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December CP climbs,
but lags behind goal

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists' unified ministry budget finally eclipsed the inflation rate in December. But at the end of the first quarter of its fiscal year, the Cooperative Program still lags almost 12 percent behind the pace needed to reach its goal.

The national Cooperative Program received \$12,151,002 in December, a 26.5 percent increase over December 1987, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee.

December receipts brought the budget's year-to-date total to \$32,158,188, or 6.78 percent over the first quarter of 1987-88, Bennett said. The U.S. inflation rate currently is about 4 percent.

The December contributions came following two months in which Cooperative Program receipts were lower than totals for the same period the previous year. In fact, November's \$9,055,571 total was the lowest in 37 months and pulled year-to-date receipts to almost 2.5 percent below the amount recorded for the first two months of 1987-88.

However, December receipts followed predictions made by observers from some of the 36 state Baptist conventions, who said the month would be a catch-up time for the budget. The \$12 million-plus total was the fourth-best in Cooperative Program history, following January of the three previous years.

"I am absolutely pleased with the level of giving to world missions through the Cooperative Program in December," Bennett said. "I am gratified by the year-to-date increase of 6.78 percent.

"However, the first three months do not necessarily establish a trend, and the December receipts taken alone absolutely do not establish a trend. I hope for faithfulness during the remaining nine months of the fiscal year, that we might reach our Cooperative Program goal."

That goal is \$145.6 million, allocated to support evangelistic, missionary, church-starting and educational ministries worldwide. It includes a first-phase basic operating budget of \$137.61 million, a capital needs budget of almost \$6.9 million and a second-phase basic operating budget of about \$1.1 million.

The Cooperative Program's first-quarter total is 11.65 percent, or more than \$4.2 million, behind the pace needed to reach the total budget. It is 6.52 percent, or more than \$2.2 million, behind the pace needed to reach the first-phase basic operating budget.

Southern Baptists must contribute an average of \$12,604,646 each month for the balance of the fiscal year if they are to reach the \$145.6 million overall goal. They must contribute an average of \$11,716,868 each month if they are to reach the \$137.61 million first-phase goal.

Cooperative Program funds originate from church members, and they pass through congregations to state conventions and on to national and international causes.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Missionary dies while
working in Tanzania

MOSHI, Tanzania (BP)--Wendell R. "Jack" Hull, a Southern Baptist missionary from Wichita Falls, Texas, died Jan. 5 after suffering a heart attack at the construction site of Kifaru Baptist Church near Moshi, Tanzania.

Hull, 64, was shoveling dirt with a Tanzanian pastor in preparation for the arrival of volunteer construction workers from Virginia when he fell over backwards. He was taken to a nearby clinic but had died by the time he was transported to a hospital in Moshi, about 12 miles away.

Hull had a heart attack about 10 years ago, and afterwards, "would keep on working until he got to feeling real bad, then he'd slow down until he got to feeling better," said Jim Houser, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's associate to the director for Eastern and Southern Africa. "His natural pace was just go, go, go."

Hull's home always was open to missionaries and Africans alike, which was one reason he was so loved by Africans, Houser said. His most recent position, besides being a church starter, was co-director of stewardship and evangelism for the Tanzania Baptist Convention.

Hull was appointed a missionary in 1959 with his wife, the former Dorothy Edwards of Sedalia, Mo. For 10 years he was a general evangelist in Kenya, where the couple pioneered Southern Baptist work among the Kikuyu people. They helped establish 43 churches and preaching points and a Baptist high school. The Kikuyus called him "Riri Waiguru," meaning "Heavenly Sunlight."

The Hulls came to Tanzania in 1970 and began work in the Mwanza area. At different times Hull was chairman and treasurer of the Southern Baptist mission organization in the country.

He graduated from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He also studied at Howard Payne College in Brownwood, Texas. He was pastor of First Baptist Church in Lavaca, Ark., at the time of his appointment.

Surviving Hull are his wife, mother, five grown children and 12 grandchildren. The funeral service and burial were scheduled to take place in Tanzania.

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

2 BJC staffers
get promotions

Baptist Press
1/6/89

WASHINGTON (BP)--Two Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs staff members received promotions effective Jan. 1.

Kathy Palen was elected acting director of the office of information services, and Oliver S. Thomas was named associate executive director, announced Executive Director James M. Dunn.

The Baptist Joint Committee is a Washington-based religious liberty organization comprised of nine Baptist denominations in the United States and Canada.

The two veteran staff members have assumed responsibilities previously held by Stan Hastey, a 15-year Baptist Joint Committee staffer who left his post to head the Southern Baptist Alliance, Dunn said.

Palen has been assistant to the director of information services for the Baptist Joint Committee and the congressional correspondent for the Washington bureau of Baptist Press since 1985. Her new post calls for her to continue to report on Congress, as well as the White House and the Supreme Court, for Baptist Press. She also directs public relations activities for the Baptist Joint Committee.

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Thomas has been general counsel and director of research for the Baptist Joint Committee since 1985. His new position calls for him to continue with those responsibilities, and now he also serves as spokesman in the absence of the executive director and shares a policy-making role with the executive director.

Both promotions were approved by unanimous vote of the Baptist Joint Committee's executive committee, Dunn said.

Palen previously was director of public relations and adjunct instructor of journalism at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee. She also has been news bureau director at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and was an early-education teacher in Tulsa, Okla.

A native Oklahoman, she is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University and has studied at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Thomas previously was a partner in the lawfirm of Thomas and Thomas in Maryville, Tenn., a law clerk with the Tennessee state court of appeals and worked on the staffs of churches in Louisiana and Tennessee.

He is a Tennessee native and a graduate of the University of Tennessee, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and the University of Tennessee College of Law.

A search committee comprised of the Baptist Joint Committee's officers is seeking a permanent director for the office of information services, Dunn said. That position must be approved by the full executive committee, and Baptist Joint Committee leaders hope to fill the post during the executive committee's March 6-7 meeting, he added.

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Young named editor
of Baptist Beacon

Baptist Press
1/6/89

PHOENIX, Ariz. (BP)--Elizabeth Young has been promoted to editor of the Baptist Beacon, newsjournal of the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, effective Jan. 1.

Young had been managing editor of the publication since 1987. She joined the paper's staff as newswriter and journalistic consultant in June 1980 and subsequently was promoted to assistant editor and then associate editor.

Throughout her tenure, Young has been responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Arizona paper.

Young, 30, is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Arizona State University in Tempe, Ariz. Her final project for her master's degree was a readership survey of the Baptist Beacon.

During her undergraduate days, Young served as a summer intern with the Rocky Mountain Baptist, newsjournal of the Colorado Baptist General Convention, and as a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board summer missionary in Long Beach, Calif. A Baptist Standard scholarship, awarded by the Texas Baptist newsjournal, helped provide for one year of her college education.

A California native, Young's initial contact with state Baptist papers came at an early age. Her father, J. Terry Young, is a former editor of the California Southern Baptist newspaper and currently is professor of theology at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

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(BP) photo available upon request from the Baptist Beacon

Church secretary selected
top home study graduate

NASHVILLE (BP)--A church financial secretary from South Carolina has been named the 1988 graduate of the year by the Southern Baptist Seminary Extension Independent Study Institute.

Martha Jane Brown has worked for 18 years at Augusta Road Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C. During almost seven of those years, she was studying toward a seminary extension diploma in biblical studies, which she received last March.

Such a diploma requires the completion of 16 courses, said George W. Knight, director of the institute. "Mrs. Brown compiled an excellent record, with only one final grade below an A," he said.

Brown is a Sunday school teacher and organist in her home church, Durbin Creek Baptist in Fountain Inn, S.C., where her husband, James, is pastor.

A plaque signifying her national recognition was presented at Durbin Creek Church by Charles H. Rabon, seminary extension consultant for South Carolina.

After losing an eye in 1980 as a result of cancer, Brown says she "felt for a period that I had nothing to look forward to, but God had other plans." While preparing a Sunday school lesson, she came across some information about seminary extension that prompted her to begin her long-term study plan.

"I don't feel that I know it all -- not by a long shot," she said, "but I do think I have attained something that I can carry with me throughout the rest of my life. And hopefully, this will not only help me but those with whom I live and labor for the Lord."

The Seminary Extension Independent Study Institute is the correspondence arm of the Seminary External Education Division, a jointly sponsored program of the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

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Alliance proceeds
with seminary plans

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press
1/6/89

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A committee of Southern and American Baptists and Presbyterians agreed to develop plans for a new seminary in Richmond, Va., during a meeting in that city Jan. 3.

The meeting involved four leaders of the Southern Baptist Alliance, a two-year-old organization of 40,000 Southern Baptist moderates: Executive Director Stan Hastey, former Acting Executive Director Allen Neely, theological education committee Chairman Tom Graves, and Morris Ashcraft, professor of theology and former academic dean at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Other committee members are an administrator from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, N.Y., representing some American Baptist seminaries; representatives from the American Baptist Board of Education; and representatives from the three members of the Richmond Theological Center: the School of Theology of Virginia Union University, an American Baptist school; the Presbyterian School of Christian Education; and Union Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian school.

The committee agreed to four statements, reported Graves, pastor of St. John's Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., who was selected to speak for the group:

-- "We recommend that the Southern Baptist Alliance proceed toward the establishment of a school for preparation of ministers in Richmond."

The Alliance voted in November to allocate \$250,000 of its 1989 budget to finance a divinity school or seminary in Richmond and urged its representatives to meet with educators from other denominations to consider starting the school.

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-- "We hope that such a school would be a cooperative venture involving the Southern Baptist Alliance and other theological institutions in Richmond and elsewhere."

The schools in the Richmond Theological Center already relate through a consortium arrangement that allows students to study at all three institutions.

-- "We have requested Morris Ashcraft, former dean at Southeastern Seminary, to draw up specific scenarios and proposals to be presented to the parties of this ongoing consultation.

-- "It is understood that our discussions are still preliminary and tentative, yet moving ahead pending the approval of each of the participant institutions."

Graves outlined procedures for moving forward: "When our proposals are firmly stated and agreed upon by our committee, they will be submitted to the Southern Baptist Alliance convocation, which meets March 1-3. Then appropriate and formal requests will be made for cooperation with the other Richmond-area institutions.

"We are seeking close cooperation with the other Richmond-area institutions, but no institution has made any commitment to us of support as of yet."

The new "free-standing" seminary would apply for accreditation through the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Graves said.

Planners hope to open the school next fall, he added: "We would begin with no more than 50 students. There would necessarily be a cap on the number of students we could accommodate so that we would not outweigh the other Richmond-area schools in any effort we might undertake."

The Alliance spearheaded the Richmond effort last fall, with its \$250,000 commitment to the project and the initiation of discussion with the other schools and educators.

At that time, Alliance members talked about an arrangement that would strengthen Virginia Union, a predominantly black school, to take in Southern Baptist ministerial students. As outlined at that time, Colgate-Rochester and two other American Baptist seminaries, Andover-Newton and Eastern, would provide two professors per year to Virginia Union on a rotating basis, and the Alliance would finance support for three more professors, probably from the Southeastern Seminary faculty. They also talked about using library, dormitory, apartment and dining facilities at Union Theological.

Current discussions indicate the new school will be independently accredited and autonomous, rather than a division within Virginia Union, Graves said: "The format of the institution is free-standing, that it would seek accreditation on its own, but not as a subsidiary of another institution. That in no way undercuts the desire to cooperate with Virginia Union."

The idea of a new seminary that would join the other three schools in the Richmond Theological Center is similar to patterns for theological education in other parts of the country, Hastey said, noting, "This idea follows a recent trend in theological education, especially in urban centers, where several institutions cluster together to share their resources."

Both Hastey and Graves said the talks still are preliminary and stressed that specific commitments -- by the Southern Baptists or by the others -- have not been made.

The Alliance has two primary motivations for starting the new school, Graves said. "First, we desire to provide alternatives to the seminary training that has been offered in Southern Baptist institutions.

"The fundamentalist shift in the trustee boards at Southeastern Seminary and elsewhere means that we can no longer depend on those schools to provide leadership for Baptist churches in our region. In Virginia, there are 800 Baptist pastorates now held by Southeastern graduates. The future of Virginia Baptist life could be drastically altered unless some other avenue of ministry training is developed."

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Alliance members and other Southern Baptist moderates have expressed concern about the fate of Southeastern Seminary in the past 15 months. In October 1987, Southeastern trustees' new conservative majority altered the way the school chooses its teachers. Ashcraft, President W. Randall Lolley and six other administrators subsequently resigned, citing the policy changes -- which they interpreted as ensuring that only biblical inerrantists could be added to the faculty -- as their reason.

Noting the Alliance's second motivation, Graves added: "More importantly, the current turmoil within our denomination has given us the opportunity to develop new relationships and creative programs. If the beginning of a new school in Richmond could bring together black and white Baptists, American and Southern Baptists, Baptists and persons from other denominational backgrounds, then it is a possibility that is long overdue."

The Alliance representatives also met with about 50 Richmond pastors Jan. 4. "We wanted to brief them on our progress, and we wanted to solicit a sense of support or lack thereof," Hasteley said. "The degree of enthusiasm of pastors present was very gratifying to us."

During the meeting with pastors, Lolley, now pastor of First Baptist Church of Raleigh, N.C., made a presentation on "the need for alternatives in theological education," Graves said. Others participated in a panel discussion to answer the pastors' questions regarding the proposed school.

Contacted by Baptist Press, Ashcraft declined to comment on the possible scenarios he might create for starting the school, citing his need "to reflect on the minutes (of the meeting) and give some thought to the process" before making public statements.

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