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New Missionary Heads To Brazil
To Be Dad's Building Partner

By Mary Jane Welch

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Philip Flournoy is traveling a long way to go into business with his dad--all the way from Fort Worth, Texas, to Brazil.

Philip and his dad, Marshall Flournoy, have worked together many times before, but this time things will be a little different. The "missionary kid," who learned the construction business from his dad as he grew up in Brazil, will join his father as a fellow Southern Baptist missionary working under Brazilian Baptists' church loan board.

With the right help, the two can start a chapel from scratch and have it ready for Sunday services two weeks later. And Philip says his dad has found some shortcuts since they set that pace a couple of years ago.

When Philip graduated from college, he decided to take a break before entering seminary and went to work for a construction firm in Dallas. As it started getting cold in Dallas, his dad called to ask if he could come to Brazil to help build a new prefabricated chapel he had designed.

In Brazil, he found his dad had been trying to solve the problem of Brazilian churches which couldn't afford a chapel to accommodate their present crowd, much less a growing one. His solution was a prefabricated chapel which would go up quickly and cost a church about one-fifth or one-sixth the normal cost of a building that size. The modified A-frame structure would seat 175 people and cost about \$5,000.

A church would secure the site and pour a concrete foundation. Then Flournoy and his team, sometimes using volunteers from the States, would put up prefabricated trusses and plywood panels, finishing in about a week.

The Flournoy's set to work, seeing if the plans would work.

"The first one was the hardest because we'd never built anything like it and didn't have anything to go by...We just had stuff on paper, and so the first one took a little bit longer to lay. We learned some shortcuts on the first few that we made," says Philip.

They built the first chapel in a little town where a Brazilian Baptist state missionary worked. Because it went over well, they started another before Philip returned to the States. Within the next three years, says Philip, his dad had built over 30 prefab churches, some financed by Brazilian Baptists, some by mother churches, and some by Southern Baptist churches who sent volunteer teams to help.

Because they look different from most buildings in Brazil, says Philip, the chapels began to attract attention. Some people even wanted to know where they could purchase a steeple like the one bolted on the roof. It's good," says Philip, "because people are starting to identify, you know. They'll say: 'Oh, I know, that's one of those little Baptist churches.'"

Philip returned to the United States to attend Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Fort Worth, but he broke his seminary training with another building stint in Brazil. At that time, the Brazilian Baptist loan board agreed to sponsor the project, hoping to put their services within the reach of more churches. Their help came at a good time.

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The Flournoys had begun building the chapels in their backyard, in what had become an affluent neighborhood of Sao Paulo. Building one chapel in the yard wasn't a big deal, says Philip, but things soon mushroomed. As orders increased, they learned it was easier to buy plywood 300 or 400 sheets at a time. And it was easier to buy 50 cans of paint at a time, rather than two or three. Plywood was stacked to the eaves of the house.

The church loan board came to the rescue with a piece of property that could house a factory/warehouse. They also provided a truck for transporting supplies. Philip's family moved to the new site and began work there.

When he, his wife, Karen, and their son, Jason Dillon, join his parents in Brazil, Philip expects the two men to divide the labor. One will stay at the factory to order materials and supervise workers, while the other travels to church sites.

They're also considering other projects, such as developing a portable fiberglass baptistry which can be moved from church to church. Baptismal services are especially important to Brazilian Baptists, says Philip. And they're thinking about training Brazilian apprentices in return for their help at the factory.

Although Philip will be working with his dad, he sees himself as working for the Brazilian loan board. "The man that is in charge...I respect him a lot," says Philip. "I respect his knowledge, leadership and wisdom in making decisions on how the church loan board should plan for the future."

As for working with his father, "We have worked together for quite a few years now doing a lot of building and that type of things together. It's fine when I disagree with something for me to say it, and I respect his opinion and his advice and he respects me."

One of the things he's learned from his dad over the years is every member of a missionary family should participate in the work. He admits he sometimes resented helping his dad when his friends were going to the beach, but today he knows many things he wouldn't know if his dad had left him at home.

In fact, he intends to do the same thing with his new son as soon as he's old enough.

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

Satellite Antenna Tests
Show Strong Reception

By Jim Lowry

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Extensive field testing of Broadman's satellite earth stations indicates most Southern Baptist churches in the continental United States will be able to use the three-meter (10-foot) television receive only antenna, despite a recent Federal Communications Commission ruling.

A recent decision by the FCC changing the placement of satellites in orbit from four degrees to two degrees raised doubts about the ability of antennas to distinguish between signals of adjacent satellites.

The results of the tests conducted by the board show most churches will be able to receive excellent signals on a three-meter antenna. The board's satellite telecommunications network to churches, BTN, will begin telecasts in June 1984.

In the testing it was determined minor modifications in the antenna are needed to improve performance to avoid any noticeable interference from adjacent satellites, according to Dan Phillips, telecommunications consultant at the Sunday School Board.

Phillips, an engineer, said the new FCC ruling will place Spacenet I two and one-half degrees from the Westar 5 satellite.

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A second recent development will improve the possibility of strong reception of BTN signals by Southern Baptist churches.

The satellite "footprint," the signal from the satellite showing the signal strength in each area of the United States, has proven stronger than first believed, according to officials of the G.T.E. Spacenet Corporation.

This means churches in 90 percent of the continental U.S. should be able to receive a signal as strong as only one-third of the country originally would have received. The only areas of the U.S. which now definitely require a four-meter antenna are the southern tip of Texas, southern Florida and northern New England.

Phillips said other factors will cause some churches to choose to purchase a larger antenna. For example, better reception will be gained with a four-meter antenna for churches located in metropolitan areas with a large amount of microwave interference. Placement of a church's antenna more than 400 feet from the receiver (television monitor) or the use of multiple receivers also would indicate the need for a larger antenna.

Phillips urged churches purchasing antenna receiving systems from other manufacturers to be certain the TVRO has been tested and proven for adequate reception when satellites are only two degrees apart. The satellite which is next to Spacenet I has the same antenna pattern (polarization) as the BTN signal will have.

The Broadman equipment has been tested by professional engineers for these new problems and built specifically for the new training network, Phillips said. While other equipment will receive the BTN signal, Phillips emphasized churches should be certain the antenna pattern will differentiate sufficiently between the similar signals.

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Building Program Tithes
To Fund Brazilian Chapel

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
10/18/83

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Most members of Crescent Hill Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., never will see all the results of their "Together We Build" campaign.

That's because the church is sending a tithe of the money it raises to renovate its building to build a chapel at North Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary in Recife.

The idea of raising \$100,000 on top of the \$1 million already needed to renovate the church's sanctuary and educational buildings was conceived by Crescent Hill Pastor H. Stephen Shoemaker.

Shoemaker visited the Brazilian seminary earlier this year while preaching to Southern Baptist missionaries in North Brazil.

"At the time of the visit, I was struck by the tremendous need in Recife," Shoemaker recalled. "It's taking more and more of our Lottie Moon Christmas Offerings and Cooperative Program funds just to sustain the work on our mission fields.

"It seems there is less and less money left over for capital needs." So when a falling exterior and buckled floors forced Crescent Hill to plan renovations, Shoemaker decided to combine his concerns for the Louisville church and the Recife seminary.

He led the congregation to approve a capital funding campaign which is 10 percent more than it needs--so the Brazilian seminary can have a chapel.

The church is working with the SBC Stewardship Commission in a "Together We Build" campaign, targeted to raise up to \$1.25 million. The first \$85,000 of the church's tithe will fund the seminary's chapel, with the rest going to other mission needs.

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The vote to tithe the renovation campaign follows the church's recent shift toward "doing more direct mission work," Shoemaker noted. "We've begun to build a specific relationship with Baptists in North Brazil, and the personal nature of that relationship has generated terrific response to the need there."

Foreign Mission Board response to the project also has been favorable.

"What you are doing illustrates you clearly understand the nature of the church and the commission Christ has given," FMB President R. Keith Parks wrote the congregation.

"The very nature of the church requires an obedience and reaching out to the whole world," Parks said. "I trust what you are doing will become a model for many others."

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Rural Pastors Key
To Community Leadership

By Norman Jameson

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--In 1970, it was a blip on a graph. By 1980 statisticians were convinced of a trend.

In both census reports rural counties, especially in southern states were growing at a faster rate than urban counties as workers followed industry south and city people fought their way out of the river of population for the cheap land, safe neighborhoods, white schools and "psychic affluence" of the country life like salmon fighting upstream to spawn.

Roads already on the maps of city planners by the year 2000 will engulf towns now up to 40 miles from Houston--and that pattern is seen everywhere.

In such massive population undulation, land and houses in small towns become unattainable. Housing developments jerk pasture and cropland from production. Taxes rise to build new schools. Crime increases, as do alcohol and drug use. People lock their doors against neighbors they don't know.

All this change confronts the rural and small town church with the unrequested challenge of unlimited growth, of ministry opportunities they may only have dreamed about.

"The church has generally lost the leadership role in our day, but we have the potential to reclaim it," admits Ralph Halbrooks, director of the associational missions department for the Alabama Baptist Convention.

He says that too often, Southern Baptist churches are isolated to their own programs and are non-cooperative in the community. "We withdrew ourselves," he says. "We felt we could run our own show and let the rest of it go by the wayside. We didn't see the relationships."

David Ruesink, a rural life expert at Texas A&M University, College Station, says rural pastors are very involved and are essential to community development.

"We find in a number of communities the real sparkplug behind community improvement has been the church," says Ruesink, an active Presbyterian. "Development moves or doesn't move according to the way the pastor feels."

Steep Hollow Church in Bryan, Texas, where Frank Mathews is pastor, scratches at the urban fringe of Bryan/College Station. Within five to ten years, his church "will have totally changed" since more than 3,000 homes are planned virtually within sight of the church.

Like all rural-urban pastors who are racing to the head of the stampede rather than eating dust, Mathews follows community development enough to know what is going on where and when, how much it costs and what kind of people it will bring. He knows where the roads are going before shovels turn the first dirt and what zoning moves the city council plans.

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Mathews, who is studying the rural-urban transitional church for the doctor of ministries degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, says five or six churches in his 40-church association face the same kind of growth, as Steep Hollow.

To lead Steep Hollow from "rural church" to "growing rural church," Mathews must show his people a church can grow and still maintain a caring, loving relationship.

"I firmly believe the church holds its own destiny," Mathews says. "They can grow or they can stay like they are and have other churches grow up around them because they wouldn't meet the challenge."

Calvin Beale, census analyst and statistician for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, lists four basic reasons for population movement to rural areas, which buffets churches like Steep Hollow.

Beale, speaking in Georgia at a national symposium sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said: 1) People are not being displaced from rural industries and mining as they once were; 2) job alternatives in rural areas are growing; 3) more people are retiring to rural areas; and 4) more people are living where they want to live rather than where they can maximize their income.

Job seekers bring different ways of dress, accents, food, habits, songs, procedures, theology and outlook. And, in strange paradox, the more newcomers are attracted to the little rural church like the one they grew up with, the less the church remains that very ideal.

Ruesink says it is those who joined most recently that leave first when the little country church becomes larger than they like.

Robert B. Greene, director of the Resource Center for Small Churches in Luling, Texas, says, "Oldtimers will be lost in terms of knowing and caring for everybody in the church and knowing where they sit. It takes a very, very skillful pastor to handle that kind of maneuver, to keep the oldtimes and minister to newcomers. We don't often find those kinds of skilled ministers."

That's because ministers are caught on the cultural ladder and when they acquire the necessary skills, they're off to a bigger church. "Our whole culture works against a man having a small rural church pastorate as a vocation," says Greene.

In a paradox that often leads to adjustment problems, the pastors most often called on to lead rural churches are themselves more and more products of the city.

Ruesink chairs a subcommittee for a Religion Life council to study models for continuing education for these ministers to help them overcome culture shock going into the small town church.

Culture shock comes in several forms, including pace and the drastic economic swings of a community centered on one industry, such as agriculture or oil. When one of them goes down, the community itself changes cycle. Banks, grocery stores, hardware, implements and the church all experience a letdown.

Another shock can be the reluctance of a rural church, where nearly everyone is related, to accept a pastor and his family as their own. Getting to know the church members often is like a newlywed getting to know his in-laws.

The pastor's family may "suffer" with the inconvenience of limited shopping, entertainment and cultural events in a rural setting. Often it is a wife's resentment at serving a small rural church that forces the pastor to look elsewhere.

Leaders at the Georgia symposium said churches ought to be involved in the process of shaping the inevitable change caused by population shift to the rural South and should seek to mold community change in the image of Christ rather than following behind it.