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Descendant of Confucius: 'I Have to Preach Jesus'

By Bill Webb

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A lot of people in Taiwan think Baptist pastor Paul Fan-pei Kung is a little strange.

Why would a man who can claim to be a 74th generation descendant of the great Confucius preach the gospel of Jesus Christ instead of the teachings of his ancestor, the most revered of Chinese philosophers and teachers?

"Yes, Confucius was a very good man," Kung tells them politely, "but he could not save people. So I cannot preach Confucius. I have to preach Jesus.

"Many of our Chinese are very superstitious," he explained during a visit to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board offices in Richmond, Va. "They believe in Buddhism, animism and one of a hundred different kinds of religion. They just don't know the true God."

But that situation is changing, due in part to Bold Mission Taiwan, a three-year evangelism partnership involving Chinese Baptists and Missouri Baptists. The partnership climaxed in September with crusades across Taiwan in which professions of faith numbered nearly 2,300, roughly one for every five Baptists in the island country.

Kung, 61, chairman of the Chinese Baptist Convention and of Bold Mission Taiwan, visit d the United States at the invitation of Missouri Baptists.

He and missionaries feel the partnership has helped Chinese Baptists turn the corner in active evangelization of Taiwan, particularly in providing successful models for cooperation.

"It has given us a vision of the strength that working together can have," said Kung. "We have seen the strength of the Missouri convention. We have seen the strength of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Baptists in Taiwan have their own convention but churches haven't always seen it as integral to training and evangelism at the local level.

"We are instituting a number of changes in our procedures, our officers, our policies and in the way we relate to the (Taiwan Baptist) mission," Kung said. (The mission is the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in Taiwan.)

Kung also credits the partnership with exciting the Chinese Christians about personal witnessing. Before, isolated groups and churches were active in personal evangelism. During the crusades, nearly all the churches had members out visiting with Missouri Baptists.

"People have experienced it (personal witnessing). They've been successful. They've seen results. That is what has been exciting to the Christians in Taiwan," Kung said. "They are more than encouraged. They are alive."

Though the partnership has been completed, the Chinese convention has ambitious plans for the next three years.

Next year will be devoted to follow-up and discipleship training of the crusade converts as well as existing members. That training will set the stage for 1985, when the emphasis will be one-to-one evangelism.

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"In 1986 our goal will be summed up in the motto, 'Living for Jesus'," Kung explained. The events of that year will lead to revival services throughout Taiwan in September in celebration of 150 years of Baptist witness in China.

The convention hopes to establish 15 new churches, 30 missions and 300 groups in homes en route to winning 5,000 persons to Christ during the three-year span, Kung said. The convention's immediate goal is to conserve the impressive results of the September meetings.

"One of our problems in follow-up has been that a number of people who accepted Christ live in areas which have no Baptist church," Kung said. Committed Christians are assigned to those people and stay in touch by writing, then sending materials, phoning, visiting and enrolling them in correspondence study. "We hope that out of this, where there are people who are new Christians, new churches will be established," he explained.

Baptists have to be particularly sensitive in their follow-up because many parents who adhere to other religions, such as Buddhism, have discounsed their children for becoming Christians.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press on Nov. 1

October Cooperative Program Breaks \$8 Million Barrier

Baptist Press 11/8/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--It was a record fiscal year start for the national Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.

October contributions to the unified giving program to underwrite worldwide mission and educational programs of the SBC totaled \$8,638,255. It was the first time October gifts exceeded the \$8 million mark.

The figure reflected an increase of 8.35 percent (\$665,995) over October 1982.

Requirements for the 1983-84 budget call for monthly average contributions from the 34 state conventions of \$9,541,666 to reach the basic operating budget of \$114,500,000 and \$10,416,666 to underwrite the combined challenge and basic budget of \$125,000,000.

The top 10 state conventions in gifts to the national Cooperative Program for October were: Texas, \$1,494,760; Georgia, \$723,244; North Carolina, \$636,949; Florida, \$606,391; Alabama, \$589,510; Oklahoma, \$585,056; Tennessee, \$518,036; South Carolina, \$515,656; Kentucky, \$405,000, and Louisiana, \$370,745.

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WMU Employs Video Specialist

Baptist Press 11/8/83

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Stan Hill has assumed the newly created role of video specialist at Woman's Missionary Union, auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

He will be creative director in the development, production and evaluation of all WMU video taping. He will also manage the proposed production studio and equipment in WMU's new headquarters building.

Hill holds a master of religious education degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a bachelor's degree in communications from Southern Illinois University.

In undergraduate school, he worked in the Southern Illinois University television station. He later began his own production company, Video Media Productions, in Statesboro, Ga., and contracted to do news and commercial productions for WJCL-TV in Savannah, Ga., and also programmed a community channel on Statesboro CATV 16 hours per week.

In two churches he designed and produced videotapes for leader training and in one designed a studio where he produced educational videotapes and cable cast church services.

Hill was co-producer and writer for "Pockets of Candlelight," recently telecast on eight Alabama television stations. For the 150th anniversary of the Birmingham Baptist Association, Hill produced and wrote the videotape, "A Family of Churches."

He comes to WMU from Woodlawn Baptist Church in Birmingham, where he is interim minister of education.

Hill was interim minister of education at Calvary Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, Ala. He has been minister of education and youth at First Baptist Church, Statesboro, Ga., and also at Memorial Church, Savannah, Ga. He was associate pastor of education and administration at First Baptist Church, Birmingham, for five years.

A native of Marion, Ill., Hill and his wife, Judy, have a daughter and a son. --30--

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Woman's Missionary Union

Marine Class Devastated Beirut Suicide Attack

By Lee Hollaway

Baptist Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Five Marines and a Navy corpsman, who had completed a Seminary Extension course in Biblical Backgrounds in September, were among the more than 200 Marine and Navy personnel killed in the Oct. 24 suicide bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut.

Two other Marines, as well as the Navy chaplain who organized the study, were wounded.

The 10 military personnel had signed up for the course to gain new insight into the land in which they were serving. Following completion of the course, Chaplain Danny G. Wheeler, a Lutheran, expressed pride in the entire class: "My students deserve a lot of credit for their diligence under fire to keep up the work."

What began as a group study situation shifted to individual study after shelling and rocket bursts repeatedly interrupted the class. Wheeler met with the students individually after that to go over assignments and administer tests.

Wheeler submitted final grades to the Seminary Extension Department in Nashville, Tenn., Sept. 18, slightly more than two months after the course began and a month before the fatal attack on the Marine barracks.

According to official reports, listed as killed in action were Brett A. Croft, Lakeland, Fla.; Steven M. Forrester, Jacksonville, N.C.; William B. Foster, Richmond, Va.; William R. Gaines Jr., Port Charlotte, Fla.; George M. Gangur, Cleveland, Ohio, and Val S. Lewis, Atlanta. Wounded were Paul P. Rivers, Brooklyn, N.Y., and Terance J. Valore, Slickville, Pa.

Seminary Extension is a ministry education system of the Seminary External Education Division, jointly sponsored by all six Southern Baptist seminaries.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story, "Women Deacons, Controversy Not New In Baptist Churches," mailed 11-1-83, please delete 8th graf.

Dallas, First, Pledges
 \$10 Million To 1984 Budget

By Helen Parmley

DALLAS (BP) -- First Baptist Church of Dallas hit a milestone in its history Nov. 6 when the 26,000-member congregation pledged more than \$10 million to the church's 1984 budget.

In September, a \$9.3 million was approved, "but when the talley was completed after the Sunday morning service, we had counted pledges totaling \$10.3 million for our 1984 giving," said Dallas businessman Dick Clements, who spearheaded the "Victory Sunday" campaign.

Church officials said \$400,000 more in pledges was received during the evening service bringing the total budget to \$10.7 million.

Records kept by several national religious organizations indicate the budget is the largest ever adopted by a U.S. church.

The church's pastor, W.A. Criswell, called it a "God glorifying budget."
--30-(Parmley is religion editor for the Dallas Morning News.)

China's Great Hall Of The People Hosts Centurymen At Rare Banquet Baptist Press 11/8/83

BEIJING, China (BP)--In an unusual display of hospitality and honor, the Centurymen, a 100-voice men's chorus, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, were given a banquet in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Nov. 3.

Leaders of the music community and travel exchange community in this capital city were hosts for the banquet in appreciation for the Centurymen's performances. The singing group consists of choral conductors from Baptist churches in 30 states in America.

The Great Hall, meeting place of the Congress of the People's Republic of China, is reserved for receiving the highest dignitaries. It was where Richard Nixon was honored, inaugurating normalization of relations between the United States and China. Banquets honoring Presidents Ford and Carter were also held in the Great Hall. For a Christian group such as the Centurymen to be received there was even more unusual.

Sponsors of the event were Yen Liang-Kun, director of the Philharmonic Society of Beijing; Wu Zi-Qiang, director and president of the China Conservatory of Music, Beijing; Yan Vh ng, associate president of the China Conservatory of Music; Gao Zhen-Gong, head of the Beijing office of the China Travel Service, and representatives of the Ministry of Cultural and the Radio and Television Ministry.

Welcoming the groups to the banquet, Wu Zi-Qiang said choral singing was a relatively new expression of music in China and the Chinese musicians were eager to learn developments during the exchange with the Centurymen.

"The musicians of China have demonstrated a professionalism and skill in choral music which is highly appreciated by the Centurymen," said Jimmy R. Allen, president of the Radio and Television Commission, in response. "This exchange is proving beneficial to both of us."

The Centurymen sang with the Philharmonic Society of Beijing Thursday morning. Each group sang music from their countries, with the Centurymen's contribution including Christian music. The groups jointly performed a composition by Buryl Red, director of the Centurymen, and Patricia Costa, music arranger for the group, called "Ode to Music."

Next stop on the China tour was a performance at the Central Conservatory of Music Friday, Nov. 4. The Central Conservatory is noted for sending competitors to international music competitions.

Wes'Ellis Elected New York President

ENDICOTT, N.Y. (BP)--Wes Ellis, pastor of Vassar Road Baptist Church, Poughkeepsie, N.Y., was elected to a second term as president and Mike Cloer, pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church, Potsdam, N.Y., was chosen chairman of a newly elected executive board at the 14th annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of New York.

The mood of the convention was one of harmony and celebration as the messengers committed themselves to continue reaching out to the 26 million people in the territory of the convention which encompasses all of New York state, northern New Jersey and part of Connecticut.

The focal point of the convention was the recognition of R. Quinn Pugh as executive director-treasurer elect of the Baptist Convention of New York. Pugh was elected Oct. 24 by the executive board of the BCNY and will assume the position Feb. 1, 1984.

Pugh, executive director of Metropolitan New York Baptist Association since 1979, also was pastor of the Bergen Baptist Church, Waldwick, N.J., for 10 years. He was involved in the formation of both Metropolitan New York Association and the BCNY and earlier worked with churches in Maryland, Georgia, Kentucky and Louisiana.

In other business the convention adopted a budget of \$1,961,844 with 22 percent (the same as last year) of Cooperative Program gifts going to national SBC causes through the Cooperative Program. Local congregations will provide \$423,718 of the budget with the remainder coming from national SBC agencies, primarily the Home Mission Board.

The 1984 meeting celebrating the 15th anniversary of the convention will be Nov. 1-3, 1984 in Syracuse, N.Y.

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Pennsylvania-South Jersey Okays Capital Fund Campaign Baptist Press

PAOLI, Pa. (BP)--Messengers to the 13th annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey meeting in Paoli, Pa., Nov. 3-5, voted to enter into a capital fund campaign to purchase a convention office building in Harrisburg.

The recommendation was on a feasibility study done by the Stewardship Commission. Plans called for the formation of a campaign steering committee to begin work early in 1984.

Messengers also approved a resolution on Spiritual Awakening, calling on churches to set aside one day each month to pray for spiritual awakening and undergird plans for simultaneous evangelistic events throughout the northeastern United States in April and May of 1984.

A budget of \$1,656,779 was approved. Member churches of the convention are expected to provide eight percent of that amount with the remainder coming from national Southern Baptist Convention agencies, primarily the Home Mission Board.

For the third consecutive year the Pennsylvania-South Jersey convention will send 26.5 percent of its budget receipts to the national Cooperative Program of the SBC.

Clyde Risen, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wrightstown, N.J., was elected president. Next year's meeting will be Nov. 1-3 in Gettysburg, Pa.

Illinois Seats Church With Woman As Pastor

MT. VERNON, Ill. (BP) -- For the first time in its history, the Illinois Baptist State Association seated messengers from a church with a woman pastor.

At the 77th annual session at Logan Street Baptist Church, messengers also adopted the largest budget in history, increased by a half of one percent Cooperative Program funds going for world causes outside Illinois, acted on the future of a student center at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and authorized a two-year study of a Baptist retirement center.

Don Sharp, pastor of Faith Tabernacle Baptist Church in Chicago, and the first black president in the history of IBSA, was reelected to a second one-year term.

An estimated 1,512 persons attended the opening session, overflowing the 700-seat church auditorium, anticipating action on seating messengers from Cornell Avenue Baptist Church of Chicago, which this summer called Susan Wright as pastor.

Cornell Avenue's messengers were challenged by James R. Mathenia, pastor of Lockport Missionary Baptist Church, who claimed the church committed scriptural heresy by employing a woman pastor.

Sharp ruled the challenge out of order, citing the IBSA constitution does not deny seating to such churches and saying the Baptist Faith and Message statement takes no position on the issue.

By a secret ballot, messengers upheld Sharp's ruling 509 to 189.

After the vote, Wright said: "I'm grateful the matter was resolved. However, I was pretty well reconciled, whichever way it went...."

Wright, believed to be the first woman to serve as pastor of a Southern Baptist church in Illinois, added: "I knew our congregation would go on with its work, regardless. Our church has never looked back, or questioned whether we made a mistake."

Hill Hammock, a messenger from Cornell Avenue, told the Illinois Baptist: "We knew not all Southern Baptist churches would approve, but we called her as our pastor not expecting everyone to agree. We called her out of our autonomy, and that's the way we wanted the issue decided here."

Mathenia told the Illinois Baptist he was "disappointed and hurt when we took a stand against what to me is an apparent teaching of the Bible. However, we must abide by...what the body decides."

Later, a motion presented by Dennis Cress, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church of North Chicago, was adopted with little opposition. It noted the action to seat Cornell Avenue messengers "does not reflect a statement of biblical interpretation, but only a statement of the constitutionality of the seating of messengers."

David Bethel, pastor of Westview Baptist Chapel in Joliet, attempted to introduce a resolution which would put the convention on record as taking a firmer stand against the ordination and employment of women as pastors.

Messengers, however, by a 182 to 173 ballot, adopted a substitute resolution offered by former IBSA president Wendell Garrison, pastor of Winstanley Baptist Church, Fairview Heights.

Garrison's substitute noted messengers recognize the disagreement..."that reflects honest differences of interpretations of the scripture," but encouraged Baptists "to demonstrate a spirit of conciliation as we all continue to seek a better understanding of God's word."

It also encouraged IBSA churches "to continue to explore further opportunities of service for Baptist women, insuring maximum utilization of all God-called servants of Christ while at the same time maintaining faithfulness to scriptural principles."

Messengers adopted a record Cooperative Program goal for 1984 of \$4,259,000. Of this amount, 42.5 percent will be shared with world causes, up from 42 percent last year. Anticipated income from other sources pushed the total 1984 budget to \$5,588,686.

Another issue confronting messengers was the Baptist Student Center, a 297-bed living center near the campus of SIU-Carbondale, which also includes a cafeteria, small library, classrooms and offices.

The center--once known as The Baptist Foundation and subsequently as the Southern Illinois College of Bible--had a decline in residents and has been unable to meet indebtedness and operating expenses. Deficits are near \$500,000.

Although the center continues to be open for BSU-related programs, the dormitory and cafeteria have been closed. IBSA directors previously voted to reopen the center in the fall of 1984 if by Jan. 1, 1984, the center had not been sold or leased.

Although the issue was not on the agenda, it surfaced when a motion was made that the board be instructed to reestablish a program of Bible teaching at the center, that the center be kept open under Baptist ownership for the purpose for which it was built and that the board modify the 1984 budget, as needed, to implement such actions.

A substitute motion was adopted affirming confidence in the IBSA board "as they continue to deal with this sensitive issue." The motion also had the effect of "overriding" previous action, taking the center off the market immediately and insuring it will reopen in the fall of 1984. This action left open the future of the center after June of 1986, should it not attract the needed residents.

Messengers also requested a two-year feasibility study of a home for the aged. The board is to report at the 1985 state convention.

Messengers also adopted 17 resolutions, including a statement on church autonomy which encouraged churches to "resist those that would pressure us to conformity of belief or conformity to law."

Another resolution affirmed "opposition to all forms of direct or indirect public aid to any school maintained or sponsored by a religious institution."

The 1984 IBSA annual meeting will be Oct. 30-Nov. 1, in Peoria.

New England Constitutes
Into State Convention

Baptist Press 11/8/83

NORTHBOROUGH, Mass. (BP) -- The Baptist Convention of New England was created Nov. 4-5, the second state convention to be added to the Southern Baptist Convention this fall.

The convention, formerly known as the Baptist General Association of New England, has been operating as a convention for three years but decided to wait until 1983 to formally constitute since this year is the 200th anniversary of the birth of pioneer Baptist mission leader Luther Rice.

The new convention has 78 churches and 36 missions/chapels and a membership in excess of 13,000 according to executive director James Currin. The convention covers the six New England states—Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

David Dean, pastor of First Baptist Church of Sudbury, Mass., was elected the first president of the convention. He was president of the association last year.

The 198 messengers adopted a budget of \$1,433,441, of which \$325,844 will be contributed by member congregations. The remainder will come from national Southern Baptist Conv ntion agencies, primarily the Home Mission Board.

For the third consecutive year, the New England Southern Baptist churches will send 20 percent of their convention contributions to the national Cooperative Program of the SBC.

Numerous Southern Baptist Convention leaders were on hand for the ceremonies launching the new convention, including SBC President James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, who delivered the charge to the convention, and Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC's Executive Committee, who led the dedication prayer.

Other officers elected were: Charles Conley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Manchester, Conn., first vice president, and Mark Smith, pastor of Fairfield (Conn.) Baptist Church, second vice president.

Meetings were held in the Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church and Trinity Church, both in Northborough. The 1984 meeting will be at First Baptist Church in Manchester, Conn.

Wyoming organized into a state convention last month.

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Indians Lose Bid To Stop
Development of Sacred Site

By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press 11/8/83

WASHINGTON (BP) -- Several tribes of Sioux and Cheyenne Indians lost a legal bid to halt development of a South Dakota state park they consider sacred to their religions when the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear their challenge.

The Nov. 7 action by the high court leaves in place rulings by two lower federal tribunals, the effect of which will be to allow South Dakota to continue developing Bear Butte State Park in the Black Hills for tourism and recreational camping.

Sioux and Cheyenne tribes, practicing the religions of Lakota and Tsistsistas respectively, had sought to stop the development, begun several years ago. They also sought exemptions from required use permits to a sacred ceremonial site, removal of all previously constructed roads, parking lots and buildings and more than \$1 million in damages. They lost on every count in both lower courts.

In their written appeal asking the nation's high court to review the decisions, attorneys for the tribes argued the Bear Butte site "has always been central and indispensable to the major ceremonies of the life cycle and the seasonal cycle." They concluded, "Bear Butte is both Jerusalem and Sinai to the Sioux and Cheyenne."

Further, the argument went, "(we) strenuously object to the idea religious freedom can be sacrificed in the name of historical or cultural preservation. It cannot be an appropriate exercise of public authority...to make a public zoo out of a people's church."

South Dakota's assistant attorney general Mikal Hanson said the state's development of the park came after the legal purchase of the area and that special efforts had been made to accommodate the religious needs of the affected Indian tribes. The latter failed to prove, Hanson argued, the state action denied them the free exercise of religion.

Joining the tribes in their unsuccessful appeal to the high court were several religious denominations, including the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the United Church of Christ, the Episcopal Church and the Unitarian Universalist Church Association.

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Architects Sought For Alaska Projects Baptist Press 11/8/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--An appeal has been issued for architects to participate in a volunteer missions project to assist small churches in the Alaska Baptist Convention.

Licensed architects who have registration in Alaska, or who would be willing to obtain registration, are needed to provide basic line drawings and working plans for church facilities, according to Gwenn McCormick, secretary of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church architecture department.

Citing \$20,000 to \$30,000 as typical of local architectural service charges, John Allen, executive director of the Alaska Baptist Convention, said volunteer service by architects would mean substantial assistance to small churches. "We need basic line drawings and working plans for churches having 75 to 100 members," he said, expressing a hope for "designs of two or three basic first unit buildings that could be used time and time again."

Alaskan climate needs, such as arctic entry ways, special insulation factors and foundations acceptable for use on permafrost or gravel, make design needs for the state's church s distinctive, said Allen.

Persons interested in discussing Alaskan architectural mission opportunities may write to McCormick at the Baptist Sunday School Board, 127 Ninth Ave. N., Nashville, TN 37234, or may call him at (615) 251-2466.

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Midwestern Trustees Defend Professor Baptist Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) -- Faculty matters and routine business consumed much of the semiannual board of trustees meeting at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in October.

Trustees unanimously approved a report from their instructional committee concluding Midwestern professor G. Temp Sparkman "does not teach or advocate universalism, but rather he teaches in accordance with the seminary's statement of faith with reference to this matter."

Sparkman's doctrinal views were considered by trustees after a letter expressing concern was mailed to each trustee in June 1983 by a Kansas City layman, Dennis Sullivan.

The trustees also concluded Sparkman's emphases regarding the desirable age for a public profession of faith and believer's baptism, set forth in a recent book, are not contrary to but in accordance with the seminary's statement of faith "which does not specify and/or limit with respect to the traditional 'age of accountability' as practiced by Southern Baptists."

Sparkman, in his book, suggests the period of adolescence is the more desirable time for confronting young people with the need to make a public commitment to Jesus Christ through believer's baptism.

The trustee instructional committee concluded Sparkman's emphasis "constitutes one of several options" historically practiced by Baptists and "since it involves a sensitive and controversial area(s) may illicit opposition and/or criticism."

Nevertheless, it calls for "further discussion and study of an area in Southern Baptist life which need attention." The full board of trustees approved the instructional committee's findings at this point by a vote of 28 affirmative, one negative and one abstention.

The trustees unanimously approved a third recommendation that trustees and administration "remain sensitive and receptive to any additional concerns which may be expressed," with the understanding that any and all expressed concerns "be acknowledged and handled in accordance with established policy and procedure."

Trustees approved the retirement of two faculty members, V. Lavell Seats, professor of missions, and William H. Morton, professor of biblical archaeology. Following the Dec. 31 retirement from full-time teaching, both men will remain at Midwestern as senior professors.

Seats, a former missionary to Nigeria, and Morton, and well-known biblical archaeologist, have served at Midwestern since the seminary's beginning in 1958.

At a recognition dinner, trustees honored George D. Thomason, senior professor of New Testament and Greek, for 23 years of service. Thomason retired July 31, 1982, but was not then publically recognized because of ill health.

In addition, trustees passed resolutions recognizing M. Vernon Davis and Ronald L. Thayer, who served as trustees from 1979-1983. Davis, a former Virginia trustee, was elected as Midwestern professor of theology this summer. Thayer recently moved to Maryland because of a military transfer, ending his term as a Colorado trustee.

The board of trustees will meet again April 9-10, 1984, at Midwestern.