



BAPTIST PRESS

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83-186

Membership Tops 14 Million
Church Programs Show Gains

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The number of Southern Baptists will top 14 million in 1983 and all five church programs will show enrollment increases, according to 1983 statistical projections released for the denomination.

The only area predicted to decrease from last year is baptisms. A projected decrease of 3.7 percent, or 15,227 would make the total 396,327. This would be the first time baptisms have dropped below 400,000 since 1979.

Gains ranging from 1.7 percent to 7.5 percent are projected for Sunday school, church training, church music, Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union.

The amount of money reported for mission expenditures in 1983 exceeded \$500 million for the first time, with an increase of almost \$43 million, or 8.6 percent, bringing the projected 1983 total to nearly \$529 million.

Total receipts for the denomination had a matching 8.6 percent increase projected for 1983, making the new total more than \$3.38 billion. The percentage increases for mission expenditures and total receipts are lower than in previous years, but inflation also has been considerably lower than in the last few years.

Sunday school, the denomination's largest church program, is projected to have a 2.1 percent or 161,251 increase for 1983, which makes the total ongoing enrollment 7,839,855. This increase is the fourth consecutive increase for the Bible study program and the largest gain since 1976.

The projected church training increase of 2.4 percent, or 46,784, makes the total enrollment for the program 1.99 million. This also is the fourth consecutive increase for church training.

Church music enrollment is projected to increase for the 18th consecutive year. The music enrollment is predicted to go up by 1.7 percent, or 27,791, to a total of 1.66 million.

Ongoing enrollment for Woman's Missionary Union is projected to increase in 1983 by 2.3 percent, or 26,433, to a new total of 1,175,699. This is the fourth consecutive year for an increase in WMU enrollment.

Brotherhood enrollment is expected to increase by 7.5 percent in 1983, to a new total of 569,365, an increase of almost 40,000. This is the fifth gain in a row for Brotherhood and the largest increase since 1965. The form for reporting Brotherhood enrollment was changed this year to allow concurrent enrollment of persons in two or more of the four Baptist men's categories.

The church membership total for 1983 is predicted to reach 14,208,226, an increase of 1.5 percent, or more than 209,000. The only decrease in church membership in the Southern Baptist Convention in the last century was in 1926.

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Statistical projections for the denomination are based on information from 26,039 Uniform Church Letters which were among the earliest received in the research services department of the Sunday School Board. Normal statistical error could cause the projections to differ slightly in either direction. The final 1983 denominational statistics will be released in February 1984.

ESTIMATED 1983 SBC STATISTICS

	1982 Total	Estimated 1982-1983 % Change	Estimated 1982-1983 Numerical Change	Estimated 1983 Total
Baptisms	411,554	-3.7	-15,227	396,327
Church Membership	13,998,252	1.5	209,974	14,208,226
Ongoing Sunday School enrollment	7,678,604	2.1	161,251	7,839,855
Church Training enrollment	1,949,348	2.4	46,784	1,996,132
Ongoing Church Music enrollment	1,634,774	1.7	27,791	1,662,565
Ongoing WMU enrollment . .	1,149,266	2.3	26,433	1,175,699
Ongoing Brotherhood enrollment	529,642	7.5	39,723	569,365
Mission Expenditures . . \$	486,935,086	8.6	\$ 41,876,417	\$ 528,811,503
Total Receipts	\$3,117,387,150	8.6	\$268,095,295	\$3,385,482,445

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Evangelism Directors Plan
For Simultaneous Revivals

By Jim Newton

Baptist Press
12/7/83

BOSTON (BP)--Calling for a year of prayer and preparation in 1985, Southern Baptist evangelism directors launched plans for simultaneous revivals in 28,000 Southern Baptist churches in 1986.

Theme for the simultaneous meetings, scheduled March 16-April 27, 1986, will be "Good News America: God Loves You."

Plans for the campaign, in which local Southern Baptist churches in a given area hold revival meetings beginning and ending the same day, were outlined in detail during the national conference of Southern Baptist evangelism directors at the Sheraton Boston Hotel.

During the opening address, SBC Home Mission Board Evangelism Vice President Robert Hamblin called for the evangelism directors to make 1985 a year of prayer preceding the simultaneous effort.

"If we want to baptize 560,000 people in 1986, then 1985 must become a year of prayer for Southern Baptists," Hamblin said. "If we really pray for revival in 1985, our plans for evangelism will succeed. But it will never happen if we don't pray."

Southern Baptist Convention President James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas, announced he had already scheduled the simultaneous revival in his church, April 6-13, and had enlisted Johnny Jackson, a vocational evangelist from Little Rock, Ark., as his evangelist. Hamblin said Draper is one of the first pastors in the SBC to schedule and enlist an evangelist for the 1986 revivals.

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Richard Harris, director of the Home Mission Board's mass evangelism department, presented each state evangelism director a planning book for the 1986 campaign, describing the effort as "the most far-reaching, lifechanging simultaneous evangelistic effort Baptists have ever attempted."

Harris cited statistics indicating that the years when Southern Baptists held simultaneous revivals were the years when the number of SBC baptisms were the highest. Simultaneous revivals were held in 1950, 1951, 1955, 1959, 1964, and 1969, said Harris, and the record number of baptisms, 429,063, was in 1959.

Harris said each state convention would set its own dates for the simultaneous revivals, but most would take place March 16-April 6, or April 6-27, 1986.

Plans call for a mass media campaign before the revivals to make unchurched Americans aware of "Good News America: God Loves You."

Bill Nichols and Eddie Gilstrap of the SBC Radio and Television Commission told the evangelism directors how the ACTS television network would be used during the campaign in an effort to reach 40 million viewers. Estimated cost of the media campaign is \$11 million.

During the opening session, Cecil A. Ray, executive director of the SBC Planned Growth in Giving program, also scheduled in 1986, called for the evangelism directors to help increase SBC giving from \$3 billion to \$20 billion in 15 years.

"Southern Baptists have begun to count the cost of Bold Mission Thrust (the SBC effort to proclaim the gospel to the entire world by the year 2000), but unless we are willing to pay the price, it will remain forever a dream," Ray said.

Fred Roach, president of Centennial Homes in Dallas, warned the evangelism directors unless the goals of Planned Growth for Giving are reached, they would not be able to accomplish SBC evangelism goals. "Southern Baptists have the resources to do both."

Harry Piland, director of the Sunday school department, and Roy Edgemon, director of the church training department, told how the Sunday School Board and Home Mission Board are cooperating in an effort to train one million Sunday school teachers in evangelism.

The two boards have developed an evangelism training "module" which can be used over and over by SBC churches to train leaders in evangelism during 1986-1990, they said.

Sunday School Board President-elect Lloyd Elder, in another address, said the winning of America to Christ is waiting on the renewal of the denomination to Christ.

"Unless there is a renewal of spirit which permeates the whole denomination, we are not going to win this nation for Christ," Elder said.

Speaking on the conference theme, "Planning for Evangelism," Home Mission Board Planning Vice President Leonard Irwin said some Baptists have the wrong idea long range planning takes the place of the Holy Spirit.

"Planning does not predetermine the future, but it helps us deal with the future when we come to it," Irwin observed.

John Havlik, who retired from the HMB evangelism section last year, called for Baptists to develop a theology of evangelism, citing how Jesus used long-range planning methods of setting purposes, goals and action plans.

Another retired evangelism director, Leonard Sanderson of Louisiana, warned against only seeking to evangelize middle class Americans, saying Baptists had left to the Pentecostals the task of winning the poor and oppressed.

Carlos McLeod, evangelism director for Texas Baptists, offered a seven-point plan for developing a state strategy of evangelism, saying the best strategy is the one Jesus used.

McLeod concluded by urging Baptists to rely on God's power, saying "we've got the power that will make the atomic bomb look like a pebble in a boy's sling shot."

The conference closed with a plea from Sam Simpson, pastor of Bronx Baptist Church in New York, to mobilize a whole army of Baptist lay people to permeate the world with the gospel. "It can't be done by the professionals," Simpson warned. "It must be done by lay people who rub shoulders every day with the business world."

Neither can Baptists do it alone, said Simpson, president of the New York City Council of Churches. "If you try, you'll make more enemies than you make friends." He asked the evangelism directors to kneel and pray revival and renewal would begin with themselves.

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Student Actions Reflect
Missions Attitude

By Gail Rothwell

Baptist Press
12/7/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The number of churches, Sunday schools and missions started with the help of students involved in Southern Baptist campus ministry tripled during the past year, according to statistics from the annual Bold Mission Thrust report.

The statistics for the 1982-83 school year, reported by state convention student directors and compiled by national student ministries of the Baptist Sunday School Board, show students were instrumental in starting 96 new churches, Sunday schools or missions, as compared with 33 new starts in 1981-82.

Charles Johnson, NSM secretary, said students comprise one of Southern Baptists' greatest resources for starting new churches. "They seem to have a level of commitment and vitality which God keeps blessing," he said.

Of the 19 states recording churches, missions or Sunday schools started with the help of students, Missouri reported 13; Louisiana, 12; Arizona, 11, and Virginia, 10.

Statistics reflect an overall increase in mission work with the number of students involved in summer missions and other short-term missions projects rising to 8,919 from 5,388.

In addition, students contributed \$933,782 toward Southern Baptist mission projects.

Johnson noted student involvement in the local church has increased the last few years. "Churches are becoming more sensitized to the many contributions students can make," explained Johnson. "Increased awareness means more opportunities for student involvement."

Last year, of the 158,630 students involved in campus ministry in the United States, 118,368 were also enrolled in Sunday school in a local church. Churches recorded 5,497 student baptisms during the year.

Student participation in Bible study groups on campus continues to rise, increasing from 32,181 in 1981-82 to 35,684 last year.

A category added this year showed more than 10,100 students involved in some type of witness training during the year.

Also, 2,828 churches received some type of assistance in developing a ministry to students and 1,448 church workers with student responsibility received training in student ministry. The BMT report indicates student work relies heavily upon volunteer directors and workers.

Of the 20 campuses reporting student work in Colorado, 14 of the directors are either Mission Service Corps personnel or volunteer workers. In North Carolina, 37 of the 46 directors are volunteers and in Ohio 26 of the 29 positions are either Mission Service Corps or volunteer workers.

Overall, 377 student directors hold volunteer positions, in addition to 517 full-time and 171 part-time workers.

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Baptist Colleges Rank
High In National Survey

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Four Southern Baptist colleges and universities were among those chosen as the nation's best schools for undergraduate study, in a recent national survey of four-year college presidents.

U.S. News & World Report surveyed 1,308 presidents of senior colleges which offer liberal arts programs. A total of 662 chose five schools similar to his or her own institution.

The categories were national universities, national liberal arts colleges, regional liberal arts colleges, comprehensive universities and smaller comprehensive universities.

Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C.; Furman University, Greenville, S.C.; and the University of Richmond, Richmond, Va., were listed second, third and sixth respectively in the category of regional liberal arts colleges east of the Mississippi River.

Schools in this category offer liberal arts and professional programs but few if any Ph.D.'s. Bucknell University in Pennsylvania was named the top school in this area.

William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., tied for third in the category of comprehensive universities west of the Mississippi River. Colleges from this category offer liberal arts and at least one professional program. Willamette University in Oregon was the top-rated school in this group.

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Hughes Named
To Alabama Post

Baptist Press
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MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--James L. (Jim) Hughes, broadcast ministries consultant for the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, has been named director of communication services for the Alabama Baptist Convention.

Hughes, the first person to fill the newly created position, will develop, coordinate and administer activities related to Baptist TelNet and American Christian Television Service (ACTS) satellite networks, and the Southern Baptist Video Tape Service. He also will be Alabama Baptist Convention representative to the networks and will produce video programs for the Alabama Baptist Convention.

At the RTVC, Hughes was producer and consultant to churches, state conventions and associations in media ministries. He wrote and produced radio and television spots and programs, and consulted with Baptist entities and implemented plans for media promotion of campaigns, revivals and public relations activities.

Hughes directed budgeting, media selection and ad purchase for "Good News Alabama" and "Good News Missouri" media campaigns for the Alabama and Missouri Baptist conventions; and "Listen Now-Hear Forever" media campaigns for the Texas, California and Kentucky conventions.

Hughes was born in Montgomery, Ala., and grew up in Montgomery and Wetumpka, Ala. He is a graduate of Sidney Lanier High School, Montgomery, and attended the University of Alabama Extension Center, Montgomery.

Prior to going to the RTVC in 1972, he was general manager of KRRV, Sherman, Texas; and in sales and/or announcing at KRLD, KSKY and WFAA, Dallas, and WCOV, Montgomery, Ala.

He is a deacon, Sunday school teacher, choir member and publicity committee chairman at East Grand Baptist Church, Dallas.

His wife is the Former Cleo Shively of Dallas. They have three grown children.

Hughes begins his duties in Alabama Jan. 3.

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