



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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SBC Cooperative Program gifts  
above last year; above budget

Baptist Press  
4/4/94

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for March were up more than 15 percent above last year and nearly three percent above the six-month total for the last fiscal year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

The six-month, year-to-date figures also are 4 percent above the SBC program allocation budget requirement.

For March, total CP gifts were \$12,843,825 compared to March 1993 of \$11,148,016, or a 15.21 percent gain. The year-to-date figures, the six-month benchmark in the fiscal year, are \$71,890,891 compared to the same period last year of \$69,908,521, or a gain of 2.84 percent.

"I am grateful for the faithfulness of our Southern Baptist people," Chapman said after reviewing the figures.

The year-to-date figures are 4.01 percent above the budget requirement of \$69,117,367 for the first six months of the 1993-94 fiscal year.

In designated gifts, the March 1994 totals were \$17,148,519 compared to last year's March of \$15,496,772, or a 10.66 percent gain. For the year to date in designated gifts, the total of \$80,366,033 is just .08 percent short of last year's total at this time of \$80,426,372.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

State and regional conventions retain a percentage of Cooperative Program contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries. The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state or regional convention.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

**Trustee chairman says letter correct, despite response**

DALLAS (BP)--Ralph W. Pulley Jr., chairman of the board of trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, said in spite of responses by fired President Russell H. Dilday Jr., information in the trustees' letter to Southern Baptist pastors is correct.

The executive committee of the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary is sending a four-page letter to all Southern Baptist pastors and directors of associational missions explaining the trustees' position in the March 9 firing of Dilday.

"His response (to the letter) did not surprise me," Pulley, a Dallas attorney, said. "Basically, the information in the letter is correct and we stand by it."

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**Mission leaders alarmed at human needs giving drop**

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Top leaders at the Foreign Mission Board are alarmed at figures showing Southern Baptist giving for overseas hunger and disaster relief slid last year and have veered even more sharply downward in 1994.

In 1993 receipts dipped by 13 percent from 1992. And through March 1994 receipts show a 26 percent decline from the same period of 1993.

If the giving pattern persists, the board would collect \$4.9 million in human needs offerings this year. It would be the lowest figure since 1981's \$4.8 million.

Receipts grew rapidly from the program's earliest stages in the late 1970s and peaked in 1985 at nearly \$12 million when Ethiopia's famine broke into world consciousness. They started leveling out between \$7 and \$8 million in the late 1980s. Last year giving finished at \$6.6 million, down from \$7.6 million the year before.

Unlike many relief agencies operating overseas, the Foreign Mission Board uses 100 percent of its human needs offerings on the field. Mission workers who plan community development programs and monitor or distribute aid are already in place supported through other funding channels.

Just before he retired March 31, human needs coordinator John Cheyne alerted Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin of the crisis. "In this regard, there would be no way that the level of appropriations and/or the number of projects could continue" as they have in the past, Cheyne warned.

Based on continuing generous giving to human needs through 1992, the program last year expanded to a record number of separate projects, 294, in 62 countries, Cheyne said.

"The downward (giving) trend is very significant," he said. "The chronic problems of poverty, famine, refugees and major disasters create a need to respond repeatedly."

Although more dire this time, Cheyne's warning nonetheless resembled other statements he has made about communicating the need for ongoing human needs funding. Since 1978 Cheyne, a 40-year veteran of foreign missions, has been Southern Baptists' chief apologist for offering a cup of cold water in the name of Jesus not as a means to evangelize people, but because meeting their needs is part of what it means to be a Christian.

But human needs projects nevertheless have led to many opportunities for spiritual development. Using an approach to world hunger he came to call "transformational" ministry, Cheyne led mission leaders overseas to plan projects that continue from year to year.

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Such projects address the evolving needs of people as they grow spiritually, emotionally and physically, touching on all aspects of their lives -- from getting clean drinking water to raising livestock, gardening and teaching others how avoid death by diarrhea. This requires ongoing support, beyond one-time gifts attached to specific hunger and disaster crises.

"We're grateful for the generous support by Southern Baptists, who have shown a confidence in the way the Foreign Mission Board uses these funds," said Rankin.

"At a time when there seems to be increased suffering and needs all over the world, I hope Southern Baptists will continue to demonstrate their compassionate hearts for a lost world and enable to us to help these hurting people."

The approach developed under Cheyne's guidance has given entrance for mission workers to places where they might otherwise be unwelcome.

"As Southern Baptists we offer humanitarian aid to the person," said Jimmy Foster, who succeeds Cheyne as coordinator for human needs at the board. Foster formerly led Southern Baptists' aid agency, Cooperative Services International, in developing human needs projects throughout the world before coming to the board staff April 1.

Etched into Foster's memory is the sight of a banner proclaiming "Chickie Hood: A Friend of the Kurds," after Southern Baptist volunteer Hood was killed in an auto accident while helping to feed Kurds after the Persian Gulf War. The Kurds, an internationally oppressed people who consider themselves friendless, had previously been considered closed to a gospel witness.

"Every human needs activity of which I have been a part has vividly planted on my mind and in my memory the names and faces of people," he added. "Even if one ignores the biblical command to give, the faces of these people, and thousands of others around the world, make it all worthwhile."

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Missionary engineer to lead  
FMB's human needs program

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
4/4/94

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Jimmy B. Foster, a veteran of meeting hunger and relief needs worldwide, took charge of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's human needs program April 1.

Foster, of Grand Prairie, Texas, succeeds John Cheyne, a former missionary who led the program to respond to world hunger and relief needs since its early stages in 1978. Cheyne, a 40-year veteran of foreign missions, retired March 31.

For nearly three years, Foster, 49, has been based in London with Cooperative Services International (CSI), a Southern Baptist overseas aid agency. As CSI human needs coordinator, he has logged thousands of miles spearheading relief and development projects in Africa, southeastern Asia and the Middle East -- and places in between.

"The world condition seems to be deteriorating in the midst of wars and disasters," said Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin. "Jimmy's overseas experience qualifies him well to help us respond to such need and suffering. He'll be able to help mission leaders integrate human needs and hunger projects into our goal of making Jesus Christ known."

Before he began work with CSI in 1991, Foster directed an extensive rural development project as a missionary in the west African nation of Burkina Faso. His wife, the former Dorothy Fletcher of Grand Prairie, assisted in many of the project's multifaceted outreach programs, including medical and nutritional work.

Later he was business manager and treasurer for the organization of Foreign Mission Board missionaries in Ivory Coast.

A registered professional civil engineer, Foster has always been interested in human development. But Christian ministry, he said, goes one step further -- meeting spiritual and emotional needs revealed by people as they open up to a compassionate influence.

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"I'm an engineer, but I've always gone with the philosophy of starting churches," Foster said. "I see a response to human needs as a very legitimate church-starting methodology."

During his first missionary term in Burkina Faso, Foster saw the Sanwabo rural development effort net 700 new believers in Christ and start 20 churches. More than 30 churches eventually grew out of the work, which involved everything from building dams and digging wells to providing veterinary services, teaching literacy, planting vegetable gardens and distributing metal watering cans.

Foster began his career as a city engineer in Grand Prairie and in Greeley, Colo., and was with engineering consulting firms in Oklahoma and Texas before being appointed a missionary by the Foreign Mission Board in 1980. From 1985-87 he directed public works in Hurst, Texas, then was reappointed as a missionary to Ivory Coast in 1987.

Foster received the bachelor of science degree from the University of Texas at Arlington and the master of arts in missiology degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He is registered as an engineer in Texas, Oklahoma and Colorado and will seek certification in Virginia.

The Fosters have two grown children.

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(BP) photo (mugshot) mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Cutline available on SBCNet Newsroom.

Spiritual abuse of children  
rampant, RTVC president says

By C.C. Risenhoover

Baptist Press  
4/4/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission says it is time for grandparents to realize their responsibility to their grandchildren.

Jack Johnson said that while physical child abuse is an abomination and should not be tolerated, millions more children suffer even greater spiritual abuse.

"Spiritual abuse is more prevalent, more lasting," he said. "It's eternal. So I'm saying enough is enough. We can't turn back the clock to the so-called 'good old days' when morality was a common virtue. We have to deal with today, tomorrow, the future ... the fact that millions of children are born each year into an environment that is adversarial and hostile toward Christianity and acceptable family values."

His "call to arms" for grandparents, Johnson said, does not negate, but rather reinforces, the duty of parents to their children.

And his concern has led to the founding of "Covenant," a voluntary fellowship of believers committed to helping carry out the Great Commission through quality television that emphasizes biblical truths and combats pornography and violence in media with positive alternatives. The fellowship acquires and produces Christian family values programming for ACTS, the RTVC's cable television service that reaches into more than 20 million homes, and for FamilyNet, its television broadcast service that reaches into more than 40 million homes.

People interested in more information about "Covenant" can write to the fellowship at 6350 West Freeway, Fort Worth, TX 76150.

Johnson said he became more acutely aware of his responsibility to the world's children because of difficulties associated with the birth of his youngest grandchild, Jonathan, who is now 10 months old.

"When Jonathan was an 11-week-old fetus, my daughter-in-law Ann had a kidney removed and gall bladder surgery," he said. "Jonathan was living just centimeters away from a malignant tumor.

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"One can only imagine the trauma to the unborn child caused by intrusion to remove the kidney, and the trauma from the anesthesia necessary to undergo the surgery. And, of course, gall bladder surgery is also demanding because the surgeon has to go so deep."

Johnson said Ann's life was of primary concern, but he and his wife Mary, family and friends went to their knees to pray for both mother and child.

"Jack (Johnson's son) had just finished medical school and was in his first year of practice," said the RTVC president. "He and Ann had been married less than six months, they'd just bought their first home and Jonathan was to be their first child. Everything was wonderful until Ann was diagnosed as having the malignant tumor. I was hurting for my son because the potential was there for him to lose his wife and baby."

Johnson said even after Ann came through the operation, he was sober enough to realize the baby was still in great jeopardy.

"We tracked his progress weekly and he's a real dude now," the proud grandfather said, smiling. "Everything's perfect. We praised God for answering our prayers in such a positive way, but while rejoicing the Lord caused me to understand that Jonathan has entered an environment more adversarial and dangerous than what he experienced in his mother's womb. It's a world where a child needs parents and grandparents who are Christian role models, who lead the child not merely with words but by example. He needs our prayers now as much or more than he did when he was an unborn. A child in today's world needs support from every family member and from a church committed to discipling." Johnson attributed the successful birth of Jonathan to answered prayer and to his daughter-in-law's commitment not to allow anything to enter her body that would jeopardize an already tenuous situation.

"If we were as disciplined as a caring mother is in protecting the fetus, we could keep Satan's filth out of our homes, schools and churches," he said. "The problem is that we have become apathetic toward the Great Commission and toward our own children and grandchildren. Parents are often too close to the forest to see the trees. And not all grandparents understand their duty and commitment to speak out. The duty to a child is not limited to the parents."

One of Johnson's hot buttons is the spiritual and emotional plight of America's children, a dilemma he thinks is caused in large part by a media-dominated culture that embraces pornography and violence. He said the media have become a wilderness of perversion, gratuitous sex and violence, especially the television and movie industries that so influence the attitudes and ideals of children.

The RTVC president also is a visionary as to the future of media, specifically as it relates to the church and Christian values. He provides a chilling commentary on what could happen if the church neglects its responsibility to use the technology that is now being referred to as the "Information Superhighway."

"The Information Superhighway can be used for good or evil," he said. "We can use it to reach the world for Christ or we can abandon it to the pornographers and social engineers of perversion who will use it to destroy the spiritual and emotional well-being of our children and grandchildren. God has given us a choice in the matter.

"Satan's on the mound," Johnson said, "and we're having difficulty getting people to step up to the plate to take their cuts at the pitches he's making for the souls of our children and grandchildren. Well, I for one am ready to hit anything he tries to throw past me."

**Leavell responds to story  
involving his retirement**

By D bbi Moore

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's president, Landrum P. Leavell II, responded April 4 to a report concerning his retirement in the March 31 issue of Associated Baptist Press.

"At our last trustee meeting, I reaffirmed what I have said for several years," said Leavell, referring to the recent annual spring meeting of the full trustee board held on the seminary campus March 15-16.

"I have stated that if I am living, I do not intend to remain as president beyond age 70. Our trustees gave me a unanimous affirmation to remain as president until that time, or at any time prior to that to announce my retirement."

As of this date, no official retirement announcement has been made by Leavell.

Leavell became New Orleans Seminary's seventh president in January 1975. Enrollment has increased more than 500 percent during his leadership. Through Leavell's tenure the seminary has expanded to include eight extension centers across the Southeast, as well as an on-campus baccalaureate degree program.

The seminary began its 76th year with the largest fall enrollment the school has ever experienced. The 28-percent enrollment increase was the largest of all six Southern Baptist seminaries. That increase reflects an 88 percent increase in the seminary's baccalaureate and pre-baccalaureate degree programs, which grew from 269 students during the 1992-93 academic year to 506 at the beginning of the 1993-94 academic year.

Leavell, also a professor of evangelism, has taught at least one course every year since coming to the seminary. He previously was the pastor of five churches, including First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, Texas, from 1963-74.

Besides his administrative responsibilities, Leavell continues to provide guidance to churches as an interim pastor on a regular basis; he currently is interim pastor at First Baptist Church in New Orleans.

Leavell earned a bachelor of arts degree in English from Mercer University in 1948 and completed two graduate degrees at New Orleans Seminary, the bachelor of divinity degree in 1951 and the doctor of theology degree with a major in Greek New Testament in 1954. A native of Newnan, Ga., Leavell turned 67 in November 1993.

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