



# -- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

SBC Executive Committee  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
(615) 244-2355  
Wilmer C. Fields, Director  
Dan Martin, News Editor  
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

February 3, 1982

AB

82-19

Senior Adults Find Action  
In Annual Mission Project

By Patti Stephenson

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (BP)—Senior adults at First Baptist Church in Gainesville, Fla., had done all the usual mission projects. They had sewn lap robes for patients at the local nursing homes, delivered meals to homebound neighbors, taught English to new foreign families.

But last fall, the "Telling and Sharing" group decided to forego ordinary projects and parties. Instead, 11 senior adults—all over 70—traveled almost 1,000 miles to help a struggling West Virginia congregation build a new church.

At first, the volunteers weren't sure that "people our age" could be assigned to a mission project by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. But after reassurance and encouragement from the board's special mission ministries department, four men and seven women accepted a challenge at Temple Baptist Church in Moundsville, W. Va.

Led by David Smith, minister of youth, college and senior adults, the team loaded a church van and headed for Atlanta, where they stopped at the Home Mission Board to pick up windows needed for the new Moundsville building.

Among the group were a retired Air Force colonel, a librarian, a former post office employee and self-employed businessman, and a bookkeeper who handled trip finances. Except for transportation, everyone paid their own way.

When they arrived in Moundsville, they found pastor Rod Kelley and his 270 members eager to expand from the crowded, converted lounge where they met. The church, started in the 1950s by a group of itinerant southern construction workers, "has had its ups and downs," Kelley says. "Pastors were always coming and going."

Though none of the Gainesville group had done construction work before, "They all knew they could handle it," says Smith. Each day, the gray-haired volunteers donned bright orange work caps and spent eight hours shoveling, painting, pouring concrete, insulating walls and stippling ceiling. The windows they hauled from Atlanta didn't fit, so they had to be recut before they were installed.

During the week, the senior adults worshipped with the Moundsville church, even stepping in to lead the Wednesday night prayer service when Kelley became ill. Afterwards, the senior adults and the congregation "all squeezed together" in the group's small rental cabin for fellowship. "We felt we were just part of their church family," Smith recalls.

By the end of the week, "we were all amazed at what the group had accomplished," Kelley says. "I admit I had really wondered what a group of older folks would be able to do."

Because of their help, as well as three other mission teams' assistance, the new 8,000-square-foot building with 11 Sunday School rooms and worship space for 300 will be completed in the spring.

The Gainesville group is planning a second mission trip and would like to return to Moundsville for the dedication of the new building in May. "They were ready to go again sooner than I was," Smith admits. "These 'golden agers' are really a gold mine for mission work."

Anderson Elected to Head  
Family Ministry Department

CO

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Douglas L. Anderson, 36, was elected secretary of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department during the semi-annual meeting of the board's trustees.

Anderson, who has been supervisor of the department's family enrichment section, assumes leadership of the department which provides resources and training in marriage and family enrichment and ministries with senior and single adults. Anderson succeeds Joe Hinkle who resigned to accept a Springfield, Tenn., pastorate.

A five-year employee of the board, Anderson becomes leader of the family ministry department as Southern Baptists enter a three-year emphasis on strengthening families. The emphasis includes goals to involve 500,000 families in regular family worship and Bible study in the home, 50,000 couples in a marriage enrichment activity, one million parents in a parent enrichment activity and 15,000 couples participating in the Baptist Marriage Enrichment System.

Anderson is a graduate of the University of Richmond, and earned a master of divinity and doctorate from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Before coming to the board, he was director of academic support services at Southern Seminary. He has been pastor of churches in Virginia, Kentucky and Indiana.

-30-

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

---

Foreign Board Commits  
\$760,000 More to Poland

By Bill Webb

RB  
Baptist Press  
2/3/82

BAD HOMBURG, West Germany (BP)--Southern Baptists will provide an additional \$760,000 for Polish food relief during 1982, including \$510,000 for food purchases and \$250,000 for a proposed agricultural development plan to help Poles produce more food for themselves.

John Cheyne, the Foreign Mission Board's consultant for relief ministries, arranged the aid in a meeting Jan. 30 in Bad Homburg, West Germany, with Knud Wumpelmann, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, and Siegfried Kerstan and Manfred Otto, directors of the German Baptist Union.

The three Baptist groups and the Baptist World Alliance plan to make regular food shipments worth more than \$930,000 to Poland this year.

That total includes \$610,000 from the Southern Baptist board (\$510,000 just committed plus \$100,000 previously committed); \$173,000 from the German Baptist Union; \$87,000 through the European Baptist Federation; and \$60,000 from the Baptist World Alliance.

The Baptist group will send two truckloads of food supplies, worth about \$26,000 a load, to Baptist distribution centers in Poland each month during 1982. In addition, a special shipment will be sent each quarter to a Baptist geriatric home in Bialystok.

The remainder of the \$930,000--nearly \$200,000--will be channeled through the Polish Ecumenical Council, which includes representatives of the Polish Baptist Union and seven other Protestant denominations. That money will buy food for general distribution and for shipment to public institutions such as schools, hospitals and children's homes, as determined by the council.

-more-

Details of the proposed \$250,000 agricultural development plan are expected to come from a February meeting of Polish Baptists and John David Hopper, the board's fraternal representative to Baptists in Eastern Europe.

The Foreign Mission Board's previous release of \$265,000 in hunger and relief money for Poland, coupled with the commitment of an additional \$760,000 for 1982, brings Southern Baptists' total aid to Poland since September 1981 to more than \$1 million.

The European Baptist Federation has sent more than \$174,000 in food and medicines to Poland since Oct. 20.

German Baptists have sent goods worth \$249,000. Local Baptist churches across Europe have collected \$261,000 in goods since May and sent them directly to sister congregations in Poland.

-30-

CO

Who Will Follow Smith?  
History May Offer Clue

By James H. Cox

Baptist Press  
2/3/82

MIDDLETOWN, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptists' biennial preoccupation with electing a new convention president is about to begin. It comes as the result of a clause in the convention's constitution which states "the term of office for the president is limited to two years."

Bailey Smith, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., reaches that constitutional limit at the SBC meeting, June 15-17, in New Orleans, La.

History may tell us something about the person to be elected in New Orleans even now, however.

Forty-two men, no women, have been elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention since the convention was organized in 1845.

By states, Texas leads with eight presidents, followed by Tennessee, seven; Georgia, five; Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma and South Carolina, three each. One of those elected from South Carolina a century ago moved from that state and was re-elected as a Kentuckian.

The last three decades have seen 17 individuals elected from seven states. Five were Tennesseans, four Texans, three Oklahomans, two North Carolinians, and there was one each from Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

All served the constitutional limit of two years with the exceptions of K. Owen White of Texas and James L. Sullivan and Adrian P. Rogers of Tennessee, who chose to limit their presidencies to one year.

Of the 17 elected since 1952, 14 were pastors of large metropolitan churches. Two were laymen--Brooks Hays of Arkansas, elected in 1957, and Owen Cooper of Mississippi, elected in 1972. One, James L. Sullivan, was a retired denominational agency executive.

Of the 14 pastors, three served the same church in Tennessee during their presidencies (R. G. Lee, Ramsey Pollard and Adrian P. Rogers) and two served the same church in North Carolina during theirs (C. C. Warren and Carl E. Bates).

-more-

The convention has met in 14 states during the last three decades. On seven occasions it met in Missouri; six in Texas; five in Florida; two in California; and one each in Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The convention last met in New Orleans in 1969, when W. A. Criswell of Texas was re-elected to a second term as president.

Of the last 17 presidents, only Criswell—elected in 1968 when the convention met in Houston, and Jaroy Weber—a Texan elected when the convention met in Dallas in 1974, lived in the state in which the convention was meeting at the time of election.

What, if anything, does recent history suggest about those most likely to be elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention? A look at the last 30 years reveals the following factors:

1. The president has always been a man.
2. A Tennessean or a Texan is most likely to be elected. (Jimmy Allen was the last Texan to serve, from 1977-79, and James L. Sullivan the last Tennessean, in 1976-77).
3. Whoever is elected president in New Orleans, unless he prefers otherwise, will almost assuredly be re-elected by the convention meeting in Pittsburgh in 1983.
4. The pastor of a large metropolitan church has an overwhelming chance of being elected president—this year, and every year. Conversely, a layman or denominational worker has only a very small chance.
5. The odds are at least fair that a person elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention will be serving a pastorate from which one or more of his predecessors was also elected president.
6. If tradition holds true, a candidate from a state where Southern Baptist work is strongest, other than Louisiana, will be elected convention president in 1982.

-30-

Missionary Nurse Helps  
Vincentian Babies Live

By Elaine Herrin

*RB*  
Baptist Press  
2/3/82

KINGSTOWN, St. Vincent (BP)—Seeing the severely malnourished baby lying in a box on the floor in a corner—barely alive—almost made Suzan Bryant sick.

The missionary nurse quickly hospitalized Lisa, the 8-month-old daughter of a young unwed mother, and gave her a high calorie blend of oil, sugar and milk.

Thriving on the special blend (provided initially by Foreign Mission Board hunger relief funds but now purchased by the hospital), Lisa became alert and soon developed into "the beautiful dark-eyed baby girl God intended her to be," Bryant marveled.

Suzan Bryant, an Arkansas native, had read about the alarming malnutrition and escalating infant mortality rates on St. Vincent even before she came to the Caribbean island nearly four years ago. She came determined to make things different.

The public hospital treated malnutrition, but existing programs were not getting at the root causes or effectively preventing malnutrition and subsequent deaths. Superstition, ignorance and lack of resources were major problems.

"People here love their children," Bryant said. "But they are often trapped in ignorance and superstition."

Some villagers believe that foods such as fish, cheese and liver cause stupidity, stuttering and worms.

Older Vincentians, convinced that children who become thin are "hexed," try to ward off evil spirits by tying black strings around the child's wrists and waist.

-more-

Some children who receive medical attention return to the hospital months later, again malnourished.

"Even though we held classes in the hospital for the mother, when she returned home, 'baby was well,' so she saw no need to continue what we had begun," she said.

Other parents learned about good nutrition, but did not have the resources for preparing nutritious meals at home. Finding that many women were willing to grow food for their families when properly taught, Bryant added a section on kitchen gardening to her program. And during 1981 the Southern Baptist mission began providing chicks and laying hens as a source of fresh eggs.

Bryant's 10-week community health program, approved by the Vincentian government, is taught in the mountain villages around Kingstown.

She works with a parent or guardian whose child is being treated for malnutrition, then uses this contact to introduce the program in that family's village.

If a child is brought in for treatment from a village where classes already have been taught, Bryant sends word to former class members in the area. They share their notebooks and training with the mother when her child is discharged.

To date she has taught eight area programs, averaging about 25 parents in each. In Georgetown, 40 enrolled, including some men who came to a session on family planning.

Painfully aware that children still die from malnutrition in St. Vincent, her dark eyes brighten when she thinks of the progress that has been made: "We can't do everything, but we have done something. I feel good about that," Bryant said.

So do children like Lisa, now a happy, healthy little girl who recently celebrated her second birthday.

-30-

Elaine Herrin is a Southern Baptist missionary press representative in Grenada.  
(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

---