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Southwestern Seminary trustees
approve budget, elect officers

By Scott Collins

*N-CO
SUBTS*

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, approved a record \$19.8 million budget for 1991-92 and elected new officers during their semi-annual meeting March 11-12.

The seminary trustees, meeting on the Southwestern campus, re-elected James T. Draper Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, to a second term as chairman of the board. Also elected were Jim Bolton, a Dallas businessman and member of First Baptist Church, as vice chairman; and T. Bob Davis, a dentist from Dallas and member of Prestonwood Baptist Church, as secretary.

"I hope we'll just continue with what we've had," Draper said, following his re-election. "It's been a year when we've moved through some tense moments and emerged stronger for it, and I would hope that we would continue."

Draper characterized the board's meeting as going "well. We had very open discussions and any concerns the trustees had were verbalized and I think we've got a good basis to work through any concerns. I just felt real good about it (the meeting)."

Southwestern's 1991-92 budget reflects a 4.1 percent increase over the 1990-91 budget. Seminary President Russell Dilday told trustees the budget represents Southwestern's continued commitment to operating the school with a balanced budget.

Projected Cooperative Program unified budget receipts account for 41 percent of the seminary's income in the coming year, the single largest source of income for the school.

But seminary officials and trustees voiced concern about the declining percentage of Cooperative Program money being allocated for the six SBC seminaries. That allocation, according to Hubert Martin, Southwestern's vice president for business affairs, has declined from 22 percent to 20 percent of the total SBC budget in recent years.

"I feel strongly, and I think most of the trustees do, that we need to do all that we can to influence the continued support of the seminary through the Cooperative Program," Draper said. "There has been an erosion of the percentage of support and we want to not see any further erosion of this support."

The 1991-92 budget includes an increase of \$50 in student matriculation fees, raising the cost per semester from \$450 to \$500 for each student in the spring and fall terms. The fee for the summer will be \$375.

The new budget provides for a 3 percent increase in salaries for faculty and staff at the seminary, while holding most of the program budget at the 1990-91 level.

During his report to the trustees, Dilday updated the board on the recent visit of the academic accrediting team from the Association of Theological Schools and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Although the visiting team's final report has not been received, Dilday said the administration was optimistic about preliminary reports.

Recent efforts to form a Southern Baptist accrediting agency to replace ATS and SACS could harm the six SBC seminaries, Dilday told the trustees. Those efforts have surfaced as a result of problems at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

"The quality of our work as measured by the objective accrediting associations ensures that our graduates are recognized," Dilday said. "They can get jobs; their degrees are certified. Without that, their degrees are worthless. They can't get teaching positions or be hired as chaplains.

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"There is a myth that America is a Christian nation," Lewis said. "America is not a Christian nation. America is a heathen, pagan nation."

Lewis said between 60 and 70 percent of the adult and youth population in America is lost, never having expressed faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. He said HMB studies have indicated at least 171 million people in America are not Christians.

"Oh yes, there are churches on every block and steeples on every corner, but the number of people who have been confronted personally with the gospel and have responded and experienced new birth is in the minority in America today," he said.

The number of lost people in America increases at a rate of nearly two million each year, Lewis added.

Students from across the country, many of them on spring break, attended the conference, according to Bud Fray, professor of missions at Southwestern and faculty sponsor for the event, which included a variety of seminars and speakers. In addition, foreign and home missionaries displayed artifacts from their areas of service.

Other speakers for the weekend included Ruth Tucker, an author and missions teacher, and Darrell Gilyard, founder of Victory Baptist Church in Richardson, Texas.

According to Fray, more than 50 students made public commitments to missions service.

Laura Blessing, who came with a group of more than 25 students from New Mexico State University, said the conference opened her heart to missions. "It helped me turn a lot more over to God," she said.

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Hymns are faith expression,
lyricist, hymn singer agree

By Ginny Whitehouse

FSSB

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NASHVILLE (BP)--In a world where the expression of music changes almost daily, hymn singing has survived and flourished for centuries, lyricist Ragan Courtney, master of ceremonies for "A Celebration for Hymn Singers" said on March 12 during PraiSing II.

"It's the only art form the Bible mentions will be in heaven," said Courtney.

After the session at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry House, Mildred Price of Burlington, N.C., agreed, "It can't get much better than this, 'till we all get to heaven."

Traditional hymns -- the ones sung by multiple generations -- provide the most moving way to "express the inexpressible," according to Cynthia Clawson, internationally renowned hymn singer and Courtney's wife.

In selecting songs she performs, Clawson looks at the lyrics first to see if their message will stand alone, Courtney said.

"The way Cynthia sings hymns, it's like the first time anyone has heard them. People are stunned because its like a fresh phrase, a fresh use of words," explained Courtney.

The hymn "Jesus Loves Me" was her first solo at age three when her father was pastor of a Corpus Christi, Texas, mission church. Her father, a singer as well as an evangelist, taught her to sing gospel classics like "I'll Fly Away." Her mother, a pianist, taught her Bach.

That experience helped Clawson accept all kinds of music and diversity in worship.

"Hymns were the way I learned theology," she recalled.

When her singing career began to flourish, some officials with her recording company wanted Clawson to consider focusing on music other than hymns. One executive even angrily accused her of being a "hymn singer." Clawson thanked him, and four years ago released an album under that title.

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Picking a traditional favorite hymn is difficult, Clawson said. Choosing a contemporary one from "The Baptist Hymnal," released during PraiSing II, is easier -- "In Remembrance," written by her husband.

Being listed in "The Baptist Hymnal" among the other writers and composers is "a thrill and an honor," Courtney said. "As a kid growing up, I thought you had to be dead to get in the hymnal."

Hymns have remained in the forefront of Southern Baptist worship, Clawson said, because they provide classic lyrics easy to understand without "vain repetition." She finds strength in phrases such as "redeeming love has been my theme and shall be 'till I die."

"Fifty Fabulous Years" of Southern Baptist church music were highlighted during the evening, marking the Jubilee year of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church music department.

Southern Baptist church music has undergone a dramatic revolution with the addition of synthesizers, handbells and orchestras, Courtney told about 7,000 people attending two identical evening celebrations.

"We now have praise songs with people clapping and raising their hands" he observed. In the 1940s, it was a big deal if an organist played the instrument with vibrato. Who could have imagined synthesizers?"

Young Musicians Choir members from Nashville's First Baptist Church seemed overwhelmed by the opportunity to perform songs from "Lo! a star," the first children's cantata published in the 1960s by the board.

"If I grow up and become an author, I'm going to write about this in my life story," said 10-year-old Aaron Duffy, of Pleasant View, Tenn.

Duffy's favorite performer for the evening was handbell Soloist Christine Anderson. Her medleys played with three bells in each hand "were like nothing I've ever seen before."

Other young performers were awestruck by the size of the audience.

"That's the biggest crowd I'll ever sing in front of. It was cool," said 14-year-old Nathan McDowell, a member of the youth choir of First Baptist Church of Mount Juliet, Tenn. McDowell and his peers sang from Southern Baptists' first Christian folk musical, Bob Oldenburg's "Good News," a project Courtney described as an "instant success and an instant controversy."

Courtney's own "Celebrate Life," written in 1972 with Composer Buryl Red was also controversial. But nearly two decades later, more than two-thirds of the PraiSing II audience stood to signify they had once performed the musical.

Just before Courtney wrote the lyrics that would become "Celebrate Life" he considered taking his life, he told the audience. After failing to realize his goal of becoming an actor in New York City, Courtney moved to the Caribbean and felt he "could not come back to America at all."

In a depressed emotional state, he stood at the edge of the ocean preparing to drown himself when sunlight broke through dark clouds. Courtney said it was then he realized God loved him. Instead of attempting suicide, he went home and penned the words to "The Truth Shall Make You Free."

Art always struggles to express the feelings of peoples' hearts, Courtney said.

"As long as we can express our feelings, the music of Baptists will grow."

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

PraiSing II experience
may aid Japanese hymnody

By Ginny Whitehouse

F-SSB

NASHVILLE (BP)--Japanese people love to sing and are seeking "good music to praise the Lord," said Rumiko Kikuchi, a Tokyo Baptist Theological Seminary student and future church music leader in Japan.

Last year Japanese Baptists published their first hymnal. Kikuchi and three fellow Tokyo seminary students attending PraiSing II will likely be the leaders to revise the next edition, according to their teacher, Rennie Ohtani.

"We put so much energy getting the hymnal produced, we want to have future leaders ready to follow up," said Ohtani, a former missionary to Japan now married to a Japanese pastor.

Kikuchi, a solo handbell ringer who graduates this semester, wants to translate American hymns and write new hymns in Japanese. Half the new Japanese hymnal contains translations from German and English, with the other half written by Japanese composers.

"Hymns help the people of Japan give response to God for the things he has given us," Kikuchi said. "PraiSing II is a good opportunity for us to discover what to do with music in the future."

Few Japanese churches have full-time music ministers or good accompanying instruments, Ohtani said. Those without congregational song leaders tend to not have "lively music or variety of hymns."

Ohtani said she wanted Kikuchi, Izumi Hotai, Naoko Kanemaki, Masumi Sakamoto -- all seminary students living in Tokyo -- to experience church music in the United States.

Other PraiSing II participants traveling from outside the United States included Patricia Wright, state music director for Puerto Rico; Thomas Blackaby from Aradingley, Manitoulin, Canada; Doug and Mary Sue Tiffin from Bradford, Ontario, Canada; and Roy and Sarah Snell from Guam.

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

More Americans believe
in heaven and hell

By Mark Wingfield

F-NMB

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ATLANTA (BP)--More Americans believe in heaven and hell than ever recorded, according to the Gallup Poll.

Among Americans surveyed, 78 percent said they believe there is a place where people who have led good lives are eternally rewarded. On the subject of hell, 60 percent said they believe there is a place where those who have led bad lives and die without being sorry are eternally damned.

Previous records for Americans expressing these beliefs were in 1952, when 72 percent said they believed in heaven and 58 percent said they believed in hell.

Those most likely to believe in heaven and hell include women, adults under age 30, evangelicals and church members.

Most of the people who said they believe in heaven expect to go there, but few who said they believe in hell expect to go there.

Of Americans who said they believe in heaven, 29 percent said their chances of going to heaven are excellent and another 49 percent said their chances of going there are good. Another 17 percent of believers in heaven said their expectations are fair, while 3 percent said their chances are poor and 2 percent were undecided.

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Of those who said they believe in hell, 77 percent claim their chances of eternal damnation are poor. Another 15 percent said there is a fair chance they could go to hell, while only 2 percent said there is a good chance and another 2 percent said there is an excellent chance. The remainder are undecided.

Those who claim no religion (9 percent) and those who do not belong to a church (7 percent) are most concerned about going to hell.

Evangelicals are the group most confident they will go to heaven, with 88 percent claiming their chance of going to heaven is either excellent or good. In comparison, 80 percent of Protestants, 76 percent of Catholics and 61 percent of those with no religion believe they are likely to go to heaven.

Evangelicals are also the most likely to believe in heaven and hell, with 91 percent believing in heaven and 80 percent believing in hell. That compares to the general category of Protestants, where 84 percent believe in heaven and 66 percent believe in hell; Catholics, with 81 percent believing in heaven and 57 percent believing in hell; and those with no religion, with 46 percent believing in heaven and 36 percent believing in hell.

Information for this Gallup poll was collected from 1,108 interviews in November 1990. Findings were reported in *Emerging Trends*, published by the Princeton Religion Research Center.

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BPRA names scholarship
program for journalists

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*N-CO
Jenn.*

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Baptist Public Relations Association has voted to rename its scholarship program in honor of Southern Baptist journalists Al Shackleford and Dan Martin.

BPRA provides one \$1,000 scholarship to an undergraduate student majoring in communications, English, journalism or public relations and one \$500 scholarship to a graduate student, both of which intend vocational objectives in Baptist communications. The group also provides scholarships of up to \$1,000 for professionals to attend BPRA annual workshops.

Shackleford was the vice president for public relations and director of Baptist Press for the SBC Executive Committee from February 1987 until he was fired in July 1990. He had also been editor of *The Baptist and Reflector*, and *The Indiana Baptist*, newsjournals of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and the State Convention of Baptist in Indiana respectively, and on the staffs of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

Martin was news editor of Baptist Press from August 1980 until he was also fired last summer. Previously, he had been on the staff of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the Texas convention.

Both Shackleford and Martin are longtime members of BPRA. BPRA is the professional organization for Southern Baptists engaged in public relations work within the denomination. The association has about 350 members.

Members were polled by the group's executive committee regarding the recommendation to rename the scholarship program. According to Karen Benson, BPRA president, the membership overwhelmingly approved it.

First recipients of the renamed scholarships are: Rebecca Ann Harris, a student at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., \$1,000 undergraduate scholarship; Lena Crabtree, a graduate student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and editorial assistant at *The Christian Index*, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention, \$500 scholarship; and Breena Kent Paine of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary public relations office, the professional scholarship.

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EDITORS' NOTE: The Executive Committee, SBC, in its February meeting, approved the following resolution by John N. Bowman of Macon, Ga.:

"That the Executive Committee of the SBC encourages all Southern Baptists to become knowledgeable of the many scientific evidences (the natural world) and resources that reveal the purposeful direct creation by God of our world. Southern Baptists will be strengthened by this knowledge in terms of witnessing to a lost world as well as in apologetic resources."

Thanks,
Baptist Press

Edgemon urges Baptists
to care for environment

By Louis Moore

Baptist Press
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NASHVILLE (BP)--A complete reading of the creation accounts in Genesis should lead Christians to concern about environmental issues, said Roy T. Edgemon.

"So many Christians live in Genesis 1 where we are told to be fruitful and multiply and subdue the earth," he said. "Those are all important aspects of creation, but there is also Genesis 2."

The second chapter of Genesis makes it clear that humans, as stewards of God's creation, are to guard and care for the earth, Edgemon, director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship training department, said.

"Mankind is not to be dominated by creation, but we are to be stewards over God's resources," he said. "Our responsibility is to till the earth and work it, then to guard it and protect it."

Edgemon said he rejects the claims by some that concern for the environment reflects either "social gospel" or "New Age" thinking. Both charges ignore the fact God created the world and authorized humans to be stewards of it, he said.

"While biblical stories of creation point to concern for the earth, concern for the earth should also point back to the need for Christians to study the doctrine of creation and other parts of the Bible," Edgemon said.

"Our first priority as Christians is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with nonbelievers. We are not only called to win people to Jesus Christ but also to disciple them, and this discipleship includes teaching them to love and care for God's creation," he said. "We are to guard and protect the earth for the next generation until Jesus comes."

"I have two grandchildren to whom I must leave a heritage," he said. "I consider part of that heritage clean air and clean water. I want them to see God's creatures that I have seen, to catch fish that are not polluted, to enjoy all the beauty of God's world that my father's generation gave to me."

As an indication of how Southern Baptists are lagging on environmental issues, Edgemon cited a comment in Firmament, a Christian magazine on the environment, which said Southern Baptists are only beginning to become concerned with earth-care issues.

It is important, he said, that Southern Baptists go beyond learning about the theology of ecology and begin to take steps to help care for the environment through such means as recycling, cleaning up the water and protecting forests.

Edgemon has worked with the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission in planning this year's CLC annual seminar in Fort Worth, Texas, March 25-27. Theme for that seminar is "Christians and the Environment: Finding a Biblical Balance Between Idolatry and Irresponsibility."

Churches can overcome handicaps,
home missionary teaches

By Mark Wingfield

LOS ANGELES (BP)--Christian ministers must not only look for the little boy with the fish and loaves, but attempt to help the remaining 4,999 people see what they can do for God's kingdom, says Russell Grelling.

Grelling, a home missionary in the Los Angeles area, alludes to the biblical account of Jesus feeding the 5,000 to illustrate a point -- ministry is most effective when Christians work together to make the best of everyone's strengths and weaknesses.

If any modern Christian could be singled out like the boy with the fish and loaves, it is Grelling. Yet he is reluctant to take on that notoriety.

Grelling is a 40-year-old father, rearing two sons, ages 7 and 9. He walks with a cane due to having polio as a child. His wife, the mother of his two boys, lies in a coma -- technically a persistent vegetative state -- as the result of an automobile accident seven years ago.

Yet the last thing Grelling wants is to be cast in the stereotypical role that could be titled "Handicapped man overcomes mountain to save world." Tough as his lot has been, he knows he is not the only person who has overcome handicaps to lead a productive life.

"I'm trying to model that chaos doesn't paralyze you," Grelling says. "I haven't done anything terrific. I'm not going to put myself up as a model."

Even Romans 8:28, the verse Christians are prone to quote to someone like Grelling, takes on a different meaning from his perspective. To him, the verse that says God works all things together for the good of those who love him is best illustrated by biscuits.

Biscuits are made up of various ingredients not normally be eaten alone, but are mixed together to create something good to eat. The verse means that God is "intermingling" all things together, Grelling believes.

By intermingling all the experiences of a person, God can create something good, he explains.

As a church and community ministries consultant, Grelling takes that same message to churches facing their own handicaps -- internal conflict, transitional communities, graying congregations, threats of crime.

"Being disabled, going through family tragedies, nothing can prevent us from fulfilling God's purpose," he says. "We need to look at all these areas and recognize that God can use them too.

"We must face our restrictions and prejudices and closed off places. We need to decide what it means to be a functional church in the communities where we live. God can make it possible for you to do what you need to do."

As a consultant, Grelling helps churches reconnect with their purpose, redream the dream of ministry and locate the resources to make it happen. "I want to empower people to realize that God gives them power through the intermingling of their experiences," he says.

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

Ministers need to hear
gospels preach, says Craddock

By Pat Cole

F-10
SBTS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Contemporary ministers can learn much about preaching Jesus Christ from the writers of the four gospels, a professor of preaching said at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The four gospel writers "are not merely the source for preachers but they are preachers," said Fred B. Craddock, professor of New Testament and preaching at Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta. Craddock delivered the Louisville, Ky. school's E.Y. Mullins Lectures on Preaching held in conjunction with the seminary's Sixth National Conference on Biblical Preaching.

"I think we should not look at the gospels simply as texts to be preached, like one would take dough from a tray and pat out little biscuits," he said. "But we need to look at the whole now and then and ask how they preached Jesus Christ."

During his four lectures, Craddock outlined how he considered each gospel writer presented Christ. "My theory, right or wrong, is the way they give the opening of their gospels is the clue to the way they preach or present Jesus Christ," he said. Craddock maintained:

-- Matthew presents Jesus as "the normative voice in matters of ethics, morals and relationships in the life of the church."

-- Mark preaches Jesus as "the stand up opponent of demonic forces in the world."

-- Luke portrays Jesus as "the prophet of Nazareth" who says what people "don't want to hear but need to hear."

-- John depicts Jesus as the the one who made a "radical in-breaking of the grace of God."

Since little reference is made to the life of Jesus in the Apostle Paul's writings, some have questioned whether Jesus' ministry and teachings were part of the preaching of the early church, Craddock noted.

However, he emphasized, the existence of the four gospels offers "evidence that the early church, guided by the spirit of God, regarded the life, teaching and ministry of Jesus as part of its preaching."

Preachers "do not honor" the gospels by viewing them only as texts to be preached, Craddock emphasized. "Let's listen to them preach," he urged. "See how they preached."