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August 8, 1986

86-113

Foreign Board May End  
Medical Work In Jordan

By Art Toalston

AJLOUN, Jordan (BP)—Southern Baptist medical work spanning nearly 35 years in Jordan may be coming to an end.

Efforts have been initiated to find a buyer for the Baptist Hospital at Ajloun—perhaps a religious organization or the Jordanian health ministry. A final sale would be approved by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. Hospital trustees hope the sale will be completed by June 30, 1989.

The hospital's board of directors cited "inadequate patient loads, shortage of personnel, and finances" in concurring with the Southern Baptist missionaries in Jordan that the medical work end.

It will be emotionally painful for many Jordanian Baptists, according to Isam Ballenger, director of Southern Baptist work in Europe and the Middle East, and missionary Lois Calhoun, the hospital's director of nursing who retired this year after 15 years of work there.

Ballenger quoted Fowaz Ameisch, president of the Baptist Community of Jordan, as saying, "I understand the necessity of this move with my head, but my heart can't accept it."

Calhoun said, "Jordanian Baptists have a very special feeling for the hospital." "The hospital, and thus Baptists, had developed a good reputation throughout the country, she said.

The Baptist Community of Jordan reported six churches, nine preaching points and 403 members at the end of 1985. Fifty-five baptisms were recorded. Two Baptist schools with elementary and secondary students, one in Ajloun and the other in Amman, the nation's capital, also have earned high marks.

The number of students enrolled last year was 691.

The hospital treated 2,160 inpatients and 11,241 outpatients last year. The number has been declining since a high of 2,908 inpatients in 1977 and a high of 17,884 outpatients the following year. One reason for the downturn is that the number of government hospitals has increased in recent years. Also, the Baptist Hospital's fees are higher than those charged at government-subsidized facilities.

The Baptist Hospital's capacity was pared down from 50 to 30 beds in 1978. Its nursing school closed after the number of students dropped from a high of 31 in 1974 to three in 1978.

The average inpatient load is 15 to 20, though sometimes all beds are full and, once, just two beds were occupied, Calhoun said.

Retirements of key missionary personnel have not been offset by new appointees. L. August Lovegren, a surgeon, and his wife, Alta Lee, will retire next year. John Roper, another surgeon, and his wife, Ruth, also a physician, will retire within a few years, as will Violet Popp, who supervises in-service training of nurses.

No replacements have entered the missionary appointment process, Ballenger said.

**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL**  
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Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

The current facility was built in 1975. There are two floors and a basement. Working alongside seven Southern Baptist missionaries are 70 Jordanian doctors, nurses and other staffers.

Southern Baptists began work in Jordan in 1952 when the initial facility was purchased from a British doctor.

"There is a need for a hospital in that area," Calhoun noted. Ajloun is a city of about 6,000 people in northern Jordan. Other than the Baptist Hospital, the nearest facilities for full emergency medical care are hospitals in Irbid, an hour's trip to the north, and Amman, an hour and a half to the south. The government has plans to open a diagnostic medical clinic in Ajloun offering full, 24-hour service.

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Widow's Gift Aids  
Struggling Church

By Brenda Hall

Baptist Press  
8/8/86

TOPEKA, Kan. (BP)—"The only thing that kept me from being completely flabbergasted was that I know God works in mysterious ways," said Leon Parker, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church after he received a letter from Mrs. Viola "Miz Vi" Campbell, of rural Yazoo City, Miss.

"Miz Vi" told Parker she wanted to contribute \$30,000 to New Hope Church.

The \$30,000 may not sound like much, but consider that New Hope's annual budget is \$14,500. Consider that Parker works in a bakery to augment his income as pastor. Consider that average attendance at the inner-city church is 45 persons.

New Hope was formed in February 1981, as a mission of First Southern Baptist Church, Lawrence. It joined Kaw Valley Baptist Association in 1983 as a church.

Miz Vi was familiar with New Hope because she spent several days in Topeka last summer with other Mississippians on a short-term missions project spearheaded by J. Courtney Selvy, a native Topekan who formerly was pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Eudora. Selvy now is a pastor in Benton, Miss.

While in Topeka, she visited with people who live near New Hope and noted the need for a gospel-preaching witness in the area. One morning, while other team members were still asleep, she stepped outside to take a walk. She saw Parker across the street at the church and went over to chat with him. He described his desire to see New Hope acquire the two lots between the house where the church currently meets and a used building which the congregation moved into place several years ago and is remodeling for its meeting place.

She caught the vision and returned to Mississippi to pray about her response to the Topeka church's needs, she said.

Her husband, Faula, died in May, 1986, and, after his death, she wrote to Parker, expressing her desire to use money from her husband's estate to assist New Hope. "He would have wanted it to be used in the Lord's work," she said. "I knew I wasn't going to need it, because I had my own money." (She retired from teaching after 32 years and then helped her husband farm, she said.)

That was the letter which nearly floored Parker.

Mrs. Campbell returned to Topeka with another missions team on July 11 and during her stay helped to make Parker's dream come true.

Miz Vi met at a local title company on July 14 with Parker, church treasurer Georgiann Reed and trustee Merten Greene, property owner Richard Billings (whose son attends New Hope), and associational missionary Ken Townsend. Because she wanted the property to remain in Southern Baptist hands, provision was made by which ownership would revert to the association if ever New Hope ceases to be a cooperating Southern Baptist church.

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After the formality of writing checks and signing documents, Miz Vi rejoined the missions team as it constructed a storage building at Baptist Community Ministries in Topeka, performed general carpentry and painting tasks at Bray Assembly, Lake Perry, and worked at Calvary Baptist Church, Atchison, before returning by motor home to Mississippi.

Now New Hope owns two lots which contain two aging rental houses. The congregation will meet to decide a course of action with the possibility of eventually, when money permits, razing the houses to allow construction of a parking lot, estimated to cost \$10,000.

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(Brenda Hall is editorial assistant of the Baptist Digest, newsjournal for the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists.)

Home Mission Board Grants  
Loan To Colorado Baptists

By Joe Westbury

Baptist Press  
8/8/86

ATLANTA (BP)—The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board approved a \$300,000 loan to help the Colorado Baptist Convention through a financial crisis and purchased property adjoining its downtown Atlanta location during the August meeting of its board of directors.

In executive session, the 85-member governing body also requested a seven-member search committee to nominate a new president to resign so that a new "balanced" committee could be named by board officers.

Marvin Prude of Birmingham, Ala., chairman of the church loans committee, said the \$300,000 secured loan would enable the Colorado convention to meet a \$450,000 payment due bond holders who had purchased bonds through the Colorado Church Loans Corporation.

The new loan funds were added to \$600,000 loaned to the convention last year to help it through a \$1.2 million financial crisis incurred by its foundation and loan corporation.

On recommendation of its business services committee, the board also purchased property adjoining its warehouse for \$395,000.

The improved property consists of 15,000 square feet of land and a 10,000 square foot warehouse-type building. The acquisition will aid the board in alleviating its shortage of warehouse space while enhancing its long range presence in the community.

In March the directors voted to maintain the agency's headquarters at 1350 Spring St. NW, in midtown Atlanta rather than relocate elsewhere in the city or nation. As a result the board has begun studying ways adjoining property could be acquired and used for future expansion.

In other business, board chairman Travis E. Wiginton resigned his post as an Oklahoma representative on the board because he is accepting the pastorate of Kona Baptist Church in Hawaii. Wiginton had been pastor of Bethel Baptist Church in Norman, Okla., for the past 11 years.

Clark Hutchinson, pastor of Eastside Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta, was elected interim chairman until regularly-scheduled election of HMB officers in March 1987.

Executive Vice President Robert T. Banks assured the directors even during the board's first six weeks without a president, the agency continues to make progress in reaching America with the gospel.

"It is no accident that even during the 53 days since the Southern Baptist Convention, home missionaries and mission volunteers have reported approximately 193 professions of faith each day—a total of 10,229 saved. About 100 churches and 300 missions have been established as a part of the more than 600 new churches expected to open their doors before January," he told the board.

Banks, as acting president, said the agency "will not go into a holding pattern" in the absence of a president. "We will continue to plan and respond to our needy and changing nation and focus upon the tasks to which all of us have been called."

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Considering a motion from the board's evangelism committee suggesting the department of interfaith witness be transferred from the HMB missions ministries division to the evangelism section, board members voted to refer the restructure question to a special committee composed of chairmen of the two committees involved and three vice presidents of the board. The committee was asked to study the matter and report to the board in its October meeting.

Wiginton said a committee appointed to study the board's policies concerning ordination of women also will present its report to the October board meeting.

In personnel matters, the board elected three new employees and promoted three existing staff members.

Wendell Belew, director of the board's missions ministries division, was promoted to a new position as associate vice president for missions strategy with a major assignment to write seminary textbooks on home missions.

R. Paul Adkins, associate director of the missions ministries division, was promoted to director of the division to succeed Belew.

Kenneth Carter, director of the board's associational evangelism department, was elevated to director of the direct evangelism division.

New staff members elected by the board include two new assistant directors in the special mission ministries department, Bill Berry of Nashville, Tenn., and Kenneth Taylor of Houston. Berry previously was student missions consultant for National Student Ministries at the Baptist Sunday School Board while Taylor was a home missionary and PACT consultant.

David William Stewart, an accounts payable supervisor with Rollins, Inc. of Atlanta, was employed as associate director of the loan servicing department.

In other matters, the board appointed four missionaries and three church planter apprentices while approving 12 individuals for church pastoral assistance, one for language pastoral assistance, and four as mission pastor interns.

The board also honored Jack Redford for 26 years service to the agency. Redford recently retired as director of the church extension department to become director of missions for the Baptist association in Cisco, Texas.

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RAs Learn, Do  
Missions At Meet

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8/8/86

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—Some 1,400 Royal Ambassadors from 26 states both learned about and did missions during the 7th National Pioneer Royal Ambassador Congress Aug. 4-7.

The Congress, which had a theme of "Dare To Care", featured studies about world missions, athletic competitions which raised \$6,600 for world hunger relief and mission action projects in the Memphis area. The Congress, for high school age young men, was sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood Commission.

The mission action projects helped needy and elderly people at more than two dozen sites around Memphis. One team passed out Scripture portions in a Memphis neighborhood.

Eight missionaries representing SBC's Foreign and Home Mission Boards gave testimonies during daily plenary sessions. The worship leader for each of these services was Franklin Pollard, pastor of First Baptist Church in Jackson, Miss.

The Royal Ambassadors were entertained by comedian Jerry Clower, world yo-yo champion Bunny Martin, and AAU champion power lifter Paul Wrenn. Music was provided by the group Truth, pianist Ken Medema, and vocal soloists Gelene Ayers, Angie Lewis and Terri Lynn.

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The closing session featured challenges by James Smith, president of the Brotherhood Commission and James Irwin. Irwin, the Apollo 15 astronaut who survived a serious heart attack earlier this summer, told his youthful audience, "I was dead but now I'm alive because of another miracle of God," adding, "My prayer for each of you is you'll have a strong heart for Jesus Christ to serve him."

Smith reported Royal Ambassadors have raised \$70,000 to date to purchase goats for the hungry in Bangladesh. Smith then challenged the Pioneers to provide friendship kits as a witness to merchant sailors at U.S. seaports. Smith said this is one way Pioneers could answer the question "What does God want to do with you when you get back home?"

A national Pioneer Royal Ambassador Congress is conducted every six years by the SBC Brotherhood Commission. This year's congress chairman was Russell Griffin, director of the commission's children and youth department.

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Raspberry Receives Career  
Chaplain Of Year Award

Baptist Press  
8/8/86

ATLANTA (BP)—John Raspberry, chaplain to employees and families of the Mobile, Ala., County Sheriff's Department, was awarded the John A. Price Excellence in Chaplaincy award by the International Conference of Police Chaplains.

Raspberry, a former U.S. Air Force chaplain, was selected as 1986 Career Chaplain of the Year by the nondenominational conference. He received the award at the annual meeting of police chaplains.

The non-profit group, which promotes the professionalism of police chaplaincy, gives two awards each year: the career chaplain and the volunteer chaplain of the year. This is the second year a Southern Baptist received the career chaplain of the year award.

Raspberry was nominated by county sheriff Tom Purvis for his work with department personnel and their families.

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