



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE.
SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #75
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Alvin C. Shackelford, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Marv Knox, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 511 N. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 720-0550
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND (Foreign) Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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Missionary charged
after fatal accident

N-FMB

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania (BP)--A Southern Baptist missionary in Tanzania has been charged with "careless driving resulting in death" and must appear in court Dec. 18.

Tim Tidenberg, 29, of Loving, Texas, was involved in a car accident Nov. 15 that resulted in the death of a young Tanzanian child. Tidenberg said the accident occurred because the child jumped into the road as he drove by, hitting the left side of the car.

The missionary reported he was asked by police to sign a report Nov. 20 that stated the child was crossing the road and Tidenberg failed to stop. He refused to sign.

The minimum sentence for the offense for which Tidenberg is charged is two years in jail, according to the law in Tanzania, a country, like most African nations, with extremely heavy pedestrian traffic. The U.S. Embassy said it would step in to help in the case if Tidenberg is arrested or if the court requires his passport.

Tidenberg and his wife, Ann, live in Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania, where they have worked as church developers since April. But he is not new to the country. His parents were missionaries to Tanzania, and the Tidenbergs now live in the house where he grew up.

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Illinois abortion case
settled out of court

By Kathy Palen

N-BJC

Baptist Press
11/29/89

WASHINGTON (BP)--One of the major abortion cases that was to be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court this term has been settled out of court.

The state of Illinois reached a settlement with abortion clinic operators less than two weeks before Ragsdale v. Turnock was to be argued before the high court.

At issue were Illinois regulations that applied strict licensing standards to abortion clinics. The rules required that all first-trimester abortions be performed in licensed facilities, which had to meet standards comparable to those set for hospitals.

An abortion clinic operator, Richard Ragsdale, challenged the regulations in court. A federal judge found the rules to be unconstitutional and enjoined the state from enforcing them. The 7th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that ruling.

The director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, Bernard Turnock, appealed the case to the Supreme Court.

But Illinois Attorney General Neil Hartigan reached an out-of-court agreement on the regulations with American Civil Liberties Union attorneys representing several abortion clinics.

Although agreeing the state should be able to set minimum health standards to protect women having abortions, the parties said the state should avoid regulations that are "unnecessary, inappropriate or excessive."

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'Stall' said to demand
attention, cooperation

By Jim Lowry

N-SSB

NASHVILLE (BP)--Stalled growth in Southern Baptist churches will be the target of renewed efforts by program leaders over the next few years to get the denomination back on track for reaching people for Christ.

Baptist state convention directors of church administration met Nov. 16-17 with personnel of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church administration department and discussed the denominational slowdown. They also heard about customized growth plans, new products and increased cooperation among programs to encourage growth.

"We are not presently a growing denomination, even with the slight increases we have had recently," said Gary Cook, the board's vice president for church programs and services. "It is our commitment, dream and prayer that we will once again be a growing convention.

"We want to look at methods that will provide growth with integrity."

The growth plan that was unveiled for the state directors emphasizes the need for cooperation among programs of the denomination.

The Coordinated Church Growth Plan, which will help churches diagnose growth potential in light of the impact on all programs of the church, calls for balanced biblical church growth in evangelism, discipleship, missions and administration.

D.G. McCoury, pastoral ministries consultant in the board's church administration department, and Bill May, church administration director for the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, have developed the Coordinated Growth Plan process to integrate the contributions of all church programs to maintain growth.

When a church achieves growth in Sunday school enrollment and resident church membership, the Coordinated Church Growth Plan points pastors and church leaders toward ways to bring all programs into the growth picture.

Roy Edgemon, director of the board's discipleship training department, told the church administration directors that the Southern Baptist Convention is "playing the game that we are a stable denomination."

Growth in discipleship is vitally important to provide spiritual foundations for growth and maturity of believers to become effective church members, Edgemon said.

The Coordinated Church Growth Plan helps church leaders evaluate the purpose and tasks of the church to achieve growth in quantity and quality.

To help church leaders understand the dimensions of healthy, sustained growth, a new periodical, "Growing Churches," will be available beginning in October 1990. It will provide suggestions for growing churches by considering needs in evangelism, missions and outreach and will carry testimonies from pastors and other staff members who have led churches in growth.

For larger churches in the convention, the church administration department unveiled a new cost-recovery growth consultation service that will customize a plan of growth to the situations and particular needs of churches with more than 1,500 members.

Joe Stacker, director of the church administration department, said only larger churches are included in the strategic growth planning service at first because they tend to be more involved in long-range planning, which is an essential element of the project. The service will be expanded at a later date to include smaller churches.

This growth plan includes four visits to the church, including an initial two-day session to evaluate the church's situation and train the pastor and other church leaders. A requirement for involvement in the project is participation in all sessions by the pastor and strategic church leaders.

A related emphasis, "Let's All Go to Church," is a jointly sponsored project for the church administration and church music departments to focus attention in local churches on improved worship services.

Included in the project will be guidance for worship leaders to evaluate worship, make changes and consider how to blend traditional and contemporary worship practices. Numerous resources will be available to help the pastor and other ministers plan for and enrich worship.

State directors also were told about the 1990 outstanding small church pastor recognition. The annual recognition, conducted conventionwide by the church administration department and state directors, is in response to a motion made during the 1987 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting that the denomination institute a special award for pastors of small churches.

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Writers' conference gives tools
for language Bible study aids

By Frank Wm. White

N-SSB

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NASHVILLE (BP)--At a time when many European countries are gaining new freedoms, Southern Baptists are helping Christians there and in other countries produce their own Bible study materials.

Christian leaders from 16 countries, including several in Eastern Europe, participated in the International Christian Writers' Conference this fall in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. The conference was a joint effort of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and the Baptist World Alliance to guide participants in producing Bible study materials.

"Many of them could not have left their countries even to attend the conference a few months earlier. Now, they are excited and eager about the possibilities for open worship and Bible study," said Myrte Veach, coordinator for the conference and manager of the youth Sunday school program section at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

Participants included representatives of Baptist or Christian groups from Hungary, Yugoslavia, Poland, East Germany, West Germany, Great Britain, Brazil, Colombia, Angola, Ghana, Nigeria, Panama, India, the Soviet Union, the Philippines and Burma.

Conference leaders hope the participants will be able to produce Bible study materials in their own languages with their own cultural distinctives.

A notebook, "Ten Steps to Produce Bible Study Materials," written for the conference, and a copy of a year's outline for materials for each age group were given to each participant.

Participants also could conduct writers' conferences similar to what they attended to train writers who will produce the material, Veach said.

Participants from at least 10 countries said they plan to translate the notebooks into their languages and conduct writers' conferences soon, Veach said.

Additional yearly outlines for Convention Uniform Series Sunday school materials will be provided as requested, she said.

Many participants for the first time "are seeing the world is opening up to them. They are excited and eager about what they can do," Veach said.

Because of the eagerness shown by Christians from Eastern European countries, Veach predicted, churches there "are going to grow by leaps and bounds."

The concept of adult Bible study is not emphasized in Europe and other areas as it is among Southern Baptist churches, Veach pointed out.

"If they work on developing adult materials, a spiritual revolution could happen all over the world," she said.

Other countries already are asking for additional conferences, which probably will be developed regionally, Veach said.

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Everley Hayes transferred
to rehabilitation center

N- FMB

SALISBURY, Md. (BP)--Retired Southern Baptist missionary nurse Everley Hayes was moved into the Deer's Head Center for rehabilitation in Salisbury, Md., Nov. 27 after regaining consciousness following a fall in October.

Hayes, 73, lay in a coma for about three weeks at Peninsula General Hospital Medical Center after falling down the choir loft stairs at Allen Memorial Baptist Church in Salisbury following a worship service Oct. 22. She showed no sign of response until Nov. 5, when she began moving her eyes at the mention of her name.

Now Hayes is able to talk and smile, said her sister, Eunice Ruark. Doctors believe she is a good candidate for rehabilitation, Ruark added.

"The doctors really have been amazed," said Ruark. "We know this is an answer to the prayers of the people who have been praying for her these past five weeks."

Hayes is known for working in China with her famous missionary colleague, physician Bill Wallace. She identified his body and helped bury it after he died in a Chinese communist prison in 1951. She later was confined by the communists for eight months before leaving China. She went on to work for 30 years as a nurse in Indonesia and retired in 1983.

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Two American Baptist workers
arrested in El Salvador

By Donald D. Martin

N- FMB

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11/29/89

VALLEY FORGE, Pa. (BP)--A second American Baptist worker was arrested Nov. 27 in El Salvador and released the next day, officials of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. said Nov. 28.

American Baptist missionary Ruth Moodey, 37, of Minneapolis was arrested at her house in Santa Ana. She was not informed why she was taken into custody, according to American Baptist officials in Valley Forge, Pa., headquarters of the denomination.

Salvadoran police said Moodey would be charged in the capital, San Salvador, about 50 miles southeast of Santa Ana. However, they released her the following morning in Santa Ana.

Moodey, a 1986 graduate of Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in Lombard, Ill., has been in El Salvador for four years helping local Baptists develop children's Sunday school material.

Moodey is a missionary of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A, which has longstanding ties to Baptists in El Salvador. Southern Baptists, on the other hand, began limited work there in 1975. The three Southern Baptist missionary couples in El Salvador report no harassment or threats either from the government or leftist guerrillas during the recent fighting.

Moodey's arrest followed the Nov. 25 arrest of Jennifer Jean Casolo, an American Baptist volunteer in San Salvador, who represents an ecumenical aid group called Christian Education Seminar based in San Antonio, Texas.

Police said they arrested Casolo after finding 80,000 rounds of ammunition, explosives, detonators and grenades buried in the yard of the house where she had been living. American Baptist officials believe they were planted there by others.

John Sundquist, executive director of American Baptists' Board of International Ministries in Valley Forge, explained that Casolo had not lived for two days in the house where the arms cache was found. He said she moved Nov. 22 into the Camino Real Hotel because of bombing near her house related to continuing clashes between guerrillas and government forces.

Casolo returned to the house Nov. 25 to pick up some things and planned to return to the hotel, American Baptist officials said. However, she found police waiting for her and was arrested. Casolo still is being held.

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"From our standpoint, she was clearly framed," Sundquist charged. "And poor Ruth (Moodey) ... all she's been doing is writing curriculum for kids in Sunday school. It appears to be an orchestrated effort to get Westerners out of the country and help them (the Salvadoran government) control news."

Victor Mercado, Latin American area secretary for the American Baptist denomination, added, "It seems that during this period (Casolo's two-day absence from the house) the police or the military placed the arms in the area and then accused her of having the arms."

The arrests of Moodey and Casolo have raised concern among American Baptists, who are involved in social action in El Salvador, that the Salvadoran government is increasing pressure against church and foreign relief groups, Sundquist said.

Mercado further charged: "I have no doubt that this is a planned strategy to try and isolate the Salvadoran church from any foreign personnel to avoid any communications back here to the United States about what the government and the military are doing in El Salvador."

Sundquist said American Baptist missionaries and workers want to stay in El Salvador, and the mission board in Valley Forge will respect their wishes, leaving any decisions to leave up to them.

A U.S. State Department spokesperson in Washington said Nov. 29 that the Salvadoran government has stopped issuing visas because of the renewed fighting. The spokesperson said she does not know when the restrictions will be lifted.

Mercado said no other American Baptist missionaries have been threatened, but Emmanuel Baptist Church in San Salvador was searched by government troops Nov. 17. The American Baptist News Service also reported that three members of Emmanuel Church arrested in September still were in custody. The church has long been active in relief programs and social action.

Southern Baptist mission officials do not expect the three missionary families in El Salvador to experience government suspicion similar to what American Baptist workers currently are facing.

"There have been no threats," said Joe Bruce, Southern Baptist area director for Middle America.