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January 14, 1993

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Gifts to home missions
offering set record

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
1/14/93

ATLANTA (BP)--Gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions set a record last year by exceeding \$37 million.

Gifts totaled \$37.61 million, according to the year-end, unaudited report. The 1992 gifts were up 5.89 percent from the 1991 total of \$35.52 million.

"I am thrilled and delighted with the record-breaking report," said Larry L. Lewis, Home Mission Board president.

The gifts indicate "the continued interest of Southern Baptists in evangelism, church planting and ministry," Lewis said.

Lewis also attributed the increased giving to Morris Chapman's challenge for churches to double their gifts to the annual offering. Chapman issued his challenge while serving as president of the Southern Baptist Convention. He is now president of the SBC Executive Committee.

Ernest Kelley, HMB vice president for planning and finance, said the offering total is a "very tangible expression of the commitment of Southern Baptists to reaching our land for Christ."

The 1992 gifts reached 91.74 percent of the \$41 million goal. The 1993 goal is \$38 million. Money received over the goal will be used to start churches.

All offering receipts are spent on the mission field. Annie Armstrong gifts account for 47 percent of the Home Mission Board's 1993 budget, Kelley said. Cooperative Program receipts are 36 percent of the budget.

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Baptist workers in Iraq
watching what happens next

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press
1/14/93

ZAKHO, Iraq (BP)--All was quiet Jan. 14 in northern Iraq where Southern Baptist aid workers are based, following allied air strikes on Iraqi missile sites to the south the day before.

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"We wouldn't have known anything was going on had we not seen it on CNN," said Paul Smith, who heads up assistance to the Kurds by Global Partners, a London-based humanitarian agency. Smith spoke to Baptist Press via cellular telephone from Zakho, near the Turkish border in the northern "no fly" zone.

Still, the seven Global Partners workers in Zakho planned to stay in their well-guarded house for at least 48 hours.

"I think we'll cease operations here for a few days until we see things are clear," Smith said.

In a morning briefing Jan. 14, allied authorities in the area told foreign relief workers there was little imminent danger of an Iraqi military incursion into the Kurdish region -- now being closely watched by allied planes. But they warned the workers to prepare for an increased risk of harassment or terrorism.

Western workers in the northern region have been targeted repeatedly over the last year in bombing incidents, shootings and destruction of vehicles and relief equipment.

Should they need to evacuate, the Global Partners workers have a detailed plan and could be "out of here ... in 15 minutes" on the way to Turkey, Smith said.

Global Partners has worked in the Zakho area since the end of the Gulf War, helping Kurdish people through medical clinics, well drilling and seed distribution.

"We're making big plans to expand; we're not giving up," Smith insisted, "unless things fall apart" in the region's fragile peace.

"Bottom line is that we are all fine, no one upset. We are continuing our work with precaution," he added.

Global Partners personnel in Zakho include Smith, of West Monroe, La., and his wife, Virginia, of Farmington, Mo.; physician Robert Pepper of Beaumont, Texas, and his wife, Rhonda, of Rutledge, Ga.; well-drilling coordinator Art Baker of Georgetown, S.C.; seed-distribution coordinator Bill Hinton of Hopkinsville, Ky.; and Chris Unger, a German.

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WMU executive offers reasons
for historic board action

By Karen Benson

Baptist Press
1/14/93

TALLADEGA, Ala. (BP)--The actions Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union took Jan. 9-13 "first and foremost" have been for the "sake of lost souls around the world," according to WMU Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien.

"What we have done here this week is not for ourselves alone. Our decisions first and foremost have been for the sake of lost souls around the world -- souls who can't wait until we resolve our denominational controversy. Souls that await the telling of the Good News," she said.

The actions also have been done "for the sake of WMU," O'Brien said. "No organization of believers can survive without a renewed vision -- nor should it. God has permitted us to experience the joy of being 'on mission' for him. He has shaken us up and caused us to see the greater purpose for which we should strive."

In concert with women around the world, "because of our unique giftedness and the urgency of the task," WMU has glimpsed the challenge and the joy and satisfaction of the journey, O'Brien said. "We invite all women to share the journey."

Most of all, though, WMU actions this week have been done "for Christ's sake," O'Brien said. "Nothing we do has any meaning or value unless it magnifies and glorifies the Father," she said. "He has been gracious to move in our hearts, giving us the courage for which we have so fervently prayed."

The decisions made during the week did not come easily, O'Brien reflected. Quoting Psalm 40:1-3, she shared how the Lord helped lift her "out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and the mire."

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"For some time, our convention has been immersed in a controversy which seems not to be resolved," O'Brien said. "For years, WMU as a whole has remained free of this conflict. While we have the same theological diversity in our organizations that is found in the SBC, with both strong conservatives and strong moderates and everything in between, it has not mattered.

"Because our eyes have been focused on Jesus and our hearts directed toward winning the world to Christ, we have refused to be distracted by this dissension," she said.

Unfortunately, she said, during the year there have been events that involved WMU "in spite of our reluctance to be a part," she said. "There has been an attempt to 'invite' us to become an agency. Our integrity regarding our program statement revision has been questioned. Threats have been made if we attempt to support any other sending agency within Southern Baptist churches."

Not only were these occasions stressful, she said, "they interrupted the good spirit of cooperation with other boards and agencies. Those of you who were present with us when we were questioned or intimidated can attest to the trauma and the distress."

At times, WMU leaders felt "bogged down by the mire -- miserable, paralyzed and detracted from our main task," she said.

More recently, it was demanded WMU "choose sides," O'Brien said, by aligning with one element or another. "The fact is, there are numerous factions within our SBC -- not just two," she said. "To fall into step with only one precludes our being what we were formed to be for other Southern Baptists."

WMU leaders have been grieved to see the polarization of the Southern Baptist denomination, O'Brien said. "Surely, surely, it is possible for one entity in our convention to embrace them all! Are we not weary of the taking of sides? Can we not rid ourselves of politics? Is there no possibility for one entity to relate to all -- conservatives, moderates, undeclared and confused?"

Someone said during the week that WMU has "taken a stance -- not sides," O'Brien said. "I like that."

Many people have said that it is time for WMU to "do something," O'Brien said. "Not one person has been able to suggest what we should do, but the plea comes from hearts weary of the slime and the mire of controversy."

WMU is "raising the flag of missions high and inviting: 'If you believe in God's command to go and teach and make disciples, then go with us. Give total allegiance to missions -- not to people, not to agencies, not to discreet groups -- but to all expressions of Southern Baptist missions.'"

WMU's goal is to challenge, to motivate and equip all Southern Baptists to follow Christ into the world, O'Brien said. "Our missionaries, from the Home and Foreign Mission boards, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and other fellowships and individual churches continue to serve. We will invoke God's blessings and protection on them. We will give financially to provide for them and their work. As it was in the beginning, so shall it ever be."

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WRAPUP

WMU embraces 'missions,'
not political factions

By Susan Doyle

Baptist Press
1/14/93

TALLADEGA, Ala. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Executive Board made decisions during their Jan. 9-13 meeting they hope will allow them to be the one entity that can relate to all Southern Baptists, according to its national executive.

The board's meeting at the national WMU office Jan. 9 and at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly Jan. 10-13 was attended by state WMU presidents, who comprise the WMU Executive Board; state WMU executive directors and their staffs; national WMU leaders and staff; and other guests.

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National WMU Executive Director Dellanna W. O'Brien said WMU has "taken a stance -- not taken sides."

"The fact is, there are numerous factions within the SBC, not just two," she said. "To fall into step with only one precludes our being what we were formed to be to other Southern Baptists."

WMU gives total allegiance to missions, O'Brien said, not to people, agencies or other groups.

Action taken by the Executive Board will allow WMU to produce materials for all Southern Baptist groups involved in missions at their request. The board also voted to begin marketing generic missions education resources for other evangelical groups.

The action was based on recommendations made to the WMU board by an ad hoc study committee formed one year ago. WMU President Carolyn Miller named the 17-member committee made up of herself, several state WMU presidents, several state WMU executive directors, the national WMU recording secretary, a former national president and several national WMU staff members.

The committee's recommendations included a preamble which affirmed the organization's desire to support "Southern Baptist global missions through prayer, the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions, and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions."

The preamble also stated "the right of individuals, churches, and state conventions to choose other plans for cooperative missions giving."

The board also approved recommendations to:

- "recommit ourselves to missions, the reason we exist, and relate to others who share our commitment";
- "promote and facilitate effective volunteerism in response to missions needs";
- "identify one social issue each year for specific intervention through national projects"; and
- "accept contributions to be used for WMU and related missions needs."

The recommendations stemmed from a vision statement and set of core values.

The vision statement reads: "Woman's Missionary Union exists to enable churches and believers to participate in introducing all persons in the world to Christ."

The eight core values adopted by the group were titled: "Priesthood of the Believer," "God's Call to Mission," "Prayer for Missions," "Giftedness of Women," "Social and Moral Issues," "Development of Leaders," "Partnership with Christians Around the World" and "Diverse Organizational Models."

After voting on each part separately, the board adopted the committee's report "in toto" -- recommendations, vision statement and core values -- without opposition.

The board also adopted a new "Church WMU Base Design," a document which defines what WMU tasks are and what WMU organizations will be in the local church. The new plan will become effective with the 1995-96 church year.

The plan calls for several major changes:

1) WMU's tasks have been simplified and re-prioritized. The tasks beginning in 1995-96 are:

- "Pray for and give to missions."
- "Do missions."
- "Learn about missions."
- "Develop spiritually toward a missions lifestyle."
- "Participate in the work of the church and the denomination."

Between now and October 1995, WMU will continue to operate under the current task statements:

- "Teach missions."
- "Engage in mission action and personal witnessing."
- "Support missions."
- "Interpret and undergird the work of the church and denomination."

2) The new plan includes a specific focus on "churchwide missions." While ongoing, in-depth missions learning and involvement will still be carried through WMU age-level organizations, there will be an additional emphasis on all people in the church having some missions awareness and involvement.

3) The adult organization has been simplified to allow groups to form around common purpose, interests, needs or age. Each group will select one or more missions task as a focus. The adult organization also will include a greater emphasis on hands-on ministry and witness involvement.

While the adult organization will allow for more diversity, it will also provide for members who are happy with current traditional missions involvement.

The name of the WMU adult organization will be presented for recommendation at the June WMU Executive Board meeting.

4) The new plan also adds a focus in Mission Friends, the preschool organization -- parental involvement in a child's missions education.

5) The Girls in Action organization will include an option for an older GA (grades 4-6) group. Older GAs will have opportunities to participate in the organization more, will have more issues-oriented curriculum and will use different learning approaches.

These changes came in direct response to requests from WMU members and leaders that the entire WMU organization be more simple, flexible and relevant to today's world, said Bobbie Patterson, WMU associate executive director.

In other business, the WMU executive board:

- Voted to ask R. Keith Parks, former president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, to allow the archives of the national WMU office to be the repository for his personal presidency papers.

- Adopted a news philosophy and news coverage policy for WMU Executive Board meetings.

- Approved the 1992 annual report.

- Approved \$65,410 in grants from WMU's endowment fund, the Second Century Fund.

Second Century Fund grants are used to support missions work among women abroad and in the United States and to support missions education among women in seminaries.

Grants awarded this year will fund the following requests from overseas: construction of a WMU building in Nigeria; production of a WMU handbook in Bolivia and Panama; leadership training in Brazil and Canada; and scholarships for a missions camp in Venezuela.

Other grants provide scholarships for women to attend the Asian Baptist Women's Union meeting in the Philippines and the Baptist Women's Union of Latin America in Mexico. Two grants will help with educational expenses for a Baptist woman from the Commonwealth of Independent States to study at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and a Baptist woman from India to study at California Baptist College.

Grants were also given to provide leadership training in the Colorado, Minnesota/Wisconsin, Wyoming, New England, New York and Utah/Idaho state Baptist conventions; assist with a Girls in Action/Acteens camp in Indiana; help with Acteens work in Iowa; provide new-work-area literature; fund a language advisory council; and produce missions videos in three languages.

- Adopted the 1995-96 Dated Plan, which outlines the activities, curriculum and products for WMU work in churches for that year.

- Heard reports from the Home and Foreign Mission boards.

- Heard reports of work WMU members did this past year to aid disaster relief efforts in Florida, Louisiana and Hawaii.

- Heard a report on "Operation Lydia," a project whereby WMU members are starting churches in and around Detroit, Mich.

- Heard from Southern Baptist missionaries and a Cooperative Services International representative who all gave testimony to the influence of WMU in their spiritual pilgrimage.

-- Heard a report from the Women's Department of the Baptist World Alliance.

-- Heard the announcement of the 1993 Acteens National Advisory Panel.

Acteens is the missions education organization for girls in grades seven through 12. They are Alison Grigg, Moweaqua, Ill.; Bobbye Jo Lipscomb, Miami, Okla.; Keo Rasavong, Amarillo, Texas; Wendy Elizabeth Hoag, Batesville, Ark.; Jennifer Marie Lott, Hattiesburg, Miss.; and Amy Wilson, Memphis, Tenn.

Advisory panel members serve as pages at the WMU annual meeting and the Southern Baptist Convention. They also write and speak on behalf of Acteens.

The next meeting of the WMU Executive Board will be June 12 in Houston, Texas.

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Southern Baptists must cooperate
in evangelism, Bisagno urges
By Ken Camp & Orville Scott

Baptist Press
1/14/93

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Leaders at congregational, state, national and global levels of Baptist life must discover new ways to cross political-theological barriers to cooperate in missions and evangelism, according to John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church in Houston.

Bisagno used the platform of the Texas Baptist Evangelism Conference, Jan. 11-13 in Fort Worth, to call on the presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Texas to explore avenues of missions cooperation.

"If we cannot agree to work together in theological education, we must find ways to link arms and work together in missions and evangelism to win the world to Christ," Bisagno said. "The need is too big. There are too few of us."

Bisagno urged the interim president of the Foreign Mission Board to meet with other evangelical denominations and para-church organizations to find ways to work together in missions.

He also publically invited two "moderate" Southern Baptist pastors in Houston to join him in personal evangelism in their city.

Bisagno said he wholeheartedly supports the "perpetuating of inerrancy within our educational system at every level of our life" as Southern Baptists, a rallying cry of SBC leaders since 1979.

But if all Southern Baptists cannot agree to cooperate in theological education, they should at least find ways to cooperate in spreading the gospel message, he maintained.

"Division among us is hurting our witness to the world. We have got to find ways to cooperate in winning people to Jesus Christ," he said.

Bisagno called on Dick Maples, BGCT president and pastor of First Baptist Church in Bryan, to appoint a "study commission" to explore ways Texas Baptists can "link arms in new, unprecedented ways" beyond differences in philosophy concerning theological education.

In a press statement, Maples expressed appreciation to Bisagno for his concern and his desire for Texas Baptists to work together to win their state to Christ.

"This is the vision that I have long held about our convention. While there is some diversity in theological matters, we are united in our purpose of missions and evangelism," Maples said.

"This has been the genius of our Texas Baptist convention from the beginning. Our very purpose for existence is that of missions and evangelism."

Out of that missions commitment and at the request of BGCT Executive Director William M. Pinson Jr., Maples said he and Levi Price, chairman of the BGCT executive board, and B.F. Risinger, chairman of the BGCT administrative committee, had appointed a blue-ribbon, 75-person, strategy council. The council is commissioned to develop new strategies and methods by which Texas Baptists can work together in evangelism and missions.

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Creation of the strategy council was approved by the BGCT executive board last September.

"This council is composed of a cross section of our Texas Baptist life and includes people of differing theological perspectives, ethnic groups and laywomen and laymen from differing professions and disciplines," Maples said.

"At the first meeting of the strategy council, I will encourage members to use every means at their disposal to mobilize our total Baptist constituency to win our state to Christ.

"At the earliest, I will be talking with Dr. Bisagno about any suggestions he has to implement the work of the BGCT strategy council."

Bisagno also urged Ed Young, SBC president and pastor of Second Baptist Church in Houston, to "go beyond" the parameters of the nine SBC study groups he named last September. Young was unavailable for comment.

Bisagno called on Don Kammerdiener, interim FMB president, to "go to meet with everyone" committed to an evangelistic philosophy of missions including not only non-Baptist denominations but also para-church missions organizations.

Kammerdiener said that in the last eight to 10 years, the Foreign Mission Board has made extraordinary efforts to "partnering kinds of activities with everybody who is committed to the Great Commission."

Outreach to other "Great Commission Christians" by the board was begun during the tenure of Keith Parks, who recently retired as FMB president.

In addition to extensive involvement with other evangelical denominations, the board also has a close working relationship with such para-church groups as Campus Crusade for Christ and the Wycliffe Bible Translators, Kammerdiener added.

"We have no intention of backing off now," he said.

Finally, on a personal level, Bisagno publically asked his "moderate friends" in Houston -- Bill Turner, pastor of South Main Baptist Church, and Dan Vestal, pastor of Tallowood Baptist Church -- to come to First Baptist Church and "go out with this fundamentalist pastor" in personal witnessing. Attempts to reach Turner and Vestal for a response were not successful.

Bisagno cited the need for a united Southern Baptist witness as part of a message stressing the urgency of the evangelistic "harvest," based in part on his belief that Christians in this generation will experience the second coming of Jesus Christ.

"Our eschatology (doctrine of last things) has something to do with our missiology. There's no time for business as usual. The security of the '50s must not extrapolate into the possibility of the '90s. It's time to color outside the lines. It's time to put the bold in Bold Mission Thrust," Bisagno said.

"God has not only opened the door. He's blown it off its hinges. And Jesus Christ is coming soon. And we are the greatest missionary force -- as Texas Baptists and Southern Baptists -- in the history of the world. And the time is right now. There is no tomorrow. This is it."

A "moral crisis" in American society is a clear indicator of God's coming judgment and Christ's soon return, Bisagno said. He counted himself among those who are "trembling as we prepare for an onslaught of liberalized laws," particularly concerning homosexual rights and abortion.

Echoing a familiar theme of the Religious Right, he attributed numerous ills -- including an increase in teen pregnancies, suicides and schoolroom violence and a drop in SAT scores -- to the Supreme Court rulings on state-sanctioned prayers and devotional Bible reading in public schools.

"The great American educational system has become a jungle. And all under the guise of separation of church and state," he said.

Law restricting worship
in Albania expected to pass

By Marty Croll

TIRANA, Albania (BP)--Turned back once, shrewd politicians are expected to win a second bid to pass a law that would block Christian evangelical efforts in Albania's young democracy.

Albanian President Sali Berisha rejected one proposed law on religion last November, saying it failed to reflect the principles of a free country. But too much is at stake for him to reject the latest one, according to sources close to the government.

The new proposed law represents the 10-month-old free republic's attempt to mold religious guidelines for citizens. In presenting it to lawmakers before the end of January, powerful forces backing Muslims and Orthodox and Catholic churches plan to tie it to nationalism and pride in Albania, the sources said.

"It would be very difficult for anybody, including the president ... to make constructive criticisms without being perceived as being ... less than a patriot," agreed John Keith, external coordinator for Albania working with the European Baptist Federation. Keith lives in Croatia.

The first law favored four religions it called traditional in Albania: Islam, an Islamic sect and the Albanian Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. Other groups would gain the right to exist only through a powerful committee whose members are officials from those religions.

"It looks as if the law before parliament (now) has been amended to bring it almost to its original state, with discrimination, government control and general nationalistic bias," said a Protestant source close to the government.

Much attention on the floor of the governing People's Assembly will focus on a clause requiring that religious groups be led by Albanian citizens. That's a hot topic now because the head of the Albanian Orthodox Church is a native of Greece, and relations between Albania and Greece are strained.

"There are implications that 'We wouldn't want religion in our country controlled by foreigners, would we?'" Keith said.

Albania scrapped the first proposed law after members of the evangelical community and others warned high government officials that it violated the United Nations' 1981 resolution against religious intolerance and would hardly be viewed as "free." Among those who protested was Tony Cupit, director of evangelism and education for the Baptist World Alliance.

In a letter to Cupit, Albanian ambassador to the United States Roland Bimo assured him "no legislation which will discriminate against Baptists and other religions will be promulgated as law in Albania. We are engaged seriously in building a democratic society, and ... the freedom of religion is of primary importance."

A new draft that followed reportedly would have been a model for religious freedom in Eastern Europe. But it was short-lived. "There were some very clever people who politically maneuvered the thing in such a way that nationalistic feelings are at stake," said Keith.

The new proposal finds strong support within Albania's bureaucratic structure, sources said. Known for brutally enforcing the atheism its once-communist government officially declared in 1967, Albania actually is about 70 percent Muslim, 20 percent Orthodox and 10 percent Catholic. Evangelicals are sparse and have invited Baptist missionaries to work with them.

In their heyday, communist leaders used a religious affairs office to curtail Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim activity. Now, however, officials in that office reportedly are advocates of those groups. They are the ones bringing the law forward.

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Government officials have been slow to respond to the latest round of protests by Protestants and evangelicals. When told the laws violate modern standards of human rights, they point to Greece and Turkey as models, according to a Protestant source. Turkey and Greece are known for restrictive laws about faith.

After receiving the letter from Bimo, Cupit said he does not see a strong anti-Christian or anti-Protestant attitude among the general Albanian population. Most evangelicals believe the law seeks to prevent Albania from being divided by a hodgepodge of religious interests -- and is designed in good faith, but also in ignorance of democratic principles.

"I suspect both the president and the community of people there are groping in the dark somewhat," Cupit said.

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'Black and white' is no way
to do gospel, missionary says

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
1/14/93

FORTH WORTH, Texas (BP)--The time must come when the church's work is no longer done in black and white, African-American Southern Baptist missionary John Singleton told black Texas Baptists at a fellowship meeting in Fort Worth.

"We Are Many Members, But One Family" was the theme of the annual Texas Baptist Black Ministers and Wives Banquet, held Jan. 11 immediately prior to the opening session of the 1993 Texas Baptist Evangelism Conference.

"You can't do the gospel in black and white. You have to do the gospel in the Holy Spirit," said Singleton, a missionary on leave of absence in St. Lucia.

"If we choose to walk together and work together as children of God, we can turn the world upside down."

Singleton asked the group if they felt the same sense of anguish when they viewed scenes of brutality in Bosnia-Herzegovina as when they saw pictures of suffering in Somalia.

"If we believe that God is the creator and that humanity is the crown of God's creation, we must hold all the world in focus and develop a world vision," Singleton said.

More black Southern Baptists should join him in answering God's call to foreign missions, he said.

"We need African-Americans on the mission field," he said. "They're asking about you all out there on the field. You must not turn inward."

Unity comes not from human effort but from the gift of oneness Christians receive from Jesus, according to William M. Pinson Jr., executive director of Baptist General Convention of Texas.

"When we present a fractured fellowship, the world has a hard time seeing Jesus," he told the group.

Pinson, who serves on the recently created Baptist World Alliance commission on racism, noted that the problem of racism was an area of special concern to him when he taught Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth in the 1960s and early '70s.

"I thought we had at last laid that monster in its grave but it is very much alive," he said. "At its heart, racism is sin."

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WMU awards \$65,410 in grants
for women's missions globally

By Susan Doyle

Baptist Press
1/14/93

TALLADEGA, Ala. (BP)--Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union has awarded \$65,410 in Second Century Fund grants to fund women's missions work in 10 foreign countries and eight state Baptist conventions.

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The 21 grants were announced during the WMU executive board meeting Jan. 9-13 at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly.

A total of 24 requests for grants totaling \$114,340 were considered by the Second Century Fund committee of the WMU executive board.

"We are thankful to have been able to give so many grants," said Fran Olivier, WMU executive board vice president from Maryland/Delaware and chairman of the Second Century Fund committee. "We regret that we didn't have three times that much money to give."

The Second Century Fund is a permanent endowment which was created by WMU during its centennial year in 1988 as a gift to future generations of women in missions. All contributions are invested permanently. Only the interest earned on the principal is given each year in grants.

The grants are given to develop women's missions organizations abroad; to enhance WMU leadership development in the United States; and to foster education about missions and WMU among Southern Baptist seminary students and faculty.

Grants awarded this year will fund the following requests from overseas: construction of a WMU building in Nigeria; production of a WMU handbook in Bolivia and Panama; leadership training in Brazil and Canada; and scholarships for a missions camp in Venezuela.

Other grants provide scholarships for women to attend the Asian Baptist Women's Union meeting in the Philippines and the Baptist Women's Union of Latin America in Mexico.

Two grants will help with education expenses for a Baptist woman from the Commonwealth of Independent States to study at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and a Baptist woman from India to study at California Baptist College.

Grants also were given to provide leadership training in the Colorado, Minnesota/Wisconsin, Wyoming, New England, New York and Utah/Idaho state Baptist conventions; assist with a Girls in Action/Acteens camp in Indiana; help with Acteens work in Iowa; provide new-work-area literature; fund a language advisory council; and produce missions videos in three languages.

This is the sixth year Second Century Fund grants have been awarded. The first awards were announced during WMU's "Centennial Celebration" in Richmond, Va., in May 1988.

For information concerning how to make gifts to the Second Century Fund or for grant applications, write Second Century Fund, WMU, P.O. Box 830010, Birmingham, AL 35283-0010.

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Changing traditional churches
requires patience, vision

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
1/14/93

HOUSTON (BP)--Leading traditional churches to be innovative takes vision, patience and sacrifice, say two Southern Baptist pastors.

Though he has led his church to make some changes, Sam Williams, pastor of Bay Marin Community Church in San Rafael, Calif., does not recommend that all traditional churches become innovative.

"The problem is not with tradition, it is with meaningless tradition. When tradition is continued beyond its effectiveness, it becomes meaningless," Williams said during a conference sponsored by the Home Mission Board and Vision 2000, a network of leaders in innovative ministries.

Traditional churches are successful, Williams said, if their church activities reflect a "high level of excellence."

Williams, who was a pastor in San Diego 20 years before moving to San Rafael, said the most emotionally intense change the San Diego church made was to stop having invitations after each sermon. Instead, people note their commitments on response cards.

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Churches making changes in their worship styles must be prepared for the grief members will experience as they give up familiar routines. Leaders of change must also be prepared for criticism.

Clark Hutchinson, pastor of Eastside Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., said he has not been challenged on a biblical basis on any change he has recommended. But he said he has been criticized based on strong preferences.

To deal with criticism, Hutchinson said pastors must know they are following God. "The only thing that will get you by is knowing you're doing what God has called you to do."

Communicating that vision to church members is essential, both pastors said. Church members will be willing to change when they see how changes will help accomplish the vision, Williams said. Churches will resist change until they see the need to change.

When church members in San Diego balked at proposed changes, Williams suggested parents ask their adult children why they no longer came to church. When children told their parents they thought church was meaningless, parents were willing to revamp.

Ministries can be added without taking away what is meaningful to some members, Williams noted. For example, classes about grief or divorce recovery can be offered in addition to regular training programs.

Before changes are made, pastors must earn the members' trust. "People have to trust leadership before they follow leadership," Williams said.

Before making changes, leaders also need to be sure they intend to stay at that church for several years, he said. "Be fair with the people. Don't mess their church up if it's not going to be your church."

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Leaders rather than teachers
needed to cast church vision

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
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HOUSTON (BP)--The "really scary thing" about too many churches is they are led by teachers not leaders, said the pastor of one of America's largest churches.

"Teachers convey information. Leaders cast a vision of what a biblically functioning community can be," said Bill Hybels, pastor of Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago. More than 14,000 people attend weekly services at the non-denominational church.

Hybels outlined eight traits of leaders during a national conference sponsored by the Home Mission Board and Vision 2000, a network of innovative church leaders. He encouraged people with the gift of leadership to fulfill the command in Romans 12:8 to lead with diligence.

Hybels said leaders:

- 1) develop and cast a vision. Leaders think about how things should be. They ponder future scenarios until a God-given vision latches onto them and nothing else seems as important as turning that vision into a reality.
- 2) organize followers and orchestrate efforts so that individuals are fulfilled and the church body is built. Leaders are concerned about how everyone feels about their part in the task.
- 3) inspire and motivate people to stay active. Leaders cheer others on, even though no one may be encouraging the leaders.
- 4) engineer change. Leaders recognize the need for change and know how to bring it about without devastating the group.
- 5) establish core values. Hybels said some of the core rules for the staff Willow Creek are to work through relational conflicts, stick to their commitments and limit their work hours.
- 6) allocate resources strategically.
- 7) intercept problems. Leaders look for trouble signs and try to see what is beneath the surface.

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8) establish a leadership culture. Leaders celebrate leadership values in other people and give responsibility to other leaders. "There is no such thing as a one-person show," Hybels said.

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'Equipping' Baptist Men
seen as starting place

By Steve Barber

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MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--This year's theme for Baptist Men is "Missions Involvement Through Equipping Believers" but "equipping" is viewed these days only as a place to begin, not an end in itself.

"When you consider the masses out there in the marketplace who don't have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, a commitment to equipping believers for missions involvement becomes even more imperative," said Jim Furgerson, director of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission's adult division.

More than 250,000 enrolled in Baptist Men and Baptist Young Men units will be celebrating a year of "equipping believers" on Baptist Men's Day, Jan. 24.

"The Baptist Men and Baptist Young Men programs in local churches are the main avenues for equipping men for missions involvement," Furgerson said. "Through the coordinated curriculum that centers on the monthly magazine, Missions Today, they discover a world of missions opportunity."

Training leaders for the church-level programs is an ongoing emphasis. Last year, the agency's Memphis headquarters staff spent more than 200 days at training events "in the field." Hundreds more were led by certified instructors at the state and associational levels.

The result, according to Furgerson, is that Baptist Men in 1992 "proved they are committed to missions, more than in any other year."

Starting last February and continuing for five months, Project Brotherhood involved 84 volunteers from 15 states who repackaged an estimated 360 metric tons of bulk food into 35,000 family packs for distribution in the Moscow area. The volunteers, all of whom went to Russia at their own expense, also distributed food to hospitals, orphanages and homes for pensioners.

After Hurricane Andrew came ashore last Aug. 24, Southern Baptist disaster relief units operated by Baptist Men from 15 state conventions began serving the first of more than 2.5 million hot meals at sites in Florida and Louisiana. The response was to become the largest effort of its kind in Brotherhood Commission history.

Although Project Brotherhood and the Hurricane Andrew response got most of the attention during the year, they were among some 4,000 projects involving volunteers, according to James D. Williams, Brotherhood Commission president.

"Obviously, God is using and blessing the work of volunteers, whose efforts are making Southern Baptist cooperative missions even more cost-effective," Williams said.

"A recent Volunteers in Missions report, with the most current annual figures we have, put a value of more than \$16 million on the work of the 62,281 volunteers that we know about. And that doesn't include workers on more than 1,700 construction projects who saved Southern Baptists \$40 to \$60 million more."

The key to expanding missions involvement by laymen is affirming their spiritual gifts and vocational talents, Williams said.

"When a church's educational program is committed to equipping laymen, a model of New Testament church strategy emerges. When that happens, laypersons are compelled to take their faith into the marketplace to minister among the hurting and lost people they meet."

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Children led the way to
Chop Bottom holler church

By Melanie Childers

ANNVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Church planting and outreach is kid's stuff in the Chop Bottom holler near Manchester, Ky.

In 1989, children in the area decided they didn't want their backyard Bible clubs to end just because summer was over. They asked that church activities be continued throughout the year.

The long-term result of that request is Southside Baptist Church, established last September.

Bill Nichols, director of missions for Booneville Baptist Association, said the association recognized several years ago the need for a ministry to families in the Chop Bottom area. Several summer ministry teams came from Florida for children's backyard Bible clubs and, at least partially because of the children's interest, the association adopted the Chop Bottom holler, purchased a trailer and began Sunday afternoon Sunday school.

"The first Sunday, 13 people came," Nichols said. But those 13 people multiplied and Lyttleton Baptist Church in Manchester later became the sponsor for Chop Bottom Mission.

Ray Spicer, a student at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College and pastor of the mission, said they were able to purchase land and build a permanent place to worship in 1991.

Spicer said the children have continued to influence the mission's ministry. In 1991, "we were more or less still a children's church," he said. "There weren't many adults, and most of them were leaders."

But much of that changed within the last year, the pastor explained. "It all started last December (1991), when we came up with the idea for a Christmas play for the children," Spicer recalled.

The idea included encouraging children to invite their parents to attend the play. It proved successful -- several couples began attending church regularly with their children after Christmas.

In September, the mission organized as a church and changed its name to Southside Baptist.

Church growth is a key area of concentration for Spicer as he leads the Southside congregation, which averages 70-75 in Sunday morning attendance.

In January 1992, at a conference in Pineville, Spicer said he and other pastors were asked to set goals for the number of people their churches would try to lead to make professions of faith in Jesus Christ and be baptized.

"Most of them were saying 15 or 20, and one person said three," Spicer recalled. "I felt led to say 50, even though it sounded unrealistic. I knew it might be too much for me, but not for God."

Southside baptized some 40 people during 1992. Spicer estimated that about half of those were older children and younger teens, while the remainder were adults who never had made professions of faith in Jesus Christ.

Spicer acknowledged children and adults alike are a part of God's purposes. "The Lord just used the children to help the adults see they needed to be in church," he said.

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