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-- FEATURES

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**African Baptist Church
Continues, Uncowed**

LIVUYU, South West Africa (BP)—When animals or people get hungry enough, they've been known to eat almost anything. But members of a struggling little Baptist congregation in the bush area of northern South West Africa didn't expect cows to eat their church.

Most of the congregation are refugees who have fled fighting in their country of Angola. Others are local inhabitants of the finger of land projecting out of the Kavango-Caprivi Strip of South West Africa (also called Namibia).

They've faced a common problem—drought-related hunger. And they've had a common desire—to build a church in which to worship God.

Not long ago, they set out proudly to build that church, cutting poles in the forest to implant as walls and old dried cornstalks to tie onto the poles. They added a thatched roof, a pulpit made of reeds from the river's edge and benches of tree limbs held on limb forks.

Southern Baptist missionary Carlos Owens came to lead their first service, attended by the happy congregation and a chicken which nestled by the missionary's feet. Twenty believers were baptized and the Livuyu Baptist Church was organized.

Two months later, Owens returned for teaching and preaching. He was astonished to see the walls missing. Only bare poles held up the thatched roof. "Oh, missionary, look at our church," a church leader cried as he ran to greet Owens. "The cows were so hungry they ate up our church."

Animals as well as people have to do the best they can for themselves in times of drought. So the people went back to the drawing board to design a cow-proof church. When Owens returned for his next visit, they had covered the structure with heavy, inedible reeds from the river's edge.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

New Mexico Baptists
Elect Misener President

By J.B. Fowler

Baptist Press
11/5/84

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—The Baptist Convention of New Mexico adopted a record \$4.8 million budget for 1984-85. The state convention will continue to send 30 percent of the contributions it receives from local churches to the national Cooperative Program.

The Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board will contribute an estimated \$989,000 to the state budget.

Milford Misener, pastor of First Baptist Church, Belen, for 17 years, was elected convention president. Luis Gomez, pastor of Gallup's Spanish Baptist Church, was elected first vice-president and Wesley McAfee, pastor of San Dia Baptist Church, Clovis, was elected second vice-president.

A total of 677 people registered for the convention, including 473 messengers.

In the Wednesday evening session, Dr. and Mrs. Chester O'Brien received a \$5,000 check from the convention as a gift of appreciation—\$500 for each of the 10 years O'Brien worked as executive director. O'Brien will become associate pastor of First Baptist Church, Amarillo, Texas, Jan. 1. The 1985 convention annual will be dedicated to the O'Briens.

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Ted Roberts, who has been convention business manager since 1971, will be interim executive director. John Parrott, pastor of First Baptist Church of Las Cruces, and chairman of the executive director search committee, told messengers it is hoped the committee will have a nominee by January, so that a special session of the convention can be called to coincide with the January Evangelism Conference.

In convention business, the resolutions committee presented 15 resolutions to the convention. Dealing with various moral and social issues, the resolutions were unanimously approved by the messengers.

But a resolution on the ordination of women was not reported out of committee for a vote. Resolutions Committee Chairman Jim Prock, pastor of First Baptist Church, Carlsbad, told the convention the resolutions committee chose not to bring the resolution to the convention because it felt ordination is a matter for the local church—not the convention—to decide.

A proposed constitutional change to make it possible for a church not in fellowship with its local association to send messengers to the state convention was referred to the state executive board for further study.

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Southeastern Trustees
OK Student Center

Baptist Press
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WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Officers were elected and a go-ahead given for a \$2.4 million student center project during the fall meeting of the board of trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

O. Charles Horton, pastor of College Park Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., was named chairman by the 30-member board, succeeding W. Lee Beaver, layman from St. Louis, who had been on the board the maximum two one-year terms.

Other officers elected were: Bill Bruster, pastor of First Baptist Church of Bearden, Knoxville, Tenn., vice-chairman; Charles Midkiff, pastor of First Baptist Church, Greenville, Ky., secretary, and J. Edwin Collette, member of First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., treasurer.

Approval was granted for construction to proceed on the student center, with a contract to be awarded Central Builders, Rocky Mount, N.C. The project will involve renovation of and an addition to Gore Gymnasium, which was the indoor athletic center of Wake Forest College prior to that school's move to Winston-Salem, N.C., in 1956. The facility has seen limited use by the seminary.

Completion of the extensive renovation and the addition will provide the seminary community with a modern center for recreation, leisure activities and meetings, as well as a bookstore and food service. Named the Ledford Student Center, the facility honors a well-known Raleigh, N.C., couple Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Ledford.

In addition the trustees:

- granted tenure to C. Michael Hawn, associate professor of church music;
- adopted a revised schedule of fees including an increase in matriculation fees to \$300 from \$250 for Southern Baptist Convention students (same as the other five seminaries) and to \$600 from \$500 for non-SBC students;
- accepted a challenge to generate gifts of \$60,000 for the student center;
- adopted a process for the selection of a president in the event that office becomes vacant;
- established a position of neutrality in secular political campaigns, including a ban on political advertising on certain seminary property, and
- established six endowment funds: the James H. Blackmore Fund for Student Aid; the Austin S. Herrington Scholarship Fund; the I. Lee Porter Memorial Fund; the William L. and Carolyn Self-Wieuca Road Baptist Church Scholarship Fund; the Ann Alexander Smith Fund for Single Adult Ministries and the Pam and Andy Morris Fund for Emergency Assistance.

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SBC Support Has Freed Us
To Work, Missionaries Say

By Robert O'Brien

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)—Seven Southern Baptist missionaries who formerly were missionaries with three other mission organizations in Africa say the Southern Baptist Convention's missions support system has freed them to do a better job.

They served a combined 42 years with those organizations before the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appointed them for three East African countries.

All were Baptists when they served with the other organizations, and three were raised as missionary kids with those organizations. Five formerly raised all their support. Two got fixed salaries—"barely enough to scrape by"—which they helped raise.

The seven love and respect their former organizations and colleagues, but they admit facts about contrasting support styles speak for themselves.

"Knowing the Lord has led 14 million Southern Baptists in 37,000 churches to support missions and missionaries has freed my wife and me to do a better job of reaching people for Christ than we could when we had to struggle constantly to raise support," said one.

"Many Southern Baptists, including some missionaries, don't fully grasp what a good thing we've got going for missions in the financial undergirding of the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," he added.

Another said he just smiles when Southern Baptist missionaries complain about this or that. "They have legitimate complaints at times. But it'd sure make a difference in their outlook if they'd tried the type of missions in which some raise more than they need and others, with less exciting slides and speaking ability, barely get enough to exist."

Some of their former organizations, most referred to loosely as "faith" missions groups, have a pool approach. Excess support raised by some missionaries is shared with more poorly funded ones. Some groups have fixed salaries. Many, though, leave it to individuals to get what they can.

Missionaries who have gathered support through personal fund raising from churches and individuals say support has a way of shrinking as stateside commitments change. That disrupts family budgets and turns medical problems into tense financial situations.

"The beauty of the Southern Baptist approach is that the organization supports the individual, backing him with what he needs to do the job," one missionary said. "My former organization called on the individual to support himself as well as the organization."

Methods of organizational support vary among mission groups which don't have the wide base of support enjoyed by the SBC. But the organization he mentioned takes at least 30 percent off the top of the support raised by missionaries to cover home office administration.

Southern Baptists have a 1985 foreign missions budget of \$144,206,000, with only 12.3 percent set aside for home office expense, but they don't have money to burn with more than 3,400 missionaries in 104 countries and a Bold Mission objective of 5,000 missionaries in 125 countries by A.D. 2000.

Voluntary gifts must rise sharply for the SBC to meet its growing foreign missions commitment to appoint and send missionaries and fund their work, cover a variety of extra costs and pay a fixed, livable salary, with a variable cost of living factor.

The future calls for increased giving, but missionaries appreciate the SBC's current support system—unique in the history of Christendom—which allows them to be full-time missionaries, instead of spending at least half of their time raising funds. Most "faith" missionaries, for example, have to raise money not only for their salaries but also for such items as work budget, car, house, travel and freight expenses, medical needs, furlough expense, foreign income tax and schooling for children. Southern Baptists provide that and more.

"I used to cry at night as an MK after overhearing my parents (both "faith" missionaries) agonize over how they would pay the bills and get their work done," a missionary commented. "I even hated the bicycle they gave me one Christmas because I knew they couldn't afford it. My kids don't have to go through that in the Southern Baptist support system."

One missionary's aged "faith" missionary parents remained on the field well beyond normal retirement time because their organization and support churches had no guaranteed pension beyond Social Security. Some churches and organizations will follow through and protect aging and disabled "faith" missionaries, and some have retirement facilities. But others either don't provide retirement help or don't do so adequately. Southern Baptists have a guaranteed pension and insurance program to meet those needs.

Furlough time provides another contrast. "I used to detest furlough," one former "faith" missionary admitted. "It became a struggle to renew fading support for the next term or there'd be no next term."

Fading support and the inclination of some churches to cut off funds during time spent in the States force some "faith" missionaries to find outside jobs on furlough. But Southern Baptists continue support during furlough, allowing time for rest, updating education and skills, visiting family and speaking in churches to tell the story of missions.

"What I liked best about my first furlough as a Southern Baptist missionary," was knowing that when I visited a church the bottom line didn't have to be 'How much money can I raise from you?'," he said. "Under the old approach the reality of the pitch for money from so many different directions often made church members defensive and wary of our motives. This time we could just share mission needs and have good fellowship without personal strings attached."

Some people have quipped that "faith" missionaries "go to the Lord" when they have a need but that SBC-supported missionaries "go to the Board." "That's an immature way of looking at faith," said one missionary. "I can't believe many people would accept that."

The missionaries interviewed don't believe any one kind of missionary has the corner on the title "faith" missionary, although one commented that Southern Baptists need to work more at keeping contact with valuable prayer support from an individual local church.

"We need as much faith as we ever did," said one. "Now we just operate under a different way of using the Lord's money. We depend on the Lord to provide tangibles and intangibles the board can't provide directly and to continue to use the board and our churches to support us and increase giving and support so we can expand our efforts to reach people everywhere."

"Given our diverse nature, voluntary structure and the difficulties we face as a denomination, that really takes faith."

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(Adapted from the November issue of the Baptist Program.)

One Missionary, 55,000 Patients:
Missions Health Work Of Future?

By Mary Jane Welch

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptist missionary Ed Barnes may represent the future already happening today.

The pharmacist runs a clinic in Africa without a doctor or registered nurse on staff. In fact, he is the only Southern Baptist missionary at the clinic. But 16 Malawian health workers saw 55,000 patients during 1983 at the main clinic and seven outlying village clinics.

For 27 missionaries, Foreign Mission Board staffers and other guests who recently gathered to discuss the future of Southern Baptist health care programs, Barnes' work was related to much of their discussion during a three-day meeting.

The group affirmed the need for a broad health care program which deals with the whole person. They see hospitals, clinics, community-based health care programs, evangelism, agriculture, literacy, economics and sanitation all playing a part in health care.

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While Southern Baptists cannot provide a total health care program for any country, they can help promote such a program and help with some of its aspects. Hospitals and clinics Southern Baptists have supported through the years will continue, the group agreed, but they're looking at innovations such as the clinic in Malawi where health care is delivered without a doctor or registered nurse. And they believe health care and evangelism will continue to be directly related in Southern Baptist missions overseas.

Barnes told what the Malawi clinic has achieved by combining under-fives, prenatal, nutritional and dental clinics with an evangelistic outreach led by a Malawian chaplain. One man brought a friend—who has been bitten two hours earlier by a highly poisonous black mamba snake—on his back to the Barneses' house. The Barneses keep a vial of expensive anti-venom in their refrigerator. They gave it to the young man and two weeks later he was well. This December he graduates from the Baptist Bible School in Lilongwe to be a preacher.

Another man traveled six miles to a village clinic to hear the morning devotionals. He became a Christian and shared his story with nine friends who became Christians. They asked their Muslim village chief for permission to start a Baptist church there. He said no, but did agree to let them meet for Bible study as long as they met in his yard.

Barnes said the chief underestimated the power of such a group. Four weeks ago the chief himself accepted Christ, he reported, and the new church has constructed a mud building with a straw roof. It has an average attendance of 80.

Overlapping concerns for physical and spiritual welfare have characterized Southern Baptist missionaries from early days, said Charles Bryan, the Foreign Mission Board's vice-president for overseas operations.

The board's first medical doctor became so overwhelmed by the spiritual needs of the Chinese that he seriously considered giving up his medical practice to give full time to evangelistic work. And an early field evangelist became so concerned about their physical needs that he practiced medical skills he had learned from his father, a doctor, said Bryan.

Today, community health and development must be connected with institutional care and a training center to be complete and adequate, said Timothy C. Pennell, professor of surgery and director of international health affairs at Wake Forest University Medical Center.

The group, almost half of them doctors, admitted in developing nations doctors may not always play the central role in health care they play in the United States. Educators or social workers may be better equipped to bring needed changes in lifestyle, they said.

And it may not be easy to find people to staff less traditional approaches as well as existing mission hospitals and clinics. Health care missionaries must be missionaries first and health care workers second, said Giles Fort, missionary physician in Zimbabwe. He and others stressed the need for medical missionaries who are flexible enough to meet needs they find on the mission field.

Several said American medical training equips people to use technology which may not be available or appropriate overseas. Some health care workers needed overseas, such as nurse midwives, are rarely trained in the United States. A work group recommended special training before and after arriving on the field to help bridge the gap between American medical training and overseas realities.

Franklin Fowler, the board's senior medical consultant, said in the last 10 years, the number of missionary physicians and nurses overseas has decreased slightly while the number of national physicians and nurses in Baptist facilities overseas has increased dramatically—168 percent for physicians.

This change shows missionaries have helped national leadership develop, he said. It also frees missionary doctors and nurses to open new work and develop new approaches.



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