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March 5, 1993

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CLC trustees affirm Land,  
 seek \$300,000 for D.C. site

By Louis Moore

Baptist Press  
 3/5/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission trustees voted unanimously to send a letter to the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee asking for the \$300,000 originally designated for a SBC building in Washington, D.C.

If the money is given to the CLC, trustees said they would probably use it for the down payment on an office building in Washington.

In presenting the recommendation, CLC trustee Liz Minnick of Austin, Texas, said with the \$300,000 down payment, the CLC would spend approximately what it is paying now for rent on Washington office space to make the payments on the new building.

The trustee action, during their semiannual meeting March 4, calls for CLC trustee chairman Jim Richards of Baton Rouge, La., to write a letter to the Executive Committee requesting the money.

Minnick also asked trustees to personally and individually communicate with Executive Committee members in their home states about the CLC's request.

The \$300,000 was originally placed in an account with the Southern Baptist Foundation in the 1960s but was later reclaimed by the Executive Committee in a dispute with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs over the funds. The dispute evolved from the SBC's decision to cut ties with the BJC. On Feb. 23 the Executive Committee approved a settlement with the BJC in which the Executive Committee agreed to give the BJC \$25,000 a year for four years out of operating reserves in exchange for a commitment to end the disagreement over the building fund.

The Executive Committee will vote on distribution of the \$300,000 during its meeting in June in Houston in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention.

In other action, the CLC trustees adopted a resolution which affirms the agency's executive director, Richard Land. The resolution reads:

"Whereas, the consideration of Dr. Richard Land, Executive Director of the Christian Life Commission, as a potential president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary comes as no surprise to we who are the Commissioners of the Christian Life Commission; and

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"Whereas, Dr. Land is an exceptional, articulate and scholarly man whose leadership skills could be used in a number of areas of ministry in Southern Baptist life.

"Therefore, be it resolved, that we are most grateful that, in the providence of God, Dr. Land is the 'man of God' for this hour in the life of the Christian Life Commission, and we do reaffirm our cooperative intercession to assist him and his superbly gifted staff to accomplish the purposes of the Christian Life Commission which thrusts them into direct confrontation with principalities and powers who aggressively or inadvertently promote a world view contrary to Scripture."

Land was one of three candidates in the final selection process for the presidency of Southern Seminary. The seminary search committee chose R. Albert Mohler Jr., editor of The Christian Index in Georgia, as its nominee for president. His election is expected to take place in late March.

In its original verbal form, the resolution contained words some trustees felt were critical of SBC seminaries. After hearing those objections, the resolution's author, John Yeats of Grand Prairie, Texas, agreed to withdraw his resolution and resubmit it later. When it was revised and presented again, the vote on it was unanimous.

The trustees also voted unanimously to award the CLC's 1993 Religious Liberty Award to Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis and a former SBC president.

The board also voted unanimously to recommend that the staff of the CLC "prepare materials on the Christian heritage of the United States." In discussion, trustees agreed such materials could be either printed or produced on audio or video tape. No deadline was set for the production of these materials.

At the conclusion of the meeting, CLC trustee Curtis Caine of Jackson, Miss., rose to a point of personal privilege and made three statements. No action was taken on any of the statements, and no further discussion resulted from them. He said:

- 1) "I do not think the Christian Life Commission should recommend reinstatement of action that would parallel the Neurenburg Trial.
- 2) "I do not think the Christian Life Commission should support the idea of the government supporting a sign-language translator in a secular school that it therefore must do so in a private school.
- 3) "If the Christian Life Commission is opposed to an ambassador from the United States to the Vatican, the Christian Life Commission should also oppose the United States sending an ambassador to the United Nations."

His reference to the Neurenburg Trail appeared to refer to Land's column in the March-April 1993 issue of the CLC's Light magazine in which Land expressed concern about "terrible acts of barbarity that have occurred routinely in parts of Yugoslavia known as Bosnia-Herzegovina."

The CLC has joined in an amicus brief that calls for allowing a deaf student in a religiously-operated school to receive help from a state-paid sign-language translator under a law that funds aid to students in private schools

The CLC has asked President Bill Clinton not to reappoint an ambassador from the United States to the Vatican.

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CLC's medical ethics seminar  
calls Christians to involvement      By Louis Moore

Baptist Press  
3/5/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Whatever their specific area of concern, speaker after speaker at the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's annual seminar on medical ethics emphasized the tardiness of Christians in the issues of medical ethics and called for Southern Baptists specifically to become engaged in the debate.

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"The Christian community has lost precious time in responding to bioethical issues and must catch up, said Nigel M. de S. Cameron of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill. "We must prepare ourselves and our communities for a different understanding of the fundamental questions of life."

Thomas Harris, who chairs the department of biomedical engineering at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, said, "I fear evangelical and conservative Christianity is not coming to grips with these issues, particularly within higher education."

Francis Collins, who led the team which in 1989 identified the gene causing cystic fibrosis and recently was appointed head of the U.S. government's multi-billion-dollar Human Genome Project, said, "It is not sufficient to take a stand against something without understanding what that something is."

He said science and the church "don't have a pretty history," though he personally believes they are "wonderfully compatible."

Collins said Christians must be prepared to face the ethical and moral issues which will surround genetic breakthroughs in the treatment of cystic fibrosis, breast cancer, Lou Gehrig's disease and thousands of other genetic disorders.

Franklin Payne of the Medical College of Georgia, said, "Medical costs are out of control because morality is out of control.

"Health without morality is impossible," he said.

Payne said health and morality are interrelated, making the spread of ravaging diseases such as AIDS inevitable without a transformation of public health policy in the United States.

Samford University's Beeson Divinity School dean, Timothy George, said the SBC lingered for years without a clear "prophetic response to the holocaust of abortion on demand" because of the "erosion of doctrinal substance" in the denomination and "the failure to think through theologically the great issues of our time."

Issues discussed during the three-day meeting ranged from when life begins to genetic research to complicated intensive-care units to euthanasia. Emotions at the meeting varied from horror at descriptions by former abortionist Carol Everett of botched abortions to a humorous incident when Harris had to use a pointer to help the audience see the patient in a slide of a hospital room filled with life-support equipment. Harris' point was that medical personnel sometimes feel they are machine-operators rather than personal care-givers.

The annual seminar, held in Nashville, drew 523 registrants, the largest for a Christian Life Commission gathering in seven years.

Two sexually transmitted diseases existed in 1960 but today these number between 20 and 25, and the total number of cases of people infected with these diseases is growing dramatically each year, said Texas physician Joe S. McIlhane Jr.

More than 12 million people are infected each year with STDs, he said.

Louisiana State University obstetrics and gynecology department head Thomas Elkins said Americans must place limitations on how information from prenatal testing is used when it involves the lives of unborn babies.

"We must be able to draw some lines somewhere in the sand and say, 'Past this point we will go no further.'"

Dianne N. Irving, assistant professor of philosophy and bioethics at DeSales School of Theology in Washington, said the question of "personhood" is central to all issues in ethics and bioethics.

"In the context of philosophy, how one defines a human being or a human person determines what ethical choices one should make," she said. "The issue concerns not only that of abortion, but so many other bioethical issues which are interrelated with it, especially those at the beginning and the end of life."

Irving said her own theology and understanding of bioethics has led her to conclude that "every human being is a human person from fertilization on."

During his talk, International Right to Life Federation President John Willke launched salvos against the new abortive pill, RU-486, and called for continued Southern Baptist opposition to the drug.

"RU-486 kills a developing human, after his or her heart has begun to beat," Willke said. The pill is not designed to prevent pregnancy, he said. "The biologically correct word is 'kill,'" when describing what RU-486 is designed to do, he said.

Ohio Department of Health Deputy Director Gary Crum said health care in the 1990s will pose difficult questions that will require morally responsible answers. Noting the encroachment of euthanasia on U.S. society, Crum said many public libraries and even school libraries stock Derek Humphry's book, "The Final Exit." "It will tell you how to kill yourself by using mixtures of drugs you may have at home," Crum said.

David Biebel of the Christian Medical and Dental Society said, "It is nearly impossible for people immersed in pain beyond their darkest imagination to be objective in relation to life-and-death decisions."

In three theme interpretations scattered throughout the meeting, Baptist Sunday School Board President Jimmy Draper said the rapidly worsening sanctity-of-life crisis in the United States calls for a Christian response that may be the legacy for future generations.

"It is obvious that there is a great gap between biblical beliefs and principles and public policy," he said. "It is imperative that we as Christians address that gap and bridge it. The response which we make to this crisis may well be the greatest legacy we leave to the world of tomorrow."

SBC Christian Life Commission Executive Director Richard Land said Christians are the "last line of defense against a rapid descent into an evil abyss of barbarism" toward human life in the United States.

"If we fail to insist that our society be one in which it is always wrong to do certain things to a human being, then we are bound to live in a society in which virtually anything can, and will, be done to human beings," he said.

Bible teacher John MacArthur said the barbarism is one more indication that America has been abandoned by God and has no hope unless Christians live by God's truth and proclaim it to their culture.

"We are not on the brink of God's wrath in America," MacArthur said. "We are not anticipating God's wrath. We are not moving down a path to God's wrath. We are in it."

In a format reminiscent of C.S. Lewis' "Screwtape Letters," SBC Executive Committee staffer Mark Coppenger tongue-in-cheek contrasted secular, humanistic attitudes toward medical ethics to Christian values.

Citing the success of convincing people that "they're good enough for heaven," one of Coppenger's mythical characters, Dissemblion, said this was accomplished by showcasing "hell-bound stars" in humanitarian telethons and benefits, thus "teaching people that adultery and other forms of decadence are OK."

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Contributing to this story were Tom Strode, Linda Lawson, Charles Willis, Lonnie Wilkey, Art Toalston, Norman Miller, Jon Walker and Edie Wilson.

Southern board will consider  
presidential nominee in March

Baptist Press  
3/5/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees will consider the election of R. Albert Mohler Jr. as the school's ninth president at a called meeting in Atlanta March 25-26.

The Louisville, Ky., school's presidential search committee announced at a Feb. 22 news conference in Nashville that Mohler, a Baptist newspaper editor from Atlanta, was its choice to succeed Roy L. Honeycutt, who is retiring.

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Search chairman W. Wayne Allen, a pastor from suburban Memphis, Tenn., said the called meeting will give trustees "sufficient time to discuss any issue" with Mohler. The meeting will be convened in Atlanta rather than Louisville in order to save money on air fares, said Allen, who is also chair of the 63-member board. The next regularly scheduled trustee meeting is set for April 19-21 in Louisville.

All proceedings of the Atlanta meeting will be in executive session, Allen said, noting that the election of every previous president of Southern Seminary has been closed to the public and the news media. The meeting will be at a hotel near the Atlanta airport.

Mohler, 33, has been editor of The Christian Index, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention, since 1989. Previously, he served as special assistant to the president and director of capital funding at Southern Seminary. The Lakeland, Fla., native holds the doctor of philosophy and master of divinity degrees from Southern and a bachelor of arts degree in religion from Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.

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WMU sends video message  
reassuring missionaries

By Susan Doyle

Baptist Press  
3/5/93

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Mar. 4 sent a video message to missionaries appointed by the Foreign Mission Board reassuring them of continued support.

"We come to you today to say that we are still in the business of being your support system," said Dellanna O'Brien, national WMU executive director. "We want to give you assurance of our loyalty."

A copy of the videotape was sent to all mission stations from which Southern Baptist foreign missionaries work.

The WMU videotape follows by less than two weeks a videotape which was sent to foreign missionaries by FMB trustees. The FMB videotape was of a two-hour dialogue between the trustees and national WMU leaders concerning recent WMU executive board decisions. Much of the debate focused on WMU's decision which will allow the organization to consider providing mission materials to all Southern Baptist groups involved in missions at the request of those groups.

"We share with (FMB trustees) the desire that you know all of the factors with which we're dealing right now, and we encourage you to watch that video," O'Brien said. "But we're also aware that by viewing that videotape, you may have more questions and concerns than you had before you watched it."

In her video message, O'Brien outlined how WMU's support of missionaries will not change because of the recent WMU board action.

"For almost 105 years, WMU has served as that organization that has provided prayer support for you," she said. "That has not changed."

"We also want to say that for those 105 years, we have supported the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering as well as the Cooperative Program to provide resources for your work. That has not changed."

WMU has told missionaries' stories through its magazines so others can know of their challenges, successes and prayer requests, she said. "That has not changed."

"We have reared up generations of young people to fill your places when you find it necessary to retire," she said. "That has not changed."

Some people are saying WMU is becoming a part-time organization, O'Brien said. "We want to say clearly -- that is not true. We will be for you all what we have been in the past."

O'Brien told the missionaries they can continue to trust and count on WMU just as missionaries have the past 105 years.

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"As a matter of fact, as we've deliberated about necessary decisions in our organization, the question most frequently asked is 'What about the missionaries?'" she said. "As we've dealt with concerns, you must know that the bottom line has been for your good."

O'Brien continued in the video to explain some of the recent actions taken by the WMU executive board beginning with the recommendation WMU provide missions materials to other groups involved in missions at their request.

There has always been a great deal of diversity within the Southern Baptist Convention, O'Brien said. "But today, it's playing itself out in a rather unique and different way. We're finding different coalitions and fellowships joining together based around some common concern or sense of alienation."

Predictions of future trends suggest there will only be further splintering, not only within the Southern Baptist Convention but in other groups as well, O'Brien said.

"Within our denomination, we're seeing a return to the societal approaches of the past. Not just independent churches anymore who send their own missionaries but churches within our Southern Baptist Convention," she said.

"The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has now formed a missions-sending agency. Ethnic groups within our denomination are suggesting that they will send their own missionaries."

Such fragmentation is pulling the SBC apart as a denomination, she said.

"WMU would like to be the umbrella that will pull all Southern Baptists back together again in the missions cause and effort," she said.

"This does not change our commitment to you," she said. "We will continue to be what we have always been for you -- a support system for the Foreign Mission Board and the Home Mission Board. In fact, we've really even recommitted ourselves to that task. We will continue to be that for you regardless of what happens to us. It's the kind of loyalty money can't buy."

WMU wants to provide prayer support and missions education materials for all groups involved in missions within the Southern Baptist Convention, she said.

"In this day when two-thirds of the world does not know Jesus as Lord and Savior, we cannot do anything except to go and tell. We must not wait on a resolution to the controversy in our convention to follow his mandate. We need every Southern Baptist to be faithful in going and giving and in doing missions for the cause of world evangelization."

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#### FIRST PERSON

Proclaiming Christ in a  
Russian public library

By Norman Miller

Baptist Press  
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OBNINSK, Russia (BP)--Apparently it was word-of-mouth that brought almost 60 people to the library. Near-zero temperatures and gusty winds did not hinder those who wanted to hear about the resurrection of Christ and an explanation of how one becomes a Christian. Unlike many Americans, Russians are keenly interested in God and Christianity.

The 60 residents of Obninsk, Russia, were represented by both genders, from youthful to elderly. Their clothes reflected the drab and the colorful, the ill-fitting and the tailored. Despite the expectancy that floated in the room, almost all the Russians' faces held solemn poses.

"We are honored to have Mr. Brock and Mr. Miller in our city. They are from the American seminary that is sponsoring theological studies at our new International Academy of Modern Knowledge," the head librarian explained. She continued in Russian, then she stopped abruptly and smiled at me.

"Does this mean it's my turn?" I asked Sasha, my translator.

"Yes," he said as he stood to climb three steps to the small stage.

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After a few comments about my education and my family, I said, "If you are a follower of Jesus, I offer encouragement to your heart. If you are skeptical about the claims of Christ's resurrection, I offer you food for thought." A few people smiled approvingly; but one man smirked, and his toothy grin revealed several stainless steel teeth.

I explained that apart from the Bible, my resources included two books written by atheistic skeptics who sought to disprove the claims of Christianity but through their investigations of the evidence each was converted to Christ.

"Your own country's history is stained with the blood of those who were willing to die for truth, and no one is willing to die for a lie," I said, with some nodding approvingly, as I refuted the skeptics' theory of a conspiracy among the disciples to falsely claim Christ's resurrection.

As I neared the end of my apologetic, I asked the people if they had any questions or comments. One woman asked if Christ were coming again; another wanted to know my denomination. But the remainder of the session was dominated by two men who seemed skeptical, perhaps even hostile. The steel-toothed skeptic pressed the validity of the Bible, said the Jewish historian Josephus did not mention Jesus and suggested the resurrection of Jesus should be understood as spiritual, not bodily.

After several spirited questions, I had to close my hour of lecture time, and I told the crowd, "If the atheist is right, I have nothing to lose. But if the Bible is correct, the atheist has everything to lose." I was shocked by the crowd's reaction of applause and laughter; they seemed to say, "Yes, you are right!"

Paul took his place on the small stage, and after brief introductory remarks, he launched into a topic he knows very well. His training as a certified Evangelism Explosion instructor showed in the straightforward and illustrative presentation of the gospel.

"Do not pray this prayer of repentance unless God is leading you to pray," Paul said. He spent several minutes qualifying what it meant to be a Christian, because our translator, Sasha, who has worked for dozens of English speaking preachers, had warned us that the Russians often respond to public invitations without being aware of what their actions mean. The people stood as Paul prayed; he paused both for the translation and the peoples' silent responses.

Paul also fielded some difficult questions, then he dismissed the crowd with the announcement that everyone who wanted a copy of the Russian New Testament would be given one. He also asked those who prayed with him to come forward for a brief meeting and prayer. One of the skeptics who had questioned the resurrection came forward to pray with Paul, indicating through the translator, "I have trusted Christ in my heart."

After Paul instructed the new believers in what they had done and how they were to live and grow as Christians, he said, "Let's join hands; I want to pray for you." Rather than forming a circle, nine pairs of hands reached forward to grasp Paul's. Then, 10 pairs of eyes shed tears of hope and joy as Paul prayed.

As I stood near the exit, distributing the New Testaments, the people departed into the black cold, closely clutching their books like precious treasures. Everyone took at least one copy and displayed a sheepish hesitancy toward the gift. They humbly half-bowed and said, "Spahseebah." This is a contracted expression used for "thank you," though it is rooted in three Russian words meaning, "God save you."

"My sister is an invalid who recently became a Christian and she couldn't be here tonight. Can I have an extra copy to give to her?" asked one woman of about 80 years. Another woman explained she had many relatives who had never read the Bible, and she asked for several copies. Surprisingly, the steel-toothed skeptic took a New Testament.

On the way back to the hotel, Paul said he was grateful for the opportunity to share the gospel in a former communist country, especially in a secret city once closed to westerners, and even many Russians.

"This proves God has a sense of humor," I said. "In a building used for decades to propound communist dogma, we preached Christian doctrine."

Before drifting off to sleep in my 8- by 12-foot hotel room, I asked God for two hungers. One for unsaved Americans to hunger for God the way Russians do. The second was a missionary hunger for missions to be given to American Christians, so we can feed sinners at home and abroad the everlasting bread of life.

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Norman Miller, newswriter at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Paul Brock, the seminary's public relations director, recently returned from a missions trip to Obninsk, Russia.

EDITORS' NOTE: This story is an update of previous Baptist Press reports on the standoff between federal agents and cult members in Waco, Texas.

Baptist hospital cares for ATF  
agents, families following raid

Baptist Press  
3/5/93

By Ken Camp & Orville Scott

WACO, Texas (BP)--Sixteen agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms were received at Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center in Waco, Texas, following a shootout between the federal authorities and members of the Branch Davidian sect near Waco, Texas.

And five days after the ATF officers attempted to execute an arrest warrant at the Mt. Carmel compound, the standoff continued between an army of federal, state and local law enforcement officers and more than 100 Branch Davidians as their leader awaited "further instructions from God."

The Branch Davidians have been described as a cultic offshoot of the Seventh-day Adventists. Their leader -- self-proclaimed "Messiah" Vernon Howell, who legally changed his name in 1990 to David Koresh -- claims to be the "Lamb of God" sent to open the seven seals of Revelation, unleashing catastrophe leading to the end of the world.

Koresh, 33-year-old son of a carpenter, had promised March 2 that if radio stations would broadcast an hour-long taped message from him, he would "come out peacefully with all the people immediately."

At 1:30 p.m. that day, stations in Waco and Dallas played the Scripture-laden, rambling message which offered a mystical interpretation of prophetic Bible verses and drew parallels between Koresh and Christ.

However, he reneged on the agreement, saying God had instructed him to wait and that "he will keep his promise to come out when he receives further instruction from God," FBI special agent Jeff Jamar told the news media on March 3.

Though Koresh claimed to have suffered two serious wounds in the Sunday shootout, on March 4 Jamar told the press -- tongue in cheek -- the cult leader seemed to have "recovered miraculously."

Four ATF officers were killed in the shootout and 15 were injured. Of the 16 received at Hillcrest, six were treated and released and three died -- one at the hospital and two who were pronounced dead on arrival. The remaining seven all were dismissed by March 4. Fifteen of the 16 injured agents had gunshot wounds and one had broken limbs.

Although none of the four officers killed was Baptist, the funeral service for one of them -- Steve Willis, a Methodist from Missouri City, Texas -- was scheduled for March 5 at Second Baptist Church in Houston. The megachurch was chosen to accommodate the expected crowds.

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A 3-year-old boy from the Mt. Carmel compound also was treated at Hillcrest March 1 for high fever and was later released to Child Protective Services. Within five days after the attempted raid, 21 children from the compound had been released and 17 were still believed to be inside the modern-day fortress.

Rebecca Adams, an emergency room nurse at Hillcrest, first learned about the tragic confrontation at Mt. Carmel soon after returning home from Sunday morning worship services at First Baptist Church in Mertens, Texas, where her husband, James, is pastor. Realizing she would be needed, she immediately made the 45-minute drive to Waco.

She discovered upon arrival that two patients from the shootout already had been received at the emergency room, and the hospital had implemented its disaster readiness plan calling for additional staff.

An eye specialist saw an orthopedic case, hospital housekeepers helped clean ambulances, a local pizza parlor sent a free delivery to the emergency room staff and routine job descriptions were meaningless as everyone joined the team effort, Adams said.

"No one was too good to do anything. It was wonderful. To an outsider, it must have looked like chaos, but it all worked together beautifully," she said.

"And the willingness of the community to help was so impressive. There were so many thoughtful things. It's the little things that add up to make a bad situation somewhat better."

Personally, Adams said she draws strength from her faith in Jesus Christ, her family and her church.

"I receive incredible support from the people in our church," she said. "At the end of the day, I can walk away from Waco and go home to a loving church where there are caring people around me. That's a big support."

During the Sunday afternoon ordeal, she found a few minutes to call her father, Roger "Buddy" Reed, pastor of Bruceville Baptist Church. He assured his daughter his church would have special prayer for everyone concerned with the tense situation in Waco.

The assurance that Christians are praying and that God is present offers comfort during the everyday turmoil of the emergency room as well as the more intense pressures of an event like the Mt. Carmel shootout, Adams said.

"I have an outlet that some of my co-workers don't. I have Christ in my heart, and I have the peace and comfort that he brings," she said.

Assigned to deal with the non-critically wounded, Adams said she was deeply impressed by the esprit de corps of federal agents and of their unselfish devotion to duty.

"They are incredible men. They were very stoic. No matter how badly they were hurt, they all wanted somebody else treated before them. None of them complained. We offered them pain medicine, but they turned it down when anyone else would have been crying for it," she said.

"I remember them being so quiet. They must have been going through emotional turmoil over seeing their co-workers who had fallen."

While most of the ATF agents were visited within hours of admittance by multiple family members, Adams said her heart went out to those who were alone -- particularly those who had no spiritual resources upon which they could rely.

"There's a lot of emotional, spiritual need," she said. "It's a void you can see when you look at them."

Although her nursing duties to the wounded ended when they left the emergency room, Adams said she made a point to visit in the rooms of those in particular need of support.

"I went up and visited with them and took them a balloon. I just wanted to let them know someone is here -- someone cares," she said.

The parents of an ATF agent wounded in the Sunday morning shootout at the Mt. Carmel compound praised God for sparing their son and said they bear "no ill will" toward anyone.

The Baptist couple said they first received word from their local sheriff's department at 9:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 28, their son -- who has served about five years with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms -- had been hospitalized at Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center for gunshot wounds.

A sheriff's deputy drove the couple to Waco, arriving in the wee hours of the morning. En route, they received word their son had successfully undergone surgery for his life-threatening wounds.

Upon arrival, they were met by Curtis Holland, director of pastoral care at the Baptist hospital who prayed with the couple and found them lodging.

"We've been treated well, and we appreciate everything that's been done," the mother said. "We couldn't ask for better treatment anywhere. "Everybody here at the hospital greeted us with smiles, and we're still getting the smiles."

While some have criticized the ATF operation, the father of the injured agent said he bore "no ill will" toward anyone.

"I don't have any problem with what the ATF did. They were well within their rights for doing what they did. I'm just sorry it was not more successful," he said.

"A man who would stand up and profess to be Jesus ... needs to be stopped."

The father said he was purposely unfamiliar with the details of his son's mission, adding he makes it a practice not to "pry" into his work.

"I knew he was over here, but I didn't know why," he said.

He attributed his son's survival to divine intervention, adding, "It could have been a lot worse than it is. God was on somebody's side."

Although their son has been heavily sedated, the couple said they had been able to talk with him and reassure him everything would be fine.

Noting their faith in Jesus Christ had sustained them, the mother said, "I just asked the Lord to give us strength to get through this ordeal, and he's done it."

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Annuity Board trustees mark  
75th year, get Kmart update By Thomas E. Miller, Jr.

Baptist Press  
3/5/93

DALLAS (BP)--Trustees of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention marked the 75th anniversary of the agency and heard reports of growth and of their anti-pornography shareholder action against Kmart during their March 1-2 meeting in Dallas.

Among actions taken by the board: a decision to continue present monthly rates for the Church Comprehensive Medical Plan through 1993. Persons who change age brackets or add dependents may experience an increase, but no general rate increase will occur July 1 as had been expected. The last rate increase for the church medical plan was July 1, 1992.

Powell, in his president's report to trustees, said that total Annuity Board assets rose more than \$1 million a day during 1992 and reached \$3.9 billion Dec. 31.

In his treasurer's report, Harold D. Richardson noted that the assets increased 10.5 percent for the year. The retirement assets reached \$3.77 billion and insurance assets grew to \$138 million. Net income was \$269.8 million.

Participation in the board's retirement plans is at record numbers, and contributions by members, churches and other employers reached new highs. At year's end there were 68,600 active individual retirement income accounts, and 23,454 people were receiving benefits. Retirement and relief benefits paid totaled \$117.2 million.

Contributions to retirement plans totaled \$228.2 million. For the first time, contributions for agency and institution employees exceeded those for church employees. Of the board's total assets, 35 percent are in the defined benefit plan known as Plan A, 30 percent are in the Convention Annuity Plan and 28 percent are in the Church Annuity Plan.

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There was strong growth in the insurance fund. Claims control and stability of reserves were credited with making it possible to avoid a medical rate increase in the church plan and permitted increased maternity benefits that took effect Jan. 1. Total benefits paid were \$93.3 million for medical claims, \$5.6 million for life claims and \$2.2 million for disability.

The property and casualty program, offered by Preferred Risk and promoted by the Annuity Board, showed its first profit since it was launched in 1989.

Also, the board operated below budget for the year.

The endowment department received \$3.1 million in cash and deferred gifts. After launching its first campaign for funds, the endowment ministry saw an increase of 129 percent in dollars and more than 50 percent increase in number of donors.

At the invitation of Annuity Board President Paul W. Powell, Southern Baptist Convention President H. Edwin Young of Houston joined trustees for a dialogue session Monday afternoon. He spoke about his experiences as the convention's president and his hopes for growth for the Southern Baptist Convention.

The trustees' relief committee approved 13 additions to the board's Adopt An Annuitant program that provides an extra \$50 each month to annuitants with inadequate benefits. The board's endowment department provided \$599,235 in Adopt An Annuitant benefits in 1992.

The relief committee considered 31 requests for assistance. Of these, eight received two-year monthly grants, two received a one-year monthly grant and three were approved for two-year expense grants. Eighteen were declined for being outside guidelines.

Relief funds are provided through an allocation from the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program. In 1992 the Cooperative Program provided \$659,567 for relief and \$400,000 for educational work in state conventions.

The trustees' investment committee reported that Kmart Corporation had notified the Pension Board of the United Methodist Church that its subsidiary, Waldenbooks, has withdrawn from sale a "Blue Moon" series of books that had been judged pornographic by some people. The Kmart letter was copied to the Annuity Board.

The Annuity Board, with support of a number of other pension boards and foundations, has filed a shareholder resolution with Kmart that seeks to end Waldenbooks' sale of what the Annuity Board deems pornographic materials.

The investment committee also reported a revision in the investment guidelines dealing with restricted companies. The new statement clarified the term "publicly recognized" to be a function of the staff investment committee and the trustee investment committee. The guidelines are:

"Investment in any company that is publicly recognized by the internal investment committee of the Annuity Board and the trustee investment committee as being in the liquor, tobacco, gambling and pornography industries or any company whose products, services or activities are publicly recognized as being incompatible with the moral and ethical posture of the Annuity Board are prohibited. This would also include any company which fails to subscribe to the Statement of Principles, the seven-point code of affirmative action for companies with operations in South Africa."

A Monday luncheon included recognition of 11 living former chairmen of the board of trustees. Nine were present: Darold H. Morgan, Bruce McIver, W. Gordon Hobgood Jr., John S. Rasco, D. William Dodson Jr., Billy C. Austin, Willis L. Meadows, B.J. Martin and William A. Willis. Unable to attend were Donald E. Bowles and Charles L. Holland, Jr.

A commissioned drama, "For Such a Time as This: Lifting the Hearts of the People of God," followed a Monday evening banquet. Written and directed by Darrel Baergen, the cast included members of The Company, a drama group of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The drama, performed earlier on Monday for Annuity Board employees, traced the ministry of the Annuity Board from 1918 to the present through the lives of six board presidents and the people who were helped by the board's ministry.

Trustees elected William A. Willis of Arkansas to a second one-year term as chairman; Daniel R. Taylor of Maryland was elected vice chairman.

The next scheduled meeting of Annuity Board trustees is Aug. 2-3 in Charleston, S.C.

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Chip Alford promoted  
to design editor role

Baptist Press  
3/5/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Chip Alford, feature reporter in the Baptist Sunday School Board's communications department since 1991, has been promoted to design editor for Facts and Trends, a monthly news and information publication for 60,000 church staff and other denominational leaders.

Reared in Gadsden, Ala., Alford earned the B.A. in journalism from Auburn (Ala.) University and the M.A. degree in religious education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

While at Southwestern Seminary, Alford was a newswriter in the seminary's public affairs office. Earlier he was a reporter for the Gadsden (Ala.) Times.

He is a member of Baptist Public Relations Association and Religious Public Relations Council.

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