



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

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

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Haste, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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RB

Board Names Center for Cauthens,
Starts Work in 96th Country

By Bob Stanley

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptists launched construction May 11 on a new \$9 million missionary orientation center, to be named for Eloise and Baker James Cauthen, and voted to begin work in Gambia, the 96th country to which Southern Baptist missionaries are assigned.

The board also sent fraternal greetings to Argentine Baptists and expressed its "Christian love and concern" for them in the crisis with Britain over the Falkland Islands. "We are praying for you as we anticipate continued cooperation in the future," the message said.

Sixty Southern Baptist missionaries work in Argentina, with 54 on the field now.

In other actions the board appointed 27 career missionaries, reappointed four couples, including one couple to start work in the small west African nation of Gambia, and set up a mandatory disability insurance program for all volunteers going overseas.

Board members applauded when informed that Southern Baptist giving in the 1981 Lottie Moon Christmas offering for foreign missions already has topped the \$50 million goal, with the books open until May 31. The total stands at \$50,066,206.

During the groundbreaking for the new orientation center about 15 miles from Richmond, President R. Keith Parks announced that a major part of funds bequeathed to the board by the late Cecil B. Day, founder of Days Inns of America, will be used as an endowment to pay for training of missionaries at the center. This training portion of the center's work will be named for Day and his wife, Deen, who participated in the ceremonies.

Day, who died of cancer in 1978 at the age of 44, left what Parks termed "a significant portion" of his multimillion-dollar estate to missions, with equal amounts going to the Home and Foreign Mission Boards. The exact amount of the gift was not disclosed.

Parks said portraits and special plaques will be placed at the center, expected to be completed by the summer of 1984, to honor the Cauthens; Louise and J. Harwood Cochrane of Richmond, and the Days.

Cauthen retired in December 1979 after 26 years as executive head of the Foreign Mission Board. Mrs. Cauthen, the former Eloise Glass, was born in China as the daughter of missionaries, and she and her husband later served there as missionaries.

The Cochranes, members of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Richmond, donated the 233-acre site for the new orientation center and later gave other property in Richmond which will help finance the center's recreation building, to be named in their honor.

Cochrane is founder, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Overnite Transportation, the seventh largest trucking firm in the United States.

He said he and his wife have participated in other people's programs financially for years, but kept wanting a "program of our own...one that would help people who are starving both physically and spiritually."

Through hundreds of missionaries who will be trained at the center, he said, they believe they have found such a program. "I strongly believe we're underestimating the potential of this orientation center and the effect it will have on the overall program for worldwide mission efforts," he said.

"My initial enthusiasm," he added, "has turned into sheer excitement."

Mrs. Day is chairman of the board, president and chief executive officer of Cecil B. Day Companies, the parent company of Days Inns of America, the sixth largest lodging chain in the country. She told how she and her husband had sought God's will when they were in their 20s about whether Day should enter the ministry. Day was the son of a preacher, but she said they came to sense that God wanted her husband to use his talents in business. "Cecil and I wanted a road map with all the directions marked" from the Lord, she recalled, but found that God was "directing us more like a compass, and the needle was always pointed to missions."

Day's brother, Lon, and other officials of the Day organization from Atlanta, as well as Mrs. Day's pastor, attended the ceremonies. Day's mother could not attend because she was recuperating from surgery.

Cauthen said the challenges of today's complex world underscore the importance of such a training center to equip missionaries going out to 96 countries. The missionary enterprise, he noted, is growing more and more demanding in today's world, "where something is wrong in man's thinking, where somehow we can spend our billions and billions of dollars for the weapons of destruction that then leave us puzzled over what to do with them...and somebody has to arise and say there is a better way—and that somebody comes to be Christian people we represent here today."

"There is a better way," he emphasized. "The dropping of nuclear bombs is not the ultimate thing to be done in this world in which we live. There's something beyond it and this orientation center says we bear witness that God has a better way and we're going to try to do what we can in the name of our Lord about it."

The board decided to build its own multiple-use orientation center after renting facilities for a number of years at Callaway Gardens, Pine Mountain, Ga. Because this resort center was available only in the non-tourist season, the program has been limited to two training sessions a year.

The new center will allow the board to hold three or four missionary orientation training sessions a year as it moves toward its goal of 5,000 missionaries by the year 2000; two training periods for missionary journeymen, the two-year program for recent college graduates; special orientation times for volunteers and student missionaries; and debriefing times for missionaries returning to the United States on their first furlough.

About \$2 million of the total construction cost has been received thus far, with special gifts from individuals expected to provide the remainder. The board anticipates no use of income from the Cooperative Program or the Lottie Moon Christmas offering for this purpose.

The board also gave special recognition in its business session to Robert and Shirley O'Brien, who will leave late in June to start a two-year pilot project to heighten communications to Southern Baptists about work in eastern and southern Africa. They will headquarter in Nairobi, Kenya.

O'Brien, overseas news coordinator and communications consultant, joined the board staff about two years ago after seven years as news editor in the national office of Baptist Press in Nashville, Tenn.

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Mid-America Accredited
After Committee Appeal

By Norman Jameson

Baptist Press
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MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, following a successful appeal, has been accredited by the Association of Southern Colleges and Schools.

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Mid-America was denied accreditation in December 1981 when the association's Commission on Colleges reversed the recommendation of its on-site evaluation team to grant the vital status.

"We're rejoicing that the committee reversed the decision of the Commission on Colleges," said Mid-America President Gray Allison. "We believe we deserve the accreditation. We don't think the accreditation makes us a better seminary, but it shows we have a good academic institution."

Mid-America, an independent seminary with strong ties to several Southern Baptist churches, has been in candidate status--an intermediate step to full accreditation--for five years. The appeal board that granted accreditation, retroactive to Dec. 8, 1981, is composed of presidents of seven colleges and universities in the association.

Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director of the Southern Baptist Education Commission, said: "Accreditation is valuable for Mid-America. It reflects acceptance by other schools of like emphasis. This means Mid-America is recognized by its peers as offering work acceptable in the area of theological training."

"We're hoping with accreditation the (Southern Baptist) Foreign Mission Board will consider appointing our graduates without them having to go to one of the six convention-supported seminaries," Allison said.

Mid-America, which has 346 students in all programs, started in Little Rock, Ark., 10 years ago. In 1975 it moved debt-free into \$1 million facilities in downtown Memphis, adjacent to Bellevue Baptist Church. Bellevue housed the seminary for about 18 months until the facilities could be prepared for seminary use.

Since then, the seminary has been in its own facilities. It just purchased an additional 3.5 acres with three major buildings adjacent to campus for \$1.5 million from Al Chymia Shrine.

Bellevue, the seminary's largest single church supporter, contributes "four or five percent" of Mid-America's \$1.5 million operating budget, Allison said. The school charges \$200 tuition per semester. The rest of its support comes from "churches and individuals." Allison said the school has operated in the black every year.

"We're Southern Baptist and train folks for Southern Baptist ministry," Allison said. "Every one of our professors accept the plenary verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. All professors are Southern Baptists and have to be active members of local, cooperating Southern Baptist churches."

Asked if the seminary would seek budget support from the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program, Allison said he would not speculate on that.

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Foreign Board Begins Work
In Gambia, 96th Country

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RICHMOND, Va., (BP)--With the reappointment of missionaries Ron and Anita Coleman Hunt, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board moved to begin mission work in a 96th country, Gambia.

The board also appointed a couple to begin work in a new east Indonesian mission, named 25 other career missionaries and five special project workers and reappointed six other missionaries.

The Hunts, Oklahomans who were missionaries to Liberia from 1973 to 1979, expect to arrive in Banjul, Gambia's capital, in August and begin a year's language study. The West African nation, a former British colony, is a sliver of land encasing the Gambia River and surrounded on three sides by French-speaking Senegal. The two countries formed a confederation the first of the year, but maintain separate governments.

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Hunt, a general evangelist, says only one other evangelical group now works in the predominantly Moslem country. Hunt has been pastor of First Baptist Church, Vinita, Okla., since 1979.

Charlie and Jenny Sanders Townsend of Shawnee, Okla., were appointed to begin work on Sulawesi, a major island in eastern Indonesia. The Foreign Mission Board voted in February to send missionaries to the island after Baptists there requested four missionaries to help with evangelism, theological education and student work. Baptists on Sulawesi are not part of the organizations of Baptists on Sumatra, Java and Bali, where almost 100 Southern Baptist missionaries work.

Townsend, associate pastor of Oklahoma Avenue Baptist Church, Shawnee, will work as a general evangelist and extension teacher. Mrs. Townsend, who was born in Lufkin, Texas, grew up in Indonesia, where her parents, Ed and Jaletta Sanders, are missionaries.

Other missionaries appointed in May were Wade and Sherry Deakins Akins, of Louisiana and Tennessee, respectively, assigned to Brazil; Jane Barnes, Kentucky, to Brazil; Lynn and Connie Westmoreland Burton, Oklahoma and Louisiana, to Bophuthatswana; Glenn and Belinda Lartigue Cantu, England and Texas, to Colombia; Dennis and Susanne Dacus Derby, California and Arkansas, to Mauritius; and Sharon Evenson, Texas, to Brazil.

Also appointed were Gary and Linda Postlewait Fisher, Ohio, to Spain; Sandi Johnson, Oklahoma, to Brazil; Mack and Andrea DuBois Jones, Texas and Tennessee, to Brazil; Phil and Linda Booker Martin, Virginia, to Venezuela; Charles and Kaye Barden Morrison, North Carolina and Virginia, to Ivory Coast; Randy and Jan Pitman Newberry, Texas, to Brazil; Oran and Cathy Burris Roberts, California to Upper Volta; and Lee and Phyllis Orr Walker, Arkansas and Louisiana, to Chile.

In addition to the Hunts, three other couples were reappointed as missionaries. Britt and Jody Long Towery of Texas will return to Hong Kong, where they worked from 1966 to 1977. Earlier they served in Taiwan. Wilson and Martha Statham Donehoo, Georgia, will go to Panama. They worked in Colombia from 1959 to 1971. Al and Peggy O'Bryant Cummins, Texas, will return to Kenya, where they worked from 1965 to 1972.

The board also named five special project medical workers: Colton Bradshaw, Florida, to Nigeria; Tom and Nancy Mathes Gray, Tennessee and Mississippi, to Nigeria; and Don and Carol Collmer McLaren, Texas, to Thailand.

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Christian Futurist Urges Churches
To Become 'Creative Scroungers'

By Patti Stephenson

Baptist Press
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ATLANTA (BP)--A Christian futurist predicted Southern Baptists will have to become "creative scroungers" if they expect to help evangelize the world by the year 2000.

Tom Sine, addressing the Home Mission Board's spring forum on evangelism, painted a future scenario of increasing need and diminishing resources and declared, "We need to let the Holy Spirit flood our imaginations with ways of doing more with less."

Sine, a Presbyterian professor of the University of Washington and Seattle Pacific University, founded Community for New Beginnings, an organization to help churches anticipate future changes and create innovative biblical ways to respond. He told the group of urban mission leaders and pastors, "We've underestimated the wealth of the church in terms of time, education, money. We need a new measure of stewardship."

After praising Southern Baptists for "taking the future more seriously than anyone I know," Sine stressed "the church must check its signals" as it ventures into the '80s and '90s. He reflected that the "surprises" of the '60s and '70s--inflation, energy shortages, Vietnam, drug abuse--had found the church unprepared.

Urging the church to be "pro-active instead of reactive," Sine said churches must anticipate changes and invent new responses rather than depend on a "long-range planning process that assumes the future will be more of the present."

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Sine claimed the church must study the implications of the space race, world hunger, the emerging international economic order, an urban boom in Third-World cities and the possibility of "mega-death" in the atomic age. On a national level, a middle class scarcity may create an "us and them" barrier between rich and poor, he said.

"The young people are losing the American dream," Sine noted, "and they're dropping out of church to try and keep their place at the party." Instead of continuing to preach a "gospel of accumulation," Sine said the church must "reconcile the haves and the have-nots, and be a catalyst for dramatic social change."

Sine observed that "some churches have psychologically taken themselves out of the ballgame, intending to be faithful until Jesus comes, but not expecting things to get better." Others are guilty of "jumping on the bandwagon of the latest progressive social agenda" without considering biblical mandates.

Many churches "are buying into the American dream and living for number one," Sine charged, "forgetting that Jesus called us to be servants. We've been eaten alive by secular values. God's idea of the future is his kingdom come on earth." That won't happen, Sine warned, unless Christians "get serious about seeking first the present and coming kingdom of God."

"The call of Christ is for cultural as well as personal transformation, beginning with the incarnation of Christ himself in our lives," he explained. "Christians must reexamine the meaning of the 'good life' and decide how much is enough instead of worrying about how much they can get."

Sine predicted more Christians will consider alternatives such as living on half an income within a supportive community in order to minister vocationally. He also urged churches to give up their "edifice complex" and consider options such as house church networks. Inner-city churches, he said, "must take more responsibility and should form partnerships with weaker churches."

If the church doesn't change, Sine warned, "more Christians will pull back from society, becoming insular and defensive instead of being the leavening that God intended."

American Christians "have got to realize that we've using a lot more than our fair share of God's resources and ignoring the biblical premise that all is God's," Sine concluded. "God hasn't blessed us materially because we're so good but because he expects us to follow his commandment to give it away. Just imagine the impact if a fraction of America's Christians turned some of God's wealth loose."