



BAPTIST PRESS

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83-110

Cooperative Program Enjoys Fourth Straight Record Month

By Craig Bird

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--June was the fourth consecutive record month for gifts to the national Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The 36,000 local churches contributed \$7,698,787 in undesignated gifts to the worldwide mission and education programs of the SBC. That was more than \$575,000 (and 8.1 percent) above the previous best June (1982).

"The consistency of commitment Southern Baptists continue to show is both an encouragement and a challenge to those involved in the programs supported by the Cooperative Program," said Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee.

"That consistency lifts our spirits by funding the projects we have been instructed to undertake--and it challenges us to match the dedication and stewardship of millions of Southern Baptists whose faithful giving and praying keeps everything going."

June marked the close of the third quarter in the SBC fiscal year. After nine months, total contributions are \$76,176,999--9.23 percent ahead of the third quarter totals last year.

The churches have also contributed \$79,543,427 in designated gifts to the 20 national SBC agencies, the vast majority of the money going to the Foreign Mission Board and the Home Mission Board.

"As we enter the final quarter of the SBC fiscal year, we are optimistic," Bennett said. "Several state conventions reported record CP months during June--and when the national portion of those state gifts are received in July we hope to be on target to reach the challenge budget as well as the basic budget, for a total Cooperative Program budget of \$106 million."

If contributions the final quarter continue at the same rate as the first three quarters, the national Cooperative Program will receive almost \$101.6 million. The basic operating and capital needs budget is \$100 million and the challenge budget is \$106 million.

Florida continues to be the only state convention ranked in the top 10 in both dollar giving to the Cooperative Program and percentage increase over last year's contributions. Florida is third in contributions (\$6,220,940) and third in percentage increase (32.07).

Other convention Cooperative Program leaders are:

Total contributions--Texas (\$13,861,967), Georgia (\$6,339,287), North Carolina (\$5,197,107), Alabama (\$5,040,698), Oklahoma (\$5,032,209), Tennessee (\$4,490,085), South Carolina (\$4,160,244), Mississippi (\$3,699,419) and Louisiana (\$3,569,028).

Percentage increase--New York (74.29), Northern Plains (44.16), Hawaii (19.71), Pennsylvania-South Jersey (18.27), Arizona (15.18), Nevada (13.91), Washington D.C. (13.34), Maryland (12.94) and Indiana (11.23).

Georgia, Florida and Alabama are all in the top 10 in designated giving and percentage increase in designated giving. Georgia is third in amount (\$6,536,477) and seventh in increase (14.25), Florida is seventh in total (\$4,660,321) and tenth in percentage (7.98) and Alabama is fourth (\$5,580,894) and fifth (15.33).

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Other designated giving leaders are:

Total designated contributions--Texas (\$14,553,518), North Carolina (\$8,258,381), South Carolina (\$5,253,060), Tennessee (\$5,220,968), Mississippi (\$4,605,461), Virginia (\$3,880,900) and Louisiana (\$3,109,380).

Percentage increase--New York (75.16), Maryland (38.94), Pennsylvania-South Jersey (33.43), West Virginia (16.14), Michigan (15.26), New Mexico (11.97) and Arkansas (9.71).

Thirty-one of the 34 state conventions have given more to the Cooperative Program through June 1983 than they did through June 1982 and 28 of the 34 have increased designated giving.

"Bold Mission Thrust (the SBC effort to present the message of Christ to everyone in the world) is a pearl of great price," Bennett said. "It is exciting to see Southern Baptists paying the price with their lives, their prayers and their financial involvement."

-30-

Christian High Adventure Campers
Injured In Georgia Traffic Accident

Baptist Press
7/22/83

DAWSONVILLE, Ga. (BP)--Two members of a group of Christian High Adventure campers were hospitalized, one in extremely critical condition, after their van was demolished in a traffic accident July 19.

Ronald Thruman, 25, of Elgin, Ill., a Christian Service Corps volunteer serving on the staff of Christian High Adventure, and Tray Tanner, 17, a camper from Tuscaloosa, Ala., were injured when the driver of a truck ran a stop sign and struck the van. Tanner and at least one other passenger were thrown out of the van as it overturned four times.

All seven campers were taken to Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville. Tanner was admitted with massive head injuries and Thruman was hospitalized for abrasions and bruised lungs. Thruman was expected to be released July 24.

Christopher Baskin, 21, of Rome, Ga., a Home Mission Board summer missionary serving with Christian High Adventure, and the remaining four teen-age boys were treated and released.

Baskin, who was driving the van, is a senior at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., and was serving his third year as a HMB summer missionary. His father, Jo, is campus minister at Shorter College in Rome.

The group originated from Baxley, Ga., where Thruman and Baskin were working with CHA's Challenge program--a branch of Christian High Adventure which provides spiritually-oriented wilderness experiences for residents of children's homes, juvenile offenders and inner-city youth. The program is associated with the Georgia Baptist Children's Home in Baxley, which owned the van.

However, the campers were not residents of the Baxley children's home but had been referred to the program by Tuscaloosa's juvenile court, according to Bill Lee, assistant director of the HMB's special mission ministries department.

The group had been in route to Neel's Gap, the trail head for the Appalachian Trail.

-30-

Baptist Church School
May Lose Tax Exemption

By Don McGregor

Baptist Press
7/22/83

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--The United States District Court for the District of Columbia ruled July 8 against Clarksdale Baptist Church School's effort to intervene in the case of William H. Green v. Donald T. Regan, the U.S. secretary of the treasury.

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The case directed the Internal Revenue Service to determine whether or not the school was guilty of racial discrimination by using one or several yardsticks determined by the court.

The summary judgment instructed the Internal Revenue Service to move ahead with its determination and revoke tax exemption for the school--and perhaps the church--if the court's criteria for determining lack of discrimination could not be met.

The order will not take effect until July 28. The school has announced its intention to appeal prior to that date.

Arguments in an appeal would not be heard until in the fall and a judgment would not be expected until winter or spring. The church is hoping for an additional stay from the court of appeal to stop the IRS from any action in the case until the appeals court has ruled.

If unsuccessful, the church will seek legislation to prevent the IRS from using federal funds for the purpose of revoking the tax-exempt status of church-related schools.

The suit resulted from just such an action. Congress passed legislation restricting the use of federal funds by the IRS in revoking the tax-exempt status of church-related schools, and Green sued the United States secretary of the treasury to have that legislation set aside in Mississippi. District of Columbia District Judge George Hart, ruled for Green on May 5, 1980.

After the IRS had begun its investigation, several churches in Mississippi sought to intervene in the case. The only one granted intervention was Clarksdale Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation.

The Hart ruling restores the investigative activity of the IRS.

The church feels the permanent injunction established on May 5, 1980, infringes on its First Amendment rights.

Hart said "Mississippi private schools or the organizations which operate them" may be denied tax exempt status if:

"They have been determined in adversary or administrative proceedings to be racially discriminatory; or were established or expanded at or about the time the public school districts in which they are located or which they serve were desegregating, and which cannot demonstrate they do not racially discriminate in admissions, employment, scholarships, loan programs, athletics, and extra-curricular programs."

He also said in his ruling: "The existence of these conditions...raises an inference of present discrimination against blacks. Such inference may be overcome by evidence which clearly and convincingly reveals objective acts and declarations establishing that such is not proximately caused by such school's policies and practices.

"Such evidence might include, but is not limited to, proof of active and vigorous recruitment programs to secure black students or teachers, including students' grants in aid; or proof of continued, meaningful public advertisements stressing the school's open admissions policy; or proof of meaningful communication between the school and black groups and black leaders within the community concerning the school's nondiscrimination policies.

"And any other similar evidence calculated to show that the doors of the private school and all facilities and programs therein are indeed open to students and teachers of both the black and white races upon the same standard of admission or employment."

The church's attorney, William B. Ball of Harrisburg, Pa., noted in his arguments, the school was founded to teach religious values to the children of church members rather than as a means of achieving a segregated school and because church members had been unhappy about the 1963 Schempp case in the Supreme Court, which ruled out Bible reading and religious programs in the public school.

"The school was founded solely out of sincere religious motivation. It is open to persons of any race. If blacks do not attend the church's school, let it be remembered that neither do they attend the Amish schools of Pennsylvania or Hassidic schools in Brooklyn," Bell said.

"To go to either, parents and children must step into a distinct religious culture, accept fundamentalist morality, Calvinist discipline, and intense Bible-centered indoctrination. The church rejects racism because it is unbiblical, therefore sinful.

"Various provisions of the court's injunction orders of 1980, if applied to the church, would violate its religious liberty. The court is obligated to apply the constitutional principles found in the religious liberty and non-entanglement decisions of the Supreme Court."

Don Dunavant, pastor of Clarksdale Baptist Church, told the Mississippi Baptist Record, "We are convinced the constitutional questions involved are of such enormous importance that they have to be pursued, that the question of free exercise of religion and excessive government entanglement in affairs of family and church relate not only to us but also to the greater issue of church-state relationships and the interpretation of the First Amendment."

In affidavits for the court, former pastor Lucius Marion said, "Planning for the Clarksdale Baptist School was begun in 1961 and 1962, well before any desegregation order for the City of Clarksdale."

Other testimony noted:

"A principal reason why parents prefer Christian schools is the attractiveness of the drug-free, alcohol-free, violence-free, disciplined and moral atmosphere."

"Fundamentalist Christian schools in Mississippi, and elsewhere in the South, have found themselves in opposition to segregationists, not in league with them."

"Clarksdale Baptist Church teaches, as an article of faith, that all men of all races are equal in the sight of God. This belief precludes it from using racial criteria in admissions and hiring."

-30-

Brazil Flood Waters Recede;
Missionaries Move In To Help

Baptist Press
7/22/83

CURITIBA, Brazil (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries set up relief headquarters in Curitiba as south Brazil's worst flooding in a century began to recede in mid-July.

Two weeks of rain and flooding in three states left more than 100 people dead or missing and some 350,000 temporarily homeless, including Southern Baptist missionaries John and Jean Poe and Sandy Simmons.

The Foreign Mission Board cabled nearly \$146,000 for food, blankets and other supplies July 19. About 25 missionaries, led by south Brazil relief coordinator Robert Erwin, are working with Brazilian Baptists to distribute food and supplies in the hardest hit areas.

"They're now trying to get in contact with the churches to see what they need," said missionary Fred Hawkins, national relief coordinator, in a telephone report July 20. "Our aid will come more or less as a second stage after the people get back in their homes and clean up the mess.... That is the best time for us to get in and help a select number of the poorest people who can't make it any other way."

Hawkins said the relief would be distributed through 25 churches to about 1,500 families. Missionary Ned Mann will fly supplies and people to areas still cut off by landslides or washed-out bridges, particularly in Santa Catarina, the state most damaged by flooding.

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The Poes, from Durham, N.C., and Knoxville, Tenn., and Simmons, of Hillsboro, Texas, were in another state when water surged through Blumenau in Santa Catarina, completely submerging the Poes' home. The city was reportedly evacuated and the three missionaries still had not been able to return by July 20.

About two-thirds of Santa Catarina has been declared a disaster area, plus large portions of Parana and Rio Grande do Sul. Huge tracts of farmland drowned in the middle of the planting season and industry virtually stopped. Property damage has been estimated at \$1.6 billion.

-30-

Chair Of Geology Established
At Hardin-Simmons University

Baptist Press
7/22/83

ABILENE, Texas (BP)--J.D. Sandefer, III, of Houston, chairman and majority stockholder of Sandefer Oil and Gas Inc., has established a chair of geology at Hardin-Simmons University with a commitment of \$500,000.

Sandefer, as HSU trustee, is the grandson of the late J.D. "Prexy" Sandefer, who served as president of Hardin-Simmons for 31 years, 1909 to 1940. His late father, J.D. Sandefer Jr., of Breckenridge, was a longtime trustee of HSU.

Sandefer's gift is a part of a three-year, \$15 million "Forging the Future" endowment and capital needs campaign currently underway at the Baptist university.

To date about \$4.5 million has been given or pledged to the effort, according to Richard M. Styles, vice president for development and university relations.

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Louisiana Baptists
Cruise Without Booze

By Oscar Hoffmeyer Jr.

Baptist Press
7/22/83

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Vibrations from songs of faith were in concert with the rhythm of diesel engines as more than 1,500 persons enjoyed a "cruise without booze" at New Orleans.

The cruise, sponsored by the Riverside Baptist Church, was developed by Zack Young, minister of music, to provide family entertainment "within a Christian context".

Several groups, including "The Revelation Quartet" from Dallas, provided non-stop gospel and traditional Christian music as the riverboat plied the Mississippi River for two hours.

While inspiration of the program was being enjoyed on the main deck, a Baptist couple, Pam Ortego and Elvin Faul were united in marriage by Arthur Achord, director of missions in Houma, La., on topside, aft deck. Achord was formerly Faul's pastor in Patterson, La.

Wesley Jackson, religion editor for the New Orleans Times Picayune-States Item, said the cruise was a first for New Orleans.

Guests, lined up for more than 30 minutes before the 8 p.m. departure, were from four states, Young said. "We were limited to 1,500 guests because of the refreshment serving capacity," he explained. "By Thursday we were sold out and announced over radio and television no more tickets were available. We could have sold more than 500 additional tickets.

"When we started planning the event as an outreach to families, we thought we might have 300 to 500 persons respond. The response overwhelmed us."

Gary Frazier, pastor of the 1,200-member Riverside church, said 40 trained counselors were aboard to assist with any decisions.

Young said he plans to offer the program again, once a year or every six months. "We found families will respond to good Christian entertainment and fellowship, even in the worldly city of New Orleans."

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