



**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) 828-5232  
**NASHVILLE** Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va., 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
**WASHINGTON** Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

June 12, 1991

91-86

Texas Baptist board proposes  
new relationship to Baylor

By Ken Camp

*N-Texas*

DALLAS (BP)--After extended discussion, the executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas at its June 11 meeting in Dallas voted 83-36 to approve a proposal outlining a new relationship between the state Baptist convention and Baylor University.

A special study committee named by Texas Baptists in the wake of Baylor University's surprise charter change last September presented the proposal to the executive board, which conducts business of the 2.5 million-member BGCT between its annual sessions.

Robert E. Naylor of Fort Worth, chairman of the committee on BGCT/Baylor relationship and president emeritus of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, said after extensive study and discussion, the committee arrived at "the minimal aspects of what we believe to be a meaningful new relationship."

But in a prepared response issued shortly after the conclusion of the BGCT Executive Board meeting, Baylor President Herbert H. Reynolds termed the proposal "unacceptable" to the Baylor Board of Regents. He said Baylor would take its own affiliation proposal to the floor of the BGCT annual meeting, Nov. 11-12 in Waco.

The Baylor plan, formulated by the university's regents at their May meeting, proposes 25 percent of Baylor's governing board for the university would be directly elected by the BGCT and 75 percent elected by the regents.

Under the BGCT/Baylor relationship committee proposal, the BGCT asks Baylor to agree that the convention directly elect 25 percent of the regents elected annually and the university regents themselves elect 25 percent.

Of the remaining 50 percent, Baylor would nominate two Texas Baptists for each vacancy from which the BGCT committee to nominate institution boards would choose one who would be submitted to messengers at the BGCT annual meeting for election. The agreement stipulates no substitutions would be allowed at any time in the process.

According to the relationship committee's findings, under the proposal Baylor would retain control of 75 percent of the membership of its board, and it would offer the university the protection from "extremist takeover" it desired.

However, Baylor maintains since some actions of its governing board require a two-thirds majority and absences occur routinely, the university needs the power to elect directly 75 percent of the regents in order to maintain adequate protection.

Citing fears that academic freedom would be endangered if the "fundamentalist takeover" of the Southern Baptist Convention extended to state conventions such as the BGCT, the Baylor University board of trustees last Sept. 21 revised the school's charter to give sole governing responsibility of Baylor to a self-perpetuating board of regents rather than a board of trustees elected by the BGCT.

The agreement approved by the BGCT executive board proposes governance by a board of regents for Baylor, eliminating the 48-member body of trustees previously elected by the BGCT. It also makes amendable only by a 90 percent vote of the regents three key charter provisions: the university operate "within Christian-oriented aims and ideals of Baptists;" university assets would be transferred to the BGCT upon dissolution; and each elected director must be a Baptist.

The agreement recognizes "Baylor no longer relates to the convention in the way prescribed for institutions in the constitution of the Baptist General Convention of Texas." It further stipulates the BGCT "recognizes Baylor as an independent, non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Texas with the full legal right, power and authority henceforth to amend or rescind its articles of incorporation or bylaws without approval or consent of any other party."

The BGCT executive board agreed acceptance of the agreement by Baylor would conclude whatever controversy may have existed between the convention and Baylor regarding the unexpected charter change last September.

If Baylor does not accept the recommended agreement by July 20 after its board of regents meeting, the BGCT committee will make a new recommendation to the executive board at its September meeting.

If Baylor accepts the agreement, the executive board recommended the convention's coordinating boards for education and human welfare institutions consider releasing escrowed 1990 funds totalling \$1.5 million, including interest earned. The board also recommended expenses directly related to the Baylor action be deducted from the funds.

"The committee feels we've come to a minimal platform on which we can walk together," Naylor said.

BGCT President Phil Lineberger, pastor of Richardson Heights Baptist Church, Richardson, said he believed the BGCT proposal was "fair to everyone concerned--fair to Baylor and fair to the Baptist General Convention of Texas."

But Mike Bishop, vice president for communications at Baylor University, disagreed and echoed Reynolds in terming the proposal "unacceptable." Noting the Baylor regents have dismissed their six-person negotiating team, he said, "Our next recourse will be at the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas."

Before giving final approval to the committee plan, the executive board rejected an amendment by Ophelia Humphrey of Amarillo that would have required individual approval for each provision in the proposal, and it turned down a motion by Bruce Murray of Austin that would have deleted reference to potential BGCT actions if Baylor does not accept the agreement by July 20.

The board also rejected a substitute motion by Tracy Crawford, an attorney from Tyler, that would have invited Baylor to enter into non-binding mediation with the BGCT and secure the services of an impartial third party mediator.

In other business, the BGCT executive board approved a recommendation from its administrative committee to provide \$20,000 to the Associated Baptist Press news service. The one-time grant will come from a trust fund and will not involve Cooperative Program dollars. The proposal passed with only a smattering of dissenting votes.

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SBC related events result in  
402 professions of faith

By Sarah Zimmerman

N- NMB

Baptist Press  
6/21/91

ATLANTA (BP)--An array of activity preceding the 1991 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta resulted in 402 professions of faith and 144 requests for information about a new church.

The events were part of Crossover Atlanta, a multi-faceted attempt to share the gospel in the convention's host city.

The majority of the professions of faith, 183, were recorded as volunteers went door-to-door in Atlanta and its suburbs. The Saturday event involved 940 individuals who conducted a religious opinion survey that led to an opportunity to share the gospel. They contacted 9,658 homes and presented the gospel 1,112 times.

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Eighty-three volunteers participated in street witnessing projects that focused on busy intersections of Atlanta's rapid rail system as well as public parks and malls. They recorded 156 professions of faith. A new downtown congregation, Heart of Atlanta Baptist Church, is making follow-up visits on the decisions.

Volunteers from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and North Carolina set up mobile feeding operations at five sites. In two days, they served a total of 15,177 meals and recorded 39 professions of faith.

Five youth rallies were held throughout the metro area and resulted in 24 professions of faith.

In addition, a phone bank was set up to invite people to a church being established near Atlanta. Thirteen volunteers spent 24 hours making 520 calls. Their efforts netted 144 households requesting information about the new congregation.

Already plans are being made for similar activities to precede next year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Indianapolis. Howard Ramsey, director of personal evangelism for the Home Mission Board, said it is not too early to sign up next year's one-day soul winning effort on Saturday before the annual meeting.

To register or gather additional information about the project, contact the HMB personal evangelism department, 1350 Spring Street NW, Atlanta, Ga. 30367-5601.

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Elder cites teaching, flexibility  
in accepting Belmont College post

N-583

Baptist Press  
6/12/91

NASHVILLE (BP)--Citing his need to seek "God's will for my life during this part of the journey," Lloyd Elder said teaching and counseling college students, with flexibility for an "at-large ministry" drew him to accept a faculty position at Belmont College in Nashville.

Belmont College President William Troutt announced June 11 that trustees of the Tennessee Baptist school had affirmed his recommendation that Elder, president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, assume the H. Franklin Paschall Chair of Biblical Studies and Preaching by Jan. 31, 1992.

Elder reached a Jan. 17 agreement with Sunday School Board trustees to retire from his present position on Jan. 31, 1992, or 30 days after a successor is appointed, whichever date comes earlier. He then will continue as a consultant/advisor to the new president until April 1, 1993, according to the agreement, taking early retirement from the board at age 60. The agreement came following a lengthy dispute with trustees regarding Elder's leadership at the board.

In a June 11 prepared statement and in a letter to trustees of the Sunday School Board, Elder said he will begin his new faculty role after his retirement as president. The retirement agreement with the trustees allows him to pursue other activities during the time he serves as consultant.

The retirement agreement "will be honored in every respect," Elder said.

"When Dr. Troutt approached me about this position, I came to see that the goals of Belmont College and the Paschall Chair are mutually consistent with my own sense of calling," said Elder. "As a Christian, I always want to be seeking and finding the will of God. One thing the Lord wants us to do is stay in his service. So, we walk by faith and tilt toward the future."

An enthusiastic Belmont president said Elder's appointment to the Paschall chair will "help us move forward as a leader in ministerial education."

"The chair is designed to attract to the Belmont College faculty an outstanding Baptist leader with a demonstrated commitment to scholarship and Biblical preaching," said Troutt.

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The faculty position, endowed by First Baptist Church of Nashville in honor of pastor emeritus H. Franklin Paschall, "affords opportunity for me to pursue a sense of calling in Christian education," said Elder. The position includes "classroom instruction, teaching/lecturing, conference assignments, student consultation and faculty participation."

The appointment "anticipates that I will be involved not only on campus but beyond the school in an enlarged ministry," said Elder.

Off-campus responsibilities may include "preaching, teaching, research, writing, consulting, conferences, retreats and short-term, voluntary missionary assignments. I am going to contribute a major portion of my time, resources and ministry back into this family that has nurtured me for almost four decades."

Although Elder said he has chosen "to begin this faculty appointment without salary," the college will provide an office and support staff from endowed funds. Under terms of his retirement agreement at the Sunday School Board, Elder will continue as a board employee until April 1, 1993.

Elder, who holds a doctorate in New Testament with studies in preaching, evangelism, theology and Old Testament from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, said he chose the Belmont position from among other opportunities under discussion.

"I want to continue in an active preaching/teaching ministry for a number of years to come," said Elder, who earlier served as a pastor of Texas churches for 22 years and then held executive positions with the Baptist General Convention of Texas and Southwestern Seminary.

Also, he said, "Sue and I will remain in Nashville and continue as part of the extended Sunday School Board family."

To assist him in this new position, Joyce M. Byrd will become his administrative/research associate at Belmont at a date to be determined, but by January 31, 1992. Elder said Byrd, his executive assistant at the board, "will bring to the Belmont position the same high level of dedication, skill and commitment she has provided at the board for 13 of her 34 years of Christian service career."

Byrd, a 13-year board employee who also has been secretary of the corporation and a member of the board's administrative management group, said her desire is "to step aside and give the new president complete freedom to select his own assistant."

"This new position poses a challenge for a different type of ministry," said Byrd, who also has taught music and English in public schools and served as program assistant in the church music department at the Tennessee Baptist Convention. She also served as secretary to Marvin Crowe, a former executive vice president of the BSSB.

She holds a bachelor's degree in music education from Murray State University in Murray, Ky., and has done additional study at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., as well as continuing education in management, supervision, computers, publishing and editing style.

Elder acknowledged the "radical change" brought on by the circumstances of his retirement has brought "trauma -- even sorrow -- but at times we all deal with second choices and new beginnings."

He expressed gratitude to trustees, employees of the board and others "for your undergirding prayer support and Christian encouragement."

"As I look toward the future," Elder said, "I expect my work to focus on biblical studies and biblical preaching consistent with the purposes of the Paschall Chair. There are many issues in that field which I think are of significance in Southern Baptist life."

"Throughout my 39 years of Christian ministry and at every turn in the journey, I have felt a deep sense of God's calling to his service," said Elder. "My heart is to go on with my life and ministry right in the midst of our Southern Baptist family."

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Until he retires as president of the board, Elder said he will continue to carry out his responsibilities with "singleness of purpose. This is still my work and my calling, my watch on the wall, and I rejoice in the stewardship of its mission. I am deeply grateful for the overwhelming support of our Southern Baptist people. Let's get on with the work."

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Judge Paul Pressler retires  
from Texas court of appeals

By Herb Hollinger

N-CO

Baptist Press  
6/12/91

HOUSTON (BP)--Judge Paul Pressler has decided not to seek re-election to the Texas 14th Court of Appeals next year.

Acknowledged as one of the architects of the conservative resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention the past 12 years, Pressler said he wants to spend "more time with my family and follow other pursuits."

The news release from Pressler's Houston office, dated June 10, said Pressler, 61, would finish his six year term but not seek re-election.

"After a total of 25 years in office in the legislature and on the bench at the end of this term, I am ready to spend more time with my family and follow other pursuits."

Pressler did not give details on the "other pursuits."

"I feel fulfilled in seeing the accomplishment of goals which I have sought. Their completion allows me freedom to change direction while I am still at an age where I can vigorously devote time and energy to various other interests," said Pressler.

At the Atlanta SBC meeting last week Pressler concluded seven years, two terms, on the SBC Executive Committee. He had served as vice chairman of the committee.

A Republican, Pressler also serves on President Bush's Drug Advisory Council; is chairman of the board of KHCB, Christian radio station; a deacon and Sunday school teacher at First Baptist Church of Houston; and is active in a number of other professional, educational, religious and charitable organizations.

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Missionary remembers  
rescue of George Bush

By Mary E. Speidel

F-FMB

Baptist Press  
6/12/91

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga.(BP)--Hugo Parkman prays daily for President Bush.

But prayer isn't Parkman's only connection with George Bush. Parkman, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to the Philippines, helped save Bush's life during World War II.

Parkman, of Stone Mountain, Ga., was then a 24-year-old communications officer aboard the submarine USS Finback. On Sept. 2, 1944, Bush's plane was shot down by the Japanese in the South Pacific. About two hours later, the Finback picked him up from a life raft. After Bush boarded the sub, Parkman was the first person he met in the ward room. And for the next 30 days, Parkman shared his bunk with Bush, who was at that time the Navy's youngest aviator.

The two men met again when Bush came to Atlanta June 6 to address the Southern Baptist Convention. Parkman and his wife, Doris, were among the delegation greeting the president when he arrived at Dobbins Air Force Base that morning.

Parkman said he and his wife had only a moment to speak to the president, who greeted her with a kiss. It was the couple's second face-to-face meeting with Bush since the rescue.

Their first meeting was during Bush's presidential inauguration in Washington, D.C. They were the Bushes' guests at an inaugural reception attended by former crew and officers of the Finback and of the USS Jacinto, the naval carrier on which Bush was stationed.

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Parkman told Bush how meaningful it was to hear someone pledge daily prayer support after his appointment as a missionary in 1958. He made the same pledge to Bush. "I'm going to be praying for you every day," he told the president.

"I believe in it," Bush replied.

Several years earlier, the Parkmans had made contact with Bush when he visited the Philippines before their retirement in 1985. Although Bush's schedule didn't permit a meeting, the Parkmans left a letter for him at the U.S. Embassy there. Bush later wrote back: "I think about you every day. After all, you did save my life."

Parkman noted Bush's reference to "you" included all 84 officers and enlisted men on board the sub. "I'm not the only one who shared in this," he said. "I was just one of the team."

Parkman said he didn't realize the connection between politician George Bush and the downed aviator until Bush was running for vice president. During the campaign, the missionary saw a television documentary on Bush. The program contained a film clip of the rescue.

To verify Bush really was the same pilot he helped save, Parkman wrote to the Navy's historical center. He received documentation of the rescue and a letter confirming the aviator really was then-Vice President Bush.

Parkman's memories of the rescue are reported in a biography about Bush, "Flight of the Avenger: George Bush at War," by Joe Hyams.

While aboard the sub, Bush sometimes served with Parkman during night watches on the deck. During their conversations, "I never heard any foul language," said Parkman. "Everything was honorable, upright. He was a clean-cut young man."

Also, Bush never indicated he was from a prestigious family, Parkman said. "He was just what he was -- himself."

While on night watches, Parkman said he had time to reflect on the rescue of Bush and four other pilots. "In the lonesome hours, God let me know that we had done a good thing in rescuing these aviators," said Parkman, now a member of First Baptist Church of Decatur, Ga. "We had been out on killing missions. That's why we were there. It was just a good feeling to know we had saved some lives."

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Hoosiers already eager  
for 1992 convention

By Sarah Zimmerman

F- NMB

Baptist Press  
6/12/91

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--Though this year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting is barely history, Indiana Southern Baptists are already eager for next year's meeting.

The 1992 annual meeting will be in Indianapolis, where Hoosiers have devised a plan to present the gospel in all 500,000 homes in the city's nine-county area. They are counting on Southern Baptists from across the country to help them meet their goal.

The project begins this summer, when half the homes in the Indianapolis area are expected to be reached with the help of summer missionaries and volunteer teams.

This fall the Home Mission Board's National Soul Winning Conference is scheduled for Indianapolis. The goal is to reach 20,000 homes during that meeting.

The plan is to reach the remaining 230,000 homes next year, with a combination of pre-convention witnessing events and evangelistic endeavors by local churches.

The proposal to present the gospel in every home in Indianapolis is known as SHARE (Share His Abundant Redemption Everywhere). Though Cloyd Sullins, SHARE project director, is counting on help from Baptists across the country, it is equally important to him that Indiana Baptists commit to the project.

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"It's not right to ask outside groups to come in and do our work for us," Sullins says. "We expect our churches to match up at least one-to-one and go shoulder-to-shoulder with volunteers."

Last fall Indiana had 10 area lay evangelism schools where 400 people were trained to share their faith. Seventy pastors and laypeople were certified to lead Lay Evangelism Schools.

"We're asking each church to train their people in door-to-door survey work," says the former Oklahoma pastor.

Yet the number and size of Southern Baptist churches in Indianapolis prohibits them from reaching all 500,000 homes in the metro area without help.

"The largest Southern Baptist church here runs about 500, the next may have 250. After that, average attendance drops considerably. Many run 50 to 75," Sullins says. The metropolitan association has 70 churches and missions.

Due to the size of local churches, Sullins is also recruiting volunteers to help follow-up in homes which report a favorable response to the gospel.

Sullins coordinated a similar SHARE project in Denver before moving to Indianapolis in 1990. He says the number of baptisms in the Denver association doubled, from 600 to 1,200, two years after the attempt to share the gospel in every home in Denver.

"We realize we do a lot of seed sowing, but that's important," Sullins says. "The fruit is in the follow-up."

Sullins and his wife, Cecilia, will move to Alaska this fall where he will be state director of evangelism and church growth. An evangelism intern or a Mission Service Corps volunteer will be assigned to continue the SHARE project.

To participate in the SHARE project, contact Metropolitan Baptist Association of Central Indiana at 952 N. Pennsylvania Street, Indianapolis, Ind., 46204. To participate in the pre-convention projects, contact the Home Mission Board's personal evangelism department at 1350 Spring Street NW, Atlanta, Ga., 30367-5601.

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SBC leaders agree  
to "Share Jesus Now"

By Sarah Zimmerman

f - HMB

Baptist Press  
6/12/91

ATLANTA (BP)--Fourteen Southern Baptist Convention leaders are the first volunteers to commit to share their faith at least 60 times in 60 days in 1995.

The SBC leaders were asked to commit to the effort during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta. They are the first to be enlisted for the 1995 project to be called "Here's Hope: Share Jesus Now."

The evangelistic thrust sponsored by the Home Mission Board will include two phases -- 60 days of personal evangelism and six months of harvest revivals.

The goal is to enlist 1.5 million people who will commit to witness to one person each day between Jan. 9 and March 9, 1995. The next group to be asked to endorse the project will be state convention executive directors.

The first group to commit to the project and the agencies they lead includes Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board; Jack Johnson, Radio and Television Commission; Paul Powell, Annuity Board; Richard Land, Christian Life Commission; James Smith, Brotherhood Commission; Rudy Fagan, Stewardship Commission; and Arthur Walker, Education Commission;

Landrum Leavell, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Milton Ferguson, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; William Crews, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary; Russell Dilday, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Roy Honeycutt, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Lewis Drummond, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Lynn May, Historical Commission.

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Graham takes Richmond church job,  
receives State Department award

By Art Toalston

N-FMU

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Maurice and Laurie Graham are resigning as Southern Baptist representatives to Kuwait and moving to Richmond, Va., where he will be associate pastor of Bon Air Baptist Church.

They joined the church June 9 and are looking for housing. Their resignations from Foreign Mission Board service will be effective at the end of June.

The Grahams were among hundreds of Americans stranded in Kuwait last August after the invasion by Iraq. They took refuge in the U.S. Embassy compound and became the focus of Southern Baptists' prayers.

Mrs. Graham, a Hutchinson, Kansas, native, and the couple's two sons joined American women and children permitted to leave Kuwait last September. Graham, of Shelbyville, Tenn., was among the last Americans to leave Kuwait in December. The family has since lived in Nashville, Tenn.

Graham said the decision to accept the invitation of the Richmond church stemmed largely from a lack of opportunity to quickly return with his family to Kuwait and lack of immediately available Foreign Mission Board positions elsewhere in English-language work.

"Laurie and I are not closed to God's will whenever God opens the door for us to go anywhere," he said.

The Grahams' resignations will not halt Southern Baptist work in Kuwait, added Gerry Volkart, associate director for the Middle East and North Africa. "In the future we anticipate the possibility of people serving there again," she said.

Graham was among 18 private citizens and 12 diplomatic officials given Meritorious Honor Awards by the U.S. State Department June 7 for their work at the embassies in Kuwait and Baghdad as the Mideast crisis unfolded. Also receiving the award was W. Nathaniel "Nat" Howell, former U.S. ambassador to Kuwait. As a youth and college student, Howell was active in Baptist churches in Virginia.

Such awards for civilians are "unprecedented," said Barbara Bodine, a State Department official in Washington who was deputy chief of mission for the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait.

"The private citizens and the diplomats worked together as one unit" while stranded at the embassy in Kuwait, Bodine said. Graham and other U.S. citizens "were more than just sort of helping; they were the embassy for that period of time," she said.

The award commended the citizens and diplomats for courage, determination and commitment and "for exemplifying the best of the American spirit of initiative, ingenuity and good humor" at the besieged embassy.

The Grahams were appointed as missionaries to Liberia in April 1986. They were stationed in Monrovia, where he was a school chaplain. They left on furlough before Liberia was devastated by civil war. In early 1990 they transferred to Kuwait to work with the National Evangelical Church. Before the war the church housed 28 ethnic congregations of foreign workers. The family arrived in Kuwait less than three months before the Iraqi invasion.

Foreign Mission Board involvement in Kuwait is continuing through Jerry Zandstra, pastor of the National Evangelical Church, who has resumed his ministry there in connection with the Reformed Church in America. The FMB has channeled some \$84,000 in world hunger funds through the church to help feed several thousand people, including workers from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, who suffered hardships during the Iraqi occupation.

1,000 posts open for volunteer  
Civil Air Patrol chaplains

By Mark Wingfield

F-NMB

ATLANTA (BP)--There are currently 1,000 openings nationwide for volunteer chaplaincy ministries in the Civil Air Patrol.

Lew Dawson, associate director of military chaplaincy with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, believes Southern Baptist ministers could fill these positions and provide an important ministry to their communities.

Currently there are 125 Southern Baptist chaplains serving Civil Air Patrol units. A total of 1,000 chaplains of all faiths serve only half the 2,000 Civil Air Patrol units nationwide.

Col. Dennis Dwyer, director of Civil Air Patrol chaplain services, has launched a campaign to enlist 1,000 additional chaplains so every unit will have at least one chaplain.

Civil Air Patrol is a corps of 66,000 members who serve as a civilian auxiliary to the U.S. Air Force. The organization has three missions: emergency services, such as conducting search and rescue missions when planes are downed or missing; aerospace education; and a cadet program for teenagers.

Dawson said chaplains have opportunities to minister during search and rescue missions, to teach moral leadership courses for cadets and to provide counsel to all unit members.

Civil Air Patrol guidelines require all chaplains to receive endorsement from their denominational chaplaincy authority. Southern Baptist chaplains are endorsed by the SBC Chaplains Commission, which is housed at the Home Mission Board.

Individuals interested in Civil Air Patrol chaplaincy may contact Dawson at the HMB, 1350 Spring St. NW, Atlanta, Ga. 30367-5601.

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Chaplaincy program puts seminary  
students in group search

By Pam Alewine

CO  
F-Dallas  
SWBTS

Baptist Press  
6/12/91

DALLAS (BP)--For six students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary who took the spring semester off, the past four months have been anything but a vacation.

Instead, their leave from the classroom has become what they call the "most intense and draining" time of their lives.

From soul searching to holding the hand of a dying patient, the six have experienced the full effect of hands-on ministry while serving as chaplain "externs" in a major hospital.

"If I had it my way CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) would be required for all seminarians," said Doug Dickens, assistant professor of pastoral ministry at Southwestern and supervisor for the students in the program at Baylor Medical Center in Dallas. Each spring, Dickens supervises five to nine students from Southwestern and Dallas Theological Seminary.

Dickens who is working toward CPE supervisory certification, is sold on the program's effectiveness in training ministers.

"I am such an advocate of CPE, not only because of what I've seen it do in the lives of some students but what I've seen it do in my own life," Dickens said.

According to Dickens, the key to CPE is it is a supervised ministry experience. Someone else is helping you to see things that you may not see yourself, he said. These blind spots or "issues" are what each student works on.

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One way CPE works is through group and individual supervision, which occurs each week. On supervision, a student presents a typed conversation with a patient. This "verbatim" includes things learned through the experience and questions that arose. It often reveals issues the student may not have seen.

In group supervision, what the externs call, "group soul," intensity begins to rise when group members and Dickens get to ask the chaplain questions about the verbatim, such as, "How were you a minister?" and "What does this say about your theology?" Within an hour, the chaplain has surfaced problem areas, insecurities and doubts. But the extern has also been affirmed by peers about what he or she did right, and about strengths and gifts sometimes hidden.

"This is a relatively safe place to share yourself, as opposed to a church setting, and a safe place to learn about who you are as a minister," said Marcie Dickson, a master's of divinity student.

The security of the group begins as each member, including the supervisor, shares an in-depth life history. That understanding of each other helps the students know why a person is the way he or she is, the externs said.

"It has changed the way I look at people. Now I think to myself that there's a story behind that face," Dickson said.

After supervision and a quick meal, the chaplains arm themselves with beepers and make their way onto their assigned floors, unsure of what they might be facing. "This is the real world," said Gene Hemingway, a master's of divinity student. "You run into everything here."

Dickens believes the intensity of ministry in the hospital is more like the "real world" than ordered lectures of seminary training in the classroom.

"CPE is the practice of ministry in the clinic, in the arena of life. It's not merely a classroom setting," Dickens said. "We're asking the student to function as a minister, out of a theological framework. We want them (students) to learn ministry in a way that fits them and their theology," he said.

The six externs attribute much of their own growth and learning to Dickens. "His insight and pastoral gifts blow my mind," said Eloise Parks, a master's of divinity student. "He ranks up there with the top two or three people who've influenced my life greatly."

The students said Dickens has modeled a balance of pushing them while at the same time being gentle.

"He's taught us all how we can communicate Christ more effectively," said Parks, who applied for the program when her brother, Stan, told her about it.

"CPE is a great way to interface such questions as, "Who am I, what is the gospel, and what can I do?" Dickens said.

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

Late is better than never  
for older seminary students

By Kathy Wade

Baptist Press  
6/12/91

F- CO  
2/20/91  
SWBTS

FORT WORTH (BP)--If late is better than never, then a new program for older students at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is maybe the best thing to come along in a while.

The Graduate Diploma Program, which started last fall at Southwestern puts the seminary, "on the cutting edge of theological education," according to the program's director.

Dan McLallen said a move into the program is a "life-changing situation" for many of the students. McLallen assumed the new position after serving for six years as the seminary's registrar and director of admissions.

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The diploma program involves a three-step process which allows students to earn the equivalent of a bachelor's degree and therefore qualify for master's work at Southwestern.

To earn the graduate diploma, McLallen said students must first complete a diploma (formerly associate's) degree.

Next, the student must finish at least 30 hours credit in a field other than that for which the diploma was earned. The seminary gives some credit for an Experimental Learning Seminar, which recognizes the student's prior employment.

Students must have a minimum of seven years of full-time employment in their subject matter.

Students may also earn the 30 hours by transferring courses from accredited colleges or universities. A third way for students to earn the 30 hours credit is to complete courses in a second field at the seminary.

The final step of the Graduate Diploma process is for students to complete liberal arts courses at the seminary or an accredited college or university.

"We believe this is on the cutting edge of theological education," said McLallen, who has worked out 170 degree plans.

The average age of the student in the diploma program is 40, he said. And while some students may have had discouragement in the past, McLallen tries to instill in them his belief "they can still go ahead and serve the Lord.

"If God calls you into the ministry he's not calling you to be a follower," said McLallen. For that reason, the principles of leadership are stressed in the program.

Betty Dittfurth, who received an associate's degree from Southwestern in May, 1990, remembers McLallen approaching her about the program. He said it was, "tailor-made" for people like her.

Dittfurth, who has worked at the seminary's Children's Center for eight years, said the diploma program is helping her become a more well-rounded minister. Her concentration is in religious education with emphasis in early childhood education. "God has provided me more of an opportunity to learn and to equip myself for whatever he has for me to do out there," she said.

David Niemeyer, who has a background of mechanical and technical skills, completed the program in December in the area of theology.

Prior to coming to seminary, Niemeyer had spent three years in a non-accredited Bible school in Canada and was pastor of a mission church in Idaho for four years. He hopes to return to the Northwest -- possibly in a bivocational capacity.

Bob Morris, a music student in the program, has worked in several different capacities while also singing and serving in music ministry for some 20 years. He is studying church music with hopes of eventually earning his master's degree.

Information about the Graduate Diploma Studies Program is available by contacting McLallen at Southwestern Seminary.

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Teens need caring Christians  
more than church programs

By Linda Lawson

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GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Buffeted by family crises, pressures to excel and threats to their health and safety, the greatest need of teen-agers is not sophisticated, multifaceted church programs.

Their greatest need is Christian adults who love and accept them and who are available to listen and talk, Doug Merritt told participants in a youth issues update during Sunday School Leadership Conference at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

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Youth today struggle with questions about their identity, questions that are complicated by family conflicts, said Merritt, an editor of youth Sunday school curriculum at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The age-old problem of parent-youth conflict is further aggravated by issues such as discipline by step-parents or relating to an absentee parent, said Merritt.

Surrounded by people, youth grapple with loneliness, he said.

"We have large schools where kids are surrounded by other kids but feel more alone. The same is true in large churches," said Merritt.

"Youth exploring God's call don't have the opportunity to preach or teach or lead singing. They need involvement in small groups where they can excel and be accepted," he added.

Substance abuse continues to be a major concern, said Merritt, who noted inhalants and cigarettes are the biggest problems "because kids don't think of them as drugs." Alcohol is the most abused substance by youth.

Cigarettes and beer are the "gateway drugs" that lead to abuse of other substances, said Merritt. The "gateway ages" when children are first being confronted with substances are 11 and 12.

Pressures to excel at school are beyond the understanding of most parents, many of whom have voluntarily opted out of exercising influence in schools, said Merritt.

"Children as young as fourth or fifth graders are being tracked toward a certain vocation and economic livelihood. Youth are having to make educational decisions that will affect the rest of their lives," he said.

In a related matter, Merritt said many teen-agers are pressured by their desire for material things to get jobs and work too many hours.

"Twelve hours per week should be the maximum," said Merritt.

"Individual attention to teen-agers is a great need, and through the churches we have an opportunity to provide this. Youth workers I talk to say the most important thing in their ministries is having lots of adults involved," said Merritt.

These adults must relate to youth individually and as adult friends. They must be willing to invest both quality and quantity time.

"Be available and accessible honestly," urged Merritt. "Don't promise what you can't deliver."

In dealing with youth on a one-on-one basis, adults must "teach and model Christlike values consistently. We must live the life we want them to adopt," he said.

Other pressure points for youth include challenging youth in matters of faith and religion.

"Youth don't need an easy religion. They need to be challenged. They need a cause worth giving their lives to," said Merritt.

Sexual conduct, health issues such as AIDS, safety and violence represent other issues confronting today's youth, said Merritt.

Youth are accustomed to blunt, direct communication which workers must understand, he said.

"I look at blunt in terms of boldness and not as crudeness," he added.

He warned workers never to join youth in any form of put-down humor.

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"Don't use it. Don't participate in it. Stop it when you see it going on," said Merritt. "Hold up the standard that when we love people, we don't put people down."

Providing support to teens who are not getting help from their families and who are living in an increasingly secular world demands churches be open to more flexible and less traditional approaches to ministry, said Merritt. While methods need to change, the good news of the gospel is unchanging.

"Many organizations are promising youth abundant life," he said, "but only Jesus provides this."