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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

**NATIONAL OFFICE**

SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
(615) 244-2355  
Herb Hollinger, Vice President  
Fax (615) 742-8919  
CompuServe ID# 70420,17

**BUREAUS**

**ATLANTA** 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522  
**DALLAS** Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232  
**NASHVILLE** 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va., 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151  
**WASHINGTON** Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223

March 24, 1993

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**Baylor regents to move forward  
with George W. Truett Seminary**

**Baptist Press  
3/24/93**

WACO, Texas (BP)--The Baylor University board of regents voted March 23 to move forward with plans to activate the George W. Truett Theological Seminary, perhaps as early as the fall of 1994.

The decision is contingent upon a further positive review of proposed funding and facilities at the May 21 regularly scheduled board meeting, according to Baylor President Herbert H. Reynolds.

"It is hoped that all aspects of our planning will coalesce quite soon," Reynolds said, "so that a definitive decision as regards the opening of the seminary can be reached in time."

The vote allows preparations to begin for the opening of the seminary. Enrollment will be limited to 50 students each year with a maximum enrollment of 150 after three years, Reynolds said.

"As an academic entity of Baylor, the seminary will likely be linked to a heritage and tradition that is unapologetically Baptist and historically committed to the pursuit of academic excellence," he said.

Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, one of six Southern Baptist Convention-sponsored seminaries, could not be reached for comment following the March 23 death of his brother, Don, 59, director of missions of the Conroe Baptist Association north of Houston.

William Pinson, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, also could not be reached for comment March 24.

The Baylor regents named Robert B. Sloan, the George W. Truett professor of evangelism at Baylor, as dean of the seminary. His responsibilities associated with the Truett Seminary will begin immediately but will not be full-time until after the May board meeting.

Incorporated on March 25, 1991, the seminary was named in honor of Truett because of his commitment both to Baylor University and to historic Baptist principles. Truett was pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas following his graduation from Baylor in 1897 until his death in 1944.

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The seminary has a 15-member board of trustees chaired by Daniel Vestal, pastor of Tallowood Baptist Church in Houston. The seminary trustees recommended to the university board of regents in January 1992 that intensive study be undertaken to determine the need for and value of activating the seminary.

The 15-month study was accomplished by an ad hoc committee of regents, chaired by John Boyd of Amarillo, Texas, in consultation with seminary trustees and university officials.

The committee recommended the seminary begin operation as soon as feasible, and the full board responded by voting unanimously to activate the seminary when proper funding and facilities can be secured.

"We believe the time is right for the birthing of a new instrument to prepare men and women for Christian ministry," Vestal said. "To begin a new seminary is a formidable task. It is a most significant undertaking requiring measured thinking and deliberate decision making.

"We envision the seminary as distinctive from other Baptist seminaries in several ways," Vestal said. "First, it will provide theological education in the context of a major international Baptist university. It will contribute to the total life of Baylor and also receive the benefit of the many academic opportunities presented on campus.

"Second, it will provide theological education with a unique focus on apprenticeships, internships and practical applications. Further, the Truett Seminary will be a Baptist seminary whose ownership and vision from the very beginning will be multiracial and multicultural."

This is not the first time a seminary will have operated at Baylor. In 1905 the Baylor Theological Seminary was established after more than a decade of organized theological instruction. Three years later it became Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. It moved to Fort Worth in 1910 and today Southwestern is the world's largest seminary with an enrollment of 3,225 students.

The Truett seminary will operate on a much smaller scale, Vestal said, thus allowing it to integrate a network of churches and ministries directly into the training process.

Degrees to be offered at the Truett Seminary will include the master of divinity and the master of theology. Additional degrees related to the ministry may be considered at a future date, Sloan said. The department of religion in the college of arts and sciences and in the graduate school will continue to offer the bachelor of arts, master of arts and doctor of philosophy degrees.

Sloan, a Texas native, has taught at Baylor since 1983. He came to the university from the faculty of Southwestern Seminary. A 1970 graduate of Baylor, Sloan holds the master of divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary and the doctor of theology degree from the University of Basel in Switzerland.

According to Reynolds, Sloan is considered by many to be one of the premier preachers, teachers and writers in Baptist and Christian life and "very much in the mold of the seminary's namesake, the Rev. George W. Truett, an unwavering advocate of religious liberty for all persons on this globe."

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Ministry to Muslims requires  
patience, love, speaker says

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press  
3/24/93

DETROIT (BP)--Prejudices against Muslims and Middle Easterners prevent Christians from sharing the gospel with those segments of society, says the director of a ministry to Middle Easterners in Detroit.

"We're not going to witness to people we don't like," says Archie Hensley, director of MANNA Project. "The way we are going to reach Muslims for Christ, as we are going to reach anybody for Christ, is to love them the same way that Christ loves them."

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Hensley, a former missionary to Africa, recently addressed Southern Baptist ethnic church starting leaders. He has spent two and a half years working among Detroit's Middle Eastern population, estimated to be 300,000.

Detroit has the highest Middle Eastern population in the nation, Hensley says, dating back to World War I when Henry Ford encouraged them to immigrate here to help keep assembly lines rolling.

MANNA stands for Mission Agencies Network of North America. Hensley coordinates about 20 volunteers who tutor and teach English at an Arab community center.

"Our goal here is to be able to share the love of Christ as he would were he in the community," Hensley says. "Our care and concern compels us to try to meet needs in the Arab-American community."

The ministry opens doors of communication that often lead to witnessing, he says.

While the work is among Middle Easterners in general, Hensley is specifically interested in reaching Muslims. "Much of our activity is to help them unlearn what they traditionally have been taught about Christianity."

For example, Muslims believe the term "Son of God" implies a sexual relationship between God and Mary before Jesus was born, Hensley says. "In the process of clarifying misconceptions, we're witnessing to them."

It has taken more than two years to build trust among the Middle Eastern community, he says, adding that work among Arabs is typically a slow process.

"The integrity of the message is directly proportional to the integrity of the messenger," he says. "It makes it very difficult for someone to simply walk into the community and start sharing the gospel."

Hensley contends that prejudice is one of the greatest barriers preventing churches from reaching Arab Americans.

"I think that Satan makes a point of trying to keep prejudice alive and well," he says. "We need to be informed in our churches that the enemy is not the Arab. The enemy is Satan."

Hensley often speaks to churches about ministering to Middle Easterners. He recommends Christians develop an international awareness so they will be able to witness to people of other ethnic groups.

"God has sent them to our land that we may take up the mantle and responsibility of leading them to Christ."

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(BP) photo (of a mosque in Detroit) mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

California students still  
celebrating Christmas

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
3/24/93

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP)--College students in Riverside, Calif., are still celebrating Christmas, thanks to the generosity of Southern Baptist children.

Del and Kathi Brixey are student ministers at the University of California at Riverside where they have been inundated with school supplies since last fall.

The Brixey's, who work under the Home Mission Board's Mission Service Corps volunteer program, received the first of 112 packages from the Christmas in August program Sept. 28. They eventually had a 12-foot stack of notebook paper in their garage along with thousands of pens, tubes of toothpaste and cans of shaving cream.

"We got stuff every day for weeks," Mrs. Brixey said. "The postman had to get a bigger truck, and we had the opportunity to witness to him."

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Sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union, Christmas in August is an activity for children and teen-agers to provide extra supplies to missionaries. The project began in the 1920s when items were sent to China and donations had to be mailed in August so missionaries would receive them by Christmas.

Last year the Brixey's name was given to Mission Friends, the missions education organization for pre-schoolers.

College students helped the Brixey's sort donations into brown paper lunch bags. During "Club Day" last October, students distributed 300 care packs, each with a flier about the campus ministry.

Steven Kish, a sophomore, learned about the ministry by receiving one of the care packs. He became involved in the organization and by February was co-host of a banquet to raise money for summer missions.

The Brixey's also used Christmas in August materials for a scavenger hunt. They put together identical bags of supplies and sent students out in groups of three. Students traded something in the bag for something of more value. One group traded for a fellow student, who became part of the group and invited her friends.

The scavenger hunt served another purpose. Before students could trade items, they had to identify themselves as part of FOCUS -- Fellowship of Christian University Students -- which meets on Thursday nights. Brixey said the project helped students learn to talk to strangers, and it provided word-of-mouth publicity for the group.

When a student expresses interest in FOCUS, Brixey makes an appointment to talk one-on-one about spiritual needs.

Such encounters convince Brixey "we're missing a whole generation of young people. So many college students have absolutely no concept of God."

This is the Brixey's third year of ministry on the Riverside campus. Eighteen of the university's 9,000 students are regularly involved in FOCUS.

Brixey describes his approach to campus ministry as holistic because it includes the college faculty and staff as well as students. Twenty of the university's staff members meet weekly to pray for the campus.

Brixey's vision for the campus ministry involves both evangelism and discipleship. "We want students to leave with a vision, a purpose in life," Brixey said.

The vision the Brixey's want students to capture includes church planting and marketplace ministry. The Brixey's are involved in a church start in Riverside and they hope that example will demonstrate to students the need for new churches.

Just as Mrs. Brixey considers her part-time job at the campus bookstore an opportunity to share her faith, she said she wants students to realize "whatever career they choose in their lives, that is their mission field."

Meanwhile the Brixey's mission field is in Riverside. "We feel like we can impact the world more here than anywhere else," Brixey said.

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

Home missionary honored  
for 52 years of service

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
3/24/93

ATLANTA (BP)--Joshua Grijalva's ordination certificate does not include a retirement clause, so he's not retiring from home missions. At 71, he says he's just becoming a senior citizen.

The president of Hispanic Baptist Seminary in San Antonio was appointed a home missionary 52 years ago when he was 19 and it took three days to get from San Antonio to Atlanta. He was honored by Home Mission Board directors March 17 for having the longest tenure of any home missionary.

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Grijalva first served as a mission pastor in Texas and Colorado, but he discovered his passion in education. He was instrumental in establishing Ethnic Leadership Development Centers to provide seminary-level training.

"Ethnic young people deserve to get the best theological and Christian education available," Grijalva said.

Many of them, however, cannot attend seminary because of job or family commitments. Ethnic Leadership Development Centers "go where the people are," Grijalva said. Also, textbooks are chosen and classes designed specifically for students in each setting.

Currently, 1,150 students representing 18 ethnic groups are enrolled in Ethnic Leadership Development Centers, said Moises Rodriguez, HMB associate director of language church extension.

The 103 centers meet students' needs by being financially and geographically accessible as well as offering classes in the students' native language, Rodriguez said.

One of Grijalva's goals now is to "recall the called" -- to help retired ministers find ways to continue using their gifts. Some senior citizens are too preoccupied with self-preservation to be involved in ministry, Grijalva said.

Grijalva has written 22 abbreviated Bible commentaries in Spanish. When he "becomes a senior citizen," he wants to write about the life of Paul and the life of Christ.

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

EDITORS' NOTE: This story can accompany (BP) story titled "New Orleans Seminary marks 75th anniversary in 1992-93," dated 3/23/93.

New Orleans Seminary highlights  
75th anniversary with new history

Baptist Press  
3/24/93

NEW ORLEANS (BP)-- New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has published an updated, pictorial history book commemorating its 75th anniversary.

Released for the first time during the recent March meeting of seminary's board of trustees, "Seventy-Five Years of Providence and Prayer: An Illustrated History of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary" was written by Claude L. Howe Jr., professor of church history at NOBTS for 33 years.

Donald W. Minton, another 33-year faculty member, served as picture editor, with Debbie Moore, director of the seminary's office of public relations, serving as general editor.

NOBTS' diamond anniversary year will be highlighted during homecoming week, April 13-15, featuring Ken Hemphill for the annual Gurney Evangelism Lectures and both Hemphill and Elmer Towns for the annual advanced church growth conference and a church growth rally. The finale of the anniversary events will occur in Houston on June 16 during the seminary's alumni and friends breakfast at the Southern Baptist Convention.

This updated history book is divided into chapters corresponding to the seven men who have served the institution as presidents: Byron Hoover DeMent (1917-28), William Wistar Hamilton Sr. (1928-42), Duke Kimbrough McCall (1943-46), Roland Quinche Leavell (1946-58), Henry Leo Eddleman (1959-70), Grady Coulter Cothen (1970-74), and Landrum Pinson Leavell II (1975-present).

The last seminary history, "The School of Providence and Prayer: A History of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary," was written by William A. Mueller, a former NOBTS church history professor, for the seminary's 50th anniversary, and has been out of print for many years. Park Anderson, a former missions professor, wrote the seminary's first history book in 1938 for the 20th anniversary.

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This new 224-page hardback volume was produced entirely by seminary staff, with an outside company printing the camera-ready material. The book features nearly 200 pictures, many never before published, with 13 full-color pages. It is available from the NOBTS office of public relations for \$19.95.

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(BP) photos available upon request from NOBTS office of public relations.

Top Russian religious leader  
asks for end to power struggle

Baptist Press  
3/24/93

MOSCOW (BP)--As Russia's constitutional battle widened, the head of the powerful Russian Orthodox Church appealed to the nation's leaders to put aside personal and political motives "for the sake of the people."

"This conflict is fraught with dangerous consequences which could ruin Russia," said Alexei II, patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, in a statement released March 23.

President Boris Yeltsin is fighting both to retain power and implement reforms in the face of intense opposition from the Russian Parliament, which is dominated by hard-line communists and nationalists. The dispute has paralyzed the government and threatens to spread chaos throughout Russia and even beyond to other former Soviet republics.

Alexei II pleaded with the combatants to "give up their ambitions, overcome their inner motives and even sacrifice their political careers for the sake of the people," according to United Press International.

"Our people, who are at an historic crossroads, are experiencing much suffering," the patriarch stated. "Poverty, ethnic conflicts, crime, the plight of refugees and social tensions are making people's lives almost unbearable."

The statement, also signed by other Orthodox leaders, did not take sides in the struggle, but seemed to lean toward the reformers by calling for "a state which will not allow us to return to the past, to dictatorship and suppression of freedom. We need a form of state administration which will make it possible to solve key issues of the life and renewal of Russia."

It also called on the armed forces to "remain wise and not to yield to the influence of political extremists." So far, Russian military leaders have stayed on the sidelines while the politicians attack each other.

Baptists in Russia also are staying neutral in the governmental struggle and praying for a resolution, Southern Baptist missionary George Lozuk told Baptist Press March 23.

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CORRECTION: In the SBC annual meeting program dated 3/23/93, please change:

-- the name of the Sunday School Board's presentation listed at 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, to "The Bible Speaks -- For Such a Time as This."

-- the title for Fred Powell under the listing of the Committee on Order of Business members to senior associate pastor, not pastor as listed.

Thanks,  
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