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92-92

**May Cooperative Program
and designated gifts down**

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program total received by the Executive Committee for May took a big drop compared to a year ago, according to Harold C. Bennett, Executive Committee president-treasurer.

The May 1992 total was \$10,680,560 compared to \$12,415,289 the same month a year ago or a 13.97 percent decrease. Designated gifts also suffered compared to a year ago: \$15,961,706 to \$19,608,602, an 18.6 percent decrease.

"I'm disappointed," Bennett said in response to the report.

After eight months of the SBC fiscal year, CP gifts are \$3,245,506 behind the comparable period in 1990-91 which is a 3.39 percent drop. Designated gifts for the fiscal year also are short compared to the previous year: \$105,601,581 compared to \$107,083,976 or a 1.38 percent drop.

The monthly CP basic operating budget requirement for the SBC is \$11,725,856 or, for the eight-month period, \$93,806,848.

Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting ministry and missions through state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. State and regional conventions retain a percentage of Cooperative Program contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries.

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**Assisted suicide, euthanasia
become front-burner issues**

By Louis Moore

Baptist Press
6/2/92

NASHVILLE (BP)--Assisted suicide and euthanasia are moving to the forefront as major ethical/moral issues facing Christians today.

Reports of acts of assisted suicide have increased around the country in recent years. Retired doctor Jack Kevorkian is a key figure in this movement with his right-to-die activities, including his infamous "suicide machine." Indicative of the trend, Hemlock Society executive director Derek Humphrey's book "Final Exit" topped the New York Times' best-seller list last year.

The federal government's new Patient Self-determination Act, which became law last December, now requires hospitals, nursing homes and other medical facilities to provide patients information on their state laws regarding "advance medical directives." Southern Baptist ethicists say the issues of assisted suicide and euthanasia (sometimes called mercy killing) will be among the hottest ethical and moral debates of the 1990s.

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"On this issue, Southern Baptists are now at the same stage as they were on the abortion issue in 1971," said Richard Land, executive director of the Christian Life Commission. At that time, some Southern Baptist leaders supported abortion and the denomination as a whole was lukewarm to the issue. Today, the denomination is among the most ardently pro-life church bodies in the country.

Land and C. Ben Mitchell, CLC director of biomedical and life issues, are encouraging Southern Baptists to become informed about the issues involved in assisted suicide and euthanasia. Once fully knowledgeable, Southern Baptists are likely to become as concerned about these issues as they are about abortion, Land and Mitchell predicted.

As many as 59 percent of U.S. Protestants support legalization of euthanasia, according to a report published in the Journal of the American Medical Association May 20. The survey, conducted by KRC Communications Research on behalf of the Boston Globe and the Harvard Program on Public Opinion and Health Care, reveals a sharp rise since 1950 in public support for legalization of euthanasia and withdrawal of life support from patients with incurable diseases.

According to the report, "In 1950, only 34 percent of Americans thought physicians ought to be allowed to end the lives of patients with incurable diseases, if their families requested it. By 1977, however, this figure had risen to 60 percent. Since then, support has remained relatively steady, between 61 percent and 63 percent, and was at 63 percent in 1991."

Among religious groups, 72 percent of Catholics, 59 percent of Jews and 59 percent of Protestants support legalizing euthanasia if patients and their families request it.

"This somewhat startling report reveals how insidiously and potently the 'quality of life' ethic has infiltrated our society in general and the religious community in particular," Mitchell said.

"The fact that 70 percent of the respondents who favor euthanasia are between the ages of 18 and 34 is both instructive and frightening," Mitchell added. "It is instructive because it demonstrates that just as our society sowed the pro-abortion wind, we are now reaping the pro-euthanasia whirlwind."

"Like it or not, these two issues are inextricably tied together. If you function by a 'quality of life' ethic in abortion, it is inevitable you will apply the same relativistic ethic at the other end of life. And that is terribly frightening since the majority of those polled in the survey will be making end-of-life decisions for their parents and family members."

Reasons Americans gave for supporting euthanasia include fear of being a burden to one's family, concern over living in pain and fear of dependence on machines. Mitchell said several things must be done to try to short-circuit the euthanasia movement in evangelical churches:

"First, pastors must preach doctrinal messages on the nature of human beings as creatures of God, made in his image. Biblical anthropology will not allow one person intentionally to kill an innocent human being.

"Second, we need to come to grips with the sovereignty of God and rethink the nature and purposes of human suffering. Americans have become wimps when it comes to pain and suffering. We have decided that any amount of pain and any suffering is too high a price to pay for life -- and that simply should not be the case.

"Third, we must call for continued research and efforts to manage pain more effectively. Ironically, the same issue of the medical journal with the report of the euthanasia survey also contained a notice of the publication of a new guide for clinical management of acute pain. We have not yet exhausted our arsenal of pain-control techniques.

"Fourth, evangelicals will have to become more active in supplying comfort and care for dying patients. Nursing homes and hospices need compassionate volunteers to make the end of life more comfortable for dying patients and their families. Churches also must help families struggling to take care of a terminal loved one.

"Finally, pro-life Christians are going to have to keep working hard to raise the level of public awareness of the issues and help motivate one another to do our work in the voting booth. Pro-euthanasia legislation is popping up all over the country."

In a matter closely related to euthanasia, the Harvard survey found only 16 percent of all Americans would want to withhold food and water from dying patients. "In spite of these statistics," Mitchell warned, "a number of states are considering revisions of their laws which include permission to withhold and withdraw nutrition and hydration. By permitting the withholding and withdrawal of food and water, we are legalizing for human health care what we would be jailed for doing to animals."

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Missionary visits Peruvian
prison despite rebel presence

By Mary E. Speidel

Baptist Press
6/2/92

CHORRILLOS, Peru (BP)--Pam Ammons prayed all the way walking to prison.

The Southern Baptist missionary didn't know what she would find when she arrived at the Santa Monica women's prison in Chorrillos, Peru, the week 70 female terrorists were transferred there. She feared she might not get to leave once she got inside.

"I considered not going," admitted Ammons, from Portsmouth, Va. She teaches aerobics twice a week at the prison, about nine miles south of Lima, the capital.

"I can remember walking to the prison (near her home) praying the whole time, saying, 'Lord, don't let me get in there and have to stay.'"

Her uneasiness was understandable. Since the transfer the facility has been surrounded by military forces and armored cars. Part of the highway in front is closed to traffic; guerrillas reportedly have threatened to plant car bombs nearby.

The threats grew out of a four-day battle in early May between police and guerrillas at the Miguel Castro prison in Lima. Riots erupted there May 6 when officials tried to move about 180 women terrorists to the Chorrillos prison.

Inmates housed in two cellblocks -- controlled by members of the Shining Path guerrilla group -- tried to fight off police with guns, acid and explosives. The next day police took control of one of the cellblocks. Rebels continued the battle from the other cellblock housing male terrorists.

The bloody standoff ended when government forces stormed the cellblock. About 500 prisoners surrendered; nearly 40 inmates and at least two policemen died, according to news reports.

Later, about 70 women inmates were moved to the Chorrillos prison, where 360 other women are jailed.

Although security has increased there, Ammons has been allowed to come and go as usual. About 40 inmates attend her aerobics class, featuring Christian music and a Bible devotion. She also counsels the women about spiritual and personal matters.

The guerrillas are held in a restricted area of the prison. Ammons can't visit them but hopes prison officials eventually will allow her to minister to the women. "I've already starting praying about it, questioning whether it would be possible," she said.

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One inmate she has helped is Alicia Soto. After Ammons began leading her in Bible studies, Soto accepted Christ as Savior. She has since finished the "Survival Kit" discipleship training program. Soto now teaches a spiritual introduction course to a prison guard and two other inmates and hopes to help Ammons after she is released.

The prison ministry may become part of a Baptist mission congregation Ammons and her husband, Chris, from Asbury, N.J., began in their Chorrillos home last year.

The prison isn't the only dangerous place in their neighborhood. A few blocks away police recently defused a car bomb allegedly targeted at a nearby military academy.

An increase in such incidents in the Lima area has put government security forces on maximum alert in recent weeks. President Alberto Fujimori pledged to wipe out the guerrilla insurgency by 1995 after he suspended Peru's democracy April 5.

Some of the recent violence has come close to Baptists. On May 22 a car bomb broke a window at the office of the Southern Baptist mission organization in Peru, five blocks away. The explosion damaged about a dozen financial institutions and several government buildings in a nearby business district. The bomb contained about 400 kilos of dynamite -- reportedly the most powerful car bomb planted by terrorists so far, said missionary Hayward Armstrong, from Atmore, Ala.

The week before, another car bomb shattered the windows at the Missionary Baptist Church of Rimac in downtown Lima. The church's pastor and his family live in the building; several of his children suffered cuts from flying glass, Armstrong said. A nearby police academy reportedly was the target.

Four terrorists interrupted Sunday night worship at Mariategui Baptist Mission in Lima in early May. The rebels took over the microphone and made some pro-guerrilla statements, according to Armstrong. They left the mission, near the Miguel Castro prison, without harming anyone. A Southern Baptist missionary was to have preached there that night but was unable to attend, Armstrong said. The missionary had visited the mission two nights before.

In the face of such unrest, "you can get afraid and want to go home," said Ammons of herself and fellow missionaries. "Pray that God would continue to keep us safe and that we would continue to work and take the opportunity to evangelize Peru."

More than ever, working in Peru is a matter of faith for Ammons. "You just really know in your heart you're where God wants you to be and you just believe he's going to take care of you," she said. "You can't put your faith in anything else. Police can fail, the bomb squads can fail... . You just know God's taking care of you today."

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Couple's loss of infant twins
turns ministry roles inside out

By Suzanne Darland

Baptist Press
6/2/92

SONORA, Ky. (BP)--It was Easter week, a time of new beginnings. They had come home to central Kentucky after being church starters in Iowa.

Bruce Underhill had begun a new pastorate at Barren Run Baptist Church near Sonora only two weeks before and his wife, Peggy, was pregnant for the first time, with twins.

Yet the births and subsequent deaths of the premature infants turned ministry roles inside out at the church just as surely as it turned the young couple's world upside down.

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Struck by the grief of their new pastor and his wife, the small church sprang into action. Mrs. Underhill had been ironing curtains when she went into labor; someone finished ironing and hung them up. Many of the gestures seemed insignificant: bringing over a meal or offering a hug. Once someone left a \$20 bill in the car. But they spoke volumes of the love they offered and helped the couple cope through a difficult time. "Just asking: 'How's Joshua? How are you coping today?' meant so much," Mrs. Underhill recalled.

"You don't have to go through psychology courses to care," added her husband.

Only two weeks after they moved to the church field, she unexplainedly went into labor. She was six months pregnant with twins in an otherwise uneventful pregnancy. She located her husband and they hurriedly began the hour-long drive to Norton Hospital in Louisville, renowned for its high-risk infant care. They stopped at Hardin Memorial Hospital in Elizabethtown to be sure she could make it to Louisville. She couldn't. Two boys, each weighing about a pound and a half, were born there within 45 minutes.

After a brief glimpse and touch, the fragile infants, barely a foot long and their heads "as big around as Coke cans," said Underhill, were rushed to Kosair Hospital in Louisville. Aside from being small, the major problem premature babies have is undeveloped lungs. The twin who was born second, Shawn, developed a form of emphysema and died two days after he was born, on Good Friday 1990.

Underhill preached Easter Sunday despite the death, saying it was "therapeutic" to proclaim God's Word.

Then nine months, 46 blood transfusions and three surgeries later, twin Joshua died, not before taking his parents on a roller coaster of emotions. He was on oxygen all his life and never came home from the hospital.

Life for the couple during that nine months was emotionally draining. They made the hour-long drive to the hospital four or five times a week, often just to scrub up and look at the baby through a haze of wires and machines. They couldn't hold Joshua until he was two months old; doctors didn't take out his feeding tube to let him drink from a bottle until he was five months old. Some days were better; by September, when he was 5 months old, he'd gained four pounds and looked like he'd reached a turning point. Other days were worse; they saw baby after baby go off the ventilator at four weeks and go home at 10 weeks. Theirs remained.

"I was lucky I got the laundry done some days," Mrs. Underhill said. Many days sandwiches were the only meals time or emotional energy could manage.

"I dreaded calling in in the morning and I dreaded calling in at night," she said. "Things changed so quickly."

And still church members kept caring. They offered to drive her up on days Underhill couldn't go so she wouldn't face a long drive home. They watched hours of video tapes of Joshua, "the only way we could bring him home," Mrs. Underhill said. They hugged the couple and prayed for them. Mrs. Underhill got especially close to one church member whose baby had died when he was 9 months old.

"We probably bonded with people a lot more quickly than if we'd been here a year or more before this happened, Underhill reflected. "They continued in their leadership roles instead of sitting back because the new pastor was here," his wife added.

By November, Joshua's health began a permanent decline. His chronic lung problem had caused his heart to enlarge, trying to force more and more blood through the damaged lungs. He needed more and more oxygen. And a low-grade fever wouldn't go away.

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The day came when doctors no longer were optimistic about Joshua's chances for survival. "Where there's life, there's hope at first," Underhill said, "but later there was no use in continuing to try and keep him alive."

Nine days before he died on January 30 last year, Joshua finally rewarded his parents with a long-awaited smile. He was 9 months old. They recorded a full 20 minutes on video of Joshua smiling, cooing and laughing.

The pathologist said Joshua's lungs were the worst he'd ever seen. He didn't know how he'd lived that long.

Both babies' funerals were held at Barren Run church; both are buried in the cemetery between the sanctuary and the parsonage. A headstone is engraved with a quote from Dr. Seuss' "Horton Hears a Who": "A person's a person no matter how small." The house is filled with remembrances: photographs, footprints, a baby book carefully filled with hospital records and snips of hair.

The couple said they've learned how loving God is. Though they often anticipated Joshua's death and dreaded it, when it came, "God gave us the grace when we needed it, when it actually happened," Underhill said. "Not before."

Their faith has been strengthened and their resolve about going to heaven stronger, they added.

They are more sensitive to others who face crisis. "No one ever knows why," she said.

"You never get over it; you just get used to it," he added. He receives compliments on how he handles funerals. He's been there.

"We're more sensitive about Mother's Day," he continued. "I ask mothers whose babies are in heaven to stand, too."

Mrs. Underhill said she got lots of hugs last Mother's Day, having lost both of the boys. The couple wondered whether they were still parents without a baby to show for it.

But the story has a happy ending. The day after that Mother's Day, she learned she was pregnant and after an uneventful pregnancy a healthy Lydia was born last Dec. 27.

"When a baby is born who's healthy, you don't ask, 'Why me?'" Underhill said. "You take for granted healthy."

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Suzanne Darland is a state correspondent for the Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist newsjournal.

Couple suggests how to help
others cope with loss of child

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SONORA, Ky. (BP)--When a parent loses a child, whether it's because of miscarriage, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome or a car accident, church members usually are at a loss for words. They don't know what to say or are afraid to say the wrong thing.

But not saying anything because of that fear is the wrong thing to do.

Bruce Underhill, pastor of Barren Run Baptist Church in Sonora, Ky., offers some advice to help grieving parents:

-- If you don't know what to say, tell them so. Tell them you love them, will pray for them and listen to them if they want to share their sadness.

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-- Keep in touch. Call and ask how they're coping or doing that day. Listen.

-- Don't offer false assurances of knowing how they feel or God giving them another baby. Even if you've lost a child, which would offer hope if you share it, you don't know how they feel. And another child will never replace the one they lost.

-- Offer to take one or both out to lunch, shopping or inviting them to your home for a meal.

-- Say the deceased child's name. "We don't want you to forget them," said Underhill's wife, Peggy.

-- Don't hesitate to mention the child, afraid you'll "stir up" painful memories. "That's all we think about anyway," Mrs. Underhill said.

-- Remember birthdays of the dead child and anniversaries of the child's death. The parents will appreciate you thinking of them on a sad day they won't ever forget.

-- Pray for them and with them.

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Religious persecution remains
in Russia, Baptist leader says

By Matthew Brady

Baptist Press
6/2/92

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Although government persecution of religious beliefs is declining in the former Soviet Union, a new kind of persecution is on the rise, according to a leading Russian Baptist who is completing doctoral studies at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

A year ago, Sergei Nikolaev spoke prophetically about changes in his country. This year he has a word of caution for those who believe the old Soviet Union has passed away.

"This is completely dismissing the situation," he said. "Changing the name and color does not mean changing the essence."

Nikolaev, senior pastor of the Temple of the Gospel in St. Petersburg, Russia, has returned to Southwestern Seminary with his family.

Nikolaev said new freedoms his country is enjoying have multiplied opportunities for evangelism -- and opportunities for persecution.

"Before, it was black and white. Now it's more colorful and it's more difficult to recognize who is who," he said. "Nobody will openly persecute you but there are hundreds of new ways to show you that you are a bit different than they are."

Since forming the Temple of the Gospel three years ago, Nikolaev said he has endured death threats, anonymous phone calls and troublemakers in his church. Increasingly, the source of his trouble has been the Russian Orthodox Church.

Nikolaev's church occupies a former Orthodox cathedral. Three years ago it was in ruins. No one wanted it. But now that his church has renovated the building, Nikolaev said the Orthodox want it back.

"Everybody comforts you and says, 'No, no, don't worry. Everything will be all right.' But you know, when they announce on the radio that 'tonight we are going to exorcise the devil out of the church which belonged to us,' it's a strange feeling.

"It (the Orthodox Church) is associated with the government authorities and slowly the Orthodox Church is going to be a state church and on its way to triumph the Orthodox are going to press everybody who is not Orthodox," he said.

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Nikolaev said he believes that could be more dangerous than past persecutions because "it seems like religious freedom." But he added, "It is a privilege for some, which will be lost for many of us."

The political changes also have created food shortages. Nikolaev estimated thousands, perhaps millions, of his countrymen are starving. His city, St. Petersburg, is "living by the donations of foreign help," he said. Much of that help is coming from Scandinavian Christians who funnel their aid through the Temple of the Gospel. Those donations allow the church to feed soup, sandwiches and milk to approximately 500 people each day. Last year the church fed 300,000 people.

Despite the persecution and hardships, Nikolaev said his church is "the fastest growing in Europe." Last year the church baptized more than 500 converts age 16 or older. The church already has baptized more than 300 this year. With Sunday worship averaging 1,800, "the building is already too small," he said. "The Lord is really good to us and makes miracles in our midst."

Although his church and many others are growing rapidly, Nikolaev said supporting pastors and missionaries financially is difficult for the churches. Part of his mission in the United States is to raise money for these workers.

"We have good young people ready to go ... ready even to sacrifice themselves but, of course, we need to support them," he said. "I could not send anybody who has a wife and two children and say, 'Well, you are going and I will pay you 250 rubles a month.' That's impossible to survive on -- two and a half dollars, you know."

Nikolaev said he believes the door to evangelism in his country will not remain open much longer. More than sugar, butter and bread, he said his country needs the West to teach free enterprise and a new way of thinking about business. If the present anarchy continues, "the military will take over," he said.

"There is no limitation of anything. If you kill people in the street, nobody will stop you. You can do whatever you want, steal, rob, whatever your imagination can conceive," he said.

"People are suffering. The army and all the military complex is very unhappy. They have united and are getting stronger. I am afraid there could be another coup," he said. "We pray the Lord will have mercy upon our country."

Nikolaev and his wife, Helen, have four sons: Vladic, 21, a student at Dallas Baptist University, Ilia, 16, Jacob, 9, and Phillip, 8. They will be in the United States through December.

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

Pastor group endorses
Ed Young for president

Baptist Press
6/2/92

SPARTANBURG, S.C. (BP)--A group of 21 Southern Baptist pastors has endorsed Ed Young for president of the Southern Baptist Convention, according to a news release issued by Michael S. Hamlet, pastor of First Baptist Church of North Spartanburg, S.C.

Pastors from churches in North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, New Mexico, Alabama and Tennessee are included as signers of the four-part endorsement.

Young is one of three announced candidates for president of the convention. The presidential vote comes during the first day of the convention, June 9, at the Hoosier Dome in Indianapolis. The other two candidates are Nelson Price, a pastor in Marietta, Ga., and Jess Moody, a pastor in a Los Angeles suburb.

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Citing a "new day of challenge, opportunity and hope," the pastors said they committed themselves to the "task before us."

The endorsement included:

- 1) a challenge to SBC churches to make evangelism a greater priority by the year 2000.
- 2) affirmation of the work of the Home and Foreign mission boards, calling on Southern Baptists to make the "greatest effort in missions in our history" by responding to opening of doors to the gospel around the world.
- 3) calling for Southern Baptists "to come together with a sense of unity knowing the great majority of Southern Baptists are ready to get on with the business of reaching people with the gospel."
- 4) "We enthusiastically endorse the nomination of Ed Young for president of the SBC." The release cited Young's record as pastor of Second Baptist Church in Houston, "one of the greatest soul-winning churches in America."

Pastors signing the document were Bobby Boyles of First Baptist of Moore, Okla.; Joe Brown, Hickory Grove of Charlotte, N.C.; Curt Dodd, Metropolitan Baptist of Houston; Ronnie Floyd, First Baptist of Springdale, Ark.; Jack Graham, Prestonwood Baptist of Dallas; David Hankins, Trinity Baptist of Lake Charles, La.; Michael Hailey, First Baptist of Lakeland, Fla.

Johnny Hunt, First Baptist of Woodstock, Ga.; Charles Lowery, Hoffmantown Baptist of Albuquerque, N.M.; James Merritt, First Baptist of North Mobile, Saraland, Ala.; Ike Reighard, New Hope of Fayetteville, Ga.; Rick Scarborough, First Baptist of Pearland, Texas.

Jerry Sutton, Two Rivers of Nashville; Larry Thompson, Dauphin Way of Mobile, Ala.; Len Turner, Calvary Temple of Savannah, Ga.; Claude Thomas, First Baptist of Euless, Texas; Randall Williams, First Baptist of Tampa, Fla.; Larry Wynn, Hebron Baptist of Dacula, Ga.; and Hamlet.

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Naval Academy BSU helps
convention build churches

By Bob Allen

Baptist Press
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WILMINGTON, Del. (BP)--When Baptist students at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., put down their manuals and textbooks to pick up hammers and nails, something remarkable happens.

A church.

That has been the experience of four Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware congregations the last five years since the Baptist Student Union at the academy began sending volunteer teams for construction of church buildings.

Dick Bumpass, BSU director at the academy, said the group's annual spring break construction project is a way for midshipmen, whose schedules do not allow them to participate in traditional BSU summer missions ventures, a chance to learn about and support missions.

"I am a very strong believer in missions," Bumpass said. The construction teams have proven effective at helping Baptist midshipmen "understand what it takes to build a church," he added. That, of course, involves more than miter cuts and spackling. Team spirit, fellowship and cooperation are as important to the project's success as is a solid foundation.

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"They still classify it as fun," Bumpass said, though after five consecutive spring breaks of 13-hour days and heavy lifting he is personally convinced it is hard work. "It does a great job of building community. They work together, get to know one another and learn to appreciate one another."

The academy's students come to Annapolis from all 50 states. For most it is the first step in a military career in which they can look forward to years of transitory relationships with churches and individuals from one assignment to the next.

The construction projects are one way BSU students can connect with Baptist work in Maryland and Delaware. They are able to meet the people as they work beside them and leave something tangible behind when they move on. It also helps both the midshipmen and Maryland/Delaware Baptists understand that BSU is "part of the total program of church development," Bumpass said. "We are part of the whole picture. If we can help build churches, that's part of our reason for being."

This year's team, working on a lot in New Castle, Del., helped Solid Rock Baptist Church, an African-American congregation sponsored as a mission by Ogletown Baptist Church in Newark, move closer to a dream of having a building of their own.

The first group of students went to the building site May 7 expecting to saw lumber for exterior framing. When they arrived, however, they discovered the concrete slab poured by a contractor was 2 feet too narrow for the building plans. The four students instead dug by hand an 80-foot trench and poured new footings. Block layers scheduled the next day were delayed by rain.

Because of the delays, the full 21-member construction team worked only three full days and were able "only" to erect and enclose exterior walls and roof, do half the roofing and begin interior stud walls. They had hoped to complete roofing, interior framing and perhaps even drywall.

It is an amazing thing to behold, said Solid Rock pastor Daniel F. Thomas. "It's just tremendous. I don't know what to say about it."

The church had been meeting in a 12-foot-by-40-foot trailer. The building will increase their space nearly six times. Thomas expects the project will cost the congregation about \$80,000. He estimates savings due to volunteer labor at \$135,000.

"There is no way we could have built this church without this help," he said. "We are building this church on a shoestring."

Delaware Baptist Association director of missions James McBride said Delaware churches have picked up where the naval academy group left off in the construction process. Volunteers from several congregations have helped with construction and providing meals. Dallas Glass, pastor at London Village Baptist Church is construction supervisor, working on the building an average of two days a week.

Other Maryland/Delaware congregations to benefit from the Annapolis BSU's annual mission project are Monroe Memorial in Denton, Md., which built a building with the BSU's help, and New Hope in Lothian, Md., and First Baptist in Marydel, Md., which added wings to existing buildings. In 1988 the midshipmen helped a sister BSU group by building the exterior shell for the Baptist Student Center at Frostburg (Md.) State University.

Bumpass said he was musing on the quality of the Middies' work while on a renovation project in New York City several years ago when the idea struck to apply their talents in Maryland and Delaware. "When you get an intelligent, disciplined group of people with good supervision, you can really accomplish a lot," he said.

Handle criticism creatively,
Sullivan tells SSB employees

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP)--The mark of a mature Christian is not whether he receives criticism but how well he handles criticism he receives, James L. Sullivan told participants May 29 in the 101st anniversary celebration of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"Christians are always vulnerable to criticism if their lives count for anything," Sullivan told more than 1,500 employees, retirees and guests who attended the annual anniversary day service. Sullivan was president of the church programs and publishing board from 1953-75.

He said everyone is subject to criticism -- even Jesus Christ -- who was the target of untrue charges he was a drunk, a glutton and son of the devil.

"They tried to weaken him by criticism," Sullivan said.

Publishing houses such as the board are especially vulnerable to criticisms caused by typographical errors and other problems in the editing and printing processes, he noted.

Sullivan recalled an incident when he was president that the printing of a book was stopped when it was discovered that the title, "Why I Believe in Immortality," instead was printed, "Why I Believe in Immorality." In another instance a Sunday school lesson titled, "Paul Pleads for a Slave," was distributed as "Paul Pleads for a Shave."

"Most criticisms are sincerely given. It is well that we analyze them. It is well that we handle them in the best way possible," Sullivan said.

When a person criticizes one or two things about another, the one criticized should listen and try to learn from it, he said. But "when someone criticizes everything, the problem is in them."

In many instances, Sullivan said, criticism "gets emotions so high that judgment ceases. People operate with their feelings instead of their brains.

"If we can get folks who disagree together and talk dispassionately, in many instances we'll find both sides are wrong. Folks ought to find the truth through dispassionate discussion," Sullivan said.

He also called for patience in dealing with criticism, reciting an experience years ago when, as a pastor, a woman called him daily to complain the basketball uniforms worn by girls at a local high school were immodest.

After many days of conversation that seemed to go nowhere, the woman said to Sullivan, "What if Jesus were to come again and catch those girls in those uniforms?"

Exasperated, Sullivan replied, "Madame, has it ever occurred to you that when he comes again, he may catch you in the bathtub?"

"I cut her off and now I had no contact," Sullivan said. "My job was to bring comfort and I failed her. I failed my church and its mission.

"Most criticism is sincere. It can actually bring a blessing to our lives if we try to deliver excellence in everything we do," he said.

Earlier, Sunday School Board President James T. Draper Jr. said when he became president in August 1991 Sullivan wrote him a six-page letter outlining his administrative philosophy in 44 points.

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In the letter, Sullivan told Draper that in leaving the pastorate of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, to lead a Southern Baptist agency he was 'stepping down. The highest position in the denomination, Sullivan wrote, is the pastorate.

Other points in Sullivan's letter addressed truth, conflict and organization.

"Good organization is like digestion. When it's working, you're not aware of it. When it's not working, you can hardly think of anything else," Sullivan wrote.

"Take your work seriously, but yourself, never," Sullivan admonished Draper.

Employees celebrating anniversary milestones in their careers were recognized. Bonnie Bradley, a merchandise assembler clerk in the distribution services division, was cited for the longest tenure, 40 years.

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

Popularity of prof's book
leads to third edition

Baptist Press
6/2/92

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Providing help for a new generation of ministers is the aim of the third edition of "Pastoral Care in the Church," according to the book's author, C.W. Brister.

"The major goal for this revision is to interpret pastoral care for a new generation of theological students and pastors," said Brister, distinguished professor of pastoral ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

"Pastoral Care in the Church" was first published in 1964 by Harper & Row. Brister said he is pleased the book's publishers have continued revising the text.

"What is new about this book that distinguishes it from other texts on pastoral care is it involves the pastoral action of the entire church and not ordained clergy alone.

"It shows how to structure a congregation's life for shared ministry both to seize the pastor's talents and to summon the gifts of committed laypersons," said Brister, who has taught at Southwestern since 1957.

Brister said today's ministers must become strategists in advancing the Christian faith. "The paradigm I've suggested for the Christian caregiver is that of hope-bearer, one who advances the faith in a perplexed world. We're not just service providers or therapists or counselors."

According to Brister, the book is not intended to be another counseling or self-help book. Counseling is presented in the context of a larger pastoral care setting.

Instead, the book offers a grasp of total ministry of the local church in the modern world from the perspective of a high-tech, Western society, Brister said.

Along with Brister's concept of hope-bearer as the ministerial image, the book offers guidance across national, ethnic and cultural lines.

According to Brister, its language reflects inclusiveness and respects women's experiences, both as providers and receivers of pastoral care. Recent research on key issues also is included in the book.

"We are turning significant corners as we live into the next millennium and caregivers are challenged to discover what it takes to practice pastoral ministry in response to the realities of life," Brister said.

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

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Also available upon request:

-- Feature by Marv Knox on the missions involvement of a single mother in Kentucky and her son and daughter.