



BAPTIST PRESS

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June 3, 1988

88-91

Cooperative Program
tops inflation rate

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' combined ministry budget, has topped the U.S. inflation rate for the second time this fiscal year.

May receipts for the conventionwide program were \$11,953,812, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee.

That amount represents an increase of about \$1.8 million over May of 1987, for a monthly gain of 17.31 percent, Bennett said.

The Cooperative Program's year-to-date total at the end of eight months of the current fiscal year is \$89,997,158, he noted. That is an increase of more than \$3.7 million, or 4.33 percent, over the same period last year.

The current U.S. inflation rate is 3.9 percent.

The only other time the Cooperative Program has surpassed the inflation rate this fiscal year was in January, when it received a record \$15.5 million. The \$11.95 million receipts for May makes that month the fourth-best in six decades of Cooperative Program history.

"Surprise is a proper word at this point" to describe reaction to the May total, Bennett said.

He conducted a year-to-date study of the Cooperative Program May 20 that indicated the budget was up only 1.72 percent over the previous year. Compared to inflation, that slight increase actually reflected a downward trend, he said.

"If we continued (at that rate), we would be facing difficult budget times, and the programs of mission work would suffer," Bennett explained. "I'm surprised and very pleased that we took a turn in this direction, and pleased also that it is in excess of the Consumer Price Index."

The Cooperative Program must maintain its current growth rate if Southern Baptists are to finance their combined basic operating budget, Bennett said. The program's first-phase basic operating budget this year is \$132 million, a 4.24 percent increase over the 1986-87 budget.

The entire Cooperative Program goal this year is \$140 million. In addition to the first-phase basic operating budget, it includes \$6.5 million in capital needs and \$1.55 million for the second phase of the operating budget.

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**SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee**

CORRECTION:

In the article titled "New 'world vision' spurs people to promise change" released June 1, please change the dates in the third paragraph to May 26-28.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

Nominating committee member
Gives 17-name minority report

By Marv Knox

SHREVEPORT, La. (BP)--A member of the Southern Baptist Convention Committee on Nominations has offered a minority report, suggesting replacements for 17 of his committee's nominees for vacant SBC trusteeships.

Raymond T. Boswell, an insurance executive from Shreveport, La., has submitted the list of substitutions for a portion of the nominating committee's report. That report will be presented to messengers to the SBC annual meeting June 14-16 in San Antonio, Texas; messengers must approve the nominees in order for them to serve as convention trustees, commissioners and committee members.

Boswell, who voted against the final nominating committee report when the group met in Nashville March 17-18, told Baptist Press he is acting alone, noting he is the only member he knows who voted against the final report.

He has put forward his slate of "denominational loyalists" as "an attempt to restore balance" to the committee's nominations, he explained.

"Some of the committee's nominees are highly involved in convention politics. That is not the spirit of the Peace Committee," Boswell said.

The SBC Peace Committee was created in 1985 and assigned the task of determining the causes of theological/political strife within the convention and suggesting solutions to the controversy. When its major report was presented last summer, the Peace Committee urged Southern Baptists to "discontinue organized political activity," he noted.

But the political nature of the nominating committee's actions -- including asking if nominees have supported "the cause" of the SBC conservative resurgence -- violated the Peace Committee's recommendation, he said.

"My heart is with the Peace Committee," Boswell insisted. "There should be balance in the nominating process, and there was not. This is an attempt to restore balance. This minority report is not an attempt to completely undo the committee's report, but it is an attempt to speak to the Peace Committee report, that fairness be shown."

Boswell's 17-person slate is a fraction of the committee's slate, which includes about 240 people, 134 of whom are new trustees.

The difference between his nominees and those they would replace is commitment to the denomination's cooperative method of conducting its ministries, he said: "I would say my nominees are denominational loyalists. These are people who are active in the convention."

Boswell's nominations are not offered on behalf of the moderate faction within the convention, he added: "I consider myself to be more conservative than the conservatives. I haven't talked with the moderate leadership. I'm a conservative, and that's where I stand.

"I'm not trying to identify this minority report as a moderate or liberal slate. I'm trying to do what the Peace Committee said for us to do, and that's give balance."

His nominees come from across the spectrum of Southern Baptist life, Boswell said. They include people he has known or people recommended by people he has known during almost four decades of activity in Southern Baptist life.

"Through my years on the (SBC) Executive Committee, as (Louisiana) state convention president and as a member of the (SBC) Canada Study Committee, I have developed some friendships across the convention," he said. "I have communicated with these people, many of whom I've known through the years, and they have suggested names of people of proven loyalty and commitment to the convention."

Boswell has asked SBC President Adrian P. Rogers, who will chair the convention's annual meeting, for permission to present the minority report "from the same platform where all other reports will be made."

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He stated his request in a letter to Rogers that also was sent to Baptist Press; the Baptist Message, newsjournal of Louisiana Baptists; Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee; and Joseph T. Knott III, a Raleigh, N.C., attorney and chairman of the nominating committee.

"I am writing to you because I could not in conscience vote for the report adopted by the majority of the Committee on Nominations," he wrote in his letter. "I feel that in the majority report, I was not able to speak for the Southern Baptists of Louisiana. The nominees I proposed were not adequately considered, and I feel that the final report did not adequately reflect an unbiased view of those to be nominated for some of the positions considered."

Boswell noted in his letter and reiterated to Baptist Press that his nominations conform to SBC bylaws, specifically bylaw 16, subparagraphs 2-10. He said previous rulings that have limited substitutions to one person at a time from one messenger actually control the report of the Committee on Committees, not the Committee on Nominations.

He noted the convention already has precedent for minority reports. Last year, a minority of conservative SBC Christian Life Commission trustees offered a report following the commission's report.

In his request to Rogers, he also asked that the minority report be published in the SBC Bulletin for the first day of the annual meeting so that, in addition to the Baptist Press story, messengers will have an opportunity to see the names of the people he is nominating.

Of Boswell's request, Rogers told Baptist Press, "I have no response to it except to say he will be treated along with every other member of the convention: No. 1 with courtesy, and No. 2 according to parliamentary procedure."

Rogers said he will wait upon the parliamentarians' advice to make a ruling. He added: "It needs to be noted a minority report is not a privilege; it must be granted by the convention -- that's one factor. The other factor is that if indeed his proposal fits the spirit and law of the bylaw."

Nominating committee Chairman Knott told Baptist Press, "I wish this had been done at the (nominating committee) meeting, when we had all the people present and all the facts could be discussed."

"If this minority report is not permitted by the presiding officer, it is my intention to appeal the decision of the chair," Boswell said.

Boswell lists names
From minority report

Baptist Press
6/3/88

SHREVEPORT, La. (BP)--The names of 17 people who have been offered as a minority report to the Southern Baptist Committee on Nominations' slate have been released by the author of that report, Raymond T. Boswell.

Boswell, a layman from Shreveport, La., and a member of the nominating committee, has announced he will offer the minority report as "an attempt to restore balance" to the process of nominating Southern Baptist Convention trustees.

Messengers to the SBC annual meeting June 14-16 in San Antonio, Texas, will elect trustees to fill vacancies on 22 convention boards, commissions and committees. Boswell's alternates are:

-- Harlan Blount, an internal auditing operations manager for a telephone company and member of Melbourne Heights Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., to replace John Hicks, an attorney and member of Cedar Creek Church in Louisville, to a five-year term as a local member of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary board.

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-- James E. Cooper, associate pastor of First Baptist Church of Ruston, La., replacing Jim Richards, pastor of Greenacres Church in Bastrop, La., to a four-year term on the Christian Life Commission.

-- Ralph E. Ehren, pastor of Colesville Church in Silver Spring, Md., replacing Deborah Glanville, a homemaker and member of Northwest Church in Reistertown, Md., to a four-year term on the Christian Life Commission.

-- Ed Freeman, pastor of Monument Heights Church in Richmond, Va., replacing Tommy J. Taylor, pastor of London Bridge Church in Virginia Beach, Va., to a four-year term on the Sunday School Board.

-- Betty Gilwreath, a homemaker and member of Providence Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., replacing Paul Steven Hardy, pastor of Holly Hill Church in Burlington, N.C., to a four-year term on the Foreign Mission Board.

-- Ralph Henson, pastor of North Monroe Church in Monroe, La., replacing Jesse Lott, pastor of First Church of Harrisonburg, La., to a four-year term as a local member of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary board.

-- Charles Johnson, pastor of First Church of Albany, Ky., replacing Allen F. Harrod, pastor of First Church of Bellevue, Ky., to a two-year term on the Sunday School Board.

-- Frank Jordan, pastor of Highland Avenue Church in National City, Calif., to replace Edwin L. Bailey, an electrical engineer and member of Rose Drive Church in Yorba Linda, Calif., to a five-year term on the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary board.

Jordan, who had been a Southeastern Seminary trustee for five years, was the only SBC trustee eligible for another term not to be renominated. (See "'Bumped' trustee won't fight status," BP, 5/13/88)

-- William Lacy, pastor of First Church of Lake Charles, La., replacing O. Carroll Karkalits, dean of engineering at McNeese State University and a member of Trinity Church in Lake Charles, to a five-year term on the Southern Seminary board.

Lacy was the only nominee proposed by Boswell and rejected by the nominating committee that Boswell included in his minority report slate, Boswell said.

-- Phil Lineberger, pastor of Richardson Heights Church in Richardson, Texas, replacing Liz Minnick, an elementary schoolteacher and member of Great Hills Church in Austin, Texas, to a four-year term as an at-large member of the Christian Life Commission.

-- Jerold R. McBride, pastor of First Church of San Angelo, Texas, to replace Paige Patterson, president of Criswell College and a member of First Church of Dallas, to a four-year term on the Foreign Mission Board.

-- Robert McGee, pastor of Temple Church in Ruston, La., to replace Gayden Jones, a homemaker and member of First Church of Baton Rouge, La., to a four-year term on the SBC Executive Committee.

-- Mickey Nardin, pastor of Fairview Church in Detroit, to replace Cecil Campbell, pastor of Gracemont Church in Marysville, Mich., to a four-year term on the Christian Life Commission. Campbell has since been replaced by Donna J. Wester, a homemaker and member of of First Church of St. Clair Shores, Mich., by the nominating committee's executive subcommittee.

-- Jeanie Nolan, a homemaker and childhood education intern at First Church of Mulvane, Kan., replacing Mark Patton, pastor of First Southern Church in Topeka, Kan., to a one-year term on the Foreign Mission Board.

-- Randall Robinson, pastor of Memorial Church in Arlington, Va., replacing T.C. Pinckney, a retired U.S. Air Force brigadier general and member of Plymouth Haven Church in Alexandria, Va., to a four-year term on the Executive Committee.

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-- Paul Sadler, pastor of Meadowbrook Church in Waco, Texas, replacing R. Richard Kirgan, pastor of First Church of Lindale, Texas, to a four-year term on the Sunday School Board.

-- Frank Thomas, pastor of Alta Woods Church in Jackson, Miss., replacing John S. Allen, pastor of First Church of Richton, Miss., to a five-year term on the Southern Seminary board.

All of the nominees on the minority slate are eligible for nomination and have agreed to serve if elected, Boswell said.

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Moore estimates 550,000
praying for convention

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
6/3/88

AMARILLO, Texas (BP)--More than 550,000 Southern Baptists are praying for their convention's annual meeting June 14-16 in San Antonio, according to estimates compiled by W. Winfred Moore.

Pastors from more than 2,500 churches have mailed prayer commitment cards to Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, and a leader in the moderate faction in the Southern Baptist Convention.

The commitment cards were part of a packet Moore mailed to more than 34,000 churches in early May. The packet also included a 10-minute tape-recorded message from Moore and a brochure produced by a moderate organization called Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Moore, who was SBC first vice president in 1985-86, also was the moderates' SBC presidential candidate in 1985 and 1986.

In his cover letter with the packet, Moore said of the upcoming SBC annual meeting: "For me, this meeting may be the most important for missions and evangelism in our history. So much is at stake."

At the time he mailed the packet, he told Baptist Press: "The bottom-line purpose of this is to try to convince Southern Baptist people that it is important that we turn this convention around and come back to historic Baptist principles and practices. That includes accepting one another in diversity and getting away from this power struggle that says, 'If you don't agree with me, you have no place in the power structure.'"

A cover letter with Moore's mailing requested recipients, "Let me know if you will covenant with me to pray about these important concerns regarding our convention."

A late-May statement released by Moore said: "I have been overwhelmed by the response, and we are continuing to get 75 to 100 cards each day. Also, the scope of the response includes every size church representing every state.

"People who work in direct-mail campaigns told me if we got back between 700 and 1,000 cards it would be an excellent response, and we have gone far beyond that figure."

Since Southern Baptist statisticians estimate the average Southern Baptist church has a resident membership of 275, Moore said, he believes "at least 550,000 Southern Baptist are praying for our San Antonio meeting. That is very encouraging news."

Moore and Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention have received some criticism for the mailing. These criticisms particularly have panned the brochure, which is critical of SBC conservative leaders Paige Patterson and W.A. Criswell of Dallas and Paul Pressler of Houston.

Moore acknowledged the criticism has been channeled back to him through some of the response cards. As of late May, he had received 221 cards "with statements that could be interpreted negatively."

But of the promises to pray, he said: "I hope the concern for our convention demonstrated in the prayer cards will result in pastors and laypersons attending the convention. This will be a historic meeting -- a crossroads for the future of Southern Baptists."

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Father and son committed
to volunteer missions

By Jim Burton

PRAIRIE VILLAGE, Kan. (BP)--The vigil lasted 20 days. Beginning Oct. 5, 1987, as many as 40 people were gathered in the waiting room of a Kansas City, Mo., hospital to pray for Caleb Finch, who was born 10 weeks early.

Greg and Pam Finch also waited and prayed. Mrs. Finch had developed toxemia during the pregnancy. Their two-pound son, whose biblical name means whole, was perfect in almost every way.

"He had eyebrows, a full head of hair, fingernails, he had everything that you and I have got. He was a terrific kid except for one thing. He didn't have the lung power that he needed to sustain his life," Finch explained.

News of Caleb spread. Finch says: "It was an amazing thing. Everybody in the hospital knew about Caleb and about the nuts that were in the waiting room praying all the time."

And healing came, but not to the child.

"Throughout the crisis many things began to happen to our family," Finch recalled. "A lot of healing began to take place. Only it wasn't in Caleb, it was in us."

As family relationships and spiritual relationships were healed, Caleb laid in an incubator attached to a respirator. "It's kind of ironic, because Caleb had the gift of healing, yet he couldn't heal himself," Finch said.

Caleb died Oct. 25.

In the eyes of his father, Caleb came to earth on a special, short-term mission trip from God. The significance of his short life has come to symbolize the Finch family's ministry.

"Caleb could have been the greatest tragedy that ever happened in our lives," Finch said. "But just by being there, just by existing and living and breathing in the image of God he touched lives.

"Caleb represents the things God wants from you and me. He wants our innocence and goodness, and he wants our dependency on him. He wants us to feel inadequate at certain times so that God's power can be revealed through our commitments."

And just as God's power was revealed through the innocence of a child, it also is seen in a commitment to volunteer missions.

Harold Finch, Greg Finch's father, has learned that when an ordinary layman sets out to help other ordinary Christians, some not-so-ordinary things can happen.

-- Like building the most successful business training firm in America from scratch. When it was sold in 1985, annual sales were about \$30 million.

-- Like sitting in a hotel room in San Francisco and yielding to God's call to form a foundation that sends missions volunteers overseas for two weeks and covers about \$1,500 of the expenses of each.

In 1984 Harold Finch, and his wife, Peggy, formed a not-so-ordinary foundation. Wellspring Mission Volunteers Foundation in Prairie Village, Kan., neither solicits funds nor accepts donations. It operates solely from the family's return on investments following the sale of their business training company.

According to Harold Finch, the business was established in 1977 with the expressed purpose of providing a financial base so that within five years he and a partner could become involved in full-time ministry. The idea for Wellspring came later.

"The vision came after we sold the business," he said. "We were just blind. All we said is we wanted to do something."

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For four months following the sale of his business, he sought God's will concerning his family's future. "I was in San Francisco just having a meditation time and the Lord spoke just very clearly and convicted me that I had spent a lot of time, in church work and I could count everyone I'd led to the Lord on one hand. My (new) business is to win souls into the kingdom."

The "business" of winning souls into the kingdom is multiplied through Wellspring. Wellspring-sponsored missions volunteers have led about 10,000 people to Christ.

Harold Finch has been joined by his son, Greg, at Wellspring. Together, they went to India on their first volunteer mission trip. "The India trip was a test. We didn't have full faith that you can really do anything in two weeks. We confirmed for ourselves, as everyone else who has gone, that you can work miracles in two weeks, mostly in your own life," Harold Finch said.

Working through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Wellspring accepts applications from Southern Baptists who feel led to volunteer for a two-week foreign mission project. Preference is given to applicants in the Kansas-Nebraska Baptist Convention, of which Harold Finch currently is president. Applicants are then matched with requests from the board.

Both Finch families are members of Messiah Baptist Church in Leawood, Kan. In addition to active church participation, both men have made two mission trips annually since that first trek to India. For Greg Finch, a real turning point came in the Philippines.

He joined others on the island of Mindanau. Pastors were paired with laymen to go in twos as evangelism teams. When several people cancelled, he was asked if he would preach.

Although he had never preached before, he felt led to cooperate. "I needed to step out and do something that was scary," he said.

When he met his interpreter, he asked how big the crowds might be. The interpreter estimated that maybe 5,000 people would attend.

"We've been preparing for your coming for a long time," the interpreter told him. "When we found out your name, I got on a motorcycle and I rode through the center of the city with a megaphone proclaiming that the great American evangelist Greg Finch was coming to preach."

More than 280 people made professions of faith, including the town's mayor and three city councilmen.

It was a valuable lesson confirmed several years later by his own son's short life. Just by being there, just by existing and living and breathing in the image of God, Greg Finch overcame language and cultural barriers to touch lives in a not-so-ordinary way.

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Lottie Moon offering
totals \$69.9 million

Baptist Press
6/3/88

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The 1987 Lottie Moon offering for Southern Baptist foreign missions totaled \$69.9 million, \$500,000 above the 1986 offering but still more than \$5 million below the goal of \$75 million.

The offering total of \$69,912,637.50, calculated after financial books closed May 31, topped last year's receipts by 0.72 percent. That is the smallest percentage increase in decades. The last increase to fall below 1 percent came in 1969, when it was 0.91 percent.

But any increase was good news to Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials who feared the total might actually fall below the previous year's offering for the first time since the Depression year of 1937, half a century ago.

"We are grateful that we've received about a half-million dollars more than we received last year," said FMB President R. Keith Parks. "A little heavier flow of gifts in these later weeks enabled us to almost reach \$70 million."

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Parks said the Lottie Moon shortfall and decreases in other types of giving already have resulted in cutbacks in mission spending this year. The shortage also will force a 12 percent across-the-board cut in worldwide mission operating budgets in 1989, although missionary support and salaries should not be affected.

"Our financial projections are very serious," he said. "We've never made that heavy a cut since the Depression years. And with the continued growth in mission opportunities and ways of doing things, we consider it tragic that we don't have the funds to do these things."

Asked if political battles in the Southern Baptist Convention are hurting Lottie Moon giving, Parks replied that he did not have any factual data to know for sure. But he said several donors who have given substantial special gifts in the past to missions, over and above the Cooperative Program unified budget and Lottie Moon, have told him they are now "reluctant to give ... because of their concern about the convention controversy" and how it might change the direction of the Foreign Mission Board.

The donors told Parks they will wait and see what happens. He added that other Southern Baptist agency heads have said they are encountering the same concerns among "over and above" supporters.

"Whether that also has been a factor in giving to the Lottie Moon offering or in giving through churches reflected in a lower percentage gain in the Cooperative Program, I do not have facts to substantiate," Parks said. "I guess it's logical to assume that if it's affecting (special gifts), then the controversy has had to have an impact on other giving."

The annual Lottie Moon offering helps support more than 3,800 Southern Baptist missionaries in 113 countries. All Lottie Moon funds are spent overseas. Once reserved for financing the missionaries' work and capital needs, Lottie Moon money now pays for a steadily increasing slice of the basic costs of missionary support, which have nearly doubled in the last decade.

The Lottie Moon goal has not been met since 1981. The 1987 goal of \$75 million -- frozen at that level after the same goal was missed by more than \$5.5 million last year -- was intended to finance almost 45 percent of the Foreign Mission Board's total 1988 budget of \$167.8 million. Cooperative Program gifts were projected to fund more than 39 percent, with other gifts and investment income providing the rest.

Foreign Mission Board trustees are expected to consider ways to handle the budget shortfall at their June session in San Antonio, Texas, just before the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting begins.

The Woman's Missionary Union, which promotes Southern Baptists' home and foreign mission offerings, recently issued a call to prayer for both offerings. Some of the women attending the union's centennial celebration in Richmond May 13-14 responded by giving to help the Lottie Moon offering. Women on several buses from Missouri began passing a paper bag and ended up giving more than \$6,000.

The 1988 Lottie Moon goal has not yet been set.

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New Addresses Assigned
For National WMU

Baptist Press
6/3/88

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--The U.S. Postal Service has assigned new addresses to the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, effective immediately.

Mail addressed to the national WMU should now be sent to P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, Ala. 35283-0010.

All deliveries should use the new shipping address Highway 280 East, 100 Missionary Ridge, Birmingham, Ala. 35242-5235.

New Hope, a publishing arm of WMU, has also been given a new address. It is P.O. Box 12065, Birmingham, Ala. 35202-2065.

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Professor sees more
authority by clergy

By Pat Cole

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Although Southern Baptists are observing the "Year of the Laity," churches in the denomination increasingly are assigning more power to their ordained leaders, claimed church historian Bill J. Leonard.

Leonard, professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., said the 1970s and '80s have been characterized by a movement toward autocratic leadership by pastors and greater specialization of ministerial duties in churches with multiple staffs.

These trends have led to a "clergification" of the Southern Baptist Convention, he described.

Many Southern Baptists pastors, Leonard noted, have adopted a style of leadership similar to a chief executive officer of a corporation. He said such a pastor will sometimes describe himself as the "undershepherd who speaks for God."

"This model of ministry has typically characterized independent Baptist churches, but the model is becoming more normative in the SBC," said Leonard. "It's more publicly visible in the so-called super churches, but its also quite prevalent in smaller churches that see it as a way to grow into 'super churches.'"

He contended such a view of ministerial leadership often threatens to degrade the status of lay people: "It makes the laity second-class citizens. It undermines the most basic biblical understanding of the church as the whole people of God."

The role of ordained leadership also has expanded as ordained professionals have joined church staffs to guide the specialized ministries of churches, he said. Churches now have ministers who work in such areas as youth, music, children, education and business administration.

"This is not a bad thing," he said. "It's an understandable development given the large sizes of churches and the need for smaller groups within the church."

However, Leonard warned, the danger of the multiple ministry concept is the that it might discourage ministry by people. He said it could foster the view that laypeople are "clients/consumers who receive a service (from a professionally trained minister) which they underwrite their financial support and attendance."

All Christians are "called to the gospel" but within different offices, he said. "For the Christian, baptism is the radical egalitarian act. Faith and baptism make all persons ministers and unite all persons equally as the people of God, the body of Christ."

The shift toward more authority for the clergy, Leonard noted, follows a period in which the role of the laity was emphasized. During the 1960s and early 1970s, the lay renewal movement led by people such as Findley Edge, Elton Trueblood, Keith Miller and Carlyle Marney stressed the equality of all believers.

The key to reversing the trend toward autocratic pastoral leadership, Leonard said, lies with the laypeople themselves.

"The situation will change only as laity become increasingly frustrated with the paternalism and the second-class status which they've received, and as the church needs more vital, lay-centered leadership," he explained.

The autocratic style of pastoral leadership will eventually harm churches, he said: "The church is not a corporation, and ultimately it will suffer. It (an autocratic pastoral style) depersonalizes and minimizes some important elements of the gospel."

Too much pastoral authority, Leonard added, "diminishes one of the dynamics of the church the energy of the laity."

Kimball: wrapped
up with Christ

By Jim Burton

PIPPA PASSES, Ky. (BP)--Danny Kimball pulls out of the gravel parking lot of Caney Baptist Church in Pippa Passes, Ky., and drives through the campus of Alice Lloyd College. He is alone as the 15-passenger van heads down state highway 899.

Kimball won't stay on this road long. Soon he will veer off and snake through the creeks and hollers of eastern Kentucky. By 9:30 a.m., he returns to the church with 43 screaming kids and two adults.

"Abigail, don't pull my hair."

"Danny, Pee Wee hit me."

Kimball doesn't even flinch. The noise and swarm of kids is worth the trouble. Before these 43 children and two adults load up to return home, seven will make professions of faith in Christ.

From an affluent family in South Carolina, Kimball finds himself ministering as a layman in Appalachia. Much of what Kimball sees today existed 100 years ago. But Baptist Brotherhood participation has given him a vision for ministry.

Kimball says he was searching for a place of ministry. He attended seminary briefly, then joined several organizations, including the Gideons. He also was a volunteer prison chaplain in Aiken, S.C., and helped form the Habitat for Humanity chapter in Greenville, S.C. Still, he didn't feel these were the ministries God had for him.

Four years ago, the director of missions for North Greenville Baptist Association asked Kimball to become the associational Brotherhood director. Kimball told him Brotherhood was dead.

"But I found that Brotherhood is not dead," says Kimball. "Brotherhood is a very live organization. Brotherhood is actually involving men and boys in missions, and that the mission is Jesus Christ."

Through the years, Kimball learned the heating and air conditioning trade. When Jerry Davis, president of Alice Lloyd College, offered him a job, Kimball saw the potential for ministry in the area surrounding Pippa Passes.

"I have dreams in this area of doing a lot of things," says Kimball. "But you just have to start in some place and do one thing good."

Kimball hopes to lead Baptist men of Caney Baptist Church to begin active ministry. Among the first projects was purchasing a trailer home for a single mother with eight children. With "sweat-equity" and help from the South Carolina Baptist Men organization, the family lives in a restored trailer.

Kimball would like to design programs for area residents to help themselves. That might include setting up a sawmill so people could help each other build new homes.

"We've got a lot of young people in this area that are good workers," says Kimball. "They just don't have jobs."

Joy in the Christian life comes from helping others, Kimball believes. He recalls a volunteer church-building mission trip to Puerto Rico and watching rich people board cruise ships in San Juan.

"I enjoyed seeing people get on board, but I really felt better about what I was doing down there," he says, "slopping in the concrete ... making the sweat pour off of me."

He compares Christ to putting on coveralls: "I think that when I became a Christian, I just sort of wrapped up with Christ. It's not just me driving me, it's Christ in me driving me."

(BP) photos available upon request from the Brotherhood Commission.

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