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86-27

**Peace Committee Adopts
 Statement On Diversity**

By Dan Martin

ATLANTA (BP)--A statement acknowledging theological diversity within the Southern Baptist Convention was adopted by the SBC Peace Committee Feb. 24-25.

The three paragraph statement "is an acknowledgement of the state of affairs" in the 14.4-million-member denomination, according to Peace Committee Chairman Charles Fuller, "but more importantly is a predication on which we can attempt to build relationships through which and by which we can do missions together."

Acknowledging the statement can be taken as a "preamble" to any Peace Committee report at the 1986 annual meeting of the SBC June 10-12 in Atlanta, Fuller said, "For the moment, it will be the basis on which we will seek to find ways in which we can legitimately work together."

The statement says:

"The Peace Committee has completed a preliminary investigation of the theological situation in our SBC seminaries. We have found significant theological diversity within our seminaries reflective of the theological diversity within our wider constituency. These divergencies are found among those who claim to hold a high view of Scripture and to teach in accordance with and not contrary to the Baptist Faith and Message statement of 1963.

"Examples of this diversity include the following, which are intended to be illustrative but not exhaustive: (1) Some accept and affirm the direct creation and historicity of Adam and Eve while others view them instead as representative of the human race in its creation and fall. (2) Some understand the historicity of every event in Scripture as reported by the original source while others hold that the historicity can be clarified and revised by the findings of modern historical scholarship. (3) Some hold to the stated authorship of every book in the Bible while others hold that in some cases such attribution may not refer to the final author or may be pseudonymous. (4) Some hold that every miracle in the Bible is intended to be taken as an historical event while others hold that some miracles are intended to be taken as parabolic.

"The Peace Committee is working earnestly to find ways to build bridges between those holding divergent views so that we may all legitimately coexist and work together in harmony to accomplish our common mission. Please pray that we may find ways to use our diversity to win the greatest number to faith in Christ as Savior and Lord."

Of the statement, Fuller commented: "I don't think any informed Southern Baptist will be surprised by it. This statement has a lot of fact in it, even though we may have known it. We have put it in writing and now it becomes a basis for how we will work together in the future.

"The first two paragraphs mean little or nothing without the third, and the third statement means little without the first two. We have brought them together to describe our condition; now we can use that as a basis for how how we can legitimately do mission together."

Fuller also said: "Regardless of the theological differences we have found and acknowledged to be in our seminaries, we believe the Peace Committee also has found many reasons to greatly affirm the work of our seminaries."

With adoption of the statement, Fuller said attention of the committee will now shift to political matters in the SBC. "The agenda now calls upon us to be as thorough and candid in an analysis of political activity in SBC life; the political causes underlying our conflicts should be no less considered than the theological differences have been."

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Fuller said he believes the diversity statement "is an accurate statement and is in line with the assignment of the committee, which was to discover and to bring to the attention of Southern Baptists some of the causes of our controversy."

Fuller was asked if the statement would put a "smoking gun" into the hands of those who have been critical of theological education at the six SBC-supported seminaries.

"The Peace Committee does not see that as the purpose of the statement. I think we would ask the people to handle this statement with care. To mishandle it is to forfeit whatever opportunity we have to build upon it," Fuller said.

Fuller said the statement "is an accurate statement of our denominational picture. Now we have to look at it and decide how we will live together, serve together, do missions together. All of that is at stake; therefore if we mishandle it, we destroy whatever opportunity we have."

Fuller said the statement came about "laboriously," after a meeting in which the differences were discussed at length.

"I left our last meeting in Dallas in January with a positive note and an encouragement. I am leaving this meeting with optimism for different reasons. We did not simply take up where we left off in Dallas. There, we believed we had turned a corner, although we had not yet experienced a breakthrough. In Dallas, we started to talk about what we could do in order to live together, yet at the same time acknowledging our diversity."

Fuller said the difference in the February and January meetings was because the five subcommittees which visited 11 national SBC agencies made reports at the February meeting.

"The reports of the visitation committees brought our diversity to the front, the reasons for our diversity and memories of the diversity," Fuller said. "We had to put the spirit of the Dallas meeting on the back burner while we dealt with immediate reactions to the reports."

He added: "Progress began to come in the last part of the meeting. After the reports, I sensed frustration about how we could get back on track. It seems that each time we come together there is a jolt in that we seem to have to bang against each other for awhile before we can really begin where we left off. That banging together has been a characteristic each time since the second meeting."

He added: "Now, I think that instead of banging against each other when we meet, we can go back to the statement and say we have accepted the fact of our diversity. Now, I think we can get on to determine what we should do from here."

In addition to adopting the diversity statement, the committee adopted a statement calling on all Southern Baptists "as they express themselves in support of the (presidential) candidate of their choice, that they do so in Christian love and in such a manner that God is honored."

"We did not desire simply to do the obvious," Fuller said, "but to exercise some leadership in speaking in advance of the convention. We have said before that removal of politics from the SBC is virtually impossible and inconsistent with the idea of free will and Baptist liberty. What we want to do is remove the bad politics and encourage people to take the high road."

The group also authorized Fuller to "appoint the necessary subcommittees to research and report on various aspects of politics in the Southern Baptist Convention to include voter registration, voter irregularities, the powers of the president and ongoing political activities in the convention."

He also was authorized to appoint a subcommittee "to consider the effects and advisability of negative designation" in Cooperative Program giving, not only on the national agencies and institutions of the SBC, but on the work of the state Baptist conventions, as well.

The Peace Committee, in the light of controversy which developed over the visit of the subcommittee to Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C., authorized Fuller to arrange for another visit to the campus if administrators and others believe such a visit would be helpful.

Robertson, Falwell, Bakker
Lose Case Over Royalties

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Supreme Court has rejected a claim by three of the nation's most prominent religious broadcasters that a federal agency engaged in religious discrimination by denying them larger shares of copyright royalties paid to producers of television programs that are rebroadcast on cable systems.

The three—Christian Broadcasting Network, Old-Time Gospel Hour and PTL Television Network—took the Copyright Royalty Tribunal to court seeking larger shares from a common pool out of which funds are distributed to a large group of organizations whose programs are rebroadcast on cable television.

At dispute were the distributions for 1979, 1980 and 1982. For 1979 and 1980, the three broadcasters—headed by M.G. "Pat" Robertson, Jerry Falwell and Jim Bakker, respectively—were paid 0.5 percent of the total pool, while in 1982 they received 1 percent. For 1982 the share amounted to \$450,000.

Attorneys for Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network asked the Supreme Court to review an earlier decision by a federal appeals panel approving the distributions. By refusing to do so, the high court left standing the lower panel's ruling.

The government sided with the copyright tribunal in urging the court not to review the case. U.S. Solicitor General Charles Fried noted in a brief filed with the court that the tribunal acted within its legal authority in making the distributions for the three years in question and denied it had engaged in religious discrimination.

Under the Copyright Act of 1976, the tribunal is responsible for distributing annually to copyright owners the royalty fees deposited with the Register of Copyrights by cable television operators. Established by Congress, the tribunal "is necessarily required to make 'inherently subjective judgment calls and engage in a rough balancing of hotly competing claims,'" Fried wrote.

He noted further that copyright owners are encouraged under the law to come to an agreement among themselves over the proper distribution of the royalties, and that all but the religious broadcasters had done so. Others receiving the payments include the Motion Picture Association of America and other producers of movies and other programs; the major professional sports associations and the National Collegiate Athletic Association; Public Broadcasting Service and National Public Radio; the major television networks; and music companies and societies.

Robertson, Falwell and Bakker began receiving their token payments only after earlier court actions challenging the copyright tribunal's original decisions in 1979 and 1980 not to award them anything. In those cases, lower courts instructed the tribunal to reconsider.

Attorneys for Robertson argued in their written appeal to the Supreme Court, however, that the tribunal has persisted in discriminatory treatment of the religious broadcasters: "Indeed, it difficult to conceive of a more flagrant and noxious violation of the firmly established principle that the Government violates the First Amendment when it excludes parties from benefits it administers based on their religious views," they wrote.

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CORRECTION: In Baptist Press story, "SBC Language Missions Workers Receive Awards," mailed Feb. 25, 1986, in the final paragraph, James Godsoe was misidentified. The paragraph should read:

The group also honored James Godsoe, who recently retired as language missions director for the Illinois Baptist State Association. He was presented the Missions Heritage Award for his overall contributions to language missions, following 37 years of service in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and Illinois.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

Hunger Relief 1985:

Most State Conventions
Set Records For Giving

By David Wilkinson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Eleven of the 37 state Baptist conventions last year more than doubled their world hunger contributions of 1984, helping to boost Southern Baptists to a record-shattering \$11.8 million in gifts to the denomination's program of worldwide hunger relief.

Only two state conventions in 1985 failed to surpass the previous year's total, according to a state-by-state analysis prepared by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. Four state conventions recorded dramatic increases over 1984—Arkansas (521 percent), Utah-Idaho (262 percent), Tennessee (230 percent) and Nevada (224 percent). Seven other states at least doubled the amount given in 1984.

Convention-wide, the total of \$11.8 million represented an increase of more than \$4.6 million—or 65 percent—over the previous record, set in 1984.

The Christian Life Commission, which is responsible for coordinating hunger awareness and action among Southern Baptists, compiled the statistics based on data provided by the Southern Baptist Home and Foreign Mission Boards.

In Arkansas and Tennessee, the percentage increases continued a pattern begun several years ago.

In 1983, Arkansas Baptists gave \$28,345 to the world hunger funds. In 1984, they more than doubled that amount, contributing \$63,253. And in 1985, they gave \$392,842—more than five times the 1984 total.

Tennessee Baptists gave \$62,220 in 1983, \$171,966 (a 176 percent increase) in 1984 and \$567,269 (a 230 percent increase) last year.

In terms of total dollars, Texas, the largest state convention, once again was No. 1, with \$1,921,962. That amount accounted for 16.2 percent of the total contributions to the hunger relief funds administered by the two mission boards.

While Texas was the only state convention to give more than \$1 million in 1984, three other state conventions topped the \$1 million mark in 1985—North Carolina (\$1,309,421), Georgia (\$1,067,411) and Virginia (\$1,036,285). South Carolina was No. 5 in 1985 with \$904,120.

In terms of per capita giving, six state conventions contributed an average of more than \$1 per person for the year: New England (\$1.76), Virginia (\$1.75), Hawaii (\$1.61), New York (\$1.43), South Carolina (\$1.31) and North Carolina (\$1.14). Texas, the leader in total dollars, contributed 81 cents per capita for 1985, very near the convention-wide per capita figure of 82 cents.

At the lower end of the scale, several state conventions averaged less than 30 cents per capita for 1985.

Per capita statistics were based on membership totals reported by state conventions for 1984, the latest year for which such statistics are available.

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Editor's Note: A copy of the 1985 hunger relief totals by state conventions has been mailed to state paper editors by the Christian Life Commission.

Ethnics Lead SBC In New
Sunday Schools, Baptisms

By Joe Westbury

Baptist Press
2/28/86

MIAMI (BP)—Nearly 70 percent of the 890 new Sunday schools established in the last five years were started by ethnic and language groups, the director of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's language missions division told a national leadership conference in Miami.

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Oscar I. Romo, who directs Southern Baptist's missions work with 83 ethnic groups in the United States, also reported the ratio of baptisms (conversions) to church members for ethnic congregations far exceeded that of Anglo Southern Baptist congregations.

While the denomination averages one conversion for every 38 members, in many cases the ethnic ratio is one to 10, Romo told participants of the Language Missions Leadership Conference.

In addition, the churches ranking highest in per capita giving during the same time period were all ethnic congregations, he said.

Romo drew his figures from a study compiled by Delbert Fann, national ethnic missionary in the Home Mission Board's language missions division.

Southern Baptists have become the most ethnically-diverse, cosmopolitan denomination in the nation, if not the world, Romo said.

He attributed the growing ethnic diversity in the SBC to "the centrality of the Bible, the autonomy of the local church, the ability for a person to have a personal experience with Christ without having to know American English and the cooperative cohesiveness of the denomination."

Some Southern Baptists still oppose ministering to the nation's ethnic population, which today numbers one-third of the country's population, the missions leader observed.

Romo cited several instances where fast-growing language/ethnic congregations have become threats to the sponsoring church and are being asked to vacate the host facilities. Such problems do not necessarily reflect a national trend, although a trend could develop, he warned.

In addition, Baptist churches in two states where there are many migrants and illegals have established a new criteria for baptism: Only ethnics who are U.S. residents are eligible for baptism, Romo said.

Americans are dealing with a different caliber of ethnic today than in the past, and they need to upgrade their ministry accordingly, he said. "The early immigrants were the poor, huddled, uneducated, unskilled masses seeking survival, a new life in America. But today they are wealthy, proud of their heritage, educated and are professionals whose port of entry is not Ellis Island but LAX (Los Angeles International Airport) and MIA (Miami International Airport)."

Many of these new immigrants are coming to America to develop further their careers and do not want to be branded second-class citizens, he explained.

"In a sense, our nation is a modern tower of Babel, a pluralistic society dispersed across an entire continent," Romo said. "To equate an ethnic as a foreigner is a mistake."

Romo reported statistics which revealed that in 1985, 33.6 percent of the American population identified itself with a language and culture other than English. At the turn of the century--just 16 years away--projections indicate that figure will increase to 35.6 percent, he said.

"The opportunities (for Southern Baptist missionaries) to go to other nations are gradually closing, but the people of the world continue to come to America," he said. "Therefore, it is imperative that Southern Baptists view our nation as a mission field that God, in his wisdom, has brought to our doorstep," he said.

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Mercer's Liberal Arts Faculty
Attacks President's Credibility

By Jack U. Harwell

Baptist Press
2/28/86

MACON, Ga. (BP)--A simmering dispute between faculty and administration of Mercer University over the role of its college of liberal arts has resulted in a resolution from the faculty charging the administration with a "lack of credibility."

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By a vote of 46-28, the faculty of the liberal arts college in Macon, Ga., drafted a three-sentence resolution aimed at President R. Kirby Godsey. The resolution, approved Feb. 24, says:

"Be it resolved: That it is the sense of the faculty of the college of liberal arts that because some of the recent trends in central administration policy and governance practice have not altered, further serious deterioration of faculty-administration relations is inevitable.

"We therefore urge the central administration to recognize that its lack of credibility with the faculty of the college of liberal arts reflects a lack of stable direction of leadership that honors promises, matches its words with action and shows respect for the traditions and procedures of participation which are the lifeblood of a genuine academic community.

"However, the college faculty will reciprocate any genuine efforts to improve the situation."

The faculty vote came after almost a year of discussion between Godsey and the 10-member "blue ribbon" committee elected by the faculty last spring to study complaints against "central administration."

When the blue ribbon committee presented its report to the full liberal arts faculty on Feb. 24, two members--Carlos Flick and Henry Warnock--presented dissenting reports. They sought to have their reports made a part of the final resolution, but the faculty rejected that appeal.

The resolution from the liberal arts faculty was supported by a 17-page document detailing eight "important grievances and problem areas." The grievances involved such matters as relations with other schools, academic programs, finances, faculty vacancies and faculty-administration trust.

After listing these grievances, the committee document observed, "the committee regrets that, after having held more than 30 meetings, it is unable to point to meaningful steps toward resolution of this crisis in leadership. It is therefore not able to give an encouraging report on the prospects for genuinely meaningful participation of the faculty in administrative decisions."

The nine members of the "blue ribbon" committee included professors Eugene Bell, Alpha Bond, John Dunaway, Carlos Flick, Clare Furse, Vincent Leitch, Theodore Nordenhaug, Henry Warnock and Henry Wilder.

In his three-page "dissent" to the blue ribbon committee report, Flick noted, "The faculty of the college, for its part, resolved to reduce the present level of confrontation with the administration. The achievements of president should be acknowledged. Equally important, the faculty must avoid renouncing support for the administration because of any and every mistake made by the president and other officers." His letter of dissent did call on Godsey to give "attention to the college of liberal arts concerns and procedures on the level that has not been the norm during the past several years."

Warnock's letter of dissent added, "The original charge given to this committee had to do with governance. The document now being presented to the faculty has, in my opinion, little to do with the structures of governance but stands rather as criticism of the president of the university and the central administration."

The college of liberal arts was the only faculty body sharing in the committee report.

However, last October, the faculty of the college of liberal arts of Mercer University in Atlanta voted to withdraw from the faculty council, "until representation from all the colleges and schools of the university can be assured."

Following the blue ribbon committee's report, Godsey gave the following statement to the Christian Index, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention:

"The genius of a university community is the ability of the faculty to speak independently of the administration. Mercer University has become far more complex in recent years and the changes which accompany that complexity generate real anxiety among the members of the faculty.

"The university has outstanding faculty who speak with integrity and a strong voice. I respect their views, applaud their freedom to speak, while at times genuinely disagreeing with some their conclusions. Yet we are an academic community, and the diversity between their views and my own remains a part the essential strength of the university.

"The progress of the university in recent years is self-evident. The endowment has increased from \$16 million to over \$50 million. Enrollment has grown significantly. Faculty salaries have substantially increased. The number of persons supporting the university, and the level of support, have also increased dramatically.

"I want this administration always to be sensitive to the voices of the faculty from any on the nine colleges, but in the final analysis, administrative decisions must be reached in the context of the will of trustees. We will always seek to be attentive to concerns of faculty as those concerns bear on our decisions."

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Angolan Rebels To Free
Brazilian Missionaries

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2/28/86

HUAMBO, Angola (BP)--Two Brazilian Baptist missionaries are expected to return to freedom in two weeks after being kidnapped by Angolan rebels on New Year's Eve.

Miriam and Margarida Horvath, who are sisters, were seized Dec. 31 near the city of Huambo in Angola by guerrillas of UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola).

UNITA has agreed to release the two women to officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said Jean-Jacques Surbeck, a Red Cross delegate to international organizations.

"They are in excellent health and ready to leave as soon as the International Red Cross provides the necessary logistical means," said a statement issued in Portugal by UNITA.

The two nurses were sent to Angola by Igreja Batista de Santo Andre, an independent Baptist church in the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, said Houston Greenhaw, a Southern Baptist missionary in Santo Andre. The nurses have no ties with the Southern Baptist Convention or the Brazilian Baptist Convention.

No motive has been established for the kidnapping, Greenhaw and Surbeck said.

"I think it's a policy of UNITA to abduct foreigners in the territories where they have military operations against the government," Surbeck said. "Then they don't really know what to do with these people and they turn them over to us."

The Red Cross will transport the missionaries to South Africa, where representatives of the missionaries will meet them to take them to Portugal or Brazil, he said.

Over the past two years, the Red Cross has repatriated more than 100 people of various nationalities.

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Pastor Credits God
With Family's Safety

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2/28/86

ORLINDA, Tenn. (BP)--A pastor whose wife and children escaped a three-hour kidnapping spree has credited God with his family's safety.

"God brought order out of disorder and absurdity," said Richard Graham, pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Orlinda, Tenn., after his wife and children fled from their abductor in mid-February.

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Marian Graham and their two children, three-year-old David and nine-month-old Debbie, were taken at gunpoint by an unidentified man from a Springfield, Tenn., shopping center. The abductor held them captive while he drove around Greenbrier, Goodlettsville and Nashville, Tenn., for three hours.

They escaped when the kidnapper stopped at a traffic light in Nashville. Clutching her children, Marian Graham jumped from the car and ran into a nearby bank. The man who had captured them drove away.

"Marian was praying that God would deliver them," her husband said. "God gave her the courage and peace of mind to look for an opportunity to escape."

The pastor said his wife and children were all right following the incident, noting the children probably are too young to realize what occurred.

"God does not always keep crises from happening, but he does always provide strength and peace to overcome in the face of crises," he said. "We are asking God to bless all concerned and to bring stronger faith to us all," he added, noting he is proud of his wife's courage and composure and thankful for God's protection.

Police investigations are continuing into the abduction, according to the Baptist and Reflector, newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Early reports indicate the incident may be related to a child-kidnapping ring.

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Edge Urges Involvement
For Church Members

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press
2/28/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptists cannot just pay preachers or church staff members to minister to the lost for them, claimed the author of a book which urges laypersons to become more involved in their churches.

"We cannot fulfill our ministry by giving money to pay for someone else to fulfill our ministry. God does not minister by proxy," explained Findley Edge, author of the "Doctrine of the Laity," the 1986 Southern Baptist doctrine study text.

Edge, a retired professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., said all church members should consider themselves ministers, noting he believes Southern Baptists should do away with the term "church member" and adopt the word "minister" instead.

"Everyone who accepts Christ as their Savior is called to the ministry and should, therefore, be called ministers," Edge insisted.

He said he also favors the term "teacher" over the word "pastor."

"We could call our pastors 'teachers' and throw out the term 'clergy.' For that matter, we could do away with the term 'laity' and just simply use 'layperson,'" said Edge, who was in Nashville, Tenn., Feb. 20-21, leading a Southern Baptist Sunday School Board church training department-sponsored seminar on doctrine of the laity.

Edge urged church staff members attending the seminar to try to get church members more involved in the ministry.

"A lot of times, people come to God for what they can get out of him instead of what they can give him," he said.

Church staff members can learn how to guide church members in becoming ministers for Christ by reading the "Doctrine of the Laity," he said.

He noted general ministries for Christians include caring for their families, both spiritually and materially; upholding Christian ideals in the workplace; and becoming involved in their community, or "voting intelligently."

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Every church member also should participate in a "focused" or specific ministry, he added, pointing out, "A focused ministry is specific in the sense that it avoids vagueness. Some people say, 'My ministry is just to love people.' That's not good enough."

Edge said the Christians' focused ministry also should be significant. "It must have significance in terms of the amount of time and energy a person puts into it. It also has to be worth something in terms of human needs."

A focused ministry must be called by God as well as self-chosen, Edge added, "You can choose to do it. Someone does not have to put pressure on you to do it," he said. "It's inner motivated, a commitment."

A focused ministry should be one in which a church member feels God has given him or her a gift, he concluded. It should be involved directly in fulfilling God's redemptive purpose of leading people to know Jesus as Savior in their lives.

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State Leaders Prepare
Outreach Bible Study

By Frank Wm. White

Baptist Press
2/28/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A new outreach plan for evangelism and Bible study offers an expanded ministry opportunity for Southern Baptist Sunday schools, believes Harry Piland, Sunday school director for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The plan is Outreach Bible Study, and its materials, "An Invitation to Bible Study," already have been tested in New England and taught to state Sunday school leaders from across the country.

"Outreach Bible Study will provide a new path for the Good News," Piland said in the opening session of a three-day training institute for state convention leaders.

The Outreach Bible Study plan calls for Bible study locations outside the church--such as apartments, community centers, homes or office buildings--in an effort to reach non-Christians and unchurched persons who might not be willing to attend traditional Sunday school or church.

The "Invitation to Bible Study" eight-session examination of the Gospel of Luke features Bible content written in language that persons with little church background and no knowledge of the Bible can understand, Piland said.

An emphasis on evangelism is provided in each session, and the teacher's books provide administrative guides and teaching aids. Holman Bible Publishers has produced a Scripture portion, "Invitation to Bible Study: The Gospel of Luke," for use in enlistment activities and in class sessions.

Plans for introducing the materials include an Outreach Bible Study kick-off seminar to be telecast live on Baptist Telecommunication Network (BTN), Aug. 23, 1986. "Invitation to Bible Study" materials for youth and adult students and leaders will be available for Southern Baptist churches in October.

A Bold Mission Thrust goal for the project is 10,000 churches conducting Outreach Bible Study by 1990, Piland reported. Bold Mission Thrust is the Southern Baptist campaign to share the message of Jesus Christ with every person on earth by the year 2000.

During the New England pilot of the outreach program, Baptists started new work in areas previously without a Southern Baptist witness and developed new Sunday school departments through the Bible study plan for non-Christians. Professions of faith in Christ were reported in several pilot project Bible studies.

An ongoing Bible study was developed after the materials were used in a fire hall in Surry, Maine. Mary Beth Caffey, a mission service corps worker, conducted the Bible study and has started another which she hopes will develop into a long-term study.

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Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church in Northborough, Mass., has a new singles department that developed from an Outreach Bible Study project conducted in the homesite of Baptist missions pioneer Luther Rice.

A major strategy resulting from the pilot project is the formation of 50 new congregations in New England in the next five years, said Al Riddley, Sunday school department director for the Baptist Convention of New England.

"In our area where 80 percent of the population is unchurched, this has been a natural," said Caffey, who predicted the materials will be just as effective in Southern states as well. She was a church worker in Waco, Texas, before going to New England two years ago.

Outreach Bible Study will not take the place of evangelism in the Sunday school, but it is another way for the Sunday school to conduct evangelism, Piland explained, noting, "Outreach Bible Study is only one part of Sunday school outreach."

In a panel discussion during the training institute in Nashville, representatives of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union and the Brotherhood Commission voiced support for the project. They suggested church WMU and Brotherhood organizations could be resources for implementing the program.

"This is an opportunity for us to cooperate to get the job of evangelism done in the church," said James Smith, president of the Brotherhood Commission.

June Whitlow, associate executive director of the Woman's Missionary Union, said the WMU has a tradition of reaching people that the church normally does not reach. "WMU should be a part of every church's strategy planning for Outreach Bible Study," she said.

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