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90-10

Baptist schools grow
for 8th straight year

By Tim Fields

N-10
(Ed. Comm.)

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist colleges and universities showed an overall increase in fall enrollment for the eighth consecutive year, according to figures released to the Southern Baptist Education Commission.

Enrollment figures for the 1989 fall semester show 109,035 students attended Southern Baptist junior and senior colleges, a 4 percent increase over the 1988 total of 104,846.

The enrollment figures include both full-time and part-time students in college credit courses but do not include students enrolled in non-credit courses. Student totals were released to the commission by each school.

For the first time, the fall 1989 total includes students enrolled at Florida Baptist Theological College in Graceville, which changed from a Bible school to a four-year senior college in November 1988.

A compilation of the figures shows that 33 of the 48 senior colleges had an increase in enrollment ranging from 23.8 percent to 0.1 percent, while two of the four junior colleges had increased enrollments ranging from 4.2 percent to 1.1 percent.

Averett College in Danville, Va., had the largest percentage increase, with 23.8 percent, followed by Brewton-Parker College in Mount Vernon, Ga., 22.4 percent; Missouri Baptist College, St. Louis, 19.8 percent; Wayland Baptist University, Plainview, Texas, 18.9 percent; and Bluefield College, Bluefield, Va., 18.8 percent.

Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C., showed the largest numerical increase, with 625 additional students, followed by Brewton-Parker College, 330, Wayland Baptist University, 326; Palm Beach Atlantic College, West Palm Beach, Fla., 278; Dallas Baptist University and University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, Belton, Texas, both with 251. Increases at all other schools fell below 250 students.

The last time overall enrollment in Southern Baptist colleges and universities decreased was in 1981, when enrollment was 91,602, a drop of less than 1 percent over the previous year.

The increased enrollment for eight straight years means that 17,433 more students attended the 52 Southern Baptist junior and senior colleges during the fall 1989 term than attended in fall 1981, for a net increase of 19 percent.

"The interest in an emphasis on values and the personal concern for the students reflected by the Baptist colleges has made possible the continued increase in enrollment at our institutions," said Arthur L. Walker Jr., executive director of the Education Commission.

"The same interest in students has encouraged non-traditional students to enter or return to college, and many of these are especially interested in the type programs offered by the Baptist institutions. This, plus an emphasis on quality education undergirded by strong values, has been demonstrated as having appeal to all prospective students.

"The emphasis upon the basic mission purpose of Baptist institutions has proven to be of major value in relating to the constituencies of these colleges."

Baylor University in Waco, Texas, remains the largest Southern Baptist university, with 11,774 students, followed by Mercer University, Macon/Atlanta, 5,856 students and Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C., 5,264 students. All three schools showed decreased enrollment from fall 1988 enrollments.

The 1989 fall enrollment figures and percentage of increase or decrease from fall 1988 to fall 1989 at all Southern Baptist junior and senior colleges by state are:

- Alabama. Judson College, 604, up 1.7 percent; Mobile College, 1,180, up 12.1 percent; Samford University, 4,159, up 1.7 percent.
- Arizona. Grand Canyon University, 1,841, up 1.5 percent.
- Arkansas. Ouachita Baptist University, 1,316, down 2.7 percent; Southern Baptist College, 576, down 2.7 percent.
- California. California Baptist College, 673, up 1 percent.
- Florida. Florida Baptist Theological College, 384, up 4.3 percent; Palm Beach Atlantic College, 1413, up 2.4 percent; Stetson University, 3,090, up 3.9 percent.
- Georgia. Brewton-Parker College, 1,802, up 22.4 percent; Mercer University, 5,856, down 4 percent; Shorter College, 882, up 6.1 percent; Truett-McConnell College, 1,504, up 1.1 percent.
- Kentucky. Campbellsville College, 760, up 4.7 percent; Cumberland College, 1,880, down 1.3 percent; Georgetown College, 1,562, up 7 percent.
- Louisiana. Louisiana College, 1,042, up 2.5 percent.
- Mississippi. Blue Mountain College, 347, up 4.2 percent; Mississippi College, 3,605, up 1.8 percent; William Carey College, 1,624, down 15.9 percent.
- Missouri. Hannibal-LaGrange College, 954, up 17.5 percent; Missouri Baptist College, 1,084, up 19.8 percent; Southwest Baptist University, 2,920, up 7.7 percent; William Jewell College, 1,968, down 0.1 percent.
- North Carolina. Campbell University, 4,820, up 14.9 percent; Chowan College, 1,015, up 4.2 percent; Gardner-Webb College, 2,191, up .1 percent; Mars Hill College, 1,344 down 0.1 percent; Meredith College, 2,264, up 6.6 percent; Wake Forest University, 5,264, down 0.1 percent; Wingate College, 1,829, up 5.8 percent.
- Oklahoma. Oklahoma Baptist University, 2,173, up 10.5 percent.
- South Carolina. Anderson College, 1,038, down 0.7 percent; Baptist College at Charleston, 2,052, up 6.5 percent; Furman University; 3,338, up 4.1 percent; North Greenville College, 507, down 4.7 percent.
- Tennessee. Belmont College, 2,681, up 3.9 percent; Carson-Newman College 1,993, down 0.1 percent; Union University, 2,211, up 9.6 percent.
- Texas. Baylor University, 11,774, down 0.1 percent; Dallas Baptist University, 2,269, up 12.4 percent; East Texas Baptist University, 811, up 0.2 percent; Hardin-Simmons University, 1,863, down 3.4 percent; Houston Baptist University, 2,394, down 1.6 percent; Howard Payne University, 1,283, up 2.9 percent; University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, 1,762, up 16.6 percent; Wayland Baptist University, 2,052, up 18.9 percent.
- Virginia. Averett College, 1,216, up 23.8 percent; Bluefield College, 435, up 18.8 percent; University of Richmond, 4,909, down 0.1 percent; Virginia Intermont College, 521, up 15.8 percent.

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Court rejects church's appeal
in emotional distress case

By Kathy Palen

N-BJC

Baptist Press
1/19/90

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected an appeal by the Church Universal and Triumphant in a case the church claimed attacked its core religious beliefs and practices.

The dispute arose in 1980 when Gregory Mull, a San Francisco architect, sued the Santa Barbara, Calif.-based church and its leader, Elizabeth Clare Prophet, for fraud and infliction of emotional distress.

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In 1974, Mull, then 53, began attending the church, including a special two-week training session at a church-owned facility. According to later charges, the training included sleep deprivation, separation from family and friends, fasting, colonics and decreeing -- a central church practice similar to chanting.

Three years later, the church asked Mull to move to Calabasis, Calif., to help design a complex of church facilities that, according to church fund-raising materials, was to be the "New Jerusalem."

Mull later testified that during the time he worked on the "Camelot" project, the church failed to fulfill promises it made to him, including that it would make payments on his house in San Francisco. In addition, Mull said, the church falsely convinced him to sign two promissory notes.

After Mull left the church, Prophet publicly condemned him and church members harassed him.

In Mull's suit against the church and Prophet, the jury found both defendants liable for \$521,000 in compensatory damages and \$521,000 in punitive damages. Mull died about three months later.

The California Court of Appeal affirmed the lower-court judgment, and the California Supreme Court refused to review the case.

In appealing to the U.S. Supreme Court, attorneys for the church argued the First Amendment protects non-fraudulent religious speech and peaceful religious conduct. Thus, they said, the church should not be held liable for Mull's charges of fraud and emotional distress.

But attorneys for Mull's estate said it was not the church's religious beliefs that were under question but its conduct -- including psychological and physical coercive practices -- to obtain large sums of money from individuals.

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'Save creation,'
ministers urged

By Connie Davis

N- (O
(Team)

Baptist Press
1/19/90

NASHVILLE (BP)--Christians need to embrace a broader sense of salvation -- "salvation of humankind and salvation and redemption of creation," Richard Land told ministers gathered in Nashville to discuss Earth Day 1990.

The international observance, first held in 1970 and credited as the impetus for federal environmental protection legislation, will be Sunday, April 22. It will include demonstrations, tree-plantings, cleanup projects, and educational events in 100 countries.

Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, was joined by Herbert Gabhart, chancellor of Belmont College, a Baptist school in Nashville; Dixon Sutherland, a Southern Baptist missionary and professor at International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland; representatives of environmental agencies; educators; and a legislator.

"Our salvation history causes too narrow a focus for salvation. We must redeem not only humankind but the cosmos," said Land, noting in John 3:16 "world" can be translated "cosmos."

God's biblical directives are for mankind to be stewards rather than lords of the earth, Land noted, although he warned against idolatry of the earth.

Gabhart termed the focus on the environment a "divinely inspired task" of the new decade. It may require sacrifice of some "so-called rights," he said.

Sutherland reported that Soviet-bloc nations and many European countries are ravaged by environmental problems.

God's manifestations are just as important as his proclamations, Land said, adding that a spatial concept of the world rather than a view that separates heaven is needed.

Charles Howell, president of Cumberland Science Museums in Nashville and former commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Conservation, reported that only one-thirty-second of the earth is a food source.

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Buildings, especially church buildings, should not be constructed with "exotic" woods such as mahogany that come from threatened rain forests; formaldehyde-treated wood products, such as chipboard and plywood that give off a health-threatening gas; and chloroflourocarbon-blown polystyrene materials, which in their manufacture damage the planet's ozone layer.

A representative of an environmental protection agency reported that plant and animal species are being destroyed at the rate that will leave only one-half of the current species for the next generation, from which all agricultural products and half of the modern pharmaceutical products are produced.

Erosion, flooding and pollution by factories and overloaded sewerage systems are some of the effects on waterways, noted another official.

Government officials encouraged citizen and neighborhood involvement because of limitations resulting from small staffs and legislation formed by lobbyists representing economic ventures.

Tennessee state Rep. Roy Herron, an ordained minister, referred to Biblical laws concerning gleanings, the Sabbath, and the year of jubilee every 49 or 50 years, all of which protected the earth.

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Mercer broke contract,
Georgia jury decides

By Audrey Post

N-CO

Baptist Press
1/19/90

ATLANTA (BP)--Mercer University's decision to close its College of Arts and Sciences in Atlanta was made in bad faith and breached its contract with students and faculty, a DeKalb County, Ga., jury ruled.

The ruling means students and faculty are entitled to recover damages, and they can file individual lawsuits against the university to determine how much.

Mercer is a Georgia Baptist school with campuses in Atlanta and Macon.

"This is the first step, not the last, but it's a good first step," plaintiffs' attorney David Llewellyn said. "I have personally felt for a long time that's the verdict that should have been reached, and I'm happy the jury saw fit to agree."

Mercer President R. Kirby Godsey, however, characterized the court action as a victory for the university.

Calling the jury verdicts "subsidiary issues," Godsey announced that the court had "upheld the university's right to close the College of Arts and Sciences in Atlanta" and "dismissed a claim challenging the use of university endowment."

The rulings on the closure and the endowment came earlier, when Superior Court Judge Carol Hunstein refused to order Mercer officials to keep the Atlanta college open or to prevent them from using an estimated \$18 million in endowment the plaintiffs said should be restricted to their college. She also ruled the students had contracts with Mercer and ordered the trial to proceed.

"We're pleased the central issues were decided in the university's favor," Godsey said. "Though we believe that the jury is wrong, we will wait to receive the judge's ruling on the jury's decision before considering any further actions."

Students and faculty filed separate lawsuits last year, which were granted class-action status and tried together. However, the class status applied only to liability and not damages, which is why individuals must file suit to seek monetary compensation.

In its finding of bad faith, the jury agreed with the plaintiffs' contention that the majority of the trustees showed an inattention to duty and thus were persuaded to close the college by a few trustee leaders and administrators who did have bad motives.

Those motives, according to the plaintiffs, were a desire to silence critical faculty and students, the need to use the disputed \$18 million in endowment to reduce Mercer's deficit of more than \$30 million; and the need for more space for the pharmacy school, which had been threatened with loss of accreditation due to its cramped quarters.

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Asked whether the university has the money to pay settlements to the 655 students and an estimated 50 faculty members affected by the school's closure, Godsey responded that Mercer's financial soundness has been affirmed repeatedly.

"We would have far preferred to spend time and money addressing individual needs of the students and faculty in the first place," he said.

Llewellyn said students are entitled to "as much damages as they can prove" as a result of being forced to transfer to other schools.

Determination of faculty compensation will be varied, he said.

"For some, it could be considerable, given the unavailability of positions for people of their age and because this school emphasized teaching instead of publishing," he said. "Many of my clients are talking about leaving the teaching profession, after they spent their entire careers in it."

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Audrey Post is a staff writer for the Macon Telegraph and News

Palm Beach Atlantic gets
40% of \$35 million trust

N-CO

Baptist Press
1/19/90

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (BP)--Palm Beach Atlantic College has signed a trust agreement with an anonymous donor who has named the college as a 40 percent participant in a \$35 million charitable remainder trust, announced president Claude H. Rhea.

The agreement will go into effect upon the death of the donor.

Forty percent of the income from the \$35 million trust will go for endowed scholarships in the donor's name, Rhea said. Students with median Scholastic Aptitude Test scores will be offered the same financial opportunities as students with high aptitude scores.

The trust is the largest trust arrangement given to Palm Beach Atlantic. With an existing endowment of \$21 million, the agreement eventually will bring the college total endowment to \$35 million.

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Southern Seminary prof
joins accrediting staff

N-CO
(SBTS)

Baptist Press
1/19/90

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--A Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor has been named associate director for accreditation at the primary accrediting agency of seminaries and divinity schools in North America.

Daniel O. Aleshire, professor of Christian education and director of seminary professional studies at the Louisville, Ky., school, will leave his seminary duties July 31 to join the staff of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

Aleshire, 42, will be responsible for planning, administering and assessing the accrediting functions of the association. ATS is in the process of moving its headquarters from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh.

Aleshire, a member of the seminary faculty since 1978, is a graduate of Belmont College in Nashville, Southern Seminary and George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville.

Prior to joining the seminary faculty, Aleshire was a research scientist for Search Institute in Minneapolis, Minn., for three years. He also has served churches in New Jersey and Kentucky as pastor and associate pastor.

Aleshire is married to the former Jo Ellen Gabhart. They are the parents of two children, Jennifer and Jonathan.

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