

(BP)

-- FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

March 18, 1982

82-44

Baptists Reach Out
To Brazil's Capital

By Erich Bridges

BRASILIA, Brazil (BP) -- Baptists arrived before the beginning, when Brazil's magnificent capital was little more than an airstrip in the wilderness.

They number more than 5,000 in Brasilia and the surrounding federal district, and they intend to grow.

Almost 40 Baptist churches minister in Brasilia and six satellite cities, home for well over a million people. Another million are expected before the end of the decade.

To evangelize the greater federal district in the 1980s, Baptists-- with help from Southern Baptist missionaries--aim to reach three levels of society: (1) the affluent class of government officials, diplomats, lawyers and military leaders, (2) middle-level Brazilian officials and business people living in the "superblocks" (row upon row of multi-story apartments) and (3) the hundreds of thousands of workers and poor people crowding the satellite cities.

In exclusive subdivisions and estates, the affluent aren't easy to contact, but 1,000-member Memorial Baptist Church hopes to attract them with beautiful facilities, preaching by Eber Vasconcelos (long-time pastor and national convention leader) and person-to-person contact. Lawyers bring colleagues. Government managers invite fellow workers.

In the swelling "superblocks," Third Baptist Church has emerged as the fastest growing congregation in the district convention. "We got 3,000 new neighbors in one week," recalls Raymond Kolb, former missionary pastor of the church. "That's how fast the new apartments go up and fill up."

In the apartment buildings near the church, the current pastor, young, aggressive Julio de Macedo, has launched "block fellowships"--Bible study and fellowship groups designed to help church members reach their neighbors.

Meanwhile, missionaries Ed and Roberta Farris, of Missouri, concentrate on Taguatinga (pop., 600,000), by far the largest of the satellite cities. Newcomers from every part of Brazil still arrive daily, huddling in shacks or under bridges, waiting for low-cost government housing. "They come here looking for a new start, like a lot of people went after the Gold Rush in the United States," Farris says.

Canaan Baptist Church, where Farris is pastor, overflows with Sunday worshipers. So do other churches in the satellite cities--an encouraging sign, since population in the satellites is more than double that of Brasilia itself.

To take advantage of growth throughout the federal district, however, Farris stresses the need for more trained leaders and followers. Only eight churches in the convention employ full-time pastors; others rely on bi-vocational and lay leaders.

Brazilians hold most leadership positions now, but missionaries still provide important support. Though Kolb uses Brasilia as a base for overseeing mission work throughout Brazil, he and his wife, Ann, have helped several local churches grow. Alabamian Bob May teaches at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Brasilia. Tommy Bridges, also of Alabama, is an evangelist and camp director.

Southern Baptist missionaries were there before the beginning. Missionary James Musgrave of Missouri and three Brazilian pastors knelt at the site of the planned capital in 1956, praying that Christ would be lifted up throughout the new city. Musgrave returned to help organize First Baptist Church in a shed, and later became pastor of Memorial church.

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When Kolb first landed his mission plane in Brasilia in 1958, the city consisted of an airstrip, a wooden shed for an air terminal and three or four half-finished buildings. A ragtag army of construction workers commuted from a nearby settlement of shanties and saloons.

Located on an empty plain of scrub brush in Brazil's interior, the spot was so isolated that even asphalt for the roads had to be flown in.

Today the city springs from the earth like a mirage, filled with ultra modern government buildings, office towers, shopping malls, plazas, cathedrals, military complexes, hotels and "superblocks," surrounded by parks, expressways and an extensive man-made lake.

As Brasilia consolidates its position as the national seat of power and the population center of central Brazil, room for Baptist growth is virtually unlimited.

"The church signifies the kingdom of God in this city," says Julio de Macedo. "We are the little flower in the cement. We will bloom."

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Adapted from Commission magazine.

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

When You Serve in El Salvador
What Do You Write Home About?

By Lee Ann McAninch

RB
Baptist Press
3/18/82

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (BP) -- One of the hardest things a Southern Baptist missionary in a place like El Salvador has to do is sit down and write a letter to the folks back home.

How do you describe what it is like to live in a war-torn country? What do you tell your family? How do you understand what they are hearing and feeling?

These questions confront both missionary families in El Salvador. Bill and Libby Stennett and their son, John, have been here since January 1977. Our family--Ernie and I and daughters, Kristie and Julia--arrived in December 1980.

I well remember our own thoughts and feelings as we read of the situation here before moving from language school in Costa Rica.

Is it enough to say to our families, "We are all right. The Lord is protecting us. Don't worry about us?" How can we expect them to understand our situation and accept it when they have never lived here or even visited us?

What do we tell our families when they write or call us?

We try to be as honest as possible. We don't shelter them from events as they really are, but we don't share only sensational news, either. We try to share our lives as they really are--our home life, our literature ministry and our church activities.

We also share that we have curbed our activities outside the capital and that we don't travel to all parts of the country. At the same time, we share that there is plenty to be done all around us--at our doorstep.

We share that our ministry is expanding. More and more people are coming to know the Lord in spite of--or maybe as a result of--the violence. Sales in the Baptist bookstore and book deposit have never been higher. New avenues of ministry are opening before us.

There are no easy answers to the questions our families ask. All we can do is answer truthfully: Trust in the Lord and follow his leading. He will direct us, protect us and help us cope with situations as they arise.

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Lee Ann McAninch, from Gadsden, Ala., is a Southern Baptist missionary in El Salvador.

Home Mission Board Names
70 To Mission Service

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ATLANTA (BP) -- Seventy people were elected to mission service during the March meeting of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.

Included are 10 missionaries, six missionary associates, 46 approved for church pastoral assistance, and eight to receive language pastoral assistance.

Elected as missionaries were Joseph and Debbie Bagwell of Chelsea, Mass.; Harry and Cheryl Edmonds of Baltimore, Md.; Timothy and Carolyn Logerquist of Yuma, Ariz.; Michael and Sarah McCullough of Reno, Nev.; and Henry and Patricia Smart of Tempe, Ariz.

Named missionary associates were Ronald and Betty Jo Sanders of Normal, Ill.; Garland and Hellen Wilkerson of Dayton, Ohio; and Gary and Joye Lynn Zafuto of Kansas City, Mo.

The Bagwells will remain in Chelsea where he is pastor/director of First Baptist Church, where he has been since 1979. He is a graduate of Samford University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary; she holds degrees from Berry College and New Orleans seminary. Mrs. Bagwell formerly was an HMB student intern at Baptist Friendship House in New Orleans.

The Edmonds, missionary associates since 1979, will continue to live in Baltimore where he is director of Kathleen Mallory Center. He earned degrees from University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and she graduated from Miami University and Southeastern Seminary.

The Logerquists will remain in Yuma where he becomes director of associational missions for Yuma County Baptist Association. A graduate of University of Arizona, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, he has been a church extension worker with the Yuma association since 1978. Mrs. Logerquist has also served the association as a preschool consultant and Woman's Missionary Union resource person.

The McCulloughs will live in Reno, where he begins work as a state Christian social ministries consultant. A Mission Service Corps volunteer at Golden Gate seminary, McCullough holds degrees from Texas A & M University, Southwestern seminary, and Louisiana State University. Mrs. McCullough is a graduate of San Jose State University and Golden Gate seminary.

The Smarts will work in Phoenix where he becomes church extension director for Central Baptist Association. Missionary associates since 1980, the Smarts hold degrees from Southwest Baptist College and Baylor University and he also graduated from Southwestern seminary. He has been director of new work in Phoenix since 1980 and was pastor of churches in Arizona and Kansas.

The Sanders will continue to live in Illinois where he is a student worker. He holds degrees from Murray State University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Sanders is a graduate of University of Kentucky.

The Wilkersons will remain in Ohio where he will become director of associational missions for West Central Baptist Association. He is a graduate of Luther Rice Seminary and has been pastor of churches in Ohio and Kentucky.

The Zafutos will move to Youngstown, N.Y., where he will be a church planter apprentice. He holds degrees from Campbellsville College and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Approved for church pastoral assistance were Wayne and Sharon Benack of Coaldale, Pa.; Samuel and Susan Birky of Mill Valley, Calif.; Phillip and Claudia Busbee of Montebello, Calif.; William and Martha Carrell of Louisville, Ky.; Tom and Shirley Cossairt of Carter Lake, Iowa; David and Evelyn Culp of Louisville, Ky.; Thomas and Marlene Daigle of Forest Park, Ohio; and John and Doris Davis of Chesapeake, W. Va.

Also, James and Debra Ehrhard of Centerville, Ohio; Daniel and Sandra Forbes of Palm Harbor, Fla.; Jack A. Frost of Columbus, Ohio; Patrick and Sandra Malone of Littleton, Colo.; Sheldon and Carla Meier of Ladoga, Ind.; Keith and Debra Menshouse of North Royalton, Ohio; Walter and Marilyn Morris of Grandview, Mo.; Steve and Janet Nerger of Beaver Meadows, Pa.

And, Larry and Nancy Pridmore of Whitehall, N.Y.; Michael and Gayle Rains of Batavia, Ohio; Ray and Sandra Sims of Geneva, N.Y.; Alan Lee Smith of Spanaway, Wash.; James and Joan Stancil of Venice, Fla.; Billy and Judith Sutton of Elk City, Idaho; Eugene and Mary Jo Vaughn of Indianapolis, Ind.; and James and Verlana White of St. Cloud, Fla.

Slated to receive language pastoral assistance were Wilfred and Sharon Chung of El Toro, Calif.; Moon Gong and Lydia Hong of Junction City, Kan.; Pedro and Noemi Rivera of Leisure City, Fla.; and James and Shinemay Yang of Rosemead, Calif.

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Angolan Baptists Will Ask
For Return of Missionaries

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
3/18/82

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) -- The Baptist Convention of Angola will ask the Angolan government to issue permanent residence visas which would allow Southern Baptist missionaries Curtis and Betty McCown Dixon to resume work there.

The Dixons, former missionaries to Angola who are now serving in Portugal, reported the development after a month long visit to Angola to teach institutes for Baptist pastors and church leaders.

Southern Baptist missionaries evacuated the civil war-torn African nation in August 1975, before Portugal granted Angola's Marxist government its independence.

Since then, no missionaries have been able to return as residents. Mrs. Dixon visited for two weeks in August 1981, to participate in the dedication of a new church.

Davis Saunders, the Foreign Mission Board's director for eastern and southern Africa, said the board was "eager to work with Angolan Baptists again and will respond favorably to requests to cooperate with them if the government permits us to enter."

Mrs. Dixon had reported earlier that officials in two provinces indicated the government may allow missionaries with technical expertise to reopen work there. They indicated they would welcome personnel, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, veterinarians, agriculturists and others, to help in the "reconstruction of Angola."

The Baptist Convention of Angola hopes the government will permit the Dixons to teach in theological institutes on a permanent basis. Baptists will ask the government to allow the Dixons to visit again in October to teach an institute.

The Dixons reported that teaching sessions went well during their visit. They taught 52 students in five 30-hour courses in biblical, theological and practical subjects.

They also said Angola's 55 churches and 35 missions have made good progress. They visited 25 churches and reported 160 persons responded to invitations to become Christians at those meetings.

The Dixons found the Baptist Book Store in Luanda open but suffering a severe shortage of Bibles. They hope to find ways to help the store restock Bibles, especially in the Portuguese language.

They also hope to work through Saunders and John Cheyne, the Foreign Mission Board's relief and hunger consultant, to import seeds needed badly by Angolan farmers. Most Baptist congregations in Angola are rural, and most Baptists are farmers, Saunders said.

Home Mission Board Elects
Officers, New Staff Members

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ATLANTA (BP) -- Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission elected a new chairman and vice chairmen, named three persons to new staff positions, approved a reorganization plan and appointed 70 new missionaries during their spring meeting.

Clifton R. Tennison, pastor of First Baptist Church, West Monroe, La., was elected chairman, succeeding Howard B. Cockrum, a Knoxville, Tenn., contractor and land developer.

First vice chairman is O. Wyndell Jones, director of the church ministries division of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, Montgomery; second vice chairman is Charles Elder, pastor of First Baptist Church, Conyers, Ga.

Implementing the first stages of a reorganization plan, the directors elected three persons to national staff positions and created two other staff positions yet to be filled.

Jack T. Merritt of Albuquerque, N. M., a former home missionary in New York and New Mexico and currently national consultant on volunteers for the Home Mission Board, was elected assistant director in the HMB special mission ministries department, effective April 1.

Two professionals in the HMB communication division were promoted to staff positions. Mark Sandlin, manager of photographic services, was elected director of photojournalism in the media department; and Karen Mitchell, graphic arts supervisor, was named director of design services in the promotion department.

As a part of the reorganization, four divisions of the board changed titles and responsibilities for 13 existing staff members and three vacant positions. Two new positions were created but not yet filled---associate director of the communication division and director of human resources development in the personnel division.

The board's language missions division will operate with three new departments. Fermin A. Whittaker will head the ethnic church growth department and Ramon Martinez will be director of the ethnic resource correlation department. A multi-ethnic ministries department was created, but no director was named.

In the communication division, the art services department was dissolved and its function and personnel assigned to three other departments. Most of the art services functions, under Mitchell's direction, will be added to the promotion department. Jim Hurst, formerly associate director of the department, was named director of media art in the media department, and Anita King, formerly assistant director of the department, was named editor, styling/typesetting in the editorial department.

Walker Knight, director of the editorial department, will continue in that capacity, but Everett Hullum, editor of magazine publication services, was named editor of Missions/USA magazine. Knight will be senior editor of the magazine he has edited for the past 22 years. In the same department, HMB news editor Jim Newton was named editor of news and information services.

The audiovisuals department, headed by J. C. Durham, was re-named the media department. Sandlin, Hurst and Wayne Grinstead, named director of media production, staff the department.

Two changes were made in the business services division. Accounting services, previously under the controller, was added to the division's responsibilities. Payroll and employee benefits were separated, adding payroll to accounting services and employee benefits to the personnel division.

Wilson Mathews, director of payroll and employee benefits, was transferred to the new position as director of employee benefits in the personnel division. There currently are three vacancies in the division, headed by Margrette Stevenson, each given new titles by board action---director of counseling services, director of employment services and director of human resources development.

Titles were also changed for two staff members in the research division---Leonard O. Hinton, is now evangelism researcher, and Jack L. Washington, is services researcher.

In other actions, the board re-elected Ouida Blount of Winder, Ga., secretary and Mrs. Lawana McIver of Dallas, assistant secretary.

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Home Mission Board Plans
Focus On Cities, Training

By Jim Newton

ALB
Baptist Press
3/18/82

ATLANTA (BP)--Although Southern Baptists are basically "a rural people," the denomination must focus major attention on the cities of America, Home Mission Board President William G. Tanner told directors at their spring meeting.

To meet the challenge of the cities, the Home Mission Board is seeking to develop a comprehensive and cohesive strategy called "Mega Focus Cities," Tanner said.

Miami and New York City, which were the subjects of a major SBC-wide mission study last month, will be the pilot projects this year in the Focus Cities program, Tanner told the board.

In 1983, the five focus cities will be Buffalo, Detroit, Baltimore, Louisville and San Francisco.

Tanner stressed that while 46 percent of the nation's population lives in the nation's 50 most populous cities, only 17 percent of the SBC's churches and 25 percent of Baptist church members are in the cities. Total population of the 50 cities is more than 103 million, Tanner said.

In outlining major emphases for the Home Mission Board in the next few years, Tanner also said major attention will be given to a new evangelism program called Continuing Witness Training (CWT).

The pilot stage of Continuing Witness Training has been completed and major emphasis will be made on CWT in the next few years.

Tanner also said the Home Mission Board will devote major emphasis in the next few years to the work of the church and associational missions committee.

In addition to Tanner's report, board members also heard a presentation of plans for a Southern Baptist pavilion at the World's Fair in Knoxville by David Peach, executive director of Baptist Ministries to the World's Fair.

Peach told of Home Mission Board support for the project, pointing out that almost all of the 21 staff members at Baptist Ministries at the World's Fair are Christian Service Corps, Mission Service Corps, US-2, semester or summer missionaries of the board.

Peach said the Southern Baptist pavilion roof will form a 50 x 70 foot Christian flag, visible from the top of the Sunsphere, the towering symbol of the fair.

In the closing address of the board meeting, Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the SBC Woman's Missionary Union reminded board members "the Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union have been walking together" to win America to Christ.

Commenting on the role and influence of Annie Armstrong, WMU's first leader and namesake of the Home Mission Board's annual offering, Weatherford warned, "We don't need to build a shrine to Annie Armstrong. She would only urge us to raise that \$22 million offering and to occupy ourselves with reaching the people God has brought to America's doorstep."

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