth of the gospel, said Lorenzen. "To know God means to participate in his passion for the world. The only real and convincing arguments for God are people who are willing to stake their lives on him."

Speaking on recovering biblical authority, George Beasley-Murray said, "I'm not sure we're ready to talk about the authority of the Bible to the secular world when we have so much difficulty talking about this to our own people."

Beasley-Murray, former principal of Spurgeon's College, London, and retired professor of New Testament interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., called "the authority to save" the major theme and purpose of the Bible.

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Tracing the historical development of the concept of biblical inerrancy, currently a subject of debate among some Baptist groups, Beasley-Murray said Christians "are probably going to differ about it for some time to come."

"The authority of the Scriptures resides in God in Christ who works through the Holy Spirit with the Scriptures," said Beasley-Murray.

W. G. Wickramasinghe, principal of Trinity College, Kandy, Sri Lanka, said "the secular assault on Christian values is most seen in the devaluing of the person." He cited racial and social injustice in a world in which he said the wealthy nations are becoming more wealthy and the Third World nations are becoming poorer.

In Asia, Wickramasinghe said Eastern religions play a minimal role in the day-to-day lives of people. "Unless moral and spiritual values undergird the education of young people, they will grow up with only a secular view," he said.

Osadolor Imasogie, president of the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomosho, said Christians must follow the teachings of Christ and share the gospel with all persons.

"The presence of the church, made up of men and women of all walks of life and levels of sophistication, points to the eternal reality of the person of Christ in the midst of the secular world," said Imasogie.

In reports from regional sharing groups, participants urged the BWA to consider planning both regional and international theological education conferences in the future.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Baptist Sunday School Board.

Baptist, Jewish Mothers  
Urged: Fight For Peace

By Jim Newton

AB

Baptist Press  
1/19/82

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--A Dallas rabbi has issued a challenge for 10 million Baptists and Jewish mothers to stage a peace demonstration on the steps of the White House.

"What we need is for 10 million mothers of Baptist and Jewish children to assemble on the steps of the White House and say, 'We're fed up with sending young babies we reared to fight old men's wars,'" said Saul Besser of Temple Shalom in Dallas.

During a speech at Baptist-Jewish dialogue at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Besser said Baptists and Jews should work together for the cause of peace because both believe what the Bible says: "That nations shall not lift up swords against nations, and they shall learn war no more."

"If we really believe the Bible," he added, "Baptists and Jews should proclaim to the world loud and clear that we will not stand idly by while any government in the world toys with a nation (Israel) that God has promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as a symbol of a better life and a better world."

He opposed the concept of a "limited nuclear war," saying it is a contradiction of terms. A "limited nuclear war" that would begin in the Middle East means that the major battle field would be in Europe and would quickly spread to the rest of the world, he explained.

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The question will finally boil down to "oil or Israel?" he said, because of America's difficulty in "getting oil from the beneficent despots in the Middle East."

During the dialogue, Besser said there is much Baptist and Jews can learn from each other.

Saying that Jews are too often solemn and have an over-emphasis on weeping, Besser urged Jews to restore life to their worship by learning to sing from Baptists.

"Baptists can learn something about the meaning of tears from Jews," he added. "With our tears and your singing, we can both learn more about reality."

Baptists and Jews should also learn something about faith and works from each other, Besser said. Baptists put more emphasis on faith and Jews put more emphasis on works, "but God's world needs both faith and works in order that God can live among us," he said.

Although Baptists and Jews have their differences, Besser cautioned against getting "stuck in the mud of our differences. Our fundamental difference--whether or not Jesus Christ is the Messiah--will be settled in the future," he said.

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HMB Approves Staff Changes,  
Appoints Six To Mission Service

AB

Baptist Press  
1/19/82

ATLANTA (BP)--In its first meeting of 1982, the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board elected a new director of the personnel division and named an acting director of the evangelism section.

In other actions, three persons were appointed missionaries, three persons were appointed missionary associates and 86 persons were approved for church and language pastoral assistance, including seven missionary pastor interns.

Margarette Stevenson, director of HMB business services division since May 1, 1981, was approved as new director of the personnel division, replacing E. Warren Woolf. Woolf is now a national consultant for student work for the HMB.

Stevenson joined the HMB staff in 1975 as director of payroll and employee benefits. Before HMB employment, she was an administrative assistant and service consultant for the Annuity Board, SBC.

Joe Ford, director of the evangelism development division, was named acting director of the evangelism section, filling the vacancy created by the resignation of C. B. Hogue. Hogue, vice president for evangelism since 1973, resigned that post to become senior pastor of Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla. Ford, author of "WOW" (Win Our World) materials for the HMB, joined the HMB staff in 1974 as director of evangelism for young adults. He assumed his present post in 1978.

Other board actions appointed Sandra K. Smith of Jefferson City, Mo., and Robert and Dolores Smith of Sterling, Kan., missionaries, and named Steve and Gale Golden of Phenix City, Ala., and Dorothy Williamson of Galveston, Texas, as missionary associates.

Sandra Smith will continue as assistant director of the Baptist Center in Detroit, Mich., where she has worked since July 1981. She is a graduate of Southwest Baptist College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and was coordinator of social services for Jefferson Street Baptist Chapel in Louisville, Ky., before assuming present duties.

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The Robert Smiths will continue work in Sterling, Kan., where he was pastor of First Baptist Church in Nickerson. Appointed by HMB church extension division, Smith now is a church planter strategist, supervising ministerial students in planning new churches in central Kansas. Smith, pastor of churches in Kentucky, Missouri and Florida, also served as foreign missionary to Brazil. He is a graduate of Southwest Baptist College, William Jewell College, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Eden Theological Seminary.

The Goldens will take up residence in Dover, Del., as directors of Christian social ministries and student ministries. He is a graduate of Samford University; she is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, and both are 1981 graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Williamson, a 1980 graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, now is a church planter apprentice in Sulfork, Va. Before HMB appointment, she was a church extension intern in Long Island, N.Y., and has been a public school teacher in Texas, Oklahoma and North Carolina. She also is a graduate of Houston Baptist University.

Approved for church pastoral assistance were:

Ron D. and Della Andrew of Cincinnati, Ohio; Harley D. and Shirley Archer of West Baden, Ind.; David J. and Carol J. Bethel of Joliet, Ill.; Charles E. and Linda Bradley of Otis Orchards, Wash.; Glenn H. and Geneva Byrd of Clarksville, Ind.;

Also, Charles E. and Tanya M. Cato of Seabrook, Md.; Timothy K. and Judy Christian of Mitchell, Ind.; William J. and Cynthia Combs of Nettie, W. Va.; Richard W. and Mary Covington of Billings, Mont.; C. Michael and Mildred Dellinger of Vernon, N.Y.; Richard E. and Rosemary Groves of Cambridge, Mass.; Joel C. and Patricia Harris of Portland, Ore.;

Also, Carl E. Jr. and Sue Hartness of Clarence Center, N.Y.; Stephen L. and Belinda Hartwick of Enderlin, N.D.; Bruce F. and Florida Harwell of Fairfield, Calif.; John D. and Paula Henry of Cheney, Wash.; Donald G. and Alice D. Hollenbeck of Wichita, Kan.; Alvin H. and Shawnee Huff of Altoona, Pa.;

Also, David L. and Barbara McCall of Milton, W. Va.; Rick D. and Jane McKinney of Middletown, Ohio; Gerald I. and Sharon Miller of Metarmora, Ill.; Gordon H. and Martha Mills of Weippi, Ind.; Jerry J. and Shanon Miller of Keno, Ore.; W. Keith and Lorena Moore of Wheeling, W. Va.; Steven B. and Linda Moorhouse of Crested Butte, Colo.

Also, Gary D. and Deborah Pearce of Grand Island, Neb.; Paul D. and Loma (Marty) Plavnick of Hiawatha, Iowa; Sonya (Mrs. Larry D.) Reagan of Welch, W. Va.; Thomas James and Cheryl Roland of Sioux Rapids, Iowa; Robert and Faye Stockland of Duluth, Minn.;

Also, John O. and Betty A. Sullivan of Plattsburgh, N.Y.; Dennis R. and Patricia Tate of Mansfield, Ohio; Brian M. and Gale Taule of Des Moines, Iowa; Cecil R. Jr. and Barbara Thomas of Maquoketa, Iowa; and Robert L. and Donna Thommarson of Sebastopol, Calif.

Approved for language pastoral assistance were: Abraham and Alda Aldape of Sublette, Kan.; James and Beleta Atkins of Shiprock, N.M.; Rizcallah and Najla Constantine of Birmingham, Ala.; Byron Mark and Cathy Spain of Biloxi, Miss.; and George B. and Margaret Welch of Gallup, N.M.

Approved as missionary pastor interns were: Gerald A. and Teri Baumann of Chadron, Neb.; Samuel David Hughes of Billings, Mont.; John Paul and Brenda J. McClain of Castalia, Ohio; and Randall W. and Deborah J. Owens of Jefferson, Ohio.

Polish Pastor  
To Return Home

CO

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--A Polish pastor studying in the United States said here he will return to Poland despite martial law and threats of a Soviet crackdown.

Aleksander Kircun Jr. arrived in the United States in September to study for six months at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pa., leaving his wife and two children in Poland.

Kircun had not heard from his family from the inception of martial law in December until Jan. 12, when he received word they were all right and were receiving adequate food through relief efforts of German Baptists.

While attending the Baptist International Conference on Theological Education at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, Kircun said, "The Lord gives me courage and strength and hope."

Kircun, pastor of the 160-member Baptist church in Wroclaw, the third largest Baptist church in Poland, said he expects to return to Poland in March.

Citing his family and his ministry as reasons for his return, Kircun said, "Material things are not the most important things in life and even freedom in the worldly sense may not be what the Christian should look after."

Kircun said he believes being a Christian should be costly. "If you are a Christian, it must be shown and it must be seen. You must not always be on the side of those who win and those who have it better. This is how we should approach Christianity in a secular world."

In his church, Kircun said the recent beginning of an all-age Bible school, similar to Sunday School, has caused the congregation to "come alive."

"For the last several years a conviction has been growing that our people are not any more a people of the Bible," said Kircun. Eight groups of 20 members each now meet for Bible study one hour before Sunday worship.

Also, the church works closely with five smaller congregations. "We always have some kind of mission station," he said.

Before he left Poland, Kircun baptized five persons. He recently received word that nine others have recently been baptized.

"The church grows slowly, but it does grow," said Kircun.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Baptist Sunday School Board.



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82-09

EDITORS: Following is the third in a series of features on the executive heads of Southern Baptist agencies, boards and institutions. Baptist Press will run one each week, with photo, in no particular order. Each article has been written by a public relations person within the agency.

Allen Asks God For  
Patience: Right Now

By Bonita Sparrow

CO

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--If Jimmy Allen had his way, the lion would lie down with the lamb and swords would be beaten into plowshares. This minute.

"Unfortunately," Allen said wryly, "God keeps reminding me that I'm in sales. He's in management."

Jimmy R. Allen, third president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, is an activist, an innovator, a visionary who is intimidated only if he finds himself in a situation where he is not dependent on God. "Without that dependence, I'm a pushover," he acknowledged.

People who know Jimmy Allen do not consider him a pushover. But there is no shortage of those who consider him energetic. William Pinson, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, told those attending Allen's installation as RTVC president: "My job tonight is to bring the charge. Me trying to charge Jimmy Allen is like a flashlight battery approaching Hoover Dam."

The consuming passion in Allen's life is "the forwarding of the reign of God in the affairs of men. I see this telecommunications assignment at the RTVC as the major opportunity of the immediate future for the forwarding of that cause."

Allen's activities in two years at the RTVC have reaped results. He has been a prime mover in raising the trust level between his agency and other SBC entities and he conceived the American Christian Television System (ACTS), which will lead to a nationwide Baptist TV network. In August he led the RTVC to sign a \$2.1 million-a-year lease on a space satellite, the first step in making the network a reality.

Allen envisions the RTVC helping local churches gain new ways of access to the media. "I think we will put together, under the leadership of God, a delivery system with the technical ability to make good radio and television programming available to every home in America and we will help the world to be genuinely a neighborhood of Christians," he says.

With all his responsibilities, Allen is not too busy to be sensitive to the needs of others. One staffer told what happened when she was hospitalized.

"I didn't know Dr. Allen even knew my name, but he called me several times long distance to tell me he was praying for me," she said. "When he got home, he came to visit. I had been worried about who would take care of my mother, when she called to tell me Mrs. Allen had been to see her, bringing a big bag of groceries. I quit worrying and concentrated on getting well."

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Imbued with a strong sense of mission, Allen lives life in the fast lane. But he will occasionally slow down and let his soul catch up.

"Every so often, I go to the house we have down at Lake Brownwood and relax," he said. "I enjoy swimming and water skiing and boating. I like to read--any kind of good fiction except romance novels--and I enjoy live drama and all kinds of spectator sports." He is an avid Dallas Cowboys fan and "worries" over the Baylor University Bears.

Like most busy men, Allen hates to spend time shopping. "I buy clothes as quickly as possible, then get on with important things." He likes yardwork even less.

"When I was a child in Dallas, I earned spending money by mowing yards in the hot sun with a push mower," he says. "I committed myself then not to ever do yardwork when I grew up. I have kept that promise. I do not do yards."

What Allen does do is turn impossibilities into probabilities. His entire career seems to have followed that course.

In the 1960s, as head of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, Allen led Texas Baptists to take strong stands for racial justice. The San Antonio church he pastored in the 1970s was noted for its innovative social action and evangelistic programs. He dedicated his two years as SBC president to promoting Bold Mission Thrust, the denomination's effort to confront everyone in the world with the message of God by the year 2000.

He is known nationally. One of former President Carter's fact finders in Iran during the hostage crisis, Allen also has met several times with Israel's Prime Minister Menchem Begin and has testified before that country's Knesset on bills relating to religious freedom in Israel.

But he has paid high dues for his achievements. During those days of racial unrest, he and his wife, Wanda, received abusive phone calls and hate mail. A cross was burned into the grass at their home.

There have been serious illness in his family and problems with their children which created another series of painful challenges. "Wanda and I have learned, in praying and working our way through these problems, to be very candid with each other as we try to discover where we each are," he says. "I'm a telephone person so when my schedule causes us to be apart we're still in daily contact."

Jimmy and Wanda Allen obviously care about each other. Both have a strong sense of humor and each has strengths from which the other draws. They make a point of having meals together. Breakfast usually ends with conversation and coffee on their patio accompanied by their Shih-Tzu, Tig (short for Tiger Euphrates).

Although problems with their children have ironed themselves out (one son graduates this year from Golden Gate Seminary, the other two are living and working in San Antonio), the Allens have learned from that suffering and understand the pain of other parents in similar situations.

"I think the Father helps you work through to a sense of limited liability and you reach the time when you've done all you know to do to share what you believe, in a loving way, with the child," he says. "Then that child has to make his own judgments and becomes liable for those decisions. You cannot be liable for everything that people around you ultimately decide to do. You have to be as faithful as you know how to be with the responsibilities that you have."

Allen says God has been teaching him a number of things. "I'm a very impatient man who has had to learn patience with processes and with people. I have a constant prayer that my sense of urgency can be geared to other people's sense of pace. That is not always easy."

Asked how he would most want to be remembered, he quickly said, "As a man who loved Jesus Christ and wanted everything to be in tune with what Jesus wants."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Radio and Television Commission.

Moon Devotee Wins Right  
To Sue for Deprograming

WB

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WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court has declined to disturb a lower court's ruling that a member of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church had the right to sue his parents and others who made an unsuccessful attempt to "deprogram" him.

Thomas J. Ward sued his parents, brother, sister and 29 others under a federal conspiracy law for the November 1978 attempt to convince him to leave the sect. Ward said he was abducted, beaten and held for 35 days.

According to court records, Ward, who was then 28, traveled from New York to Virginia Beach, Va., for a Thanksgiving celebration with his family at the home of his sister. But as family members were supposedly taking him to an airport for a return flight to New York, Ward said they kidnapped him, taking him first to a private home, then to a Norfolk, Va., hotel.

Later, he complained in his suit, he was transported forcefully to Pittsburgh, Pa., for the duration of his 35-day ordeal, which ended when he escaped.

Ward's parents and the others accused in the conspiracy argued in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia that they were immune from the suit because it was brought under a federal law designed to help blacks, not victims of religious discrimination, in bringing equal protection cases to federal courts.

Although the district court agreed, the Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in Richmond, Va., reversed the decision, ruling that religious discrimination is "akin to invidious racial bias."

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Southern Baptist Opens  
Kansas Senate Seat

By Brenda Hall

CO

Baptist Press  
1/19/82

TOPEKA, Kan. (BP)--Kansas Senate Chaplain Fred Hollomon delivered the legislature's opening session prayer just like he has for the past three years: in a manner that has gained him national media attention.

Attention-getting is not his motivation, but Hollomon admitted that the legislators know him as a "maverick" pray-er.

Hollomon, pastor of Faith Southern Baptist Church in Lawrence, Kan., has become known for his down-to-earth prayers, sometimes presented in verse form, as typified by this year's opening session prayer:

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"Dear Lord,

The lawyer's locked his office  
 And the farmer's shut his gate.  
 We're headed for Topeka  
 Where it's time to legislate.  
 We kissed the spouse and hugged the children.  
 Again they'll have to learn to wait  
 For the House and Senate are in session,  
 And it's time to legislate.  
 Help our partners run the business--  
 In their hands they hold our fate--  
 While we labor in the statehouse  
 And Attempt to legislate.  
 Grant us wisdom, Lord, this session  
 As we start with fresh new slate;  
 For the folks back home are wondering  
 What it is we'll legislate.  
 In the name of Christ, the Redeemer,

Amen."

He has been Senate chaplain since 1978, when he was selected by Senate President Ross Doyen. Besides offering a daily prayer during the Senate's three-month session, Hollomon makes himself available as a counselor to lawmakers and others working in the capitol complex.

The continuity Hollomon has developed over the past three years has borne fruit.

"I'm on a first-name basis with just about everybody," he said. "There are no new faces in the Senate this year since there were no elections last year," he said, and even though there is a turnover among legislative staffs and other state employees, Hollomon said he feels he's developed "a pretty good relationship with everyone" in the course of his low-key ministry.

"I usually take time within the first few days of the session to talk to each one to see how they're doing and what's happened to them the past year. I've been there long enough now that I can ask specific questions," he said.

Hollomon is no stranger to the statehouse. In 1975 and 1976 he was an administrative assistant to the Kansas House majority floor leader, and in 1977 was administrative assistant to Doyen. He worked 18 months for the Kansas Corporation Commission before going to the full-time pastorate at Faith Southern Baptist Church in 1978.

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WB

Court Rules Home Violence  
 Factor in Sentencing Minors

By Stan Haste

Baptist Press  
 1/19/82

WASHINGTON (BP)--The fact that a juvenile convicted of first degree murder was reared in a violent atmosphere must be considered by trial judges before imposing a death sentence, the Supreme Court has ruled 5-4.

Contrary to some initial reports, the high court decision did not forbid judges and juries from sentencing juveniles to death. But it did order an Oklahoma judge to consider the fact that convicted murderer Monty Lee Eddings was brought up in a violent home before deciding whether to impose a sentence of death.

Eddings killed an Oklahoma highway patrolman in April 1977 after being stopped for a traffic offense. Then 16, Eddings and several younger companions had run away from their Missouri homes, traveling in a car owned by Eddings' brother.

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After pleading no contest at his trial, Eddings was convicted of first degree murder by a jury. At a separate sentencing hearing, required by Oklahoma law in capital murder cases, a state judge imposed the death sentence.

The judge held that the state had successfully shown the crime was especially heinous, atrocious and cruel, that it was committed in order to avoid arrest and that there was a probability that Eddings would commit other acts of violence if ever released.

Besides permitting the state to argue such "aggravating" circumstances, the Oklahoma law instructs the sentencing judge to consider "mitigating" circumstances such as the defendant's background, age and state of mind at the time of the killing.

In Eddings' case, the sentencing judge condemned him to death after giving "very serious consideration" to his youth and rejecting the argument that his violent background was a sufficiently "mitigating" circumstance.

In its ruling the slim high court majority cited an earlier decision in an Ohio murder case requiring that "individualized consideration of mitigating factors" are required by the Eighth Amendment's ban on "cruel and unusual punishment" and the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

The court ordered the case sent back to the Oklahoma judge to reconsider the death sentence. It did not say the judge may not reimpose the same sentence.

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Storm Interrupts  
Baptist Meetings

CO

Baptist Press  
1/19/82

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Two meetings of national Baptist significance were severely interrupted by the disastrous winter storm that blitzed the country in January.

Trees heavily coated with ice crashed into three of 65 cabins occupied by missionaries and families during orientation at Callaway Gardens in Georgia. Nine other cabins suffered electrical or plumbing damage, chasing the 183 participants into separate lodging on the grounds.

At Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly in Alabama, a six-day meeting of state presidents and state and national staff members at the Woman's Missionary Union stretched into eight days for some as ice paralyzed the area.

The WMU participants were without heat and electricity for one day. They met in the dining room where large windows let in warming sunlight, but they still wore coats and blankets and the evening session that day was cancelled.

All but a few of the 150 participants were delayed in departure 24 hours. Some had to wait even another day beyond that to get out.

The WMU participants did learn at the meeting that a final decision on one of 39 building sites considered in the Birmingham area for relocation of WMU headquarters, will be made "within days," according to a report by Relocation Committee Chairman Mrs. J. Frank Gilreath.

No one was injured at the missionary orientation in Georgia. The missionaries and their families found shelter first at First Baptist Church in Pine Mountain. Later in the evening they moved to the Callaway Gardens Inn, on the grounds of the vacation center.

"Just about the time we got settled in, the power went off there, too," said Donald R. Smith, interim orientation center director. "But the building was warm and far better insulated than the cottages, so we sat tight."

Orientation activities resumed Jan. 18.

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