



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
901 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 511 N. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75201
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

July 25, 1990

90-95

Honeycutt undergoes
heart bypass surgery

N^{CO}
(SBTS)

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Roy L. Honeycutt, 63-year-old president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., is recovering in a Louisville hospital following open heart surgery July 24.

The four-and-one-half-hour surgery involved five heart bypasses.

Honeycutt's wife, June, reported that the surgeon, Layman A. Gray, Jr., told her following surgery that "things couldn't have gone better."

The surgery was performed less than a week after some heart blockage was discovered through stress tests ordered following Honeycutt's routine annual physical exam. Although he had not experience any pain or other prominent symptoms of heart problems, Honeycutt elected to schedule the surgery as soon as possible.

Doctors anticipate that he will remain in the hospital for 8 to 10 days.

Honeycutt, president since 1983, has appointed Provost Willis G. Bennett, a member of the seminary faculty for more than 30 years, to serve as acting president during the recuperation period.

Honeycutt's surgery came about four months after Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, underwent successful triple-bypass surgery.

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Virginia draft budget
would reduce CP contributions

By Robert H. Dilday

N^{CO}
(VA)

Baptist Press
7/25/90

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Baptist General Association of Virginia's budget committee will present a draft budget July 31 which reduces the amount of money for the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program unified budget by more than \$3.1 million.

Additional funds for selected SBC entities, including the Foreign and Home mission boards, as well as the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, are included in the draft budget, as is support for an alternative denominational news service and a theological education fund.

The proposal, to be presented at a called meeting of the Virginia Baptist General Board, also permits churches to continue giving under the current budget plan and still be "considered supportive of the Virginia Baptist Cooperative Program."

The budget proposal is a response to the solidification of control by the conservative faction in the SBC at the denomination's annual meeting in June.

That meeting was widely seen as a decisive victory for the faction following 12 years of theological and political conflict with convention moderates. Moderates have since maintained that diverting funds from the national denomination is their only means of protest.

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Joining the Virginia budget committee at the July 31 general board meeting will be members of the state association's denominational crisis committee, who are expected to endorse the budget in a statement which describes it as a move "toward a more comprehensive, positive plan of cooperative missions giving." The crisis committee was authorized by the BGAV in 1988 to study the state's relationship with the national denomination.

The 97-member general board, which may act between meetings of the BGAV, does not vote on the BGAV budget. However, state association bylaws stipulate the board must receive it for "information and counsel."

BGAV President Ray L. Spence Jr., who also is general board chairperson, said the budget and crisis committees will encourage questions and comments from board members and visitors.

"The meeting is open to all who are interested and want to attend," said Spence, pastor of Second Baptist Church of Richmond.

The budget committee could revise its draft following the July 31 meeting but must present a final proposal again only as a matter of information at the regularly scheduled session of the general board Oct. 2-3.

Messengers will vote on the matter at the annual meeting of the BGAV in Richmond, Nov. 13-14. The 1991 budget will go into effect on Dec. 1.

The \$16,300,000 suggested for the 1991 budget is the same amount budgeted for 1990. Like the current budget, \$660,000 is allocated as a priority item to the SBC Annuity/Protection Plan, a retirement program for church staff members.

The budget committee will recommend that 64.5 percent of the remaining \$15,640,000 support causes in Virginia, leaving 35.5 percent for national and world ministries.

That is a change from the current budget, which allocates 62 percent, or \$9,696,800, to state causes and 38 percent, or \$5,943,200, to national and world causes.

Each item in the proposed Virginia portion of \$10,087,800 would receive increased funding over the current year's allocation.

The national and world ministries portion, which totals \$5,552,200, would be distributed in two ways. Fifty percent, or \$2,776,100, would be an undesignated contribution to the SBC Cooperative Program, to be allocated according to the budget approved by the SBC in June.

The remaining \$2,776,100 would be designated to eight ministries. Under SBC bylaws, designated gifts are not considered Cooperative Program contributions.

The ministries are the Foreign Mission Board, \$1,611,950; Home Mission Board, \$620,000; partnership missions, \$134,150; Baptist World Alliance, \$100,000; a theological education reserve fund, \$100,000; Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, \$75,000; Associated Baptist Press, \$60,000; and the Annuity Board, \$25,000.

The six SBC seminaries have been targets of conservative criticism since the beginning of the denomination's conflict. Moderates fear that instruction in SBC theological institutions will experience a dramatic shift to the right as conservatives exercise their new power.

The proposed theological education reserve fund would be used "in the event it becomes necessary to supplement existing theological education," said BGAV Executive Director Reginald M. McDonough, an ex officio member of the budget committee.

The Baptist Joint Committee is a Washington-based church-state and religious liberty agency supported by eight denominations, including the SBC. Conservatives have charged its positions on such issues as state-mandated prayer in public schools are unacceptably liberal. In June the SBC slashed its contributions to the BJC from \$391,596 to \$50,000.

Associated Baptist Press was established by several state Baptist paper editors following the firing July 17 of the director and news editor of Baptist Press, the denomination's news service.

Conservatives accused the two journalists of bias in reporting events in the SBC. Some state editors charged the firings would result in less candid news reporting and that an independent press service free from conservative pressure was necessary. Associated Baptist Press is expected to begin operations in mid-August.

A ninth item in the designated portion of national and world section would be a general contingency fund, to which \$50,000 would be allocated.

"Because of the rapidity with which events are moving in the SBC, the budget committee felt some funds should be set aside for unexpected contingencies," McDonough said.

He added the BGAV would decide at its annual meeting in November who would have authority to allocate those funds.

Not all SBC agencies would lose money under the Virginia proposal. The Foreign and Home mission boards actually would receive more funding in the draft budget than in the current one.

The combined amount allocated to the FMB from both halves of the national and world ministries section of the draft budget is \$3,000,000, compared to \$2,917,517 in the 1990 budget. The HMB would receive \$1,162,589, compared to \$1,140,166.

Hardest hit would be the six SBC seminaries, which would receive no funding in the designated portion of the national and world ministries section. They currently receive \$1,193,849 from Virginia; the draft budget would allocate \$568,073 next year.

The budget committee is recommending that churches which continue to give to the Cooperative Program on the current 62-38 percentage basis still "be considered as supportive of the Virginia Baptist Cooperative Program."

That essentially establishes a second budget option for Virginia Baptist churches. The concept of two budgets was approved at a joint meeting of the budget and crisis committees on June 28.

A third option would exist for churches which craft their own giving patterns by utilizing a limited participation, or negative designation, plan provided in the BGAV bylaws.

Crisis Committee Chairperson Neal T. Jones said his panel will present a statement at the July 31 meeting endorsing the budget committee's suggestion.

That statement will emphasize the three options BGAV churches would have "to support world missions through the general association."

"As a committee we have been resolved to recommend ways that every Virginia Baptist church can, with integrity, participate in our cooperative mission program," said Jones, pastor of Columbia Baptist Church, Falls Church.

"We want every church which wishes to support Virginia and Southern Baptist causes to have a place to stand."

Budget Committee Chairperson Mary Wilson of McLean said her committee has attempted to implement the concepts agreed on in the joint meeting of June 28.

"The cooperation between our committees has been beautiful," she maintained. "While each of our groups has worked separately, we are presenting a draft budget which is in perfect harmony with the crisis committee's report."

Chairman Pace defends
Executive Committee action

By Tammi Ledbetter

N-EO
(Ind.)

LAWTON, Okla. (BP)--SBC Executive Committee Chairman Sam Pace responded to criticism for conducting discussions of Baptist Press employee terminations behind closed doors on July 17.

"The Executive Committee exercised its stated right and responsibility to conduct executive sessions in unusual circumstances," Pace said in a statement released July 24 from Lawton, Okla., where he is director of missions for Comanche-Cotton Baptist Association.

Nashville attorney Frank Ingraham led in protests of the executive session, repeatedly seeking a public forum in which Baptist Press employees Alvin C. Shackleford and Dan Martin would be given opportunity to respond to any charges by the Executive Committee.

Immediately following an executive session of the administrative arrangements subcommittee, the full committee began their proceedings in private. Off-duty Nashville police were employed for the purpose of limiting access to the meeting area, Pace said.

When Ingraham and other protesters were denied access to the Executive Committee session, the Nashville attorney told the crowd gathered in the foyer that the Executive Committee had violated Robert's Rules of Order restricting entry before an actual vote had been taken to go into executive session.

Pace defended the decision to keep the doors closed when the meeting began, stating in a phone interview, "Had we opened the doors and gotten everybody in there it would have been impossible to ever have voted."

Citing the limited time allotted for the meeting, Pace said, "The logistics of getting it done made it almost essential to do it as we did."

"Voting themselves into executive session was the only responsible and effective way to conduct any business of the nature of that under consideration," Pace said in his release.

The use of off-duty policemen was a necessary security measure, Pace noted, in light of an expectation that over 1,000 spectators might be on hand for the meeting. Pace said the estimate was drawn from several sources, all of which indicated attempts were being made to rally protestors to the scene.

"Upon learning that people were being encouraged to attend the meeting in large numbers," Pace said, "the officers of the Executive Committee determined that some security measures were necessary" and requested its legal counsel make such arrangements.

"Without advance knowledge of how large the crowd would be, the Executive Committee was required to anticipate numbers in excess of the legal building occupancy limits" established by the local fire marshal.

Pace responded to questions about armed guards by pointing out that off-duty Nashville police officers are required by department policy to carry sidearms even while off duty. It was "not because of any request of the Executive Committee," Pace added.

Oral and written instructions to the officers involved limiting access to the Executive Committee meeting area and preparation for evacuation procedures if warranted.

Once the Executive Committee adjourned, Pace and other members refused all comment. The explanatory statement issued by the Executive Committee was read without elaboration by Ernest E. Mosley, executive vice-president.

Pace said a portion of the statement had been formulated in advance, but "was not complete until the end of the meeting." Because of an agreement among the Executive Committee members that they be made aware of any statements issued to the media, Pace declined to address a news conference.

He described the proceedings of the closed door session as "respectful" with "no strident rhetoric."

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"The demeanor of all participants was exemplary in the serious, thoughtful approach to a most difficult situation," Pace said.

"Our meeting was not a time to engage in slander, but it was a time when all Executive Committee members could freely and carefully weigh information in an effort to know the truth and to lay falsehood to rest. This could not have been done in a public forum.

He further stated, "No specific charges were leveled against either man, but the opinion of many was that irreconcilable differences did exist. Accepting the fact that the journalists had been operating in ways consistent with their own consciences, to ask them, or anyone else, to do otherwise would have been unconscionable."

"By the same token," Pace continued, "the majority of the Executive Committee members could not continue in good conscience to operate Baptist Press as it was. To do so was unconscionable to them.

Responding to concerns expressed by members of the Southern Baptist Press Association which represents state Baptist newspapers, Pace affirmed the group's desire to continue a partnership with Baptist Press. "The Committee recognizes the state papers are the principle, primary users and we're not opposed to the full, free flow of responsible, balanced, accurate information about the Baptist witness and ministries in our convention.

However, Pace noted, "Everyone obviously does not define responsible, balanced, and accurate in exactly the same way."

In his prepared statement, Pace said, "The issue is not only a free press, but also a fair press with news releases truthful, balanced and equitable."

He rejected charges that the Executive Committee intends to refashion Baptist Press into "a propaganda tool." Pace responded, "I'm committed to maintaining the integrity and professionalism of Baptist Press.

"The Committee intends to support the leadership of President Harold C. Bennett in his efforts to secure such personnel with whom to staff Baptist Press.

In a July 13 interview with the Baptist and Reflector, newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Bennett said the secretary and editorial assistants would continue to operate the national office of Baptist Press. Mosley will work with the remaining BP staff as well as the five bureau offices in Atlanta, Nashville, Dallas, Richmond and Washington.

Mosley said that "lacking a professional journalist at the present time, the staff will rely more heavily on stories provided by the bureaus and other news writers." He added that he assumes "an interim BP director will be employed as soon as the process can be completed."

Bennett said he did not know if he would have any recommendations for the Executive Committee members when they meet in September. "I will have gone through the process and will try to fill the positions." He declined further comment about the closed meeting of the Executive Committee on July 17.

Full committee approval is only required for the public relations vice-president, while the administration arrangements subcommittee must approved the news and feature editors recommended to fill other vacancies.

"We would like for the Baptist journalists to wait and see what we do with Baptist Press before they automatically prejudge that we're incapable of operating an acceptable free and fair press," Pace said.

In spite of the recent formation of an alternative news service, Pace is convinced Baptist Press will continue to play a crucial role in representing the work of Southern Baptists.

"What we operate has as much or more likelihood of being objective." Pace added that publications which anticipate relying upon an alternate news service over Baptist Press "have already prejudged our ability to operate the kind of Baptist press service that they could use and respect."

Pace commended Baptist editors in their desire to enhance the six-year old networking system which allows exchange of information and articles through computer link-up. "It's been in use heretofore and has well served our convention in many respects."

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EDITORS' NOTE: The full text of Pace's July 24 statement was to be available from the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger.

Missionary Nancy Martin
dies of cancer at 57

7-00

Baptist Press
7/25/90

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (BP)--Nancy Martin, a Southern Baptist missionary to Liberia since 1978, died of cancer July 24 at North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. She was 57.

Martin and her husband, Jack, served in Harper, Liberia, where he was a church developer and she was a church and home worker. Besides working with the Baptist churches of the area, they started a mission church in their home.

Martin also taught her two children at home but found plenty of time for ministry to others.

"She was a deeply spiritual person and a woman of much prayer," said Bradley Brown, administrator of the Southern Baptist mission organization in Liberia.

"She reached out in love to her fellow missionaries and labored well in a very difficult situation," he said. "It was not easy as a wife and mother because she and her family were in a very isolated situation so far as other missionaries are concerned. She had a good ministry to the young people of the neighborhood. She tried to make her home an open home to the children."

The former Nancy Palmer of Jacksonville, Fla., Martin received the bachelor of science degree from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, and the master of religious education degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Before missionary appointment she taught in Papua New Guinea for several years as a staff member of Wycliffe Bible Translators and returned there from 1974-76 with her husband, who also joined Wycliffe as a teacher after their marriage in 1971.

She is survived by her husband and children, Samuel, 15, and Mary Lyda, 9.

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

Brennan retires from court;
president names replacement

By Kathy Palen

N. G. C.

Baptist Press
7/25/90

WASHINGTON (BP)--Three days following the resignation of Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan Jr., President Bush named his first appointment to the nation's highest court.

During a White House press conference July 23, Bush announced his selection of David H. Souter, a judge on the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Souter, 50, was confirmed to that position unanimously by the U.S. Senate last April.

Refusing to answer questions concerning Souter's views on such issues as abortion and civil rights, the president said, "What I'm certain of is that he will interpret the Constitution and not legislate from the federal bench."

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Bush said he selected Souter because of his "keen intellect" and "scholarly commitment to the law." Souter's professional experience "unquestionably demonstrates his ability, his integrity and his dedication to public service," Bush said, adding, "He has a keen appreciation of the proper judicial role rooted in fundamental belief in separation of powers and the democratic principles underlying our great system of government."

Souter is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. As a Rhodes scholar, he studied at Oxford University.

He served as New Hampshire's deputy attorney general during Sen. Warren Rudman's (R-N.H.) tenure as that state's attorney general. Souter then was appointed attorney general in 1976.

After being named a state superior court judge in 1978, Souter was appointed to a seat on the New Hampshire Supreme Court in 1983.

Souter, an Episcopalian, has never been married.

Senate confirmation hearings on his appointment are expected to begin in September.

During the press conference, Bush also paid tribute to Brennan, who unexpectedly announced his retirement in a letter delivered to the White House late July 20.

"His powerful intellect, his winning personality and, importantly, his commitment to civil discourse on emotional issues that at times tempt uncivil voices have made him one of the greatest figures of our age," Bush said. "No one can question his dedication to the nation and the energy that he has brought to his high office. His retirement is marked by the dignity and honor that characterized his 34 years of service on the bench."

In his letter to Bush, Brennan cited the "strenuous demands of court work" as being "incompatible with my advancing age and medical condition."

Brennan, 84, suffered a small stroke several weeks prior to his resignation.

Brennan, who was appointed to the Supreme Court by President Eisenhower in 1956, is the fourth-oldest justice to have sat on the court. Only five Supreme Court justices have served longer than Brennan.

During his tenure, Brennan wrote more than 1,200 opinions, including decisions in such cases as:

- Sherbert v. Verner (1963), in which the court held only a compelling state interest can justify placing restrictions on an individual's religious liberty.
- Grand Rapids School District v. Ball (1985), in which the court ruled that federally funded remedial and enrichment classes cannot be held on parochial school campuses.
- Edwards v. Aguillard (1987), in which the court held a state law requiring public schools that teach the theory of evolution also to teach "creation science" violates the First Amendment's establishment clause.

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High school students witness
on 'uncommon common ground'

Baptist Press
7/25/90

F-7MB

NYERI, Kenya (BP)--Common ground among Baptists, Catholics and Muslims is uncommon.

But they found it in the Bible during a recent Holiday Bible Club in the remote African village of Sosian, Kenya, when Catholics agreed to cosponsor a meeting led by two students from Nyeri Baptist High School.

During the club and at the joint evangelistic service afterward, more than 100 people professed faith in Jesus Christ -- many of them from the Muslim Borana tribe.

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Kenyan Baptist students James Lokini, whose parents came from two other northern tribes, the Samburu and the Turkana, and Jonathan Saulet, a Maasai, spent their spring school break conducting Holiday Bible Clubs, a Kenyan adaptation of Vacation Bible Schools.

The clubs, developed by Southern Baptist missionary Jill Branyon, feature Bible stories, Bible verse memorization and a study of "Who Is Jesus?" -- the first book in the Bible Way international correspondence course program.

The week-long club attracted 79 participants, including 23 young people (three Baptists, 15 Catholics and five Muslims). When Saulet shared the plan of salvation, numerous young people responded. Inspired, the two high school seniors talked Catholic and Baptist leaders into a joint service at Sosian Baptist Church, then visited every house in the village to invite people.

Lokini preached and was overwhelmed at the number of hands raised when he asked who wanted to become Christians. At the end of the service he explained the gravity of such a decision and asked only those who were serious to stay for more instruction and counseling. Twenty-two adults, 30 young people and 18 children remained to give their lives to Christ, including many Muslims.

Lokini originally was befriended by Southern Baptist missionaries Vaughn Ross and James Green, who found him herding goats on the hillsides. His mother had died and his father had left him. In Bible studies the boy's intelligence became obvious, so the missionaries arranged for him to attend Nyeri Baptist High School and provided his school fees.

Now he is the top-ranked student at the school, and according to Branyon, "the closest thing to a genius we've ever had here."

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Multi-housing
association formed

J-DMB

Baptist Press
7/25/90

ATLANTA (BP)--Baptists involved in multi-housing ministries have formed an association for support and resourcing.

Fifteen people attended an organizational meeting for the Southern Baptist Multi-housing Association last month. The association is an autonomous group that will relate to the Home Mission Board's church extension section.

Tommy Goode, mission department associate for church and community ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, is the association's president.

Multi-housing includes any area of dense population, from manufactured home communities to duplexes to high-rise apartment buildings.

Typically only 2 to 4 percent of people living in multi-housing attend any church, Goode said.

Goode noted that door-to-door canvassing is not effective in multi-housing areas because managers seek to protect residents from solicitors. Other methods, such as extension Bible study, chaplaincy or organized social activities, are required to reach residents.

Noting the large number of people who live in multi-housing in urban areas, Goode said, "If we are going to reach our cities, we will do multi-housing ministries."

Goode said the association plans to meet annually on Monday prior the Southern Baptist Convention. It will also assist in producing "The Hinge," a quarterly newsletter about multi-housing ministries.

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Texas BSU volunteers labor
alongside Soviet Baptists

By Orville Scott

F-10
(JMS)

DALLAS (BP)--Twelve Texas Baptist Student Union volunteers helped Soviet Baptists begin remodeling an old cathedral in Leningrad and laid the groundwork for what is hoped will be an open door for ministry in the Soviet Union.

The Texas students were one of four teams from the U.S. to participate in the first such project between Southern Baptists and Soviet Baptists.

Made possible through the Cooperative Program, the project was a joint venture of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, the student ministry department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and the Texas Baptist division of student work.

The Southern Baptists worked with volunteers from the Temple of the Gospel, a Baptist church which has grown from fewer than 100 members to 1,000 in less than a year. It is one of two Baptist churches in Leningrad, a city of 5 million people.

A 90-year-old building, formerly a Russian Orthodox cathedral which has been used as a steel fabricating factory, was given to the Baptists by the Leningrad city government.

Pastor Sergei Nikolaev said the gift of the building was "nothing less than a miracle of God" because never before had the government given away property, especially to a church.

The vast project will take at least five years to complete, said Don Prince, associate in Texas division of student work and a member of the construction team.

"Although the work of the Texas team did not show dramatically visible results, the Soviet Baptists expressed excitement and appreciation for our efforts."

The Texans did bricklaying, carpentry and masonry. Much of the work was strenuous and dirty, involving removing debris in buckets and moving tons of steel pieces.

"We lived with Soviet church members and worshipped with their hosts in services that often last for three hours," said Prince.

"Soviet Christians exhibit a joy and level of commitment and faith that is an inspiration to American Christians.

"Hardships that we read about, such as shortages of food and other consumer goods, are very real," he said. "Some of the Texas Baptists stayed in apartments that had no hot water, but despite minor hardships, the team members learned many lessons from the Soviet Christians."

Some members of the Temple of the Gospel are among those who have been persecuted for their faith. One man had been demoted from a high-level position when he became a Christian, and a university teacher was fired when she professed Christ.

The volunteers were able to carry with them a small quantity of Bibles which were received gratefully because Bibles are still in short supply in the Soviet Union, Prince said.

Despite the language barrier (few Russians speak English, and only one of the team spoke Russian), basic Christian unity and understanding enabled the volunteers to communicate at the work site.

"As the Eastern Bloc nations open their doors, Southern Baptists are in a strategic position to fulfill the Great Commission," said Prince.

"Our faith was strengthened by working and worshiping where Christianity has continued to grow despite great opposition."

Two years after tragedy, 'God is in control,' missionaries believe

By Mary E. Speidel

F-FMS

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP)--For the past two years, little has been certain for Southern Baptist missionaries James and Martha Parrish.

An accidental gasoline explosion in Esmeraldas, Ecuador, took the life of their 3-year-old son and severely burned another son on July 4, 1988. The first-term missionary family had been living there only about five months.

After the accident, "I felt like we were being torn, like wolves had been set loose in our family and we were being torn to pieces," Mrs. Parrish recalled in a recent interview at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va. The Parrishes are on furlough in Dallas.

The explosion occurred when James Parrish, a church planter from Grand Saline, Texas, and two of their sons stopped at a gasoline station for fuel. Parrish stepped out of his truck and was standing behind it when the truck's cab burst into flames. He rushed to the cab, where his sons were sitting, and grabbed Stephen, then 7, from the blaze but couldn't reach 3-year-old John.

John died in the fire; Stephen suffered second- and third-degree burns over 44 percent of his body -- his face, legs and hands. Parrish was burned on his face, arms and hands. Mrs. Parrish, the former Martha Penhorwood from Mount Victory, Ohio, was at home with their other son, Micah, then 5, when the accident occurred.

Parrish said he thought the explosion was caused by a spark of static electricity that ignited fumes as an attendant was priming a flooded gas pump.

Following emergency treatment in Esmeraldas and hospitalization in Quito, Ecuador, the Parrishes were taken to the burn care unit of Methodist Medical Center in Dallas. Doctors gave Stephen a 40-percent chance of survival.

The months that followed were filled with pain and uncertainty. Parrish was released from the hospital after two weeks, but Stephen had to stay another month. He underwent physical therapy to help him regain the use of his hands, which were severely burned. The family stayed for about seven months in housing provided by churches in the Dallas area.

Throughout the ordeal, expressions of support poured in from Southern Baptists, Ecuadorian Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board. The Parrishes received more than 2,000 letters. "We felt surrounded," said Mrs. Parrish, holding the couple's infant son, Timothy, who was born last January, on her lap while Stephen and Micah played outdoors.

One of the most painful treatments Parrish and his son endured was being submerged in a whirlpool bath several times a day. In the water, the burned skin was scrubbed away to promote healing. For Stephen, "It was an hour-long scream session three times a day," recalled Parrish.

Since the accident, Stephen has undergone skin grafts on his legs, hands and face. Until recently he had to wear elastic burn garments covering most of his body and a plastic facial mask to help his skin heal properly.

Although recovery has been difficult and his skin is scarred, Stephen is learning to accept his situation. For one of the skin grafts, his surgeons took replacement skin from Stephen's scalp. They removed the hair follicles before grafting the skin, but missed a few. As a result, Stephen has to shave a small area of his face. "He thinks that's cool," said Parrish.

The first time Stephen went to church after coming home from the hospital, he walked into his Sunday school class, saying to his parents, "Just let me tell my story and I'll be OK." He told the class and later a group of boys in a Royal Ambassadors chapter about his ordeal, Parrish said.

The accident "was a real testing time" for Stephen, "but it didn't seem to devastate his faith," said Mrs. Parrish. The year before the explosion, he had made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

"In some ways, he did better than I did. ... My faith was taking a beating," admitted Mrs. Parrish.

The critical nature of Stephen's injuries took much of the Parrishes' energy during the months following the accident. As a result, they had to delay dealing with their grief concerning John's death.

Parrish was unable to attend his son's funeral because he was hospitalized in Quito. "That was very difficult for me. It still is," he said.

Some of the family's most difficult days came right after returning to Ecuador in January 1989, said Mrs. Parrish. They went back to Esmeraldas to find their belongings just as they had left them the day of the accident. A domestic helper had been taking care of their house.

The couple had been working in church development through two Baptist congregations in Esmeraldas, along Ecuador's northwestern coast. "The people were so eager," said Parrish. "They had never had one of our missionaries live there."

But the Parrishes returned to Esmeraldas knowing they couldn't continue to work there. The area's heat and humidity made Stephen miserable because of close-fitting burn garments. His skin also is sensitive to the tropical sun.

The family spent the next four months visiting possible places of service in Ecuador's cooler mountainous regions. They decided on Cuenca, the nation's third-largest city.

Once they made that decision, more uncertainties followed.

While moving to Cuenca, they found themselves in the middle of a national transportation strike. At a roadblock, a demonstrator punctured three of their tires. Parrish was able to drive out of the violence but their truck slid into a ditch.

"We thought we were going to be there all night," said Mrs. Parrish.

About 15 minutes later a truckload of Indians stopped. They lifted the Parrishes' truck, full of the family's belongings, onto the road. Then they asked who the Parrishes were and where they were going. During the conversation, the couple told them about their faith in Jesus Christ. Later the Parrishes borrowed tires from some tourists to get to the next town.

After settling in Cuenca, the Parrishes began working with an Ecuadorian Baptist pastor in various outreach ministries.

More pressure came when Mrs. Parrish became pregnant with the couple's fourth child. Her doctor urged her to have an abortion because he feared complications. She said they changed to a Christian obstetrician, who gave a different opinion. Timothy was born normal and healthy on Jan. 5, 1990.

The events of the past two years have changed their perspective on life and ministry. "I found that just losing John so quickly gave me a new appreciation for how brief life can be. I found a new desire to share with people," Parrish said.

The Parrishes also have been able to minister to others who have experienced similar tragedies. "We've had the opportunity to share the things that God has taught us -- that he does love us, that we're not exempt from tragedy, that he doesn't want to hurt us, that he does want to provide a hope and a future for us and grace to get through it," said Parrish.

The couple still has questions about the tragedy. "I don't have the answers to all the 'whys,'" he admitted. "I still don't know why John had to die and why Stephen and the rest of our family had to suffer."

But despite unanswered questions, the Parrishes believe "God was in control of what happened," said Mrs. Parrish. "He didn't cause it. He allowed it to happen, but he set all the limitations around it. It's been a great comfort to realize that."

Books offer help
for AIDS ministry

By Terri Lackey

F-SSB

NASHVILLE (BP)--Promiscuity in young people, Christians included, is forcing the deadly issue of AIDS into the sanctuary, and Southern Baptists had better prepare to deal with it, said a denominational worker who ministers to persons with the disease.

"Young people have a tendency to feel they are immortal. Because of that, they are promiscuous in their sexual activity, and that is both immoral and unsafe," said Rich Murrell, an editor for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and volunteer for Nashville CARES, a support service for people with AIDS.

AIDS, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, is a fatal disease that cripples the immune system, leaving the victim susceptible to illnesses the body ordinarily would resist, Murrell said. It is caused by a virus known as human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV.

One way church members can familiarize themselves with AIDS and the ministry that must accompany the disease is to read any material produced by Christians they can find, Murrell said.

Two such sources are "AIDS: A Christian Response" and "AIDS: A Christian Student's Response." Both books are produced by the Sunday School Board's discipleship training department. The student book is a Collegiate Disciple product, produced jointly with the board's student ministry department. The books relate 1989 statistics and facts about AIDS, as well as ministry responses to people with AIDS and their families and friends.

Murrell said AIDS is fast becoming a heterosexual illness, and sexually active young people are at great risk of contracting the HIV virus.

General estimates are that from one to one-and-one-half million Americans and six to eight million people worldwide carry the HIV virus. And while only a few studies of college students have been made, Murrell said, it estimated that one in 300 carry the HIV virus.

Murrell said it is no secret that young people tend to lead freer lifestyles once they leave home.

"Although we (Christians) do not condone a promiscuous lifestyle, we will still have to deal with it if (a young person in our church) becomes infected with the AIDS virus."

He said churches must begin addressing human sexuality from a biblical perspective.

In the AIDS book for students, author Hoyet Chance, a medical doctor and member of Ellerbe Road Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., said the church must be consistent in its responses to people in need.

"The church might support a person who is dying of cancer caused by smoking," Chance wrote, "but someone with AIDS may be ostracized, and a cautious ministry, if any at all, might be practiced."

Chance said a Christian ministering to a person with AIDS should maintain continual contact with that person and his family.

"As in any type of ministry, just being there at times of crisis is one of the most effective ways to show love and concern."

He also suggested that the volunteer caregiver to a person with AIDS have knowledge of the current facts about the disease. He said the U.S. surgeon general's report on AIDS and a series of pamphlets published by the SBC Christian Life Commission are good avenues for obtaining facts about the disease.

Leon Simpson, who edited the 12-chapter book for adults by William M. Tillman Jr., assistant professor of ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, said babies are the fastest growing group of people with AIDS.

"Christians must respond (to the AIDS issue), protect themselves, address the issue and minister to those it touches," Simpson said.

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He advised churches to work out policies and procedures in dealing with AIDS.

"The AIDS virus does not discriminate between young and old, gay and straight, male or female, Christian or non-Christian," Simpson said.

"AIDS: A Christian Response", released in April, deals with AIDS facts, theological approaches to AIDS, moral issues involved in the disease, the spiritual, emotional, social and physical needs of AIDS sufferers and their families, and ways individual Christians and churches can respond to those needs.

"AIDS: A Christian Student's Response" examines AIDS in the context of student life, offers a biblical response to the crisis, and suggests specific ways Christian students can minister to people with AIDS and their families.

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Don't be the missing
link, missionary urges

By Mark Wingfield

F-FMB

Baptist Press
7/25/90

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--A foreign missionary pleaded with Southern Baptists not to be the missing link in world evangelization.

Clifford Vick, a church planter in Leuven, Belgium, issued the challenge during "Jericho: A Missions Festival" at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. The week-long missions conference is jointly sponsored by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Woman's Missionary Union and Brotherhood Commission.

"The ultimate goal of all mission efforts is to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ," he said. "They must hear the gospel message, but how will they hear?"

Vick based his message on four questions found in Acts 10 that form "essential links in the gospel chain:" belief, hearing, calling and sending.

"The great danger comes when there are weak or missing links in this chain," Vick declared. "If any link in the chain is missing, it can all fall apart and the goal of bringing people to Christ can break down."

For example, if Southern Baptists believe the gospel is intended for everyone, they must give everyone the opportunity to hear the gospel, Vick said. "If any nation of our world does not hear the gospel, there is a missing link in the gospel chain."

Vick explained that at least 1.3 billion people in the world have never heard the gospel explained one time. In addition, there are millions who have been exposed to the gospel but have never really heard it, he said.

The foreign missionary lamented that 95 percent of Christian preachers continue to focus their energies on 5 percent of the world's population.

"Here in America we have more opportunities to hear the gospel than in just about any country in our world. That really isn't fair," he said.

"Is it fair that some should hear the gospel hundreds and even thousands of times while others in our world have yet to hear it even one time?"

If God cares for all the world and wants everyone to hear the gospel, the problem must be that some messengers aren't willing to be transferred to places of need, Vick suggested.

He described his struggle with a call to missions. Vick was formerly pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Tucson, Ariz., Riviera Baptist Church in Eugene, Ore., and Lincoln Street Baptist Church in Portland, Ore.

"I was comfortable, just as so many Southern Baptists are comfortable in their pews," he said. "But God has not called us to be comfortable."

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He chided pastors who are more concerned with career advancement than giving every nation a chance to hear the gospel.

"God is not one bit interested in our ego trips," he said. "A lot of what we call success God sees as nothing. God is concerned about getting the message out to the whole world. But without messengers, the gospel chain is broken."

Although not everyone can be sent as a missionary, all can "hold the ropes" through praying and giving, he said.

"What would happen if the support system were to stop? What would happen if people began to be called in the thousands across this land and we as Southern Baptists were not prepared to send them out?" he asked.

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Volunteers tailor discipleship programs for churches who ask

By Terri Lackey

F-SSB

Baptist Press
7/25/90

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--An army of 260 men and women is being equipped this summer to go directly into Southern Baptist churches and provide assistance in starting or strengthening discipleship training programs, the leader of the SBC discipleship training program said.

Roy Edgemon, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship training department, said these pastors, associational and state leaders and lay people have studied more than 250 resources his department offers.

During the Discipleship Training Leadership Conference at Glorieta, June 30-July 6, about 105 hand-picked men and women from 14 states and Canada completed 30 hours of basic training on discipleship training resources and their uses, Edgemon said. Another 155 are expected to receive the same training at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center at the August Discipleship Training Week.

The discipleship training department is working with the discipleship training directors of Baptist state conventions to train the special workers, Edgemon said. He said each state convention discipleship training director chose the individuals from his or her state for the training.

By the end of the summer, discipleship training consultants from 35 states will have been trained, according to Edgemon, who said he hopes these consultants will get into at least 500 churches next year.

"This is the first time we have ever tried to train generalists who can go directly to the churches and design a customized plan for a discipleship training program," he said.

"We feel discipleship is so critical to the Southern Baptist Convention, that we are going to move in this direction of training these specialists for every state."

Edgemon said statistics show churches with discipleship training programs fare better in Sunday school enrollment, baptisms and undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program.

Churches with discipleship training programs have an average of 79.3 percent of their resident members enrolled in Sunday school. Churches without discipleship training have an average of 62.7 percent of resident members enrolled in Sunday school, he said.

Likewise, churches with discipleship training annually baptize 3.4 people for every 100 resident members, and they give 10.5 percent of their undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program.

Churches without discipleship training programs baptize three people for every 100 resident members annually, and they give 7.4 percent of their undesignated receipts to the Cooperative Program, Edgemon said, quoting statistics from the Uniform Church Letter.

Bennie Slack, pastor of First Baptist Church of Gainesville, Texas, said he volunteered to become a discipleship training consultant because too few pastors wave a banner for that cause.

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"I really believe in lobbying for discipleship training," Slack said. "We have plenty of people pushing music, Sunday school and missions, but there are very few pastors that push discipleship training."

Edgemon said the plan to train consultants in designing tailored discipleship programs for churches has been in the works about five years. He said he hopes the plan can complement the Great Commission plan to be implemented by the board's Sunday school division.

"I feel like the discipleship training department has every resource it needs for every size church," Edgemon said.

"It is evident that the Southern Baptist Convention is not going to grow unless churches come back and do a better job in discipleship. This is critically important for the future growth of our denomination and our churches," Edgemon said.

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Small sentences add up
to big prayer requests

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press
7/25/90

F-FMB

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Small sentences added up to big prayer requests for participants in "Jericho: A Missions Festival" this summer.

The week-long missions conferences were held at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Participants, who were mostly laypeople and pastors with an interest in missions, were confronted with facts and figures about missions needs at home and around the world. As the call to prayer in each evening session, worship leader Esther Burroughs presented up-to-date statistics gleaned from a variety of sources. Burroughs works in the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's evangelism program.

A sampling of what participants heard and were asked to pray about includes:

- Of the 5 billion people living on earth, nearly 2 billion have never heard the name of Jesus.
- Of 11,500 people groups with their own language, culture and identity, 2,000 are unreached with the gospel.
- The 100 countries where Southern Baptists do not have formal missions work comprise 80 percent of the world's population.
- Nearly 70 nations are restricted or hostile to Christian missionaries.
- More than 80,000 lost people move to cities each day.
- By 2000 A.D., the five largest cities in the world (none of which will be in the United States) will each have more than 20 million residents.
- Total gifts of all Southern Baptists to foreign missions in 1988 was \$147.4 million, an average of 4 cents per lost person in the world.
- More than 1,700 children die of hunger and related diseases every hour.
- Worldwide there are 400 million people on the verge of starvation, yet three of every 10 Americans die yearly due to overeating.
- American garbage cans are fed better than 30 percent of the world's population.
- If lined up single file, the world's hungry people would circle the globe 25 times.
- Of all the 14-year-old American girls alive today, 40 percent will become pregnant by their 19th birthday.
- Every 68 seconds, a teenager attempts suicide in America.

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Jericho is jointly sponsored by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union, Brotherhood Commission and Sunday School Board.

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Southern Baptists get taste
of disaster relief

By Tim Yarbrough

Baptist Press
7/25/90

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Southern Baptists got a taste of disaster relief ministries during "Jericho: A Missions Festival" at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

On Monday night of the week-long missions conference, the dining hall closed and participants gathered around a mobile feeding unit to experience an authentic disaster relief meal.

One mobile disaster relief unit served 80 gallons of tea, 102 gallons of beef stew, 78 gallons of green beans, 72 gallons of peaches, 9,000 crackers and 80 pounds of cookies to 1,850 people.

The 1,850 meals prepared and served by Louisiana Baptist Men are only a fraction of the 10,000 meals the modified tractor-trailer rig is capable of preparing daily during a real disaster, said Cal Jones, associate director of Brotherhood in Louisiana and coordinator of the feeding demonstration.

Jones said the meal prepared by him and 11 Baptist Men volunteers from Louisiana is typical of meals served on the scene of a disaster. "We want to show Southern Baptists what their Cooperative Program money is going for, that we're using it to show people that Baptists care through meeting their needs in a disaster," Jones said.

In addition to the meal, Jericho participants got a close look at emergency child care facilities used by Texas Baptist Men in disaster relief.

Cotton Bridges, interim Royal Ambassador director and Brotherhood trainer for Texas Baptist Men, explained that emergency child care can be an important ministry to both children and adult victims of disaster.

The child care unit is equipped to handle 150 infants and children daily. Games, Christian books and activities are used by child care workers who operate the unit at the scene of a disaster.

In the evening service after the feeding demonstration, participants heard the testimony of a volunteer who ministered in San Francisco after last year's World Series earthquake.

James McCullough, a Brotherhood Commission trustee from California, told how he was en route to assist victims of Hurricane Hugo in South Carolina when he was called home to assist his neighbors in another disaster.

McCullough said he had been looking for a way to use his talents in ministry, but hadn't anticipated an earthquake providing the opportunity.

The spiritual rubble he saw upon arriving in Oakland, Calif., after the quake "had always been there, but the people had not seen it," he said.

"My Bible tells me to 'be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only,'" McCullough told the Jericho crowd. He explained how he helped recruit Spanish interpreters to deliver food, transport volunteers to areas of need and lead his church to become a training camp for volunteers.

"Those who were already in our midst, used to going to church houses but not used to serving, came to serve," he said. "We got the job done, not through us, but through God."

Jericho participants were surprised at the tastiness of the meal served by disaster relief volunteers at Glorieta.

Jeff Easley of Eastwood Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla., said the meal was better than he expected.

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"I don't know what I expected, but definitely not beef stew over rice, green beans and peaches," he said.

Jan Thorbjornsen, also of Eastwood Baptist Church, said she thinks the Southern Baptist disaster relief ministry "is great because it shows people that we care."

Others were interested in becoming involved in the operation of a disaster relief unit.

"I'm fascinated by the child care because I work with children in kindergarten and Sunday school," said Jane Varner of First Baptist Church of Pensacola, Fla. "I can see what they're doing helps children in a disaster. In fact, I'm looking for a place to volunteer and am considering that."

The 40-foot air-conditioned trailer unit Louisiana brought to Glorieta houses sleeping quarters, a kitchen, freezer, communications facilities, a 500-gallon water tank and 15 kilowatt generator. Stored on the unit are 3,000 meals that can be prepared and served within one hour of arrival to a disaster scene.

First used in 1978, the Louisiana unit has responded to 16 disasters in numerous states and Mexico. More than 500 Baptist Men in Louisiana serve as disaster relief volunteers.

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(Mark Wingfield also contributed to this story.)

Deacons can serve
as conflict managers

By Jim Lowry

N-10
(W.C.)

Baptist Press
7/25/90

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Deacons are prime candidates to be conflict managers in local churches, according to James Hightower, pastoral ministries consultant who led four sessions on conflict management at the annual Southern Baptist Conference on Deacon Ministry at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

It is inevitable that conflict will rear its ugly head in local church fellowship, but deacons can be mediators and managers to serve common interest and concern, Hightower told participants in the annual seminar sponsored by the church administration department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

First, churches need to analyze the conflict to determine if it is substantive or a disagreement between two or more persons or groups.

He said most instances of conflict are related to issues which are not directly tied to church matters, such as family or work.

Deacons, because they generally have longer tenure than the pastor, are in a position to identify potential traps from which conflicts have grown in the past.

"Deacons can help pastors listen and plan effective strategy," Hightower said. "By listening behind the scenes and interpreting for the pastor, deacons can give the church a wider range of options to clarify potentially unpleasant situations.

"Also, deacons can help keep the church which is experiencing conflict to focus on what the gospel has to say about this disagreement," he continued.

The question to ask when a church is in the midst of a conflict is not which majority will prevail, Hightower said. "Instead, church members need to ask what is the mind of Christ in the matter.

"Conflict wastes resources and causes a church to digress from its primary mission of evangelism, nurture and missions," Hightower warned.

"The goal for local churches should be how to manage conflict, not how to avoid it, because it is an inevitable fact of life," he said.

If churches attempt to manage conflict, parties in disagreement "must be willing to discuss problems instead of voting against each other so quickly. Then there can be positive outcomes from conflict, according to Hightower.

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"First, conflict can empower, or create energy where there has been apathy," he said. "It can also help more solidly identify the mission of the church. Conflict can also promote tolerance.

"If churches would spend more time in discussion, building a consensus, there wouldn't be win/lose situations as often," he said.

"Deacons and all church members need to keep in perspective that God is bigger and his Kingdom's mission is bigger than any single conflict," Hightower added. "The work of God in the world will go on with or without our help.

"Be a supporter of the pastor and other staff during conflict," he added. "You can do a lot by being a listening ear and a closed mouth.

"It is essential that in times of conflict that you keep close to God," he said. "A personal devotional life is always essential, but an absolute necessity when in the thick of a fight.

"We need to remember that God said vengeance is mine," Hightower concluded. "Our task is to join God where God is at work in the world, not to be vindictive toward each other."

The Southern Baptist Conference on Deacon Ministry is part of the Bible Preaching/Administration Conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

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Understanding essential
to balanced church growth

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
7/25/90

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Dexas*

DALLAS (BP)--The pastor of a smaller membership church must understand the mission and personality of his congregation and the needs of his community if he wants his church to experience balanced growth, according to a Southern Baptist pastoral leadership consultant.

"Biblical Growth" was the topic of a seminar led by D.G. McCoury, pastoral leadership consultant with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville.

The seminar was one of several offered at a conference for bivocational ministers and wives and for church staff and spouses in smaller membership congregations, July 20-22 at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, Belton, Texas. About 100 attended the meeting, sponsored by the church ministries department, Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Biblical church growth is multi-dimensional and depends on a balanced emphasis on evangelism, discipleship, missions and administration, McCoury said.

"I make no apology for talking about numerical growth, but biblical church growth is more than just numerical growth," McCoury said.

Balanced growth happens when a church understands its purpose, establishes priorities and sets goals to meet specific needs, he said.

McCoury stressed that the pastor is not "hired to do" the church's mission but is "called to equip" God's people to do the mission of the church.

"If you are not placing the priority in your ministry on preparing God's people to do the mission of the church, are you not perverting God's call?" he asked.

Too many churches are ruled by cultural expectations and worldly models for success rather than by biblical principles, he noted.

"A lot of churches build themselves like corporations, and pastors think of themselves as CEOs. That is not the biblical model," he said.

While holding up an "ideal" of balanced church growth, McCoury encouraged the smaller membership church ministers not to lose hope if their churches are not excelling in every area.

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"Wherever your church is, God has it there for a purpose," McCoury said, pointing to the vital place of smaller membership churches in Southern Baptist life.

He noted that 80 percent of all Southern Baptist ministers of music are bivocational, and 76 percent of all Southern Baptist pastors are in single staff churches. The median Sunday school attendance across the Southern Baptist Convention is 64.

"Don't ever get the idea that the Southern Baptist Convention is a denomination of large churches. You are part of the very backbone of Southern Baptist life," McCoury said.