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83-154

Foreign Board Appoints
31 New Missionaries

By Marty Croll

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--While Judith Richards was a journeyman in Taiwan, she told the Lord if he wanted her full-time on the foreign mission field, she'd be there. Nearly nine years passed before she was willing to keep that promise

Richards, who grew up in a farming community in New York, was one of 31 missionaries appointed and four reappointed during the October meeting of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va. She was one of several who noted they found God's will for their lives only after yielding their hearts to him.

"There have been times I have not wanted to go," Richards told a congregation of about 800 at the appointment service at River Road Baptist Church. "I have tried at times to convince the Lord that there's just as great a need in New York.

"I know I will miss the cold climate. I love a good snowball fight. I will miss the trees in the fall and the maple syrup in the spring." Richards will return to Taiwan.

Eddie Cox yielded to God's direction during a discipleship-training program. A non-missionary in a group with three home missionaries and one foreign missionary, Cox asked himself whether he would be willing to totally submit his will if it meant going overseas.

"I came to the firm conclusion," he said, "that no sacrifice is too great to make to the Lord." Cox, of New York, and his wife, the former Debbie Odom of Texas, will be going to France.

Mark McClellan and John White also died to their own wills before they were led into missions. Before yielding, McClellan's life was "deeply empty." White realized he had "rationally proceeded with what I wanted to do" even after committing to full-time Christian work at age 11.

"I was not willing to yield," White said. "But God's way is total obedience, and God got me to see his way is perfect."

McClellan, from Ohio, and his wife, the former Cindy Welborn of Oklahoma, will go to Guatemala. White, from Alabama, and his wife, the former Trudy Cathy of Georgia, will go to South Brazil.

Others appointed as missionaries were Robin and Kathy Baze Hadaway of Tennessee and Texas, respectively, to Tanzania; Terry and Michaelle Schauer Buford of Tennessee and North Dakota, to the Philippines.

Others appointed as missionaries include Carey and Lynne Pepin Bates of California and Tennessee, to Portugal; Glenda Cook, New Mexico, to Taiwan, and Everett and Beth Culbertson Douglas, South Carolina, to Nigeria.

Also, Steve and Phyllis Johnson Goss, North Carolina, to Japan; Ruth Haskins, Oklahoma, to Liberia; Frank and Doris Cline Hickman, Tennessee, to South Brazil; Fred and Cherry Lee Himstedt, Texas, to South Brazil, and Mike and Fran Rock Manley, Oklahoma and Texas, to Zimbabwe.

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Other appointees include Roy and Marcia Parrish McKay, Texas and Mississippi, to the Philippines; Wayne and Pat Chamberlain Thorpe, Virginia and North Carolina, to South and Southeast Asia, and Karl and Thelma Williams Weathers, Nebraska and Arkansas, to Lebanon.

Reappointments as missionaries include Everett and Dorothy McKeown Burnette, South Carolina, to West Africa. Since August 1980 Burnette has been manager of auxiliary personnel in the personnel selection arm of the Foreign Mission Board. He and his wife were missionaries to Senegal for eight years.

Also reappointed were Richard and Beatrice Rodgers Walker, Texas and Arkansas, to Equatorial Brazil.

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RTVC Radio Program
Wins Gabriel Award

By Greg Warner

Baptist Press
10/12/83

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--"On Track," a radio program produced by Southern Baptists, has won a Gabriel Award, one of broadcastings' top recognitions for excellence in programming.

"On Track" is a 30-minute program of contemporary Christian music produced in Fort Worth, Texas, by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission (RTVC) and broadcast on 520 radio stations each week.

The Gabriel Awards, to be presented this year in Cleveland on Nov. 10, are sponsored yearly by Unda-USA, the National Catholic Association for Broadcasters and Allied Communicators. The honors, presented in 38 categories, recognize positive human value in radio and TV programs.

"On Track" will be cited as the top nationally syndicated entertainment program for radio. Competition in that category was not limited to religious programs, but included all forms of radio entertainment.

The newest of the RTVC's 12 radio shows, "On Track" was started in 1981 and premiered on more than 100 stations. It is patterned after the RTVC's "Powerline," the most widely syndicated program in radio history, which is heard on 1,423 stations nation-wide.

Each weekly installment of "On Track" mixes contemporary Christian music, an interview with a performer or group and a short spiritual message. Jack Norris is the show's producer.

In March "On Track" was named top entertainment program in the Angel Awards, sponsored by Religion in Media. The Angel Awards recognize excellence in religious programming.

This year's Gabriel Award is the third presented to an RTVC program. "MasterControl" was the first Southern Baptist winner in 1969. "Country Crossroads" was honored in 1974.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Radio and Television Commission

Retiring Missionaries Complete
A Millenium of Overseas Service

By Bill Webb

Baptist Press
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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Thirty retiring Southern Baptist missionaries were being recognized for 1,021 years of service among them, but it was they who repeatedly said thanks for the blessings of overseas ministry.

"We are ordinary people but, in the providence of God, receiving extraordinary blessings," said Mildred Crabtree, a Texas and 37-year veteran of work in Nigeria, as she borrowed a quote from a missionary before her.

Zelma Foster, who with her husband, James, both from Mississippi, served 36 years overseas, added, "Our lives have been enriched and blessed by people we have come to know and love in China, the Philippines and Surinam.

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"We have learned how precious are the red, brown, yellow, black and white people of God's beautiful world," she said. Then she named 18 different nationalities with whom the couple have shared the gospel.

Repeatedly, the veteran missionaries thanked Southern Baptists for their support on the field through the Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. And for prayer.

"I'm grateful for prayer that has linked all of us together and given us one purpose," said Mary Sampson, a Kentuckian who served 38 years in China and Taiwan. "Without the prevailing power of prayer, there is not a one of us here tonight that could have served these years and come to this very special night in our lives."

The rewards of overseas service were great, they agreed.

Walter Moore, missionary doctor who served 28 years in Nigeria and Ghana with his wife, Charlean, both from Oklahoma, recounted the words of a preacher friend years ago: "Walter, why are you going overseas to be a missionary doctor when you could do just as good of work here in America and make a lot of money, too?"

"That may have been true," Moore acknowledged to the audience of friends, relatives, board members and others, "but I have been compensated greatly on the mission field."

That field is still needy and ripe for the gospel, the missionaries reminded their audience.

John Shepard, from Louisiana, who served in Japan 35 years with his wife, Jean, from Illinois, alluded to the spiritual miracle that surpasses the economic miracle in that country. "There's a crisis in the soul of Japan today, a search for meaning," he said. "The miracle of God and his Spirit is waiting to happen."

Cecil and Mary McConnell, from Ohio and Pennsylvania, served longer than any other missionaries on the program--45 years. The first 40 were in Chile, followed by two in Colombia and three at the Baptist Spanish Publishing House in El Paso, Texas.

Despite their official retirement, they will continue at El Paso until they complete their work on a revision of the Spanish Bible.

"If I had 10 lives, I'd gladly give them to this same gracious cause," said McConnell. "Since that is not possible, I urge and pray those who can to carry on and on until Jesus comes."

The board paid tribute to one missionary who died in Malaysia in 1977, Harold Clark. His widow, Anna, from Illinois, who transferred to the Philippines upon his death and completed 28 years, accepted service plaques for him and her.

"You exemplified the missionary spirit as you reviewed your options when Harold died and decided to continue in your own right, doing what God had called you to do," said Bill Wakefield, director for South and Southeast Asia. "You showed us the kind of spirit we honor tonight for 28 years of service."

Board President R. Keith Parks told the missionaries he felt like the prophet Elisha when he asked to inherit a double portion of the spirit of Elijah just before his aging predecessor was taken away.

"If I had a prayer for my own life and for (new missionaries), I would pray, 'Lord, give me a double portion of your (retiring missionaries') spirit,'" he said.

Other missionaries honored in the service were Edward and Audrey Gordon, from Virginia and North Carolina, 31 years, Philippines; Irene Branum, Arkansas, 37 years, China and South Korea; Charles and Sara Mullins, Alabama, 28 years, Hawaii and Macao; Cathryn L. Smith, Georgia, 37 years, Brazil; Lester and B. Wayne Bell, Texas and Oklahoma, 33 years, Brazil and Portugal; Dan and Doris Sharpley, Texas, 35 years, Brazil;

Ulman and Ruth Moss, Alabama and Texas, 38 years, Colombia, Venezuela and Mexico; Tucker and Liz Callaway, Georgia and Tennessee, 35 years, Hawaii, Japan and Liberia; Lois Hart, Texas, 42 years, Chile, and Ben and Patsy Lawton, North Carolina and Georgia, 36 years, Italy.

Samuel and Emanetta Qualls, from Tennessee and Kansas, were unable to attend the service because of health problems. They served 21 years in Brazil.

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(Photos mailed to home states by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press)

Escobar Combines Social Work,
Theology at Southern Seminary

By Mark Brock

Baptist Press
10/12/83

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor Donoso Escobar recently joined evangelical Hispanic leaders at the White House to suggest answers for troubled Central America.

For President Ronald Reagan, it was an attempt to rally Hispanic support around his foreign policy. For Escobar, it was an opportunity to affirm his calling as a Christian social worker and teacher.

Escobar, who was director of immigration and refugee resettlement for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board from 1980 to 1983, was named assistant professor of social work at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., last April.

"I came to Southern with a sense of arrival," Escobar said. "This is what I have dreamed of for most of my life."

That dream was born in Costa Rica during Escobar's final year of seminary. There he was involved in an evangelism project in an inner city neighborhood.

"I found myself equipped with theology but lacking the skills to respond to the great social needs I encountered," Escobar reflected. So after a period of praying and searching, he decided to become a social worker and combine theology with social work skills.

The decision led Escobar back to his native Nicaragua, where he founded a school in a poverty-stricken neighborhood in Managua. The school also doubled as a church where he served as pastor.

In 1968 Escobar came to the United States and the University of Arkansas to begin studies in social work. During his graduate studies, he ministered to Hispanics in Little Rock. It was there he began his work with the Home Mission Board during the 1979 influx of Cuban refugees.

"We live in an age of challenge," Escobar said. "God's ministers are being challenged to intervene in whatever arena they may find themselves. Those placed by God in leadership positions at a national level have a duty to influence public policy."

"While I was at the White House I asked myself over and over again, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Each time the answer echoed back, 'Yes, I am.'"

As a social worker and a minister, Escobar expressed two major concerns of Hispanic Americans while he was at the White House.

One concern was to oppose the support of future dictators in Central America. The other was to encourage the U.S. government to meet the needs of displaced persons already fleeing the conflicts in that region.

The rationale for his stance relates to his commitment to Christian social work.

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"Social work enables one to interpret human reality," Escobar said. "But one can't divorce human reality from God's reality. Anytime a Christian intervenes in history--whether individual, community or national history--he has to take into account God's plan for mankind."

Concern for God's plan and a commitment to reveal the social reality of humanity from a theological perspective led Escobar to teach at Southern Seminary.

"It has been my dream to prepare ministers capable of responding to mankind as a whole," he explained.

"Social work makes sense, and I am convinced that it is biblical," he added. "I want to help Southern Baptist ministers respond to the social as well as the spiritual needs of man. I think that is the best way to minister in Central America and around the world."

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New TV Station In Houston
Will Carry ACTS Network

By Greg Warner

Baptist Press
10/12/83

HOUSTON (BP)--Southern Baptists will have a television network outlet in the nation's ninth largest metropolitan area once a group of Houston residents build an educational station authorized by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Educational Television of Houston Inc. (ETH), a group which includes several prominent Southern Baptists has been granted a construction permit by the FCC to build a full-power educational station on channel 14 in Houston. The station will carry the programming of the American Christian Television System (ACTS), the national TV network being developed by Southern Baptists.

Houston Baptist University will supply educational programming to supplement the ACTS programs, as will other educational institutions in the Houston area.

Officers of ETH are Gilbert Turner, Houston businessman, president; Edwin H. Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Houston, vice president, and William J. Merrill, Houston attorney, secretary-treasurer.

To get FCC approval for the station, ETH worked out an agreement with Texas Educational Network, which also had applied for a station on channel 14. ETH agreed to reimburse Texas Educational Network its filing costs if it would withdraw its application, allowing the FCC to grant the channel to ETH. Texas Educational Network, in turn, had to certify for the FCC it did not file the competing application in order to negotiate such a settlement with ETH.

The permit gives Educational Television of Houston one year in which to build the station. ETH will be responsible for financing the project. No estimates on cost have been announced.

Channel 14 will cover the entire Houston market, which has 1.3 million homes that use television. In keeping with FCC rules, the station's signal will be carried on all cable TV systems in the area.

A construction permit for a full-power station was recently granted in Greenville, N.C., to ACTS of Eastern North Carolina, a group of area Baptist laymen and pastors. In addition, educational applications have been filed in Fort Worth and San Antonio, Texas, and Santa Rosa, Calif. Eight to ten other locations are under consideration.

The strategy to use educational television in ACTS is in addition to plans for 100-plus low-power TV stations nationwide. Although full-power educational stations cost more than low-power, they can reach an area about 45 miles in radius, compared to 10-15 miles for low-power.

Next May ACTS will begin delivering 16 hours of family entertainment, inspirational and informational programs daily to cable television systems and TV stations nationwide. The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission is developing the network and programming.

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