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CBF global offering promotion
criticized by SBC officials

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
11/6/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--Promotion of a "Global Missions Offering" for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has drawn criticism from Southern Baptist Convention executives who see it as competition for the denomination's mission offerings.

The CBF sent publicity packets for its first Global Missions Offering, which has a goal of \$2 million, to more than 700 Baptist churches. The offering would go to "undergird (the Fellowship's) mission work where others have broken that promise," Cecil E. Sherman, coordinator for the Atlanta-based CBF Coordinating Council, said in a cover letter included with the packets.

With a theme "Keeping the Promises," \$345,000 of the CBF offering would go to Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland (defunded by the SBC Foreign Mission Board last year), \$1.2 million for the ministry of new "missioners" employed by the CBF and \$455,000 for relief for hungry and homeless people, Sherman said.

But the timing of the CBF offering, shortly before promotion begins for the SBC's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, drew the ire of several SBC officials.

"The CBF already has developed a Ventures 2000 plan of giving which totally circumvents the SBC Cooperative Program," Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee said. "These gifts will go directly to CBF projects. Now the Fellowship is appealing to some of our SBC churches to give to a Global Missions Offering ... in direct competition with Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong offerings.

"Don't let anybody tell you that Southern Baptists have lost their long-held vision for world missions," Chapman said. "We do need the help of every Southern Baptist church. I have great faith that our Southern Baptist churches, with a few exceptions, will not participate in anything which attempts to undermine our world missions efforts through the Cooperative Program and special mission offerings."

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Regarding the CBF's "Keeping the Promises" theme, Foreign Mission Board interim President Don Kammerdiener responded: "I feel some promises have been made to Southern Baptist missionaries. I hope Baptists will want to keep the promises made to support those missionaries who went out on faith that Southern Baptists would continue to support them."

Of the timing of the CBF offering, Kammerdiener told Baptist Press: "I don't think (the CBF) had much choice. That's when Southern Baptists think about missions. If I were going to set up a new mission board I'd try to tap into the spirit of the season also. It is a divisive thing to do, but that's their privilege."

Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, said, "I regret any efforts which would erode support for Southern Baptist missionaries on the field by promotion of a competitive missions offering."

Lewis said he would "strongly" encourage Southern Baptists to continue their support through the two SBC mission offerings and "resist appeals which could reduce prayer and funding support for these historic programs that have served our missionaries so well."

Sherman, when told of the SBC officials' criticism, told Baptist Press, "People who feel like I do should do what they think best."

In Sherman's letter, he suggests churches -- "between now and the end of this year" -- give a major emphasis to the "Keeping the Promises" Global Missions Offering. Included in the packet are samples of materials for the offering and a card to request materials for a church.

"Your church's participation in the missions offering becomes even more important as I read the letters from our Southern Baptist missionaries -- which arrive every week -- seeking appointment by the Fellowship," Sherman said in his letter. "The fact is more missionaries are seeking appointment by the Fellowship than we can afford to appoint at this moment. As I think about these God-called missionaries, the offering becomes even more important."

The SBC Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions emphasis usually begins the first week in December with a Week of Prayer while the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions is conducted in the spring, around the Easter season. As reported in the 1992 SBC Annual, the 1990-91 Lottie Moon offering totaled \$78,662,150 while the Annie Armstrong offering totaled \$35,341,141.

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EDITORS' NOTE: The following story supplements stories filed today and earlier this week by Baptist Press writers on various ballot issues across the country.

State ballots included lotteries,
homosexual rights, doctor-aided death

Baptist Press
11/6/92

By Mark Wingfield & Art Toalston

NASHVILLE (BP)--Lottery opponents lost battles in two key Bible Belt states in the Nov. 3 election; Californians tilted against physician-assisted suicide and Colorado voters nixed homosexual rights.

Here's a summary of key ballot measures across the country Nov. 3:

-- Gambling. Georgia voters approved a state-run lottery by a 52 percent majority despite active opposition by the Georgia Baptist Convention and other groups. The convention had sponsored a series of rallies across the state during the summer and through October.

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Mississippi voters approved a measure to repeal a state constitution ban on lotteries by a 53 percent majority; lottery proponents now are expected to seek formal approval of a state-run lottery.

Nebraska voters also approved a state-run lottery.

Missourians approved riverboat gambling by a 62 percent majority but rejected by less than 3,000 votes a proposal to establish off-track betting parlors for horse racing.

In other votes, a ban on casino gambling was approved in Idaho; Utah voters defeated parimutuel betting at horse tracks; South Dakotans rejected an effort to repeal the state's video lottery; and Kentucky voters approved a constitutional amendment to allow the state legislature to formally legalize charitable gambling. Despite opposition by the Temperance League of Kentucky and many Baptists, the measure passed by a 769,858 - 321,029 vote.

-- Right-to-die. Californians defeated a controversial right-to-die measure by a 54 percent no vote. Proposition 161 would have made California the first state to allow doctors to assist terminally ill people who wish to end their lives.

"It would open up all kinds of plain, frank suicide possibilities that would lead to criminal action by physicians," commented Wayne Swindall, professor of philosophy at California Baptist College in Riverside. "I could almost guarantee you that death clinics would rise up and you'd have an industry like the abortion industry."

-- Homosexual rights. Colorado voters approved a constitutional amendment prohibiting the state from passing or enforcing laws granting civil rights status to homosexuality. Amendment No. 2, with a 53 percent yes vote, overturns homosexual rights ordinances already in force in Denver, Boulder and Aspen.

The Colorado state convention's executive board unanimously endorsed the amendment in September.

Oregon voters defeated a constitutional amendment which would have made illegal the state's recognition of "any categorical provision such as 'sexual orientation'" and forbidden all government entities in the state from encouraging or facilitating homosexuality, pedophilia, sadism or masochism.

Measure 9 would have made Oregon the first state requiring government agencies and public schools to discourage homosexuality. It also would have prohibited the extension of anti-discrimination protections to homosexuals as a group.

Proposed by the Oregon Citizen's Alliance, a political confederation of evangelicals, the measure drew strong support from conservative Christian groups. Outspoken opposition to the measure was considerable, including most every elected official in Oregon and labor, cultural, business and professional associations. Many religious groups, including Jewish, Roman Catholic and mainline Protestants, also spoke in opposition.

-- Abortion. Arizonans defeated a proposed constitutional amendment that would have prohibited most abortions.

Called the Preborn Child Protection Amendment, the measure would have prohibited abortions except to save the mother's life, directed the state legislature to provide exceptions for reported cases of rape or incest and forbidden the use of public funds for abortions. The measure was defeated by a 7-3 margin.

In Maryland, voters upheld a law written to keep abortion legal in the event the U.S. Supreme Court should reverse its 1973 Roe vs. Wade ruling. The Baptist Convention of Maryland-Delaware's general mission board had asked Baptists to vote against Question 6, but some Baptist pastors said their fellow Baptists didn't do enough.

-- Death penalty. Voters in the District of Columbia rejected a provision making first-degree murder a capital offense. The initiative, mandated by Congress, was defeated by a 2-to-1 ratio.

The death penalty also was an issue in two other states. Arizona voters decided to replace the gas chamber with lethal injection as a more humane method of execution. New Jersey voters overwhelmingly approved the death penalty for crimes where death was not intentional.

-- Martin Luther King holiday. Long a sore spot for Arizonans, and particularly the state's tourist industry, voters approved a paid state holiday in honor of the late civil rights leader by a 844,719 - 533,256 count, or 61-39 percent split.

-- Equal Rights Amendment. Iowa voters defeated a measure to add Equal Rights Amendment-style language to the state constitution. According to Religious News Service, TV evangelist Pat Robertson had labeled the proposal part of a "socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians."

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Compiled from Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press reports.

State-run lottery on horizon
after vote in Mississippi

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Baptist Press
11/6/92

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--Mississippians approved the lifting of a 102-year-old constitutional ban on lotteries Nov. 3, disappointing confident opponents and paving the way for the Mississippi legislature to design the state-run game of chance during their January 1993 session.

With 100 percent of statewide precincts reporting, the lottery proposal passed with 53 percent of the vote. State Sen. Tommy Gallott of Biloxi announced immediately after the vote count that he would introduce a lottery bill in the next session of the legislature.

Citizens Advocating Responsible Economics (CARE), an anti-lottery group formed earlier this year to fight the proposal, held nine rallies around the state in a bid to defeat the lifting of the lottery ban in Mississippi's 1890 constitution.

Incumbent Gov. Kirk Fordice, two former governors and state civic, political and religious organizations publicly announced their opposition. The Christian Action Commission of the Mississippi Baptist Convention also played a pivotal opposition role.

As election day neared, organizers began to express cautious confidence the proposal could be defeated. Close vote totals in many of the state's 82 counties eventually tipped in favor of passage, however.

In an interesting twist, the state's two most affluent counties in the suburbs of metropolitan Jackson voted in favor of the lottery, while the state's poorest county in southeast Mississippi voted in opposition. Lottery critics contended before the election poor people have been hoodwinked by pie-in-the-sky promises, while people with higher incomes and educations would not buy into it.

Gambling opponents managed one victory, however, when DeSoto County, located just south of Memphis, Tenn., overwhelmingly rejected riverboat casino gambling for the second time in as many years. A Memphis-based gambling company admitted spending nearly \$300,000 in an effort to influence the outcome of the vote.

Seven Mississippi counties on the Gulf Coast and along the Mississippi River have approved riverboat gambling in previous elections, and five casinos are currently operating in the state.

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**Missourians give big OK
to riverboat gambling**

By Bob Terry

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)--Missouri voters overwhelmingly approved riverboat gambling excursions but defeated a proposal to establish off-track betting parlors for horse racing.

The riverboat gambling excursions were approved by 62 percent of the votes, 1,395,739 - 838,308, in Nov. 3's election. The measure allows floating casinos along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers under the supervision of the state's Tourism Commission. Maximum losses for an evening are limited to \$500.

The proposal to establish off-track betting parlors and allow simulcasting and betting on horse races run in other states lost by less than 2,850 votes out of 2,750,056 votes cast. The final vote was 1,083,953 against and 1,081,103 in favor.

Missouri approved pari-mutuel gambling on horse races seven years ago but, as yet, no horse racing tracks have been constructed in the state. Potential track owners said simulcasting was necessary to make the tracks profitable.

In addition to approving riverboat gambling statewide, six of seven communities voted to allow riverboat gambling in their areas. The adopted state proposal mandated local option elections before riverboats could be allowed in any community.

Approving riverboat gambling along the Mississippi River were St. Louis and St. Genevieve. Along the Missouri River, communities approving riverboat gambling were St. Charles, Jefferson City, Parkville and St. Joseph.

Only in Hannibal did voters reject riverboat gambling. There an interdenominational effort called Citizens Against Riverboat Gambling led a successful campaign which defeated the proposal 3,423 - 3,096.

"No one expected it (riverboat gambling) to fail," said Cardis Bryant, pastor of Fifth Street Baptist Church in Hannibal who organized the opposition. He said 36 different church groups worked together to defeat riverboat gambling.

"The way the churches worked together to defeat this has never happened in Hannibal before," he added. "We were able to work together against gambling when we can't even get together to worship."

The Missouri Baptist Convention adopted a resolution condemning riverboat gambling only a week before the statewide vote. The resolution called gambling unscriptural and unethical and urged Missouri Baptists to vote against the proposal.

However, no statewide opposition to riverboat gambling ever emerged.

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Church's presidential ads
called tax law violation

Baptist Press
11/6/92

WASHINGTON (BP)--A church advertisement critical of Bill Clinton during the presidential campaign violated federal tax law, claims Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

Americans United (AU), a Silver Spring, Md.-based church/state watchdog organization, formally complained to the Internal Revenue Service Nov. 3 about the advertisements in USA Today and purchased by the Church at Pierce Creek in Binghamton, N.Y.

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AU charged the advertisements violated federal tax rules by charging Clinton supports abortion on demand, special rights for homosexuals and the distribution of condoms in public schools, thus violating biblical injunctions. The advertisements solicited "tax deductible donations," according to AU.

IRS regulations forbid churches and other tax-exempt groups from participating in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office, AU said. Earlier this year, the IRS issued a statement warning churches and other nonprofit organizations that partisan politicking is forbidden by tax-exempt entities.

A spokesman for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission reported that the agency had decided not to comment on AU's charges against the church.

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CORRECTIONS: Please make the following changes in 11-4 stories from (BP)'s election coverage:

-- In "Baptists to pray for Clinton, work with him when possible," the last part of a quotation in the 8th paragraph should read, "... rethink his position on these issues."

-- In "Vice presidency offers new environment for Al Gore," the last part of the 15th paragraph should read, "... and an address by Gore at the CLC's 1992 citizenship seminar."

-- In "Election coverage downplays religious, moral issues," the 18th paragraph should read "... Clinton and Gore," not "... Clinton and Bush." Also Chip Alford should be listed as a contributing writer.

-- In "Voters re-elect Southern Baptists in congressional leadership roles," delete the next-to-last paragraph. Duncan Hunter, R.-Calif., was identified by his offices in Washington and San Diego as belonging to a Southern Baptist church, but checking with the church found it is an independent Baptist congregation.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

BSSB service celebrates
careers of retiring 159

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
11/6/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--Worship, celebration, reflection, humor and gratitude characterized a chapel service marking the retirements of 159 Southern Baptist Sunday School Board employees whose combined tenure totaled 4,225 years.

The 159 employees retired under terms of a one-time voluntary retirement incentive program as part of the church programs and publications agency's restructuring. Eighty-three percent of the 191 eligible employees elected to retire between Sept. 1 and Nov. 1.

James L. Sullivan, president of the board from 1953-75, told retiring employees in change, "whether you make it or it is made for you, there are joys, there are sorrows and there are surprises." Many of the retirees came to the board during Sullivan's administration.

Recalling the massive reorganization he led at the board following his arrival in 1953, Sullivan said the board "didn't miss a beat because of the commitment of our people.

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"Change is an inevitable part of human living," he said, "and employees of the board deal with truth that never changes and facts that are changing all the time. There is a part of this board that cannot change: truth unaltered -- Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever. Your task is never finished at this institution in a changing environment.

"If you don't serve your day and generation," he admonished employees who will continue work in the widely restructured Sunday School Board, "you don't serve any day or generation."

President James T. Draper Jr., said the service was "a time to say 'thank you.' It doesn't seem like enough, in one way, and yet if you understand the depth the words carry, it says it all."

Draper said he believes those who are retiring "have been bridge builders. You built bridges for those who follow you."

Metropolitan Nashville's Mayor Philip Bredesen sent a proclamation to the service, honoring the 159 new retirees and making Oct. 30, 1992, "Sunday School Board Retiree Day" in Nashville.

Among employees who made farewell remarks at the service was Paul Phillips, a unit supervisor in the distribution services division, who encouraged retirees and employees to "make God's will our agenda, and not try to make our agenda God's will. Let us all look forward with confidence, faith and expectation and look back with a justifiable pride."

Muriel Blackwell, retiring director of the Sunday school preschool-children's department, told humorous stories of relationships inside and outside the board. Pointing to the dependence of the board on its customers, she quoted a seat companion on an airplane trip who inquired about Blackwell's line of work. "Are you a writer, too?" Blackwell responded. "No, I'm a reader," the woman said, "and without us readers, you writers wouldn't be anywhere."

Bill Young, manager of the preschool-children's section in the discipleship training department, said the transition for those retiring "requires adjustments and provides opportunities filled with hope. We are retiring from the Sunday School Board but we are not retiring from life."

Sybil Waldrop, manager of Sunday school preschool curriculum, broke any heavy emotion in the board's Van Ness Auditorium when she announced, "as a child, I felt called to preach. But when I became a Baptist, I felt called to teach!"

She said her initial reaction to early retirement was that the board couldn't do without her, but then she remembered the words of a professor who used to say, "The cemetery is full of people we thought we couldn't do without."

She told employees, "God has put you into the kingdom for just such a time as this. Our calling is higher than our jobs. Whether we go or stay, let us fulfill our calling knowing we are God's people."

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

City's sacrifice ban violates
religious liberty, court told

Baptist Press
11/6/92

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Supreme Court will determine whether a city's ban on ritual sacrifice of animals is a violation of the free exercise of religion.

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The court recently heard oral arguments in a case in which the city of Hialeah, Fla., had prohibited ceremonial animal sacrifices by practitioners of Santeria, a cultic religion also known as Lukumi.

When Santeria adherents announced plans to open a church, the city of Hialeah passed ordinances outlawing animal sacrifices. The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the ordinances on the basis of health risks, harm to animals and zoning restrictions.

The ordinances single out religion for discrimination, which is unconstitutional even under the court's 1990 Employment Division v. Smith decision, religious liberty advocates contend. Several religious liberty organizations have asked the court to use the case, Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye v. Hialeah, to clarify its Smith opinion.

In Smith, the court abandoned a long-held test determining when government could restrict conduct in spite of a religious belief. The Smith decision found government no longer had to prove in most cases it had a "compelling interest" for a law which indirectly burdened religious practice if the law was neutral to religion on its face.

"The justices seemed puzzled why the ordinance was not drafted to comply with Smith, facially neutral to religion," said Michael Whitehead, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's general counsel who observed the arguments. "The city argued that such neutral laws on animal cruelty and sanitation were ineffective to deter the ritual killing. Hialeah's law was intended to be preventive, catching persons who were merely possessing the animals in their homes prior to sacrifice, the city's lawyer said.

"Some of the justices asked amusing questions about whether trapping mice or rats was permitted in Hialeah or whether boiling a live lobster would be illegal as cruel. Justice (John Paul) Stevens asked if a person could drown a sick cat in his bathtub. Such questions indicated that the justices, while not approving of goat heads left lying on a beach, still believed that the ordinance may not be drafted with precision."

University of Texas law professor Douglas Laycock argued on behalf of the Lukumi.

"The city argued that the law is neutral on its face toward religion and deals rather with conduct which the government has power to restrict for health and welfare reasons," Whitehead said. "Professor Laycock argued that the words 'ritual sacrifice' were expressly targeting the central religious tenet of his clients.

"Justice (Antonin) Scalia quizzed Laycock about whether 'ritual sacrifices' were necessarily religious. A fraternity might have a ritual sacrifice for secular purposes, Scalia said.

"Justices (Sandra Day) O'Connor and (Anthony) Kennedy quizzed the city lawyer about whether humane and sanitary methods were the true goal or whether the law was motivated by dislike for the religion."

A decision is not expected until next spring or summer.

Santeria, which came to the United States from Cuba and has about 60,000 followers in south Florida, includes the sacrifice of chickens, pigeons, goats, sheep and other animals in its rites, including the initiation of new members and priests.

The Christian Life Commission, the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and more than 50 other religious liberty and civil liberties organizations support a legislative remedy to Smith known as the Religious Freedom of Restoration Act, which would restore the "compelling interest" test. RFRA never reached the floor of either the Senate or House of Representatives this year.

Virginia church baptizes 22
after family member's death

By Robert Dilday

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A Virginia church recorded 22 baptisms stemming from contact with a grieving family.

Pastor Rodney Barwick of Gravel Hill Baptist Church near Clarksville, Va., immersed 22 members of the Belcher Wells family in the congregation's baptismal pool during a July service.

Contact between the Wells family and the church began when the man's wife asked a funeral director to suggest a minister to conduct the service; the director recommended Barwick.

The Sunday following the funeral, several Wells family members appeared in Gravel Hill's worship service, Barwick recounted. Shortly afterward, Mrs. Wells made a profession of faith and joined the church, he said.

"The next three or four Sundays, members of the family kept coming forward to accept Christ -- daughters of Mrs. Wells and their husbands and children," Barwick said.

The pastor arranged to baptize all of them on the same Sunday. Normally, he says, he baptizes candidates in order of age, from youngest to oldest. But Mrs. Wells insisted on being baptized first. During the service, he found out why.

"She stood at the bottom of the steps -- dripping wet -- and kissed every one of her grandchildren as they came out of the baptistry," Barwick reported.

Since their baptisms the Wells family has become an important addition to Gravel Hill Baptist. "They support the church with their attendance and their finances," Barwick said. "All the youth -- 16 of them -- sing in the youth choir. ... They say they've found a home."

The Wells family brings to 28 the number of baptisms at Gravel Hill Baptist this year, a record for the congregation and Barwick himself.

"For a small, country church, this is really exciting," he said. "It's like being on a honeymoon."

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Calvary trying to make
ministry work in D.C.

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press
11/6/92

WASHINGTON (BP)--Rodney Bolton pulls the church door closed and checks to make sure it locked before turning to walk north on 8th Street.

Sitting in Washington's inner city, Calvary Baptist Church is subject to the same burglaries by the homeless and drug users that plague area shops and offices.

Some steal food, others money. Pulpit chairs and other equipment have been taken by addicts who sell the loot to support their habit.

"People don't say, 'Well, we're going to break into this store, but we'll respect God's work,'" says Bolton, minister of education and community ministry. "It's one of the hazards of the inner-city church."

Other dangers include threats, swindles or ducking an occasional fist from people seeking something from a minister and church that's already offering assistance.

Bolton shrugs it off, confident he's not any of the names he's called by those on the street.

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"It's always one of the hazards of downtown," he repeats. "God planted us here, and that's where he needs us."

Started in 1865, Calvary Baptist started as a result of members' concern for the community, Bolton says. To reach out to all people, members broke from another congregation that supported slavery, he says.

Calvary's continued commitment to social involvement draws members from as far away as Manassas, Va., and Baltimore, Bolton says.

"People that come here pass a lot of Baptist churches along the way, but they like what happens here," says "Reverend" Rodney, as he is called by children who come to church's the after-school tutorial program.

"For the most part, we're just down-to-earth people trying to do God's work, and there's a lot to be done."

In addition to the tutorial program, the church also offers a preschool for neighborhood children and English classes for immigrants.

On Thursdays, members organize social activities for patients and outpatients of a nearby mental hospital. The church also recently started a new program to help homeless people get back into society and empower them to help other homeless people.

The church also offers space to a nonprofit group that provides housing to homeless women.

"There's never a dull moment around here," Bolton says. "I think one of the sins is not using the building and space that God has given us to help the community."

Another resource of the church are summer missionary volunteers, coordinated by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Their work is both a help to the church and an eye-opening experience for the volunteers, Bolton says.

"They are taken out of their nice homes and they are ministering in an area where the gospel really grips the road," he says. "They seem to grasp a broader idea of what it means to be a part of God's family dealing with the real issue of poverty."

All of this work occurs in the midst of change in both the community and church.

Civic leaders are promoting the area as an arts district and drawing more upscale people. While that will be good for some, low-income residents are squeezed out as the cost of living becomes too high, Bolton said. "The whole rehabilitation of this area has displaced a lot of people."

Inside, the church is undergoing a \$2 million renovation. At the same time, members are seeking spiritual revival. "It's important not only just to renew our building and facilities, but we're going through a phase of Christian renewal where we're rededicating our lives."

Despite the change, the church's focus remains on ministry, Bolton says. "We believe in the community. We want to see it work."

**CONTACT group paves the way
for apartment congregation**

By Mark Wingfield

ST. LOUIS (BP)--In the shadow of the St. Louis airport, two Baptist women are piloting a church-starting project they have no guarantee will take off.

But by using CONTACT, a personal spiritual growth plan, they are building a base of adult leadership they hope will become a church.

CONTACT, a 12-week program combining individual and group Bible study with Scripture memory and missions awareness, is published by New Hope Press, publishing arm of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

Donna Potts and Vivian Hite lead the CONTACT group at Crosswinds, an aging apartment complex near Edmundson Road Baptist Church. The CONTACT group is a part of the ministry of Edmundson Road.

Both the church and the apartments lie in the path of Lambert Field airport expansion. For the church, that means a possible need for relocation in five to 10 years. For the apartment dwellers, it means their neighborhood will continue to be a transient, low-rent district.

Potts is WMU director at Edmundson Road. She also is a member of Baptist Women, the missions organization in local churches sponsored by WMU for women ages 35 and up. Potts is a state special worker for Baptist Women's groups and sits on the Missouri WMU executive board.

Hite is a Southern Baptist home missionary specializing in multi-housing ministries.

The two women began working together after Richard Miller, minister of education at Edmundson Road, saw an opportunity for ministry in Crosswinds, a complex of about 1,000 apartments.

Two years ago, the church used student summer missionaries to begin a ministry with apartment children. The student missionaries canvassed the complex and invited children for Vacation Bible School. They flocked to the church.

Subsequently, the church began bringing the apartment children in for Wednesday evening missions programs year-round.

Last summer, the church decided to expand its ministry to include adults. But no one knew for sure what direction that ministry would take or how long it would last, Potts said.

"We were just blundering into this, doing our own thing," she said.

About the same time, Hite assumed responsibility for multi-housing ministries in the St. Louis area. Leaders from Edmundson Road approached Hite about working with them in the Crosswinds complex.

Hite met with the apartment manager and secured the use of a vacant apartment for free. So the church moved its ministry on site, alleviating transportation problems and concerns about the apartment children overloading what the church's Wednesday evening leadership could handle, Potts said.

"The travel was wearing everyone out, and we couldn't get the adults from Crosswinds to come to the church," she said.

Hite had heard about WMU's CONTACT program and suggested it might be the right tool to use with the fledgling adult Bible study. Potts, Miller and others involved agreed.

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Currently, Potts and Hite lead the CONTACT group every Sunday at 4 p.m. They meet in the bedroom of a vacant one-bedroom apartment, while Miller and other church members conduct Big A Club, a program for unchurched children, in the adjacent living room. The materials, also published by WMU, include an assortment of Bible studies and activities.

In addition to Potts and Hite, two other church members attend, as well as two women who live in Crosswinds. Both of the apartment residents, Deborah and Sherry, are single mothers with no means of transportation to get to another church.

The two women, who are neighbors, also face a multitude of problems just to survive each day. Each has three children -- some with medical problems -- and limited financial resources.

Inevitably, Potts and Hite explained, the Sunday sessions turn into discussions of the two women's struggles. But CONTACT is good for this group because it relates Bible study to real-life issues, they said.

"It talks about everyday problems," Potts said of CONTACT. For example, in a recent session, the group discussed Jesus' claim to be the "Bread of Life." "How has God supplied your needs this week?" Hite asked the women. They recalled provisions of food, money and friends that had sustained them during the previous week.

CONTACT is structured with a seven-point emphasis for five days of each week. A daily Bible study revolves around an acronym of the word "contact": "Connect with the Lord," "Observe my world," "Nudge me through the Word," "Teach my heart," "Approach the past," "Confront needs," and "Touch others through prayer."

"To me, the real solidity of (this experience) is that when we get to the end of the CONTACT material, we're going to have two women committed to whatever happens there," Hite said, referring to her dream of a permanent congregation.

For now, a permanent, thriving congregation seems far off, but it is possible, the women believe.

Moving the church's ministry to the apartment complex has given the church increased exposure to the residents and made church a positive experience for them, Hite said. "They see it as theirs, and it's on their turf. There's been a trust built."

Other adults who haven't yet come to the Sunday sessions at least are aware they're available, Potts noted. "We think there are a lot of people watching us, wondering if this is going to last. We're just trying to be consistent."

The Edmundson Road congregation also has plans for additional work in the complex, such as a divorce recovery group and expanded summer children's programs.

For now, both Sherry and Deborah say they like the CONTACT material and need the weekly encouragement the group offers. "It helps you in your everyday life," Sherry said. "But it's a gradual thing. You can't expect miracles in a second."

And meeting in the apartment complex makes it easier to attend, she said. With children to care for and no car, "It's hard for me sometimes to get them all together at a certain time" and off to church, she said.

Regardless of whether the CONTACT group evolves into a permanent congregation, the Crosswinds ministry is a vital part of caring for the Edmundson Road neighborhood, Hite said.

"The needs in the community abound, and you don't see any other group knocking us out," she explained. "If we're not there, who's going to be?"

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Wingfield, news director for the Kentucky Baptist newsjournal Western Recorder, prepared this story on assignment for WMU.

Lay renewal's future:
'glorious,' speaker says

By Sarah Zimmerman

TOCCOA, Ga. (BP)--The future of lay renewal is "more glorious than the past has ever been," Darrell Robinson predicted.

The Home Mission Board's vice president for evangelism made his claim during a 20-year reunion of people involved in the lay renewal movement. Three hundred people from 24 states plus a couple from Scotland attended the reunion at the Georgia Baptist Assembly in Toccoa, Ga.

The renewal process includes renewal and ministry weekends. Renewal weekends are times for church members to evaluate their roles, said Doyle Pennington, liason for the Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission which jointly sponsor the renewal activities. Ministry weekends are for churches to focus on responsibilities in their communities.

Robinson said he hopes the number of lay renewal weekends will multiply -- and that every church needs one.

"By the year 2000, we will have an army of laity so that lay members of every church will report for duty to permeate that area with Christ," Robinson said.

In 1972 the Home Mission Board hired Reid Hardin, a Florida insurance salesman who had become involved in lay renewal activities, as the first lay renewal coordinator. That year also was the first national retreat and training session for Southern Baptists interested in lay renewal.

Now the lay renewal movement involves 18,000 volunteers, and 600 renewal weekends are held each year.

Recent HMB administrative reorganization merged the lay evangelism department with the personal evangelism department. During the reunion, Thad Hamilton, director of the personal evangelism department, pledged his support to the lay renewal movement.

"I'm grateful for what God is doing in and through renewal," Hamilton told lay renewal state coordinators. He said he would encourage pastors to have lay renewal weekends in their churches.

Jim Ballard, associate pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., already is sold on lay renewal weekends.

"If the pastor understands the calling and equipping of the laity, it sets the pastor free to really minister to his people," Ballard said. "As we free the laity up, the church does more."

In the past, the lay renewal movement was equated with the charismatic or Pentecostal movement, Ballard noted. "That wave has washed through. This movement is maturing, and I see it as the leavening in the denomination now."

A renewed laity is essential for effective evangelism, said Leonard Sanderson, former evangelism director for the Home Mission Board as well as Louisiana and Tennessee state conventions.

"Since evangelism is spreading the good news, it's not a problem if we're excited about what God is doing in our lives," Sanderson said. "I still think renewal is at the heart of evangelism."

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Sanderson also encouraged a continued emphasis on marketplace evangelism. He noted that Christians share neighborhoods, schools, offices, stores and factories with non-Christians. "If we get the gospel to the world, it will have to be through lay people," he said.

Jim Kimbell, member of Briarlake Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga., noted the lay renewal movement is not a program. "It will not form a structure in your church, but it will strengthen all the programs in your church," he said.

After being involved in the lay renewal movement for 20 years, Kimbell said his dream is to have no distinction between clergy and laity, but "to all be people of God."

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EDITORS' NOTE: Localized versions of this story are being sent to state Baptist papers in South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland/Delaware, Arizona, Virginia, New England, Mississippi, Georgia, New Mexico and Ohio.

WMU revises 'Missions Adventures'
after letters from church GA leaders

Baptist Press
11/6/92

By Susan Todd Doyle

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--It isn't often that students' pleas for fewer homework assignments bring the sought-after response.

But recently, when leaders of Girls in Action made that kind of request on behalf of GA members, Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union listened.

Girls in Action is the missions organization in local churches sponsored by WMU for girls in grades one through six.

The GA staff at the national WMU office received about 50 letters from GA leaders in local churches. They asked the national leaders to reconsider the total number of activities required in the Missions Adventures program.

Missions Adventures is an optional, individual mission study/activity plan for GAs. It does not take the place of meetings but is an outline of supplemental activities girls can do on their own to earn badges and special recognition. The Missions Adventures series includes six books -- one for each grade level.

Even though there was not an avalanche of requests, "they were substantive, and we knew what they represented," said Barbara Massey, editor of the GA leader magazine, *Aware*, and the member magazine, *Discovery*.

"What we were hearing from our constituents was that we were requiring the girls to do too much considering all they are involved in," Massey said.

GAs and their leaders got the answer they have waited for in the current quarterly issue (October-November-December) of *Aware* magazine.

A leaflet titled "We have heard you ..." has been inserted in the magazine. It outlines changes which have been made in the Missions Adventures series for GAs.

Rather than weaken the program, WMU leaders decided instead to simply cut the number of additional activities in the plan.

In each Missions Adventure booklet, there are four required activities. These have not been changed in the revision. In addition to the required activities, there are additional activities.

-- In Missions Adventures 1 and 2, the number of additional activities has been decreased from six to two.

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-- In Missions Adventures 3 and 4, the number of additional activities has been decreased from six to three.

-- In Missions Adventures 5, the number of additional activities remains four.

-- In Missions Adventures 6, the number of additional activities has been decreased from six to four.

In the revised Missions Adventures plan, girls will continue to choose such activities as keeping a prayer journal, reading missionary biographies, putting on puppet shows which explain the work of Baptist associations, making a game which explains the Cooperative Program, memorizing Bible verses and visiting missionaries.

They just won't have to complete as many activities as was first expected to receive their badges and recognitions.

"Our goal was not to minimize the program but to make it more acceptable and more attainable," Massey said.