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NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
801 Commerce #750
Nashville, Tennessee 37203
(615) 244-2355
Herb Hollinger, Vice President
Fax (615) 742-8919
CompuServe ID# 70420.17

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

March 12, 1992

92-46

**Home Mission Board declines
action of Freemasonry issue**

By David Winfrey

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Home Mission Board declined a request from the Southern Baptist Convention to study the teachings of Masonic lodges, referring the issue back to the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

"We feel like no agency has a right to pass judgement on personal behavior choices like this," said Johnny Jackson, chairman of the HMB's board of directors after its March meeting.

Last year, a motion presented at the SBC in Atlanta asked the HMB's interfaith witness department to compare Masonic teachings with Christian doctrine. The motion was referred by the convention's committee on order of business to the Home Mission Board for consideration.

The vote by the HMB board of directors at its March meeting takes no action on the requested study and asks messengers to address the potentially divisive matter at this year's convention in Indianapolis, June 9-11.

Some Southern Baptists contend Masonic teachings, or Freemasonry, are contrary to Christian doctrine.

But many Baptists are Masons and some board members said condemning Masonic membership would cause strife within the convention.

"It would be such a divisive issue," said Wade Armstrong, a board member from Credo, W.Va. "Either way you go, you lose."

The Home Mission Board's interfaith witness department issues position papers on religions, sects and cults. But that department's job is to study established religions, not fraternal organizations, said department head Gary Leazer.

This was the second time the Home Mission Board voted against investigating the fraternal order.

In 1985, a messenger to the annual convention proposed a four-page resolution blasting Masons as a "spiritually devastating and ungodly brotherhood of satanic darkness."

The resolution was referred to the Home Mission Board which, in turn, authorized a study by its interfaith witness department.

As a result, the board simply concluded "Freemasonry does not fall within the scope of assigned responsibility of the Home Mission Board."

The issue resurfaced last year with a call for a new investigation by the interfaith witness department, "apart from any employees that are in a position to be influenced by Masonic members of the Home Mission Board or otherwise."

Chairman Jackson said he thinks most Southern Baptists don't care about Freemasonry.

"It's those who are extremist or militant on either side of the issue who have caused whatever divisiveness that has occurred," he said.

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Some board members, however, disagreed.

"I think we have the resources within the interfaith witness department to have responded a little more thoroughly," said Walter Collett, of Columbia, Md.

In a November 1991 survey of church leaders, 37 percent of the pastors asked said the Southern Baptist Convention should have an official statement on Freemasonry.

Sixty percent of the pastors said it wasn't important at all to have a statement or had no opinion, according to the poll, taken by the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Forty-nine percent of the pastors said Freemasonry and Christianity have at least some conflict. Seventy-one percent of pastors said their church has never dealt with the issue.

Among the denominations which have taken a stand against Freemasonry is the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, U.S.A.

Eldon Winker, director of that denomination's Commission of Organizations, said Masonic teachings oppose Christianity because they offer members "a hope of eternal reward based on living a virtuous life."

About a half-dozen denominations have issued statements on Freemasonry, said Leazer, who contends it is not a religion even if a minority of members treat it as such.

"It really is a place where grown up men can play like boys," said Leazer. "It's certainly not anything we want to divide the convention over."

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HMB president calls for
denominational healing

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
3/12/92

ATLANTA (BP)--Saying the issue of inerrancy has been settled, the president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board said now is the time for healing and reconciliation.

"Much has been said about broadening the tent. It is time to make that rhetoric reality," Larry Lewis told Home Mission Board trustees during their spring meeting in Atlanta.

The term "broadening the tent" has been used to suggest the need to include moderates in leadership roles throughout the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Southern Baptists have made it abundantly clear. We do believe the Bible is a trustworthy book -- inspired, infallible, inerrant," Lewis said. "And we want our agencies and institutions to reflect that position."

However, Lewis said conservatives in the convention need to dispel the perception they have created a "closed shop" where only people who voted for a particular political agenda are welcome.

Lewis said some people argue when moderates were in control of the convention, conservatives were not elected to convention positions.

"That may or may not be so, but one thing is certainly true -- two wrongs don't make a right," Lewis noted. "If the shoe fit badly on one foot, it will fit just as badly on the other."

Ron Phillips, newly elected HMB trustee chairman, said he wholeheartedly supports Lewis' call for reconciliation. He noted Lewis was not asking Southern Baptists to compromise their beliefs.

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Phillips, who is also pastor of Central Baptist Church of Hixson, near Chattanooga, Tenn., and president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, said Southern Baptists "have got to pull together" to accomplish their mission tasks.

Brad Allen, newly elected first vice-chairman, agreed it is "time for those of us who are involved in missions and evangelism to band together and do the work."

However, the pastor of First Baptist Church of Duncan, Okla., noted people are asked to serve on Southern Baptist boards through a committee process that begins with the SBC president.

"I think they have the opportunity to enlarge the tent," Allen said.

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HMB elects officers, names
Hemphill church growth director

By Jim Newton

Baptist Press
3/12/92

ATLANTA (BP)--Directors of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board elected new officers, approved plans to expand the size of a new headquarters building to be completed by 1995, and elected Ken Hemphill of Norfolk, Va., to a new position as director of church growth.

Board members also elected a director of the board's human resources division, an associate in the new church extension division, and a national manager for Mega Focus Cities, the HMB's coordinated strategy planning process for missions work in 44 major cities in America.

Daniel Garcia, a human resource management consultant with 15 years experience in the field, was elected director of the human resources division. Gerald S. Raynor, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Flagstaff, Ariz., was named associate director of field servicing for the new church extension division. M. Eugene Wilson, director of missions for Calvary-Arrowhead Baptist Association in Riverside, Calif., was elected national manager of Mega Focus Cities.

Hemphill, pastor of First Baptist Church of Norfolk, would coordinate church growth efforts by the Home Mission Board and Sunday School Board, contingent upon approval by the Sunday School Board.

The newly-created position will be jointly funded by the Home Mission Board and Sunday School Board, upon approval from both boards. Hemphill would report directly to President Larry Lewis of the HMB and President James T. Draper Jr. of the SSB.

Brad Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church of Duncan, Okla., recommended Hemphill's election effective July 16 on behalf of the HMB administrative committee. Allen said the new position was being created "to give high visibility to church growth and measurably impact the life of the Southern Baptist Convention and nation. This is a great new step toward reaching our goal of 75 percent of SBC churches growing by the end of this decade," Allen said.

Lewis pointed out research had revealed about two-thirds of all Southern Baptist churches are either plateaued or declining, and church growth is one of the four priority emphases of the HMB.

"This is an exciting new venture with the Sunday School Board," Lewis said. "We felt it would be best to have one director serving both agencies, correlating and coordinating a total program across agency lines."

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He added Hemphill would be able to coordinate church growth efforts within each agency, since he will report directly to the president of each agency and will work across the entire organizational structure.

Draper issued a statement in Nashville saying he is "excited" to work out details with the HMB and present the matter through the appropriate channels at the Sunday School Board for Hemphill to work jointly with the two boards.

While financial details have not been finalized, Draper said he would work with Lewis "to divide the costs of the project.

"There is a tremendous need to say positively to Southern Baptists that we are coordinating the church growth emphasis in the SBC," Draper said. "Ken Hemphill will be the quarterback, working to avoid duplication and overlap."

Draper said he believes Hemphill probably is "the most uniquely qualified man in the SBC for this job. Other church growth experts are researchers and observers. Ken has been a participant in growing churches.

"He has tremendous respect across the country, and he has the academic credentials to establish genuine credibility for Southern Baptists in the field of church growth."

Draper observed that with Hemphill's leadership and coordination, a Southern Baptist center for church growth could become the church growth center for the evangelical world.

A native of North Carolina, Hemphill has been pastor of First Baptist Norfolk for the past 11 years. He previously was pastor of churches in Galax, Va.; Louisville and Battletown, Ky.; Winston-Salem, N.C.; and Little Stukeley, England. He earned the Ph.D degree from Cambridge University in Cambridge, England; and the D.Min. and M.Div. degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

HMB directors also voted to expand the plans previously approved to construct a 150,000 square-foot headquarters building in Alpharetta, Ga., a suburb in northeast Atlanta, to include a 30,000 square-foot warehouse and video production studio. The additional cost, estimated at about \$2 million, would be funded from working capital.

Elected new chairman of the board was Ron Phillips, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Hixson, Tenn., and current president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Phillips succeeds Johnny Jackson of Little Rock, Ark., who rotates off the board this year.

Other officers elected by the board included Allen from Duncan, Okla., first vice chairman; Bob F. Curtis, pastor of Ballwin (Mo.) Baptist Church, second vice chairman; Alice W. Sanders of Bamberg, S.C., secretary; and Linda S. Principe of Brandenburg, Ky., assistant secretary.

Directors appointed 19 new missionaries, voted to increase the 1992 HMB budget by \$963,349 to an adjusted total of \$85.7 million, and restructured the HMB language church extension division by combining the language church development and ethnic resource correlation departments.

Jose A. Hernandez was elected director of the combined ethnic resource and development department, and Moises C. Rodriguez was named associate director. Both had previously had been with the language church extension division in other roles.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press. Linda Lawson also contributed to this story.

SWBTS trustees elect chairman,
approve record budget

By Scott Collins

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, elected a new chairman, approved a record \$21.2 million budget and accepted a report from an ad hoc committee assigned to study the seminary's relationship to women in ministry.

Trustees, meeting March 10, elected Damon Shook, pastor of Champion Forest Baptist Church in Houston, as chairman to succeed Jim Bolton who resigned from the board. Re-elected were Pat Campbell, St. Charles, Mo., vice chairman and T. Bob Davis, Dallas, secretary.

Bolton, who is from Dallas, announced his resignation because of future investments the seminary is considering with his company. "It has always been my policy to resign from such boards and positions of trust where this kind of possibility exists," Bolton said.

Shook was elected to the seminary board in 1987 and was vice chairman from 1989-91.

"I believe the seminary is on the threshold of its greatest days," Shook said. "We have a harmonious relationship and God is going to do a remarkable work here, continuing in the long history of the school."

Trustees gave approval to the 1992-93 budget which begins Aug. 1. The budget of \$21.2 million represents a 6.88 percent increase over the current year and includes a 3 percent raise in faculty and staff salaries.

During discussion, trustees commended President Russell H. Dilday for continuing his policy of presenting a balanced budget despite projected declines in Cooperative Program receipts from the Southern Baptist Convention.

The 1992-93 budget includes an increase in student matriculation fees to \$600 per semester for Southern Baptist students and \$1,200 for non-Southern Baptists.

Trustees also approved a recommendation from an ad hoc committee appointed in October to examine the role of women at the seminary. The committee recommended no changes be made in the seminary's policy concerning female students and faculty members.

The seminary historically has accepted students on the basis of local-church recommendations. The ad hoc committee also suggested the board's current procedures for faculty elections should be continued.

Campbell, who was chairman of the ad hoc committee, said the group had "a time of good, open dialogue. We didn't have to make a specific policy (recommendation). We just built trust" between trustees and administration.

Members of the committee and other trustees expressed an openness about electing women to teach certain subjects in the school of theology, Campbell said.

The board approved a master of divinity advanced standing degree which enables students from cooperating Baptist colleges and universities to complete the degree with 72 hours rather than the standard 92. Dilday said the new degree has been approved by the Association of Theological Schools.

About 16 Baptist schools have signed an agreement with Southwestern allowing students at those colleges and universities to apply for advanced placement at the seminary, according to Thomas Brisco, director of the Advanced Standing Program. Students must have a 2.75 overall grade point average with a 3.0 average in religion courses.

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Three new faculty members were elected by the board. All three will serve in the school of theology. Elected were Alan Brehm, assistant professor of New Testament; Rick Johnson, associate professor of Old Testament; and Jeff Pool, assistant professor of systematic theology.

Dilday announced the appointment of Millard Erickson as research professor of theology. Erickson, dean of Bethel Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., since 1984, will begin his responsibilities in the fall semester. Dilday described Erickson as one of the leading Baptist and evangelical theologians in the world.

Trustees approved a report from an ad hoc committee assigned to address accreditation matters regarding trustee development and education, the relationship and communication between the board and the president, the board's self-appraisal and board appraisal of the president.

In other business, the board:

-- Approved two new academic chairs. Approval was given for the Virtus E. Gideon Chair of New Testament and the Richard D. Baker Chair of Music Missions and Evangelism. Gideon taught at Southwestern for more than 30 years and Baker recently retired as minister of music at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas.

-- Approved promotions for eight faculty members and granted tenure to six professors.

-- Elected seven directors to the Southwestern Baptist Seminary Development Foundation, Inc.

The board's next meeting will be Oct. 19-20.

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

Ballenger nominated to faculty
of Richmond Baptist seminary

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
3/12/92

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond will recommend Isam Ballenger to a new post as professor of missions and world religions.

Ballenger, 56, formerly the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, will begin teaching this fall if approved by seminary trustees April 6-7 in Richmond, Va.

He took early retirement from the Foreign Mission Board following the board trustees' decision last October to defund the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. He said he could no longer serve because he felt the "conservative resurgence" in the Southern Baptist Convention was becoming "an agenda for the global missions effort." FMB trustees have denied the board has any agenda other than evangelism and missions.

The Richmond seminary trustees also will vote on E. Glenn Hinson, announced earlier as a candidate to fill a new post as professor of spirituality and church history. The new seminary began classes last fall. It currently has 41 students, four full-time faculty members other than Ballenger and Hinson, and seven adjunct faculty members, according to seminary officials.

Foreign Mission Board trustees initiated action to defund the Ruschlikon seminary after they learned Hinson was teaching there on a four-month sabbatical. Many trustees had long regarded both Hinson and the seminary as "liberal," a charge Hinson and the school dispute. Hinson, 61, has been a professor of church history at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., since 1962.

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Ballenger told Baptist Press: "I don't accept accusations by some that (the Richmond seminary) is a liberal seminary. I'm pleased to be identified with a seminary which is engaged in searching for truth and not a place of indoctrination. I think the school is following the best of Baptist traditions and will be balanced in theology. I appreciate emphasis given to missions and involvement in missions."

Besides developing and teaching courses in missions and world religions, Ballenger said he will develop a practical experience for each of the students in cross-cultural missions either overseas or in the United States.

"Isam Ballenger has that rare combination of scholarly knowledge and practical experience that reflects the style of education we offer at the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond," said seminary president Tom Graves.

During a 28-year career in missions, Ballenger worked as a teacher in Nigeria, a missionary to Germany, associate to the area director for Europe and the Middle East, president of the Ruschlikon seminary, area director for Europe and the Middle East and, for his final five years of service, as vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Previously, he was youth director of First Baptist Church in Petersburg, Va., and pastor of Carey Baptist Church in Henderson, N.C.

Ballenger earned the bachelor of science degree from Clemson University, Clemson, S.C.; the bachelor of divinity and master of theology degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.; and the doctor of ministries degree from Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

A native of West Palm Beach, Fla., Ballenger was reared in Charleston, S.C., and Inman, S.C. He is married to the former Katherine Thomason of Laurens, S.C., and has three grown children.

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Foundation sends \$81,036
to Baptist Joint Committee

Baptist Press
3/12/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foundation sent a check for \$81,036 to the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs March 11, according to Foundation President Hollis E. Johnson III.

The amount is the "accumulated growth of the principal" on the disputed funds held by the foundation and per instructions given the foundation by the SBC Executive Committee in February. Johnson contends the foundation acts as an agent for the \$300,000 fund principal, not as the trustee, and thus had asked the Executive Committee for instructions in the matter.

The principal amount was given in 1968 by the Southern Baptist Convention as a capital expenditure. But who gets the amount has been disputed with the BJCPA, a religious liberty lobby in Washington, and the SBC Christian Life Commission, both claiming ownership.

The Executive Committee, in its February meeting, decided to recommend to the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis in June that the \$300,000 be reallocated to "convention causes as the Executive Committee deems appropriate."

Also, at that meeting the Executive Committee "disclaims any right to the interest accumulated on these funds on deposit" and directed the Foundation to send it to the BJCPA. Some time was needed by Foundation officials to convert investments into cash in order to send the money.

The BJCPA had been granted the interest earned on the funds over the years and has drawn \$568,384 since 1968.

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**Tulsa pastor named to teach
at Southwestern Seminary**

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Retiring Tulsa Pastor Warren Hultgren has been appointed as an adjunct professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, for the 1992-93 school year.

Hultgren, who was appointed by Southwestern President Russell Dilday, will be the first teacher to occupy the Warren Hultgren Chair of Pastoral Counseling at the seminary. The chair is being funded by friends of Hultgren to honor his 35 years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Tulsa, Okla.

Hultgren, who retires April 1, will teach pastoral ministry studies and counseling in Southwestern's school of theology.

A graduate of Southwestern Seminary, Hultgren has been pastor of First Baptist in Tulsa since 1957. He previously served churches in Texas and Louisiana.

Hultgren has received seven honorary degrees and has been active in denominational work throughout his career. He is a past vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention and the SBC Pastors' Conference and has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Baptist World Alliance.

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**Southwestern trustees approve
advanced standing degree**

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3/12/92

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, have approved a degree program that allows qualified students to earn the master of divinity degree by taking 74 hours rather than the standard 92-hour requirement.

The master of divinity advanced standing degree passed by the trustees March 10 will enable students from Baptist colleges and universities working in agreement with the seminary to cut up to 18 hours from the required hours in the school of theology, according to Thomas Brisco, associate professor of biblical backgrounds and director of the Advanced Standing Program.

Students must be a religion major at a cooperating Baptist college or university to be eligible for the program, Brisco said. About 16 Baptist schools have signed an agreement with Southwestern allowing students at those colleges to apply for advanced placement at the seminary. Brisco said other Baptist schools also are considering signing an agreement with Southwestern.

Other qualifications for the program include a 2.75 overall grade point average with a 3.0 average in religion courses. Students must also receive a recommendation from the department of religion at their college or university.

Brisco said the college work of each student will be evaluated by Southwestern before the student enrolls in the seminary.

Russell H. Dilday, president of the seminary, said the new degree program has already been approved by the Association of Theological Schools. He said the degree represents "hours of hard work" by members of the seminary's faculty.

Bruce Corley, dean of Southwestern's school of theology, said the program grew out of requests from several Baptist college and universities.

"This is a response to colleges and universities which have asked for some kind of correlation between their religion departments and seminary education," Corley said.

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According to Corley, a major advantage of the program is the flexibility it gives to students. That flexibility includes allowing students to choose a wider variety of courses to substitute for classes taken in college.

In addition, Corley said the Advanced Standing Program will provide "careful advisement" to each student.

Dilday praised the new program as a way to avoid duplication of course work students have completed in college.

Along with the advanced standing degree, students may also earn seminary credit by testing out of certain required classes. Brisco said the advanced standing by examination has been offered at Southwestern for several years.

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Griffith announces retirement,
search committee to be named

Baptist Press
3/12/92

ATLANTA (BP)--James N. Griffith, executive director-treasurer of the Georgia Baptist Convention since 1981, has announced his intention to retire from that office effective March 15, 1993.

Griffith's unexpected announcement was made before the GBC executive committee, assembled for its regular spring meeting.

In his statement, Griffith cited the biblical book of Ecclesiastes, noting "a time to every purpose under heaven." He said, "This, I feel, is the appropriate time for these words."

Griffith, 66, said he was resisting those urging him to remain until mandatory retirement at the end of 1994 because "I do not feel led of God to do this."

In his comments, Griffith expressed appreciation to Georgia Baptists for "allowing me the privilege of serving in what has been the most challenging time in the history of our convention. The greatness of Georgia Baptists is clearly indicated by the fact that almost without exception, progress has been made in every area of our work."

Griffith is a native of Georgia, and worked as a journalist prior to entering the ministry. A graduate of Mercer University and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., he received honorary doctorates from Mercer, Brewton-Parker College, Tift College, and the Atlanta Law School.

Prior to his election as executive director-treasurer, Griffith was pastor of First Baptist Church of Gray; First Baptist Church of St. Simon's Island; and Beech Haven Baptist Church in Athens, where he served for 14 years.

He also has held almost every elected office in Georgia Baptist life, including two terms as president of the convention. For two years he was chairman of the convention's executive committee and twice was elected first vice president of the convention.

At the SBC level, Griffith served twice on the committee on boards, and an 8-year term as a trustee of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. He recently was president of the Association of State Convention Executive Directors of the SBC.

Griffith has contributed a column to The Christian Index, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention, since 1956. He is the author of three books.

During Griffith's tenure, total gifts through the Cooperative Program have more than doubled, and the state missions offering has expanded to more than three times its 1980 income level. He led the Georgia Baptist Convention to assume its place as the top percentage contributor to the Cooperative Program in the Southern Baptist Convention.

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His tenure also has seen an expansion of Georgia's state missions program, and significant advances in church planting and language missions efforts.

Griffith told the committee he "would hope to have the privilege of working with the new executive director-treasurer-elect" for at least two months prior to his retirement, in order to provide continuity.

Robert Woodall, chairman of the administration committee, moved the executive committee accept the retirement proposal "with feeling and deep regret, for he (Griffith) has truly given himself to cooperative mission causes."

Executive committee chairman Napp N. Granade was empowered to name a search committee. Granade said, according to GBC policy, the search committee would include ten people, with the executive committee chairman and GBC president serving as ex officio members.

Granade told the assembly he was not yet prepared to appoint the search committee.

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Church recreation ministers
must learn to be innovative

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press
3/12/92

NEW BRAUNFELS, Texas (BP)--Innovation and creativity are not right brain functions inherent in some people and not in others, two leaders of church recreation agreed.

Innovation is a way to look at ideas differently, "with a different angle," said Jim Baker, minister of activities at First Baptist Church of Jackson, Miss. "Innovation is actually a learned process. Innovators gain their abilities through conscious effort, desire and experience."

Even creativity has its guidelines, Randy Lanford, coordinator of educational and promotional services in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church recreation department, told participants of a Rec Lab seminar held in New Braunfels, Texas, Feb. 28-March 4. Both men led seminars at Rec Lab, a church recreation department-sponsored conference for recreation ministers.

Baker said church recreators who stretch beyond traditional ministry into innovative and creative programming are able to stimulate themselves and their members.

Recreation ministers more than any other staff member have the potential to constantly inject new and exciting ideas into their ministries, he said.

"I've been in church recreation ministry for 20 years, and I found out if I didn't continue to research ideas from other sources I was going to lose my enthusiasm and my motivation," Baker said.

He said he has researched programs offered by parks and recreation facilities, YMCAs, spas, colleges and junior colleges with leisure education courses and other churches to find out what type of new ideas each could offer.

"Innovation is a relative term," Baker said. "What is innovative to me may not be innovative to you. Or what is innovative in one part of the country may not be innovative in another part of the country.

"Serious innovative programmers" have several characteristics in common, he said. Almost any church recreation minister who "works at it" can become an innovator.

He said innovators are trend spotters, borrowers, without prejudices, resourceful, futuristic, persistent, feedback- and opportunity-oriented, team builders and people with the ability to change their perspective.

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"Innovators don't always invent new ideas," Baker said. "They usually borrow existing thoughts. It's a learned process."

Meanwhile, Lanford said the first rule to creativity "is to copy."

"Look for ideas anywhere you can find them," said Lanford who said he borrowed information for his conference from the book, "A Whack on the Side of the Head" by Roger Van Oech and published by Warner Press. "One reason you come to Rec Lab is to copy."

The second rule is adapt, he said.

"Make the idea work for you. Don't go home and immediately use an idea you get. Wait until it fits your program," he suggested.

Brainstorming with others on the church staff is an important step to creativity, Lanford said. "You're not as creative by yourself as you are with a group. When you're in that group, keep your ideas flowing; be as rowdy and as noisy as you want to be."

The final rule to creativity, Lanford said, is learning to risk. "You have to take a shot at failure. When you quit risking, your program becomes like a muscle in a cast. It atrophies."

Once the idea is formed, it's time to implement, said Lanford, outlining eight methods for turning ideas into reality.

"This is one of the hardest parts," said Lanford. "A lot of us sit around all our lives saying, 'What if I could just do this.'"

The methods for turning ideas into reality include:

- "Get a strategy together.
- "Put a fire in your belly. Get in touch with what motivates you to do that event.
- "Get a lion in your heart. Get the courage to do it a new way. Don't just do what you did last year. God gave us a neck. Stick it out.
- "Just do it. Don't wait until next week.
- "Get rid of your excuses. Write down your excuses for what's going to make this a flop, and go through and eliminate them.
- "Strengthen your shield. Thicken your skin. Realize if you do it a new way, somebody is going to take shots at you. People fear change.
- "Sell, sell, sell. Sell the product of your event. Sell what the product will do for you.
- "Be persistent. When you get knocked down, get back up.

"You lose a lot of great ideas by not being foolish," said Lanford in explaining why some people don't move forward with their ideas.

The biggest mistake people make when dabbling in creativity, he said, is to think making a mistake is wrong.

"If you're convinced when you make a mistake, it is wrong, then you are never going to risk," he said. "To increase your successes, you probably need to double your failures."