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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
Craig Bird, 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 (Foreign) Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hastey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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Lebanese Army Sweep Causes Lull In Beirut Fighting

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Southern Baptist missionaries in west Beirut reported a lull late Aug. 31 in fighting as fierce as the city experienced during the 1982 Israeli invasion.

They attributed the lull to a massive sweep through the western sector by 10,000 Lebanese troops, supported by tank and mortar crews, which routed Druse and Shiite militiamen in house-to-house combat.

Missionary Mabel Summers, from Bardstown, Ky., who lives next door to Beirut Baptist School in the Mouseitbeh section of west Beirut, said things quieted down in the neighborhood after a column of Lebanese troops marched past the school.

The school was damaged Aug. 25 when a French ammunition truck blew up next door to the school, breaking windows and damaging an 8-foot concrete wall alongside the building. The impact of nearby shelling has since broken other windows.

Missionaries Nancie Wingo, from San Antonio, Texas, and Ruth Spence, Byron, Ark., vacated their apartment in Mouseitbeh after their balcony and the one above them were damaged by the impact of nearby shelling. They have joined Summers in the missionary apartment building.

As a precaution, missionaries Mack and Linda Sacco, from Gilroy, Calif., and McAlester, Okla., moved their family downstairs to the bottom floor of the same building.

First-term missionaries Jim and Stephanie Bethea, Memphis, Tenn., and Waverly, Pa., who returned to Lebanon Aug. 28, just before the Beirut airport closed, reported calm in Ras Beirut in the northern part of west Beirut. They were in the United States for the birth of their son six weeks earlier.

Missionaries working with the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary, Baptist Publications and the Baptist Recording Studio in the hillside community of Monsouriyeh have taken shelter in the seminary basement during shelling.

Finlay Graham, Foreign Mission Board associate for the Middle East, reported from Nicosia, Cyprus, that all Southern Baptist missionaries were safe. Isam Ballenger, director for Europe and the Middle East, added, "No one feels in immediate danger but they must take precautions because of strife in that city."

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First Satellite System
Installed For Baptist TelNet

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WHITE OAK, Texas (BP)--Emmanuel Baptist Church in White Oak, Texas, is the first church in the Southern Baptist Convention to have a telecommunications system installed to receive Baptist TelNet, the Sunday School Board's training network.

A 13-foot satellite receiving dish and related equipment were installed in late August at the church, which has an average weekly Sunday school attendance of 250.

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Randall Babin, minister of education at Emmanuel, said the church has been involved in a videotape training program, but feels Baptist TelNet will offer immediate access to denominational programming.

"We like the idea of having the opportunity to preview the shows, and then use them when we want to," Babin said. "We can control the programming, and everything will relate to our church." Lindsey Burns, pastor, said money for the system was given by an anonymous donor who is a member of the church.

First Baptist Church, Belton, Texas, was the second church to have a system installed by Starview, the company which is handling all installations ordered with the equipment.

Baptist TelNet is expected to begin broadcasting late in the spring of 1984. Churches interested in additional information about a telecommunications system may contact Broadman Press at the Sunday School Board for guidance in selecting the proper equipment.

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

Accent Editor Brown
Resigns At WMU

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Pam Brown has resigned as editor of Accent magazine, the Woman's Missionary Union monthly magazine for Acteens. Acteens is the WMU organization for girls in grades 7 through 12.

Brown came to WMU in September of 1977 as Accent editor. She was a Home Mission Board student summer missionary assigned to WMU in 1976. A native of Jasper, Ala., Brown will be teaching in that city's public schools.

Laurella Owens of Birmingham is filling in as temporary assistant Accent editor, until a permanent editor is selected.

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Buckner Gets \$4.5 Million
In Property, Trusts

By Betty Ensminger

Baptist Press
9/1/83

DALLAS (BP)--Buckner Baptist Benevolences has received a gift of property and trusts in excess of \$4.5 million from Louie O. Sluder.

Property coming to Buckner immediately includes two centers for retirement and nursing care in Austin, Texas, which Buckner has been operating since 1970, plus frontage on Lake Austin. Another 50 acres in south Austin previously was deeded to Buckner. The two retirement centers provide care for 240 persons.

Sluder, a Baptist pastor for more than 20 years, mostly in the Austin area, has been engaged in Christian social services since 1956. At that time, he founded the Austin Career Center, a rehabilitative program for underprivileged and non-academic young people. Later, he turned to the care of older persons, opening Villa Siesta Retirement Village in north Austin in 1961. He converted the Career Center into a similar home, Monte Siesta Village, in 1963.

When Sluder asked Buckner to operate his two retirement homes in 1970, it was his intention for the agency to eventually own the Austin homes, and perpetuate the Christian ministry he had started.

A graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, Sluder also holds a master of arts degree in sociology and educational psychology from the University of Texas. He retired to Burleson, Texas, six years ago.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas agency operates social care programs in 15 cities.

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Church In Alamogordo
Receives \$100,000 Gift

ALAMOGORDO, N.M. (BP)--First Church in Alamogordo has been given \$100,000 by Billie and Louise Holder to be used for debt retirement.

At the close of the Aug. 7 morning worship service, Wilson asked the congregation to be seated. After reviewing the burden the church had carried for the last 10 years as it struggled with the indebtedness while trying to carry on a full program, Wilson announced a check had been received sufficient to retire all the indebtedness.

Holder, a longtime publisher of the Alamogordo Daily News, recently sold the paper and retired after more than 53 years in the newspaper business.

The Holders have been members of the church for 30 years. He has been chairman of three pulpit committees, and was chairman of the trustees who signed the original note of indebtedness.

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Believers Must Imitate
Christ, Sullivan Says

By Jim Lowry

Baptist Press
9/1/83

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Southern Baptists must have the "audacity to imitate Christ" if the denomination is to develop believers who carry the gospel to the world, says John Sullivan, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport, La.

"We recognize we have done a good job in evangelism and missions, but many of our people do not live godly lives," said Sullivan, who is in his second term as first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention. "It becomes obvious that we haven't done a good job developing believers."

Sullivan said some of the observable things that point to a failure of the denomination to develop believers are the divorce rate in churches, the counseling load of pastors and alcoholism, sex and morality problems among youth.

"Some church members attend church out of a sense of duty, some out of a sense of habit, some out of a sense of need and for many, church is ritual," he continued. "Many of our members are hearing spiritual truths in Sunday school but do not have the corresponding spiritual insight to make application."

"To have the audacity to imitate Christ, you must first study the life of Christ," Sullivan said. "You have got to get close to the heart of Christ to make decisions. It must be an experiential thing, not pragmatic."

Sullivan, speaking to the Bible preaching conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, said: "We must do a better job of developing the potential of the people in our churches. We have come to the place that if we don't begin to develop our people we face the tragedy of unfulfilled potential."

Because of the continuing need to get the gospel to the grassroots, Sullivan said he believes the small church is strategic to the denomination.

"The small church has limits," Sullivan said. "I think you come closest to the heart of Southern Baptists when you are in a small church that is doing a good job in a small town. The members live in a small community, do their work, stay faithful and continue to witness in a situation where consistency is absolutely important."

The first church where Sullivan served as pastor was in Rainbow Valley, Ariz., where the membership was approximately 13. He then moved to a church in Phoenix, Ariz., where the average Sunday school attendance was 50. He said his present church in Shreveport just recently passed the 5,000 mark in membership.

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"We must continue to get our materials to the grassroots," he challenged. "I think the pastor of any size church can lead the people by example. As the pastor continues to be a developing believer he can lead others to be developing believers.

"The size church has nothing to do with arriving spiritually," he said. "The man in the church of 200 may be as spiritual as a man in a church of 2,000.

"I would encourage Southern Baptist pastors to build on the basics and stay in tune with the gospel," Sullivan continued. "The tragedy is when we try to do the work of God using our strength, rhetoric and organization. We do not do the work of God without the word of God."

The conference was sponsored by the church administration department of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

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'Time Limit' Prompts
Mission Venture

By Don Kirkland

Baptist Press
9/1/83

GREENVILLE, S.C. (BP)--When Joan King was given a "time limit on life," she decided not to wait any longer to fulfill an ambition to do missions work.

The Greenville resident left Aug. 8 for Ajloun, Jordan, where she will work as staff nurse at the Baptist Hospital. Her month of volunteer service is sponsored by the Foreign Mission Board. She also has received support from her home church, City View First Baptist Church.

Eighteen months ago the registered nurse knew she had hepatitis. She did not know she also had leukemia. "It was really diagnosed by accident," she said. "I was not sick at all."

The first prognosis was she would live perhaps four to six years. It has been raised to eight to 10 years now. "Last summer I went on chemotherapy and I am on it now," she said. "At present there are no abnormal blood cells and I have no outward signs of the disease."

She said her condition now is "a direct answer to prayer" and her physician is very optimistic. "The only known cure," she pointed out, "is a bone marrow transplant. I have no compatible donor, however, and the procedure is very risky."

She is pleased with her family's acceptance of the illness. "We talk about it openly," she noted, "and they are aware of the outlook."

Her husband, John, a military veteran of 17 years, teaches ROTC at Furman University and Greenville TEC. They are parents of Kirstie, 14, Amanda, 11, and Betsy, 8.

Having leukemia has sharpened King's focus on life.

"Everybody has the tendency to put things off," she said. "But you become very aware of doing God's will when a time limit is put on your life."

King, a native of Lake City, Mich., came to Greenville in 1980. She is now on leave as a head nurse with the Greenville Hospital System.

King is president of the Baptist Women group and teaches in church training. For two weeks this summer she also served as nurse for Marietta Baptist Camp.

"My church has been very supportive during the illness," she said. "They are a wonderful group of encouragers."

King, who for years had looked at herself as an "itinerate mission worker," applied for the Jordan appointment in April. "I felt led to do it," she said. "My doctor had given me clearance on it and I knew if it were God's will, I would go.

"All that will last," she concluded, "is what is done for Christ."

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Children Find More
Than Friendship at House

By David Wilkinson

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Carolyn McClendon, a small woman with an enormous heart, dares to care in a rough, southwest New Orleans neighborhood.

As home missionary/director of Southern Baptists' Friendship House, she works daily in a quadrant where hope often lies buried beneath layers of poverty, crime, anger and depression.

The transitional neighborhood which Friendship House serves includes a fluctuating mixture of racial groups: the majority of children and teenagers are black; many elderly are white, and there is a growing number of Hispanics.

A 1977 graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, McClendon oversees a multifaceted program that includes a licensed day-care center, various activities for street-wise children, including tutoring for neighborhood youth with reading deficiencies, and a family crisis ministry offering food, clothing and emergency funds. She also ministers to elderly residents in a nearby high-rise.

Children trail McClendon like ducklings lined up behind their mother. She cares deeply about those who come to the center, but she also worries about the hundreds who don't.

In an area where most adults are working away from home all day, children have little to do but roam the streets. McClendon explained, "The kids have no one to set limits for them. It's not that the mothers don't care. Many are single parents who simply have no choice. They have to work to buy food."

Sometimes, however, the strain of poverty results in childhood problems worse than illiteracy and idleness. McClendon has encountered serious child abuse and neglect; several times children have been abandoned at the center.

"It's frustrating sometimes because the children have so many needs, and there's so little we can do about them," she confessed.

In spite of all the problems McClendon has refused to despair; she offsets her sparse resources with abundant energy. She spoke of needs and opportunities rather than problems.

"Friendship House is my life right now," she said. "I can't believe it when I go home at night. When I go home and close the door I just can't shut out Friendship House."

She knelt down and picked up a brown-eyed, three-year-old Cuban girl who tugged at her skirt. Though the child could not speak English her eyes reflected her feelings. McClendon embraced her friend and lifted her onto a battered red wagon. She sighed. "Even at its worst, just a hug from one of the children," she said, "makes it all worthwhile."

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Adapted from May-June issue of Missions/USA, the Home Mission Board's magazine

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