



-- 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, Telephone (404) 898-7522
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas, 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5100
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 Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

October 12, 1990

90-140

Wrap-up

FMB approves record budget,
appoints 48, enters Bulgaria

By Robert O'Brien

N-FMB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees, pointing toward the challenges of the future amid sobering realities in the world and the denomination, voted a record \$182.76 million 1991 budget and appointed 48 new overseas personnel at their October meeting.

They also voted to send missionaries to Bulgaria and heard reports of a Baptist seminary scheduled to open in Moscow, worldwide mission advances despite change and unrest, and new approaches to reach the 1.3 billion people in the world who live where Christian witness is virtually nonexistent.

In other action, trustees held a dialogue with pastors from across the Southern Baptist Convention, tabled until December a motion to study criteria for moving the FMB headquarters, appointed a committee to coordinate policy interpretation with staff and honored 71 retiring missionaries with 2,164 years of service.

Trustees also clarified policy on mission service by divorced people, named veteran missionary and administrator Billy Bullington as vice president for Africa and received a report endorsing continued open and unbiased news reporting by its communications staff.

FMB President R. Keith Parks said the budget, a \$7.9 million increase over 1990, reflects his belief that Southern Baptists will continue to give cooperatively amid talk of alternative funding programs which has arisen in the Southern Baptist Convention's theological/political controversy.

During the dialogue, reports of growing mission opportunities and advances across the changing world scene excited trustees and 41 visiting pastors from across the SBC spectrum, but the continuing convention unrest tempered the enthusiasm.

"In spite of all of our idealism, it's impossible for us to just talk missions, evidently, (without) some of the struggles we're facing seeping into the conversation," said SBC President Morris Chapman after several pastors confronted the denominational issues.

Chapman noted that some good can result -- "to know each other as brothers and sisters and to communicate."

The pastors gathered at the Foreign Mission Board's invitation for a special session to hear about the challenges of world missions and consider increasing gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions. The offering accounts for more than 45 percent of the funds the board needs annually to support and expand its mission force.

FMB trustee chairman Bill Hancock of Louisville, Ky., who conceived the idea of the pastor dialogue, told trustees and visitors that "the work begins as we leave here to support the Lottie Moon offering."

At the end of the four-hour dialogue, Hancock called for an offering among staff, trustees and visiting pastors in the meeting to start moving toward the Lottie Moon goal. More than \$11,500 was collected, plus \$2,700 in pledges.

--more--

With the 48 new appointments, the overseas force now numbers 3,812 in 120 countries and includes ministries related to about 25 other countries. The board aims toward a goal of 5,000 overseas personnel throughout the world by the year 2000.

So far this year, the board has appointed or reappointed 193 career and associate missionaries, compared to 185 in 1989 and 234 in 1988. It also has sent 162 long-term mission workers overseas through the International Service Corps program compared to 125 in 1989 and 137 in 1988.

The 1990 total now stands at 355, with a projected total of more than 400 by the end of the year. The board appointed 310 workers last year and 371 in 1988.

At the dialogue session, several pastors raised fears about the directions the board may take under conservatives now in control of the SBC. Parks and several of the board's 90 trustees sought to calm those fears.

Parks responded that the board has not changed qualifications for mission appointment and will continue to appoint qualified people without regard to politics. He said the board "will continue to appoint all God-called, biblically sound, evangelistically committed and otherwise qualified Southern Baptists from the full spectrum of our denomination, while ignoring partisan political identity and avoiding creedal shibboleths."

Chapman addressed doubts expressed by several pastors about the pledge of conservative leaders to "enlarge the tent," or broaden the spectrum of people appointed as trustees of Southern Baptist institutions.

He expressed commitment to listen, learn and pray as he interacts with those who disagree with him, and said he wants "to lead this convention beyond the perceptions or reality of political coalitions."

But while acknowledging his promise to "enlarge the tent," he added, "You need to hear very carefully that, again and again, I have also indicated the parameters of that tent."

"I have a deep and abiding conviction about the holy word of God. I do, unapologetically, with all of my heart, believe this Bible to be the inspired, infallible, inerrant word of God. ... It is not, with me, a matter of theological debate. It is a matter that I serve a perfect God. And the only way I can reason in my faith ... is that a perfect God could have done no less than deposit a perfect word on this earth."

A motion by trustee Ron Wilson of Thousand Oaks, Calif., to consider criteria for possible relocation of the Foreign Mission Board headquarters was passed by the trustee administrative subcommittee. But it was tabled until December at Wilson's request at the trustee business session.

Wilson said that he had not intended by his motion to appear that he was seeking to move the Foreign Mission Board headquarters, but only that a committee be appointed to "develop the criteria which the board would use to decide the merits of moving the Foreign Mission Board."

He said he has asked for five years that a study be done to determine the stewardship of remaining at the board's present location in Richmond or moving to another site either in or out of Virginia. Major corporations, he said, regularly compile such information.

Wilson said the motion has no connection to the SBC controversy, as some observers felt, but added he was asking for the motion to be tabled until December because he had been told Virginia's state Baptist body would interpret it as political pressure. Virginia Baptists meet in Richmond Nov. 13-14 and will vote on a plan to develop alternative funding for Southern Baptist causes in reaction to the SBC controversy.

But trustee Paige Patterson of Dallas, interviewed by a Richmond Times-Dispatch reporter, was quoted as saying: "If Virginia Baptists take precipitous action to hurt the Cooperative Program, they (FMB trustees) might be advised to consider whether they would keep the agency in that kind of milieu."

In another action, trustee chairman Hancock appointed a committee at the request of the board's council of trustee committee chairmen to coordinate with staff and trustees to decide who interprets certain policies which have been referred to the council.

Hancock said the policies may involve such things as missionary leave when there are deaths in the family, how the board will respond to alternative giving plans, "minor theological matters" and the response of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, to the board's request that it consider drafting a doctrinal statement.

Some trustees have felt the Ruschlikon seminary's response has been too slow, while others have urged that it be allowed to have more time.

Hancock also requested that trustees bring board-related concerns they might have through proper channels and that staff respond in a prompt, orderly manner to trustee concerns to prevent misperceptions and misunderstandings.

On the question of divorce, trustees approved a recommendation that further defined the FMB policy for selecting overseas personnel.

Last February the trustees reaffirmed a longstanding policy that divorced people cannot be appointed as career or associate missionaries. But they voted Oct. 10 to remove the requirement that divorced people must provide their own funding for assignments of two years or less through the International Service Corps. Previously, the board allowed divorced people to serve in ISC roles other than pastoral or theological education assignments if they provided their own funding.

The board will continue considering ISC and volunteer applications from divorced people.

Trustees also approved creation of a new volunteer channel called Creative Evangelistic Opportunities, or CEO, for Southern Baptist lay people who travel overseas regularly and make contact with high-level leaders in government and business. Southern Baptists in the program would agree, in a covenant with the Foreign Mission Board, to share their faith through their travel and work.

In voting to open work in Bulgaria, the board paved the way for assignment of personnel to serve as liaison with Bulgarian Baptists.

Trustees also heard a report that a Baptist seminary is scheduled to open in Moscow in January, initially with 15 to 20 students. In 1989 the board appropriated \$200,000 to assist in creation of the new seminary.

--30--

Missions video programming to
continue despite folding of BTN

By Susan Todd

F-10
(wmu)

Baptist Press
10/12/90

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Missions broadcasting is still available to Southern Baptists even though the Baptist Telecommunication Network has ceased operation, said a missions video producer.

"Video is so powerful a tool for missions education, and a satellite network is so valuable a resource for the denomination, that we must at least try to fill the void left by BTN," said Stan Hill, video specialist for Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

The missions programming which has been available to subscribers of BTN will still be offered on the same satellite channel used by BTN -- Spacenet 1, Channel 21, Hill said.

The programming will include shows which were aired by BTN -- "Missions File," "MissionsUSA Video Magazine" and "Foreign Missions Update." WMU and the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission will also broadcast training programs.

--more--

Missions programs will be aired each Tuesday at 1 p.m. (CST), Hill said. Programs are scheduled through March 12, 1991. Continuation of programming beyond this date has not yet been decided, he said.

"With this temporary arrangement in place, the Brotherhood Commission, Foreign Mission Board, Home Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union will be working with the Sunday School Board and the Radio and TV Commission to try to organize a free programming network," Hill said.

Through March 1991, churches are free to record the missions programming and use it. The four missions agencies are paying for the broadcasting costs, Hill said.

Any questions or comments about missions programming may be directed to Missions Video Team, c/o Communications Group, Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283-0010.

--30--

Doors open in Russia, missionaries
tell Southwestern students

By Chip Alford

F-^{CO}
(SUBTS)

Baptist Press
10/12/90

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Stunning changes in Russia and Eastern Europe have created an open door for evangelism and church planting, a Southern Baptist missionary told students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary during a missions day program.

"There is a tremendous hunger on the part of the Russian people for the Bible and the gospel of Jesus Christ," according to Earl Martin, director of the Institute for Missions and Evangelism at Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. Martin, who has been involved with mission projects in the Soviet Union, spoke during Southwestern's Missions Day Chapel Oct. 9. This year's theme was "From/To Russia With Love."

Also speaking at the event was George Lozuk, Southern Baptists' first fraternal representative to Russian Baptists. He and his wife, Veda, will leave next month for Moscow where they will be involved in evangelism and religious education.

"God has opened so many doors in Europe," said Lozuk, a former missionary in South America. "And there is all the difference in the world in a closed door and an open door. The openness is an opportunity before you. It's a beckoning."

Lozuk shared with seminary students the challenge of working in the Soviet Union. "Do you realize that the Soviet Union is a land of some 290 million people?" he asked. "When the sun sets on the western-most part of this land it is already rising on the eastern-most part. This land has 11 time zones from east to west and it covers one-sixth of this globe we call earth."

The Lozucs will be working along side Russian Baptists. The Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists reports a membership of 250,000 in 3,000 churches.

Lozuk said the new religious freedom in the Soviet Union, spurred by the recent passage of the "freedom of conscience" act, is opening a door for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

"We are told to go and disciple all nations," he said. "We see that God has called many, and is calling others, and will continue to call them as he opens doors."

Lozuk told students God expects Christians "to be the light in dark places. We can go in and we can share Christ. We can share where true joy comes from," he said.

One Southwestern student did exactly that on a missions trip to Leningrad this summer. Joe Kelley went to the Russian city with a group of Texas Baptist students to help renovate an old cathedral which is now being used as a Baptist church. During the Missions Day Chapel, he shared with students how he was able to help lead a young Russian college student to Christ.

--more--

"The openness of the people there is just awesome," Kelley said in a later dialogue session with students. He was impressed with the openness of the Russian media to Christianity. He and another mission volunteer were interviewed by a correspondent for a television news program in Russia and their comments were aired over national television.

Kelley also was impressed with the reverence of Russian Baptists for the Bible. "One of the women kept her Bible in a plastic bag so it wouldn't get damaged. She really took care of it. They have respect for God's word."

David Price, another Southwestern student, was part of a group of Mississippi Baptist students who worked on the same project in Leningrad. He was impressed with the Russian Baptists' zeal for God and evangelism.

"I left challenged and humbled. They don't just wear the name tag that says Christian. They really live it," he said.

As the door to missions opportunity continues to open in Russia, Martin said it is important for Southern Baptists to avoid a "Messianic" mentality. "Russian Baptists don't need us to bring revival to them, they are already experiencing it," he said. "We need to work along side them, as a link and liaison to help make things happen."

Martin said one of the biggest needs among Russian Baptists is theological education. Southern Baptists working through the Baptist World Alliance, will likely play a part in the development of a seminary in Moscow, he said.

--30--

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

Ministry centers are sites
for new inner city churches

By Mark Wingfield

N-NMB

Baptist Press
10/12/90

ATLANTA (BP)--As existing churches flee America's inner cities, Christian social workers are leading an effort to plant new congregations by combining the tasks of church starting and ministry.

At least 32 inner city congregations have been started in the past two years through an emphasis of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board called "Starting Churches through Ministry Centers."

The project is the brainchild of Harold Wilcox, the HMB's director of church and community ministries.

"We Southern Baptists say every person should have the opportunity to hear the gospel and have a congregation of believers to associate with," Wilcox explains. "If we really mean that, we're going to have to get into the inner cities, where our churches have moved out.

"Baptist Centers remain in the inner cities, where they have been for years. We are uniquely qualified to start churches there through ministry."

The HMB, in cooperation with state conventions and associations, has established 77 Baptist Centers across the nation. The centers typically offer food, clothing and other ministry programs for the poor and homeless.

Two year ago, about one-third of the Baptist Centers offered some form of weekly worship, Wilcox says. Now, about three-fourths of all Baptist Centers have organized congregations.

Churches in ministry centers are more meaningful to the down-and-out, Wilcox explains. "We've said these people are welcome in our churches, and they would be. But they need a place where they will be comfortable. Why not let them have a church in their own community?"

--more--

In Birmingham, Ala., Baptist Center director Ray Joiner has started a satellite congregation in the Metropolitan Gardens Housing Project, classified as one of the poorest communities in America.

"The last Southern Baptist church moved out of that neighborhood several years ago," Joiner says. "The last large church, a Church of Christ, is in the process of relocating right now."

In communities where traditional churches cannot survive, ministry-oriented churches can make a difference, says Mark Powell, director of the Indianapolis Baptist Center. A multi-racial congregation meets in the Indianapolis facility, and plans are in place to start a Hispanic mission.

"We've touched a lot of people, but this is still a transient neighborhood," Powell says. "This is never going to be a 5,000-member church. Primarily we minister to people we know aren't going to be here long. A regular church would not be able to reach these folks."

Starting a church in a Baptist Center also enhances the existing social ministries, says Lisa Chilson, associate director of East Seventh Baptist Ministry (Graffiti) in Manhattan, N.Y. Last Easter, 57 people attended services in the center's small storefront.

"Meeting for worship has brought out a lot of leadership," she explains. "People who are homeless aren't lacking in leadership skills, they just need someone to nurture. We now have stronger leadership within the center."

As an example, Chilson cites the three neighborhood women who assumed responsibility for the clothing closet. Before the church was started, the ministry center staff did the work.

The three women have a "sense of ownership" through this ministry, she explains. "They lay out the clothes. They give them out. This is their clothing closet. They're able to minister to people.

"Because of the church forming there's an avenue for them to grow spiritually and then go out and live what they've learned."

Some Baptist Centers have started more than one congregation.

Delano Humphreys has conducted Sunday services at Edgewood Baptist Center in Dayton, Ohio, since 1972. But with a new vision for church starting, he has added 16 mission points in nearby housing projects.

Humphreys and volunteers take ministry programs and weekly Bible studies into the housing projects within a 10-mile radius of the center.

This is more effective than attempting to bring residents to the Baptist Center, he says. "I think the answer is getting in the projects and meeting their needs where they are."

In Oakland, Calif., Paula Dickson helped start two congregations at Telegraph Baptist Center. One of those, a Filipino congregation, already has outgrown the accommodations and moved to a larger meeting place.

Now Dickson is starting a third congregation. "We can do more by facilitating a number of missions than by being the primary mover in just one. We want to grow them up so far, push them out and start another one."

The emphasis on starting ministry-based churches also has moved beyond existing Baptist Centers. For example, First Baptist Church of Bell, Calif., started a ministry center and a mission congregation almost simultaneously.

As the neighborhood around the church became transitional, attendance declined, leaving an educational building unused. With assistance from the association, state convention and HMB, Bell Baptist Center and Iglesia Bautista Hispana de Bell were begun.

Director Francisco Juarbe and US-2 missionary Terese Carlson offer English classes, children's programming, Big A Clubs and other ministries in addition to Sunday worship and Wednesday night prayer meeting. An average of 30 people attend the church.

"Many of the people in the English classes are coming to the church," reports Carlson. "The people come to receive help with their English, and the teachers tell them about Jesus. We had three people accept Jesus in the last session.

"If the people come and hear us talking about Jesus, but we don't offer them a time and place to study his word and be a part of a fellowship, our purpose is defeated," she says.

--30--

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

Smallest breakthroughs are major
victories at Baptist Centers

By Mark Wingfield

F-NMB

Baptist Press
10/12/90

ATLANTA (BP)--The smallest breakthroughs are often major victories to pastors of Baptist Center congregations.

The pastors, who usually double as Baptist Center directors, work with a highly transitory population, immense human need and limited financial resources. Sometimes they have to laugh at their situations; other times they are moved to tears.

Terese Carlson, a US-2 missionary serving at Bell Baptist Center in Bell, Calif., was touched by the prayer of a child at snack time. The boy's family won't let him attend all the church activities, even though he enjoys going to the Baptist Center.

"Thank you, God, for my favorite place," the boy prayed.

In Birmingham, Ala., an answer to prayer made a difference in the satellite congregation led by Baptist Center director Ray Joiner. The weekly Bible study meets in the Metropolitan Gardens housing project, the scene of frequent violence related to drug trafficking.

One woman who attends the Bible study had neighbors active in the drug trade. In the mornings, she often had to clean blood off her front steps from fights the previous night.

Within two weeks after the group prayed for the safety of the woman and her 4-year-old son, the drug-dealing neighbors suddenly packed up and moved.

In Indianapolis, Baptist Center director Mark Powell encountered an elderly couple who came for emergency food assistance. After addressing their physical needs, Powell asked if there was anything he could pray with them about.

"Well, someday we'd like to get married," the man said, explaining that he and the woman had been living together.

"I didn't pull out my favorite sin sermon and stand on the desk and preach," Powell recalled. "I just talked with them and told them we could take care of that right here."

The couple was married, she became a Christian, he renewed his Christian commitment and they both joined the church at the Baptist Center.

Baptist groups who visit the Baptist Center churches also are moved by their experiences. When a Girls in Action group toured the Indianapolis center, they were impressed with a man who had been helped by the center and now was working there as a volunteer.

When the man was later diagnosed with AIDS, the girls all sent him cards while he was in the hospital.

"Here is a man who was on his way out, and we made a difference in his life," Powell said.

--30--

Entering enrollment
up at Southern Seminary

Baptist Press
10/12/90

F-CO
(SBTS)

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's entering student enrollment is up over last fall, but overall enrollment at the Louisville, Ky., seminary declined.

The seminary posted a six percent increase in entering student enrollment, but the seminary's total enrollment declined by 7.6 percent from last fall. The entering class totaled 418 at the close of fall registration and overall enrollment was 1,916. Students enrolled in several of the seminary's off-campus programs are not included in the count.

The seminary's non-duplicating enrollment for the academic year should once again top 3,000 if enrollment follows the trend of previous years, said Harold S. Songer, vice president for academic affairs at Southern Seminary.

The fall figures indicate the seminary's enrollment is stable, said Songer. "Minor fluctuations in enrollment have been experienced over the years," he said, noting graduation patterns and other factors cause slight variances in enrollment figures.

Nevertheless, Songer pointed out that an increase in entering student enrollment is "significant," because the size of the entering class affects total enrollment for at least two to three years.

--30--

Southwestern student pastor
finds niche at growing church

By Chip Alford

F-CO
(Texas)

Baptist Press
10/12/90

PLANO, Texas (BP)--Samuel Dennis, former jingle-writer, free-lance singer/entertainer, and commercial real estate broker, seems to have found his niche as pastor of a "traditional" Southern Baptist church.

"The people in this area are more traditional than you would ever think they would be," said Dennis, pastor of Parkway Hills Baptist Church in west Plano, Texas. Household incomes of \$150,000 and up are typical of Parkway's members, who also come from nearby Carrollton and north Dallas.

"These people are extremely interested in giving their children a religious background," Dennis said. "They're baby boomers who have gone through the hippie movement and become bona fide middle age 'yuppies.' They're going to be the kind of folks who wouldn't be embarrassed if their minister wore a robe when he married a couple."

So, while the trend has been toward a more contemporary style in newer churches, Dennis said Parkway Hills is "very traditional because that's really what our people want and need."

To prepare for his work at Parkway Hills Dennis enrolled at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's off-campus classes in Garland just east of Dallas in the fall of 1989. He is pursuing a master of divinity degree.

"I'm a guy that says thank you, thank you for the off-campus classes because I couldn't go to school otherwise," Dennis said. "Even though the seminary is in Fort Worth, Texas, I work 80 hours a week at my church, so I couldn't make it there. But the Monday classes in Garland allow me to take that as my day off and take classes here."

--more--

I'm enjoying it, especially the fellowship there with other Christian brothers and sisters."

Like his congregation, the 40-year-old Dennis has also gone through changes.

Dennis felt the call to ministry at age 19 and considered enrolling in seminary after college. "But I really I thought I would be a writer," he recalled. "I also played the guitar and sang and wrote songs, so when I moved back down to Dallas that kind of grew into a free-lance advertising business. I would write songs and jingles and I would also entertain in churches."

He became an active member of Northway Baptist Church in Dallas, taking on a variety of roles from deacon to Sunday school teacher, and later joining the staff as minister of single adults and then as minister of education and administration. He also helped start the mission which became Prestonwood Baptist Church.

By 1979 the free-lance work had grown into his own advertising agency, which he operated for almost six years. "I cut my hair short, put on the suit, hired employees and started the business," Dennis said. "We did mostly print advertising with some occasional radio spots and on very rare occasions we did some TV."

Ten years in the competitive world of advertising took its toll, though. The victim of "burnout," Dennis sold his company and tried his hand at real estate. "I'm embarrassed to say, but in those two years (selling real estate) I made more money than I've made in my life," Dennis said. "But I realize now that God was preparing me with a financial base to go into the ministry."

That began in 1986 when he left the real estate market behind and took the first of the two staff positions at Northway. During his tenure there, Dennis was encouraged to consider starting a new church by Bill Tinsley, director of missions for the Denton Baptist Association.

"He asked me why I wasn't preaching and I told him that the circumstances of life hadn't allowed that," Dennis remembered. "But he told me I would be a natural at starting a church. I had no idea how hard that would be."

Realizing the pastorate was God's will for his life, Dennis resigned from Northway. Working with the Denton Association, his wife, Belinda, and a core group of families, Dennis began the process of forming Parkway Hills.

The church has had its share of hurdles to overcome. First, a facility the church planned to lease in Carrollton had to be abandoned because of its proximity to a nightclub. The church opted to hold its first service on Easter Sunday 1989, in a tent borrowed from the Baptist General Convention of Texas. The congregation later met at a car broker facility before moving into its current location in west Plano.

Already offering Sunday school for all ages and morning and evening services on Sunday, Parkway has grown to 150 members. A few had Christian background, others have joined from other denominations, and some are transplanted Baptists.

"My vision for the church is that it be aggressive and growing and continually reaching people," Dennis said. "I've been excited that hard work, and even door to door visitation, meeting your neighbors and inviting folks, still works."

--30--

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

Southwestern students find
different type of school work

By Pam Alewine

F-60
(SWBTS)

Baptist Press
10/12/90

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--There is a group of students helping Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, build for the future -- theirs as well as the school's.

--more--

Using everything from hammers and saws to lawnmowers and heavy equipment, they bring specialized expertise to their task and form what Vice President for Business Affairs Hubert Martin calls Southwestern's "support crew."

About 190 students work across the Southwestern campus to make up the support group and provide a "unique service for the seminary and for the Lord," according to Martin.

Martin has a great appreciation for the workers. He said he personally has been encouraged by seeing each student's commitment to the Lord.

"Students who work here have the opportunity to have employment that will fit into their schedule," Martin said. "The ones who work here with us take a lot of pride in what they're doing."

Martin said he often sees former students walking around campus telling their families about the things they had a part in creating or renovating while they were student employees.

"We have some quality personnel, men who have expertise in different fields and with different skills," Martin said. Those skills allow the seminary to save money on maintenance and major building projects, according to Martin.

Kevin Walker, supervisor of landscaping at the seminary, came to Southwestern as a student and joined the landscaping department. At that time he had no idea the ministry God would lead him to would be landscaping.

"It is a ministry," Walker said. "We're not just here to mow grass, but to be good stewards of what the Lord has given us and the seminary." Walker said students come to work for him at all levels, some having been farmers for years, some who have had almost no experience. One of Walker's goals is to help students develop skills they can later merge with ministry.

That goal fits with his goal of beautifying the campus and providing something pleasant for students and seminary guests.

"I think it can make a difference in how a student views his whole day, when he or she comes out of class and sees those flowers," Walker said.

All 35 workers in landscaping meet once a week, on Monday mornings, for a brief devotional time. Walker said the devotions started several years ago when Carl Norton was supervisor of landscaping. "He knew that the only thing that would work is prayer," Walker said of Norton.

Walker's greatest joy is seeing the students he works with grow and develop as a whole person -- ministry, skills, attitudes and disciplines Walker has seen some students graduate from seminary and go to positions in landscaping on Baptist campuses to bi-vocational positions, and other church-related positions. Some have become missionaries in the agricultural field. It's his hope that they will always be able to use the skills they learn while employed at seminary.

Like Walker, Bill Sullivan, director of building trades at Southwestern, didn't know he'd be staying at the seminary, but now sees his job as the ministry God has called him to.

Sullivan was a bivocational pastor for years before coming to seminary to receive more training. While at Southwestern, he began using the skills he already had in carpentry to train students.

"To me, this is an extra, additional part of a student's seminary training," Sullivan said. "Part of our ministry is in that area of bivocational training, that will give them a trade that will better enable them to supplement their income," he said.

--more--

Sullivan loves being a carpenter, mainly because Jesus was one, but also because he feels it's a special gift from God, he said. "To return to the Lord these talents is a privilege."

One of Sullivan's workers, Ben West, owned a business before coming to Southwestern. He too sees his job in construction as a ministry. "I really feel the leadership of the Lord in what I'm doing, and feel like it's a ministry. I'm doing what I've always felt capable of doing," West said.

Sullivan's goal is to equip students to serve in pioneer areas, to teach younger students discipline and to show them that working with their hands has a great ministry in it, giving the student chance to know what it's like to be out in the work force.

"This is our opportunity to provide employment for students," Sullivan said, "but the seminary also benefits. That's what has to happen -- the seminary and the student have to benefit."

--30--

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

'Missions' means school supplies
for Tennessee school children

By Susan Todd

F-CO WMU

Baptist Press
10/12/90

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--When the schoolbell first rang this fall, 120 students in eastern Tennessee found themselves more well-supplied for class than ever before, thanks to members of a nearby Southern Baptist church.

The Woman's Missionary Union of Oak Grove Baptist Church in Mount Carmel, Tenn., provided school supplies for the children in a low-income area of a neighboring town. After buying textbooks, many of the families had no money left to purchase other school supplies.

Working with the local school principal, the women learned what the children would need for the year.

"We made a list of the school supplies the kids would need, and we gave the list out during Sunday school," said Carolyn Reed, Oak Grove's WMU director.

More than 250 members of the 500-plus-member church participated. "They bought pencils, paper, crayons, glue, construction paper, watercolors, composition books, backpacks for the small kids, pencil boxes, scissors and rulers," Reed said.

An activity center operated by neighboring Sullivan Baptist Association became the distribution site for the supplies. The neighborhood surrounding the center is full of children from low-income families.

Fliers were circulated in the neighborhood the week before the distribution date, Reed said.

"We told the mothers they had to come and pick up the supplies," she said. This gave the WMU women an opportunity to witness to the parents and invite them to activities at the center.

The school supply drive was such a success the year it was launched that Oak Grove Baptist Church has now completed its second year of distributing school supplies.

The members of Oak Grove Baptist Church never know how many parents and children will show up to claim supplies, but there always have been enough to go around with some left over. Extra supplies are given to the local school staff to distribute to children throughout the year who aren't able to replenish their own supplies.

--more--

This mission action project has been so successful it was chosen as one of 100 mission projects featured in "100 Plus Ways to Involve People in Missions, a book recently released by WMU.

--30--

Sending packages to Romania
regular business for church

By Sarah Zimmerman

F-AMB

Baptist Press
10/12/90

CHICAGO (BP)--Since last December's Romanian revolution, Romanian Baptists in Chicago have spent thousands of dollars sending food, clothing, medicine and every Romanian New Testament they could find to their homeland.

"Sending packages is a regular business in our church," says Valentin Popovici, pastor of Chicago's Romanian Baptist Church.

In February the church sent about 200 packages to churches in Romania at a shipping cost of \$3,000. Popovici estimates the church spends \$2,000 a month on shipping. He said financial assistance for freight comes from a number of sources, including the Illinois Baptist State Association.

Church members' ties to Romania compel them to share their resources. "We are living in two worlds," Popovici explains. "We are still in Romania in our hearts."

Popovici is certain Baptists are now more free to worship in Romania because at least once a month his church gets a letter from a church in Romania asking for financial assistance. One letter was from a church trying to raise money to build a 400-seat auditorium. Another church asked for help in building a 600-seat auditorium.

At the same time, the 20-year-old Chicago congregation is facing growing pains. Each Sunday 500 people squeeze into the sanctuary designed for 400. While the auditorium is being remodeled to accommodate 700, a closed-circuit television transmits the worship services into another room.

The church's growth is due largely to the influx of Romanians in the United States. For Baptists, the church becomes their gathering point.

"Almost every day something is going on -- choir practice, orchestra, children's activities -- there are not enough days in the week," Popovici says.

One of the church's outreach activities is teaching English. A church member who was an English professor in Romania now is hired by the city of Chicago to teach classes at the church. About 45 people, including non-church members, attend.

Not all Romanian refugees come to the United States for religious freedom, Popovici notes. "They come here to have a microwave, a good car, a television. In Romania we knew who the enemy was. Here the enemy, such as materialism, is not as easily identified."

He also notes that increased religious freedom has not been totally beneficial for Christians in Romania. "The Christians are not as united as before. The oppression forced them to stay together, like huddling together in the cold."

Popovici says one of his goals for the Chicago church is to start a ministry of Christian video and audio cassettes to send to Romania.

Also, he has identified areas near Chicago where a Romanian Baptist church needs to be planted. "Our mission as a Baptist church is not only local," he says.

Popovici and his father are co-pastors of the church which the elder Popovici started with four families. The Popovici family moved to the United States from Romania in 1967.

--30--

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