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July 11, 1989

*N-BJC*

89-106

Court agrees to hear  
three abortion cases

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear three additional abortion cases next term.

The high court announced its intention to review those cases the same day it handed down its ruling in Webster v. Reproductive Health Services, a highly publicized case involving a Missouri anti-abortion law.

Two of the cases to undergo Supreme Court review involve state laws requiring parental notification for minors seeking abortions. At dispute are Ohio and Minnesota statutes that require minors to notify their parents or obtain court permission before obtaining an abortion.

In the past, the high court has upheld parental notification laws as long as those statutes provide minors with the option of judicial bypass.

The third case involves Illinois regulations that apply strict licensing standards to abortion clinics.

The rules require first-trimester abortions be performed in licensed facilities, which must meet standards comparable to those set for hospitals.

In 1983, the Supreme Court struck down a law that required all second-trimester abortions be performed in hospitals, holding it imposed an unnecessary burden on a woman's access to abortion without necessary medical justification.

The court is expected to announce oral argument dates for the three cases sometime after beginning its new term in October.

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Brotherhood commission  
sees financial turnabout

By Tim Yarbrough

*N-CO  
(B'hood)*

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7/11/89

ASHEVILLE, N.C. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission has made a turnabout in its finances in the first three quarters of 1989, President James H. Smith told the commission's executive committee June 8.

The commission has generated \$264,000 more than budget expenditures through the third quarter of 1989, Smith said and projected the figure will reach \$300,000 by the end of September.

"We're really out of the woods on this thing," Smith said. "This, of course, puts us in a position where we are able to take care of some of the liabilities that we have. The thing that has been most helpful is increased cash flow."

If income remains above expenditures through September it will mark the first time the commission has not had a deficit during the summer months, Smith said.

The commission ended the 1987-88 fiscal year with a deficit of \$240,000. A series of budget balancing measures were enacted, including elimination of a planned 2 percent salary increase for staff and cutting budgeted expenditures.

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The executive committee's affirmation of computer equipment purchases supports the strengthened financial position of the commission, Smith said, adding: "We have the money to pay for that (the computers). I think that's tremendously important. I don't think trustees had any idea that we would turn this thing around in a year."

In April, the executive committee approved \$100,000 in computer equipment purchases for the commission's Memphis, Tenn., headquarters. Smith said the computers are needed to replace and upgrade outdated equipment. The equipment is scheduled to be in place by Oct. 31.

The commission's strengthened financial position would not have been possible without a "spirit of cooperation" among commission staff and state Brotherhood leaders, Smith said. "Every staff person has been involved because they didn't get a raise in pay this year ... it has been a great spirit of cooperation and togetherness that has come out of this. That is what is important to me," Smith told the executive committee.

The executive committee also affirmed efforts by the commission staff in exploring the possibility of establishing a world hunger demonstration farm. The farm would provide a laboratory setting for training Christians to better minister to the physical needs of the people of the world and to provide a research center for the development of plants and animals to strengthen the world's food supply.

Russell Griffin, director of the children and youth department at the commission, said the proposed world hunger demonstration farm would provide a new way for men and boys to explore missions education.

A location for the proposed world hunger demonstration farm is being considered.

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Christian books  
on way to Iraq

N - FmB

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LARNACA, Cyprus (BP)--Christian believers in Iraq will receive \$12,000 worth of Christian literature through a grant from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Bibles, Christian books and 1,000 hymnals, all in Arabic, will be shipped from the Arab Baptist Publication Center in Beirut as soon as conditions in Lebanon allow mail service to resume.

During Iraq's war with Iran, sending literature to Iraq was impossible, said Southern Baptist representative Frances Fuller, publication center director. Now Iraqi Christians are "starved for Christian literature" and can receive books through the mail, but they are not allowed to send out money, she said.

The books are being sent free to Christian believers in Iraq through contacts made by the Bible Society of Lebanon, Fuller said. The society will pay the postage.

The possibility of displaying Christian literature at an international book fair in Iraq in 1990 also is being investigated, she said.

Only about 3 percent of Iraq's 17.6 million people are Christians.

Islam is the national religion of Iraq. More than 95 percent of Iraqis are Muslims; a slight majority of them follow the Shiite sect championed by the late Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran. Other Iraqi Muslims follow the Sunni branch of Islam, which is the predominant form of the faith worldwide.

Christianity in Iraq dates back to the first century, with the evangelization of Jewish colonies in what is now modern Iraq. The majority of Iraq's small Christian population belongs to Catholic churches in union with the Roman Catholic Church. Christian communities of various traditions are found in all major Iraqi cities. Freedom of worship is allowed in Iraq, but public evangelizing is not.

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Indiana revival  
targets seniors

By Tammi Ledbetter

N-60  
(end.)

Indianapolis (BP)--When Bob Latham of Northside Baptist Church in Indianapolis began looking for ways to minister to all his congregation, senior adults were an obvious consideration.

With nearly 50 members in this age group, Latham sought out ministers who could effectively speak to them and began planning a senior adult revival in late June.

Several members of the church had long established ties to the revival team of Thomas Halsell and William Souther. Halsell previously had been evangelism director of West Virginia's state convention as well as a teacher at Boyce Bible School in Louisville, Ky.

Souther has taught music at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and teamed with W.A. Criswell at First Baptist Church of Dallas where he was minister of music.

Reaching senior adults with the gospel is a priority for Halsell. "There is a general feeling everywhere that all old people are nice, saved folks and all of them are going to heaven. People assume that when your hair turns gray you start praying all the time."

Halsell and Souther both senior adults geared the services to speak to the needs of older members, providing music and message they would enjoy.

One Northside Church member, Zudora Stroud, said the revival reminded her of those she attended many years ago.

Halsell addressed the reality of death. "I want to see them get their salvation settled." He told of a visit with a ninety-year-old man who prayed to receive Christ as Savior, telling God "I'm a really old sinner."

The staff of Northside Church enlisted the help of area retirement villages to make it possible for the residents to attend. Members of the church were available to provide transportation for senior adults. Other churches in the city brought vanloads of their old members to participate in the revival.

Northside member, Floyd Worrell said, "The personal contact by some of our members in apartment complexes has made a difference in getting people here." He and Latham were encouraged by the large proportion of non-members present, unlike typical revivals "when we would only have a handful of visitors."

Souther asked those present to turn in the names of their favorite hymns and found the most popular choices to be "Amazing Grace," "Blessed Assurance," "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and "My Faith Looks Up to Thee."

The more contemporary song "Because He Lives" also was favored by many of the senior adults. "They usually go back to the old hymns," Souther said. "These are songs that many of these women have known since they were little girls."

Halsell emphasized the important ministry senior adults can have to their peers: "They can really help us and we should never put them on a shelf. They should be active until Jesus calls them home."

Every person has a spiritual ministry regardless of their age, he said, adding: "They can live that out by waking each day, asking God, 'What can I do?'"

"We need to be able to build up their image of themselves and recognize that we can benefit from their wisdom and experience."

While some of the senior adults attending were still in their 50's, having retired early, others were in their 90's. "Many of these people who are retiring have a lot that they've been promising God they would do."

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Steve McNeil, associate pastor of Northside Baptist Church, was pleased with new contacts made throughout the community: "Most of these people will have transportation problems and that is something we will have to consider making available."

"We really didn't know what to expect in terms of results at this revival. Because it was new ground, we were pleased with the response we got."

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Ex-Hindu leader  
now spreads gospel

By Pam Parry

F-00  
(M.D.)

Baptist Press  
7/11/89

BALTIMORE (BP)--With the same zeal as the former Hindu leader once persecuted Christians, Kandal Joseph now propagates the gospel, investing his life in evangelism.

Joseph, general secretary of the Karnataka Baptist Convention in India, came to the United States this spring to receive evangelism training and spoke at many Maryland/Delaware churches about Southern Baptist work in India.

In India, about 2 percent of the population is Christian, while 87 percent is Hindu and 11 percent Islam, he estimates. While Baptists represent only a small percentage of India's 800.3 million people, next to the United States, India has the largest number of Baptists of any country.

Christianity reportedly reached India as early as the first century, according to the 1988-89 Partners in Missions, published by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The architect of the modern missionary movement, William Carey, ministered in what is now West Bengal.

The first Southern Baptist missionary was appointed to India in 1961, says John Ingouf, the Foreign Mission Board's area director for Southern Asia and the Pacific. Many missionary agencies and conventions work in India. Southern Baptists cooperate with the Karnataka Baptist Convention, organized in 1976, which has 353 churches with 8,000 members. The convention has set a goal of 500 churches and 10,000 members by 1990, Joseph adds.

Ingouf says the FMB involvement with the Karnataka Convention today primarily entails sponsoring church planters and training local pastors. The FMB also has a 15-minute radio broadcast in Kannada, the language of about 40 million people in Karnataka, one of India's 19 states.

Joseph praises God that the Karnataka Convention is a product of the Foreign Mission Board. He told a group of Maryland/Delaware Baptists that because of their financial, prayer and emotional support through the FMB "we are able to see 353 churches today."

In 1973, the FMB established the Bangalore Baptist Hospital, where two Southern Baptist missionaries, Rebekah Naylor and Jason Lee, now work. Although visas for new missionary personnel are nearly impossible to obtain, the medical work allows the two missionaries to remain. The FMB has turned the management of the hospital over to Christian Medical College in Vellore but still maintains ownership and the Baptist name, as well as representation on the governing board, Ingouf says.

Joseph, a former president of the Indian convention, says the ministry of the Baptist Hospital in Bangalore planted Trinity Baptist Church in that city, where he is pastor. Trinity began Jan. 26, 1981, with 57 members.

Formerly a chaplain at the hospital, Joseph built a rapport with patients whose cultural and religious beliefs at the very least were skeptical of the gospel. Joseph started seven other congregations through Trinity Church.

In an economically and socially poor nation, India's Christians are spiritually rich, he says, and the Baptist churches there rely heavily on the laity. Unable to afford full-time ministers or church buildings Indian churches practice the belief "ev ry deacon is a preacher or church planter," he adds.

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Joseph, who also is vice president of the Asian Baptist Federation, a member of the Baptist World Alliance, singlehandedly brought the gospel to 125 families despite personal risk.

The fifth child of devout Hindu parents, Joseph was the first male to convert after petitioning the family god. Named for that god, Joseph was expected to become a religious leader within his village. Once a zealous persecutor of Christ, Joseph became an evangelist, and his strong resistance to the gospel made his conversion to Christianity more traumatic for his family and friends. He was baptized by the very people he had beaten.

Outcast and stoned for his stalwart stance for the gospel, Joseph came into preparing for the ministry. He studied five years at a seminary before returning to his village.

His mother was the first convert, and within six years, 125 families had converted -- made decisions for Christ. His father was stubbornly against his son but finally became the family's last convert. As a convention leader, Joseph gained knowledge he learned from Evangelism Explosion training at First Baptist Church in Lauderdale, Fla., back to his land, continuing to train lay leadership.

His ministry "is probably one of the most outstanding I have ever known for evangelism," says John W. Collins, Jr., a vocational evangelist from Miami. Joseph put his life on the line -- facing the very risk of death -- going back to his village where they tried to kill him and winning an entire village.

"He is constantly challenging himself and others to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth."  
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