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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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April 20, 1992

92-68

**SEBTS trustees to vote
on Paige Patterson**

By Herb Hollinger

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Paige Patterson, an architect of the "conservative resurgence" in the Southern Baptist Convention, is the nominee for the next president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

Roger Ellsworth, Benton, Ill., pastor and chairman of the seminary's trustees, told Baptist Press April 20 Patterson, 49, was the choice of the search committee and had accepted the committee's invitation.

Patterson told Baptist Press he would make a statement at Criswell College's morning chapel April 21 and would prefer not to make any comments until that time.

A special meeting of SEBTS board of trustees has been called May 14 at the Wake Forest campus at 2 p.m., Ellsworth said. Patterson will meet with faculty and students of Southeastern before the trustee meeting and possibly as early as next week in keeping with trustee policy.

The announcement confirmed speculation going back before President Lewis Drummond's official retirement notice earlier this year. He will retire June 30 after four years as president. Many trustees, students and alumni had urged Patterson's election as the fifth president to help the struggling seminary with financial, enrollment and accreditation problems.

In fact, Ellsworth said Patterson fit the four considerations the search committee felt were primary for a new president: student recruitment, faculty recruitment, financial development and accreditation.

"Dr. Patterson's experiences in these areas are such that he will make a very fine president," Ellsworth told Baptist Press.

In recent years declining enrollment, a faculty exodus and financial struggles have plagued the seminary which was put on probation by its regional accrediting agency, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, late last year.

Two other candidates had been interviewed by the trustees' executive committee acting as the search committee, Ellsworth said. R. Albert Mohler Jr., editor of the Georgia Baptist newsjournal, The Christian Index, and Richard Melick, a professor at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, Tenn., are both considered strong and active conservatives within the SBC.

Late last year Patterson declined an invitation from Jerry Falwell to become president of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va.. On Oct. 28, 1991, trustees of Criswell College voted to fire Patterson as president but he was later reinstated following protests by students, alumni and high-profile SBC pastors.

Patterson has been president of the 335-student Criswell College in Dallas since 1975. He also is a trustee of the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

Patterson and his wife, Dorothy, have two children: Armour, 23, and Carmen, 22.

Churches called on to respond
biblically to sinful behavior

By Sarah Zimmerman

ATLANTA (BP)--A pastor is accused of adultery, a Sunday school teacher is arrested for child molestation, a church clerk is found guilty of embezzlement, a deacon is caught soliciting sex from an undercover police officer.

When such unthinkable incidents occur, churches have the opportunity to respond with biblical, redemptive ministry, Southern Baptist counselors said. All too often, however, churches react in indignation without offering any chance of restoration.

Joe Richardson, personnel counselor for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, referred to Matthew 18 as the guideline for handling such situations. Jesus admonishes Christians to talk to fellow Christians privately before presenting the matter to the church body.

"What I find happening -- and it's devastating -- is that the order is almost inevitably reversed," Richardson said.

"As a community of believers, we have the right and the responsibility to confront one another when a wrong is committed," said Ben Mitchell, director of bio-medical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The church should provide an extended opportunity for repentance with an emphasis on nurturing the individual, Mitchell said. "But ultimately, if there is no repentance, then corrective church discipline would include exclusion."

Often the person is excluded without an opportunity for restoration, said Huey Perry, director of chaplaincy for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

One of Perry's earliest pastoral experiences was being asked to visit a church member in jail. "I was terrified. I wasn't afraid of the jail but this man had been in our worship the previous Sunday. I felt so awkward. I didn't know what to do or say."

Perry, a former prison chaplain, said one appropriate reaction is to pray for the accused and his family. He suggested making phone calls and sending notes to the family without asking for an explanation of the situation. Otherwise, Perry said the offender's family members become victims as well.

In dealing with the perpetrator, Perry said it is essential to maintain the delicate balance between loving the sinner and hating the sin. "Many times I have said to someone, 'I really cannot endorse what you have done but I want to be here to minister to you.'"

With the congregation, the situation needs to be handled in a gentle yet firm fashion, said Richard Houston, HMB director of counseling services. "Most people are not going to be initially forgiving. Most will be indignant," he said.

Other initial reactions may be disappointment, a sense of betrayal, shock and anger, Houston said.

Consider the pastor involved in adultery. Church members deny their pastor would do such a thing. Or they become angry -- either at the pastor for committing adultery, at his mistress for allowing it to happen or at the pastor's spouse for supposedly not being a better wife.

If the pastor leaves, church members experience grief at the loss, whether they liked the pastor or not, Richardson said. He noted that "grief is a very normal process but it may take one to two years to resolve."

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When the offender stays in the church, congregations need to help him "own responsibility and accept the consequences" for his actions, Richardson said. "When we just dismiss staff members (for immoral deeds), people say it's the church which has a problem."

If it becomes necessary to remove the person from church leadership, Mitchell said it is important to keep him under the church's nurture and oversight.

Churches need to "get the person the help he needs but not let him deny the help," Houston said. "If he could have handled it by himself, he would have (handled it alone) before it got to this point. Someone has to say, 'We're going to intervene on your behalf.'"

Richardson said one church which discovered a staff member was an alcoholic offered him the choice of being fired or going through rehabilitation. The church paid for his treatment and he now has a valuable ministry at the church, Richardson said.

Richardson said Christian counseling can offer the therapeutic assistance a person needs. "We need to identify Christian professionals who can help our folks deal with these issues and set up a mechanism to make that financially possible for them," he said.

After a person has been through counseling, Houston said it is important to set boundaries for the person. For example, the person guilty of child molestation would not be allowed to work in the children's program.

Most states require that if someone is suspected of illegal behavior, such as child abuse, the incidents be reported to proper authorities. Richardson stressed congregations which help a person stop a sinful behavior protect other people from becoming his victims.

Mitchell said churches should not wait until an incident occurs to deal with such issues. He said biblical church discipline includes teaching and modeling appropriate Christian behavior in an attempt to keep church leaders and church members from yielding to such temptations.

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Project Brotherhood food
packaging to begin April 20

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
4/20/92

MOSCOW (BP)--Packaging of food for some 40,000 needy families through Project Brotherhood is expected to begin the week of April 20 by two teams of volunteers.

Five volunteers from Tennessee and Michigan who arrived in Moscow April 12 spent part of their first week moving equipment from Moscow Baptist Church to the warehouse where food will be packaged for distribution. While they waited for food to arrive, team members went sightseeing and passed out tracts. A bus driver accepted Christ as his Savior after the witness of one team member, who then gave him a Russian Bible.

A second group of five volunteers, from Tennessee and Missouri, arrived April 19.

Project Brotherhood is an effort to provide food to persons in the Commonwealth of Independent States under the leadership of the Baptist World Alliance. At the request of the BWA, the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission is recruiting volunteers and coordinating their work. Brother's Brother Foundation, an international benevolence organization based in Pittsburgh, is handling transport of the food supplied by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Dennis Quinn, who with his wife, Jennefer, serve as on-site volunteer coordinators for Project Brotherhood, said he was notified April 14 the first shipment of flour, rice and beans had arrived in Moscow. About 10 percent of the shipment is designated for Project Brotherhood; the remainder is to be distributed by the Russian Orthodox Church.

If sacking of rice, beans and flour starts Monday (April 20), "distribution will begin the day after the powdered milk arrives," Quinn said. Brotherhood Commission officials were attempting to locate powdered milk in Europe which could be diverted rapidly to Moscow.

"I was hoping we could already be working by now," said Quinn, an electrician from St. Peters, Mo., who arrived March 29 for a three-month assignment. "We're finding we need to be patient and flexible."

Quinn said the food is arriving in large containers and must first be packaged in two-pound sacks.

Each family will receive four pounds each of flour and rice and two pounds each of beans and powdered milk. Recipients will bring their own containers for vegetable oil and butter oil. Families with small children will receive baby formula.

"We will be meeting temporary, short-term needs with these one-time food gifts," Quinn said.

Food will be distributed from the Moscow Baptist Church and some 40 mission points throughout the city. Food also will be provided to about 30 orphanages, homes for the elderly and other institutions.

Quinn said some Baptist families will receive food gifts along with others identified as needy. Special attention is being given to the elderly whose fixed incomes leave them without adequate means to meet basic life needs amid spiraling inflation.

After three weeks in Moscow, the Quinns are learning rudimentary Russian for ordering meals and getting around the city. In addition to hosting volunteers, they work closely with officials of Brother's Brother, the Russian Orthodox Church and the Moscow Baptist Church.

Baptist leaders, under the direction of Michael Zhidkov, director of Compassionate Ministries at the church, located and negotiated use of the warehouse and set up housing at the Rossya Hotel for volunteers. They are setting up food distribution points, arranging for food to be transported by truck from the Russian Orthodox warehouse to the Baptist warehouse, providing interpreters to work with the American volunteers and providing additional volunteers to help with sacking and distribution.

Project Brotherhood officials predict the Moscow project will last from four to six months and require an estimated 80 volunteers.

"The needs are great and we want this project to strengthen the long-term work of Baptists who minister in the name of Christ," said James D. Williams, Brotherhood Commission president. "We are so pleased that Southern Baptists, by means of their prayer and financial support, are allowing us to do on their behalf exactly what we told the Russians we would do. I believe this work will bolster the good name of Baptists among the people there for years to come."

Project Brotherhood officials hope to place an additional 50,000 food boxes in other areas of the Commonwealth of Independent States in the weeks ahead. Associations, churches and individuals will package 36-pound food boxes. Project Brotherhood coordinators will work with state Brotherhood directors to collect the food boxes for distribution in the CIS.

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Specifics regarding the food boxes and contents are available from state convention Brotherhood offices or by calling the Project Brotherhood Information Center at (901) 272-2461.

Southern Baptists are encouraged to continue supporting Project Brotherhood through their donations and prayers.

Contributions should be clearly marked "For Project Brotherhood" and mailed to Project Brotherhood, Brotherhood Commission, SBC, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104 or to Baptist World Alliance, 6733 Curran St., McLean, VA 22101.

Prayer requests, updated daily, are available on the Project Brotherhood Prayer Update line at (901) 278-7839. Volunteers in Moscow until April 24 are Fred Kinsey from Monroe, Mich., Mark Lassiter and Lawson Newman from Memphis, Tenn., and Pat and Linda Lawson Still from Nashville. Team members arriving April 19 for two weeks are Gene Vincent and Robert Noah from Millington, Tenn., Jim McCaughan from St. Louis, Hugh Painter from Liberty, Mo., and B.G. Johnson from Raymore, Mo.

Teams will arrive weekly for two-week stays. Volunteers have been recruited through June. Additional volunteers are being sought for July and later months.

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Women in former Soviet Union
gets boost from BWA women

By Wendy Ryan

Baptist Press
4/20/92

WASHINGTON (BP)--Baptist women in the former Soviet Union will have a new fully equipped office in Moscow, thanks to the Baptist World Alliance's women's department.

The office will be a 10-minute drive from the present overcrowded offices of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, located in historic Moscow Central Baptist Church.

The BWA women's department also has funded the salary of an office director for a year and plans are under way to provide requested training for new officers.

This assistance was made possible by special contributions from Baptist churches, individuals and women's groups in North America and Mexico during the past 12 months, said Catherine Allen of Birmingham, Alabama, women's department president.

The special fund-raising goal was reached in February 1992 with a gift of \$20,000 from First Baptist Church of Lumberton, N.C., from its foreign missions offering, designated to help purchase the office space. Also, the women's department received a grant of \$2,500 from the Second Century Fund of the Southern Baptist Women's Missionary Union for this purpose. Other gifts were made by women in several states. The Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union sent \$2,000, along with an additional \$1,000 to help pay the yearly salary for an office director. The Mexico Baptist Women's Union sent \$1,000.

Allen visited Moscow in April to complete negotiations to buy a small four-room apartment for the new office and consult with leaders. She was accompanied by Dorothy Sample of Flint, Michigan, president of the North American Baptist Women's Union.

In 1991 NABWU purchased a Canon copier for women's work in the former Soviet Union and the North Carolina Woman's Missionary Union purchased a cyrillic typewriter. Other office equipment items were delivered by Allen and Sample during their visit with women leaders in Moscow and Kiev, Ukraine.

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The need for an apartment for the women's work first came to the attention of the BWA women's department in March 1991 when representatives of the UECB attended a BWA executive committee meeting. In discussing women's ministries in the churches and republics, UECB leaders said what the women needed most was an office.

The women's department of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists was organized in November 1990 when women from all the republics of the former Soviet Union met in Moscow. A second national/international meeting was held in November 1991, again in Moscow. The women's group has members in 12 nations of the new Commonwealth of Independent States.

"No one knows what will happen politically in the former Soviet Union, but one thing we do know is the women are doing wonderful ministries in their churches," Allen said upon her return.

"In the past, much of the women's work was done in secret," Allen explained. "Now the women are learning to work with public recognition, which has many challenges."

Women make up 85 percent of the church membership and lead in evangelism, Allen continued. Women are the "praying department" of the church, she said. "Most notable is the women's charity work, both among believers and non-believers.

"With continued freedom and with continued affirmation ... the formal and informal ministries of women will prove a blessing to the world," Allen said.

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Honeycutt keeps vision
after decade of service

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press
4/20/92

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--A decade of guiding one of the world's largest seminaries through the stormy waters of denominational discord has not dampened Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Roy L. Honeycutt's vision for the future.

"I want to be a part of the continual shaping and development of this institution through what I think will be the 'feathering out' of this crisis in the Southern Baptist Convention," said Honeycutt, eighth president of Southern Baptists' oldest institution. "I use the term 'feathering out' intentionally because I don't think it will end on a certain date on the calendar but I think it will become less intensive."

The seminary community and trustees will honor Honeycutt and his wife, June, during a 10th anniversary celebration April 28 on the campus in Louisville, Ky.

Honeycutt assumed the presidency of Southern in the spring of 1982, three years into Southern Baptists' longest and most divisive controversy. Much of the criticism of the conservative takeover movement has been aimed at the denomination's six seminaries. Honeycutt's presidency has confronted the double duty of dealing with the denominational crisis while leading one of the world's largest theological schools.

"One of the most prominent things in my 10 years as president is that we have negotiated 10 years of denominational controversy," he said. "There are still problems to confront but the institution is still together and we're still doing, I think, quality education."

Yet Honeycutt's presidency has not just been about institutional survival. During his tenure, the seminary has tripled its endowment, constructed the largest capital project in its history and achieved record enrollments. It also has expanded continuing education offerings and curriculum, including the opening of the Carver School of Church Social Work.

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"None of (the achievements) are mine alone," he said. "All have been a shared role. I'm indebted to many people for what has happened."

The seminary will face the future guided by a "more consciously stated conservatism," Honeycutt said. Its more conservative course is spelled out by the Covenant Renewal, a document approved by trustees and faculty last year, and the Glorieta Statement, an agreement among the six Southern Baptist seminary presidents.

"I use the term 'consciously stated conservatism' intentionally, because I think we've always been a conservative institution when measured by national norms," he said. "Put us alongside the other 200 schools in the Association of Theological Schools and call us 'liberal' and everybody would laugh at you."

The seminary's future has challenges and opportunities beyond the school's theological posture, Honeycutt said. Slow growth experienced by the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program, the denomination's unified giving plan, has forced the seminary to take more initiative to secure its financial future, he said. "Endowment is a slow way to do that but is the only certain way."

Honeycutt looks forward to seeing the seminary secure the \$5 million necessary to complete the final phase of its Campus Center. The first two phases of the complex, which include health and recreation facilities, a post office, book store and student-related offices, opened in 1990 at a cost of \$12 million.

The seminary also will rigorously evaluate its educational programs, utilizing the findings of the seminary's 10-year self study and its study of Southern Baptist quality ministers funded by a \$350,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc., he said.

After 10 years on the job, Honeycutt still approaches his daily activities with enthusiasm. Not even quadruple heart bypass surgery performed two years ago has slowed his pace. In fact, he has undertaken a regular exercise routine since the surgery that has helped mold a trimmer, more energetic president. "I feel better than I have in years," he said. "There's no question about it."

At age 65, Honeycutt spends more time contemplating the future of the seminary than his retirement. His timetable for retirement hinges on his sense of God's purpose, he said. "I plan to serve as president as long as I have the conviction of God's calling to be president."

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

Baptist pastor staying
in Sarajevo despite war

By Mike Creswell

Baptist Press
4/20/92

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina (BP)--A Baptist church here canceled services in April for the first time in its history as war raged in the city streets but pastor Boris Kacarovica has insisted on staying to minister.

Kacarovica told Yugoslavian Baptist Union leaders he would remain in Sarajevo with his pregnant wife and three children despite the violence. Union leaders had urged him to leave, according to a report from Christian Information Service, a church news service headed by Baptists in Zagreb, Croatia.

"We feel that our place is here in these difficult days. We want to be with the people we work with and minister to. Our pastoral calling and the future of our work in Sarajevo are at the heart of the matter," he said.

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Kacarovica said the church has set up a charitable arm called "Man to Man" to receive and distribute aid. But currently neither food nor medicine can get into Sarajevo because the city is cut off by road, rail and air.

Nine people were killed and 50 injured when police opened fire on war protesters in the city during early April, the information service reported. The civilian army was seized by the Yugoslavian army and police fuel reserves were burned, amid other violence. Later, the 12-nation European Community established a peace mission to try to arrange a cease-fire in the region but news reports April 20 said the community was considering reimposing economic sanctions on Serbia, accusing it and the Serb-dominated federal army of fomenting violence in Bosnia. Serbs want their areas to remain part of Yugoslavia.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is a multi-ethnic region whose major population groups are Muslims, 44 percent; Serbians, 31 percent; and Croats, 17 percent. Historically its residents have lived together in peace. It is the third region of Yugoslavia to declare independence after Slovenia and Croatia did so last year. The resulting war has left some 10,000 dead and 800,000 homeless in the former Yugoslavia regions.

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Evangelicals in Croatia
organizing new council

By Mike Creswell

Baptist Press
4/20/92

ZAGREB, Croatia (BP)--Baptists have joined with five other evangelical church groups in Croatia to consider forming a Council of Evangelical Protestant Christians in Croatia.

If approved in a May 15 meeting, the council will replace an existing organization called the Association of Evangelical Church Workers of Croatia, according to a report from the Christian Information Service, a Baptist-led church news agency based in Zagreb.

The move reflects the pulling together of Christians in war-torn Croatia, which has been at war with the Serbian-dominated remnants of Yugoslavia.

Slovenia and Croatia declared independence last year from Yugoslavia as did Bosnia-Herzegovina earlier this year. Yugoslavia essentially has been reduced from a federation of six republics to an alliance between the republics of Serbia and Montenegro.

Some 10,000 people have been killed and 800,000 made homeless in the months-long war in the region. By late April fighting had shifted from the Croatian front to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

More than 30 ministers and other church workers attended a meeting in Zagreb April 14 to discuss the new organization. Church groups participating were the Baptist Union of Croatia, Evangelical (Pentecostal) churches, Church of Christ, Church of God, Bethany Church and Agape Christian Church.

Many representatives came from Croatian cities which have come under heavy attacks during the conflict: Osijek, Rijeka, Karlovac, Sisak, Vinkovac, Djakovo, Daruvar, Cakover, Laslovo and Moscenica.

All six of the church groups have set up humanitarian ministries in response to the war, representatives said. One function of the new council would be to better coordinate relief ministries. Organizing a more formal council also would help the churches position themselves to make a specifically Christian contribution to the development of democracy in Croatia, they said. Three leaders were selected to draft a new constitution for the new council: Branko Lovrec, president of the Baptist Union of Croatia; Peter Kuzmic, president of the Evangelical Church of Croatia; and Josip Jendricko, pastor of the Church of God in Croatia.

Leaders said the new council would help them have contacts and cooperation with similar evangelical councils in Europe and other parts of the world.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Following is a three-part series on unemployment from the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Unemployed Christians
share common experiences

By Terri Lackey

RICHMOND, VA. (BP)--In October 1990 Charlie Ewell bought his wife, Jorja, pregnant with their fourth child, "a very nice Christmas present." In November 1990 he lost his job.

Until November Ewell and his family were living the good life. He was a CPA -- a manager -- at a Richmond, Va., firm. He was young, untouchable. Money was not a problem; the Ewells had just about everything they wanted.

"One day things are rosy. Then all of the sudden all these things you've been counting on are gone," Ewell said. "You have the rug pulled out from under you and you are gasping for air.

"A lot of people have compared the grief you experience after losing your job to losing a loved one," he said.

Although Ewell picked up odd accounting jobs during the 14 months he was out of work, he was constantly concerned about money. Feeding and clothing four children and a wife who works in the home was stressful.

On top of that he was angry and his ego was hurting. The fact that many others before him and several after him lost their jobs did nothing to relieve his hurt.

"I had doubts about myself. I wondered if I could have done anything differently. I wondered if it was something I did," said Ewell, who found a permanent job in January 1992. "Losing your job just throws your whole life out of control right when you think you're in control of everything."

Northborough, Mass., resident Patrick Coyne was comfortable with his job and his life. He and his wife, Jean, had raised their two children and were watching their grandchildren grow. He had worked as a principal software engineer for the same national computer firm since 1967.

In October 1991 Coyne was called into the boss' office. He was told his services were no longer needed. He was devastated. No matter that about 10,000 other employees of that company were given identical news.

"That was the first time I was out of work since I delivered newspapers in grammar school," Coyne said. "My life that had always been stable was now on a natural roller coaster ride."

At 52, Coyne knew his chance at finding another job in the competitive computer market of the economy-bruised state of Massachusetts was extremely slim.

"I could have cried about it. I could have ranted and raved, but what good would that have done?" asked Coyne, who recently started his own mobile dry cleaning service.

"We get comfortable in the corporation we work for because they supply everything we need. When they say good-bye, it's like a death," said Coyne, who acknowledged he has experienced depression, anger, self-pity and fear.

"Today I've had a bad day. Until my dry cleaning service succeeds, I'll probably have a lot of bad days. I'm definitely not the same person I was before."

Ewell, 35, agreed. Both Ewell, Coyne and their wives said being Christians helped them survive this traumatic ordeal. In fact, all said they are better off spiritually.

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"This was really a watershed experience for me in terms of my spirituality," said Ewell, a member of Bon Air Baptist Church in Richmond. "I had been a Christian since I was 9 and I had always been a big churchgoer. But when I had problems, instead of going to the Word and getting the answers, I would go away from it. I would try to find my own answers."

Ewell said prior to losing his job he was moving speedily toward materialism. "I began to rely on my job status to make me feel good about myself. For the first time in my life I began having trouble tithing."

Ewell said he is not sure if God used unemployment to get his attention.

"I'm not going to say God caused it per se. But I think it's one of the best things that could have happened to me in terms of my spiritual life," said Ewell, who was nominated as a deacon for the first time in his life five months after losing his job. "I think it was God's way of getting my attention."

"This is a lesson I'll never forget," Ewell continued. "I was self-centered and self-motivated. (Unemployment) freed me from a lot of things and it allowed me to return to my faith to God."

Ewell said the situation also has strengthened his and Jorja's prayer life together as well as their communication channels.

Coyne believes God was getting his attention for another reason.

"I was very comfortable. I was getting used to where I was. God showed me if I wouldn't get myself out of a rut, he would do it for me."

Like Ewell, Coyne's relationship to God has been strengthened. And so has his relationship to his wife.

"This situation has drawn us closer together as a couple," said Jean Coyne, who with her husband is a member of Grace Baptist Church of Marlborough, Mass.

Coyne and Ewell agreed spouses can make or break the situation.

"It's best if your spouse is not judgmental and does not put pressure on you," Coyne said. "He or she needs to be encouraging."

Ewell said: "Wives can't let husbands think they think any less of them because of this. Especially if he is doing everything he can to find another job."

Neither man says he is completely recovered or happy.

"I took a 15 percent pay cut," Ewell said. "My ego is still pretty much bruised by that. I took a job I probably wouldn't have taken two to three months after I was first unemployed but it's turned out for the best."

What has most helped both survive, they say, is church member concern and attending support groups and Bible study with other unemployed persons. Both are now leaders in their communities in that area.

What also has helped, Coyne said, is continuing the routine of going to work. Unemployed persons should attend job placement centers sponsored by the church, the community or former workplace, he suggested.

"Get up, shave, get out of the house. Do anything that resembles your normal pattern," he said. "Just don't stay at home, get in your wife's hair and watch soaps."

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

Recovery, hope follows
grieving for unemployed

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP)--Unemployed persons who have lost their jobs through layoffs or firings go through grief patterns similar to those accompanying the death of a loved one or divorce, three officials agreed.

Shock, disbelief, anger, hostility, despair, bargaining, self-pity, loss of self-esteem and embarrassment are common emotions among people who have lost their jobs, said Fred McGeehee, a career assessment consultant in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's church administration department.

"People who have lost their jobs work with a lot of different feelings like anger, fear and hopelessness but they also experience anticipation and zest as they come to find another job," McGeehee said.

A good attitude is the name of the game when it comes to looking for another job, said McGeehee, although he acknowledged it is normal for a person to experience some of the stages of grief before he or she arrives at a point of hope.

Losing one's job in the 1990s is not the social stigma it once was, McGeehee believes.

"I would think now that firings and layoffs are so common that other than the embarrassment that might come to the family and the threat from the economical setback, it is a situation other people understand," he said. "It is not as shameful to be laid off anymore.

"But I do believe these people might feel a sense of loss of self-esteem because their identity through their vocation has been lost."

James Cotham III, acting dean of the Jack C. Massey Graduate School of Business for Belmont University in Nashville, said losing one's job usually takes a person by surprise.

"Many, many people who see it happening to other people say, 'Well, that won't happen to me,'" said Cotham, author of the book, "Career Shock."

When it does, "they feel sorry for themselves and they are totally unproductive for a while," he said. "It's a slam to their self-esteem. Because of the psychological shock, it takes 30 to 60 days for them to come to grips.

"After a while, people tend to get ahold of themselves and figure out what they are going to do," he said.

Cotham said middle managers and professionals can expect to be out of work for about six months to a year while technical and clerical workers will probably find another job within 90 days to six months.

Cotham advocates preparedness which to him means building a savings account.

"With the '90s and the uncertainty of the economy, chances are you or someone you know will be unemployed," he said. "Everybody needs a rainy day fund. It's frightening the number of people who live from paycheck to paycheck."

Churches should get involved in the plight of their unemployed members, Cotham said. Maurice Graham, associate pastor of Bon Air Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., agrees.

That is why he conducts bimonthly support groups for unemployed church members and has established an ongoing benevolence fund to help those who are financially strapped. The church also has developed a job bank where members can notify the church about job openings in the area.

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"Basically, what our church tries to do is help people cope emotionally, spiritually and financially," Graham said.

"Almost all these people are asking themselves the questions, 'What did I do wrong?' 'Is God trying to get my attention?' 'Have I not been faithful enough to God?'"

"There is a spiritual dimension as well as an emotional dimension to unemployment," he said.

Practical concerns also are an issue, the three men agree.

How to write resumes and complete successful interviews are critical aspects of finding a new job, and a person who has long-standing tenure in one company may have forgotten how to perform those tasks, Cotham said.

"The worst mistake a person can make is turning in a bad resume," he said.

Graham recommends the unemployed person locate a career counseling center offered through the community or church to help in these areas and McGeehee suggests "socioemotional" support systems and books.

"You need a few key people who can encourage you and help you with problem solving and give you objective feedback on how you're really doing," McGeehee said. "And you need to read a few good books."

Books suggested by McGeehee include: "What Color is Your Parachute" by Richard Bolles and "Do What You Love -- the Money Will Follow: Discovering Your Right Livelihood" by Marsha Sinetar. Both books, plus Cotham's "Career Shock," can be ordered through Baptist Book Stores, he said. Another resource McGeehee suggested is the World Book Encyclopedia "under vocations."

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Churches finding ways
to help unemployed

By Chip Alford

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HOUSTON (BP)--Gathered in a circle of folding chairs, a diverse group of people listens attentively as a counselor tells them they must take responsibility for their anger.

Nearby, others are using the phones to follow job leads, browsing through want ads and professional journals or faxing resumes to prospective employers.

One man, sipping a cup of coffee and munching on a doughnut, seems just to enjoy a chance to relax.

This was the scene recently, and on most any day, at the Career Resource Center (CRC), a nonprofit community service which provides free career planning and job search assistance to the unemployed in the Houston suburb of Kingwood, Texas.

While other facilities across the country offer similar services, the Kingwood center is unique in that it is sponsored and funded primarily by the Kingwood Area Clergy Association, a group of churches that includes two Southern Baptist congregations.

"I just don't feel our churches are doing enough to help the people in our communities, especially the unemployed," said Betty Arnold, director of the center and a member of First Baptist Church of Kingwood. Arnold first started a support group for the unemployed in her own church in 1986. A year later she had joined forces with the Kingwood Area Clergy Association, talked a local development company into donating office space and opened the doors of the CRC.

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"The unemployed are under tremendous pressure," Arnold explained. "Being without a job can be a very sensitive time both for them and their families. Prayer is important -- we all need that -- but these people need something concrete, too, and we try our best to give it to them."

A weekly "group meeting" for unemployed persons is just one way CRC provides support. Every Thursday morning a local counselor or minister leads participants in a discussion about stresses and problems common to the unemployed. Members offer support and encouragement to one another and also discuss practical solutions.

Other helps offered by the center, all free of charge, include:

-- Assistance in preparing resumes and cover letters; help with typing, copying and faxing the letters to prospective employers from part-time and volunteer secretaries.

-- An answering service the unemployed can use to take messages from prospective employers. Arnold said many people prefer this to having employers contact them at home. "It just seems more professional," she explained.

-- Telephones and cubicles with desk space for the unemployed to use in their job search. "Sometimes it helps to just have a place to go," Arnold said. "Some come in their suits or dresses just like a regular work day; others come in jeans."

And while the center is not a "job placement" facility, Arnold said she sometimes receives tips from employers about possible job openings and passes them on to unemployed persons who visit the center. In addition, CRC plans to begin offering free counseling sessions to spouses and children of the unemployed.

While the center is promoted through area churches, Arnold said only about half those who use it are church-affiliated. And while direct evangelism is not part of CRC's strategy, she said many who use the facility are impressed churches are willing to help.

"We have never tried to turn this into an evangelism tool," she said. "But a lot of people who use the center have joined churches or gone back to church. We have no idea how many lives we may have touched through this."

They do know, however, how well-used the center has become since opening its doors in 1987. Arnold said CRC currently sees about 30 people per month and, in 1991, 109 of 261 who came looking for help found jobs.

"This ministry really grew out of an urgent need of Christians to believe the church was understanding what was going on," said Dearing Garner, pastor of Kingwood First Baptist Church and a member of CRC's board of directors. "So much of a person's identity is tied up in their work. When we started this ministry we knew immediately it was really meeting a need."

The two Kingwood churches aren't the only Southern Baptist congregations active in ministry to the unemployed. As an economic recession continues to impact many areas of the country, more churches and Baptist agencies are expressing interest in getting involved. Consider the following:

-- Lexington Baptist Church in Lexington, S.C., (near Columbia) is offering a weekly support group and Bible study for the unemployed. Church member Jack Maguire uses the Serendipity House Bible study, "Unemployed/Unfilled" in leading the group. He also drives job seekers to sites of potential employers and job-assistance agencies.

-- Telegraph Avenue Baptist Community Center, an Oakland, Calif.,-based ministry supported by the California Southern Baptist Convention and the Home Mission Board, offers job training and referrals to local unemployed residents on welfare. The center also has a clothes closet for the unemployed which includes clothing suitable for job interviews.

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-- Grandview Baptist Church in St. Louis offers a weekly support group for the unemployed to aid individuals in their search for employment and provide an opportunity to meet and discuss mutual problems.

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

Ministers' Wives to hear
Deanna McClary at luncheon

Baptist Press
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INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--The Southern Baptist Ministers' Wives organization will hear Deanna McClary, former model and nationally acclaimed vocalist of Pawleys Island, S.C., at their annual luncheon June 9.

The ministers' wives group holds its luncheon each year in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. The luncheon will begin at 12:15 p.m. in the Hyatt Regency Ballroom.

Each person attending the meeting will be given a copy of "Commitment to Love," written by the guest speaker.

Denise Behymer of Council Road Baptist Church in Yukon, Okla., will provide the special music.

Tickets may be ordered by May 20 by sending a check for \$17 to Linda Myers, First Baptist Church, 106 Bluegrass Commons Blvd., Hendersonville, TN 37075. Tickets will be \$19 at the door.

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