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**FMB cuts 37 jobs, 8 percent
of staff, in budget shortfall**

By Bob Stanley

**Baptist Press
5/6/93**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Thirty-seven jobs, representing 8 percent of its 450 home office positions, are being cut by the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board.

Most of the cutback will be in effect by June 1. A few people close to retirement are being allowed to work several more months until their planned retirement date.

The board's interim president, Don Kammerdiener, said a reduction in home office expenses was necessary because of "shortfalls in Cooperative Program and Lottie Moon giving as well as some decline in investment income caused by the decline in interest rates."

In a message sent overnight to mission board trustees, he said the cuts include support level, professional and management positions. With the reductions, the board will be able to reduce its staff salary and benefits expenditures by "more than \$1 million annually," he wrote trustees.

Kammerdiener noted 10 of the positions being cut were vacant. The remaining 27 people, including 14 support staff and 13 professional or management staff members, were notified May 5.

For those losing their jobs, the board will provide full pay, continuing insurance and pension participation for three to six months, depending on years of service. They also will be paid for unused leave time.

The board will cover the cost of at least two months' professional assistance to secure another job, beginning with an orientation session May 7. Later, a two-day training seminar will be provided, along with individual assistance in resume preparation, job search counseling and job interview training.

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Kammerdiener said these stateside budget cuts will be accompanied by reductions in the board's overseas budget, but these have not yet been determined. He estimates the Foreign Mission Board will have \$1.5 million less funding available for 1994.

Of the board's \$183.8 million budget for 1993, 12.20 percent, or \$22.4 million, was allocated for stateside administrative and promotional expenses. Staff salaries and benefits make up \$15.5 million of the stateside total.

The interim president said the process of downsizing included individual conferences with each vice president or office director and study by the staff's top-level global strategy group, which reviewed each office's proposed cutbacks in detail during a May 3-4 meeting. "While we regret that this (staff reduction) is necessary, we have no choice but to move on with the reduction of some home office jobs," Kammerdiener said in his explanation to staff.

He noted the study included only positions for which the president is directly responsible and did not include those filled by trustee election. The elected administrators include the president, executive vice president, vice presidents, area directors and others constituting the global strategy group.

In conjunction with the downsizing of staff, Kammerdiener announced the board will not renew its contract with David Barrett, consultant to the board's World Evangelization Research Center. Barrett, who has been related to the board since 1985, was a missionary and research officer based in Nairobi, Kenya, for the Anglicans before moving to Richmond, Va. Six months' notification is required to end the contract.

"For reasons of economy we find it necessary to bring this relationship to a close," Kammerdiener said. But he said this decision "in no way represents a lessening of the Foreign Mission Board's commitment to be actively engaged with other Great Commission Christian groups."

He said one of the "most stunning successes" of the relationship with Barrett has been the way the FMB has strengthened its relationship with other Christian groups committed to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with all peoples of the world. The board's Global Desk will continue to maintain and strengthen these relationships, Kammerdiener said.

Barrett, 65, said, "I am very satisfied with the tremendous interest in world missions research that the Foreign Mission Board has pioneered in." He said he has no immediate plans to leave Richmond.

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Specialists still needed on
mission field, FMB leaders say By Mary E. Speidel

Baptist Press
5/6/93

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Church planters top the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's "help wanted" list, but many needs still exist for lay professionals and people in specialized, church-related vocations.

That's the word from officials who monitor the hundreds of career mission job requests on file in the board's personnel selection department.

"Because our greatest need is for church planters, most of our high-priority requests fall into this category," acknowledged Lloyd Atkinson, director of personnel selection. "Sometimes the perception is that this is the only kind of request we have. In reality, we need many different kinds of people with many different gifts."

In fact, Atkinson said, about a third of the 1993 personnel requests call for lay specialists, the term board officials use for missionaries in professions such as health care, education, business and media. The rest of the requests are for people in church-related vocations. These include church planting as well as specialized ministries such as religious education, church music and theological education. Some needs are for combination jobs such as a church planter skilled in teaching English as a second language.

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"We're appointing people with a broad spectrum of vocational skills," Atkinson noted. Last year 31 percent of career appointees filled lay specialty jobs. That number was up from 1991, when 23 percent of missionaries appointed were lay specialists.

In the early 1980s, the board saw an increasing proportion of specialists becoming career missionaries compared to the number of church planters, according to Jim Riddell, associate director of personnel selection.

Since the board's primary task is evangelism that results in churches, FMB leaders responded by developing a strategy to better focus on that task. The strategy called for 70 percent of the missionary force to devote at least half their time to evangelism and church planting. For short, the plan came to be known as "70/30."

The "70/30" strategy resulted in some misconceptions among Southern Baptists about the appointment of career missionaries other than church planters. "It gave the impression that we didn't want anybody else (besides church planters)," Riddell said.

Currently, there are about 660 jobs on the 1993 personnel request list, according to Riddell. About 370 of them are for missionaries other than church planters. Approximately 200 of these are for lay specialty jobs.

Part of Riddell's role is managing the job request list, which is constantly fluctuating as positions are filled and new requests come in. From this overall list the board's global strategy group of top administrators selects priority requests each year.

Most of the 1993 priority requests are for church planters, Riddell noted. "Church planting is still our primary task," he said.

However, the 1993 priorities also include several requests for lay specialists and others experienced in church-related vocations besides the pastorate, according to Riddell.

Among the priority needs for lay specialists are:

- community health worker to serve in public health and relief ministry in east Africa.
- university teacher to work in evangelism and church development in east Asia.
- physician to work in family practice at a hospital in Nepal.
- relief and development worker to develop programs in agriculture, medicine and hydrology in east Africa.

Some of the top needs for people experienced in specialized, church-related vocations include:

- religious education consultants to work in Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus and Bulgaria.
- student/youth worker in Hungary.
- music consultant in Bulgaria.
- youth worker in Burkina Faso.

Riddell added when lay people approach the board's personnel selection department about possible career mission service, "First, we will evaluate their skills in light of our needs overseas. We will always try to determine how they could serve. But if they come from a vocational background we can't use, we'll say that."

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(BP) photos (two horizontal and one vertical) mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutlines available on SBCNet Newsroom.

**BSSB to aid prayer effort
for 'strategic-level' warfare By Art Toalston**

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Convention's Sunday School Board is set to play a key role in broadening the scope of intercessory prayer and spiritual warfare in America, according to Peter Wagner.

Wagner, professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., announced to a May 4 meeting of Nashville-area Christians the Sunday School Board is sending a mailing to some 10,000 pastors of non-SBC churches encouraging them to initiate city-wide prayer networks.

The SBC-wide prayer network, Watchmen National Prayer Alert, now in its second year, involves 2,000-plus SBC churches in praying an assigned hour every week for spiritual awakening in America as well as their own prayer concerns.

Each of the 168 hours of the week is assigned to a participating church prayer group which gathers at its appointed hour, prays and then "passes the watch" in a telephone call to the next church group on the schedule.

Wagner said he hopes interdenominational Watchmen-like prayer networks will be formed in 1,000 U.S. cities.

The Sunday School Board has prepared an interdenominational "Watchman" prayer ministry planning kit to aid local prayer leaders start such networks.

Currently, a city-wide prayer network is being organized in Boston, said Avery Willis, a Sunday School Board leader in the national prayer effort. Planning for such an effort also is under way in Houston, he added.

Nashville would be an especially prime location for a local network, Wagner told the crowd of 200 who gathered to hear his thinking of a strategy for spiritual warfare in America -- perhaps starting with the field of country music -- that could even hasten the completion of world evangelization by the year 2000.

Wagner is coordinator of the "prayer resource network" of the interdenominational "A.D. 2000 and Beyond Movement" working toward evangelization of what he called the world's "10/40 Window," referring to latitude lines across the Middle East, North Africa and Asia, by the year 2000.

The region, called "World A" by Southern Baptist missiologists, contains 95 percent of the world's least evangelized people, Wagner said. Unless circumstances change, these people will never have the opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ in their lifetimes, he said.

"But we believe God is going to change those circumstances."

One change is evident: increasing Christian unity, Wagner said, noting: "God is not going to evangelize this world with traditional evangelicals alone ... (nor) with Pentecostals and charismatics alone. He's going to evangelize the world with the whole body of Christ."

Southern Baptists, for example, "were a different world" until 20 years ago, Wagner said. "They might just as well have had their own planet. They knew how to do it; they became the biggest denomination in America. But they were isolated."

Now, Wagner said, Southern Baptists are more aware, more involved in spiritual concerns shared by other evangelicals.

The BSSB's Willis, for example, was one of the steering committee members who organized the May 4 gathering. And the Sunday School Board provided the meeting room.

Another change cited by Wagner: a more intense involvement by Christians in "strategic-level spiritual warfare." This, he said, is "a relatively new thing the Spirit is saying to the churches."

Wagner noted prayer is often answered when a church seeks God's intervention for an individual, a family or the church itself.

But few churches see answers to prayers for their communities -- and to their prayers for people in those communities to turn to Christ as Lord and Savior, he said.

"Now, we're daring to ask the question, 'Why?'"

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One key possibility, Wagner said, is that "a significant obstacle to change in our communities and to lost people being saved is Satan."

To keep communities in spiritual captivity, Satan has delegated the responsibility to "a whole slew of demonic principalities and powers," Wagner said, citing the Ephesians 6:12 passage in the New Testament: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Some of these powers rule cities, nations, people groups, even religious groups, Wagner said. Evil forces are at work "wherever there's a human network."

Industries are probably among the networks "unduly ruled by Satan," Wagner continued, saying he has long wanted "to focus spiritual power" on an industry.

"And a good industry to begin with, to experiment with, would be the country music industry."

Wagner quipped, "The only kind of music I really like is country-and-western music," saying he watches Nashville's "Grand Ole Opry" on cable TV on Saturday nights. Years ago, he quipped, as a dairy farmer in upstate New York, a country music radio station was the only one "the cows would give milk to."

If Christians in Nashville can learn to do "strategic-level spiritual warfare" and defeat Satan in the country music industry, Wagner said, then Satan can be tackled in other industries as part of a larger, worldwide Christian effort to ultimately prevail for Christ in the "10/40 Window," which he described as "the last stand of Satan."

Once the gospel has been proclaimed there -- not necessarily that all its inhabitants have been converted to Christianity -- then Christ may come again, Wagner said, quoting Matthew 24:14 in the New Testament: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The group was given a questionnaire at the end of the day's session asking whether they wanted to meet again to discuss Wagner's ideas.

"After reading the surveys," Darryl Miller, one of the conference's organizers told Baptist Press, "I realized there was unanimous support for Dr. Wagner to return to Nashville for a multi-day conference." No dates have yet been set, he said, except that it will be in the winter of 1994.

Wagner, in his comments on strategic-level spiritual war, said a number of books are now on the market on the subject, including his own books, "Warfare Prayer" and "Prayer Shield"; John Dawson's "Taking Our Cities for God"; Cindy Jacobs' "Possessing the Gates of the Enemy: A Training Manual for Militant Intercession"; George Otis Jr.'s "The Last of the Giants;" Frances Frangipane's "The House of the Lord;" and two books with numerous contributors, "Breaking Strongholds in Your City" and "Engaging the Enemy."

"This whole area is something relatively new for me," Wagner said, explaining he began studying intercessory prayer and spiritual warfare only in 1987.

What he has learned about prayer, he said, has fueled the most exciting years of his entire ministry.

"The way I was praying before was boring, but it's not anymore. ... I never realized how powerful intercession was."

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Senate committee OKs
RFRA nearly unanimously

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
5/6/93

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Senate Judiciary Committee voted nearly unanimously May 6 to send the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to the floor despite some concerns expressed about its application in prisons.

RFRA, S. 578, received a 15-1 vote, with only Sen. Alan Simpson, R.-Wyo., dissenting.

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After the vote, Simpson, who killed the bill late in the session last year by putting a hold on it in committee, said he opposed the bill solely on the basis of problems he fears RFRA may create in prison administration.

The Senate committee's action means RFRA has reached the floors of both houses. The House of Representatives Judiciary Committee approved the companion bill, H.R. 1308, unanimously in late March.

House floor action may occur soon but a timetable for Senate consideration is uncertain, said a spokesman for the coalition supporting RFRA.

RFRA is a legislative response to the 1990 Employment Division v. Smith opinion in which the Supreme Court ruled government no longer has to show it has a "compelling interest" before restricting the free exercise of religion. Under the decision, it became easier for government to limit the religious expression of citizens.

Since Smith, religious freedom has been hindered in more than 50 cases because of the lower standard faced by government, said Sen. Orrin Hatch, R.-Utah, lead Republican sponsor in the Senate.

The legislation is intended to restore the "compelling interest" test to free exercise of religion cases, supporters say.

A Senate Judiciary Committee vote originally was scheduled March 25, one day after the House committee OK'd RFRA but was delayed to give Attorney General Janet Reno an opportunity to review the bill in response to concerns expressed by the Bureau of Prisons. Reno later said an exemption for prisons is unnecessary, a position espoused by the coalition supporting RFRA.

Fueled by a letter from 22 state attorneys general saying the legislation is unworkable in the prison system, however, Simpson voiced opposition to RFRA without language addressing the concerns of prison administrators.

Circuit courts have applied the "compelling interest" test in the past, Hatch said, in such a way as to balance the interests of prison administrators and the "limited religious rights of prisoners."

Simpson was not alone in expressing concerns about RFRA's application to prisons, but the others who voiced such questions voted for the bill.

"RFRA preserves the power of the people to pass and enforce criminal laws, while requiring only that government articulate a good reason for overriding a religious claim," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "This is not an unfair price to ask prison officials and other government officials to pay in order to preserve the highest protection for religious liberty that our law can afford."

Pro-choice advocates also have expressed concern the bill would aid pro-life demonstrators who blockade abortion clinics because of religious convictions, Simpson said.

RFRA "does not protect criminal behavior that endangers public safety, health or private property," said Sen. Edward Kennedy, D.-Mass, the prime Democratic sponsor.

The committee vote was encouraging, although he expects an amendment related to prisons to be introduced on the Senate floor, said Brent Walker, associate general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

RFRA will pass "in some form, with the possibility of some kind of carve-out, limited or extreme, for the prison situation," Walker said. "But I think that even with the prisons that we have a good shot at winning the battle."

In addition to the CLC and BJC, the unusually broad coalition of nearly 60 members supporting RFRA includes the National Association of Evangelicals, American Civil Liberties Union, Concerned Women for America, People for the American Way, Christian Legal Society, Americans United for Separation of Church and State and United States Catholic Conference.

President Bill Clinton has endorsed the legislation.

Southern Baptists discuss
expanded sports evangelism

By Jim Burton

MARIETTA, Ga. (BP)--Southern Baptist sports evangelism will become a more concentrated and focused denominational strategy for outreach following a meeting April 30-May 1 in Marietta, Ga.

Desiring to create avenues for ways "to do our ministries," sports and church recreation leaders shared their strategies and successes while agreeing coordination of Southern Baptist efforts will increase their effectiveness.

"We're not trying to start a new organization," said Steve DeVoss, a Southern Baptist and director of Global Sports Partners of Hong Kong. "Our vision is to see sports used to reach people."

The Southern Baptists wrapped their meeting around a Sports Outreach America meeting. SOA is a collection of organizations involved in sports evangelism, including the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Athletes in Action, Navigators and Young Life.

Citing sports as the No. 1 interest activity in the world, DeVoss said Southern Baptist coaches, athletes, trainers, sports psychologists and others have unprecedented ministry opportunities.

"Sports evangelism is like a bomb about to explode," agreed Keith McVay, a church recreation minister at First Baptist Church in Farmerville, La. "The question is, how long is the fuse?"

Four Southern Baptist agencies have strategies for sports evangelism -- the Brotherhood Commission, Sunday School Board and the Home and Foreign Mission boards.

"We have tremendous resources in place already," said Frank Drinkard, director of the Brotherhood Commission's National Fellowship of Baptists in Sports, based in Memphis, Tenn. "We are now seeing that we can take this beyond what we have done."

Sports evangelism has primarily been a local church ministry, said Drinkard, who is also minister of recreation at Germantown Baptist Church in suburban Memphis.

"We've never seen it as the tool to reach the world for Christ as much as we do now," Drinkard said.

Fred Sorrels, a Southern Baptist agricultural missionary to Madagascar, has used sports evangelism extensively there.

"I am convinced that God is working nowhere the way he is in sports," Sorrels said.

Other Foreign Mission Board representatives presented urgent needs, including three more players to round out a basketball squad leaving June 4 for Mongolia and China.

The Sunday School Board's church recreation director, Tommy Yessick, said sports evangelism is a growing part of their ministry. The board's administration has approved a position of sports evangelist, which is to be filled by Oct. 1, 1993.

Strategies discussed by participants at the Marietta meeting included making sports evangelism an emphasis at existing Southern Baptist meetings and training events, such as Rec Lab, Brotherhood training events, state evangelism conferences and Ridgecrest and Glorieta training events.

People interested in sports evangelism should register with National Fellowship of Baptists in Sports, which maintains a database of volunteers for home and foreign projects. For information, call (901) 272-2461.

Church hosts defenders
of Freemasonry & faith

By Mark Wingfield

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--A panel of eight longtime Masons stood at the pulpit of a Baptist church to declare they see no conflict between Freemasonry and Christianity.

The Masons spoke during a program at Jeffersontown Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., intended to rebuff criticisms of Freemasonry coming from some quarters of the Southern Baptist Convention.

At the SBC's annual meeting in Houston next month, messengers will vote either to accept or reject a report on Freemasonry by the Home Mission Board. That report says some elements of Freemasonry are "not compatible with Christianity," but that individual Baptists should be free to make their own decisions about whether to be Masons.

The HMB report was developed in response to a motion offered at last year's convention by Larry Holly, a Beaumont, Texas, physician. Holly, an ardent critic of Freemasonry, has published two widely circulated paperback books to document what he claims are satanic elements in Freemasonry.

Joel Jones, pastor of Jeffersontown Baptist Church, noted at the April 27 meeting that his own church met for its first 60 years in a Masonic lodge hall. Many church members and deacons are Masons, he added.

"Mr. Holly's motion is not the voice of all Southern Baptists," he assured the 60 people in the audience, most of whom were Masons.

The event was organized by Jeffersontown member Marion Reed, retired editor of the Masonic Home Journal who was raised as a child in the Masonic Widows and Orphans Home in Louisville.

Reed and the other speakers uniformly stated they have found no conflict between their Christian faith and Freemasonry. All of the speakers had achieved leadership positions within Freemasonry and had been Masons 20 to 40 years or more.

"I've known a lot of Baptist deacons who were Masons," Reed noted. "I never saw horns or tails on any of them, nor any halos."

Reed said the primary purpose of Freemasonry is to teach friendship, morality and brotherly love. He challenged Freemasonry's critics to find anything evil in those objectives.

Speakers attempted to address specific charges made against Freemasonry:

-- Titles. Calling the person elected to preside over a local lodge "worshipful grand master" is a traditional title and does not equate that person with deity, said William Hinton, who works on the staff of Hopkinsville Community College. "By no means do we mean that he is to be worshipped or venerated or set apart," Hinton explained, "but that he is to be respected.

-- Oaths. Oaths taken by Masons are solemn vows, not "bloody oaths" with sinister meanings, Hinton said. "The oaths are promises to be a better man and a better Mason."

-- Religion. "Freemasonry is not a religion," said Floyd Booth, a deacon at Ninth & O Baptist Church in Louisville. He said Freemasonry does not offer a plan of salvation nor any theology and does not teach that salvation is found through good works. Further, discussion of religion is forbidden during Masonic meetings, he added.

-- Masonic Bible. Although critics claim Masons have created their own Bible, the only difference in a "Masonic Bible" from a normal King James translation is a set of cross-references at the back of the book, said Jack Early, president of the Kentucky Independent College Fund.

-- Universalism. "Nowhere in the Masonic ritual do we say every person will be saved," Early stated. "There may be (some Masonic) writers who say this, but they speak for themselves."

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Several speakers said that while Freemasonry is not a religion it does promote the religious values of Christianity. For example, applicants to the York Rite of Freemasonry "must express a belief in the Christian religion ... and a belief that Jesus Christ died upon the Cross for the remission of sins," said James Wall, who is retired from the U.S. Army.

Holly, contacted for comment, said, "No one questions the sincerity of Baptists who are Masons. What is in doubt is their sensitivity to truth and error and to the incompatibility between their craft and Christ's gospel. Sincerity has never been a measure of validity."

Holly reiterated his claim that "until now every Christian denomination which has studied the Lodge has condemned it as being incompatible with Christianity."

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Association aims to serve churches
not sell pre-packaged programs By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
5/6/93

HOUSTON (BP)--With 515 churches and missions, Union Baptist Association in Houston has more churches than 23 state conventions. But the Southern Baptist Convention's largest association does not depend on size for success.

Jim Herrington became director of missions for Union Association four years ago. His first impression was, "What we're doing is not working. We're losing the city at supersonic speeds."

From 1980 to 1989, the Houston metroplex had a net population gain of 350,000. But Southern Baptist churches reported a net gain of 1,032 members.

From a "sense of despair and hopelessness" and extended times of retreat and prayer, the associational staff developed a strategy to help churches identify and fulfill their mission.

The association used to primarily push denominational programs developed at state or national levels by offering training and resources, Herrington says.

"Churches have come to perceive that the association ... is more interested in selling the program than in knowing and responding to each congregation's distinctive needs," Herrington wrote in a paper for the Home Mission Board's metropolitan missions department.

The problem with that approach, Herrington says, is the assumption that one format is best for all churches. Though the association continues to be a resource center for state and national programs, the staff serve as consultants rather than promoters, he says.

For example, Robert Sowell, coordinator of strategy planning, leads churches in a spiritual journey to clarify their vision and identify their priorities. A by-product of the process is a renewed passion for ministry, Sowell says.

Next, Frank Moreno, programming coordinator, helps churches explore an array of available resources. He leads them to customize programs that will carry out their vision.

Rather than assuming "that everything a church is currently doing should be done," Herrington says the associational staff asks churches if their programs are helping them achieve their goals.

"We're committed to encouraging the local church to pursue what it believes is appropriate for its setting," Herrington says.

One staff position Union Association does not have is a person who relates to specific ethnic groups. Herrington is determined to offer all churches the same service, with no regard to their ethnic makeup.

Herrington intentionally involves people from various ethnic groups in decision-making places. For example, the association's credentials committee this year includes three African-Americans, including the chairman, two Hispanics, one Indonesian and one Chinese.

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To be truly inclusive, Herrington says ethnics must feel like they can retain their heritage rather than being forced into an Anglo mold of church life. The diversity, Herrington says, "gives full expression to the nature and character of God."

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Midwestern honors 2 grads
with 1992 alumni award

Baptist Press
5/6/93

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Two graduates of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary recently were selected as 1993 Alumni of the Year. They will be recognized during the annual alumni luncheon June 16 held in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Houston.

Receiving the award this year are Christian education worker B. Marie Clark of Kansas City, Kansas, and Wyoming Baptist leader John W. Thomason Jr. Both are being recognized by the MBTS alumni association for significant contributions to Christian ministry.

The luncheon in room 307 of the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston - site of the SBC meeting -- will begin at 12:15 p.m., immediately after the close of the Wednesday morning session of the convention.

Bob Webb, a 1969 Midwestern graduate and national alumni association president, will serve as moderator for the luncheon program and business meeting.

Tickets for the alumni luncheon may be purchased in advance for \$15 per person from the Alumni Office, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 5001 N. Oak St. Trafficway, Kansas City, MO 64118. Or tickets may be obtained for \$18 at the seminary booth in the convention exhibit hall.

Clark, a Christian education consultant for the Kansas City (Kansas) Baptist Association, received the master of religious education degree from Midwestern in 1982. She is a 1964 graduate of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark.

During the past decade, Clark has led religious education conferences in local churches and associations and at state and national Baptist gatherings. She has served as an adjunct professor for Midwestern Seminary and has written articles for several periodicals. She is a member of Nall Avenue Baptist Church in Prairie Village, Kansas.

Since 1982, Thomason has been executive director for the Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention. In addition, he directs the state's Brotherhood and stewardship departments and is editor of the Wyoming Baptist newspaper, WSBC Horizons. A two-time Midwestern graduate, he received the master of divinity degree in 1962 and the master of theology degree in 1968. He also is a 1959 bachelor of arts graduate of Howard College (now Samford University), Birmingham, Ala.

Previously, Thomason served the former Northern Plains Baptist Convention as director of the teaching/training division and also provided leadership in several other areas. In addition, he has been pastor of churches in Billings, Mont.; Kansas City, Mo.; and Phenix City, Ala.

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3 chosen as Southwestern's
'93 distinguished alumni

Baptist Press
5/6/93

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Three graduates of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have been chosen to receive the school's distinguished alumni award for 1993 and will be recognized June 16 at the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston.

Receiving the award this year are Carolyn Coggin, a Fort Worth, Texas, pastor's wife; retired missionary James Crane; and retired Texas Baptist missions leader Charles Lee Williamson.

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The recipients will be honored during the seminary's annual luncheon following the Wednesday morning session of the SBC. The luncheon will be at the George R. Brown Convention Center, site of the convention.

Tickets may be purchased by sending \$12 to Southwestern's Office of Institutional Advancement, P.O. Box 22000, Fort Worth, TX 76122.

Carolyn Coggin received the master of religious education degree in 1949. She is the wife of James Coggin, pastor emeritus of Travis Avenue Baptist Church in Fort Worth. Throughout her husband's ministry, she was active with Woman's Missionary Union and as a Sunday school teacher. For nearly 25 years, she conducted conferences for ministers' wives at Southwestern, in the Tarrant Baptist Association and with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Coggin also led a weekly Bible study in her home for wives of Southwestern students. In 1985, she was president of the Conference of Ministers' Wives for the SBC.

James Crane received the master of theology degree in 1945. He retired from foreign mission work in 1981 after more than 36 years as a Southern Baptist missionary in Mexico. During his mission service, Crane's ministry included student work, rural evangelism and theological education.

In addition, he was a guest professor at Southwestern and at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Texas-Austin, he is the author of nine Spanish books, three of which have been translated into Portuguese. He is married to the former Edith Carden.

Charles Lee Williamson earned the bachelor of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Southwestern. He retired after 23 years as director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas' State Missions Commission missions division. He also was director of missions for Southeast Texas, Golden Triangle and Waco Baptist associations in Texas.

While at the BGCT, Williamson pioneered the work of strategy planning through local associations. He served as a trustee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and was guest professor at the Louisville, Ky., school. He is married to the former Patsy Cypert.

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Southern's alumni, friends
to meet June 16 in Houston

Baptist Press
5/6/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's annual Alumni/ae and Friends Reunion Banquet will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Houston Wednesday, June 16, at 1 p.m. during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Tickets are \$14.50 each in advance and \$18 each at the convention. Tickets may be ordered by sending a check and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Alumni Relations, Southern Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280.

Tickets ordered after June 5 will be held at the seminary exhibit at the convention center.

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Southern names 5 as
distinguished alumni

Baptist Press
5/6/93

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Five graduates of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary have been selected as 1993 distinguished alumni by the Louisville, Ky., school.

Honorees are Victor T. Glass, retired director of the black church relations department at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta; Alton Harpe, retired campus minister at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.; Roy McClung, president emeritus of Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas; Floyd Roebuck, pastor of First Baptist Church in Rome, Ga.; and Eric Henry Ohlman, vice president and dean at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

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McClung and Harpe will be honored at the seminary's Alumni/ae and Friends Reunion Banquet June 16 in Houston during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The award was presented to Glass March 30 at the Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in Atlanta during a concert by the Southern Seminary Choir.

Roebuck will be honored at the alumni reunion dinner May 14 during the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in Birmingham, Ala.

Ohlman, an American Baptist honoree, will receive his award later this year at Eastern Seminary.

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Golden Gate to recognize
3 as distinguished alumni

By Cameron Crabtree

Baptist Press
5/6/93

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Three alumni of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary will be honored as recipients of the alumni achievement award during the seminary's annual Alumni and Friends Luncheon at the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston June 16.

Receiving the awards this year are Nicaragua missionary James M. Palmer Jr., former Hawaii Baptist leader Edmond R. Walker and California pastor Willie T. Gaines.

The luncheon begins at 12:30 p.m. following the Wednesday morning session of the SBC. It will be held at the George R. Brown Convention Center, site of the SBC annual meeting.

Tickets may be purchased by sending \$12 to Golden Gate's Office of Alumni Relations, 201 Seminary Drive, Mill Valley, CA 94941.

James M. Palmer earned a master of divinity from Golden Gate in 1980. He and his wife, Viola, are Southern Baptist missionaries to Nicaragua, the first missionaries assigned to that country since Southern Baptists formally re-entered the Central American nation. They have been involved with developing social ministries there. Previously, they were missionaries to Honduras.

Edmond R. Walker earned a doctor of theology degree from Golden Gate in 1951. He was executive director of the Hawaii Baptist Convention from 1963-82. During that period he also served as editor of the Hawaii Baptist, the convention's newsjournal. Walker was assistant executive-secretary of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California from 1957-63.

Prior to his service in Hawaii, Walker was pastor in Arkansas, Kentucky, Indiana and California. He started the first Baptist Student Union in California.

Gaines attended Golden Gate Seminary from 1978-79 and 1984-85. He is pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in San Jose, Calif., a church that has extensive educational and social ministries and has consistently been a leader in the number of baptisms in the California Southern Baptist Convention. He was president of the state convention from 1984-86. He also has served as a member of long-range planning committees of both the California Southern Baptist Convention and Golden Gate Seminary.

In business matters, alumni participants will be asked to approve a change in the alumni association's constitution to provide opportunity for more people to become involved with the association's leadership. President William O. Crews will report on new directions and goals of the seminary.

The alumni board of directors will meet prior to the luncheon to elect new officers for the coming year.

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**Southeastern alumni
to hear from 3 grads**

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--The Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Alumni Association will sponsor a luncheon for the seminary's alumni at noon in the Hyatt Regency Wednesday, June 16, during the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston.

The Outstanding Alumni Award -- the seminary's first, at least in recent years -- will be announced by President Paige Patterson.

Speakers will include Southeastern alumni Charles Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.; Gerald Harris, pastor of Peachtree Corners Baptist Church in Norcross, Ga.; and Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ga.

Music will be provided by the choir of the Second Baptist Church of Houston.

Cost of the luncheon is \$12 per person. Reservations can be made through May 30 by sending payment or calling Southeastern's Alumni Office, P.O. Box 1889, Wake Forest, NC 27588-1889 or (919) 556-3101. Any remaining tickets will be available at the door June 16.

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**Alumni & Friends meeting
set for New Orleans Seminary**

**Baptist Press
5/6/93**

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary will hold a breakfast meeting this year for the annual Alumni & Friends Reunion at the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston June 16.

The full-course, country-style breakfast will be in the Imperial Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency, 1200 Louisiana, that Wednesday at 7:30 a.m.

Tickets are now on sale by mail. Tickets ordered before June 1 will cost \$8 each; tickets purchased after June 1 and at the NOBTS exhibit booth at the convention will cost \$10 each. Ticket sales at the SBC will end at 3 p.m. Tuesday, June 15.

The meeting will include a report from the seminary president, Landrum P. Leavell II, and the presentation of several awards for outstanding leadership and service.

The 1993 distinguished alumnus award recipient is Ernest L. Carswell Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C., for more than 20 years. A 1978 doctor of ministry degree graduate of New Orleans Seminary, Carswell is being recognized for leadership in the area of pastoral ministries.

J. Hardee Kennedy, NOBTS professor emeritus of Old Testament and Hebrew, and Leavell will receive special diamond jubilee awards for distinguished service to the seminary during the school's 75 years. Kennedy, retired vice president for academic affairs, served at the school 34 years. Leavell has been president of the school since 1975.

Claude L. Howe, author of "Seventy-Five Years of Providence and Prayer," the seminary's new history book, will be present to autograph books, which will be on sale at the breakfast and at the NOBTS exhibit for \$19.95 each.

Purchase breakfast tickets from the Alumni Office, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70126. Tickets purchased from the office after June 1 may be picked up at the seminary's booth at the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Baptist woman's birthday cards
spark smiles in police dept.

By Kevin Butler

TOPEKA, Kansas (BP)--Ethel Herrick is building a large collection of pen pals within the Topeka, Kansas, police department.

About a year ago, Herrick decided to start sending Topeka police officers birthday cards and a note to show her appreciation for their services.

And it has kept her busy. In the past three months, the retiree estimated she has mailed 150 cards to Topeka officers.

On a recent Sunday, the police gave Herrick a sign of their appreciation. At Trinity Baptist Church, which Herrick attends, she was presented with a Distinguished Service Award by John Sams, president of the Topeka Fraternal Order of Police.

"Ethel's brought a lot of sunshine to all the officers and me," Sams said.

"You often hear people talking bad about the police. It's nice to hear from someone that appreciates what we do."

Herrick said she gets more enjoyment from sending the cards than the officers who receive them.

"I'm not a person who can sit all day and fold my hands," Herrick said. "I need to be doing something.

"Life's fairly short and you have to appreciate the chances you get to help other people.

"They do a lot more for me than I do for them."

In addition to the certificate, Herrick was presented with a small box. She unwrapped it to find a roll of postage stamps.

As her pastor Carl Steele pointed out, it is likely those stamps will come in handy.

"The other day Ethel asked me, 'Now why don't we do this for the fire department?'" he said.

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Alabama Baptist Book Store
cited among America's top 100

Baptist Press
5/6/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Baptist Book Store in Birmingham, Ala., has been cited among the "top 100 bookstores in America" by Christian Retailing, a national trade magazine for Christian bookstores.

The store, recently relocated to Birmingham's Wildwood Shopping Center, is part of the Baptist Sunday School Board's 63-store chain of Baptist Book Stores and Lifeway Christian Stores.

Christian Retailing writer Mary Manz Simon wrote in the May 1 issue that the magazine used high sales volume as the focal point for choosing its top 100 Christian bookstores, with product suppliers contributing lists of their largest bookstore accounts.

Simon said almost without exception managers of the nominated stores attributed high sales volume to "outstanding service, (product) selection and staff."

In a mini-feature on the Birmingham Baptist Book Store, Edwin Poindexter, who was manager when the store moved in September 1992, told Christian Retailing of the affect the move had on customer service and sales.

"The store was doing well," he said, "but we were more of a destination store. We needed to have exposure to walk-by customers."

The move to a shopping center near a Sam's Club and a Wal-mart has proved a good decision, according to the feature. Customers, especially church staff people who visit the neighboring discount stores, seem to appreciate the convenience of the new location, the article concluded.

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"We are seeing so many new customers," said Poindexter, who has since become director of the chain's western region. "We have to get out of the mind-set that we have a built-in trade with churches We must be open to new ideas. We need to be open to what the customer wants, not what we want."

Linda Jackson, a 26-year employee who has spent most of her career in the Birmingham Baptist Book Store, became manager in January. The excitement of national recognition has added to the pride the 20 full-time and six temporary staff members already felt because of the move, she said.

"I went to each one personally to show them the article," she recalled, "and each one asked to have a copy. I ordered 25 copies on my own credit card," she laughed, "and I'll just have to explain that to my husband later!"

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