



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Draper Calls SBC To Prayer For Pentecost Sunday

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Thousands of new churches will be launched May 22 as the Southern Baptist Convention celebrates "Pentecost Sunday."

SBC churches are being asked to pledge to begin at least 3,000 new churches in the next year as part of the convention's Bold Mission Thrust (an effort to allow every person in the world an opportunity to respond to the message of Jesus Christ by the year 2000).

James T. Draper Jr., president of the SBC and pastor of First Baptist Church in Euless, Texas, is optimistic the emphasis will be successful. "Interest has been received from all over our convention," Draper told Baptist Press. "I believe we will go beyond our goal and I call on all Southern Baptists to undergrid May 22 with our prayers."

Jerry Graham, associate director of the church extension department of the convention's Home Mission Board, said figures back up Draper's enthusiasm. A week before Pentecost Sunday the HMB had commitments from churches to begin 2,064 new works in the next year.

Those commitments came from 22 (of 34) state conventions. "I am sure we will go beyond the goal of 3,000 when all the signed cards come in from the churches after May 22," Graham said. The 36,000 churches which cooperate with the SBC have a membership of 13.9 million.

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Childhood Business Venture Leads to Futuristic Career

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
5/17/83

POCAHONTAS, Ark. (BP)--When John Hastings and Virgil Richardson were elementary school entrepreneurs selling homemade radios, no one would have thought their efforts would lead them into the futuristic world of satellite communications.

But some 25 years later, Hastings and Richardson are gearing up to provide Southern Baptist churches with television receive only systems (TVROS) or earth stations to receive Baptist TelNet and American Christian Television System programs in 1984.

ACTS is a satellite network to homes being developed by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission; Baptist TelNet is a telecommunications network to be operated by the Sunday School Board to churches, associations, state conventions and other Baptist groups.

Hastings, president of StarView, a subsidiary of Craig Electronics, and a deacon at Witt's Chapel Baptist Church, Maynard, Ark., recently recalled his first venture with Richardson, the company's vice president. "I was in fifth grade and Virgil in ninth grade when our small town got a radio station," he said. "None of us had transistor radios, so we started building crystal radios, using as cases the plastic medicine boxes discarded by the local drug store."

Richardson built radios and Hastings sold them to schoolmates for about \$3. The radios had to be grounded, he recalled, and "all the kids wanted to sit on the outside row in class so they could hook their radio wires to the water pipe."

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Their efforts in "homemade" electronic equipment didn't end with childhood. In the late 1970's, Hastings, a cattle rancher, decided he wanted better television reception than he was getting from stations 60 to 100 miles away. Friends in other areas could receive movies through cable system television, but the cost of an earth station for his ranch would be about \$100,000. Knowing Virgil, now an appliance store owner, had the needed electronics background, Hastings proposed another joint venture.

So Hastings and Richardson experimented again, but on a larger scale, to build a satellite receiving antenna. At a cost of \$10,000, excluding labor, their mission was accomplished. Using commercial equipment and parts of their own design, the two friends completed the project in 1,000 man hours. Word quickly spread among Hastings' neighbors, many of whom wanted better television reception, too. In 1980, when the Federal Communications Commission deregulated earth stations, permitting their use without a license, Hastings convinced Richardson to join him in manufacturing TVROS.

"We figured if we could sell \$100,000 a year, we'd make a good living at it," Hastings recalls with a grin. Soon thereafter, at a satellite show in Miami, Fla., they sold \$150,000 worth of satellite dishes in three days.

Today, earth stations built by StarView are being used in eight countries and in every state in the U.S. StarView, purchased by Craig Electronics of Compton, Calif., in 1982, has grown from a two-person operation in a garage, to a multi-million dollar firm employing 45 persons in a 45,000-square-foot building.

While StarView already manufactures receiving dishes numbering in the thousands annually, Hastings said he feels a special sense of purpose in providing equipment for Southern Baptists through the Sunday School Board's Broadman division. The unusual career path that brought him to such a relationship with the denomination was part of God's plan, Hastings said. "I really think the Lord had a hand in all of that."

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

Blackwell Follows Wagoner
As N.C. Children's Home Head

By Rick Stegall

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THOMASVILLE, N.C. (BP)--Michael C. Blackwell, 41, has become the eighth president of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina effective July 1. He will replace W.R. Wagoner who is retiring after 25 years.

Blackwell has been pastor of Monument Heights Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia, since 1980 and is a past trustee of the North Carolina Baptist Homes. He graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and received master of divinity, master of theology, and doctor of ministry degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest. He has done post graduate work at Wake Forest University, the University of Richmond and Union Theological Seminary.

The Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina is an institution of the Baptist State Convention. The institution employs 285 full time staff members who distribute services from 25 locations in 18 cities throughout North Carolina. The institution operates on a \$6.7 million annual budget.

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(Rick Stegall is managing editor of Charity and Children.)

Historical Commission Gets
Landmark Era Manuscripts

By Leisa A. Hammett

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5/17/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--"Baptists in every state need to know that they may have significant resources on Baptist life hidden away in their trunks and attics," according to Lynn E. May Jr.

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May, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, was referring to two manuscript volumes of Robert Boyte Crawford Howell donated to the Commission library and archives by Howell's great granddaughter, Bette B. DeMoss of Nashville, Tenn.

The two handwritten volumes contain copied letters, committee reports, and other documents relating to the Howell and James Robinson Graves controversy during the mid 1800's. The controversy arose when Graves, member of First Baptist Church, Nashville, and editor of The Baptist (now the Tennessee Baptist state paper, Baptist and Reflector), sought to change the structure of the Southern Baptist Convention.

During the five-year struggle (1857-1862) which threatened to split the Southern Baptist denomination, Graves led the Landmark movement. Landmarkists believed Baptist churches were the only true churches. In his effort to reorganize the Convention, Graves also sought to reorganize and control Southern Baptist publishing and foreign missions. He felt missionaries should be appointed by individual churches instead of denominational agencies.

Howell, twice pastor of First Baptist Church and the founder and first editor of The Baptist, served as the second president of the Southern Baptist Convention amid Graves' reorganization attempts.

The Howell volumes, May said, are examples of significant Baptist materials that are often overlooked, forgotten, or stashed away in remote places. DeMoss said when her sister, Andrena G. Woodward, and cousin, J. Scott Grigsby, divided a deceased relative's estate, they decided to donate the volumes to the Southern Baptist Convention Archives.

Other Howell manuscripts are available on microfilm at the Dargan-Carver Library, jointly operated by the Commission and the Sunday School Board. In 1981, the Southern Baptist Convention designated the Historical Commission as the Convention's official archives agency.

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Southern Baptists Need CSM
To Live Up To Church's Ideals

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press
5/17/83

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (BP)--A Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor recently challenged Christian social ministers to become models of servants in order to reform the church to meet its own ideals.

Anne Davis, associate professor of social work at Southern seminary, charged Southern Baptists have turned away from a theology of service outside the local church and have instead placed a heavy emphasis on evangelism.

Davis likened the church to the family, and stated evangelism was equivalent to birthing family members. "You can't have a church without evangelism," she explained. "But once a child is born, it has to be trained, matured. Yet the church has birthed babes and left them."

Jewel Beall, retired Home Mission Board staffer, echoed Davis' sentiments, and added, "Whenever we lose our mission we become watchdogs for orthodoxy."

Historically, Davis said, Southern Baptists have "squashed" any form of the social gospel. But she attributed that to the fact the Southern Baptist Convention was born out of an effort to justify slavery. Rather than confront corporate sins, Baptists turned to an individualistic salvation, she explained. The tension between evangelism and Christian social ministries continues, because "We privatize our faith," but with such an emphasis, "it's hard to get people to have a biblical mandate to share anything but a verbal witness--period."

Davis asserted Christian social ministries "does not need to be justified. In the end God will separate sheep from goats by 'did you or didn't you?' It's that simple." She said CSM leaders must switch their focus from needs to resources for meeting needs if they expect to minister to a growing segment of the population affected by poverty and unemployment.

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"We've sold Southern Baptists on the need, but we've put the responsibility for our actions on the person with the need," Davis said. "If the person acted irresponsibly then the Christian was off the hook. But as a child of God I have a mandate to minister, to serve irrespective of what the person does with it. Inherent in the very nature of a Christian is a mandate to minister. As a Christian, I cannot get off the hook."

Davis said CSM workers must admit they don't have all the resources to meet peoples' needs and focus on who does have "the loaves and the fishes" and match them up with CSM needs.

Davis warned, "We are in a new and difficult time for CSM. Basic changes in the growing number of people in our ministries and the closing down of anything beyond self in the Southern Baptist Convention will mean your needs are going to be greater than they've ever been."

The key to meeting needs, said Davis, lies in recruiting the laity of the church to use their gifts in ministry. "The thing we have done least well is to help local church members identify their gifts for discipleship," said Davis. "Southern Baptists are good people who need to be taught to be good disciples. We are one of the last hopes for making disciples."

"(CSMers) have as much responsibility to train the church as anyone," she explained. "The church has given us ideals and not actualities. We have the possibility in Christian social ministries to help the church reform itself to meet its ideals, to help the church be the church in the world, to build disciples who see being a Christian in the world is the call of every saved believer."

The New Testament, Davis said, affirms Christians were "called to serve" and CSM workers will have to take the lead in teaching Southern Baptists how to serve. Without a model for service, Davis predicted a bleak future for American society and Southern Baptists.

Recent trends show schools are shaky, government has withdrawn its social services support, and business and industry have a proven track record that they will not be charitable, Davis said. "The only thing that has the capacity to make our world a different place is the local church because it is the only institution left in our society that is everywhere."

She said CSM workers need to give Southern Baptists a good theological understanding "of the mission of the church. If you can teach Southern Baptists a theology of service you've won half the battle." Complicating the problem beyond the local church are seminary students who "are taught an exegesis without an application."

Davis said Baptists must experience more than the spoken word to motivate them into service. Preached words enable Southern Baptists to come out thinking "the right things" without changes in actions, said Davis, citing racial issues of the 1960's as exemplary of how Southern Baptists had developed a theology of reconciliation and acceptance of blacks which lacked concrete action.

Using the old and new covenants, Davis explained the link between words and experiences. "The old covenant was a covenant of words which didn't work," she observed, so God matched that word to an event--the coming of Jesus. "When people heard the words and saw the event, lives were changed," she noted.

"Until Southern Baptists have had personal experiences, their lives are not going to change," Davis said. "We won't get the church to change its resource pattern by talking them into it." She encouraged CSM workers to be patient as they teach Southern Baptists a theology of service, emphasizing no one is perfect in their application of God's word in the world.

"The church is still being redeemed," Davis said. "Until God finishes with the church, forgiveness, mercy and grace must be the order of the day."

Service To Churches Continues
For Phil Harris, A.V. Washburn

By Linda Lawson

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)--Christians retire from their careers, not their responsibilities.

That is how A.V. Washburn and Phil Harris, who retired in 1977 as directors of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Sunday school and church training departments, respectively explain their lives which include teaching, leading conferences and working in their churches.

They remain active in their churches in Nashville, and each served as a guest director for a Metro Sunday School Enrollment Training Clinic in Raleigh, N.C., last month. They also keep physically fit by continuing a long-time practice of running two miles a day.

"I have a philosophy that a person, regardless of age, ought to continue to grow in body, mind and spirit," Harris said.

So at retirement, "I told the Foreign Mission Board I'd give them five years of my life." He and his wife Mariam have worked in Brazil, Argentina, Taiwan, Hong Kong and West Germany. Between trips he has chaired the evangelism committee at First Baptist Church and the Senior Adult Committee for the local YWCA.

For the next five years, Harris has committed to teach at colleges and seminaries and to return to Brazil to help in the area of church growth.

A.V. and Kate Washburn spent one year in Scotland working with churches to strengthen their Sunday schools. When they returned home, Washburn received a challenge from his pastor, David G orge at Immanuel Baptist Church, "to become Sunday school director and to do some of th things at Immanuel that I'd been telling others to do."

After two years on the job, Washburn who has been a deacon at the church for 45 years, quips, "It's easier to write a book than to fill it out." At the same time, the Sunday school at Immanuel has experienced a five percent gain in Sunday school enrollment this year.

Washburn has only positive things to say about 8.5 by '85, the SBC effort to increase the Sunday school enrollment to 8.5 million by 1985. I'm excited about it and glad to be a part of it," Washburn said.

Turning reflective, he said he believes one problem with the "million more in '54" campaign (an effort to enroll one million persons in Sunday school in 1954) was that "many persons were enlisted that churches weren't prepared for. We suffered some from over-extension. The basic plans of 8.5 by '85 take that problem into consideration."

Washburn is "more convinced than ever, if that is possible," that the Sunday school is th key to church growth. "Personalizing ministry can best be done through the Sunday school," emphasized Washburn. "The more we get into computers and the loss of individuality is accentuated in society, the greater is the need for the small group in churches."

Harris also praised developments in church training since his retirement.

Among their priorities for the future, Washburn and Harris both list traveling and family time, along with leading conferences and working in their churches.

Harris said he is sustained by a four-step philosophy of life: "Abiding faith in God, fellowship in the gospel with people, an optimistic spirit as demonstrated by a positive attitude and a sense of humor.

"Don't feel sorry for me," he laughed. "While you're working, I may be in Wiesbaden (W st Germany) riding down the Rhine."