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July 27, 1989

89-114

Annuity Board offers presidency  
to Paul W. Powell of Texas

By Thomas E. Miller Jr.

GO  
(A.Bd.)

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Texas pastor Paul W. Powell has asked for more time to consider an offer to become the president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

Powell would succeed Darold H. Morgan, who has asked to retire March 1, 1990, after 18 years in the position.

Powell, who has been pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, for 17 years, agreed to reconsider an earlier decision to decline nomination after trustees voted unanimously July 25 to ask him to accept.

An Annuity Board trustee for five years, Powell was the choice of a seven-member search committee chaired by George H. Balentine Jr., a South Carolina industrialist.

The committee had considered 41 people to head the \$2.6 billion pension and insurance agency before settling on Powell, Balentine said, adding, "We were so convinced that he is the one God wants for this position that we told Paul we wanted to nominate him in spite of his answer of 'no.'"

Powell agreed, after a late-night committee meeting July 24 to allow the nomination. Affirming his belief in God's leadership, Powell said he would allow the process to run its course and search the results carefully for God's will.

"I've never been anything but a pastor, and never aspired to be anything but a pastor," he told his fellow trustees. "But I try to do what God leads me to do."

Powell was asked to leave the trustee meeting after the committee report while other trustees discussed the process.

After each member of the search committee had spoken about his personal reasons for nominating Powell, Powell was brought back to the meeting and answered questions from board members.

In the discussion with the trustees, Powell gave personal testimony and family history. He discussed the Annuity Board philosophy of being a "manager of managers" and told the trustees he favored the concept.

Powell noted that he helped, as a member of the board's administrative policy committee, to create the current organizational policies and structure. "I would not consider being president without that kind of arrangement," he said.

Trustees questioned Powell about his opinion of the board's position and role in the current Southern Baptist theological/political controversy.

"Anybody, unless he is mindless or spineless, has a position, but this board is above politics. It must serve all the people. I pledge that for myself, and I expect it from each of you. We will take care of our people no matter who they are," Powell said.

Powell affirmed the Southern Baptist way of doing "cooperative missions" and said, "The Cooperative Program (convention unified budget) lets the smallest church be a part of the biggest mission."

Green Acres Baptist Church, with 7,000 members, is a leader in Texas Baptist Bible study, evangelism and missions. About 2,500 gather each week for Sunday school. In addition to baptizing 175-200 people per year and contributing 10 percent of its budget to the Cooperative Program, the church sponsors eight local missions -- two Hispanic, one Black, one Korean and four Anglo. The church's 1989 budget is \$2.5 million. Sunday school attendance in the missions totals 500 people per week.

Following questions, Powell left the room and the trustees elected him unanimously. No time limit was set for Powell to reply, but long-scheduled vacation plans indicate a decision probably will not be made until some time in August.

Acknowledging the difficulty of deciding to leave a happy and growing pastorate, Powell said: "I'll share openly with my people. They are a mature, praying people who want me to do what God wants."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Annuity Board

Annuity Board trustees nominate  
Powell, grant annuity increases

N - CO  
(A.Bd.)

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board have asked Paul W. Powell, 17-year pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, to succeed Darold H. Morgan as president and granted Church Annuity Program members a 10 percent increase in retirement benefits.

Powell, the unanimous choice of a seven-member search committee named in February, is expected to make his decision in August. The 55-year-old pastor is a five-year trustee of the board and former president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The board's action came July 24-25 in New Orleans, during the meeting that traditionally is held outside of Dallas, its headquarters.

Upon staff recommendation, trustees voted the permanent 10 percent increase for members who participate in the formula benefit section of the Church Annuity Plan, sometimes referred to as Plan A, a 50 percent increase in future disability benefits payable under the protection section of the plan and a 50 percent increase in survivor benefits under the same section.

Education and temporary income benefits are not included in the Plan A increases.

Morgan praised the increased benefits, which were attributed to good earnings experience. "As often as we can value this fund and demonstrate excess assets, we want to get the money into the hands of those to whom it belongs," he said.

Annuitants with formula benefits will see increases in the January 1990 checks they receive the first week in February, board officials said. Plan members who have not yet retired will have the increase added to their benefit at retirement.

The latest announced rise in formula benefits follows a permanent 25 percent increase last January.

New records in contributions, earnings and total assets highlighted staff reports made to trustees.

Participants and their employers in the board's pension plans contributed more than \$85 million to personal accounts in the first six months of 1989. This, coupled with net income of more than \$184 million in the same period, helped to swell assets 14.31 percent above the total on June 30, 1988, managers reported. Morgan noted that assets had increased by almost \$1 million per day for the past year.

Benefits paid to annuitants totaled \$23.19 million in the three months ended June 30.

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Trustees approved actions of their relief committee to give supplemental assistance to 41 needy applicants. This raises to 451 the number of ministers, missionaries or their widows receiving special grants or monthly income supplements funded by the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. Of the 41 new relief recipients, 24 do not receive an annuity from the board.

The board's Adopt an Annuitant ministry provides \$50 per month to 468 other retirees who receive regular annuities but whose incomes are too low for current expenses.

Plan documents for the board's several annuity plans and agency supplements have been extensively revised to comply with recent tax law, board leaders reported, and trustees approved a series of resolutions to adopt the amendments and plan restatements, subject to ratification by Southern Baptist agencies.

In his report to trustees, Morgan noted that the first two quarters of 1989 were "among the strongest ever in Annuity Board history," as assets grew to almost \$2.6 billion.

Morgan also noted strong growth in new members for the Convention Annuity Plan, the retirement plan used by most Southern Baptist institutions, agencies and state conventions.

Harold D. Richardson, executive vice president and treasurer, said 3,500 members were added to the Convention Annuity Plan in the first six months of the year.

Richardson expressed "cautious optimism" about earnings potential in the last half of 1989. He cited indications that "inflation is being slowed, if not curbed, without the sharp turndown that could send the United States economy into a recession."

A statistical milestone was reached in the second quarter, as assets in the board's Fixed Fund passed the \$1 billion mark for first time. Members direct most of their contributions to the fund, which will credit 8.75 percent earnings in 1989. The 1990 annual earnings rate will be announced in December.

The Variable Fund, composed of common stocks and securities convertible to common stocks, rose to \$7.89 per unit, representing a 12.93 percent earnings rate for the first six months of 1989.

The Balanced Fund earned 10.25 percent in the first six months. Its assets are a mix of common stock and high-quality bonds.

The one negative report was the continuing rise in church medical claims that exceed premiums paid. By June 30, more than \$3 million had been drawn from a shrinking insurance reserve to pay excess claims.

The board's insurance services division is seeking products and procedures to provide medical expense protection that is both affordable and effective, Richardson said, but he warned that substantial premium rate increases are inevitable for 1990.

The trustees also were told that participants had received information on the new ChurchLife insurance plans. These plans become effective Sept. 1.

In the July 24 meeting at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, trustees and guests heard Mark Short, executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, speak on the "cooperative spirit" of Southern Baptists and the genius of partnership among the various bodies who relate voluntarily without hierarchical control.

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Evangelization said to need  
cooperation, not competition

By Robert O'Brien & Michael Chute

N-FMB

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

MANILA, Philippines (BP)--World evangelization will succeed only if a "patchwork church," with all its diverse gifts, works cooperatively to reach a "patchwork world," with all its diverse problems.

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That message wound like a thread throughout 10 days of the Lausanne II International Congress on World Evangelization in Manila, which drew 4,300 people from 170 nations and from across the spectrum of evangelical Christianity.

Lausanne II participants were told Christians often focus more on what divides them into patchworks within Christendom than on what they hold in common.

What they hold in common, Lausanne II programmers declared, is oneness in Jesus Christ, who can be a common denominator in efforts to evangelize a fragmented world.

William R. O'Brien, a keynote congress speaker, challenged evangelical Christians to join hands "no matter what their race, gender or economic status and pour out the resources they have -- material, physical and spiritual -- to the end that all persons may hear of Jesus Christ." O'Brien is executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Competition worldwide among more than 22,000 denominations and 20,000 parachurch groups creates problems, O'Brien said: "The validity of one is questioned by the other, resulting in competition and conflict. Within many of these rage clergy-laity battles that siphon spiritual energy. They fail to capitalize on the availability of gifts and commitment that could become the salt penetrating a lost world."

All kinds of Christians with all kinds of emphases make up the Lausanne movement, which recognizes they must still grapple with diverse styles and biblical interpretations in seeking cooperation, observers noted. It has no membership or formal structure but seeks to energize and motivate Christians to develop cooperative networks to accomplish world evangelization.

As the congress concluded, participants voted to affirm for study and response a Manila Manifesto, which seeks to bring evangelical Christians onto an acceptable common ground from which to pursue cooperative world evangelization. The manifesto supplements the Lausanne Covenant, a document which grew out of the first Lausanne meeting in 1974.

Lausanne II picked up the torch of the missionary vision of the first Lausanne Congress, which evangelist Billy Graham convened in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1974 to rekindle the evangelical missionary thrust of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The torch, in fact, became a symbol of Lausanne II. Youth, who carried a flame across 50 nations, lit the Lausanne Manila flame in the opening ceremony. It dramatized the need for younger leaders to take over the work started by older Lausanne I leaders.

Graham underlined the torch-bearing theme when the 70-year-old evangelist cancelled his appearance in Manila because of heavy evangelism assignments elsewhere and the need to conserve his strength.

Another torch-bearing moment occurred when Tom Houston, a Baptist from Scotland and outgoing president of World Vision International, took over from Thomas Wang, a Chinese Baptist, as international director of the ongoing Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization.

The remainder of the Lausanne II congress explored, in 49 subject tracks and 425 workshops, not only who will carry the torch but the many ways it must be carried to accomplish world evangelization.

Participants focused on the range of issues confronting evangelicals today, from social justice for the world's poor and oppressed to reaching people groups and major cities that have never heard the Christian message.

The world's major cities -- breeding grounds for poverty and injustice -- will become cesspools which poison nations if Christians fail to evangelize and renew them, Lausanne II speakers warned.

"The world's mega-cities (more than 1 million population) represent the new frontier for missions," said Jimmy Maroney, Foreign Mission Board consultant for evangelism and church growth. "As the cities go, so goes the country -- intellectually, politically, economically, morally and religiously." Non-Christian mega-cities number 145 worldwide, he said.

Narrowing his focus to the world's most restricted nations, he noted, "If we fail to evangelize the cities in these 15 countries, we shall never finish the task of evangelizing the world by AD 2000 or AD 2100."

Several issues at Lausanne reflected a growing awareness in evangelical Christianity of diverse factors affecting global evangelization, observers said. They include awareness that evangelization involves social justice, as well as proclamation, and that evangelicals must confront positively issues related to women in ministry, the role of laymen and participation of charismatic Christians in world evangelization.

Philippine President Corazon Aquino, in a letter welcoming Lausanne II to Manila, expressed hope that participants would expand beyond purely spiritual topics to explore how to combat problems of hunger and poverty. Conference leaders, who had prepared before hearing her message, declared that world evangelization will make little headway unless Christians face the challenge of the poor -- one-half of the world's population.

"If both economic and human compassion isn't seen in the lives of those of us who follow Jesus, an enormous number of poor will never have convincing enough evidence to believe the good news of the Kingdom of God," new International Director Houston declared.

Failure of Christians to grasp the whole gospel occurs because they "put an ideological grid over the Bible to filter out what doesn't fit their world view," said Ray Bakke, Baptist seminary professor from Chicago, Ill., and the Lausanne committee's senior associate for world-class cities.

Lausanne II planners designed two subject tracks on women in ministry and the laity, reflecting an effort to seek ways to empower them to minister and to recognize and encourage their gifts.

That emphasis also reflects a realization that the church must find a way to involve men and women more effectively or get swamped in a growing tide of lay involvement -- which refuses to be controlled or diverted into narrow channels -- around the world.

Congress planners almost succeeded in their goal to draw 25 percent women to Lausanne, with 1,041 women in attendance. But they fell short of another goal of 25 percent women program leaders.

They also failed to attract participants from the church in mainland China. Hopes that Chinese church leaders would attend the congress were dashed when would-be congress participants were refused permission to travel.

But congress planners rejoiced over an upsurge over Lausanne I in attendance from East European nations. About 135 East Europeans built bridges to the West as they reported on Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's "perestroika" reforms and their implications for Eastern churches.

Some told of new opportunities for church planting and evangelism in small villages of the Soviet Union. Others expressed fear that influential atheists would successfully oppose liberalized laws on religious freedom currently under consideration in the Soviet Union.

Participants from other East European nations generally reported an increase in public evangelism efforts, particularly in Hungary and Poland, where they said religious restrictions have been eased in recent months.

The Lausanne II track on AD 2000 captured the imagination of many participants who believe the message of Christ can be proclaimed to the entire world by the year 2000 and beyond.

World evangelization by "the end of this century is totally possible," said Wang, echoing a theme that permeated the Lausanne II congress.

Southern Baptists asked  
to respond to manifesto

By Michael Chute

N-FMB

MANILA, Philippines (BP)--World evangelization leaders will ask Southern Baptists and other Christians to study and respond to a document that the church worldwide could use as a basis for cooperation.

Called the Manila Manifesto, the document was adopted by 4,300 participants at the Lausanne II International Congress on World Evangelization July 11-20 in Manila.

"The Manila Manifesto is a statement of conviction and a call to action," said John Stott, major writer of the document. "The very word 'manifesto' means a public declaration of convictions, intentions and motives. That's exactly what the Manila Manifesto is."

Congress participants from 170 nations hope the manifesto, in conjunction with the Lausanne Covenant, will be used by national Lausanne groups and other Christians for study and action in world evangelization. The covenant was issued by the first Congress on World Evangelization held in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1974.

The Lausanne movement, which has emerged since 1974, has no membership or formal structure, said Tom Houston, a Scottish Baptist and new international director of the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization. Lausanne seeks to inform, energize and motivate Christians to plug the gospel into their spheres of influence and develop cooperative networks.

The manifesto deals with topics that emerged in the 15 years since Lausanne I. Issues -- such as the Christian lifestyle, gospel and culture, evangelism and social responsibility, the Holy Spirit and conversion -- surfaced in Lausanne consultations held since the first congress.

Congress leaders said the covenant "rose out of a particular context in 1974 and should be left in its own integrity," said Stott, president of Christian Impact and rector emeritus of All Souls Church in London.

The covenant and manifesto "don't go over the same ground," Stott added. The manifesto "tries to address more fully some of the major issues debated during the (Lausanne II) congress."

The Manila Manifesto has two purposes beyond helping Lausanne II participants clarify some points in their commitment. First, it shares with those in the larger evangelical constituency who were absent from Manila what took place during the congress. Second, it addresses the wider Christian community, which includes non-evangelicals.

The initial section of the manifesto contains a series of 21 affirmations which, among other points, highlight the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ and call for continued commitment to the Lausanne Covenant. Another section deals with the realities of sin, guilt, judgment and the lostness of mankind. The Lausanne Covenant contains no equivalent to either of these sections.

The manifesto also discusses the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility. The Lausanne Covenant makes no attempt to relate the two except in the statement: "In the church's mission of sacrificial service, evangelism is primary."

However, Stott said the manifesto points out the gospel is primary, and the church's primary commitment is to the gospel.

"If the gospel is to be effective and if there is to be credibility, the Christian community has to be seen as well as heard," Stott emphasized. "Good news and good works go along together; the gospel is not only verbalized but embodied."

The social responsibility section of the manifesto "will certainly challenge parts of the evangelical world and give greater courage to many evangelicals," said Bjorn Bue, Norway's Lausanne group leader. The fight for human rights and liberation of oppressed peoples "as a genuine issue for evangelicals" should influence evangelical thinking around the world, he said.

Horst Marquardt of the German delegation said his group was concerned with how the simple lifestyle concept "can be made concrete" in the West, where affluence abounds.

The Germans hoped for more "flesh on the bone" regarding the call to a simple lifestyle among Christians. They wondered how this call for simple living could become incarnational in the lives of Christians living in the western world, explained Marquardt, executive director of Evangeliums-Rundfunk, a partner of Trans World Radio.

The manifesto includes a section on the Holy Spirit, also addressed in the Lausanne Covenant, but the manifesto attempts to overcome the division between charismatics and non-charismatics. "We attempted to produce a balanced statement that both sides of the debate would be able to accept," Stott explained.

Bue pointed out the significance of a strong statement for social concern appearing in a document that underscores the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.

"It's imperative to keep that untouched," said Bue, chairman of the Norwegian Missionary Society. "Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. Theologically, that will be one of the challenging questions for us as Christians in years to come because of the religious pluralism spreading all over the world."

Kenyan George Wanjau added: "In recent years, we've talked about coexistence so much, we've almost lost the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. Whatever context we're working in, we must remember the uniqueness of Jesus Christ." Wanjau is moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Nairobi.

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National task force formed  
on marketplace evangelism

By Mark Wingfield

N-HMB

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

ATLANTA (BP)--A national task force has been formed to help Southern Baptists develop evangelistic ministries in the workplace.

The task force on marketplace evangelism was organized by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's lay evangelism department with support from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Kansas City, MO. Also represented on the 73-member task force are the denomination's Brotherhood Commission, Woman's Missionary Union, Foreign Mission Board, Sunday School Board, state conventions and associations, as well as pastors and laity from a variety of vocations.

The purpose of the task force is to design a denominational emphasis on marketplace evangelism that will be launched in three-year pilot projects beginning in Boston in 1990 and Los Angeles in 1991.

"Marketplace evangelism is the people of God -- the laos -- sharing the gospel through redemptive ministry in the workplace," said Reid Hardin, director of the Home Mission Board's lay evangelism department. "Marketplace evangelism is lifestyle evangelism."

Every office building is a mission field where the scattered church comes in contact with those who need the gospel, Hardin explained. In the workplace, Christian laypeople have opportunities for witnessing that pastors and missionaries will never have, he said.

"We're not trying to create a new program," he added. "We're trying to connect churches with marketplace evangelism that is already going on. We're trying to teach laity how to network with other Christians for evangelism."

The pilot projects in Boston and Los Angeles will begin with regional conferences on "The Laos in Marketplace Evangelism" in those cities. Both will provide workshops and seminars with models of church-based ministries in the marketplace, Hardin said.

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Students list child abuse,  
abortion as top concerns

By Frank Wm. White

N-SSB

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

NASHVILLE (BP)--Child abuse and abortion are the top societal concerns listed by college students responding to a nationwide survey by The Student magazine, a publication of the student ministry department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

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For the second consecutive year, an overwhelming number of students have listed child abuse as the major societal concern, said Editor Milt Hughes.

Results from the September 1988 survey are published in the August 1989 issue of the magazine.

From a list of 28 societal needs and concerns, students were asked to check five that concern them most and that need priority attention.

Of the 439 students responding to the survey, 61.9 percent listed child abuse. That is up from 53.2 percent in a similar survey taken in September 1987, Hughes said.

"The high rating for child abuse was a major surprise for me the first year," Hughes said.

But other information the student ministry department receives, including comments from students attending conferences, indicates that child abuse touches many students personally, Hughes explained: "Many have experienced child abuse but have never talked with anyone about it. There's got to be a reason for the high level of concern. We've got to address it."

The survey list did not specify sexual abuse but listed child abuse in general, he noted.

Abortion rose on the 1988 survey with 45 percent of the respondents listing it as a concern, up from 36.7 percent the previous year.

Abortion replaced hunger as the No. 2 concern. Hunger dropped to seventh on the list, with 33.8 percent of respondents checking it, compared with 41.7 percent the previous year.

Hughes noted that the decline of hunger on the list follows a decline in giving to hunger concerns in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Other concerns listed most often by respondents included drug abuse, 36.5 percent; AIDS, 36 percent; homelessness, 34.9 percent; and drunk driving, 34.2 percent.

Among personal needs and concerns, 62.4 percent of students singled out a relationship to God. Grades ranked second, with 44 percent.

Other personal concerns included time management, 41.7 percent; setting priorities, 35.1 percent; and stress, 29.4 percent.

Students were asked to note their level of participation -- frequent, occasional, not at all -- in 16 activities within the past year.

Highest on the list was attending a religious service, with 95.5 percent. Also, 93.4 percent said they attended Sunday school, and 89.5 percent said they participated in Baptist Student Union.

Sexual relationship, drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes were marked by the fewest number of students. A total of 21.8 percent said they had drunk alcohol, and 17.5 percent of the single students said they had had a sexual relationship in the past year, while 6 percent said they smoked cigarettes.

"I hope college department Sunday school teachers will look at this and see that one in five have had some sexual experience," Hughes said. "Teachers also need to ask whether students have the proper biblical background for convictions about sex and alcohol. We need to build character and instill decision-making principles and not just preach rules."

Students are seeking more help from their churches, he pointed out. From a list of areas where the church could provide more help, students most frequently checked life decisions, Bible study and discipleship.



When asked their preferred translation of the Bible, 29.2 percent selected the New International Version and 25.3 percent chose the King James Version, while 19.3 percent opted for the New American Standard.

From a list of nine descriptions of the Bible, 84.5 percent noted "inspired by God" as closest to their view of the Bible, while 78.8 chose "guidelines for Christian living" as similar to their description. Students were asked to check two or three descriptions.

Hughes began the survey in 1987 as a means of tracking student opinions on key issues. He pointed out that the survey is not a scientific polling of college students. The survey form is printed in the September issue of the magazine each year and individual students, campus organizations and state BSU organizations are encouraged to complete it.

In the 1988 survey, 88.8 percent said they were Baptists; 4.1 percent, other Protestant; and 5.5 percent, other. Female students comprised 61.7 percent of the survey respondents, with 38.3 percent male respondents. A total of 56 percent of respondents live in a campus dormitory, 17 percent commuters and 17 percent apartment dwellers.

The 1989 survey form will be published in the September issue of The Student, with results to be reported in August 1990.

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CORRECTION: Please note the following correction in the 7/21/89 Baptist Press story titled "Stop fighting or stop growing, chaplain tells Southern Baptists":

Change the reference to the National Baptist Convention in the 11th paragraph to the Northern Baptist Convention and the reference to National Baptists in the 13th paragraph to Northern Baptists.

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Regarding the 7/24/89 Baptist Press story titled "Dellanna W. O'Brien elected national WMU executive director," please note that the O'Briens are members of Ginter Park Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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925 Venezuelans accept Christ during medical mission project

By Mary Speidel

*F~~B~~, FMB*

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

VALENCIA, Venezuela (BP)--She gasped when she saw the floral fabric of her own dress.

The Venezuelan senior citizen had just received her first pair of glasses from Southern Baptist mission volunteers.

"She had probably never seen the flowers (on her dress) before," said optometry student Tim Thompson of Birmingham, Ala.

And she might not have heard about Jesus Christ if it weren't for 77 Southern Baptist medical missions volunteers who worked 10 days in Venezuela.

The volunteers from nine states returned July 17 from leading medical clinics in the Venezuelan cities of Maracaibo and Valencia, reported to Dewey Dunn, a Nashville physician and trip leader. Twenty-four volunteers worked in Valencia and the surrounding area; 53 worked in Maracaibo.

Clinics offered dental, eye and physical exams, pharmaceuticals and nutrition information, as well as spiritual counsel, Dunn said.

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The project was a follow-up of work begun last summer by a group of 175 medical volunteers, the largest volunteer medical team ever sent by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, according to board officials.

Although smaller than last year's group, the July volunteer team reported a greater number of decisions for Christ, Dunn said: "The amazing thing to me ... was that last year with 175 people (volunteers), we had about 800 people receive Christ and 10,000 patients receive treatment. This year with 77 persons, we saw 7,977 patients and the decisions for Christ were 925."

Venezuelans and Southern Baptist missionaries in Venezuela were instrumental in organizing and running the project, Dunn added. They worked as translators or personal witnesses and some as medical professionals.

"None of this would have been possible without their help," he said.

Dunn, who has been a medical volunteer in Venezuela six times, said he is planning additional volunteer medical projects in January and July 1990 in Venezuela.

Volunteers from the most recent trip came from Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Some reported profound experiences, Dunn said.

Becky Roy, a dental assistant from Gallatin, Tenn., said a young Venezuelan patient fainted after a dental exam. "We tried to cool her down and relax her, but she would push us away," Roy said.

Later the girl's father arrived. Volunteers learned the family thought she was possessed. After father and daughter heard a presentation of the gospel, both accepted Christ.

"She got up like nothing had ever taken place. Her color was great," Roy said. "She didn't remember anything that happened, but she had the joy of Christ."

Kim Rakes, a 23-year-old medical technologist from Nashville, admitted she had complained about the dry bread on sandwiches served to volunteers during lunch. One day children swarmed around her, begging for her lunch. "I realized I couldn't feed them all," she said, but said she decided to give her food discreetly to a 10-year-old girl and her 6-year-old sister. The 6-year-old, who suffered from scabies, had tried to take the lunch from Rakes' hand.

"From that day on, I vowed to do better as a Christian and to leave the materialistic world in second place," said Rakes, who postponed beginning her first professional job to go on the trip. She started working as a medical technologist at Vanderbilt Medical Center in Nashville the day after the volunteers returned home.

Gene Harston, a Bowling Green, Ky., cardiologist, and his wife, Deborah, took their three children on the trip. Their older children, Monica, 14, and Billy, 15, assisted optometrist Tim Thompson with eye exams. Another 11-year-old child also helped in the clinic.

Mrs. Harston said she was unable to work in the clinic one day because she was ill. That morning a Venezuelan boy delivered breakfast to her hotel room. "He kept saying, 'Biblia, Biblia,'" she said. "I said, 'Do you want a Bible?'" He nodded.

Mrs. Harston was amazed that even though she was sick, an opportunity to tell someone about Christ had come to her doorstep, she said, adding, "I thought ... God can use you wherever you are, even if you're not able to go out."

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Byrd retires  
as Boyce dean

N-CO  
(SBTS)

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--David Q. Byrd Jr., dean of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Boyce Bible School, will retire from that position effective Dec. 31.

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Byrd came to the Louisville, Ky., school in 1978 after 24 years as pastor of West Jackson Baptist Church in Jackson, Tenn. At Boyce, Byrd has directed a program that since 1974 has provided ministerial training for people without college degrees. In May, the school graduated its 500th student.

In addition to his pastorate in Jackson, the Brookhaven, Miss., native has been pastor of Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church, Meridian, Miss.; Waddy Baptist Church, Waddy, Ky.; and Calvary Baptist Church, Harrodsburg, Ky. He is a graduate of Mississippi College in Clinton and Southern Seminary.

Byrd has been on the Southern Baptist Executive Committee and has been a trustee of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board. He also has been on the Southern Baptist Committee on Boards and the Southern Baptist Committee on Committees. He is a former president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Southern Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt said Byrd has "provided superb leadership and has worked tirelessly to strengthen and expand the programs of Boyce. "Byrd plans to continue his service to Boyce by teaching a course there occasionally.

Seminary Provost G. Willis Bennett said a new dean should be named before Byrd's departure.

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Aspiring Christian writers  
find ministry competition

By Charles Willis

N-SSB

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

NASHVILLE (BP)--Aspiring Christian writers searching for opportunities to multiply ministry and meet creative needs are finding an open market and fierce competition, according to participants in an annual writers workshop conducted by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

While not all 70 participants in this year's workshop desire a full-time writing career, those who want to market their work discovered a wide range of Southern Baptist Convention writing opportunities and plenty of fellow seekers.

"I found there are a lot of things open for someone who wants to write," said Richard Roney, chief of chaplain services at Veterans Administration Hospital in Marion, Ill. "And there are a lot of writers out there who know what you go through. You aren't the only one with a desk full of rejection letters."

The benefit of multiplied ministry makes the struggle to be published worthwhile, Roney said. One may preach the same message several times in modified forms, he said, but publishing a message results in "more ministry than I could do in a lifetime."

Jim Lane discovered several subject areas he may be qualified to write about, but he described his perception of the competition to be published as "fierce," noting, "I'll have to learn to be aggressive if I'm going to see my name in print."

Lane, minister of education at Uvalde Baptist Church in Houston, said he aspires to write on family topics and specifically for children. A side benefit, is to write for his grandchildren who want to know what it was like when he grew up "in the olden days," he confided. "One grandchild even wants to know what it was like to ride in a covered wagon."

Gail Tucker of Louisville, Ky., on furlough with her husband, Dale, from the Argentine Baptist Mission in Buenos Aires, worked for 15 years in writing and public relations before assuming duties as a press representative for the mission. She attended the workshop to update her skills, she said. As a part of missions education, she writes 20 letters a week, responding fully to even two-sentence letters from small children.

"I see my letter writing as an enormous part of my ministry," she said, explaining that she uses her letters to tell about her specific work and to describe what it's like to be a missionary.

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"I've been surprised at how large the competition is," she said. "That's a little discouraging, yet the potential to reach so many people is encouraging. I'd like to find ways to expand my ministry of interpreting missions beyond missions publications."

Combining training in journalism and religious education is the goal of Jerry Wooley, associate pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Seagoville, Texas, and a writer for "Suburbia News," a weekly newspaper in southeast Dallas County.

"There is a better chance to write for SBC publications than I originally thought," Wooley said. "At the same time, I've also realized my ministry is so general it limits what I am qualified to do. The workshop has given me some direction. Competition is going to be very stiff, but it should make me a better writer. I'm going to have to edit my own work and be sure I really have something to say before I submit it in writing."

Wooley would like to write for leadership magazines with a focus on small-church needs, he said.

Carole Wilkins, secretary at Northwood Hills Baptist Church in Northport, Ala., has written for publications produced by the board's discipleship training -- the new name for church training effective Oct. 1 -- and church administration departments. Her goal in attending the workshop was to find ways to expand her ministry through article writing, especially for leadership and youth publications, she said: "I've learned how editors think and about the credentials we need to have if we want editors to pay attention to us. I've also seen the need to adhere to guidelines in order to be a good writer."

Wilkins is not concerned about competition among writers for publication opportunities, she said: "I believe God will take care of that part, if he wants me to write as a ministry I wouldn't want to be selfish and say I'm the only one out there who can write."

Barbara and Ernest Beevers of Savage, Md., had slightly different reasons for attending the workshop together. He is pastor of First Baptist Church in Savage, and she is a freelance writer.

Mrs. Beevers wants to write more, and came to the conference looking for ways to reach a wider audience.

"The big thing was learning that lay people are needed to write curriculum," she said. "I may want to try my hand at that."

But Beevers, who observed that writing his sermons is always "a practical necessity," wanted to gain motivation from the sessions.

"I need to apply the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair," he said. "I want the discipline of sitting down to write."

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Southern Baptist volunteers  
go to jail to help prisoners

F - (S.C.)

Baptist Press  
7/27/89

LANCASTER, S.C. (BP)--Imagine a grandmother behind bars.

That's exactly where Oleen Hinson, a grandmother 11 times over, spends a lot of her time. She is not an inmate, but a counselor for the Lancaster County Sheriff's Department through the Moriah Baptist Association.

"It seems almost unexplainable. My family did not think that Grandmother needed to be going to a place like the jail," Hinson said. "But the new awakening to the spiritual needs of persons behind bars preys soberly on my mind and heart. So, here I am, after many hours of prayer, pursuing this new world where I can fill a valid place in it for the building of God's kingdom."

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Hinson and five others found their "valid place" through a Southern Baptist Seminary Extension Department's clinical pastoral training course of ministry in a corrections facility. The six Southern Baptist seminaries have sponsored jointly the department for more than 30 years, providing a non-traditional approach to effective training for ministry.

I think this prison counseling has had a great impact," said Lancaster County Sheriff Williford Faile. "It's great to know we now have people who have been trained; who are qualified to talk with inmates. Before this program, we have people trying to commit suicide. This has cut down tremendously. I don't believe we've had one who has tried to commit suicide after talking with one of these folks."

Faile, a member of Hyde Park Baptist Church in Lancaster, endorses the sheriff's department identification badges for the counselors. This allows them to have easy access to the prison areas and helps the inmates know who the counselors are.

Riley Hammond, former chaplain for the sheriff's department when he was pastor of Heath Springs Baptist Church, taught the 32-hour course. Riley now is pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Aiken, S.C.

Because of the course materials, his teaching and the specialized are of ministry, the six students who completed the course felt confident to begin their new phase of ministry.

However, Hammond said, "the success of this program is due to having an associational missions development council in place and able to respond to this need, and a sheriff open to the ministry."

John Platt, director of missions for the association, agreed with Hammond. "Over the past eight or nine years, we've had three or four groups express an interest in working with prisoners," said Platt, who had worked with prisoners.

"In this situation, we saw the need for more specialized training in this area, and I know clinical pastoral training could provide the materials. My past experiences and the coordination provided through our missions development council helped push this program through."

All the coordination and training in the world isn't enough if the sheriff isn't open to the ministry, he added.

"The director of missions should initiate this ministry by contacting the local sheriff and expressing his vision for the county," he said. "He should also share his willingness to help provide effective ministry in a professional manner to help the sheriff do a more effective job."

The experience also produced Hammond's successor as sheriff's department chaplain. John Rogers, pastor of Oakhurst Baptist Church in Heath Springs, S.C., was one of the six to complete the program. He took over as chaplain when Hammond accepted the pastorate in Aiken.

"I work mostly with the officers now," Rogers said. "But Riley helped us learn that security with the prisoners is the first thing. His experience really made the difference in the course."

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Changes in personality, dress  
accompany occultic behavior

By Terri Lackey

AV-SSB

Baptist Press

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Parents should not ignore their sons or daughters when they suddenly begin to wear black torn clothing, listen to heavy-metal music and undergo noticeable personality changes, an expert on religious groups said.

Signs such as these may suggest a young person is dabbling in the occult, said Gary Leazer, director of the interfaith witness department at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.

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"When their children start displaying abnormal behaviors such as this, parents usually don't know what to do, so they just don't do anything," said Leazer. "They see their son or daughter acting out these occultic things, and they may even know they are occultic, but they don't do anything because they think it's just a phase they are going through."

Occult, meaning hidden, is an umbrella term which covers a variety of diverse practices including astrology, magic and witchcraft, spiritualism and Satanism, Leazer said. Occult should not be confused with cult, which is a religious group that identifies with a parent group, but deviates in theology from its basic biblical doctrines.

Leazer is author of a new Equipping Center module, Understanding the Occult, which he taught during Church Training Leadership Conferences at Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist conference centers. The module, released in July, is produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church training department, whose name will change to the discipleship training department Oct. 1.

While occultism has been around as long as Christianity, Leazer said, he attributes its revival to rapid social change in this country, a heavy interest in materialism and the rising use of drugs.

Divination, or prediction, is probably the most appealing aspect of the occult, and astrology is the most popular form of occult divination, Leazer said. Palmistry, crystal ball gazing and tarot cards are other forms of occult divination, he said.

"I have a problem with a person's practice of astrology when he really does believe the planets influence his life," Leazer said. "I see a greater problem when people begin to make decisions based on what their horoscope says."

Other occult forms include spiritualism, the belief that spirits of the dead can and do communicate with the living; magic -- spelled "magick" in the occult world -- and witchcraft, which appeal to a basic human desire to control individual lives and the lives of others and Satanism, or worship of the devil.

"Satanism is a small part of the overall occult world, although it is very big in the news media because they tend to glamorize the exotic and strange," Leazer said.

"Usually a person has to have low self-esteem to get into the occult," Leazer said. "One of the biggest personal appeals of the occult is that it offers power; it appeals to basic human emotions."

"So if you have an individual who does not feel any personal power, say a teen-ager who is not doing well in school, the occult can say, 'I will give you power to succeed in life.'" The largest majority of people who practice occultic behaviors are teenagers and young adults, Leazer said.

Many of them become involved in the practice because of "a lack of communication with their parents and other responsible adults," he said.

"Kids don't get in to the occult just over night. If I find a family with a teen in the occult, one of the first things I look at are the parents."

"About 85 percent of the time trouble with the occult can be traced to a breakdown of communication between parents and kids," he said. "It happens over the years, rather innocently. The parents get tired at work, they come home and read the paper."

"They just don't spend time talking with their kids."

Parents who fear their children may be dabbling in occultism should look for "sudden changes in dress or personality, the music they are listening to, and what they are watching or reading."

"If they start to wear a lot of black clothing, especially torn, that can be a sign of evil. Additionally, a lot of kids in the occult write their own, pretty detailed diaries about their activities in Satanism," Leazer said.

Even though a young person's occult practices might be a phase, Leazer said parents should not ignore it: "Parents ought not to assume it's a phase. They should sit down with their kids, say, 'I've noticed a change in you, and frankly I'm a little concerned and want to talk to you about how you are feeling.'

"It may just be a phase, but I suggest parents get some help even if they might not need it."

Talking to a pastor or representatives at a local hospital with a crisis unit for young people would be a good start in getting help, he said.

Christians concerned about occultism should "first of all, be aware of its practices, and second, have a strong biblical foundation of life," he added. "And parents need to keep those communication lines with their children open."

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Inner beauty takes 1st place  
with newly crowned Miss Texas

By Orville Scott

F- Tops

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DALLAS (BP)--Her dream came true, but newly crowned Miss Texas, Leah Kay Lyle of Hyde Park Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, has no illusions concerning her title or that of Miss America, for which she will compete in Atlantic City, N.J., in September.

The 22-year-old Baylor University honor graduate has "convenanted" with her parents to pray as they always have, even before she was born.

Paul and Linda Lyle of First Baptist Church in Plainview, Texas, committed their daughter and her brother, John Paul, a Baylor law student, to God before their children entered this world.

A plaque on the wall of Paul Lyle's law office in Plainview reads: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Joshua 24:15 "In the same spirit, as she prepared for the Miss Texas pageant, Lyle prayed "not to win, but if the Lord could use me more as Miss Texas, he'd allow me to win."

"Now I'd like to go into churches and tell young girls that beauty which comes from within is so much more important than the outside. I've found that to be true all my life," the 5-foot, 6-inch brown-haired beauty said.

Lyle and her parents are praying that if she can serve God better as Miss America that his will be done. "If not, I'll be satisfied to come back to Texas, knowing I've done my very best," she said.

Ironically, the first runner-up in the Miss Texas pageant was her good friend since high school, Leslie Chambers of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, whose father, Jim, is minister of music at Highland Baptist Church in Lubbock.

In the talent competition, which accounts for 40 percent, Lyle performed the intricate fourth movement of "Ginastera's Sonata No. 1."

Her mother, a certified public accountant who is a member of the board of the Texas Baptist Church Loan Corporation, said: "A sensitive, caring piano teacher had a profound influence on Leah Kay's development musically. Also, she grew a great deal from her involvement in youth choir and the Rio Grande River Ministry."

When Lyle was 10, she gave her testimony and sang solos and a duet with her mother at the Texas Baptist Woman's Missionary Union House Party at Baylor University in Waco.

The young woman made a profession of faith in Christ in First Baptist Church in Plainview at the age of 5 and was baptized by her pastor, Carlos McLeod, who now is director of the Texas Baptist evangelism division.

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"At the time -- because she was so young -- we couldn't help wondering if it was genuine," her mother admits. "But from that point on, she seemed to have an unusual care and concern for her friends.

"There was a little girl in the third grade whom I believe she was instrumental in leading to the Lord. It made a profound difference in that girl's home life."

Lyle's parents, who met and married while in Baylor University, said Leah Kay works hard at everything she does, but puts other people's interests first and is really down to earth.

"I'm proud of both my kids," said Paul Lyle, a deacon in First Baptist Church in Plainview. "She and John Paul are so level-headed I rely on them for advice."

"Leah Kay is laid back but a high achiever," said her mother. "She sets a goal and starts clicking toward it, but she doesn't get things out of balance. I wish I could be more like her."

Mrs. Lyle was runner-up to Miss Texas in the 1962 pageant, but she avoided encouraging her daughter to pursue the title "until Leah Kay was at the stage where she felt comfortable about it and it wouldn't traumatize her."

"A rhinestone crown is very unreal, and the title is fleeting," said Mrs. Lyle. "Nobody remembers the girl's name. If you go into it for something other than service -- if you think it makes you some kind of princess -- you're doomed to be disappointed.

"It appears, from my point of view, that the Lord has endowed Leah Kay with an unusual ability to love people, and people really warm up to her.

"We've talked about what that responsibility means. I believe she has no illusions. She sees it as a golden opportunity to open doors and touch lives, and other lives will touch hers."

Looking beyond her busy year as Miss Texas -- and possibly Miss America -- Lyle said she may enter law school or return to work in Austin, where she has been research associate for the Texas Legislative Council since graduating from Baylor in May of 1988.

Travis Hart, pastor at First Baptist Church in Plainview, said the Lyles are extra supportive of their church and pastor.

"It won't surprise me if Leah Kay turns out to be one of the most wholesome Miss Texas representatives in history," said Hart. "With her, the inner person is as attractive as what you see on the outside."