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December 5, 1989

89-173

Baylor professor pilots plan
to boost Cooperative Program

By Ken Camp

N-Texas

DALLAS (BP)--Positive action, not further analytical study, is the answer to the downward trend in Cooperative Program percentage giving, according to Charles S. Madden of Baylor University.

Madden, marketing professor and associate dean of graduate programs at Baylor's Hankamer School of Business, and his graduate students have conducted research to discover reasons for the downward trend in the percentage of churches' undesignated receipts given to the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist unified budget plan for missions support.

The "positive action" Madden would like to see is implementation of an educational and promotional plan -- soon to be piloted by two state Baptist conventions -- that is designed to reverse the decline in percentage Cooperative Program giving at the level of the local church.

"Trends in Cooperative Program giving have been studied to death in Southern Baptist life with consistent, redundant results," Madden said. "The bottom line is that we've been promoting individual giving, not impacting the corporate budget-making process in our churches."

Developing new strategies for "impacting" the budget-making process, "telling the Cooperative Program story" and reversing the downward trend in percentage giving were among the challenges given to a task force created by the Baptist General Convention of Texas executive board at its Dec. 5 meeting in Dallas.

Responding to the findings of Madden's research, the board approved a recommendation from the BGCT administrative committee that the 15-member task force be created to develop new approaches to Cooperative Program promotion and education.

The task force, to be appointed by the BGCT president and the chairman of the executive board, will include pastors, laypeople, directors of missions and BGCT-related employees. Madden will be consultant.

Creation of the task force is in keeping with the objectives and goals of "Mission Texas: Reach, Grow, Serve," the long-range convention plan for 1990-95. The plan identifies Cooperative Program education and promotion as a special emphasis during the first half of the coming decade.

Mississippi Baptists agreed earlier to launch a Cooperative Program promotional campaign based on Madden's findings. Two hundred of the 2,000 Southern Baptist churches in Mississippi are being targeted during the first year of the five-year pilot program, with the eventual goal of all churches being contacted.

Unless the current decline in Cooperative Program percentage giving is reversed through promotion and education, Madden said, missions, education and evangelistic endeavors across the Southern Baptist Convention could be jeopardized.

Most churches "feel good" about the Cooperative Program, Madden noted. However, the Cooperative Program finds itself competing with many other worthwhile budget items in Southern Baptist.

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"Every study reveals that Southern Baptists have a positive attitude about the Cooperative Program. Most active Baptists still associate the Cooperative Program with obedience and missions support," Madden said. "However, while church giving has increased over the past several decades, the percentage of undesignated receipts given through the Cooperative Program has declined.

"Very few churches make deliberate choices against the Cooperative Program. Decreases are usually a by-product of other decisions."

According to Madden, the keys to reversing the downward trend in percentage Cooperative Program giving are improving knowledge; increasing commitment; influencing individual choice; influencing the philosophy of pastors and church leaders; and making the Cooperative Program an active competitor for funds in the budget-making process.

Establishing a network of Cooperative Program "advocates" in local churches -- people who understand the unified budget plan and are willing to "speak out" for it when church budgets are being adopted -- is essential, Madden said.

He warned against the problems caused by designated giving as opposed to giving through the unified budget of the local church, state convention or Southern Baptist Convention.

"Designated giving at every level destroys the ability to budget and makes long-range planning very difficult," he said.

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Hawaii Baptists
re-elect Farr

N - CO
(Hawaii)

Baptist Press
12/5/89

HILO, Hawaii (BP)--The 47th annual session of the Hawaii Baptist Convention met Nov. 9-12 in Hilo and re-elected President Donna Farr, a member of Kailua Baptist Church, and adopted a \$1.8 million budget.

Other officers are Ken Newman, pastor of Hawaii Kai Baptist Church, Honolulu, first vice president; Bruce Edwards, pastor of Makakilo Baptist Church in Makakilo, second vice president; and Susan Rowe, member of Central Baptist Church, Honolulu, recording secretary.

Of the \$1.8 million budget, \$701,000 will be contributed by the 82 congregations cooperating with the Hawaii Baptist Convention. The budget calls for a 0.25 increase in contributions to worldwide causes through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. Of the budget, 72 percent will be used in Hawaii and American Samoa, and 28 percent will be sent to the national Cooperative Program.

The churches of the convention reported gains in most areas, with the exception of baptisms and other additions. Total membership topped 15,000 for the first time in convention history. During the decade of the '80's, the number of churches cooperating with the Hawaii Baptist Convention have increased 36.5 percent. Total membership has grown by 33.7 percent and resident membership has increased 44.1 percent.

Katsuro Taura, retiring director of church development, was honored for 22 years of service.

Messengers reaffirmed a resolution opposing abortion except for incest, rape and to save the life of the mother, which was adopted by the convention in 1985.

A total of 266 messengers and 78 guests were registered. Next year's convention will be held Nov. 8-10 at Korean Baptist Church in Honolulu.

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Crooked elevator shafts
to be rebuilt on SSB tower

N - SSB

Baptist Press
12/5/89

NASHVILLE (BP)--Portions of two elevator shafts recently built for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's new nine-story office/conference tower are being torn down and rebuilt to correct alignment problems.

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A series of laser tests was conducted on the shafts in early October after visual inspection indicated the shafts might be several inches out of true vertical position. Results showed the upper portions of both shafts are out of plumb. The exact cause of the construction problem has not been determined.

The number of levels to be removed and rebuilt on each shaft will be decided in consultation with personnel from Otis Elevator Co. and representatives of other affected subcontractors. Cost of demolition and rebuilding will be borne by Patten Construction Co., builders of the \$15.5 million project.

Correction of the problem should take about two months, said John Doherty, facilities planner/designer for the board.

Meanwhile, construction of the tower atop the board's Operations Building is continuing, with completion scheduled for late 1990.

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

Roy Jennings retires
from Memphis hospital

N- CO

Baptist Press
12/5/89

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Roy Jennings, 65, director of public relations for Baptist Memorial Hospital Health Care System, will retire Dec. 31, 1989.

The retirement will cap 30 years of Southern Baptist denominational service which included 22 years as editorial director of Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn.

In 1981, Jennings left the Brotherhood Commission to join Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis to organize a communications department. Later that year, a health care system was organized with Baptist Memorial Hospital as the flagship. The system now embraces 22 corporations, including 12 hospitals in Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee.

At the Brotherhood Commission, Jennings was editorial director from 1959 to 1981.

He is a 1949 graduate of the University of Oklahoma and worked for 10 years as reporter and night city editor of the Memphis Commercial Appeal daily newspaper.

Jennings is past president of the Baptist Public Relations Association, an organization of communicators and journalists in the Southern Baptist Convention, and the Memphis chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, an organization of public relations professionals.

He has been married 44 yers to the former Marye Elizabeth Kirksey. They have one daughter, Gail Elaine Jennings, a social services consultant in Roswell, Ga.

Since 1959, Jennings has been copy chief in the newsroom at the Southern Baptist Convention, a voluntary service he anticipates continuing.

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WMU Festival of Light
educates, shares Christ

By Terri Lackey

F-SSB CO
(WMU)

Baptist Press
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NASHVILLE (BP)--Santa Claus was waving to small children at one end of the mall. And waving at the other end were more than 100 flags representing nations where Southern Baptists perform mission work.

The contrast of Christian and secular Christmas was evident Saturday, Dec. 2, when the Nashville Baptist Association Woman's Missionary Union brought 37 countries to one of the city's oldest malls.

"We want the general public to be aware of what Southern Baptists are doing around the world and where they are doing it," said Diane Stewart, Nashville Baptist Association WMU director in charge of the missions fair at 100 Oaks Mall.

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Stewart said she and eight others on the associational WMU council began in June planning for their first Festival of Light missions fair.

"Traditionally, during the Christmas season we hold a Baptist Woman's Day of Prayer, where we pray for foreign missionaries and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for (foreign) missions," Stewart said.

This year, the WMU wanted to do more to heighten missions awareness -- not only among the unchurched public, but among Southern Baptists as well, Stewart said: "Really, our purpose for a missions fair was two-fold. We are educating our own people about the countries Southern Baptists serve, and we are sharing Jesus Christ with those who just come to browse our mission booths."

About 40 of the 141 churches and missions in Nashville Association participated in the missions fair, dressing in their assigned country's traditional garb, and serving indigenous foods. Several churches participated by providing choral and instrumental music.

The countries represented included the familiar -- Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina -- and the not so familiar -- Burkina Faso, Sierre Leone, Namibia, Senegal.

"We just arbitrarily assigned countries to churches who wanted to participate," Stewart said. "Those churches were then encouraged to tell their people about the missions fair and to educate them about the purpose of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

"As churches prepared for their booths, they went through a learning process of that particular country, and their awareness of Southern Baptist mission work and the Lottie Moon offering was strengthened."

Charlotte Diggs (Lottie) Moon, who lived from 1840 to 1912, spent 40 years representing Southern Baptists in China.

When the 4-foot, 3-inch Moon saw that the Pingtu Chinese she was serving on the mission field were starving, she gave them her food, thus starving herself, according to a Southern Baptist pamphlet found at the fair's Baptist Book Store booth.

When Moon became so weak and ill from starvation, her doctor ordered her to return to the United States. She died on Christmas Eve while making the trip back home by boat.

Following Moon's death, Annie Armstrong, WMU's first national executive, suggested a Christmas offering for foreign missions be named in honor of Lottie Moon.

Kathleen Gilbert, a member of Inglewood Baptist Church which represented Thailand, said as a fair participant she "learned an awful lot about what Southern Baptists are doing in foreign missions."

"By learning about a specific country, a lot of our church members were more motivated into giving to foreign missions," said Gilbert, who expressed interest in participating in the fair again next year if it is held.

Judging by the first-year success of the WMU missions fair, Stewart said she hopes to hold another next year, perhaps building it into an annual event.

"We have about 50 people out of a membership of thousands in the association attend our annual day of prayer. You can look around and see we've made a much bigger impact here," Stewart said.

"There are a lot more people here looking at what we have than up there talking to Santa Claus."

Commitment to Lottie Moon
is lifestyle for Wakefields

By Teresa Dickens

F - CO
(Mo.)

HARTVILLE, Mo.(BP)--The Wakefield family's commitment to missions has been expressed in many ways over the past 70 years. From local Missouri Baptist churches to remote mission fields in India, every member of the Earl Wakefield family of Hartville, Mo., has exemplified a commitment to missions.

The commitment began with Alma Carlson's desire as a teenager to become a foreign missionary. Although she never fulfilled her dream of serving on a foreign field, that did not prohibit her from being a missionary where she was.

Her first mission project began when she married Earl Wakefield in 1926. He was not a Christian. Twenty-six years of prayer and faithful witnessing later, she saw him make that commitment to Christ. From age 50 until he died this past summer at age 87, he too was committed to missions.

Her second missions assignment involved her children and grandchildren. Even before they were born, Mrs. Wakefield dedicated her children to God for him to use in whatever way he chose. Of her four sons, Bob is a missionary to Southeast Asia; Don is a deacon at Harmony Baptist Church in Rogersville, Mo.; Bill is a vice president with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board; and Dick is pastor of First Baptist Church of Camdenton, Mo..

Several of the Wakefield grandchildren also have dedicated their lives to full-time Christian service. Her grandson Mark is a missionary in Fiji; grandson Mike is serving on a church staff in Arkansas; and others are either in seminary or preparing to go to seminary.

But even those not preparing for full-time Christian service are committed to God. "There is not one member of our family, including grandchildren and in-laws, who has not made a commitment of his or her life to Christ," noted Dick, the youngest son. "That is quite a miracle in and of itself."

However, Mrs. Wakefield's commitment to missions has not stopped with her family. According to the testimonies of her sons, she has dedicated her adult years to sharing Christ with virtually everyone she has met.

"Mom always has been an intense Christian," commented her oldest son, Bob, who currently is on furlough with his wife, Marge, from their assignment as itinerant missionaries in Southeast Asia. "She's been a strong witness all of her life. She has been a model witness, and her life has exemplified a commitment to discipleship."

Without question, the Wakefield brothers attribute their involvement in missions and missions support to the influence of their mother.

"I can remember hearing Mother pray for us," recalled Don, who retired from Kraft after 26 years as a truck driver. "She offered us to the Lord for him to do with us as he pleased. That has always had an influence on me."

"Her commitment to the church and determination that we would go no doubt has had a tremendous influence on my life," added Bill, her third son. "Once there, involvement in such programs as RAs (Royal Ambassadors) taught me that I had made a commitment to be an ambassador for Christ."

Describing his struggle about his role in missions, Dick commented, "I learned from Mom that I must be willing to go wherever he (God) leads. If I am willing, he will make clear where he wants me to serve. Over the years, he has kept me at home to be a promoter of missions."

Dick is not alone in his promotion of missions. That's something the entire family does. At no time is this more clearly seen than during the annual observance of Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions.

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"Because I am a missions-oriented person, it is a natural thing for me to be a big supporter of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," remarked Dick, who recently was elected Missouri Baptist Convention first vice president. "In every church I have served, I have encouraged them to give generously to the Christmas offering.

"Fortunately, that has not been a difficult task," he added, "because the churches have been missions-minded, too. It has meant a lot to me to be able to serve these churches.

"The command of Christ to evangelize the world has not been fulfilled. Until we fulfill that command, I'll be a big supporter of missions, and one of the greatest ways we can support foreign missions is through gifts to the Lottie Moon Offering."

Don also is a supporter of the annual foreign missions offering. "Everything I know about the benefits of this offering, I learned from my brothers," he said, referring to Bob and Bill. "I know it is very important in the support of our foreign missions work. It is money that goes directly to our missionaries, providing such essentials as a car."

Sporting his Wakefield sense of humor, Don added, "I always encourage people to give a lot of money to the Lottie Moon Offering. I tell them if they don't give, my brothers will be calling me, asking for money."

Seeing the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering at work is what has made the annual offering significant to Bob and Bill. The two brothers, along with their families, have served simultaneously as foreign missionaries since 1960.

Bob noted he was most impressed by the benefits of the Lottie Moon Offering during his first term in Singapore and Malaysia. In 1965, the missionaries there scheduled simultaneous revivals in the two countries. As a means of promotion, the missionaries ordered thousands of plastic bags imprinted with information about the revivals. Plastic was a new discovery during those days, he explained. In the two countries, vendors usually used newspaper to wrap meat and other items for customers. As a substitute, the missionaries provided the vendors with plastic bags.

"We were almost mobbed," Bob recalled. "They were thrilled to be given such a luxury. It only cost us 6 cents a bag, but the impact was priceless."

One of the vendors who received bags from the missionaries went to the first service of one of the revivals. Listening from a distance, he accepted Jesus Christ as savior.

"In counseling with him, I asked him why he came to the service," Bob commented. "He said, 'The bags. I came because of the bags. No one has ever given me anything like that before.'"

"The bags were provided through gifts to the Lottie Moon Offering. I've seen benefits like this from the ministries provided for through Lottie Moon many times over.

"Lottie Moon means three things to me. Winning people to the Lord, encouraging national Christians and a constant reminder of Southern Baptists' commitment to foreign missions."

Bill recounted experiences similar to Bob's that occurred during his service in the Philippines. He and his family were assigned there from 1960 to 1972. Since moving into an administrative position with the FMB in 1972, he has seen an even broader view of the results of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

"The Lottie Moon Offering is the largest single source of income the Foreign Mission Board receives," he pointed out. "We could do only half of what we are doing now if it wasn't for the offering. When you consider that at the present time, we have only one missionary serving for every 3 million people, it is unthinkable that the offering would be less.

"The nearly 13 percent increase in the offering last year was a great encouragement to not only those of us at the board, but missionaries as well. We were able to meet requests that we never dreamed we would be able to do. It was a tremendous encouragement for us."

One of the requests the FMB did not expect to fill was a request from the Baptist hospital in Bangalore, India. The hospital administration requested \$400,000 to help in building a new wing onto the present facility. The new wing would create enough additional revenue to make the facility self-supporting.

However, health care is not the only service the hospital provides, Bill explained. It also serves as a major witness in an area with a population of 800 million people. In 1979, only 17 churches existed in the city; today, there are 380. The hospital has played a significant role in cultivating that kind of growth, he said.

"India is one of the countries in which our missionaries have some restrictions," he said. "The hospital is an 'acceptable' way of sharing the gospel there.

"The increase in the Lottie Moon offering gave us the opportunity to partially meet the Bangalore request. We designated \$200,000 from the offering to help with the construction of the wing. It wasn't everything they needed or wanted, but it was much more than we ever dreamed we would be able to give."

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Texas leader recalls growth
of Baptist disaster relief

By Orville Scott

F. Texas

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DALLAS (BP)--In about 20 years, Bob Dixon has seen Southern Baptist disaster relief grow from a "buddy burner" to 13 disaster relief mobile units, each capable of feeding thousands of hungry people a day.

Dixon, executive director of the Texas Baptist Men organization, remembers vividly being called from a Royal Ambassador boys' mission camp in 1967 to help victims of Hurricane Buelah in the Rio Grande Valley.

From the RA camp, he carried with him in his station wagon some makeshift gallon-size cooking cans called "buddy burners" and used these to prepare breakfast for truck drivers bringing food and clothing to the hurricane victims.

"My station wagon with the 'buddy burners' was our first disaster relief mobile unit," said Dixon, "but I started then making a wish list of needs in disasters."

Before the wish list culminated in Texas Baptists' first disaster relief mobile unit in 1971, two other major disasters occurred -- a tornado in Lubbock and Hurricane Celia, which devastated the Corpus Christi area.

The unit was made possible through a \$25,000 allocation from the Mary Hill Davis Offering for State Missions, which purchased a tractor-trailer. Volunteers, under direction of John LaNoue, now Texas Baptist Young Men director, outfitted the unit with a field kitchen capable of feeding 10,000 people a day, a large water tank, a ham radio, bunks for the crew and a generator that could help provide emergency power for a hospital in disasters.

Pictured on the sides of the unit is the disaster relief logo, which would ultimately become familiar to millions of people in several nations. It incorporates the early-day Christian symbol of the fish and a stalk of wheat, symbolizing Baptist efforts to meet both spiritual and physical needs. Soon the unit was called to Seguin, Texas, to serve hungry homeless victims of a flood, the first of about 50 disasters into which it would be driven by volunteers in Jesus' name.

In 1973, the government of Honduras asked for the disaster unit to serve thousands of starving homeless victims of Hurricane Fifi.

During an unforgettable journey across Mexico, the unit itself survived a series of near disasters including being stuck under a tunnel in Mexico City and a tire catching fire.

Just before its arrival in Belize, Dixon discovered that no barge was available to transport the disaster unit across the bay to Honduras.

He prayed: "Lord, we've gone as far as we can. The rest is up to you."

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A man walked up to him and asked, "What's your problem?"

"Nothing a hundred-foot barge wouldn't cure," Dixon replied.

"I've got the only one in Belize," said the man, "but I can't use it right away. When do you need it?"

In Honduras, volunteers used the unit to prepare hot meals for hurricane victims for two months. Through the spiritual ministry that always accompanies the feeding ministry, several Baptist churches were started in an area where none had been before.

In one of the most dramatic events, the crew helped deliver a baby in the mobile unit while people were being reborn in revival services under a tent nearby.

The mobile unit again was involved in disaster relief on an international scale in 1985 when it was sent to Mexico City to serve earthquake victims. Thirteen Texas Baptist volunteers fed them at a rate of 2,000 meals per hour for the first four hours.

Later the Texas unit was joined by Baptist disaster relief teams from Oklahoma, Mississippi and Louisiana. Altogether, the volunteers provided more than 150,000 meals to earthquake-stricken residents of Mexico City.

In time, 13 other state Baptist conventions built disaster relief mobile units. They all operate in coordination with the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn.

"It is a thrill to see the total ministry in the Southern Baptist Convention," said Dixon. "When Hurricane Hugo swept into the Carolinas this fall, within a few hours, units from Alabama, Tennessee and North Carolina were moving into the disaster area.

"By the next morning, units from Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri and Illinois were moving in, and by the following morning, units from Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi were converging on the scene."

Meanwhile, Texas Baptist volunteers were setting up field kitchens and training local Baptists to operate them on St. Croix, one of the Virgin Islands that was virtually destroyed by the hurricane.

Now, other Texas Baptist relief volunteers are sharing their faith in Christ as they help the hurricane victims rebuild their homes and churches.

One of the most dramatic results of disaster relief in Jesus' name was celebrated recently in the city of Victoria in northeastern Mexico. The event was "a birthday party" commemorating the Christian rebirth of David Romero, aide to the governor of the state of Tamaulipas.

In 1988, during disaster relief by Southern Baptists in the wake of Hurricane Gilbert in San Fernando and nearby areas of Mexico, Romero was led to faith in Jesus.

"Why have I never heard this before?" exclaimed Romero. "I'm going home and tell my wife."

Soon, Romero led members of his family and other high officials, including the mayor of Victoria, to Christ. More than 80 new believers attended the "birthday party" in the Romeros' home in Victoria.

Recently, the Romeros shared their testimonies in Dallas, where the disaster relief unit was used to serve a meal during a tent revival for the Hispanic mission of Midway Road Baptist Church.

They pointed to "Hurricane Gilbert" inscribed on the big disaster relief unit, one of some 50 disasters in which it has been used, including tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, airplane crashes and hospital fires.

Mrs. Romero is expecting a baby, and if it is a boy, they plan to name him David Gilbert.

'Preachers must speak as poets
against a prose world,' scholar says By Brenda J. Sanders

N-CO
(mwbts)

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Preaching should consist of poetic speech, Walter Brueggemann told students at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

"It is the task of preachers to speak as poets against a prose world," said Brueggemann, professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga.

"By a 'prose' world, I mean a world that is organized so that even pastoral prayers and love letters after a while come to sound like memos," he continued. "By 'poetry,' I do not mean rhyme and rhythm and meter. Rather, I mean language that moves, that jumps at the right time and surprises, and occasionally brushes you back."

Brueggemann was guest speaker during the Burlan A. Sizemore Jr. Memorial Lectureship in Biblical Studies at Midwestern. The annual lectures bring noted biblical scholars to the seminary campus to acquaint students and the Kansas City community with a variety of disciplines and interpretations.

"The problem with preaching today," Brueggemann said, "is that the gospel is not heard mostly as problematic and dangerous and unsettling. So the gospel is an old habit that is not greatly questioned and not greatly valued, it seems to me.

"Therefore, the task of the preacher is to try to cut underneath those assumptions that are not taken seriously.

"Is there an alternative universe of discourse that can keep the truth of the gospel from being greatly reduced? Poetic speech, I believe, is the only kind of proclamation that is worthy of the name of preaching.

Preaching is not moral instruction, problem solving, doctrinal clarification or soothing good humor, Brueggemann said, noting: "It is rhetoric that cuts underneath all that to those hidden places wherein people have a chance to be transformed.

"The task of preaching in this buttoned-down, settled, factual world of technology is precisely to verbalize and present alternatives to which we could indeed commit our lives ... In the voice of the preacher comes the poet who breaks fixed conclusions and who invites us to new imaginative, dangerous, subversive possibilities."

The Old Testament scholar challenged preachers to share the gospel message in a fresh way, so that the text "crashes against our realism and causes us to imagine and dream and hope that ... there could be a better world, a more excellent way."

Poetic preaching can liberate people "to stand up stronger, and bolder and more daringly in a world that has become tired and killing," Brueggemann said.

The church waits, he concluded, for the voice of the poet which has the power to render the world.

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Fulbright writes book to help
parents of teen drug abusers

By Linda Lawson

F-SSB

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KIRKWOOD, Mo. (BP)--Pat Fulbright, her husband, Bob, and their four children constituted the all-American Southern Baptist family -- living in the suburbs of Nashville, attending church as involved members, enjoying family vacations, dealing with the kinds of family crises that are almost routine in large families -- until the spring of 1975.

That was when their oldest son, Todd, a junior high school student, began to undergo dramatic mood changes. His grades slipped, and his whereabouts often were unknown. By fall, the source of the problem was discovered when a collection of pills was found in his room.

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The nightmare escalated with a series of arrests, detention, legal problems and continued substance abuse by Todd, who by then preferred to be called Derek. Those problems multiplied when the Fulbrights later learned 14-year-old Mandi, their third child, also was abusing drugs and alcohol.

Mrs. Fulbright, who now lives in Kirkwood, Mo., where her husband is minister of education at Kirkwood Baptist Church, has chronicled their family journey in "Troubled Teens -- Troubled Parents" published in July 1989 by Broadman Press of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

In writing the book, "I wanted to be of help to other parents, to say this is what you will be facing if your child is doing drugs," said Mrs. Fulbright. "I also wanted to help parents respond more quickly and not to try and hide their problems."

She speaks regularly to church, school and civic groups of parents and teens. She warns them of the consequences of drug and alcohol abuse and urges them to give their lives instead to Jesus Christ.

She lifts up the importance of support groups.

"I think a support group has saved my sanity. I realized others were going through the same thing. We were a help to each other," Mrs. Fulbright said.

She urges churches and leaders to give greater attention to the burgeoning crisis of drug and alcohol abuse among teens.

First, she suggests, drug education should be emphasized at church with children, youth and adults. Parents need to know what to do if a child is abusing chemicals, before the problem arises.

Second, as one way to demonstrate concern, churches should allow support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, parents of teens using drugs and co-dependents to use their facilities for their meetings.

Third, churches should practice "loving support for families" struggling their way through the crisis of substance abuse.

Finally, transformation rather than condemnation should characterize the actions of churches.

"It's not the business of a church to judge and condemn and criticize but to transform lives," said Mrs. Fulbright. "We need to accept people where they are and take them where they need to be.

"Churches need to open their eyes. We're going to be dealing with this problem more in the future."

Mrs. Fulbright has nothing but positive words for the members of Kirkwood Church where they moved just days after Mandi had been released from her first treatment in Nashville.

"We shared this with the church, and they prayed. I think their prayers have helped more than anything. They are proud of her progress," said Mrs. Fulbright.

Mandi, now 21, recently married Lonnie Speer, St. Louis Policeman of the Year in 1988. She "is recovering and doing well," said Mrs. Fulbright.

Derek lives in a West Coast city and has no permanent home or job.

"We hear from him occasionally. He doesn't seem to be angry," she said.

With the release of her book, Mrs. Fulbright describes herself as "recovering" and points to the telling of her story as one evidence.

Also, she has sought to be for others what significant people have been for her through the years -- "bonus people" who stick with friends through the difficult times.

"One of the ways we recover is to become a bonus person to someone else," she said.