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-- FEATURES

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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

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When They Spell Bible
In Uganda, It's POGUE

By Robert O'Brien

KAMPALA, Uganda (BP)--Russell and Imogene Pogue probably saw more Bibles in one year in Uganda than in the nearly 40 years he spent as pastor of several Texas Baptist churches.

"I saw some versions I didn't even know existed," declared the 64-year-old Pogue, who retired and went with his wife to Uganda as a Southern Baptist Mission Service Corps worker.

At least 60,000 Bibles flowed through the Pogues' hands during their tour of duty, but that did little more than whet the appetites of book-hungry Ugandans. An American Bible Society report said churches in the economically distressed nation need over 500,000 Bibles.

"It was nothing to pass out 1,000 Bibles in one day," said Pogue, who was pastor of the Kampala Baptist Church. "We could have given full time to Bible distribution and not wasted our time one bit."

That's not all the Pogues did by any means. Besides duties at the church, they personally led eight of the church's 28 weekly lunch-hour Bible studies around town and did many other things to help the personnel-strapped Baptist Mission of Uganda.

But they and their colleagues in Uganda attracted the most attention with their Bible study sessions and Bible distribution program. "The Bible means everything to those people," Pogue said. "For many of them, it's the only book they have in their house."

Many of the Bibles, both new and used, were donated through a foundation in Florida. The Foreign Mission Board provided funds for thousands of others.

"Ugandans got a variety of Bibles in the shipments," said Pogue. "For example, many old Bibles came through which had center reference study and concordances. I've taught many Ugandans how to use those Bibles for study. Many had read the Bible and could quote from it. I tried to help them learn to study and inter-relate Scriptures."

"As they studied God's Word and came to Jesus Christ, I could see a new openness in their lives and changes in their conduct. More than this, I could see a real interest developing in studying God's Word."

The Pogues and their colleagues distributed Bibles across Uganda at military and police roadblocks, on campuses, in schoolrooms, at police barracks, in prisons, in homes, in business offices, on city street corners, at the Baptist Center in Kampala, in villages, at Bible study group meetings, in churches, in hospitals, in doctors' offices and even on Uganda President Milton Obote's back porch.

"One day I was walking around the neighborhood where President Obote lives, passing out New Testaments," Pogue recalled. "A heavily armed soldier on Obote's back porch called out, 'Come up here, sir. I can't leave. I want a Bible.'"

The donated Bibles, many with personal memorabilia still between their leaves, came in all versions--from the most modern ones to such relics as "The Student's Chronological New Testament," published in 1904 by A.T. Robertson, and a New Testament translation by Olaf M. Norlie with an 800-word vocabulary.

They came in all formats, such as Bibles for nurses, soldiers' New Testaments with bulletproof covers, big print editions, Bibles for children, Masonic Bibles, Greek Interlinear Bibles, and a variety of versions, marked and annotated special usage Bibles, parallel editions, Bible study books, handbooks, study Bibles, commentaries and storybooks.

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The Pogues distributed versions ranging from King James to Revised Standard to Good News to Living to Phillips to New American Standard to Moffat to New English to whatever. They inserted a gospel tract and an enrollment card for the Baptist Mission's Bible Way Correspondence School in each Bible.

But they didn't distribute Bibles unacceptable to most of evangelical Christianity such as the few New World translations of the Watchtower Society (Jehovah's Witness) and Douay Bibles with Apocrypha (Roman Catholic) which turned up in shipments.

They made a special effort to help pastors, Bible teachers and scholars, ministerial hopefuls and other serious Bible students who couldn't find enough study material in Uganda. The bookshop run by the Baptist Mission of Uganda in Kampala has been launched to bring in such materials, but it's one of the few places in Uganda making that attempt.

For that reason the Pogues reserved as many Greek Interlinears, Bibles with concordances, chain reference bibles, study Bibles, handbooks and commentaries as possible to give to pastors, teachers and serious Bible students.

The Pogues' Bible study groups, which ranged from 10 people crammed into a Subaru on a parking lot to a group in an office, struck a widely responsive chord. But they discovered not enough trained teachers were available.

One young man said to Pogue, "Preacher, I'm taking notes on what you say in our Friday group because on Mondays I go to a button factory during lunch to lead a Bible study from what you have told me."

The young man wasn't yet a Christian, but the Bible study group had stirred him to want to pass on what he had heard. Pogue found a Kampala Baptist Church member to help him. Not long after that the young man accepted Jesus Christ as his savior.

The Pogues, graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, trained a group of church members to assume their Bible study groups when they left. But that only scratched the surface of the hunger for God's Word among Uganda's 13.8 million people.

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

Brazilian Woman Dies After
Mission Truck Accident

Baptist Press
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JAGUAQUARA, Brazil (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Jerry Smyth accidentally backed his pickup truck over a Brazilian woman Dec. 21. The woman, who had 12 children, died Dec. 23.

The accident occurred on a farm in Jaguaquara managed by Smyth, 57, a Texan and 30-year mission veteran. The woman was gathering tomatoes with other workers when she was struck.

No immediate legal action was taken by the woman's family, according to Thurmon Bryant, Foreign Mission Board director for eastern South America. Smyth will appear in a Brazilian court in March to give a deposition related to the accident.

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Southern Baptist Pastors
Improving By Degrees

By Lonnie Wilkey

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12/28/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--More Southern Baptist pastors are receiving degrees at various educational levels than ever before, according to a 1983 study on the educational attainment of Southern Baptist pastors.

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The study, conducted by the Southern Baptist Convention's Education Commission and Home Mission Board, included information on 17,220 pastors in 556 associations. It follows a similar study done in 1973.

The largest increase in educational attainment occurred in pastors completing seminary or postgraduate degrees. The study revealed 43.2 percent hold postcollege degrees, an increase of almost seven percent from 1973. College graduates who became Baptist pastors rose from 12 percent in 1973 to 13.5 percent in 1983.

A negative finding of the study was, of the pastors attending college, only 52 percent attending Southern Baptist school. This figure dropped 20 percent in 10 years.

Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director/treasurer of the SBC Education Commission, attributed the drop to two factors.

"The decrease reflects a sense of lack of importance of the value of Baptist colleges by many Southern Baptists. It also reflects the growing number of Southern Baptist churches in states which do not have a Baptist college," he said.

Despite the fewer number of pastors attending Baptist colleges, the percentage of pastors attending a Southern Baptist seminary remained stable at 94 percent.

Increases were also shown in the number of pastors completing high school--up 14.9 percent-- and those completing Bible schools or institutes--up 6.2 percent.

Other findings from the study revealed Southern Baptist pastors tend to be between the ages of 30 and 60, and of those surveyed, 29 percent are bivocational.

The complete study will be available from the Education Commission in late January.

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President of Brazil Turns
TV Station Over to Baptists

Baptist Press
12/28/83

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--Brazilian President Joao Figueiredo has signed over a television broadcasting license worth \$1.5 million to a production company formed by Baptist evangelist Nilson Fanini.

The license gives Fanini's company, Television Ebenezer Limited, control of an inactive television station in Rio de Janeiro formerly run by the Roman Catholic Church. The station can reach 40 million TV watchers in southern Brazil and with expanded facilities could reach the nation's entire television audience.

Fanini has two years to raise \$5 million to equip the defunct station or he loses the license. Though raising that amount in the ailing Brazilian economy will be difficult, he believes he can find investors. "Television is big business in Brazil," Fanini said in a December telephone interview. He hopes to begin broadcasting in 1984.

"This is a tremendous, wide open door for evangelism," Fanini said. "It must be Christian television, for preaching the gospel." Besides preaching, Fanini said he wants to program "Christian soap operas, drama, news and everything." He intends to seek production advice from the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission and the Foreign Mission Board.

Sometimes called the Billy Graham of Brazil, the nationally famous evangelist and pastor already reaches an estimated 45 million people through his weekly broadcasts, syndicated on 152 television and radio stations.

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The presidential decree giving the station to Fanini's company aroused controversy in the Brazilian media. "All the papers, all the magazines are wondering why the president did that. We are a Catholic country, but he gave it to us," said the evangelist. The Roman Catholic Church "protested hardily," he said. Catholic authorities operated the station before it went off the air some 10 years ago.

Fanini has developed a personal friendship with President Figueiredo in recent years, preaching several times at the presidential palace. In 1982, during centennial celebrations of Baptist work in Brazil, Figueiredo spoke at a mammoth rally organized by Fanini at a Rio soccer stadium. He praised Baptists and called the Christian gospel the solution for Brazil.

Arolde de Oliveira, a federal congressman and member of Fanini's church in Niterort, also played a major role in obtaining the license for Television Ebenezer. Fanini and Arolde were scheduled to accept the license at an official ceremony in Brasilia Jan. 10.

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Music Missions Need
Said At Crisis Level

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
12/28/83

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The need for musicians in Southern Baptist new work areas is at a crisis level, David Bunch, Mission Service Corps (MSC) director for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, told the state music secretaries and associates here in December.

Of the 550 active MSC volunteers across the United States, there are three full-time musicians, Bunch reported. "Literally, if I had 100 music leaders to volunteer, I could place them now," he added.

Bunch called on state music leaders to "help us enlist full-time church musicians that will go, serve and pay their own way and to help us to decipher and determine which of the requests are most needed."

Observing "it's a unique individual who will hear the Lord's call and pay his own way," Bunch offered the testimonies of three experienced volunteers to emphasize specific needs for small churches.

"The Lord calls you to obey first and then gives you the faith to do it," said David Brazzeal, an MSC music volunteer in the Puget Sound (Wash.) Association.

A native Georgian, Brazzeal obtained financial support through four churches, three Woman's Missionary Unions, three Sunday school classes and 27 individuals.

In the cities of Seattle, Everett, Tacoma and Olympia, Brazzeal discovered a lack of trained leadership, a lack of money for music, instruments and staff and a lack of adequate pianists.

To help meet needs, he is establishing a music library, teaching study course books, leading choirs in music reading classes and holding retreats for youth choirs. Other efforts include helping interim music leaders hold choirs together in the absence of full-time directors, arranging visits by short-term music missionaries, organizing associational choirs, leading Baptist Student Union ensembles at the University of Washington and writing music for small choirs.

In many churches, he is discovering the need to teach the meanings of musical terms, adding that choir members seem thrilled to understand sheet music markings they had not known before.

Lois and Ron Swafford, MSC music volunteers for three years, said their work in California, Arizona and Colorado was with many churches of 30 to 40 members.

"What a need these churches have in the field of music," said Ron Swafford. "I've seen the growth of a church stifled because of lack of support for a music program."

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The Swaffords' efforts included teaching persons how to direct music and how to enliven worship services through music, working with teenagers in singing, helping pastors to seek out and train music leaders, organizing age-level choirs and conducting choir rehearsals and music clinics.

Lcis Swafford noted "we became a part of every church where we worked, and were blessed to see people accept Christ.

"I've seen the need," she said, "and I've been a part of the solution. Isn't that what the Christian life is all about?"

Wesley Forbes, secretary of the Sunday School Board's church music department, said, "Bold Mission Thrust can't be accomplished by the church music department or by the state workers. "Fulfillment has to come through persons making a commitment of parts of their lives serving where th need is greatest."

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Alabama Brotherhood
Consultant Dies

Baptist Press
12/28/83

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--Jim Bethea, 55, consultant Brotherhood Department, Alabama Baptist State Convention, died Dec. 20 of a heart attack.

A native of Birmingham, Bethea had directed the Royal Ambassador boy's mission work for Alabama Baptists for 11 years and was director of the Alabama Baptist boy's camp at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly, Talladega.

Bethea is a graduate of Samford University, Birmingham, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

He is survived by his wife, Peggy, of Montgomery; sons, David, of Montgomery; Terry, of Tuscaloosa; Tim, of Birmingham, and father, A.J. Bethea Sr., of Birmingham.

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