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April 14, 1989

N-FMB

89-59

FMB appoints 50, postpones
Belgian seminary discussion

By Everett Sneed & Bob Stanley

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--Fifty new foreign missionaries were appointed April 11 before an overflow crowd of 7,000 in Little Rock as Arkansas Baptists played host to a meeting of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees.

More than 6,400 people packed the main Little Rock Convention Center exhibition hall, while others watched on closed-circuit television screens in an overflow area. At the close of the service, 251 people made spiritual decisions, including 110 who committed themselves to explore career mission service.

The only cloud over the otherwise tranquil three-day trustee meeting was the possibility of confrontation between Foreign Mission Board President R. Keith Parks and Criswell College President Paige Patterson, an FMB trustee. Parks expressed concern in March over the college's option to purchase a seminary in Belgium.

The confrontation did not materialize in this meeting, but Parks and Patterson huddled for 25 minutes with trustee Chairman C. Mark Corts and other board officers during a break in the board's business session April 12.

After the break, Corts announced that a report will be given in the May 22-24 trustee meeting. The report will include what Patterson is doing in regard to the purchase of the Belgian property as well as Parks' concerns about its impact on Baptist work in Europe.

"It is premature for us to discuss this today," Corts said. "We will know more about the disposition of the property in May." In the meantime, he said, board officers will discuss the matter with Patterson and Parks.

Criswell College of Dallas is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Dallas. It is negotiating for purchase of a financially troubled evangelical school near Brussels, Belgium. During a visit to Belgium in mid-March, Patterson said the Belgian school's leaders first approached Criswell College about buying the institution more than three years ago.

Knud Wumpelmann, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, said the Belgian school's possible affiliation with Criswell College "could create divisions" among European Baptists by emphasizing their differences. He criticized Patterson for not discussing the purchase with European Baptist leaders before pursuing negotiations, a concern Parks also voiced.

During a follow-up visit, Patterson scheduled meetings with Wumpelmann and President John David Hopper of the Southern Baptist-related international Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

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Parks indicated he believes that any church has the right to be involved in any kind of mission or evangelistic work it desires. But he said he considers Criswell College's possible purchase of the Belgian school a return to a societal approach to missions, whereas the FMB is committed to the cooperative method in which churches work together through Southern Baptist-established channels. In this, Parks sees a possible conflict of interest with Patterson's role as an FMB trustee, he said.

In other actions, the board approved a resolution reaffirming the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, elected three new officers, approved a new category of service and heard reports on FMB finances and a possible change in the board's bylaws.

The resolution said: "The trustees ... go on record as being in strong support of the Cooperative Program as the lifeline of our missions effort. We urge caution at any decision that would fragment, weaken or erode the Cooperative Program principle." The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' conventionwide plan for funding missions and other denominational programs.

A discussion regarding designated giving to the Cooperative Program had emerged in the board's Feb. 13-15 meeting, when Corts indicated he "had heard of 15 or more churches" in North Carolina that have decided against full participation in the budget.

FMB officers all were elected by acclamation. Corts, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, N.C., was re-elected chairman. The new officers are Morris H. Mills, a member of Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., first vice chairman; Wayne W. Poplin, pastor of First Baptist Church, Charlottesville, Va., second vice chairman; and Betty (Mrs. Paul) Swadley, a pastor's wife and author from South Haven Baptist Church, Springfield, Mo., recording secretary.

The trustees approved a new personnel category called "tentmakers" for people who work in secular professions overseas. The program is designed to help the board reach into limited-access or "closed" countries where traditional missionaries are unable to work, as well as countries where a more traditional approach is possible.

Tentmakers could be teamed up with the board's new nonresidential missionaries, who explore ways of evangelizing populations inside limited-access countries. In other areas not yet targeted by nonresidential missionaries, they might take the lead in beginning Christian work.

Tentmakers will enter into a formal agreement to cooperate with the board. Unlike Southern Baptists who happen to live outside the United States because of their work, tentmakers identify themselves as Christians whose commitment to missions and evangelism lead them overseas.

Executive Vice President William R. O'Brien drew trustees' applause during a report emphasizing that Southern Baptists' future depends on providing proper missions education for young people today. He said other denominational groups "wish they had what we have."

O'Brien noted the Baptist Men organization is committed to involving men and boys in meaningful missions experience and that Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union is committed to remaining a mission organization for women, not a women's organization concerned about missions.

"We must work to produce a people who biblically embrace the whole counsel of God, who hold to a biblical world view and are willing to commit to a missions lifestyle," he said. Such commitment depends upon the training of young people today, he noted.

The trustees voted that notification be given for an anticipated vote in May to change the FMB bylaws, which now require that either the board chairman or one of the vice chairmen live in or near Richmond, Va., where the board's offices are located. The new recommendation removes this restriction. Board President Parks said, "This is really a matter of just cleaning up our bylaws."

Parks observed that in 1970, when the present requirement was established, the board met 11 times a year and not all trustees were required to come to all meetings. Having an officer from the Richmond area made simpler the signing of papers and having someone to preside over the meeting. This is no longer necessary since two staff members have been authorized to sign papers. The board now meets only six times a year, with trustees encouraged to attend all meetings.

Carl W. Johnson, vice president for finance and treasurer, reported that the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is up substantially over the amount budgeted by the FMB, but he said receipts from the Cooperative Program may be less than the amount budgeted. Much of the increase from the Lottie Moon offering must be utilized to offset the deficit in receipts from the Cooperative Program, he said.

The trustees also voted that the June 1990 meeting of the board be changed to June 8-9 to coincide with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans, La., if sufficient program time can be obtained for a missionary appointment service during the report of the Foreign Mission Board. Otherwise, the FMB will meet as previously scheduled June 25-27 in Richmond.

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Arkansas appointment service
records 251 decisions

By Mark Kelly

N-10
(ARK)

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--A foreign missionary appointment service in Little Rock, Ark., recorded what may be the largest number of commitments to career missions registered in such a meeting.

Each April, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board appoints new missionaries in connection with its spring board meeting. Those meetings are held away from the FMB's home offices in Richmond, Va., in order to let rank-and-file Southern Baptists experience the drama of missionary appointment.

This year's appointment service, held April 11 at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock, drew an overflow crowd of almost 7,000 people to witness the appointment of 50 missionaries who will work in 19 countries.

Participants in the service heard a 500-voice choir and 60-piece orchestra and witnessed a parade of flags representing the 114 countries in which more than 3,800 Southern Baptist missionaries serve. They also heard the missionary candidates testify to their calling to foreign missions and listened as FMB President R. Keith Parks delivered a charge to the new missionaries.

And when Parks extended an invitation to the audience, 251 people registered missions commitments. While many of those came to pledge greater prayer and financial support for missions, 110 individuals told FMB counselors they wanted to explore careers in foreign missions.

The next day, Parks told an assembly of the meeting's organizers that he believed those decisions represented the largest number of commitments to career missions recorded since the board started holding appointment services outside of Richmond in 1969.

The "remarkably fine response" was evidence that people from almost 1,300 churches in the state had "come praying and with great expectations" for a movement of God in the meeting, Parks said.

During the service, Parks told the new missionaries that although missionary appointment represented an important step in their Christian lives, they should not believe they had reached the pinnacle of growth and maturity.

Quoting from chapter 10 of the Gospel of Mark, Parks warned the new missionaries that many would want to put them on a pedestal and praise them for their commitment. But he cautioned them that servanthood -- indeed, slavery to Jesus Christ -- was the only path to Christian greatness.

During the invitation, Parks asked members of the congregation: "If Jesus had been incarnated today as he was 20 centuries ago and that person was you, would your life be as it is now?"

Yet such an incarnation in each Christian's life is what God intends, Parks explained. "The Lord Jesus intends to dwell in us and reach the entire world for which he died," he said.

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Many Christians stand before Christ as beggars asking that more be given them, he added, noting, but they find only that the "nail scarred hands extend back toward them saying 'What wouldst thou give me?'"

The April 1990 board meeting and appointment service will be held in San Diego.

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(BP) photo available upon request from Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine.

Midwestern seminary trustees
approve budget, elect faculty

By Brenda J. Sanders

N-CO
(MWBTS)

Baptist Press
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KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees approved a reduced 1989-90 budget and elected two faculty members during their annual board meeting April 10-11 in Kansas City, Mo.

Acting upon recommendation of the board's finance committee, trustees approved an operating budget of \$4.2 million for the upcoming fiscal year. That amount represents a 2.5 percent decrease from the current \$4.3 million budget.

A.C. Woodburn, a layman from Las Cruces, N.M., and chairman of the finance committee, noted the 1989-90 budget includes funds to fill two faculty positions but does not provide funding for annual salary increases for faculty and staff.

He led the board to adopt a motion expressing "sincere regret" to seminary employees that the monetary restrictions of the coming year make freezing their salaries necessary.

During his report to trustees, Midwestern President Milton Ferguson noted the new budget is the first since 1973-74 in which trustees could not increase salaries for faculty and staff.

Seminary administrators and trustees agreed, however, a reduced 1989-90 budget is necessary. They cited an expected decrease in SB Cooperative Program unified budget allocations to the seminary, due to the Southern Baptist Executive Committee's proposal for a reduced convention budget next year.

Ferguson said: "We live close to the edge because we are a Cooperative Program institution. The cash flow of the Cooperative Program hits us immediately."

The seminary is facing challenging times, when "resourcefulness and tough-mindedness" will be required to carefully manage financial resources, he said.

While dealing with the challenges ahead, Southern Baptists need a positive attitude, he said, noting, "The future seems bright, and the opportunities seem unlimited to truly do what we believe we can do when we work together."

Two faculty members were elected unanimously by the trustees. Wilburn Thomas Stancil, associate professor of divinity at Samford University's Beeson School of Divinity in Birmingham, Ala., was elected associate professor of Christian theology. Charles Randall Bradley, minister of music at First Baptist church in Benbrook, Texas, was elected assistant professor of church music education.

Trustees elected J. Truett Gannon, pastor of Smoke Rise Baptist church in Stone Mountain, Ga., to his third term as board chairman. Other officers include Richard Adams, pastor of First Baptist Church of Festus/Crystal City, Mo., first vice chairman; Kerry G. Powell, pastor of First Baptist Church, McGehee, Ark., second vice chairman; and Lowell E. Socolofsky, a layman from Bellevue, Neb., secretary-treasurer.

In other matters, trustees:

-- Approved increasing the student matriculation fee from \$375 to \$400 per semester.

-- Granted tenure to Albert Bean, associate professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, and R. Wayne Stacy, assistant professor of New Testament.

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-- Approved an advancement in rank for Stacy, to associate professor of New Testament.

-- Approved a six-months tudy leave for both John C. Howell, professor of Christian ethics, and Don E. Hammer, associate professor of ministry studies and director of theological field education.

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'Centrists' to announce
candidate week of April 17

By Toby Druin

N- CO
(Texas Std.)

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4/14/89

ARLINGTON, Texas (BP)--Vowing a "long haul" effort to unify the Southern Baptist Convention behind historic Baptist principles and to head off divisiveness in the Texas convention, Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention organized a Texas chapter in a meeting in Arlington April 13.

About 20 people attended the meeting and press conference and heard leaders of the "centrist coalition" urge Southern Baptists of every persuasion -- "fundamentalist, conservative, inerrantist, moderate or unlabeled" -- to stand with them as Baptists to keep the convention free of political control and "work together in a spirit of unity to share the gospel."

W. Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, and chairman of Baptists Committed, announced that a nominee for president of the Southern Baptist Convention will be announced the week of April 17 but gave no indication who it will be.

Moore also announced that Baptists Committed will sponsor a national symposium at the Nashville Convention Center, May 1-2.

The Arlington meeting was organized by Charles Wade, pastor of First Baptist Church of Arlington, who distributed a list of almost 50 pastors who he said had agreed to serve on the advisory board of the Texas chapter. Many laymen's names will be added, too, he said.

Reading a prepared statement, Wade said Baptists Committed has a "very simple, straightforward purpose ... to unify our convention behind the great distinctives of Southern Baptists: divinely inspired Scripture as our authority; the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer; the principle of separation of church and state; and local-church autonomy and democracy in church government."

The Texas meeting was the second held by Baptists Committed since the group announced its organization in February. A chapter was organized in Georgia April 7. Several others will follow, said Moore and David Currie of San Angelo, Texas, the organization's field director.

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Several counts dismissed
in mission board case

N-FMB

Baptist Press
4/14/89

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A judge has dismissed several claims in two lawsuits filed against the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board last year by a former missionary.

In orders entered April 3 following a March 20 hearing, Richmond (Va.) Circuit Court Judge Randall G. Johnson dismissed the claims of intentional infliction of emotional harm, conspiracy and outrage filed against the mission board in suits by Diana Wade and her four children.

The dismissed claims accounted for some \$100 million of the \$141 million sought by Mrs. Wade in the two suits. Judge Johnson retained other allegations of breach of contract and negligence in the suits for further hearings. He also dismissed claims for negligent infliction of emotional harm, but granted Mrs. Wade and her children 21 days to amend these claims if they can. Subsequent hearing dates have not been set.

The two suits claim a representative of the mission board was told that Mrs. Wade's former husband, G. Thomas Wade Jr., had sexually abused the couple's oldest daughter but did not report it to Mrs. Wade or to police. The suits say that the board's representative asked Wade to get counseling, but the missionary refused, promising the abuse would not continue. Later, the suits allege, sexual abuse of two younger daughters and a son occurred.

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The Wades were missionaries in Kenya and Botswana from 1976 until their return to the United States in 1984. The board requested Mrs. Wade's resignation after her husband voluntarily submitted his resignation in August 1985. The resignations were effective Jan. 31, 1986. The couple now is divorced.

Wade, a native of Austell, Ga., received forestry and agricultural degrees from the University of Georgia in Athens. Mrs. Wade, a native of Shawnee, Okla., attended colleges in Alaska, Georgia and Missouri. The couple lived in Alaska, where Wade worked for the state as a forester before their missionary appointment.

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Genevox album
wins Dove Award

N-SSB

Baptist Press
4/14/89

NASHVILLE (BP)--"In His Presence: The Risen King," a Christian musical album produced by the Genevox Music Group of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board was named musical album of the year in the Gospel Music Association's 20th Annual Dove Awards April 13.

The album was one of five nominated in the musical album-of-the-year category. The songs were written by Dick and Melodie Tunney, GMA songwriters of the year for 1987. Sam Sanders and David Danner of Genevox were executive producers of the album.

Songs on the album are "In His Presence," "Come Before Him," "Calvary's Love," "Stand Up and Bless the Lord," "Bless the Lord, My Soul," "Create in Me," "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," "Come, Worship the King," "Seekers of Your Heart" and "In Majesty He Will Come."

Fes Robertson, director of Genevox, said he is "extremely proud we have achieved this significant milestone. Those at the Sunday School Board who laid the foundation of music publishing made it possible for Genevox to be recognized by the other members of this significant industry."

According to the Gospel Music Association, the Dove Awards are given to recognize "excellence or significant accomplishments in the quality and means of spreading the True Word through gospel music."

Genevox was established in 1986 by the Sunday School Board to produce music products for sale through trade outlets to churches and individuals.

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