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November 12, 1993

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Catholics announce participation
in 'True Love Waits' campaign By Chip Alford

Baptist Press
11/12/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--The two largest religious bodies in the United States are now actively involved in a nationwide campaign to encourage teen-agers and college students to remain sexually pure until marriage.

At a Nov. 12 press conference during the National Catholic Youth Conference in Philadelphia, officials with the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, Inc. announced plans for bringing the message of "True Love Waits" to Catholic teen-agers.

NFCYM is a networking organization which serves youth ministry offices in the Catholic dioceses across the United States. These dioceses include 19,000 parishes with a combined membership of more than 10 million teen-agers.

According to Leonard Wenke, executive director of NFCYM, the federation will provide Catholic dioceses with an overview of Catholic teaching on adolescent sexuality, resource listings and supplemental teaching materials that can be used with young people, families and parishes. Catholic youth also will have an opportunity to sign "True Love Waits" pledge cards as a sign of their promise to remain sexually pure until marriage. They will be displayed on the Washington Mall July 29, 1994, along with several hundred thousand cards signed by youth from Protestant churches.

"We wish to empower Catholic young people in this country to be witnesses of their faith and give them the opportunity to commit to a chaste lifestyle and to reject the 'safe-sex' messages dominant in our culture," Wenke said in a statement released to Baptist Press.

With the involvement of Catholics, the largest religious group in the country, "True Love Waits" is now supported by the two largest religious bodies in the nation, along with other denominations and para-church groups. The campaign is sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board, an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention, the country's largest Protestant denomination.

"The nation will not be able to ignore such a united statement from teen-agers," Richard Ross, co-coordinator of "True Love Waits," said of the involvement of both Catholic and Protestant youth in the campaign. "I honestly believe there will be a measurable impact on the moral conscience of our society."

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Some of the other groups participating in "True Love Waits" include: Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Assemblies of God, Youth America, Wesleyan Church, Campus Crusade for Christ, Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), Evangelical Covenant Church, Youth With a Mission, Youth for Christ, National Network of Youth Ministries, Reachout Ministries, Student Discipleship Ministries, Pentecostal Church of God and SonLife Ministries.

But the campaign isn't only reaching an American audience. Last month, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada announced it would carry the campaign's theme to its 100 Canadian Protestant denominations, para-church groups and mission agencies representing more than 7,000 churches.

In response to the increasing public attention to the campaign, the Baptist Sunday School Board recently installed a toll-free number to field questions from interested callers, 1-800-LUV-WAIT.

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English continues
to open doors in China

By Donald D. Martin

Baptist Press
11/12/93

WUHU, China (BP)--China's healthy appetite for English remains one of the best ministry opportunities for Southern Baptists in the nation of 1.2 billion people.

"The door is open wider than ever before," said C.K. Zhang, a retired language professor at Anhui Normal University in Wuhu, China. "You can't send missionaries but that doesn't mean (Christian) work in China has stopped. You can come as foreign experts."

Zhang, 84, considers himself a "third-generation Southern Baptist" because his grandmother became a Christian through the ministry of Southern Baptist missionaries. He has devoted his life to teaching sociology and English in China.

"I felt the Lord called me to teach ... but that's not the most important thing," Zhang explained. "It is more important to teach the gospel message. But as a Christian teacher you bring the gospel into every class you teach."

Southern Baptist teachers will have a chance to do just that next summer. The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board is seeking 60 to 80 English teachers -- certified to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) -- to work in China for six weeks.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for outreach," said Charlie Wilson, a Southern Baptist education consultant based in Hong Kong. "Most students that summer teachers meet aren't Christians. These contacts are often the first opportunity for Chinese students to meet someone with the Christian faith."

"Whether the students make commitments to become Christians or not, they are introduced to foreigners who have made Jesus Christ their Lord. Many of these students are studying to teach English themselves, and when they begin to teach they will relate their positive experiences to their own students."

The summer teachers program is entering its fifth year. Last summer's 53 Southern Baptist teachers, working on 11 campuses, taught more than 1,800 students during their six weeks in China, Wilson estimated.

"They planted seeds of witness with hundreds of people," Wilson said. "With teaching, you get to build relationships with people rather than just letting them pass by with only giving them a piece of literature."

For more information about the summer teachers program, call Bob McEachern at the Foreign Mission Board toll-free at (800) 999-3113, ext. 524.

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Virginia Baptists reduce budget,
fail to enact messenger change By Robert Dilday

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Virginia Baptists adopted a 1994 budget \$800,000 lower than the current one and narrowly defeated a proposal to make the basis for church representation at the state association's annual meeting contingent on financial contributions to Virginia ministries alone.

The nearly 4,000 messengers attending the Baptist General Association of Virginia Nov. 9-10 also approved a recommendation to nominate one trustee each for Associated Baptist Press and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; elected a slate of moderate officers; and agreed to explore the possibilities of "mutual ministries" with American Baptists and two African-American Baptist organizations.

In addition, messengers adopted a statement calling homosexual behavior "sinful and unacceptable for Christians," ending a year-long controversy in the state over the subject.

Next year's \$15.5 million budget -- adopted with little opposition -- continues recent practice of offering to churches options in the distribution of their world missions contributions: through the Southern Baptist Convention, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship or an amalgam of the two. Congregations also may craft their own world missions distribution plans.

However, the budget is \$800,000 less than the \$16.3 million goal of the past few years. BGAV budget committee chair Skip Irby told messengers contributions from Virginia churches in the past three years have never surpassed \$15.4 million.

"It's not fair to give the agencies (which are allocated funds in the budget) dollar figures and then expect them to operate at 88 to 90 percent of it," he said in explaining his committee's lower recommendation.

Virginia has experienced the same plateaued level of financial support as Southern Baptists across the nation. Some observers in the state blame the decline on economic trends.

However, conservatives often lay the blame on BGAV budget options, particularly the financial channel to the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and in fact some conservative churches have protested by diverting funds from Virginia ministries to the national Southern Baptist Convention.

The almost unlimited freedom offered to churches in missions support permits congregations to send all their contributions outside Virginia while retaining representation at the state association's annual meeting.

An attempt to stem that flow of funds at this month's meeting won more than 60 percent of the vote but failed to achieve the two-thirds (66 percent) necessary to amend the BGAV constitution.

"This proposal is a matter of simple fairness," said Bob McKinley, the Tappahannock pastor who proposed the change. "If you wish to participate (in the BGAV) you should pay the bill."

But the move could be seen as exclusionary, said opponents. "We don't need to create the perception of exclusion," said Charles Fuller, pastor of First Baptist Church in Roanoke.

Observers noted the change would have been the first among the 37 SBC-affiliated state conventions, which universally base messenger representation on a combination of financial gifts to both national and state causes.

Nomination of trustees for Associated Baptist Press and the Baptist Joint Committee finalized a process begun several years ago when funding for the two moderate groups was included in the BGAV budget.

ABP was established in 1990 amid charges that conservative SBC leaders had compromised the objectivity of the denomination's official SBC news agency, Baptist Press. The BJC, a Washington-based religious liberty advocate, lost its SBC contributions in 1990 when the convention withdrew support in disagreement over its positions on issues such as state-mandated school prayer and tuition tax credits.

Richmond pastor Ray Spence, chairman of the BGAV denominational relations committee, said nominating trustees for ABP and the BJC would provide accountability for Virginia Baptists' financial support.

The BGAV developed a similar relationship with the moderate Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond last year.

Ron Crawford, pastor of Lakeside Baptist Church in Richmond, was elected BGAV president with 58 percent of the vote in a runoff with another Richmond pastor, Cecil Chambers of Branch's Baptist Church.

Vander Warner, a former pastor who heads a ministry to ministers' families, withdrew from the race after garnering 27 percent on a first ballot. Crawford had received 50 percent and Chambers, 23 percent. In his withdrawal statement, Warner, endorsed by a statewide conservative organization, encouraged his supporters to vote for Chambers.

Although both Crawford and Chambers are viewed as moderates, some observers said Chambers attracted a more centrist constituency than Crawford, who has been active in moderate organizations such as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Alliance of Baptists.

Other officers elected -- Mark Olson, pastor of First Baptist Church of South Boston, as first vice president; and Mary Wilson, a real estate executive and member of Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, as second vice president -- won with more than 70 percent of the vote.

All three officers were endorsed by a network of moderates in the state.

Dialog with the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. and two black Baptist groups -- the Progressive National Baptist Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Virginia -- is likely to move cautiously following its narrow 1,297-1,257 approval. A similar proposal last year was defeated 1,543-1,375.

Proponents of the discussions said they would not lead to "organic union" between the BGAV, traditionally aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention, and other Baptist bodies, but instead would focus on "improving fellowship and ... exploring the possibilities of mutual understanding and ministries."

The state association's denominational relations committee, assigned the task of initiating the dialog, must report its progress at next year's annual meeting in Salem, Nov. 15-16.

Messengers authorized another dialog with Southern Baptist Conservatives in Virginia, an organization formed last January by churches opposed to some BGAV policies, and with the state chapter of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The statement on homosexual behavior is identical to one adopted by the Virginia Baptist general board in October 1992 and presented as a matter of information at last year's annual BGAV meeting in Virginia Beach.

The general board, which acts for the BGAV between annual meetings, did not recommend adoption of the statement at that 1992 meeting, and the state association subsequently approved a resolution urging ministry to homosexuals but avoiding condemnation of their lifestyle.

An attempt to amend the resolution with the general board's description of homosexual behavior as "sinful and unacceptable for Christians" was defeated.

Reaction from conservatives was swift, fueled in part by secular news reports that the BGAV action indicated support for ordaining homosexuals to the ministry. The failure to condemn homosexuality was prominently cited by conservatives last January when they formed Southern Baptist Conservatives in Virginia.

This year, the general board affirmed its earlier statement and urged the BGAV to adopt it as well. Apparently weary of the year-long debate, messengers consented with little comment, giving it broad support on a hand vote.

Condemnation of another high profile issue -- abortion -- fared less well at the BGAV meeting. Conservatives raised the topic on several fronts throughout the meeting, including a request for the BGAV Christian life committee to "evaluate the issue ... from a biblical perspective" and recommend "an appropriate course of action." Other motions would have required the committee to define "sanctity of life" and to distribute materials on abortion. Messengers defeated the measures.

**Indiana Baptists celebrate
53 added church starts**

By Tammi Ledbetter

VINCENNES, Ind. (BP)--Southern Baptists in Indiana celebrated another year of growth, with the theme of "Fifty-Three in Ninety-Three" being realized through new church starts.

With the addition of 53 church-type missions and seven missions constituted into churches, the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana now includes 441 churches and missions. Such progress has resulted in Southern Baptists having a witness in every county of Indiana for the first time.

Messengers and guests meeting at Ridgecrest Baptist Church in Vincennes numbered 520, up 170 from the previous year's meeting.

A 1994 budget of \$3,030,689 was approved, up from \$2,876,200 this year. Included is a budgeted \$1,899,532 in Cooperative Program receipts from local churches, up 6 percent from the previous year. The portion of receipts going to the Cooperative Program remains at 32.25 percent.

Sanford Peterson, a layman from Greenwood, Ind., was elected by acclamation to serve as state convention president. Elected vice president was Steve Marcum, pastor of Graceland Baptist in New Albany, and Don Moore, pastor of First Southern Baptist in Evansville, as second vice president.

State WMU Director Margaret Gillaspie was recognized with a plaque and love gift for 25 years of service in missions education and mission action for women and girls.

Resolutions approved by messengers included a call for continued emphasis by pastors on reclaiming America for Christ and opposition to the inclusion of abortion as a benefit in any health care reform package.

The 1994 annual session will be held at Sunnycrest Baptist Church in Marion, Nov. 15-16.

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**Rankin delivers challenge
to fulfill God's purpose**

By Brenda Sanders

Baptist Press
11/12/93

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Fulfilling God's purpose of bringing redemption to a lost world is a challenge Southern Baptists must accept and wholeheartedly pursue, Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin told hundreds of people this week during two speaking engagements in the Kansas City area.

Rankin was keynote speaker for a Foreign Missions Rally at First Baptist Church in Raytown, Mo., on Nov. 8, and delivered a chapel address the next morning at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His visit to the seminary kicked off Global Missions Week, a week of special lectures and events focused on Southern Baptist missions efforts around the world.

"God has never been diverted from his intention of all the world knowing of Jesus Christ and being saved," Rankin said. "It's a purpose that began in the heart of God even before the foundation of the earth. ... It's a purpose that was commissioned to the church to carry out."

Basing his message on the text of Numbers 13-14, Rankin told the Raytown audience God commanded the Israelites to move forward into the promised land and possess it, just as "God has given us a purpose to go into all the world and make disciples of every nation."

But when the Israelites sent spies into Canaan to scout out the land, Rankin said the spies returned with a report of native people who were strong and whose cities were well fortified.

"When we look out into the world, do we not draw back as did the children of Israel and say, 'But the people are so many and so powerful,'" Rankin asked. "Our researchers tell us that probably 1.2 billion people have yet to hear the name of Jesus Christ," he continued. "In our modern age of communication, after almost 2,000 years of witness, that many people still have not heard the gospel."

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Rankin reminded the audience of World A, a term used by FMB personnel to define the least-evangelized part of the global population -- stretching across North Africa, into the Middle East and across Southern Asia -- where as many as 2,000 ethnolinguistic groups have yet to hear the gospel message.

"The cities are so large and there's such an amalgamation of human suffering and ethnic groups and poverty -- how do you penetrate them and take possession for God?" he asked.

Referring to the scriptural text, Rankin said one of the Israelite spies, Caleb, differed with the others and sought to rally the people, saying: "Do not fear the people of the land ... for their protection is removed from them and the Lord is with us."

Caleb saw the promised land through God's eyes, Rankin said. "He had a different spirit and followed the Lord wholeheartedly.

"God is calling us today to be like Caleb, to see things like God is seeing them, to see the nations in the ends of the earth becoming his possession, knowing that we can do it in the power of God's Holy Spirit and in the power of the gospel," he charged.

Southern Baptists have nearly 4,000 missionaries "who have a spirit like Caleb, who are committed to following God and doing his will and making the gospel known," Rankin noted.

"Last year, these missionaries reported 251,000 baptisms, 16 percent more than we'd ever recorded before. God is moving in the power of his Spirit to fulfill his purpose to bring the nations to repentance."

Serving in 131 countries, the missionaries reported starting 1,600 new churches and 1,100 new mission points last year, Rankin shared, "and each one of those 2,700 churches and mission points represent a new community, a new village where now the gospel is planted and the witness is continuing to grow and expand because there are those in the spirit of Caleb who went in fulfillment of God's purpose and carried the gospel to places where it not been heard."

Rankin affirmed, "God's purpose is going to be fulfilled. Every person and every tribe and tongue and nation are going to hear the gospel, they're going to become God's possession ... because there is no barrier of human society that can stand against God's purpose being fulfilled. Even the laws of a Russian Parliament cannot stand in the way when God determines his purpose is going to be fulfilled in bringing Russia to Jesus Christ."

The FMB president noted, "God is breaking down the barriers, opening the doors, softening the hearts of people who've been resistant. ... The barriers of pagan tribes, ethnic groups, population centers cannot stand in the way of God's purpose being fulfilled."

However, he noted, "There's still one barrier that remains. It's not the barrier of governments that are resistant to missionary witness; it's not the barrier of pagan religions and cultures -- but it's the barrier in the hearts of God's people who fail to see God's purpose through the eyes of faith and who fail to be wholeheartedly committed to fulfilling that purpose."

Rankin concluded, "God's purpose to redeem a lost world is going to be realized. There's no question about that. But the question is whether or not we will be a part of it. ... He's calling us to be obedient and wholeheartedly committed to share the gospel with people who have never heard."

Throughout the week at Midwestern Seminary, nine other FMB administrators and 19 missionaries delivered chapel addresses and testimonies, staffed cultural displays representing missions work in various countries and led seminars for students interested in options available for overseas missions service.

Chapel speakers included two Midwestern alumni, Don Kammerdiener, FMB executive vice president, and Bill Bullington, regional vice president for Africa.

During the week, Midwesterners also dedicated a new Missions Resource Center located in the seminary library. The permanent display includes a large collection of cultural artifacts from around the world donated by V. Lavell Seats, senior professor of missions. Seats was a missionary to Nigeria for 17 years before joining the Midwestern faculty when the school opened in 1958.

**Golden Gate taps grad
as development director**

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Joe D. Caldwell, pastor of First Baptist Church in Gilroy, Calif, since 1984, has been named director of development for Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary effective Jan. 3, 1994. He will give direction to the seminary's capital campaign efforts.

Caldwell, 44, is registered with the Securities Exchange Commission as an investment advisor, overseeing financial portfolios apart from his pastoral duties at First Baptist.

"Dr. Caldwell's experiences with the local church, the state convention and his own financial business bring solid leadership to this critical area of seminary life," said Steve Thomas, vice president for institutional advancement at the Mill Valley, Calif., seminary.

Caldwell was a member of the California Southern Baptist Convention executive board from 1978-82 and since 1988 has been on the California Baptist Foundation board of directors, currently serving as chairman of the board.

Before becoming pastor of the Gilroy congregation, Caldwell was pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Porterville, 1977-84.

He and his wife, Peggy, have five children, Misty, Micah, Memory, Victory and Justus.

He earned master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Golden Gate Seminary. He also is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and El Camino College in Torrance, Calif.

As director of the capital campaign efforts, Caldwell succeeds Fred Chapman, assistant vice president for institutional advancement who plans to retire at the end of 1993 to Phoenix, Ariz. Although retired, Chapman plans to assist the seminary in its efforts to establish a Phoenix center in conjunction with Grand Canyon University. Cameron Crabtree, the seminary's director of public relations since 1991, will become assistant vice president for institutional advancement on Jan. 3, overseeing day-to-day administration of the advancement program.

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