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HMB declines to consider  
CBF leader as missionary

By Martin King

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

ATLANTA (BP)--The spouse of a newly-appointed home missionary will not be considered for missionary status because of his leadership involvement with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

That decision came during the Home Mission Board's fall board of directors meeting in Atlanta.

Rebecca Waugh was appointed Oct. 13 as church and community ministries director for the Metropolitan New York Baptist Association in New York City.

Bob Curtis, chairman of the board's missionary personnel committee, emphasized Waugh met all qualifications for service with the Home Mission Board. "We did not see any reason either theologically or ethically for not appointing her."

Under HMB policies, missionary spouses are also appointed as home missionaries. However, Curtis, a pastor from Ballwin, Mo., reported to the board that his committee declined to consider Waugh's husband, David, because he is a member of the CBF's national Coordinating Council.

The CBF is an organization of Southern Baptists dissatisfied with current SBC leadership and trends.

Larry Lewis, HMB president, said he agrees with the board's position that an elected leader with the CBF should not be appointed or approved as a SBC-supported missionary.

"However, there was no logical reason not to appoint Mrs. Waugh since she has no direct involvement with CBF and has expressed strong support for the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Program and our agency," Lewis explained. "She appears to be eminently qualified for the position."

"The issue here is not affiliation with or membership in a church which is perceived to be supportive of the CBF. The Home Mission Board remains committed to serving all cooperative Southern Baptist churches," he said.

Hardy Clemons, CBF moderator and a pastor from Greenville, S.C., said he was shocked and astounded at the action. "That is an awfully inconsistent attitude for a group of Baptists to have. People were not denied involvement (in the SBC) because of their involvement in Mid-America (Baptist) Seminary or Criswell College. This seems decidedly discriminatory to me," Clemons stated.

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Asked if the CBF would appoint a missionary whose spouse served on the board of an SBC agency, he said, "I'm sure we would. I don't know any reason we would not."

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HMB approves record budget,  
Lewis calls for CP support

By Martin King

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

ATLANTA (BP)--Home Mission Board directors approved a record \$91.2 million budget during their fall meeting, at which President Larry Lewis urged directors and staff to lead their churches to boost support of the SBC Cooperative Program.

Next year's budget is 2.2 percent more than the current year's budget. The Cooperative Program supplies about one-third of the mission agency's income, but "CP receipts have leveled off and even declined for several years," said Lewis.

Lewis issued a challenge to each director and Home Mission Board staff member to lead his or her church to increase Cooperative Program giving to at least 10 percent. His challenge echoed that given last month to the SBC Executive Committee by chairman Fred Wolfe and its chief executive Morris H. Chapman. Lewis' challenge was met with a chorus of amens.

The missions leader also challenged every Southern Baptist church saying, "We cannot meet ever-increasing spiritual needs with ever-decreasing resources."

Lewis announced during the meeting the HMB had received a gift of nearly \$250,000 for construction of its new national office building near Atlanta.

"Clara Ward of Chattanooga, Tenn., has requested \$239,052 from the estate of her late husband, C. Clifton Ward, to underwrite construction and furnishing of the agency's new library," Lewis said.

"This is the first major gift for the new building. This type of commitment will enable us to build this facility without the use of Cooperative Program dollars," Lewis said.

The construction cost of the five-story building will be covered by sale of the board's current location two years ago. Total construction costs will be \$17.2 million. An additional \$2.4 million may be needed for furnishings.

According to Lewis, a capital funds campaign is expected to supply the necessary funds although some expenditures from the agency's general fund have been authorized if needed.

Board members also voted to reorganize the volunteer division in response to increasing contributions of volunteers. The reorganization redefines several staff positions but does not create new positions according to Lewis.

In the reorganization, Don Hammonds, volunteer division director with 26 years of service to the HMB, will be associate vice president for operations and volunteers in the ministry section.

Elmer Goble, who has been associate director of short-term volunteers, will become director of the volunteer projects department to work with volunteers serving less than four months. People serving more than four months will be assigned through the Mission Service Corps department, which Bob Mills will continue to lead.

The short-term volunteer department will be renamed student missions department and be directed by Mike Robertson. The staff will work with high school and college students in summer and semester missions.

At the request of the church loans committee, the board approved offering five- and seven-year adjustable rate church loans in addition to three-year adjustable rate loans already available.

The board modified terms of site loans for church property from a three-year to a seven-year balloon note.

Board members also approved guidelines for the Kilgore loan plan to assist some churches not otherwise qualified for traditional loans. The fund is named after Robert H. Kilgore who directed the church loans division for 25 years.

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The board paid tribute to five HMB employees retiring at the end of the year. Recognized for a total of 73 years of service to the board were Nell T. Bobo, secretary, Mission Service Corps; William I. Long, associate director, new church extension; Howard H. Ramsey, director of personal evangelism; Maurice Smith, associate director, interfaith witness department; and, Jack M. Touchstone, internal auditor.

A number of changes to the board's by-laws and program statements also were approved. The program statements, which define agency responsibilities, will be reviewed by the SBC Executive Committee.

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**FMB's \$185 million budget  
makes way for new personnel**

**By Marty Croll**

**Baptist Press  
10/14/93**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees adopted a record \$185 million budget for 1994 at their Oct. 11-13 meeting and agreed to consider digging deeper to support the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Moved by a report from Kenya about sacrificial giving by missionaries to the annual foreign missions offering, trustee chairman John Jackson challenged trustees to give \$500 apiece and ask fellow church members to do the same.

About 100 Kenya missionaries -- or 50 family units -- contributed about \$35,000 to the Lottie Moon Offering for foreign missions during their annual meeting in August. That's an average of \$700 per family.

"We have not laid it on the hearts of our people to give," Jackson said. "We need to tell people the good things that are happening around the world."

The Lottie Moon offering is the largest offering of its kind in the world. In the early 1970s it started growing by millions nearly every year. As it has grown, so has the portion of the foreign missions effort it has supported. But receipts two of the past three years fell shy of totals from the year before.

In 1994 the offering is expected to account for almost 45 percent of the board's income. Southern Baptists' unified giving plan, the Cooperative Program, is expected to supply 37 percent.

Jackson told trustees if only 1 million Southern Baptist families gave as little as \$1 for each of the world's 253 countries, contributions would total in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Trustee Terry Horton of Irving, Texas, added incentive by announcing he would give \$10,000 through his church to Lottie Moon as seed money to get other trustees started.

The \$185 million 1994 FMB budget approved by trustees taps into new income channels to offset rising costs and make way for what board leaders feel will be a "banner year" in new overseas personnel.

Still, the budget reflects the board's fight to dig in against rising costs and against a lingering flatness in giving that took hold three years ago after a long period of rapid growth.

Next year the board expects to pick up about \$1.7 million in new income from rents and interest on overseas property and redirect to the 1994 budget \$1 million in loan paybacks that in the past have been used for such purchases as mission cars and houses.

That should help offset a \$2.2 million drop in giving the board is budgeting to receive. In fact, it will even allow the board to show an increase of about a half-million dollars in spending over last year.

That's a rise of less than a half-percent, "but praise God, it is an increase," FMB President Jerry Rankin told trustees.

During the past four years board spending has increased by about \$10 million, he added. (About \$8 million of that came in a jump between 1990 and 1991.) "I would not want you to lose sight of the progress we have made, (even) as we've heard reports of the convention controversy and recessionary problems," he said.

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Rankin said he believes recent giving patterns show a possible reversal of a three-year slide in the Cooperative Program.

The Lottie Moon goal for this year is \$85 million, but the board is budgeting only \$83 million of the goal. Still, that's \$2 million, or 2.5 percent, more than actually received last year, a percentage increase equaled only once during the last four years.

Rankin drew a chorus of "amens" and sustained applause from trustees when he said he was looking forward to coming back to them next spring recommending "what to do with the \$2 million we received in excess of the \$83 million we budgeted for Lottie Moon."

The third-largest source of income next year will be \$13.5 million from investments, about 7 percent of total expected income. Responding to periodic inquiries about why the board keeps investments, Carl Johnson, vice president for finance, told trustees the board's investment income supports 292 missionaries on the field.

This is the first year the board has planned to spend income related to widely scattered land and housing it owns in Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. About \$2.5 million is expected from this income -- not predictable for a long term, but especially important now as other income has plateaued, Johnson said.

About two-thirds of spending next year will support overseas personnel, including a net increase of 70 missionaries on the field -- after retirements and resignations. This increase, plus rising prices for housing and for teaching children of overseas personnel, demands the board cut its spending in other areas next year, Rankin said.

The board trimmed about \$1 million from its field operating budgets. Still, largely because Baptists overseas are taking more responsibility for paying the bills, reduced funding will not diminish Southern Baptist impact overseas, Rankin said.

The budget allows for about \$8 million in capital spending and \$7 million in hunger and relief receipts, all of which are spent overseas. Money also will go to evangelism and church development, Christian leadership development, media ministries, health care ministries and field ministry support.

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Robert O'Brien contributed to this story.

Rankin wins unanimous support  
for FMB organizational changes By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin won unanimous approval Oct. 13 to elect a new senior vice president and change the way the board administers overseas operations.

The affirmation by FMB trustees followed Rankin's Oct. 10 installation as the 10th man to serve as president of the 148-year-old board.

Trustees also voted a \$185 million 1994 operating budget, honored 99 retiring missionaries and approved 32 people for missionary service amid predictions that missionary appointments will rise in 1994.

Moved by a report from Kenya about sacrificial giving by missionaries to the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, trustees agreed to consider digging deeper into their own pockets to support the Christmas Offering.

Terry Horton, a trustee from Texas, said he would give \$10,000 through his church to Lottie Moon as seed money to get other trustees started.

About 100 Kenya missionaries -- or 50 family units -- contributed about \$35,000 to the Lottie Moon Offering for foreign missions during their annual meeting in August. That's an average of \$700 per family.

Trustees also endorsed recommendations from Rankin and a joint trustee-staff committee by:

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-- electing Avery T. Willis Jr., a national leader in discipleship training and former missionary, to a new post of senior vice president for overseas.

-- agreeing to consolidate a variety of board programs and services under Willis' supervision in the new overseas office.

-- approving expansion of Executive Vice President Don Kammerdiener's administrative duties to relate to the entire board structure.

Rankin said he, Kammerdiener and Willis will evolve a working relationship as a top-level administrative team -- a pattern of operation he wants to filter down into other levels of board administration.

Willis, 59, who joins the staff Dec. 1, basically will administer overseas operations, overseeing 10 area directors, four vice presidents assigned to strategic administrative roles and an assistant vice president.

Willis has worked with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board for 15 years and currently directs its discipleship and family adult department. Previously he was a missionary in Indonesia for 14 years.

Rankin told trustees the reorganization steps will: 1) streamline decision making for more rapid response to mission needs and opportunities, 2) place primary focus on overseas ministries, 3) consolidate efforts that directly affect missionary work overseas under one administration, 4) inspire vision, and 5) decentralize strategy and planning.

The function of the mission board's top-level Global Strategy Group, which Rankin dissolved, will be filled by the 10 area directors convening twice yearly, and by other administrative procedures now evolving.

The changes will return most field administration and strategic development responsibilities to the area directors, who will relate to the board through Willis.

Rankin has asked four regional vice presidents who currently head geographic regions to accept other vice presidential roles under Willis' office.

Bill Bullington, now regional vice president for Africa, will become vice president for overseas services, administering programs to be consolidated under him from other FMB offices. He will serve under Willis as a liaison with area directors to meet field needs.

Rankin said regional vice presidents Bill Wakefield, Lewis Myers and Sam James are considering strategic administrative assignments to:

-- mobilize Southern Baptist impact on internationals in the United States, developing international networks and ministries;

-- focus strategies on people groups in the unreached "World A" portions of the globe, develop rapid deployment teams, and head a task force on Muslim ministries; and

-- train and guide missionaries in conducting church growth studies and strategy studies overseas and give leadership to evaluation and review of missionary training and orientation.

Wakefield, 63, is now vice president for Asia and the Pacific; Lewis Myers, 60, vice president for Cooperative Services International, which relates to restricted areas; and Sam James, 61, vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Interim Americas vice president Joe Bruce, 49, will continue his regular role as area director for Middle America and Canada.

Bullington's office will absorb functions now in the board's research and planning office, which ceases operation Jan. 1, and two other functions from the office of mission personnel.

Clark Scanlon, 64, director of research and planning and a 40-year veteran of foreign missions, will become assistant vice president to Willis until his retirement.

Overseas services under Bullington will encompass research, evangelism and church growth, human needs, overseas media services, the board's Jenkins Research Library, missionary health, missionary family services and missionary information analysis.

Two other functions now under the board's office of mission personnel will move under Willis by the end of 1994. They are the Missionary Learning Center in nearby Rockville, Va., which trains and orients personnel for overseas service, and the volunteers in missions department, which coordinates use of volunteers to work alongside missionaries overseas.

Rankin has named Jim Furgerson, 53, adult division director at the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, to head the volunteer department, effective Dec. 1. He succeeds Ron Boswell, who left the board to become pastor of Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

Rankin, who introduced Furgerson to trustees, outlined his vision to "enlarge the channels of opportunity" for volunteers globally.

"Tremendous interest for personal involvement in missions" exists among Southern Baptists, Rankin said. The board must facilitate "the opportunity for more Southern Baptists to participate in the greatest experience in the world -- having a part in sharing Christ with a lost world."

In other action at their Oct. 11-13 meeting, trustees affirmed actions of staff in promoting religious liberty throughout the world. But they declined to send letters asking for such freedom to all heads of countries currently closed to missionaries, as a motion referred to them by the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Houston suggested.

Kammerdiener said the board affirms the concern expressed in the SBC motion, but feels such a "shotgun" approach might do more harm than good. Sometimes, he said, such a direct letter could threaten the possibility of Southern Baptist representatives working in that country. Board leaders have talked with the SBC messenger who introduced the motion, he said, and the messenger was satisfied with the board's approach to work in individual countries in a more diplomatic way.

The policy subcommittee of the trustees' administrative committee is reviewing the manuscript of a new FMB history being published in connection with the board's 1995 observance of its 150th year.

Final plans for publication of the book by church historian William R. Estep will be discussed at the trustees' Dec. 6-8 meeting. At that time they may also discuss the dedication of the book, which trustees earlier had voted to dedicate to retired FMB President R. Keith Parks and his wife, Helen Jean. Parks is now missions coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Trustee Roger Roberts of Kansas, in a report from the board's strategy committee, said the committee is asking the policy subcommittee to reconsider the dedication. But no action has been taken.

Another trustee, Terry Fox of Texas, asked Jackson to investigate and inform trustees about reports that the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union is distributing a book "which perhaps promotes the CBF's missions program."

The book in question is a customized version of "Operation World," a day-by-day prayer guide published by Zondervan focusing on the entire world.

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A synopsis of FMB trustee actions is available on SBCNet Newsroom.

CLC sets health care consultation,  
slams abortion in Clinton plan      By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, expressing a variety of concerns about President Clinton's health care reform plan, has announced it will hold a consultation on the issue in January in the nation's capital.

At an Oct. 13 news conference, CLC officials said it would mount an unprecedented effort to defeat any health care proposal, including Clinton's, which incorporates abortion coverage.

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Invitations to the Southern Baptist National Consultation on Health Care Reform have been issued to Hillary Clinton, the president's wife and head of his health care task force; leaders in Congress; Southern Baptist Convention leaders; medical ethicists, physicians, and nurses. The consultation is expected to produce a list of public policy recommendations on the issue.

While the consultation "will tell us much about this issue, we already know enough to declare unequivocally that to the extent abortion on demand remains in the president's plan, the Christian Life Commission will oppose that legislation," said James A. Smith, the CLC's director of government relations.

Clinton and other members of his administration have said abortion will be included in his plan's basic benefits package. If Clinton's plan is adopted, premiums paid by employers and employees would underwrite abortion services. In addition, the Hyde Amendment, which prevents Medicaid from paying for most abortions, would be overturned, in effect.

"There can be little doubt that, in spite of the president's professed desire that abortion be 'safe and legal, but rare,' the killing of unborn children will vastly multiply as a result of his national health care plan," said CLC Executive Director Richard Land.

"It is unfortunate that the president is apparently so committed to the pro-abortion lobby that he seems willing to jeopardize the most significant social policy legislation of this century for a medical procedure which most Americans agree is elective, except in the rarest of circumstances."

Land said the "inclusion of abortion on demand in the final version of any health care reform would be the most devastating setback for the pro-life movement since Roe v. Wade. In 1973, the pro-life movement was caught by surprise when the Supreme Court decided Roe v. Wade. ... this time the pro-life movement is ready. We must not fail."

Not only abortion, but euthanasia is a major concern, CLC officials say.

"We will likewise contest any plan which opens the door to or actively promotes euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide as a method of reducing medical expenditures near the end of life," said Ben Mitchell, the CLC's director of biomedical and life issues.

Both Land and Mitchell expressed discomfort with the implications of Hillary Clinton's recent comment in The Washington Post: "We'll try to reduce the level of defensive medicine in the last six months of life."

Mitchell also expressed concerns about:

-- the question of religious liberty and exemptions from performing abortions.

The president has said there will be a conscience clause allowing some health plans to opt out of abortion services, but an administration official has said such an arrangement will not be possible unless all members of the network oppose abortion.

"Southern Baptists still maintain, through their state conventions, some oversight of denominationally operated hospitals," Mitchell said. "We are concerned about the Clinton proposal's impact on the religious liberty of those facilities that refuse to perform abortions."

-- the rationing of health care based on factors other than medical need.

"We will oppose any form of restricted access based on age," Mitchell said.

-- the impact on families related to such issues as contraceptive distribution to minors and medical care without parental consent.

-- the effect on Southern Baptist pastors, missionaries and agency employees covered by insurance plans through the Annuity Board.

"We are concerned that Southern Baptists, along with most Americans, may be worse off under the Clinton blueprint," Mitchell said.

The CLC's opposition to the president's plan and any other plan including abortion coverage will consist of: (1) A grassroots campaign to educate Southern Baptists "above and beyond a scale previously undertaken on any issue," Smith said; (2) leadership in coalitions formed to contest the plan; (3) distribution to the White House, Congress and media of the recommendations from the consultation.

**Jewish, Arab believers unite  
in evangelism effort in Israel** By Mike Creswell

ACRE, Israel (BP)--Christian believers from both Jewish and Arab backgrounds joined forces to distribute more than 100,000 gospel tracts during a major Jewish festival in early October.

It was one of the first evangelistic campaigns in Israel since the nation reached historic peace accords with the Palestinians.

"It's significant that Jews and Arabs united to share the gospel during the festival, especially since the peace process has begun in earnest," said veteran Southern Baptist representative Ray Register. "I believe peace will give added opportunities to share the gospel among both Jews and Arabs."

An estimated 850,000 people attended the Acre Festival, celebrating the biblical Feast of Tabernacles, in the city of Acre on the Mediterranean coast near Haifa. The crowds engulfed Acre, which normally has a population of about 50,000 Jews and Arabs. Acre was called Ptolemais in biblical times; the Apostle Paul visited the Christians there on his last trip to Jerusalem.

More than 40 volunteers from Arab Baptist and evangelical churches in Galilee worked with an evangelism team of Jewish believers in Jesus from all over Israel. Earlier the Jewish evangelists distributed gospel tracts at concerts held by pop stars Madonna and Michael Jackson in Tel Aviv. They also took part in an annual Feast of Tabernacles march in Jerusalem.

Most people they approached at the Acre festival accepted the Christian literature, Register said. Some asked for Bibles in their native languages.

Acre Baptist Church and the local Baptist bookstore played host for the tract effort. Jewish believers in Christ set up a bookstand to sell books at the church building.

Register teamed up with Sameer Siman, the bookstore manager, to help with the project. Siman organized a similar effort last year, but this year's campaign was much larger. He will direct follow-up on requests for Bibles and other literature. The Baptist bookstore, located at the al-Jazzar Mosque in Acre, is jointly supported by the Association of Baptist Churches in Israel and the Christian Broadcasting Network.

The Acre church has only about 20 baptized members, although it has sponsored much other Baptist work, including a church in Haifa. "Acre is an economically depressed area and the church has had difficulty sustaining growth," Register said.

Philip Saad, pastor of the Haifa church, also leads the Acre congregation. He was the first person Register baptized in the region 25 years ago.

The Feast of Tabernacles, or Booths, comes at the end of the Jewish year at harvest time. Jews are required to build booths and live in them seven days to remember the time the Israelites spent in the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt. The observance is cited in Leviticus 23 and other Old Testament passages. On the eighth day the final reading of the Torah, called "Joy of the Law" or "Simchat Torah," is held.

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**Octogenarian leads conferences  
for senior adults at Glorieta** By Gomer Lesch

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Just shy of his 85th birthday, Leonard Wedel not only is healthy and active, he completed two weeks of leading conferences at senior adult Chautauquas held at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Wedel, who retired in 1974 as director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's personnel department, led sessions on growing through grief and making new friends.

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He described senior adults attending the conferences as "eager to learn and so open in expressing themselves. They have a sparkle in their eyes and are upbeat in attitude. And they're all proud of where they come from," Wedel added. "They have a loyalty to their church and state groups."

The octogenarian said today's seniors are more active and mobile than those of earlier years.

"They are getting out of the house -- touring, joining health clubs. Some even have second jobs. They're active, not sitting on the sidelines."

Wedel, who takes no medications and has no pains "except a touch of arthritis," said he plans to stay active, including leading conferences "as long as people ask me and as long as I can stand up in front of a group."

After a 30-year career at the board, Wedel continues to work with churches on personnel administration issues, lead pastor-deacon conferences and write. He is the author of three books. He also enjoys woodworking and maintains flower and vegetable gardens at his home in Brentwood, Tenn.

His prescription for a long and happy life?

"I'm sure the Lord has a plan; maybe part of it is health," he said. "I believe a child of God ought to maintain a working stance, a positive outlook, care for his family and demonstrate love for them and others."

"My wife Nora and I continue to make plans for the next few years. We enjoy the past, but we are always looking ahead to other exciting adventures. I count every day as a precious gift from God," Wedel said.

A total of 16 senior adult chautauquas are being conducted this fall by the BSSB discipleship and family development division.

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Gomer Lesch retired from the BSSB in 1988 after serving as director of public relations, special assistant to the president and a BTN anchorperson.

**32-foot Praying Hands creator  
practices a 'visual ministry'**

By David Mallory

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

WEBB CITY, Mo. (BP)--Driving south on U.S. 71 and viewing the gently rolling hills and wide-open farm country, a visitor to the southwest corner of Missouri might feel he could be almost anywhere in rural America.

Then he sees the Praying Hands.

The Praying Hands is a 32-foot concrete and steel sculpture in the shape of two hands clasped in prayer atop a 40-foot man-made hill. There has been no advance notice, no promotion, no billboards urging the visitor to stop and see the Praying Hands.

And that is just the way Jack Dawson, designer of the sculpture, wants it.

"I believe you can market anything, but I didn't want this to be commercialized," says Dawson, a deacon at First Baptist Church in Webb City. Instead, he intended it as a quiet reminder to turn to God.

"The Praying Hands serve as a silent reminder that God is always there, waiting for us to call on him," Dawson said.

The sculpture was erected more than 20 years ago. Despite the lack of publicity, it has become a local landmark. The site of the sculpture is in Webb City, and the praying hands symbol is now included on the official seal of the city. Last year it became the meeting place for southwest Missouri participants in the National Day of Prayer.

The sculpture currently is in its first restoration, with new paint applied to the hands Oct. 5 and a new base of concrete, with four marble Scripture panels, to be completed by December.

Dawson was an art major at Missouri Southern College when he built the sculpture from 1971-73. Now, at age 42, he helps run a family-owned furniture manufacturing business. But he still feels led to use his artistic talents to help draw people closer to the Lord.

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Although the Praying Hands sculptur is th most publicly visible of Dawson's artworks, he has found another way to use his talents for the Lord. He uses pastel chalk to draw pictures as he shares Bible stories.

His technique is similar to the old flannel boards -- with a high-tech twist. He intersperses fluorescent chalks, which show up under certain lights, with the regular chalks. In this way, he is able to hide other pictures within the visible picture he is drawing.

At the appropriate point in his message, he changes the lighting to reveal the hidden picture, dramatically illustrating his point.

Combined with a musical background provided by his wife, Nancy, these "chalk talks" convey a powerful message. Dawson estimates he has given several hundred of these presentations on many different subjects.

"That's what is so exciting about the Christian life," Dawson said, "that the Lord keeps opening up new things."

As an artist, Dawson shares messages from his soul.

"You can teach someone the mechanical skills to become a craftsman," he explained, "but sharing a message as powerful as the gospel calls for something more than just the physical.

"An artist doesn't want you to only observe color compositions, he wants you to feel something. I share God through my artwork."

Dawson uses the term "visual ministry" to describe what he does.

"People remember what they see so much better than what they just hear," he said. "I believe the gospel message is important enough that we should use all our talents to help them understand it."

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Mallory is a correspondent for the Word & Way Missouri Baptist newsjournal. (BP) photo available from Dawson at (417) 673-5012.

SBCNet offers special  
for new subscribers

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--SBCNet, the data communications network for Southern Baptists, will offer a special usage credit to new subscribers from Nov. 1, 1993, through Jan. 31, 1994, resulting in a price break that makes the software kit free and pays the new subscriber \$5.

For the three-month period, the SBCNet kit, which includes software and account information on SBCNet and CompuServe, will provide a \$25 usage credit. The kit sells for \$20.

According to David Haywood, SBCNet coordinator at the Baptist Sunday School Board, the special offer is designed as an extra incentive to introduce the network's services to Southern Baptist church staff persons and lay leaders.

SBCNet may be accessed by using a computer, modem and a membership kit distributed by the board. Kits are available in DOS, Macintosh and Windows versions and may be ordered by calling 1-800-458-2772. Additional information about SBCNet and CompuServe may be obtained by calling Haywood at 1-800-325-7749, ext. 2895.

The monthly charge for SBCNet is \$7.95 for unlimited usage, plus CompuServe charges. Users must choose between CompuServe's standard plan, which provides unlimited access to 35 basic services at \$8.95 monthly, or the alternate plan at \$2.50 monthly, plus time-on-line for services other than SBCNet.

Since SBCNet and CompuServe formed a partnership in 1991, membership has grown to 1,125 members and continues to grow monthly, Haywood said.

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Information available on SBCNet includes Baptist Press, the official Southern Baptist news service; News Room, offering news and feature stories from Southern Baptist agencies and state conventions; Facts & Trends, the Sunday School Board's newsletter for church and denominational leaders; Facts & Trends Information Service, news briefs from the Sunday School Board, Home Mission Board and Foreign Mission Board with usage suggestions for church newsletters.

SBCNet also carried supplemental teaching helps for Adult Bible Book and Life & Work series; Youth Bible Book, Convention Uniform and Life and Work series and collegiate Bible study. Adult Convention Uniform Series helps are scheduled to be added in Jan. 1994. Life applications are available in the Acrobat format for persons who teach fifth and sixth grade children and who use "Bible Searchers Teacher."

Also included is Clip Art, a collection of ready-to-use art pieces; Bold Mission Prayer, requests for prayer from home and foreign missionaries; DiscipleLife Plus, a youth discipleship supplement which includes the quarterly edition of "Youth Prayer Corps Newsletter"; and Minister's Corner, a collection of sermons and illustrations.

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Review board confirms  
Ed Young's tax liability

Baptist Press  
10/14/93

HOUSTON (BP)--After a review by local officials, H. Edwin Young, pastor of Houston's Second Baptist Church and current president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is being assessed an estimated \$60,000 in unpaid taxes in an apparent mixup with property appraisal officials, the Houston Chronicle reported Oct. 8.

The review -- of Young's Houston home being mistakenly listed as tax-exempt church property 10 years -- was conducted by a three-member panel of the Harris County Appraisal District.

The review board ruled Young's liability for the 10 years of previously unassessed taxes preceded a new Texas law limiting liability to five years.

An earlier article in the Chronicle stated there has been no suggestion that taxes were avoided intentionally -- a point underscored by Lynn Carter, chairman of Second Baptists' deacons and a Houston attorney.

Carter said the mixup stemmed from a transition-type housing allowance agreement between the church and Young when he became pastor in 1978 to give Young ownership of a new parsonage in 15 yearly installments.

At the outset, Second Baptist paid full taxes on the property but in 1983 learned it could, as a church, request an exemption, which was granted by local officials, the Chronicle reported. The problem was, Young already was one-third owner of the home, but that was not entered into the tax records. The property remained tax-exempt until officials began realizing the mistake after a local magazine did an article on noted Houstonians' homes earlier this year, the Chronicle said.

Young has received 14 of the 15 yearly deeds under the agreement, Carter said.

Young will pay all previously unassessed taxes when the tax statements are issued to the pastor, Carter said. There is no tax delinquency, as no tax bills previously were sent to Young, and there will be no penalties, Carter said. Young declined comment to the newspaper and Carter was serving as church spokesman.

A Houston tax consultant representing church officials met with property appraisal officials in May, Carter said, to "give them all the facts ... and assist them in clearing all this up."

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