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Former SBC President,
Jaroy Weber, Dies

By Orville Scott

DALLAS (BP)—Jaroy Weber, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention and a pastor for more than 40 years, died Feb. 6. He was 64. Weber, who surrendered to the ministry at the age of 12, was pastor of Little Cypress Baptist Church, Orange, Texas; North Orange Baptist Church in Orange, Texas; First Baptist Church, West Monroe, La.; First Baptist Church, Beaumont, Texas; Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala., and First Baptist Church, Lubbock, Texas.

Before he was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1974, Weber was president of the SBC Pastors' Conference.

He earned the bachelor of arts degree from Louisiana College and the bachelor of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He also received the doctor of divinity degree from Louisiana College.

Memorial services were at Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas, where Weber's son, Bill, is pastor. Warren Hultgren, pastor of First Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla., officiated.

Weber is survived by his widow, Nettie, and three children: Jaroy Weber Jr., a plastic surgeon in Palo Alto, Calif.; Bill, pastor of the Prestonwood Church, and Nettie Beth of Palo Alto.

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House Members Hear Pleas
For Hunger Aid To Africa

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2/12/85

WASHINGTON (BP)—Private voluntary organizations in America have channeled about \$60 million in food aid to Africa within the last three months. But the magnitude of the African famine is so great that without additional food aid an estimated 150 million people will face hunger and starvation, according to testimony given before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Legislation co-sponsored by 113 U.S. representatives from both parties seeks quick delivery of about 1.4 million metric tons of food to the 27 nations most adversely affected by Africa's drought. The prolonged drought, resulting in severe food shortages compounded by problems with food distribution, already has claimed about 300,000 lives.

In hearings marked by unusual bipartisan support of the pending legislation (H.R. 100), speaker after speaker pleaded for immediate action to help meet a crisis which has captured worldwide attention.

Rep. Gerald Solomon (R-N.Y.) opened the hearings by reminding his colleagues "a hungry child knows no politics."

Rep. Howard Wolpe (D.-Mich.) added hundreds of thousands of persons already have starved to death "because we did not act on the facts two years ago and compromised on what we said was really needed."

While committee members repeatedly commended the Reagan administration for quick action in allocating aid already authorized, several congressmen challenged administration representatives for underestimating the amount of food aid needed to meet the emergency.

One administration representative, the director of the Agency for International Development, presented an estimate which was significantly lower than Republican and Democratic proposals for emergency food aid.

"By the end of February, the U.S. food pipeline to Africa will dry up," said Robert Parham, director of hunger concerns for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "H.R. 100 will keep the pipeline flowing with desperately needed food and recovery aid. This proposed legislation is a responsible, reasonable approach to the African crisis, based on real need.

"The response of Southern Baptists and other voluntary organizations has been substantial," Parham added. "But we must go the extra mile if we hope to deal with a crisis that confronts a third of all Africans."

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Hanna Named CSM
Missionary Of The Year

By Michael Tutterow

Baptist Press
2/12/85

SAN DIEGO (BP)—Ross H. Hanna, pastor/director of Friendship, Pascua and Manzo Baptist Centers in Tucson, Ariz., received the 1984 Clovis A. Brantley Memorial Award for outstanding contribution to the field of Christian social ministries during the annual meeting of state directors of CSM in San Diego.

Hanna, a missionary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board since 1957, has a long history of CSM work, stemming from his call "to work with the little and forgotten people," said A.B. Colvin, associate to the executive for the Kentucky Baptist Convention who presented the award. Colvin noted Hanna pioneered CSM work with blacks, among the poor in a small Kentucky community, and in a Kentucky mountain community, where he started eight churches.

Hanna began the first CSM program in Arizona when he went to inner-city Tucson. During the past 15 years, Hanna has expanded Baptist ministries to three centers which serve more than 1,000 people a week. During 1984, Colvin also noted, Hanna reported 200 professions of faith as a result of center ministries.

Last year Hanna also began outreach to Mexicans living near the Arizona-Mexico border. Now about 500 people a week frequent three centers he established on the Arizona side of the border. Hanna coordinates a staff of more than 50 local and Mission Service Corps volunteers to work with the six centers.

A native of Shelbyville, Ky., Hanna, 56, was pastor of churches in Kentucky before he was appointed a home missionary. Prior to moving to Tucson, Hanna was pastor of First Papago Baptist Church (Arizona), also under HMB appointment.

From 1961 to 1965, Hanna was pastor of Baptist Indian Mission in Sante Fe, N.M., and from 1957 to 1961 he worked as a language missionary among Indians in Quapaw, Okla.

Hanna is a graduate of Moorehead State College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, both in Kentucky.

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

Longtime WMU Staffer,
Helen Fling, Retires

By D'Lesia Garnett Carroll

Baptist Press
2/12/85

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Longtime missions leader Helen Fling has retired from the Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union, SBC, as promotion associate in new areas.

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Fling's "best of two worlds" offered opportunity to plant and promote WMU in new areas.

Fling's past missions involvement has included being national WMU president, state WMU president, home and foreign missionary, and staff member of national WMU.

"Though I have been intimately connected with WMU and have lived at the heart of WMU for many years, I want it to be clear that I do not serve an organization, I serve Jesus Christ, a person. I serve him through his church, and I have found WMU to be the organization that will develop a woman to her highest potential," said Fling.

Involvement in her local church WMU prepared her for the opportunity to serve a staff member of national WMU. "I found that WMU developed my spiritual life," explained Fling. Her first encounter with WMU, SBC, was a recording secretary from 1957-1963.

In 1963 Fling struggled with the decision to become national president of WMU. "I came to the conclusion that God had given me previous opportunities for a purpose, and I dared not turn my back on what he had already done in my life."

During Fling's term as president, she and her late husband, Robert, saw the necessity of organizing WMU and laying foundations for home missionaries in new areas. In 1968 the Flings were called to serve in New York, and she ended her service as president a year later.

Two years after her stint as president, Fling became WMU president of the Baptist Convention of New York, mainly "because no one else would do it." She served until 1976.

In 1976 the Flings went to Munich, Germany, on special assignment for the Foreign Mission Board. They worked in an English-speaking Baptist church there for a year.

While they were serving in Germany Carolyn Weatherford, WMU executive director, contacted Fling for the upcoming vacancy of promotion associate in new areas. Details were worked out, and in 1977, Fling joined the national WMU staff, succeeding Bernice Elliott.

As promotion associate, Fling's specific task was to help state WMU organizations get started. Several new areas she has helped establish are Nevada, Wyoming, Minnesota-Wisconsin, New England and others.

Based in Birmingham, Fling's salary and travel were paid by the Home Mission Board. Her work was directed by WMU and supervised by Weatherford and Wendell Belew, director of the HMB missions ministries division.

Fling's strong belief in missions work was encouraged by her husband. She considers being called as "his wife, not just any minister's wife," a great gift from God.

"The greatest joy of my life was walking by the side of Robert Fling for 48 wonderful years. Together, we experienced joys and sorrows, but also times of learning and great accelerating," she said of her husband who died in 1982.

First and foremost influence in her life was "Mrs. William McMurray who saw possibilities in me as a young pastor's wife," said Fling. Mrs. R.L. Mathis, former WMU president, and Miss Alma Hunt, former WMU executive director, also played a vital role in Fling's career. "Those three cooperated with God in giving me assignments God used in my heart to stretch me and make me grow," she said.

Fling credits early missions pioneer Juliette Mather "in showing me the importance of WMU literature." Fling said she has relied on this literature and the Bible for spiritual food throughout the years.

Retirement from a full-time job will provide Fling with more opportunities to serve in her local church.

"Every day I am conscious of God's goodness. I do not know what He has in store for me in the next few years, but whatever it is, it will be an exciting adventure," said Fling.

Virginia's Oldest Church
Renews Growth Spirit

By Frank Wm. White

WARRENTON, Va. (BP)—Three years ago observers predicted the oldest continually operating Southern Baptist church in Virginia was near death.

That was before the 64 members at Broad Run Baptist Church in this historic area decided to do something to change the 222-year-old church's plight.

The first step was to find a pastor—after more than a year without one, said Jess Surles, now Sunday school director. Don Traywick accepted the church as a challenge in July 1982, first serving as an interim pastor.

"I had been used to more established churches in North Carolina and had a chance to go back there. I decided I was needed more here," said Traywick, the church's only full-time staff member.

Now, almost three years later, the church has a Sunday school enrollment of 134—double what it was—and has set an enrollment goal of 165 by Sept. 30.

"We started by setting goals," Surles said. Each Sunday school class has an attendance goal to work toward each week and the enrollment goals are set to challenge growth, he said.

There are 11 Sunday school classes at the small white church now instead of the four classes of three years ago. And there is no more space for additional classes in the present facilities.

"When I came here, there was one big class for all the adults, one for the youth, one for the children and one for the preschoolers," Traywick recalled.

Establishing a class structure and ordering Baptist Sunday School Board literature for the different age groups helped boost enrollment and attendance immediately he said.

Increased attendance has strained the seating capacity in the dimly lit, erratically heated sanctuary built with reconstruction funds after the Civil War. Union soldiers burned the original structure which was located two miles down the road.

The members are looking forward to moving into a new sanctuary within a few months. The larger facility will allow room to grow and enable the old sanctuary to be used for children's church service. "We think children's church is really going to help us grow," Traywick said.

Finishing the sanctuary will be a sign to the community the church is alive again and committed to finishing what it has started, Traywick said.

The sanctuary structure was erected 12 years ago, but because of financial problems, a decline in attendance and other problems, the building stood unfinished.

Finances have improved with numerical growth, Traywick said. "We almost starved that first year," he added with a laugh.

Now the offering averages about \$1,350 per week, with six percent of the budget going to the Cooperative Program. The church is making progress in paying off the sanctuary building debt.

Now church leaders say they are looking for more ways to continue the church's growth.

Only 40 miles from Washington, the church is in a rural but developing area as commuters move into new subdivisions which are springing up all around the church, Traywick said.

With the improved morale of the church leaders and the spirit of growth, Traywick believes Broad Run is ready to develop into a strong church.

Lacemaking Leads To
New Mission In Brazil

By Glenda McCauley Miller

POCAO, Brazil (BP)—When Southern Baptist missionary Martha Hairston hit on a plan to help some poor but talented lacemakers improve their families' living conditions, she had no idea the concept would go beyond their small town in northeast Brazil.

But the marketing plan spread to another town and opened the door for a Baptist mission in the midst of a strong Catholic community which had been considered out of reach.

Hairston long had been impressed with the exquisite, detailed lace several women in Belo Jardim made. But their community was poor and few people had money to purchase the luxury items the women created. They found themselves at the mercy of a middleman who offered little more than the cost of the materials.

With few available jobs in the community, those meager profits went to buy food for the women's families, leaving them unable to replenish their lacemaking supplies.

Conditions were ripe to introduce the idea of a cottage industry. Dona Julia, a lacemaker who had trained several other women, was excited about the concept and recruited friends to work with her. Hairston provided the start-up funds and took the placemats, napkins, blouses and other items to Recife where fellow missionary Mary Witt helped with sales.

Soon missionary Mary Ruth Hawkins of Brasilia, the nation's capital, heard about the lace and offered to take orders. The business grew rapidly.

When Hairston learned Dona Julia had lacemaking relatives in Pocaó, a city about 40 miles from Belo Jardim, she offered to help market their products, too. But her motives went beyond financial assistance.

Pocaó is the site of a mountainside Catholic shrine where tourists and devout Catholics come by bus and truckload to ask for blessings. They leave money, jewelry and plastic forms of hands, feet and other body parts, hoping these gifts will persuade their saints to cure them and answer prayers. There had never been an evangelical church in the area. Most Baptists felt there was no hope for preaching the gospel there.

As Dona Julia introduced Hairston to a relative in Pocaó, she explained the missionary wanted to start a Baptist mission and wondered if she could use the relative's house.

Two days later the woman agreed and 70 people turned out for the first meeting, making it necessary to meet in the street outside her home. "The street meetings actually gave us much wider exposure," relates the missionary.

Hairston asked the mayor if he knew of a house they could rent for the mission. He offered the use of a local school. Neighbors volunteered to store the chairs purchased for the meetings.

Later when a home was rented on the town's main street, volunteers, none of them Baptists, offered to repair the broken electrical system.

Sixty-five people regularly attend the Baptist Mission in Pocaó. A relative of Dona Julia's has accepted the Lord, followed by several others.

What began as a ministry to poor lacemakers has resulted in a witness in an area Baptists had decided was impossible to reach.

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(Miller is Southern Baptist missionary press representative in north Brazil.)

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