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NEW MEXICO--WMU members hear stories of victories and struggles.

NEW MEXICO--Hunger myths explored by Baptist women.

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NEW MEXICO--Evangelism solves church problems, HMB leaders say.

Southern Baptists join others  
working in Rwanda relief efforts By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
7/25/94

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptists hope to deliver 10 trailer-size, gas-powered water purification machines to Goma, Zaire, before volunteers start arriving in mid-August at the cholera-riddled death camps of Rwandan refugees.

The machines will pump and purify water 24 hours a day for as long as they are needed in camps around Goma, and might be moved into Rwanda if the wave of 2 to 3 million refugees fleeing their homeland decides to turn back.

Southern Baptist officials hope to secure space for the machines on U.S. military flights.

At least 20 Southern Baptist volunteers trained to operate them plan to arrive Aug. 14. Teams of Southern Baptist doctors and nurses also will go to provide medical help.

The refugees belong to Rwanda's Hutu majority, whose militias slaughtered hundreds of thousands of the rival Tutsi minority after a Hutu president died in a mysterious plane crash April 6.

As Tutsi forces took control in the country, Hutus fled, fearing revenge attacks. Relief officials estimate refugees in Zaire total 1.7 million, and possibly an additional 1 million are on their way. Tutsi leaders have asked the Hutu refugees to return without fear of reprisal, but it is too early to know how many will do so.

With their initial \$250,000 outlay, Southern Baptists join a long list of Christian and relief agencies seeking to heal at least some of the hurt in sprawling refugee camps, where Hutu bodies are heaped in fields that have become mass graveyards.

The Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board based in Richmond, Va., expects to channel funds designated for Rwandan relief, and draw from funds already designated to its ongoing World Hunger program, to support relief efforts over the next several months. The convention's Brotherhood Commission, based in Memphis, Tenn., will recruit doctors, nurses, water technicians and support staff and send them as teams.

An ongoing and intensified schedule of military flights into the border area of Zaire resulted from an order by President Clinton, who July 22 authorized more than \$100 million for military airlifts of food, medicine and water. Clinton said disease and malnutrition are claiming a life a minute in the camps.

Already various groups are responding to Southern Baptists' plea for help. Numerous churches have collected special offerings.

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Southern Baptists attending the first Black Church Week July 2-8 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center collected \$1,783 for Rwandan refugees. The offering was to be channeled through the Florida Baptist Convention. Before the crisis the Florida convention had been working in partnership through the Foreign Mission Board with Baptists in Tanzania, where hordes of Rwandans have also fled.

From the western African nation of Burkina Faso, the Ouagadougou Baptist Association sent the Foreign Mission Board \$63.

"This money is a love gift from a Baptist association in one of the world's poorest countries, but nevertheless from poor Baptists rich in love for aiding suffering people in the name of Christ," said Larry Rowell, a missionary there.

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New Mexico association calls  
nation's first black DOM

By John Loudat

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--Reginald C. "Reggie" Thomas, 30, of Dallas, and an African American, has accepted the call as director of missions of Central Baptist Association in New Mexico.

According to the HMB associational missions division, Thomas is the first black DOM in the nation.

Thomas has been a consultant with the church extension department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas since 1990. His responsibilities included starting and developing new churches. Thomas has helped start 120 new works since 1990.

Thomas earned a bachelor of arts degree in religion from Union University in Tennessee in 1985. He attended Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., for one year before transferring to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, where he received his master of divinity degree in 1988.

Thomas was pastor of a church in Tennessee during his final year of college. In 1987 he became the pastor of New Generation Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas. During his three-year ministry there, the church membership grew from 10 to 170, and 100 people were baptized.

In a meeting with interested people of Central Association July 9, Thomas said, "My forte and love and heart is missions." He said he considers himself a missions strategist.

Thomas told the group he viewed his first task as getting to know the association and building relationships. He would lead the association through a strategy planning process, which would cast a vision for the association. He would then promote that vision across the association.

Search committee chairman Alan Hawkins told the Baptist New Mexican, newsjournal of the state Baptist convention, "We're extremely excited about having Reggie come. He represents not only a new generation but a new way of thinking about associational missions."

Hawkins said he was unaware Thomas would be the first black DOM until after the association had voted to extend the call to Thomas. "It (race) was not an issue (during the search)," Hawkins said. "We just went out looking for the best person we could find."

Thomas is married to the former Jeannine Johnson, and they have a one-year-old daughter, Amanda Kelsey. Mrs. Thomas holds a bachelor of arts degree in behavioral science from California Baptist College, a bachelor of science in elementary education from the University of Texas, Tyler, and a master of education from East Texas University.

Thomas' first day in the Central Association office will be Aug. 29.

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WMU members hear stories of  
victories and struggles

By Susan Doyle

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--While there are missions advances that should be celebrated, now is not the time to rest on laurels.

This was the message heard by the more than 1,250 men and women attending Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center July 16-22.

"We're being tested as to whether or not we will even be a missionary people," said Don Kammerdiener, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in a message to the group.

"There is a creeping universalism that wants to creep into your church and mine and your life and mine which will lead us to believe that there must be some other way the peoples of the world can come to know Christ without us."

Kammerdiener reminded the group decisions which are being made today will set the pace for the next generation and how it will carry out the missions mandate.

He also urged the group to remember that in the midst of the struggles and the hard times, it is still the day which the Lord has made. Christians can only fully understand the victories along with the struggles, he said.

The parade of home and foreign missionaries who spoke to the group throughout the week, told stories of both victories and struggles.

Jimmy Anderson, a Creek Indian and home missionary in Oklahoma, told the group he owed his beginning to WMU.

"So much of my ministry I owe to WMU," he said. Anderson, Indian church developer for the state of Oklahoma, celebrates his 30th year of ministry to Indians this year.

Anderson told the group one of the greatest hindrances to the spread of the gospel among Indians has been Christianity.

"Indians have felt that Christians came with a gun in one hand and a Bible in the other," he said. The fight continues today, not in gunfights, but in courtrooms over issues such as land rights.

Mission work with Indians is slow, he said. Anderson shared sobering statistics such as:

- Approximately 92 percent of American Indians have yet to be evangelized;
- Gambling is taking a stronghold on the American Indian population;
- Mission dollars which fund work among American Indians are dwindling.

However, there were also reports of victories:

-- In the last 14 years, Indian congregations have grown from 360 to 601. The number of baptisms reported has grown from 1,300 in 1980 to 3,010 in the first six months of 1994.

-- Between 1980-1992, Indian congregations gave almost \$3.5 million to the Cooperative Program, despite the fact that many of their members have very little money.

-- American Indian congregations now are giving more to the Cooperative Program than they receive.

"We have a staggering task ahead," he said.

The women witnessed the beginning of one victory for the work of American Indians and other ethnic groups work while at Glorieta.

During the week, several reports were heard about positions and publications in ethnic work across the SBC being decreased.

Dellanna O'Brien, national WMU executive director, reminded the group ethnic work is the fastest growing segment of the convention.

"If it hadn't been for the increase seen in ethnic work, the Southern Baptist Convention would have seen a decline last year," she said. "Our future is in the growth of ethnic work.

"Is it time for WMU to assert its leadership role in providing materials for our ethnic and black churches? We can do it. We will do it."

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During the last evening service of the week, O'Brien announced two gifts totaling \$10,005 had been given through the WMU Vision Fund to help pick up the slack in the production of ethnic materials. Texas WMU gave \$10,000 of the gift.

WMU members were challenged to help financially by giving through the Vision Fund so WMU can step in to help in the areas of ethnic work which are being decreased by other SBC entities.

Other missionaries gave reports about Southern Baptist work in Korea, Brazil, Japan, Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Chile and the United States.

Conference participants gave \$3,562 to the Cooperative Program while at Glorieta. The Cooperative Program is the convention's unified plan of giving which supports the work of the denomination.

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Hunger myths explored  
by Baptist women

By Susan Doyle

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7/25/94

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--There isn't enough food to go around. That's why there are people in the world who are hungry and starving to death.

Although many people may believe this to be true, it is actually a myth, said one hunger expert and author.

"There is enough food on earth for each person to have 3,600 calories a day just from grain," said Cathy Butler. "That doesn't include fruits, vegetables, meats and junk food."

Butler is author of *Servants of the Banquet: Stories and Ideas about Fighting Hunger*, which was published by New Hope, a publishing arm of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union. Hunger is the focus of Project Hope, a national campaign being led by WMU in local churches through September 1995.

"People aren't hungry because there isn't enough food on earth," she said. "They're hungry because it isn't getting to where the people need it."

Butler explored some commonly accepted myths concerning hunger during WMU week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center July 16-22.

Myth #2: Hunger is caused by natural disasters.

Chronic, long-lasting hunger that is passed from generation to generation is not due to natural causes, she said. Many times hunger is caused by war, poverty due to unemployment, and political or economic systems which oppress the poor.

In many third-world countries, farmers are tenants and are told what cash crops to grow and then allowed to keep only a small portion of the income made off the crop.

Myth #3: People go hungry because of overpopulation.

"In certain countries, this is true," Butler said. "But there are a lot of places within the United States that I would hardly categorize as overpopulated, but you will find hungry people there."

She listed areas within the Appalachian region, parts of the Mississippi River delta, and Hispanic communities within the Southwest as three places in the United States where hunger problems are severe.

In many third-world countries, women earn their worth only when they bear children -- particularly male children, she said.

"One thing that we as women can do is to do whatever God leads us to do to lift up the plight of women so they don't feel the burden to keep having children."

Myth #4: Rural people don't go hungry.

Many people have heard relatives tell stories of how they survived off the land during the Depression era. This may have been true for some, but others did go hungry, Butler said. The same myth continues.

"While many rural people are quite self-sufficient, others lack the know-how, the land, or the ability to grow all their own food," Butler said.

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In addition, more and more restrictions are being placed on hunting and fishing activities due to liability concerns and pollution, she said.

Myth #5: Government assistance is enough to feed people.

"There are people caught up in being dependent on help," she said. "But it's not fair to assume that this is true of everybody on government assistance."

Food stamps are given to families based on 50 cents per person per meal, she said.

"To provide good meals for 50 cents a person, a cook would need sophisticated skills in shopping, menu planning and food preparation, skills which most of the poor lack," Butler said.

WMU members can help alleviate these problems by building relationships with women who receive food stamps and teaching them how to shop to get the most for their food money, she said.

Myth #6: Many people who seek assistance can't really be hungry because they don't appear malnourished. Some of them look downright overweight.

"This is an indication of how prosperous our country is -- even our hungry people are overweight," Butler said.

Cheap food is usually of the poorest quality and full of starches and greases. It takes more of it to quell hunger but contributes too little vitamins, minerals and protein.

Myth #7: There is no point in getting carried away in feeding the hungry because Jesus said the poor would be with us always.

"This is an especially dangerous myth because it uses the Bible as rationale," Butler said. Jesus did say the poor would always be with us but he also instructed us to do good for them.

"The root problem in hunger is sin," she said. "We don't care for each other like we should."

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Southern teaches first  
doctoral course in Korean

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press  
7/25/94

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--The language of ministry became the language of learning for 11 Korean American ministers in July.

They participated in the first doctor of ministry seminar taught in the Korean language at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. While all students in the course could speak and read English, their main language for preaching, teaching, and counseling is Korean, says course instructor David Ro, an adjunct professor of Old Testament at the Louisville, Ky., school. "Sometimes (Korean students) have a problem communicating in English on current issues or on ways of interpreting the Bible," notes Ro. Therefore, he says, teaching the course in Korean allowed students the opportunity to delve deeper into issues facing them in ministry.

Ro, a 1991 Ph.D. graduate of Southern, co-taught the course with David Garland, Ernest and Mildred Hogan professor of New Testament. Garland's lectures were translated into Korean by Ro. The students included 10 Korean American pastors and a music minister who is enrolled in the seminary's doctor of music ministry program.

The class found a new sense of freedom by being able to learn in Korean, declares Young-Sik Noh, pastor of New Hope Korean Baptist Church in Orange City, Calif.

"We share many of the same problems in the Korean churches," says Noh. "We can share our problems. We can talk freely and get other pastors' experiences." In addition to pastoral duties, Noh is president of Korean Southern Baptist College and Seminary in Los Angeles. He also writes Bible study materials for his church and 10 other Korean congregations.

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One of his goals, he says, is to sharpen his abilities as a biblical interpreter so he can write better lessons. Noh maintains he has not been disappointed. "You cannot imagine how much we have learned," he says.

Another student, Paul Choi, also serves a dual role as pastor and educator. He teaches Christian education classes at the Baptist College and Seminary of Washington and is pastor of the Korean congregation at Forest Baptist Church of Woodbridge, Va. "I need more training in practical areas," says Choi, who holds a doctorate in education from George Mason University. "I know Southern Seminary is a good school. I think I can achieve my goals here."

Classroom lectures and reading assignments (which were in English) have dealt with contemporary issues from a biblical perspective, says Ro, associate pastor of the Korean congregation at First Baptist Church of Annandale, Va. Ro emphasizes Korean American pastors are forced to deal with subjects in America they wouldn't have to face in their native country. "If we were in Korea, wouldn't have to face problems like intermarriage and homosexuality," he says. "Korean pastors here have to learn about those issues."

Pastors are also concerned about the spiritual nurture of the second generation of Korean Americans, says Ro. The second generation, he explains, are much more influenced by American culture than their immigrant parents.

Korean American pastors need to be familiar with both the American and Korean cultures to minister effectively within the Korean American society, says James Chung, pastor of New Hope Korean Baptist Church in Queens, N.Y. The second generation, he stresses, needs solid Christian education. "We also try to give them an identity as Korean," Chung says. "They have to know themselves first and then absorb the broader culture."

In the classroom, the Korean pastors grappled vigorously with issues facing their ministries, says Garland. "There was good peer interaction, whereas if they had to do everything in English the process would be more difficult and halting," he says.

Southern's focus on Korean American pastors is unique among seminary doctoral programs taught in Korean, says Harry L. Poe, director of professional doctoral studies. Other programs, he says, are concerned with pastors who serve in Korea.

For several years, the seminary has taught master of divinity classes in Korean. In 1988, Poe, through an interpreter, taught the first M.Div. class geared to Korean students. Students can now take about half their M.Div. courses in Korean.

"We are seeing graduates of that program move into the D.Min. program," says Poe. "Because of the quality of our students, our D.Min. program will undergo leadership of Korean American churches for years to come."

Among Southern Baptist seminaries, Southern is the first to offer doctoral courses in Korean. The program provides a much needed outlet of continuing education for Korean American pastors, says Kwan Lee, coordinator of the Korean D.Min. program.

"This can be an opportunity for (Korean American pastors) to have competencies in many areas of ministry," says Lee, a recent Ph.D. graduate of Southern.

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Evangelism solves church  
problems, HMB leaders say

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
7/25/94

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Every church problem can be solved by training members to be witnesses, Larry Lewis said during a Home Missions conference.

"I don't know of a problem in any church that can't be solved if people are trained to be witnesses, the Home Mission Board president said. "Fellowship, growth, financial -- those problems will be solved.

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"It does something to a congregation when every week there's an expectation that someone will make a profession of faith," he said at the Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

People committed to evangelism are not caught up in other anxieties and frustrations, said Darrell Robinson, HMB vice president for evangelism.

"It will drive us to Bible study because we know we cannot share Jesus without knowing the Word of God. It will drive us to prayer and yielding to the Holy Spirit," said Robinson, who also spoke during the conference.

"No wonder so many of our churches are plateaued or declining. We're living in perpetual disobedience to the mandate to share Jesus," Robinson said. "How could God bless us with revival if we're living in disobedience?"

Evangelism, however, is not a program or a strategy, but a spirit that reaches out to people in love, Lewis said.

While he referred to Continuing Witness Training as "the finest witness training in the world," Lewis said problems arise when a few members are trained in CWT and others think they are not expected to witness.

A simultaneous witnessing effort called "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now," asks every Southern Baptist to share Jesus 60 times in 60 days between Jan. 9 and March 9 next year.

"Imagine what would happen if 15 million Southern Baptists participated," Robinson said. "There would be 900 million presentations of the gospel."

Quoting Psalm 126, Lewis said Christians must "sow in tears" if they are to "reap in joy."

"We must bathe our efforts in tears of compassion from a broken heart. How long has it been since you wept over somebody without Christ?"

Effective soul winning requires Christians to look outside their churches, Lewis said. "We must get off our seats, on our feet and into the streets. Scripture does not command people to come. It commands us to go."

Church leaders must also model soul winning for the congregation to get involved in witnessing, Lewis said.

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