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85-118

August CP Gifts
Almost \$11 Million

By Craig Bird

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The worldwide mission and educational programs of the Southern Baptist Convention received \$10,911,903 during the month of August through the national Cooperative Program, the SBC's voluntary, unified budget.

"A record response to the record needs of our world is what Bold Mission Thrust is all about," Harold C. Bennett, president of the SBC Executive Committee said, referring to the Southern Baptist effort to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world by the year 2000. "Southern Baptists--individually and as a denomination--are responding to the fact God wants to use us--our time, our talents and our resources--to tell the Good News."

It was the largest single month for the national Cooperative Program since it began in 1925. The previous high (\$10,812,419) was set last January.

The undesignated gifts, which represented an increase of \$2.2 million (25.2 percent) over income during August 1984, pushed the yearly total to \$107,799,155 with one month remaining in the fiscal year.

The 1984-85 basic operating budget from the Cooperative Program for the 19 boards, agencies, commissions and committees which share the money is \$118 million which means September receipts will need to exceed \$10.2 million to meet budget goals.

In the first 11 months of the fiscal year voluntary contributions from the 37 state conventions affiliated with the SBC averaged almost \$9.8 million. Monthly income has exceeded \$10 million four times (January, March, May and July).

"When you frame the increased contributions with the lingering, low inflation rate the figures are even more encouraging," Tim Hedquist, vice-president for business and finance for the SBC Executive Committee, said. "The inflation rate through July of 3.6 percent is the lowest since 1967 and national Cooperative Program giving is up 8.52 percent for the year. The increase in real dollars is significant which means the dollars available to our missionaries and our seminaries and our agencies, though still too few to do everything we need to do, are going further than in times of high inflation.

"It is also significant that, in addition to the Cooperative Program gifts, national agencies have received more than \$102 million in designated gifts--mostly to the Foreign Mission Board and the Home Mission Board and for hunger relief."

Thirty-four of the 37 state conventions affiliated with the SBC have given more to the national Cooperative Program than at the same stage last year.

Wyoming has more than doubled its gifts from \$22,300 to \$46,682 (109.34 percent). Three states have given more than \$1 million over the same time a year ago and another three states are more than \$500,000 ahead.

Georgia is the dollar increase leader (\$1,463,217, up 17.72 percent); followed by Texas, \$1,345,704 (7.66 percent); Florida, \$1,005,355 (12.97 percent); Alabama, \$570,957 (8.57 percent); Tennessee, \$567,691 (9.69 percent) and North Carolina, \$540,588 (7.84 percent).

Seminary Extension Picks Virginian
As Outstanding Center Director

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Robert Y. Sandford, director of campus ministry in Norfolk, Va., has been selected as the outstanding extension center director for 1984-85 by the Southern Baptist Seminary Extension Department.

Sandford began operating a Seminary Extension center in Norfolk in September 1981 and has offered classes each fall and spring since. Twelve black pastors from the area enrolled for his first class and have continued to attend every course, including systematic theology, Christian ethics, pastoral care and several studies in New Testament books. College students and others have swelled some course enrollments to as many as 27.

"Providing ministry education opportunities for pastors without seminary training is one of the main reasons Seminary Extension exists," says Paul E. Robertson, director of extension center education for the SED. "Others of our 350 centers last year had more students, but Sandford has done an exceptional job of reaching and training persons in that primary target group."

Robertson estimates 20 percent of the some 8,000 Seminary Extension students last year were members of an ethnic minority, including blacks, Hispanics, Koreans and Native Americans.

Sandford works under the general board of the Baptist General Association of Virginia. A formal presentation of his award is planned for the annual meeting of the state association in November.

The SED has recognized an outstanding extension center director each year since 1979. The department is part of the Seminary External Education Division, a jointly sponsored ministry of the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

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Hammers And Nails Build
Witness And Fellowship

By Jim Lowry

Baptist Press
9/26/85

KALISPELL, Mont. (BP)--Hammers and nails can do a lot more than hold boards together.

Some construction work in the northwestern United States also can help bring about a special understanding of Southern Baptist missions.

Montana pastor Butch Adcock knows God told him to help construct church buildings in this strategic, pioneer location.

"If nothing else is certain in my life, this is," he said. "We're fulfilling what was born in the heart of God."

Adcock, pastor of Easthaven Baptist Church in Kalispell, Mont., for 12 years, has led building crews for nine years which have helped construct 14 Southern Baptist churches.

Each summer, during the first week of July, families from Easthaven Church travel as much as 600 miles to do construction work.

The church families, who take vacation time from their jobs, live in campers and tents, cook all their food and work 10- and 12-hour days to frame and roof a church building.

"This is our way of participating in missions even though we are a small church," Adcock said. "Every year at the end of a project, we come home loving more people."

Faith, commitment, excitement and sacrifice all are vital parts of building churches in the Northwest, which started in Kalispell with the construction of Easthaven Baptist Church.

"We wanted to build a new church here but we didn't know how to get loans, permits or materials," Adcock explained. "Hal Buettner, a retired building contractor, moved to Kalispell and soon became coordinator of the project, working on plans and listing and pricing materials.

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"While we were building Easthaven, the Lord said he had a job for us," he continued. "The Lord said 'Go and leave the things you think are important and I'll give you more.' Our family grows every year."

When Easthaven's facility was built in 1977, average attendance was approximately 120, but the auditorium was built to seat 500. Attendance now reaches 200 occasionally, with an average of 165. The Sunday morning services are televised.

Over the years, the construction projects have grown to include families and workers from other churches, including First Baptist Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, where Adcock was associate pastor before moving to Montana. Other families meet the group after traveling from Washington, Idaho, Arizona and California.

Construction sites have ranged from Portland, Ore., which is 600 miles west of Kalispell, to Poplar, Mont., located 500 miles east on an Indian reservation near the North Dakota border. Work at each location includes checking plans with the church architecture department of the Baptist Sunday School Board and learning how to obtain financing through the Home Mission Board.

The annual trek begins on the first Sunday of July when a caravan leaves Kalispell following the morning worship service to drive to the construction site. Living quarters are set up that night and construction begins early Monday morning. An advance coordinator has prepared the site by having the foundation completed and materials delivered and ready for construction.

In the Northwest, distances between churches and meetings are a way of life instead of an insurmountable obstacle. On a recent trip to visit some of the construction sites west of Kalispell, Adcock covered 1,600 miles in three days.

Numerous benefits are cited by churches in appreciation for the free labor from construction crews, but there is universal agreement the financial saving is the most obvious.

Different churches have estimated savings as high as 50 percent of projected costs. While this would be significant to any church, it is the difference between building and not building a facility for these congregations. When construction crews leave, there is usually a building with walls and a roof. Considering all but one or two are amateur carpenters, the amount of progress in six days is miraculous.

It is at this point sacrifice and participation begins for local church members who do the inside and finishing work.

Clint Ashley, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Pullman, Wash., the location for the 1985 construction project, said visiting workers let his church see the good in Baptists working together.

Like other Baptist churches in the Northwest, many members do not have a Baptist background. "When our members rub shoulders with other Southern Baptists, it enlarges their vision of missions," Ashley said. "Our members are amazed that a group of people who don't know them would give up vacations to come and work like this."

Charles Hargrove is pastor of Deer Park Baptist Church in Deer Park, Wash., where a building was constructed in 1982 by the Kalispell crew. In his two and one-half years there, attendance has risen from 60 to more than 100.

Hargrove said the free labor really got the church started in an area where "money is hard to come by. Putting the building up showed the community Southern Baptists are really serious about being a part of the community. After meeting in a mobile home and the entrance to a mall, the new building gave us room to expand and we started to grow."

Other locations where the construction crews have worked include Rathdrum, Idaho (1980); Hood River, Ore.; Bingen, Wash.; Dallesport, Wash., and Nine Mile Falls, Wash. (1981); Dishman, Wash. (1983); and Lakeside, Mont., and Sandpoint, Idaho (1984).

The excitement of participating in the construction and meeting new friends becomes a "mutual ministry," in the words of Ashley, the pastor in Pullman. Every year, Adcock said people in the church under construction express interest in helping the next year. Their feelings go farther than gratitude to a commitment to help others, which is translated into action.

There is a powerful Southern Baptist witness in the Northwest—Baptists helping other Baptists. Next year these Kalispell Southern Baptists plan to help some Baptist brothers and sisters in Laurel, Mont.

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

South Africa Violence Grows,
Disrupts Mission Work On Cape

Baptist Press
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CAPE TOWN, South Africa (BP)—As violence escalates on the Cape Peninsula of South Africa, Southern Baptist missionaries are experiencing increased disruption of their work.

Student worker Keith Blakley, from Fort Worth, Texas, reports tension on the three university campuses where he works has reached an all-time high. Tensions are especially bad on the campus of the University of the Western Cape, a primarily "coloured" (mixed race) school where student boycotts, demonstrations and resulting police action have brought his ministry to a halt. Because of controlled access, Blakely is unable to enter the campus.

The day after assuring her sister she was safe and far removed from the hot spots in Cape Town, Blakley's wife, Terry, found herself watching a clash between varsity students and South African riot police from her upstairs window.

"A peaceful student demonstration had turned nasty after traffic was blocked by masses of students met by police in full riot gear," she said. "Tear gas wafted over our garden as we saw students stoning vehicles, and police with batons and sjamboks (a whip of rhinoceros or hippopotamus hide) charging those gathered.

"Although we were truly never in any danger, I will feel hard pressed convincing my family and friends not to worry," she said.

Earlier, a Baptist Student Union prayer meeting had narrowly escaped intrusion by groups known on the campuses as "disruption squads," said Mrs. Blakley, a native of Houston. The squads break up classes and disrupt lectures, sometimes using force, to assure the success of a campus-wide boycott of classes.

Baptist Student Union members at the University of Western Cape heard noises outside, but were unaware the "disruption squad" was threatening to break up their meeting. They later learned that a young non-Christian who had been witnessed to by one of the group members convinced the disrupters not to intrude.

Charles and Evelyn Hampton, who work primarily with "coloured" churches, at first avoided going into some neighborhoods after dark, but continued normal ministries during the day. But they now say some meetings have been canceled because of rioting and unrest and that travel in some communities is extremely limited. Blacks particularly have been unable to participate in much of the work in the province recently because of the unrest, they say. Hampton is from Monticello, Ark., and Mrs. Hampton from Helena, Ark.

The tensions also have infected the student body, made up of equal numbers of white and "coloured" students, at the Western Province Branch of the Baptist Theological College of Southern Africa in Cape Town, says John Saunders of Richmond, Va., special assignment worker teaching at the college. Unrest in the country has caused strong polarization and tension among students and had a profound effect on their ability to continue their studies, he said.

Some students have been absent frequently because of fear of violence in their townships, further disrupting their studies, he added.

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Baptist World Alliance
Denounces Apartheid

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Baptist World Alliance, a voluntary organization of 34 million Baptists in 143 countries, has sent an open letter to the president of South Africa denouncing apartheid as a "demonic system."

Gerhard Claas, general secretary of BWA, sent the letter to South African President Pieter W. Botha, saying the BWA is "deeply concerned about the indiscriminate arrests, imprisonment and persecution of black South Africans seeking their just rights under God."

Claas added: "We abhor and denounce apartheid and its demonic system, including forceable relocation of black populations and destruction of their homes by bulldozing, humiliating discrimination in many public places with rigid pass laws; arbitrary arrest and detention indefinitely without trial, and the disenfranchisement of the black majority."

The letter, mailed Sept. 18, cites a resolution on racism passed during the July 1985 meeting of the Baptist World Congress in Los Angeles, where 8,000 assembled Baptists called racism "a crime against humanity and a sin against God." The resolution added: "We believe it is our duty in the name of God to denounce this system and all who practice or support it."

In his letter, Claas says: "We Baptists join with Christians of South Africa and the world in praying for a peaceful solution to the tragedy that confronts your country. We call upon all men and women of good will to work constructively for the dismantling of apartheid and for a democratic system of government. Mr. President the hour is late. You must act now to avoid further bloodshed. In the name of God, please seize the opportunity to work for the freedom of all people in South Africa."

Claas said in a postscript: "There are those who would speak as Baptists who do not represent the historic movement of our people. The Baptist World Alliance represents 134 Baptist conventions and unions in 143 countries and thus unites 95 percent of the Baptists in the world."

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Senate Panel Considers
National Day Of Fasting

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press
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WASHINGTON (BP)—A congressional joint resolution would encourage Americans to fast one or more meals and contribute the unspent food money for hunger relief.

The proposed bill would designate Nov. 24, 1985—the Sunday before Thanksgiving—as National Day of Fasting to Raise Funds to Combat Hunger. The bipartisan measure is now before Senate and House committees.

Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah), one of the bill's sponsors, outlined details of the proposed National Day of Fasting during a Senate hearing. Participants in the fast will be asked to forego a meal or two on the specified Sunday and send the savings either to the charity of their choice or to a post office box already established in Washington.

Contributions sent to the post office box will be distributed through InterAction, an umbrella organization of groups dedicated to ending hunger throughout the world. Baptist World Alliance is an InterAction member agency and, according to a BWA spokesman, will participate.

Donations distributed through InterAction will be designated as 35 percent for immediate relief and 45 percent for long-term reconstruction and development in Africa, 15 percent for hunger in the United States, and five percent for development education and public awareness.

Hatch emphasized the National Day of Fasting "is not to interfere, detract or diminish the panoply of events already planned for this fall," but is to "augment and support these other activities and provide another opportunity for Americans to help defeat famine."

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