



-- FEATURES

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Leukemia Victim Sees
'Miracle In Her Fight'

By W. A. Reed

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Lisa Pittman, 10, says the "Lord gave us a miracle" after her 3-year-old brother supplied her with bone marrow leading to a remission of leukemia.

Lisa underwent the transplant in two trips from the Vanderbilt Children's Hospital in Nashville to the University of Minnesota Hospital in Minneapolis during the last six months.

She is now in remission from leukemia, said her doctor, John Lukens of Vanderbilt. But he refused to say she is cured "until a few years have passed."

"We believe that God has healed her," said John Jocelyn, the Pittmans' pastor at Smith Springs Baptist Church. "We are Southern Baptists and are not into faith healing, but I am confident that God used every incident surrounding her illness and healed her."

Lisa, her mother and her brother, Jason, traveled twice to the Minneapolis hospital for Lisa's bone marrow transplant.

"I feel fine now, but I prayed every night (in the Minneapolis hospital)," Lisa said at the Pittmans' home. Her prayers came with the knowledge that many young people who received a transplant "didn't make it," in Lisa's words.

Usually a patient who survives for five years is considered medically cured, according to other physicians. "Lisa Pittman now has all the color and excitement of a healthy 10-year-old," Jocelyn said.

The fifth-grader, says she will get back to school next year.

Anna Pittman, Lisa's mother, recalled the ordeal of the two trips to the hospital in Minneapolis and the total bill for the marrow transplant, which amounted to \$125,000.

"Those 70 days were an ordeal of worry for me," she said. "Our first trip to Minneapolis was Oct. 31 and we came home Jan. 8. For six weeks Lisa was in total isolation and it took six more weeks for the bone marrow to take hold. It turned out Jason was a perfect match."

The second flight to Minneapolis was March 3, the return to Nashville, March 6.

"I am afraid we will have to go back to Minneapolis next year. I believe everybody's faith kept us going through Lisa's tough fight," the mother said. When she received the news of Lisa's remission in Minneapolis, "suddenly I felt wonderful."

"Most children who have gone through what Lisa has suffered have side effects," she said. "Lisa has no side effects and I am thankful."

She said the deposit for Lisa's transplant was \$10,000, a sum neighbors and members of the Smith Springs Baptist Church raised. "Our insurance paid 80 percent of that \$125,000 and now we owe only something like \$200," she said.

A recreation center organized a "Lisa Pittman Day" one Saturday and people held yard sales, promoted football games and set up a \$10,000 trust fund to pay for the transplant.

Jocelyn said he first met Lisa at a Vacation Bible School in 1980 and he and a retired pastor went to see her mother.

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"Lisa told us her mother wanted to be saved like she had been saved," Jocelyn said. "Later, while she was ill, her aunts, grandmother, father (Ronnie Pittman) and an uncle all came into the church and now all of them are very active in the church."

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(W.A. Reed is religion editor for the Nashville Tennessean).

Hinson Leaves Southern
For Wake Forest University

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WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP)--E. Glenn Hinson, a member of the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. since 1959, will join the faculty of Wake Forest University in North Carolina.

Hinson has been on leave of absence from Southern seminary this academic year while being a visiting professor of religion at Wake Forest. He cited the environment of freedom and new opportunities he has found at the North Carolina Baptist university as the primary reasons for his decision: "Real education can take place only within an environment of freedom and Wake Forest has always offered a rather open environment in which one may search for truth."

Hinson also said one of the things that attracted him was the opportunity to develop a graduate-level program in spirituality.

Hinson has chaired the Ecumenical Institute of Spirituality and is on the Faith and Order Commission of the National and World Council of Churches. He has already become actively involved in matters dealing with peace, economic justice and concern for the poor and hungry.

In Louisville he was editor of the Baptist Peacemaker, a quarterly begun 30 months ago, which now has about 40,000 circulation. He will continue to work with the publication as an editor-at-large.

Hinson received a BA degree from Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., BD and Th.D degrees from Southern and a doctor of philosophy from Oxford University.

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Georgia Approves Aid
For Unemployed Ministers

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TOCCOA, Ga. (BP)--Limited financial assistance to unemployed ministers who have been terminated by local churches has been approved by the executive committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

The new program, similar to those in operation in least six states within the Southern Baptist Convention, is operative immediately. It will give disengaged ministers limited income if churches which terminate them do not provide at least 90 days of severance pay and if the minister's family income does not exceed \$800 per month.

Ministers must have been in a Georgia Baptist church at least 12 months and must be trying to locate religious or secular work. It suggested they accept counseling and/or career guidance. No minister may receive more than \$1,500 in a 12-month period and none may be assisted more than once in a 5-year span.

James N. Griffith, executive director-treasurer of the Georgia Baptist Convention executive committee, said an estimated 50 Georgia Baptist pastors per year are terminated with no place to go and at least half of them are given less than 90 days severance pay.

The Georgia Baptist assistance program will be channeled through W. Howard Ethington, the convention's director of church-minister relations. Georgia was the first state in the Southern Baptist Convention to have a full time director of church-minister relations. Now 14 state conventions have such persons to help churches locate ministers and vice-versa.

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The 1983 Georgia Baptist Convention budget includes \$28,000 for ministerial assistance. Additional monies will be recommended in 1984.

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HMB Directors Approve
Long-Range Strategy, Officers

By Patti Stephenson

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ATLANTA (BP)--In their annual spring meeting, the board of directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board heard SBC leaders describe what must be done if Southern Baptists hope to meet Bold Mission Thrust goals by 2000 A.D. and responded by approving a 17-year strategy plan for the agency.

HMB President William G. Tanner told directors the agency must create new missionary positions, accelerate church planting and "emphasize the essentiality of the local church" in order to add 16,000 churches to SBC ranks and share the gospel with every American by the end of the century.

In reporting 1,703 churches have committed to start new churches on May 22, Pentecost Sunday, Tanner expressed confidence that a total of 3,000 churches would participate in the national effort to begin 3,000 new works. If Southern Baptists meet that goal, Tanner added, "it could be the largest church planting effort in the history of Christendom."

Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, warned the "tensions severing Southern Baptists" are barriers to attaining Bold Mission Thrust objectives. "When we are separated from each other we no longer have strength or unity."

Bennett also blamed "static stewardship, status quo church growth and survival church extension" as hindrances. He noted "it took 53 years for Baptists to give \$691 each" to the Home and Foreign Mission Boards, but annual gifts of \$937 will be needed by the year 2000.

While acknowledging recent church Sunday School growth, "we ought to have the same 13.9 million in Sunday School as are members of our churches," he said. Bennett also stressed establishing a Southern Baptist church in every community "can't be done with a lackadaisical attitude" toward church starting.

Richard Maples, pastor of First Baptist Church, Bryan, Texas, told fellow board members the HMB must "find ways to plug into the missions pipeline the thousands of Southern Baptist young people who are graduating from our Baptist schools with no place to go." Maples also said the agency must "find places for God-called pastors who have been forced out of ministry" by conflicts within churches.

The Texas pastor said though "the temptation is to skim the cream" in cultivating new church members, "we must be at work in the hard, thorny places as well."

The directors approved A.D. 2000, a long-range plan focusing on increasing the professional and volunteer mission force, undergirding mission efforts of state conventions, associations and local churches, reaching America's cities, and training ethnic leaders.

The officers for 1983-84 were also elected. Jerry Gilmore, a Dallas, Texas, attorney, was chosen chairman; Omar H. Pachecano, associate director of missions for El Paso (Texas) Baptist Association, first vice-chairman; Frank B. Lowndes, Jr., president of Frank B. Lowndes and Son Funeral Home in Atlanta, Ga., second vice-chairman; Helen S. Landers of Riverdale, Ga., secretary and Edna Shows, director of the DeKalb Historical Society in Atlanta, assistant secretary.

The board members increased Southern Baptist outreach to international diplomats by voting to provide offices for Southern Baptist Ministries to the United Nations community, directed by HMB missionary Elias Golonka.

The board also approved a new position for assistant director of the church extension division to supervise US-2ers, seminary students and church planter apprentices involved in starting new works.

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Robert W. Campbell, director of evangelism for the Baptist General Convention of New England, was elected associate director of the specialized evangelism department, effective April 1. Campbell will promote the department's "Growing an Evangelistic Church" seminars and direct the HMB's correspondence Bible course.

In addition, the board appointed six missionaries and six missionary associates, and approved pastoral assistance for 60 persons. Resolutions of appreciation for retired HMB staff members Walker L. Knight and James W. Nelson were also adopted.

Knight, director of editorial services department since 1959, was commended for his example of "Christian love, sensitivity and courage as he has given attention to individuals with the most basic needs, respected the dignity of people and championed the cause of those oppressed."

Nelson was honored for his "significant contribution to home missions" as a missionary to the Navajo reservation in New Mexico 1964-1971; as director of the division of missions ministries for the Baptist Convention of New Mexico 1971-1975; as director of the HMB rural-urban missions department, 1975-1979, and as director of the HMB's associational missions division, 1975-1982.

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Saturday Evening Post Reprints
Of SBC Article Offered For Sale

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PHILADELPHIA, Pa. (BP)--An article on Southern Baptists, featured in the April edition of the Saturday Evening Post, is being made available to SBC churches in a special reprint format.

"The Southern Baptists: Not Just Whistling Dixie!" explains the current status, history, make up, theology, organization and scope of the 13.9 million member denomination in a way a non-Southern Baptist can understand, Wilmer C. Fields, director of public relations for the SBC Executive Committee, who wrote the article, said.

"The article is an excellent statement about a diverse and dynamic people," James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church in Euless, Texas, and president of the SBC, said. He sees the reprints, which cost 20 cents each, as "useful in evangelistic efforts."

Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, said the reprints, "can generate widespread interest among our own people as well as in the communities where they live and work."

A copy of the reprint and information on ordering them have been sent to all SBC pastors by the Saturday Evening Post.

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(Photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Baptist Press)

Hatfield Bill Would Protect
Students' Religious Speech

By Gerri Ratliff

Baptist Press
3/17/83

WASHINGTON (BP)--Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore., has reintroduced legislation to prevent public school districts from discriminating against voluntary, student-initiated religious meetings by high school students.

The bill, S.815, forbids any public secondary school which receives federal financial assistance and allows students to meet during non-instructional periods to discriminate against meetings of students on the basis of the content of the speech at such meetings. It also allows students to take school officials to federal court if such meetings are not permitted.

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"We hope to enact this bill to restore the First Amendment right of freedom of religion to students wherever those rights are being denied," Hatfield said.

The bill has the support of Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives and moderates, he said. Fourteen senators signed on as initial co-sponsors.

A provision of the bill specifies it is not meant to permit the government to influence the form or content of any prayer or religious activity or require student participation.

"From the beginning, the government was to be in a neutral position on the matter of church and state. When the state takes the position that you cannot exercise a religious right, but you can exercise every other kind of a right in the same context, that puts the state in an adversary role," he said.

In 1981, the Supreme Court ruled in *Widmar v. Vincent* that public universities may not deny student religious groups access to campus facilities for their meetings. "But lesser courts have upheld acts of discrimination by public school districts not allowing Bible study when other clubs are allowed," he said.

Hatfield said he had hoped the Supreme Court would reverse a U. S. Appeals Court decision in Texas that struck down a school policy permitting students to meet voluntarily before or after school "for any educational, moral, religious or ethical purposes (*Lubbock Independent School District v. Lubbock Civil Liberties Union*)."

Last December, Hatfield and 23 other senators requested a review of the lower court's decision, but in January the Supreme Court refused to hear the case.