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January 28, 1985

85-6

New Church Growth Probe  
 Tries To 'Close Back Door'

By Jim Newton

JOLIET, Ill. (BP)--Seeking to help "close the back door" through which new Southern Baptist churches leave the denomination by merger or death, the SBC Home Mission Board recently conducted the first of a series of New Church Growth Probe consultations.

The six "probes" in the Joliet, Ill., area were followed by similar consultations with 12 new SBC churches in Iowa. Both consultations were held in cooperation with the state Baptist offices in Illinois and Iowa.

Tom Sykes, associate director of the HMB's new church growth department, said the effort was designed to strengthen existing congregations by helping them develop strategies for the future. "We've been so busy trying to start new churches we haven't had time to help the ones we start to survive, to grow and mature," said Sykes, who led the team of consultants in both the Illinois and Iowa projects.

Sykes pointed out data provided by the Home Mission Board's research division has shown that in the last 10 years, about half of the missions started in the SBC will grow strong enough to become churches, and half will be lost by either disbanding or merging.

Since 1974, Southern Baptists have started 8,721 new church-type missions, according to a research report prepared by Rudee Boan of the HMB research division. During the same period, 3,908 (44.8 percent of the total) missions became churches.

During the same ten years (except for 1982 when no data was available), a total of 3,514 SBC missions merged or disbanded, according to Boan's study.

Although Boan cautioned the data may not be accurate for a number of reasons, the statistics indicate generally that "Southern Baptists will see about one-half their missions constitute as churches; and the other half will eventually be lost."

Sykes said the New Church Growth Probe is designed to help churches and pastors who are discouraged because membership and attendance may have reached a plateau or declined.

Ray Fuller, director of missions for Three Rivers Baptist Association in Illinois, said timing of the projects came at a significant moment when Illinois was in the grips of the dead of winter.

"I believe the number one factor which discourages pastors here is the cold weather," Fuller said. "Nobody wants to get out in the cold to go to church, and the pastors get discouraged. They go home and their wives are depressed by cabin fever, and the discouragement intensifies. Our churches just don't grow in the winter; only in the spring and fall."

Despite temperatures of 10 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit), HMB church extension consultants met with the church and pastor during the probes in Illinois and Iowa. They helped the church study and understand the community in which it is located, the potential for growth, the needs that exist, and helped develop short-range strategies for meeting the needs.

Each pastor was asked before the consultation to prepare charts and graphs on the number of prospects, Sunday school and worship attendance and membership, giving trends, and numbers of decisions.

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**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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 Nashville, Tennessee**

The probes in Illinois and Iowa were slightly different, Sykes said. In Illinois, the consultants met only with the six church pastors, whereas in Iowa, they met with the pastors for daytime consultations, and with the 12 congregations in the evening to involve all concerned church members.

Sykes said response to the evening sessions involving the whole church was so encouraging he is recommending all future probes include that element in the schedule.

Sykes said the Home Mission Board sponsored a pilot project for eight churches in Pittsburgh last year, but it was conducted with no advance preparation materials for pastors. Materials used in Illinois and Iowa were developed from the Pittsburgh experience, he said.

During an evaluation luncheon following the probe in Joliet, the six pastors involved praised the board for coming up with a project to help churches and pastors like theirs.

"I didn't know what to expect in a growth probe," said David Bethel, pastor of Westview Baptist Church, Shorewood, Ill. "I'd always thought a probe was something that came in a biology dissecting kit that hurt when you got stuck with it, but this didn't hurt at all. It really helped.

"Maybe the best thing about it is knowing somebody else really does care," Bethel said. He added he received from the consultant several excellent suggestions and "one fantastic idea" which he hopes to implement.

Another pastor, Wes Gillespie of Dwight Baptist Church, Dwight, Ill., welcomed the "breath of fresh air" the probe provided. "When you're down in the dumps like I've been, you've got to trust the Lord," he said. But you also need a breath of fresh air. That's what this probe provided for me."

Sykes said the Home Mission Board selected Illinois and Iowa for the pilot projects because of the need and special interest expressed by the state convention's church extension directors, Jim Norman of Illinois and Richard Lamborn of Iowa. The board will work with other state conventions in planning and conducting similar New Church Growth Probes in the future.

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

Missionary Stops Going;  
Sends Tapes to West Beirut

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

BEIRUT, Lebanon (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary David King no longer risks going to preach at University Baptist Church in West Beirut. Now he sends his sermons to church by cassette tape.

His change in routine came after American Catholic relief worker Lawrence Martin Jenco was kidnapped within a block of the church in early January. Until then, King had been riding in the backseat of a non-American doctor's car as a safety precaution. Now his wife, Maxin, takes cassette tapes of his sermons across the green line into Muslim-dominated West Beirut each Sunday.

King says no American men are attending the services now. A Baptist layman leads the worship.

Jenco is the latest of five American men being held hostage. Presbyterian missionary Ben Weir, a friend of many of the Southern Baptist missionaries, has been missing since May. American women and children have not been victims of kidnappings.

King says he had prayed the fighting factions in West Beirut would overlook University Baptist Church. "We still pray that prayer...but we feel we also should use the common sense the Lord has given us and not presume upon his grace," he explains.

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Southern Baptist missionary Jim Ragland still lives in West Beirut but stays close to the Beirut Baptist School compound where he is principal. He says this latest kidnapping will not affect his work except to limit his shopping for school supplies in that area of town.

Although news reports suggest about 100 Americans remain in West Beirut, Ragland estimates only about 15 to 20 are there who are not either part Lebanese or married to Lebanese. Ragland, his wife, and two single women are the only Southern Baptist missionaries who still live west of the green line. Eighteen missionaries lived in West Beirut at the beginning of this 10-year civil war in which more than 100,000 people have been killed.

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WMU Celebrated Dedication  
Of New Headquarters

By Carol Sisson Garrett

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Approximately 600 guests and national staff poured into the Woman's Missionary Union national headquarters building Jan. 16 for official dedication ceremonies.

Relocation procedures were set in motion four years ago.

Held during the annual executive board meeting for promotion, the dedication ceremonies focused on the theme "His Love is Eternal." Southern Baptist Convention agency heads participated in the dedication.

The program called Woman's Missionary Union and gathered individuals to rededication in praise, thankfulness, obedience, and service to God.

"This building is a result of obedience," said Nona Bickerstaff, home missionary in New York. "There is no greater blessing than the peace that comes from constant obedience."

Citing new methods of publishing, teaching, training, and communicating, Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of WMU, SBC, said, "WMU has built a building which can facilitate the use of every modern technological discovery for making our service to the Lord more efficient and effective." Acknowledging the building as a "monument to those women of the past, inspired by a vision of a lost world," she reminded the audience "people bring glory to God, not monuments."

WMU President Dorothy Sample presided over the dedication. Presidents of the Home and Foreign Mission Boards, William G. Tanner and R. Keith Parks, led prayers of obedience and praise. The prayer of dedication was led by Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer, Executive Committee, SBC.

James Smith, Brotherhood Commission president, read scripture, and Lloyd Elder, Sunday School Board president, led in responsive reading.

Expressions of thankfulness were as varied as Woman's Missionary Union itself. Mrs. Edwin Howard, a member of the relocation committee, chose to say "We thank Thee, Lord," while 1984 Acteens panelist Holly Hutson exclaimed, "Wow, God, you have fashioned a beauty!"

The entire audience joined in a litany of dedication, led by Mrs. A. Harrison Gregory, former president of WMU. Special music was provided by Janie House, foreign missionary to Zambia, and the Samford University Band.

Full use was made of the three-story complex, as guests filled the 400-seat auditorium and spilled over into conference rooms equipped with closed circuit broadcast of the dedication.

Although 600 people were present, "all WMU members everywhere dedicate this building," Weatherford said. "Let us also dedicate our lives so that dry places of the earth will bound forth in our glory to God," she said.

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North Central States Affirm  
Goal To Double Churches

By Michael Tutterow

DAYTON, Ohio (BP)—More than 430 participants from seven north central states reaffirmed their commitment to double the number of churches in the region by 1990.

The pastors and laypersons from the seven north central states—Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin—met at Far Hills Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio, to hear an update on Southern Baptists' work in the region and to train for church starting in the country's mid-section.

R.V. Haygood, executive director of the Indiana Baptist Convention, told participants Southern Baptists had only 625 churches in north central and northeast states in 1946. By 1973, the number had increased to 1,758. During 1973 a steering committee established North Central States Thrust to reach people in the north central states with the gospel. The committee adopted a goal to double the number of churches in the region by 1990.

Since then Southern Baptists have begun only about 19 percent of the churches needed to meet the goal. But Haygood said other goals from the 1973 meeting have been met.

One goal of the thrust "was to turn the eyes of Southern Baptists on the area and get linkages established between old-line state conventions and new work areas," Haygood said. "We have not doubled the number of churches by any means, but we have focused the minds of Southern Baptists on this area and we have focused the minds of Southern Baptists on a Bold Mission Thrust for our world," he explained.

Since the goals were adopted, he added, more than 50 pastors have come from Southern states to work in the region. Also, the north central states have received about \$500,000 through linkages with old-line Baptist state conventions in addition to the scores of volunteers who have flooded the area, working in church construction and other ministries.

Haygood noted currently 2,085 Southern Baptist churches minister to 60 million people—one-fourth of nation's population—who reside in the north central states. "We feel that one-fourth (of Southern Baptist churches) should be here, too," Haygood said.

Baptists will attempt to have 3,516 churches in the seven-state area by 1990, he added.

Clay Price, director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's program research department, reported six percent of the SBC's churches are in the north central states while one out of eight SBC churches started in the United States since 1972 has been in the region.

Though church starts have been high in the region, "as soon as we organize church, we start to lose churches," Price lamented. He noted the region lost two percent of its church starts per year, noting 25 percent of the churches begun in 1972 have been lost and 20 percent of the churches begun since 1973 have disbanded.

Price noted of the churches which reported they organized in 1972, 50 percent did so with 50 members or less. He added figures show one-third of the churches begun with 50 members or fewer are in trouble or dead within five years.

Price suggested Southern Baptists more closely monitor new churches, offering verbal encouragement and support to church leaders. But he also suggested Baptists look at organizing churches when they reach 100 or more in membership. "The smaller the church when organized, the greater the potential of losing it," he warned.

Conference participants also heard Lloyd Elder, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, pledge he will request trustees of the board to increase support for the north central states, with the agency contributing as much as \$100,000 more to each state convention in the region by 1990.

Oscar Romo, director of the Home Mission Board's language missions division, called on Baptists in the north central states to reach ethnics with the gospel. Romo noted 122 million Americans claim they belong to at least one language/ethnic-culture group other than white.

Romo noted the north central states are home to 122 different ethnic groups. While reaching ethnics is important, Romo cautioned Baptists in their approach to language missions. "We must learn to contextualize the gospel," Romo said. "Language becomes the thread and culture becomes the needle by which we weave the gospel into the lives of people."

Joe Ford, associate vice-president of evangelism for the Home Mission Board, told participants "the church is God's way of evangelizing the world. Evangelism will be done by the church or it will not be done at all."

Ford said the climate is right for church starting in today's high-tech society. "Southern Baptists must start more churches because that's the only way we're going to reach the world," he concluded.

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ACTS Opens Offices  
In New York, Atlanta

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The American Christian Television System opened regional offices in New York City and Atlanta Jan. 15.

These are the first regional offices for ACTS, which is operated by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. In its first six months of operation, the network has signed 136 TV systems to carry its family and Christian entertainment programs 24 hours a day.

The purpose of the offices, according to Ron Dixon, ACTS' vice-president of media services, will be to assist state ACTS directors in those areas in their efforts to sign new cable TV affiliates and get churches involved in local programming. The offices are necessary because of "accelerated growth and geographic expansion," he said.

The New York office will be managed by Bill Nichols, ACTS director of broadcast services and regional manager for the Northeast. Nichols, former pastor of First Baptist Church, Albany, Ga., has been with ACTS three years. He is a native of West Palm Beach, Fla. The office will cover Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, Michigan, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont.

The Atlanta office will be managed by Mike Wright, southeastern regional manager. Wright, a native of Crescent City, Calif., has been a consultant for ACTS for two years. The office will cover Alabama, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

"In addition to being more accessible to the state directors, this move also is good stewardship," Dixon said. "We will spend more time on the field rather than traveling back and forth to Texas."

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Tennessean Sees God's Purpose  
Despite Hardicap And Hardship

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Life's been no bed of roses for Imogene May but the 35-year-old east Tennesseean has learned it's enough to simply "live for the Lord."

May, a full-time employee at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., where her husband, Richard, studies at Boyce Bible School, believes "the Lord uses my experiences. They open up witnessing opportunities and we all have our purpose."

Reared in a mountain community outside Chattanooga, Tenn., the eleventh child of twelve, May grew up poor and married at age 16. She describes her early life as "wild."

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Losing her arm became the initial step to changing her life, she adds. "My husband drank heavily. One night after he had been drinking, he was cleaning a shot gun. It went off and literally blew my arm away."

May became aware of what dying might be like. "I had an experience of dying and I was very much aware that I was not going to heaven. People seldom talk of dying," she notes, "but when they do, they talk about going to heaven. I knew I wasn't."

After leaving the hospital, May moved to a tenant farm with her husband and two small children. Through the landowner and a revival meeting she was led to Christ, but soon after her husband left her. Struggling to provide for her daughters and partying to escape from her problems, May put God in her past. That is until the man she was dating—Richard—accepted an invitation to hear another friend preach. During that service, Richard came to God and May rededicated her life.

They married and things were going pretty well for the two until Richard lost his job, May said. At the end of three months of searching, May said the two decided to do "what the Lord wanted us to. We didn't know why, but we decided to come here. We had \$5, an old car and some clothes and dishes."

They looked up friends in Louisville and Richard secured a job the day he arrived, she recalled. "In the two years we've been here, we've had doors opened and all our needs met."

At present, the two are working with youth at Garfield Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville's west end.

"I really don't know what we'll do in the future but I know whatever it is, it will be rough. There's a lot of my life I wouldn't want to live over again but the Lord uses it now. When I get cocky, my arm's still here to keep me humble. It's helped change my outlook. I can do all things through Christ."

May realizes her past enables her to minister to others with special needs.

"I'm weak and struggling, but I'm still trying to live for the Lord," she affirms. "I've found there's peace and joy in being where you're supposed to be. All I ask anymore is that the Lord help me do things effectively."

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#### Filipino Chapel Plans For Continued Growth

By Theodore E. Mall

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (BP)—On Nov. 21, 1982, 30 internationals, including Filipinos, Polish Americans and Japanese, met in a home in Jersey City, N.J., to worship. Before the day was over, Bible Church International was born.

Two years later, BCI, reportedly the only primarily Filipino congregation on the East coast, has grown over 300 percent. The chapel, sponsored by Madison Baptist Church, Madison, N.J., is affiliated with the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association, in New York City, and the Baptist Convention of New York, Syracuse.

The church totally has outgrown the rented facilities it uses. A \$300,000 capital funds campaign has been launched for a building site and structure.

The feeling of excitement was amply evident at BCI during the second anniversary celebrations last November when over 200 persons gathered for a time of rejoicing. Those present were challenged to keep sight of their vision for Christian ministry by BCI's pastor Romeo Manansala.

The young congregation already has initiated efforts to start new work among Filipinos in the greater New York City area.

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In cooperation with MNYBA and Madison Baptist Church, BCI has begun work with Filipinos in Manhattan with pastor Job Tacadena as head of the project. "We are seeing results. Several people have responded to the gospel and are ready to be baptized," Tacadena reported recently.

Other new outreach work is being developed by BCI in Passaic, N.J., and other parts of greater New York.

"The response to BCI's outreach has been nothing short of phenomenal," reports Manansala. According to his estimates, there are over 10,000 Filipinos in the Jersey City area. He has been training a number of evangelism and outreach teams to reach these persons.

The needs of the church also have grown in the last two years. According to Manansala, there are scores of Bible studies and other Christian growth units in operation. Even though the church does not own a building, an active building committee is at work looking at the possibility of a new site and to begin new construction soon.

Members and friends of the church already have donated or pledged over \$50,000 toward the initial goal of \$300,000 for the building fund. "We are praying for a miracle. We are praying the Lord will meet our needs," Manansala said. "We know he will continue to bless us as long as we are faithful to him."

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(Theodor E. Mall is associate director of Christian ministries to the United Nations, New York City, a Home Mission Board agency.)

(BP) photo available from Mall upon request

Pastors And Churches Need  
Commitment To Growth

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Southern Baptists have "grown a generation of church members who see non-growth as a natural state of the church," according James Frost.

Frost, a church growth consultant who led Florida Baptist Sunday school work for nearly 14 years, currently is teaching "Principles and Methods of Local Church Growth" at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

He expresses concern about churches which are satisfied with "meager growth" and "maintenance activities." He believes much of the problem arises from pastors and staff who have focused their efforts on internal ministries and do not "have the highest priority on reaching lost people."

Frost has developed seven church growth principles over a career as a pastor, minister of education and denominational official.

Strong, positive, Christian leadership by pastor and staff is the first step to a growing church, Frost indicates. "They must have a philosophy of growth and a commitment to go," he insists. "They have to make it happen."

The pastor is the key, Frost believes, because he sets the pace and pattern for a church. If pastors do not practice evangelism in their own lives, they will not be able to lead their churches to do so.

Biblical priorities are another key ingredient.

A third principle involves developing a strategy for reaching people. He believes the best method for this is to make the Sunday school the church's major outreach organ.

A spirit or attitude of growth is the fourth important element in developing a growing church.

A fifth principle cited by Frost is implementation "through personal witnessing and outreach visitation."

Such an emphasis requires training pastor, staff and members "to witness their faith as part of their lifestyle" and through an organized program of visitation "focused on the unsaved and unenlisted," Frost indicates.

Extension growth—"extending the church's preaching and teaching ministry"—is a sixth step in developing a growing church, the visiting professor explains.

"A church must multiply itself—go beyond any scheduled set of meetings and programs to go wherever people are," Frost said, "not saying, here's our building, here's our schedule, come here if you want to hear the gospel."

New missions, Bible studies, resort ministries and other methods are offered as examples by Frost. He points out extension growth can require reorientation on the part of many pastors. A pastor must "see his success in terms of building the Kingdom of God rather than simply building an organized church," explains Frost. "Their task is to reach people, whether it counts on their statistics or not."

Priority planning is the final principle Frost suggests.

"A church must lay 'holy hands' on its church calendar and plan activities and projects that get at the task they've seen for themselves," Frost argues. He adds the church also should let its priorities guide its budget and financial commitments.

Since his retirement in 1983, Frost has traveled extensively under the sponsorship of his organization, Church Ministries, Inc. He says as he teaches church growth principles, he finds "ready acceptance" on an intellectual level. "The rub is commitment," he adds.

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Lower Medical Standards  
Don't Stop This Dentist

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania (BP)—Harold Mitchell would have left Tanzania and returned to his dental practice in the United States long ago if his only goal were to practice the highest possible level of dentistry.

"As a dentist, I'd walk out everyday based on what we have to work with," said Mitchell, who teaches dental students, practices clinical dentistry and has been as an acting pastor.

"As a missionary, I have to say my first goal here is to serve as a Christian witness, not as a dentist. But I must not fail to practice the best dentistry I can in the situation. Sometimes I still get frustrated when a student doesn't have a light, a saliva ejector, proper filling material or most of the things so normal in the States."

Mitchell doesn't face a unique dilemma. Many health care professionals who choose a career in Third World missions find they eventually can adjust their medical expectations downward. Others discover they can't.

Those who can, usually stay and learn to blend their expertise into a productive Christian ministry. Those who can't either don't stay or stay and work in an unhappy situation.

Harold Mitchell is one who's stayed, adjusted and begun to reap the benefits of his flexibility. "Because I'm a dentist, I get opportunities to reach a lot of different people who wouldn't give me a chance as a preacher," he said.

Those opportunities have come with personnel at the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, where Mitchell operates a clinic; in churches where he's done some clinic work, and with faculty and students in the Division of Dentistry at the University of Tanzania.

"I work with dental students everyday on a one-to-one basis, and my wife, Rene, and I have them come to our home for meals and Christian fellowship," he said.

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"They and members of the faculty have begun to trust us and know we care about them as people. That opens a lot of doors for counsel and witness."

They also have come to realize Mitchell's training and expertise as a dentist has value to them. He probably practices the highest level of dentistry available in Tanzania. His U.S. training and 16 years of practice in Pine Bluff, Ark., before missionary appointment in 1976, prepared him better than most dentists in Tanzania. He also has superior supplies and means.

"My support through the Foreign Mission Board has put me ahead," he explained. "I have the materials, equipment and supplies generally unavailable here."

A mild, unassuming person, Mitchell doesn't put his qualifications and resources on display. He just quietly goes about the job of winning friends, influencing people and helping train Tanzanians to practice the best possible dentistry in their own situation.

"We have certain standards we cannot go below," he said. "We want to give the students the education that's reasonable and realistic for their situation, but not compromise to the point they aren't qualified."

He points out while medical missionaries must learn flexibility and realistic standards, they, too, must not compromise to the point of shoddy practice.

That creates another dilemma for medical missionaries. How do they keep up with advances in their fields and maintain the competence required to retain medical licenses and board certifications in their home states? States require anywhere from 60 to 150 hours of continuing education every three years to maintain licenses.

Mitchell, a member of both the Christian Medical Society and the Baptist Medical-Dental Fellowship, said the two organizations have helped solve that problem for missionary physicians and dentists.

The Christian Medical Society sponsors an international symposium on continuing medical education every two years on a foreign field and brings in some 25 highly qualified faculty members, who pay their own expenses.

The Baptist Medical-Dental Fellowship, among other services, pays the expenses for Southern Baptist missionary physicians and dentists to attend. Southern Baptists usually make up anywhere from one-fifth to one-fourth of the participants.

"The quality of this meeting is superior to any other medical seminar I've attended," Mitchell said. "It keeps us professionally sharp and keeps our spiritual batteries charged." The program provides spiritual emphasis and Bible study in addition to 60 hours of intensive medical training.

Mitchell eagerly sought opportunities for spiritual recharging to prepare himself for his role as acting pastor of Dar es Salaam Baptist Church. He was there until Troy Bennett, a reappointed missionary, arrived recently to take over the full-time pastorate.

The international, English-language congregation, which meets in a school building, reaches a cross section of Africans and Europeans in the city of some one million people.

While pastor, Mitchell became more and more impressed with the role English-language churches can play in urban evangelism and church development among Africans.

"Urban evangelism has been a great weakness on mission fields," he said. "I think the mindset of most missions and missionaries has been to reach more isolated people."

"But spiritual hunger isn't related to color, nationality, wealth, education or location. City people have the same spiritual need as the poorest African in the remotest village."

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(Adapted from the January 1985 issue of The Commission magazine)

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

Missionary Quota In Effect;  
Two Couples Given Extension

IBADAN, Nigeria (BP)--Two Southern Baptist missionary couples who expected to leave Nigeria Jan. 29 because of a new quota system have been granted an extension.

Coy and Vivian Sample of Arkansas and Loretta and Urban Green of Oklahoma, who have been unable to get permanent visas, were told they would have to leave by Jan. 31, but the Foreign Mission Board received a telex Jan. 24 saying the couples could stay until April 25.

No one yet knows what the move means for the couples or the future of missionary quotas in Nigeria, said John Mills, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board director for west Africa.

Fred Levrets, executive secretary of the Baptist Mission of Nigeria, and S.T. Ola Akande, general secretary of the Nigerian Baptist Convention, got confirmation of a quota in a meeting Jan. 17 with the principal immigration officer in Lagos, Nigeria's capital.

Mills said details related to the quota would be worked out in coming months, but it will probably mean a reduction in the number of missionaries as new missionaries are unable to obtain residence permits. How it will affect missionaries already in the country is unknown.

Another couple, Jim and Donna Haney of Missouri, returned to the United States from Nigeria in July 1984 after they also were unable to obtain residence visas.

Mills said two journeyman in orientation preparing to go to Nigeria are being reassigned. Marianne Miles of Savannah, Ga., who was to teach missionary children in Ogbomosho, has been reassigned to work at a Baptist center in The Gambia. Tracey Smith of Prattville, Ala., who was to be a nurse at the Baptist hospital in Eku, will go instead to Gaza.

The Greens and Samples live on the Nigerian coast, where both men are beginning work as general evangelists. Before their appointment, Sample was pastor of First Baptist Church, Morrilton, Ark. He and Mrs. Sample consider Hot Springs, Ark., their hometown. The Greens earlier were missionaries to Nigeria for eight years and to Ghana for 10 years, but more recently had been Southern Baptist home missionaries in Oklahoma. Green is a native of Enid and Mrs. Green is a native of Pawnee.

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Argentina Quake Damages  
Churches, Children's Home

Baptist Press  
1/28/85

MENDOZA, Argentina (BP)--An earthquake early Jan. 26 cracked the walls of two Baptist churches and damaged a children's home in this western Argentina province.

Many Mendoza residents were returning home from theaters and coffee houses when the quake hit at 12:07 a.m. Others ran from homes into the streets, and several died of heart attacks. Early reports listed six dead and 110 injured (including 50 hurt when walls of Carmen Hospital collapsed). Thurmon Bryant, director for Southern Baptist work in eastern South America, said the two missionary couples in Mendoza received no reports of casualties among Baptists.

The earthquake, registering 5.8 on the Richter scale and lasting about five minutes, cracked walls at Mendoza's First Baptist Church and the suburban Godoy Cruz Baptist Church. A children's home operated in the old building of First Baptist Church also was damaged. None of the buildings' walls collapsed. A third Southern Baptist missionary couple in San Juan, about 100 miles to the north, also felt the tremor.

La Nell Bedford in Buenos Aires told Bryant she had called all three missionary families in the quake area and all were uninjured. William and Janis Malone of Texas and Paul and Laura Shelton of Texas and Florida live in Mendoza. Ronnie and Glenda Reynolds of West Virginia work in San Juan.

No immediate need was reported for Southern Baptist relief aid, Bryant said, because quake victims' needs were being cared for locally.

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