

(BP)

New Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

-- FEATUERS

produced by Baptist Press *

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

April 16, 1984

84-59

Senior Adult Brown
Ministers To Peers

By Gail Rothwell

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. (BP)--Hayward Brown's zeal for learning and living would never betray the fact he will be 86 this October.

Brown, a member of First Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Ky., is credited with starting the church's Senior Adult Fellowship (SAF) in 1972, a program now considered among the best in the state.

His resolve to begin a ministry to senior adults began some 30 years earlier when he was working as a counselor for Western State Hospital, Hopkinsville, Ky. "I would see patients, mostly senior adults, literally rocking away their lives," he explained. "I promised myself I would do something about that if and when I could."

Brown never forgot his promise and the opportunity came in 1982 when he and his late wife, Zella, founded the SAF--a program which now ministers to some 200 persons each month.

Brown's many years as a counselor and teacher are reflected in the quality of programs he has advocated and organized. The monthly luncheon programs feature denominational representatives, government employees, doctors, social workers and others.

"We need to give senior adults answers to questions about the aging process. Also, we strive to make them feel a part of the church and denomination," Brown said.

Weekday activities include classes in ceramics, weaving, quilting and exercise. The group has made efforts to visit and support the work of Baptists throughout Kentucky and regularly collects clothing for needy causes.

Trips, ranging from one-day to ten-day excursions, are a favorite activity of most members. Trips planned for 1984 include the Southern Baptist Convention in Kansas City, Mo., and a senior adult Chataqua in September at Glorieta, N.M.

Brown believes the success of any senior adult ministry depends on the support of the church leadership. "Just keep encouraging your senior adults to be active church members until the leadership recognizes their gifts and talents," he advised.

He cautioned churches against thinking senior adults don't want to be bothered just because they are older. "Churches need to learn to give them something to do." He explained programs must promote a sense of self-worth, be informational, and most of all, assure senior adults of God's continuing love.

One of the greatest needs met by a senior adult ministry is the opportunity for adults to "fellowship" together, Brown believes. "Often senior adults spend a great deal of time at home--alone," Brown said. "The opportunity to get together and share time and ideas is important."

Tom Baker, associate minister of youth and activities, who is responsible for coordinating the senior adult ministry at FBC, said the reason most churches do not have an organized senior adult group is because of their lack of awareness of what senior adults can do. "The SAF's volunteer contributions and willingness to serve are invaluable to our church."

He added the annual Senior Adult Day emphasis, set for May 6, 1984, is an excellent beginning point for recognizing the contributions of senior adults. The emphasis is sponsored by the family ministry department of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

--more--

According to Baker, when a genuine interest is expressed in senior adults, "they will open up to you and let you know their needs."

Baker said the SAF from Bowling Green has been so successful the group is often asked to travel to other churches in the state to share ideas.

Baker attributes the success of the SAF to Hayward Brown's constant concern and motivation. "He is the prime mover behind the group and the forerunner in keeping programs and activities going."

--30--

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press

HMB-P

EDITOR'S NOTE: Concerned about the growing need of poor Americans for clothing, food, shelter, medical care and jobs, Christian social ministries experts and pastors shared ideas on how churches can meet such needs at a symposium sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. This is the second article in a five-part series based on their suggestions.

Hunger Experts Suggest Ways
Southern Baptists Can Aid Poor

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press
4/16/84

ATLANTA (BP)--While hunger in the United States has grown dramatically during the past several years, Southern Baptists have the resources to significantly aid the poor, Southern Baptist hunger experts are convinced.

Statistics show 35 million people live below the poverty level with another 35 million clinging to the border, said Nathan Porter, national domestic hunger consultant for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"Approximately half of those added to the poverty roles in the U.S. the last two years are children," he said. One of every five children now lives in poverty; seven million children receive no medical care in the U.S., while one out of three has never seen a dentist.

"One cannot deny the existence of poverty and hunger in the United States," he asserted. "Christian social ministries is the mission of the church in a world of suffering, hunger and urgent need for the gospel of Jesus Christ," he said.

In light of federal budget cuts in social services funding and threats of more government outbacks, churches must fill the gaps in aiding the poor, he added. Though churches don't possess enough resources to meet all human needs, they can perform vital ministries.

Southern Baptist churches throughout the United States have already begun ministries to the nation's hungry. As unemployment took its toll among Kansas City, Mo., residents, Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association churches responded.

Emergency assistance centers, set up in five associational churches, provided needy residents with food and clothing, reported Ken Taylor, associational director of Christian social ministries and special mission ministries.

About 10 churches support each emergency assistance center, regularly sending volunteers to work in food pantries and clothing closets, stocking and distributing goods collected by the supporting churches. Other churches in the association provide support in a quarterly food drive, explained Taylor.

Last year, the association raised \$8,000 toward domestic hunger causes through a hunger walk. Taylor said 75 percent went to the Home Mission Board's domestic hunger fund, while 25 percent will be used for a local hunger project. Children will receive a hot breakfast and tutoring on Saturday mornings, said Taylor.

--more--

In Detroit, people who had never been unemployed before suddenly found themselves without a paycheck and without food. Pastor Rochelle Davis and members of Temple of Faith Baptist Church set out to aid Detroit residents battered by unemployment, which ran as high as 17 percent in some areas of the city.

The church distributes food items, selected and packaged by a dietician, and offers hungry people--many of the them unemployed suburbanites--a three- to four-day supply of groceries. Working through the association, the church purchases food from a local food bank for 13 cents a pound.

But Davis wants to offer more than meat and bread to needy Detroit residents. "It's an opportune time. People are receptive to the gospel," he explained. "Folks get caught up in the American dream and it becomes their god. Now it seems something has happened to the American dream and people are open."

Charles McCullin, associate director of the HMB's Christian social ministries department, noted: "People are not just open to the gospel 'out there' but also those in the pew are open" to acting out the gospel.

Nancy Hastings Sehested, associate minister at Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga., agreed. Feeding the poor is an expression of the gospel in one of its purest forms, she asserted. "I can think of no better good news for poor people than that they have shelter, food and dignity," said Sehested.

During the past year, the Oakhurst community saw a dramatic increase in the number of people seeking emergency food assistance, said Sehested, with two to three times as many clients served during the past year than in previous years.

Last fall, to aid residents whose food stamps ran out before the end of the month, Oakhurst members began providing hot meals to community residents during the last full week of the month. The church also houses and feeds a dozen street people during winter months.

In Hibbing, Minn., residents eek out a living--barely. In the northern mining town of 21,000, closures of local mines and related businesses have driven the unemployment rate as high as 90 percent. Currently unemployment hovers near 80 percent.

At Calvary Baptist Church in Hibbing, only four of more than 40 church members are employed, reported pastor Tom "Hap" Hertel. For a one-year period starting in February 1983, Calvary members distributed food for more than 55,000 meals. Now, finally recognized as a city food shelf, the church has access to a local food bank where they can purchase food at six cents to 12 cents a pound. Funds can stretch further, said Hertle, who anticipates distributing more than 65,000 meals during the next year.

Distributing food has been an avenue for "reaching people (for Christ)," said Hertle, who added all food and financial support has come from Southern Baptists. "We're letting people know that God--and Southern Baptists--love them."

"To help poor people, one must stand by their side," said Porter. Through getting to know poor people, he added, Christians become advocates for the poor, both socially and politically.

Suggestions for starting hunger ministries are:

--Conduct a hunger survey to determine community needs and community resources.

--Decide what type of hunger relief the church will begin (making sure not to duplicate other community ministries or programs). Possibilities range from soup kitchens, where church members actually feed residents, to food pantries, where churches provide families with food stuffs for a two- to three-day period. Other options include a community garden, setting up a food bank, setting up a food co-op, delivering meals (Meals on Wheels), offering food vouchers to stores or restaurants. Help for these and other ministries can be obtained through associational offices.

--more--

--Enlist volunteers to staff food programs; also enlist volunteers to stock, distribute and/or cook food.

--Set definite guidelines to determine who receives food; set hours for distribution (yet remain flexible for real emergencies).

--Establish follow-up ministries to food recipients for long-term church ministry.

--Make a list of social service agencies in the community; refer persons with long-term needs to government agencies. Help eligible persons sign up for social services benefits.

--Work with local, state and federal legislators to insure adequate funding of social services programs.

---30---

*Missouri paper
(C)-N*

Stuckey Resigns
Iowa Fellowship Post

By Bob Terry

Baptist Press
4/16/84

DES MOINES, Iowa (BP)--Robert H. Stuckey, executive director-treasurer of the Iowa Southern Baptist Fellowship, has resigned effective April 9, 1984.

His resignation came two days after the Fellowship's administrative committee voted 11-0 not to express confidence in Stuckey's ability to lead the state or oversee the affairs of the Fellowship. Although the administrative committee has no authority to dismiss the executive director, Stuckey acknowledged his resignation was prompted by the committee's action.

According to Administrative Committee Chairman Mike McKinney, pastor of Ashworth Road Baptist Church in West Des Moines, the administrative committee spent almost 10 hours in session before reaching its unanimous conclusion.

"We finally decided the information available to us indicated Bob Stuckey had lost his 'fellowship' within our state," McKinney said. "The committee agreed he was no longer able to manage or administer the affairs of the convention."

The administrative committee's vote of no confidence came only two weeks after the same committee upheld Stuckey's dismissal of Missions Division Director David Morgan. However, McKinney insisted the two incidents were unrelated.

Stuckey, who was elected to the Iowa position in October 1981, told Word and Way (the Missouri Baptist newspaper) "too many decisions are left to the discretion of the executive director. "Our newly developing state organization operates with inadequate policies and guidelines to protect the executive director from administrative and judgment errors," he said.

Stuckey charged the administrative committee's polling of every staff member and the directors of missions left him open to any latent unrest, deserved or not.

"I stand on my record of 30 years of faithful service to our Lord in Southern Baptist life...including 16 years as a foreign missionary," he declared. Adding that no charges have been made, Stuckey said the administrative committee has only questions regarding management of personnel and accounts.

"Our annual audit was just concluded in February. I welcome any questions and will certainly stand behind any corrections needed because of administrative judgments," he said.

A special audit has been ordered by the Iowa Fellowship's executive committee, according to Fellowship President Tom Nesbitt, pastor of Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Ames.

The audit will be shared with the Fellowship's executive board at a called meeting April 28 when the administrative committee will make a complete report on its actions. Until then, the executive committee (elected officers and executive board committee chairmen) of the Fellowship has assumed the administrative responsibilities of the organization.

California Dream Coming True
For Korean Missionary

By David Wilkinson

SANTA ANA, Calif. (BP)--David Kim, catalytic language missionary for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, dreams of reaching the unchurched among more than 250,000 Koreans living in southern California.

A small, stocky man whose black hair is trimmed with touches of gray, Kim envisions 500 Korean Baptist churches and missions in the state by 1990, part of a nationwide effort to achieve a total of 1,000 congregations.

Kim moved to his new responsibilities from a thriving, 900-member Korean congregation in Silver Spring, Md. "I was willing to stay in Maryland the rest of my life," said Kim, who came to the United States 20 years ago as a theological student. "But the Lord convinced me that there's plenty of work to be done in California."

The transition from pastor to catalytic language missionary has not been easy for the 50-year-old Kim or his wife, Judy. But they're warming to the challenge. In his first seven months on the job, nine new missions were begun, bringing the total in the state to 69.

Korean Baptists, Kim observed, tend to be "highly evangelical and missions minded." Many of the churches function according to the highly successful "cell group" principle of growing and ministering through small units--a process modeled effectively in South Korea. In addition, Korean churches are an important cultural and social center within the community.

Kim, who works out of his home in Santa Ana, averaged more than 6,000 miles per month on the road in his first year, occasionally even sleeping in his car when an inexpensive hotel room wasn't available. During the first months, he preached every Sunday in a concentrated effort to get to know pastors and other church leaders.

"I don't want to interfere, but to help," he said. "I want to act as a consultant, not as a denominational 'expert' who tells churches what to do."

Kim quickly became involved in the Ethnic Leadership Development Center for Koreans in the Los Angeles area. The center is one of many begun "as a result of the growing ethnicity of Southern Baptists," said Oscar Romo, language missions director at the HMB. "The ELD centers were created to provide theological education for ethnic church leaders who did not have the opportunity to receive formal training."

The centers, now spotted around the nation, serve not only Koreans, but also Hispanics, Chinese, Haitians and Eskimos. They are sponsored by the Home Mission Board in conjunction with Southern Baptist seminaries.

The active participation of laypeople in the ELD center is one reason Kim finds evidence for optimism in Asian language work in California.

Another reason for optimism is the success of congregations like Korean Baptist Church of Irvine. Started eight years ago as a Bible study, this growing mission met in the facilities of its sponsor, Bristol Baptist Church. In April 1983, the 750-member congregation dedicated a new building near a major interchange on the Santa Ana Freeway. Worship attendance, averaging 350, is still growing. The church also has started an Anglo mission.

--30--

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

CORRECTION--In (BP) story "\$2.8 Million Committed To Help Launch ACTS," mailed 4/13/84, please change the figure in the first paragraph from \$2.7 million to \$2.8 million.

Thanks,
Baptist Press
