



## BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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84-65

SBC Tension Decreasing,  
Draper Tells Missionaries

By Robert O'Brien

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention President, James T. Draper Jr., told Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in Nairobi they'll find decreased tensions between so-called moderates and inerrantists and favorable support for missions when they return to the United States on furlough.

Draper, pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas, addressed 35 missionaries at a dinner meeting soon after his arrival in Nairobi on the first leg of a 25-day tour of missions in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco.

"I'm sure it (the inerrancy squabble) has been either amusing, perplexing or disgusting for you, depending on what you've heard or how you relate to it," he told the missionaries, who have experienced concern about what they will find at home after several years' absence.

"Polarization in the SBC has occurred primarily in the academic community and among the large church pastors--or the visible names you'd recognize," Draper said.

"You're coming back at a time when there'll be less of that," he said. "It really has been very uncomfortable for the last four or five years. I feel like some things had to be done, and it was very, very stressful. Nobody liked what was going on, and I hope we're past the worst of that." Draper assured the missionaries of his personal commitment to missions support, declaring "the mission of winning people to Christ around the world is the only reason we have for having a convention."

He said he regretted the charges that inerrantist leaders in the SBC were anti-missions. Describing the strong support of his own church for the SBC's Cooperative Program budget and world mission offerings, Draper said, "I believe what I have described of our church is the heart of the conservatives in the SBC. We're not anti-missions."

Asked how Southern Baptists should evaluate a candidate for the SBC presidency from the standpoint of conservatism versus denominational support, Draper admitted, "There is some cause for concern in that respect. I personally don't want to enter into making those judgments."

He added, however, that leading inerrantist pastors are committed to missions and have strong local church missions, but that many have designated to various Southern Baptist-type missions "because they do not want to throw it into a general pool."

"I don't agree with that," he continued, "but, nevertheless, if we're going to be Southern Baptists and unless we're going to require a certain percentage of giving or a certain amount we're going to have to let people be free to do that."

"I think that tells you something about the SBC when prominent names being mentioned (for the SBC presidency) are men like that," he continued. "Why is it the case? There certainly has been every effort to discredit them. Why are they strong? If we're really a diverse convention as we say we are, then maybe we're going to have to start really letting the convention be diverse."

Draper added, however, "There's a sense in which I think you need to earn your right to be president of the convention" through support of it and its causes.

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He explained he finally became convinced to run for the SBC presidency in 1982 in New Orleans because he felt "the missions record of the leading conservative candidates wasn't as strong as mine....I felt like I could be a bridge over troubled waters. I felt like I could say to Southern Baptists, 'You can be conservative, stand on your convictions and not be anti-convention, anti-Cooperative Program and so on.'"

Turning to specifics of the upcoming convention in Kansas City in June, Draper identified five names mentioned as candidates to succeed him as president and some issues Southern Baptists will face.

He said names now mentioned for nomination include John Sullivan, current SBC first vice-president and pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport, La.; Ed Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Houston; Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta; Richard Jackson, pastor of North Phoenix (Ariz.) Baptist Church, and Grady Cothen, recently retired president of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Although he predicted a good convention, he said women's ordination will be a hot issue. "My attitude is that churches should decide that," he declared. "The convention doesn't need to deal with it, but I don't think it's going to be left there, and so I think we're going to squabble over that."

He predicted "some concern" will arise over controversy surrounding the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. "It's pretty deep and strong. What form it will take I don't know." Draper said part of the problem in the SBC is "we have a crisis in leadership in th SBC right now" and most of the agencies have changed top executives and younger men have been elected to the SBC presidency.

"Do you realize that of the last five SBC presidents, the oldest has been 52 and four of the five have been under 50?" he asked. "What happened to the 50- to 60-year-olds and the 60- to 65-year-olds who ought to be presidents of the convention?"

"I don't know what happened" he said. "When we moved from the W.A. Criswells and the Wayne Dehoneys and the Herschel Hobbs and skip all the way down to the Jimmy Drapers--you know the 'Jimmy whos'--and the Bailey Smiths and the Jimmy Allens and the Jaroy Webers, you have a leadership gap. Very honestly, I have no business being president of the SBC. I am too young." The 48-year-old pastor is completing his second term as SBC president.

Another part of the SBC's problem, he added, has been a lack of trust.

He said he and his wife have a trust relationship which makes one realize there has been a misunderstanding if the other says something that seems to be hurtful. "We each know the other wouldn't do something like that on purpose," he said.

"That's what I want to see happen in the SBC," Draper declared. "We're going to have differences, but I'm hoping that we can continue to move toward a level of trust--which I think is building--where if I say something that hurts Kenneth Chafin's feelings or Cecil Sherman says something that gets all over me, we can each say, 'I know that guy better than that. We have some differences, but he wouldn't be malicious.'"

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58 Cable Systems  
Signed Up For ACTS

RTUC  
C-U-N

Baptist Press  
5/1/84

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The American Christian Television System is looking toward a potential audience of "three or four million" homes when it begins fulltime programming June 12.

James Edwards, vice president for financial affairs for the Southern Baptist Convention's Radio and Television Commission, which is sponsoring the network, made the estimate after explaining 58 cable television systems with approximately a million subscribers are committed for the May 15 start-up of the satellite system.

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Additional cable systems are signing daily and could push the total audience to several million homes by mid-June.

"There are almost 200 communities serviced by the 58 cable systems under contract," Edwards said. "There are 14 states represented currently." Edwards said 611 Southern Baptist churches had signed "letters of intent" as affiliates with local ACTS boards.

Cities where local cable system are committed to the May 15 startup include:

ALABAMA--Montgomery, Dothan, Andalusia, Lannett; COLORADO--Englewood; CALIFORNIA--Rosemond, Ventura; GEORGIA--Valdosta, Statesboro, Stathom; KANSAS--Sublete, Overland Park; KENTUCKY--Louisville; LOUISIANA--Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Alexandria, Monroe, Many, Greenwall, Sulphur; MISSOURI--Independence, Kansas City; MISSISSIPPI--Jackson, Hattisburg, Laurel, Meridian, Tupelo, West Point, Corinth;

NORTH CAROLINA--Greensboro, Gastonia, Charlotte, High Point, Lincolnton; OKLAHOMA--Blackwell, Bartlesville, Owasso, Shawnee; SOUTH CAROLINA--Florence, Moncks Corner; TENNESSEE--Knoxville, Alcoa, Bartlett, Collierville; TEXAS--Lubbock, Tyler, Wichita Falls, Brownwood, Center, Clarendon, Grapevine, Kingwood, Katy, Plano, Richardson, Arlington, Palo Pinto.

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Seminary Woman's Committee  
Honors Rosalynn Carter

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Baptist Press  
5/1/84

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter has been named recipient of the first Distinguished Christian Woman Award by The Woman's Committee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Carter, an active partner in her husband Jimmy's political career, will be honored officially during Southern Seminary's first national conference for women, Oct. 15-16.

According to Betty McGary Pearce, conference and award coordinator for The Woman's Committee, the award has been established to annually recognize women making outstanding achievements benefitting humanity and reflecting the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The selection committee chose Carter because of her international reputation as a committed Christian and a devoted church and family woman, Pearce said. The two-day conference for men and women also will feature plenary and workshop sessions on "The Changing Roles of Women in Church and Society."

Plenary speakers include the award recipient; Roy L. Honeycutt, president, Southern Seminary; Catherine Allen, associate director, Woman's Missionary Union; Sarah F. Anders, Walker Chair of Sociology, Louisiana College; Andy Lester, professor of psychology of religion, Southern Seminary; Evelyn Stagg, writer and frequent speaker, and Bill Leonard, associate professor of church history, Southern Seminary.

Pearce added 14 workshops will be offered during the event along with the plenary sessions. For registration fees and details, persons should contact "Women in Church and Society," Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. 40280.

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Householder Elected  
PR Council President

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Baptist Press  
5/1/84

ST. LOUIS (BP)--A Southern Baptist communicator, Lloyd T. Householder, was elected national president of the Religious Public Relations Council during the organization's 55th annual convention in St. Louis.

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Householder, director of the office of communications of the Baptist Sunday School Board will head the interdenominational organization which includes 11 local chapters and approximately 500 members. He had been RPRC secretary for two years.

Communications staffers from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and the Sunday School Board also garnered 11 awards in the annual DeRose/Hinkhouse competition for RPRC members. The awards were presented during the closing luncheon at the Chase-Park Plaza Hot l.

Robert O'Brien, Foreign Mission Board, received two awards of excellence and one certificate of special merit. The awards of excellence were for a feature series, "Changing Lives in Uganda," and black-and-white photography for "More Than a Century." The merit award was for a feature article, "Hope Grows Out of Despair."

Jim Lowry, Sunday School Board, received an award of excellence in the newsletter category for "Facts and Trends." He also received certificates of merit for a folder, "Grady Cothen--A Life of Denominational Service," and a feature series on preaching effectiveness.

Linda Lawson, Sunday School Board, received three certificates of merit, including one for a news series on forced termination of ministers. Lawson, Marshall Walker, David Haywood and Gail Rothwell were cited for the board's 1982-83 annual report, "The Mission Continues." Lawson and Haywood received an award for a brochure on the Baptist Telecommunications Network, "Countdown to Tomorrow."

Don Fearheiley, Sunday School Board, received an award of excellence in the television series category for "At Home with the Bible."

Bob Stanley, Foreign Mission Board, received a certificate of merit for a news series, "Southern Baptists Rush Aid to Returning Ghana Refugees."

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Consultation Explores  
Children, Moral Issues

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Baptist Press  
5/1/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Churches and families must find creative ways to help children and adults apply their faith to contemporary moral concerns, according to participants at a consultation on children and ethical issues.

The one-day consultation, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, brought together specialists on children and family from churches and SBC agencies.

Participants identified a variety of ethical issues related to children and the family, including hunger, child abuse, poverty, racial discrimination, alcohol and other drugs, character development, divorce, sex education and world peace. The group also explored possible actions to be taken by individuals, churches, denominational groups and SBC agencies.

Bill Young of the Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department said churches must give increased attention to practical application of Bible knowledge.

"We have taught children Bible facts but we must also concentrate on teaching them how to apply that information to their daily lives," he said.

Dwayne Cole, pastor of Nashville's Crieewood Baptist Church, pointed out many adults shy away from discussion of moral issues. "I think we need to develop more honesty and openness in our churches to give people greater freedom to discuss issues which affect children and families," he said. "There are a lot of barriers to overcome."

Harry Hollis, director of family and special moral concerns for the Christian Life Commission and convener of the consultation, stressed churches and parents must compet with "a tremendous volume of miseducation being communicated daily to our children from a variety of sources."

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Television, he added, is "the primary miseducator of children in our country. This is tragic because TV offers great potential for more positive education."

Helping children also requires attention be given to strengthening marriages and improving parenting, added Gary Hauk of the Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

"We need to provide better education for adults on how to parent, without necessarily burdening the church with another program to administer," he said.

A new concept being field tested by the family ministry department, he illustrated, focuses on "parenting by grace." The idea, Hauk explained, "is to model parenting the way God parents his children."

Several participants addressed the need for churches to help children and their parents cope with societal pressures which lead to increased stress on children. Situations such as the so-called "hurried child syndrome" they pointed out, can rob children of the joys of childhood by burdening them with adult expectations and values.

Ann Tonks of the Sunday School Board, who edits Sunday school material for teachers of children, emphasized the need for better training for parents and church workers on how to listen to children. "If we hope to teach moral values to our children, then we must learn to listen to them," she explained.

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Shuttle Bus Routes  
For SBC Announced

C-N

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5/1/84

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Shuttle bus transportation will be provided for visitors and messengers to the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting June 12-14 in Kansas City, Mo.

Bus transportation between some local motels and the convention site at H. Roe Bartle Hall will be available at 15 to 30 minute intervals from 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. each day.

Six routes will facilitate travel to Travelodge, Howard Johnson's downtown, central, north and east locations, Adam's Mark Kansas City, Drury Inn, Inn at Executive Park, Worlds of Fun Holiday Inn, Red Roof Inn's east and north locations, Alameda Plaza Hotel, The Raphael Hotel, Granada Royale Homotel, Hilton Plaza Inn, Westin Crown Center Hotel, Hyatt Regency at Crown Center, Ramada Inn's north and east locations, Budgetel Inn, Thrifty Scot Motel, Antioch Motor Inn and Shoney's Inn.

Shuttle buses also will be provided to Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"The shuttle bus service has been arranged at strategic points to provide the best possible service to our messengers," said Paul Lambert, chairman of shuttle bus service for the local arrangements committee. "Obviously you can't cover an entire metropolitan area. Based on the projected hotel and motel accommodations, the six shuttle bus routes are designed to care for the messengers in a most adequate way."

According to Lambert, buses will be color coded according to route for passenger convenience. Lambert added the shuttle service would utilize "large buses, fully air-conditioned and maintained in the highest standards."

Convention messengers and visitors are encouraged to use the shuttle bus service to avoid traffic congestion in the convention center parking garage and the downtown area. Due to renovation, 50 percent of the convention center parking area will not be available for parking.

Cost for the shuttle service is 50 cents per ride. Signs in hotel with shuttle service will list pick-up and delivery times. A shuttle bus supervisor and dispatcher will staff the shuttle bus booth in the convention center lobby throughout the convention for the convenience of the messengers.

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Annual Historical Meeting

Baptists Differ Over  
Description Of Bible

By Leisa A. Hammett and Stan Hasteay

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--While the Bible has played a central role in Baptists' four centuries of life, it also has been the subject of ongoing conflict, more than 225 participants were told during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission and Society.

Throughout the two-day meeting, prominent Southern Baptist historians demonstrated the tension between a firm commitment to the authority of the Bible and a fierce individualism that insists on the soul competency of every believer.

John Steely, professor of historical theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., set the tone in an opening address when he said Southern Baptists do not differ on the authority of the Bible "for personal devotion and conduct, nor with the order and observances in the church, but with the beliefs, interpretations and opinions (of the Bible)."

Furthermore, he said, they differ not on the central doctrines of the Bible but "with how one describes the Bible and its authority."

Steely added the current Southern Baptist debate over biblical authority has to do not with whether the Bible was divinely inspired, but with how it was inspired, the extent of its authority and the agreement required among Southern Baptists in order "to walk together."

That debate, which has clouded Southern Baptist life for five years, was faced squarely in a panel discussion featuring a leading spokesman for the inerrancy wing of the 14.1 million member denomination, who appeared with two seminary professors considered moderates.

Richard Land, vice-president for academic affairs at Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, Dallas, argued present-day inerrantists in the SBC are unlike a former type of Fundamentalists, led by the late J. Frank Norris, who advocated an "exclusive" brand of Fundamentalism that led them to withdraw from the denomination. Today's Southern Baptist inerrantists, Land declared, are determined to remain in the denomination and seek "parity" in the faculties of Southern Baptist educational institutions.

Glenn Hinson, professor of religion at Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C., disagreed with Land's view that inerrancy is a subject of importance to the average Baptist, saying what matters to most Southern Baptists is whether the Bible's teachings are practiced. "Orthopraxy," not "orthodoxy," Hinson insisted, is what has always mattered to Baptists.

The third panelist, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary professor Claude Howe, suggested all parties to the current debate be wary of assuming that theological labels today mean the same as they did in a previous day. While more Southern Baptists have defended the Fundamentalist view over a liberal one, he said, "most maintained a high view of Scripture expressed in rather general terms that reflected moderation."

Two speakers, Land and Steely, offered the view that in spite of turmoil in the denomination, a split between inerrantists and moderates is unlikely.

Land, a Princeton University graduate with a doctorate from Oxford, emphasized today's Southern Baptist inerrantists will not leave because of a deep and abiding loyalty to the denomination and said he hopes moderates will not leave either.

Steely said a split in the SBC would be of "very small benefit" and would be bought at an incalculable price."

Baptist confessions of faith from the 17th-century to the present were examined by a pair of acknowledged experts, Virginia pastor William Lumpkin and Texas pastor James Carter.

Lumpkin, pastor of Freemason Street Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va., said Baptists throughout their history have looked on the Bible as their sole guidepost for faith and practice while insisting on the competence of the individual soul before God.

Early Baptist confessions of faith, Lumpkin said, assumed the truthfulness and authority of the Scriptures and made generous use of biblical references as a foundation for all doctrinal matters addressed. These early confessions, he added, "generally agreed that the Bible was its own best interpreter."

Lumpkin summarized by stating that "from the beginning the Baptists were a confessing community and always laboring for consensus."

Carter, pastor of University Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, underscored the fact that the Southern Baptist Convention, although organized in 1845, did not adopt a full-fledged confession of faith until 1925, when it approved the first Baptist Faith and Message Statement.

Both the 1925 statement and a similar one adopted in 1963 resulted directly from controversy, the first coming in the wake of widespread alarm over the theory of evolution, the second resulting from turmoil over the publication of a commentary on the book of Genesis by a Southern Baptist seminary teacher.

Nevertheless, Carter pointed out, both confessions pointedly state they were not binding on individual conscience. They contained "assurances that statements of faith do not have the qualities of finality or infallibility," he said. Furthermore, "they are statements of religious conviction and should not be used to hamper freedom of thought or investigation in other areas of life."

A final session of the joint Historical Commission and Society meeting focused on the historic efforts by Baptists to communicate biblical doctrine through preaching, Bible distribution and Bible curriculum.

Thomas McKibbens, associate professor of preaching at Southeastern Seminary, told participants that while "the Bible has been central to all Baptist preaching," Baptist proclamation has been "fertilized by broad and liberally educated minds." Thus a caricature of Baptist preachers as backwoods simpletons has led to "the delusion among many Baptists that our preaching heritage is nothing to be proud of, and, in fact, we are just now crawling up out of the sea of mindless ranting and raving and beginning to stand erect."

Stephen Carleton, a Baptist historian who is academic dean at California Baptist College, Riverside, said Southern Baptists have distributed Bibles and provided curriculum materials throughout most of their history, but have not always agreed on the right way to perform those tasks.

Nevertheless, the twin commitments of sharing the gospel with an unbelieving world and communicating Baptist doctrinal convictions have motivated Southern Baptists to help lead the way in mass Scripture distribution and in devising an unparalleled system of writing and distributing church curriculum materials, he said.

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Annuity Trustees Elect  
New Investment VP

By Ray Furr

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*Annuity Board  
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DALLAS (BP)--Annuity Board trustees elected a new investment officer and employed an investment consulting firm in the April meeting of the executive committee.

A. George Avinger Jr. was elected vice-president in the board's investment division. Avinger, 50, has been employed by RepublicBank of Dallas for 22 years where he has been president of RepublicBank North, Dallas, for the past three years.

He is a native of Fort Worth and a graduate of Southern Methodist University in Dallas and the Southwestern Graduate School of Banking at SMU. He attends Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas. Avinger is scheduled to begin work May 15.

The trustees also added Hotchkiss Associates Inc., of Chicago, as investment consultants. The firm will counsel the board's investment officers in evaluating the performance of investment managers and will help develop investment objectives and guidelines.

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Hotchkiss serves in the same capacity for the United Methodist pension board, the largest church pension board in the nation, and manages the investments of several other pension boards and schools. Stan Morrow, a partner with Hotchkiss, will be assigned to the Annuity Board account. Morrow has worked with the board developing the Convention Annuity Plan and the new Church Annuity Plan. He has served as executive director of the Methodist pension board where he managed the investment funds for several years.

Annuity Board President Darrold H. Morgan said these moves represent a two-year study by board officials and consultants. "We expect the assets of the board to reach the \$2 billion mark before the end of the decade. The expertise of George Avinger and the addition of Hotchkiss Associates Inc., will be critical to the board as we prepare to meet an increasing fiduciary responsibilities," said Morgan.

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Dallas First Church  
Sets Attendance Record

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Baptist Press  
5/1/84

DALLAS (BP)--The First Baptist Church of Dallas went down in the record books Easter Sunday when 12,058 persons attended Sunday school, the highest attendance in Sunday school ever in the Southern Baptist Convention.

W.A. Criswell, pastor, said, "We are ecstatic, we are elated, and we are praising God all over the place this Easter. We worked hard and prayed hard and God gave us the victory."

Tom Melzoni, executive director of ministries for the church said, "As far as we can determine, this Sunday's attendance sets an all-time record for a Southern Baptist church in this country."

He explained a great deal of preparation went into the record-setting event. "It was a combination of several old-fashioned Sunday school methods. The first step was what we called the Blockbuster Survey. Each Sunday school department spent a Sunday morning going door-to-door taking a household census. In this way, they made contact with more than 25,000 homes. At the same time, the class members left a Scripture at each home. More than 20,000 Scriptures were distributed during a three-month period."

Melzoni also asked Sunday school leadership to use a Survival Kit, a tool developed by the church training department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. Each Sunday school leader was challenged to strive for spiritual growth first, and the numerical growth would follow.

Also, each Sunday school leader and individual church member was encouraged to fill out a commitment card to indicate how many visitors they would try to bring to Sunday school on Easter Sunday. These cards, in turn, were given to the Intercessory Prayer Ministry for extra prayer.

To top off the effort, an area-wide media campaign was developed to raise public awareness of what First Baptist Church, Dallas, is doing and what ministries it has to offer. The campaign used various mediums, including newspaper ads, radio and television spots, billboards, direct mail, and an eight-page, four-color newspaper insert, which was delivered the Sunday before Easter.

Melzoni says, "All of these elements, the old-fashioned and the new, worked together to help us reach this great plateau. But, none of it would have been successful were it not for the fact God answered our prayers and blessed our efforts to reach those in our great Metroplex area who need to be reached."

The high attendance at this year's Easter services has a special importance to church members because this is the year of Criswell's 40th anniversary as pastor.

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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 final article in a five-part series based on their suggestions.

SBC Churches Grapple  
With Helping Unemployed

By Jim Newton

HMB-F

ATLANTA (BP)--Almost 50 times each week, Jim Queen, pastor of Uptown Baptist Church in a poverty-stricken area of Chicago, is asked, "Do you know where I can find a job?"

Queen, who says 80 percent of Uptown Chicago's 130,000 people live on incomes beneath the poverty level, usually answers the question the same way. "You're about the 50th person to ask me that this week." But Queen isn't being flippant--he's concerned.

With a national unemployment rate of 8.2 percent--and higher rates in some areas of the country--Southern Baptist pastors like Queen often feel helpless and unable to do much to help the unemployed.

"It's hard for churches to get a handle on unemployment and do anything about it," admitted Lowell Lawson, director of the Baptist Center in Detroit, one of the cities hardest hit by unemployment.

Yet even with few resources, Uptown Baptist Church has helped church members start three new busin sses to provide jobs for those out of work, including a thrift shop, a silk-screen business, and a marketing program for crafts and clothing made by Indochinese refugees.

The church also held seminars to teach the unemployed how to fill out job applications, how to act during job interviews and provided transportation to the interviews.

Deacons at Northside Baptist Church in Columbia, S.C., started a job referral system that helped more than a dozen unemployed persons find jobs. The church office compiled names and resumes of people looking for work, and church members called when they learned of openings.

A similar idea was implemented by First Baptist Church in Coffeyville, Kan., when the pastor learned there were 15 unemployed families in the church. They started a job swap program to provide temporary "odd jobs" like chopping wood or repairing rental property.

A.B. Short, a member of Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga., and director of the Atlanta Food Bank, said unemployment is not new--it is only receiving more recognition because it is now affecting middle-class suburbanites. "So it's a hot issue," Short claimed. But unemployment has been a problem for the poor, especially blacks, forever, he said.

On a small scale, Oakhurst members have tried to help the largest single group of the unemployed--inner-city black teenagers. A project called "Labor of Love" has provided summer carpentry classes for black teenagers taught by a layman who took the summer off to direct the project. Every teenager who participated found a job, Short reported.

Nationally, more than 47 percent of black teenagers are out of school and unemployed. Rochelle Davis, pastor of Temple of Faith Baptist Church in Detroit, said the problem is critical in his city. Baptists, Davis said, need to cooperate with others to provide job training programs for youths and to improve inner-city public school systems where blacks receive an inferior education.

Short added churches also need to fight oppression of blacks, not only in education, but in job discrimination.

Lawson, whose Baptist center in Detroit is in the heart of a poverty area, said the inner-city poor have an easier time surviving than the new poor in the suburbs who don't know what it's like to be poor. "They are embarrassed and too proud to ask for help," Lawson related.

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In Hibbing, Minn., where unemployment soared to 80 percent last year due to the shutdown of iron ore mines, the "new poor" have learned to share even what little they have with those less fortunate, said "Hamp" Hertel, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church.

"The people here share everything," he said. "If they have food and someone is hungry, they share it. It doesn't matter if you have food for your next meal or not," he said.

Only four of the 45 church members had jobs after the mines closed--a truck driver, a military recruiter and two gas station attendants, he reported.

The church has two offering plates--one to receive gifts, another from which those who have nothing can take what they need. Usually there is about \$20 in small bills in the second offering plate, Hertel said.

Since most of the men are unemployed, Hertel boosted their morale by getting them to repair and renovate the church building with \$3,000 worth of donated materials. "They said if they didn't have that work to do at the church, they'd go nuts," Hertel said. "It gave them a sense of worth."

In contrast to the Hibbing church, many times the new unemployed are ashamed to admit their needs and isolate themselves from friends and the church, Hopkins observed.

Davis said in Detroit family crises intensify when the breadwinner is unemployed and spouse and child abuse has increased with unemployment. To help, he encourages unemployed families to attend marriage enrichment seminars to learn how to better handle pressure.

In Chicago, Queen has sponsored seminars on improving the self-image and self-confidence of the poor and unemployed. "The concept in America is 'If you're not productive, you are worthless,'" he charged.

Queen believes the major problem in his community is not poverty or jobs, but lack of self-esteem and self-worth. "There is just so much despair and hopelessness," he lamented.

Queen said Southern Baptists have the resources to do something about the problem, but is not sure Baptists have the commitment to do anything substantive. "We have the resources and abilities, but do we have the heart and will?" he asked.

Advice to churches wishing to minister to the unemployed includes the following:

- Form support groups for the unemployed in the local church.
- Provide family counseling for the unemployed, abused family members, etc.
- Set up a job bank and referral system.
- Start a job swap, where people exchange skills instead of money for services.
- Provide training for filling out job applications and interviewing.
- Provide bus tokens to transport the unemployed to interview appointments.

--As a church, sponsor an unemployed family by paying for rent and utilities, or by providing a short-term loan.