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SBC agencies receive capital funds; designated gifts up

**Baptist Press
10/6/94**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Eight Southern Baptist Convention agencies and institutions received nearly \$1.7 million for capital needs as a result of Cooperative Program gifts exceeding the 1993-94 SBC program allocation budget.

Also, SBC designated gifts for the 1993-94 year of \$127.8 million topped the previous year and almost matched the record high total set in 1991-92.

Those statistics were part of the fiscal year end information released by Morris H. Chapman, SBC Executive Committee president and chief executive officer. The SBC fiscal year ended Sept. 30.

SBC Cooperative Program gifts for 1993-94 set a record of \$142,866,782, more than \$4 million above the SBC program allocation budget and more than \$6 million over the previous year's total gifts.

When CP gifts surpass the allocation budget, distribution of those extra undesignated CP funds are one-half to all the SBC agencies according to the standard budget distribution and one-half to a special capital needs budget approved by the SBC.

Thus nearly \$1.7 million was distributed to all SBC agencies, over and above the budget, and an equal amount went to the Home Mission Board, the six SBC seminaries and the Radio and TV Commission for capital needs.

The capital needs distribution was: Home Mission Board, \$177,696; Golden Gate Seminary, \$195,516; Midwestern Seminary, \$208,245; New Orleans Seminary, \$235,740; Southeastern Seminary, \$171,077; Southern Seminary, \$255,258; Southwestern Seminary, \$303,628; and the Radio and TV Commission, \$150,032.

The last time SBC agencies received funds for capital needs was at the end of the 1990-91 fiscal year.

Designated gifts totaled \$127,828,517 for the fiscal year, just missing the 1991-92 record of \$127,916,369. However, the 1993-94 total did surpass the previous year total of \$127,036,370 which tabulates to a .62 percent increase.

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.

Texas attorney files charter
for new state convention

By Toby Druin

HOUSTON (BP)--Houston attorney J. Walter Carpenter has filed a charter for a "Texas Baptist Convention, Inc.," should the need arise for a new convention, he said last week.

Carpenter, a trustee of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, told the Texas weekly newsjournal, The Baptist Standard, he had "no intention to use it, but it is there to use if things go from bad to worse and conservative leadership in Texas wants it. It is merely an enabling thing in the event it is needed."

Events which might bring on separation of "conservatives" from the Baptist General Convention of Texas and establishment of a new convention, he said, could include inclusion of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in the BGCT budget if the Cooperative Missions Giving Study Committee report is rejected at the annual convention in Amarillo, Oct. 31.

"I would expect that would trigger this (new) convention," Carpenter said, adding he had "no idea" if the approval of the committee report, which would permit CBF gifts to be considered as Cooperative Program gifts, would "trigger" establishment of the new convention.

"I am not in the loop of the leadership decisions," Carpenter said. "I merely do what I am asked to do."

The decision to file the nonprofit charter for the new convention was his own, however, he said. "I just did it and then informed them (conservative leadership) that it is available. I have heard from none of them."

The charter was filed in July with the Texas secretary of state in Austin. The name, "Texas Baptist Convention, Inc.," previously had been reserved in May by Jim Bolton of Dallas, Carpenter said. Bolton, a member of First Baptist Church, Dallas, previously was a member of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary board of trustees.

"There's nothing secretive about this," Carpenter said. "It is a matter of public record."

Asked if establishment of another convention would not be following the example of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a moderate group criticized by conservatives, Carpenter declined to defend it "because nothing has happened. You are free to draw your own parallels. I am taking no leadership role; I am merely creating an entity."

William M. Pinson Jr., executive director of the Texas Baptist executive board, said, "There are a number of state Baptist groups in Texas. The Baptist General Convention of Texas is one of these and the largest. It came into being in 1886 when several state Baptist bodies determined that more good could be accomplished united than divided. That has certainly proved to be true since the BGCT has become the largest Baptist entity of its kind in the world in spite of differences of opinion we have had through the years.

"In Baptist polity each church is autonomous and free to cooperate or not cooperate with any association of churches, state or national convention. I would hope that no church in cooperation with the Baptist General Convention of Texas would cease that cooperation. Each church is important to our cooperative effort in missions, evangelism, education and benevolence."

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Prominent Fort Worth family
gives SWBTS insurance check

Baptist Press
10/6/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary received \$239,000 Oct. 5 as the result of a life insurance policy purchased by a prominent Fort Worth area Baptist and community leader.

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Herman J. Smith's wife, Patsy, made the special presentation during Southwestern's chapel service. The \$293,000 check was from a life insurance policy purchased in 1989 by her late husband, who named Southwestern beneficiary.

He died Aug. 15 at the age of 64. The insurance policy was purchased during his service as chairman of the Greater Fort Worth Upward '90 campaign, a fundraising effort that brought millions of dollars to Southwestern.

In addition to leading the Upward '90 campaign, he was a life member of the Southwestern Council and a distinguished life member of Southwestern's Presidents Club. The couple was presented the B.H. Carroll Award, the seminary's highest honor, in March 1988.

"We felt that the best kind of giving we could participate in was to contribute to Southwestern for the training of so many pastors and ministers," Mrs. Smith said at the chapel service.

She emphasized the greatest blessings ultimately do not come from human efforts. "You can't outgive God," she said.

A respected community leader and former mayor of Hurst, Texas, Smith was a long-time member of Richland Hills Baptist Church in North Richland Hills, Texas. He served on numerous boards and received various professional and civic awards.

The Smith's two daughters, Karla Smith and Vicki Weinberg of Colleyville, Texas, accompanied their mother at the chapel service.

Following the check presentation, Weinberg joined her husband, Steve, in announcing their donations of life insurance policies to the seminary in memory of Smith. The insurance gift is undetermined but the Weinbergs said it would be similar to the amount of Smith's policy.

Southwestern President Ken Hemphill said Smith exemplified the kind of leadership shown in the Bible by Nehemiah, "one of history's greatest leaders."

Smith served as building contractor for Southwestern's construction of Walsh Medical Center, now Walsh Counseling Center. The Herman Jared and Patsy Ruth Smith Preaching Chapel in The Linebery Preaching Center at the seminary honors the Smiths' long-time support.

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SBC saw non-metro
increase in 1980s

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press
10/6/94

ATLANTA (BP)--The per-capita number of Southern Baptists outside metropolitan areas increased during the 1980s, according to a study by the Home Mission Board's director of town and country associational missions.

Gary Farley noted during a decade when many denominations reduced their work in the most rural areas of America, Southern Baptists were still planting churches and reaching people.

"Historically, we've just done well in those kinds of places," said Farley. "Really, we're the most aggressive denomination in trying to reach these places, although we're probably not as aware of that fact as we should be."

In 1980, one out of 13.3 people in non-metropolitan America was a resident member of a Southern Baptist church, according to figures compiled by the HMB research department. By 1990, that number improved to one out of every 13 people.

Non-metropolitan refers to counties outside urban regions identified as "metropolitan statistical areas" by the U.S. Census Bureau. About 73 percent of America's counties are non-metropolitan; they contain 20.2 percent of the population.

About 36 percent of all Southern Baptists live in non-metro areas. Vermont (92.6 percent), Mississippi (75.4 percent) and Idaho (74.9 percent) have the highest percentage of Southern Baptists who live in non-metro areas.

While the percentage of rural population continues to shrink, the actual number of people in non-metropolitan counties grew 1.3 million during the 1980s, the report notes.

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"Rural America is growing and needs new churches," Farley said. He cited five reasons for Southern Baptist growth in non-metropolitan counties:

-- Southern Baptists continued to plant churches in non-metropolitan areas. These counties grew by almost 800 new churches during the 1980s, he said. "And new churches continue to grow."

-- Southern Baptists continued to be evangelistic. "Our churches have reached out in witness and ministry and that's contributed to our continued growth."

-- Mainline denominations pulled out of some areas where the population is declining. "We have sometimes by default been able to reach people who have maybe felt abandoned by their denomination."

-- Much of the non-metropolitan population growth in that decade occurred in the sunbelt. "That's the area we're the dominant denomination."

-- Southern Baptists continued to aggressively plant and develop congregations in the rural newer convention areas. Every convention outside of traditional Southern Baptist territory had significant gains in non-metropolitan membership, he said.

The study also found population decline resulting from the loss of farming and small-town industrial jobs in the convention's older work states was offset by the development of retirement and recreation facilities.

"I think particularly we need to look at planting churches that are designed for senior adults in the recreation and retirement areas," Farley said.

"I call them lake-people churches," he added. "A lot of these churches have significant ministries because they have people with time, resources and talent."

Figures for 1992 show Georgia (404,649), Texas (397,778) and North Carolina (390,092) have the most resident non-metropolitan Southern Baptists.

New Jersey and the District of Columbia have no non-metro resident Southern Baptists. Of the states with some, Massachusetts (15), Rhode Island (269) and Connecticut (294) have the fewest non-metropolitan Southern Baptists.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: A chart listing the number and percentage of non-metro Southern Baptists per state was mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press. The chart can be used as a graphic, or information can be used to localize the story.

Doran McCarty to retire
from Seminary Extension

By Leonard E. Hill

Baptist Press
10/6/94

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Doran C. McCarty, executive director of Seminary Extension since 1988, has announced his plans to retire at the end of 1994. He and his wife Gloria will move from Nashville, Tenn., where the Seminary Extension offices are located, to St. Augustine, Fla.

Seminary Extension, through extension centers and correspondence courses, provides theological training for nearly 6,000 students, making it one of the largest theological enterprises in the world.

McCarty, 63, has agreed to serve as interim director, following his retirement, until a successor is named, according to Landrum P. Leavell, chairman of the board of governors of Seminary Extension and president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Seminary Extension's governing board is composed of the presidents of the six SBC seminaries.

William O. Crews, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, Calif., said, "Dr. McCarty has brought stability, innovation, and a vision for the future to Seminary Extension efforts. He has given solid leadership in a time of necessary restructuring, and a renewed focus on providing quality theological education using a variety of delivery systems."

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During his tenure at Seminary Extension, McCarty developed the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry and served as coordinator of the Northeastern Baptist Education Consortium serving four Northeast state Baptist conventions -- New York, New England, Pennsylvania-South Jersey, and Maryland/Delaware.

Previously, McCarty served as a professor and director of the D.Min. program at Golden Gate Seminary, and as a professor of supervised ministry and director of continuing education at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo. He is the author of 10 books.

McCarty said he plans to continue writing, as well as consulting and leading seminars.

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(BP) photo available upon request from Seminary Extension at 615-242-2453.

Hawkins: meet people's
needs, not their wants

Baptist Press
10/6/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--America's greatest problem is the church asking, "What are we going to do to deal with issues such as the rapid decline of traditional values, the soaring crime rate, teenage pregnancies, drug addiction, child abuse, spousal abuse and illiteracy?"

O.S. Hawkins, pastor, First Baptist Church, Dallas, issued that challenge in an Oct. 4 chapel service at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

But the church should be asking, "Why do these issues exist?," Hawkins said.

Much of Hawkins' message emphasized lessons Christians today could learn from the biblical prophet Jeremiah since he faced some of the same challenges that church-going Christians will face in the next few years.

Jeremiah was a man with a burden for the way his country had turned its back on God, Hawkins said.

"With a weeping heart in his prophecy in Jeremiah 2:26, the prophet says, 'Where is the Lord who brought you out of Egypt?' He comes straight to the point in Jeremiah 2:27 when he says from God, 'You have turned your back to me and not your face.'"

Hawkins said Christians are in an "incredible day for church growth" because America's traditional values are at an all-time low. Many people outside the church consider it to be archaic, irrelevant, and out of date, he said.

"We are going to live and minister in a day when the church, by and large, is on the wane in secular society," Hawkins said. Instead of finding out only what people want, church leaders must discover that people's needs are most important and that only Jesus Christ can fill the voids in their lives.

Hawkins assured the seminary students that the struggles of the church today are minimal in comparison to the challenges faced by the early church in Acts.

"Sometimes we wonder whether we're going to lose our tax-exempt status," Hawkins said. "They were being persecuted, beaten, and imprisoned for doing what we're doing today."

Hawkins compared the people Jeremiah attempted to reach to many people in America today.

"Jeremiah's people did not know the judgment of God. They were covetous, they had no shame, they were agnostic and apathetic toward spiritual things and they had false confidence," he said. "There is a health crisis in America, and it's a spiritual health crisis. Just as there are prescriptions for medicine, there is a prescription for America. There is a Balm in Gilead for America. He is Jesus Christ."

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**Draper urges seminarians:
look for God in adversity**

By Pat Cole

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Life's most tumultuous experiences can lead people toward God, according to Baptist Sunday School Board President James T. Draper Jr. Even amid tragedy, God is "always moving our lives toward an encounter with him," said Draper in an Oct. 5 chapel address at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Draper's address concluded a three-day Sunday School Board Emphasis at the Louisville, Ky. school. During the event, Sunday School Board personnel lectured in 25 seminary classes and conducted two writing conferences. They also shared information about the board with numerous students and faculty at an exhibit in the seminary's Honeycutt Campus Center.

In his address, Draper reminded seminarians of the adversity that brought Moses to a divine encounter at the burning bush. Moses had suffered the devastation of losing his royal status as an Egyptian prince and had endured the isolation of working as a desert sheep herder.

"It is in the isolation that Moses met God," said Draper. "He didn't meet God in the crowd. He met him alone. He didn't meet him in the noise. He met him in the silence."

Draper said Moses also had experienced the humiliation of losing his esteemed economic and social status. He had gone from "being the darling of an empire to taking care of someone else's sheep," he said.

Despite Moses' misfortunes, he was able to hear God's directive to lead the people of Israel out of slavery, Draper noted.

Like Moses, people today can also find God through unfavorable circumstances, emphasized Draper. "Rather than being experiences to defeat you, rather than being experiences to torment you, they ought to be preparation for an encounter with God," he said.

Negative situations can "make you bitter, but if you look carefully you will see through the devastation that there's a bush burning and that God is preparing you for an encounter with him," Draper said.

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**International BSU student turns
handicaps into ministry outlet** By Russell N. Dilday

Baptist Press
10/6/94

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)--Being deaf and blind does have some advantages, said Bapin Bhattacharyya, a student at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. "I get to save on my electricity bill, because I don't need a light at night."

Most Arkansas Baptists do not know Bapin (pronounced BAH-pen), but they have a profound influence on his life. He not only is active in the Reach Our Campus Thursday night worship of UALR's Baptist Student Union, but also receives Arkansas Baptist State Convention funds for an interpreter during BSU functions.

"I really appreciate that," he said of the funds from the state missions department. "It makes me feel that BSU is doing its part in reaching out and makes me feel more involved."

Bapin said he enjoys BSU activities because, "as a Christian, I want to be involved and share my faith with others and to feel inspired by hearing other Christians speak. I don't get to participate in a lot of social activities with other Christians."

Jimmy Barrentine, director of Arkansas Baptist State Convention's state missions department, said Bapin's interpreter is being funded as a pilot project ministry. "It's a legitimate missions investment. It is challenge to the BSU to make a commitment to reaching the high deaf student population at UALR." He said providing interpretation for one deaf student will allow for translation to others. "In a sense, we are hoping he's a missionary to the deaf."

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Barrentine said the interpretation funds come from a "limited response" fund in the state missions department provided from a mixture of Cooperative Program and Dixi Jackson State Missions Offering receipts. "The fund allows us a quick response to needs we don't know about when conducting annual planning," Barrentine explained.

Bapin, a native of India, was raised in a village 20 miles south of Calcutta. "The village has no paved roads, vehicles or fancy markets," he related. "Eighty-five percent of its population live in poverty and illiteracy and get free land on which they build huts from mud, hay and bamboo."

Deaf from birth, Bapin lost the sight in his right eye after another child threw dirt in his face as a prank. Bapin was completely blinded at age 9 following a fight with another boy. "I slowly lost sight in my left eye during a three-month period. I was so frightened and felt lost as I did not know how to live or move around freely without any sight."

He said he feels "gifted" because of support from his family in India. "God provided me a wonderful family. Most people in this kind of culture would be too embarrassed to show their handicapped children to the public.

"They always understood that my needs were very special," he said of his parents. "At the age of 2, my mother taught me how to speak Bengali, my native language. She used many artistic ways to describe how to make the sound of a letter by moving her lips and had me feel her throat for vibrations."

Because of his handicaps, he was forced to quit school and had to make other adjustments in his lifestyle. "It was not easy. I lost a lot of my friends because they were fearful about how to communicate with me.

"While struggling to acquire a new life without any sight, I often fell into a desire to commit suicide," he said. "At that time I was not a Christian, yet God kept his eyes closely on me. God was gracious in granting me enough strength to live through those difficult days."

He also said having a positive attitude helped him through those challenging times. "We need to recognize every gift we have comes from God, and never say, 'I can't do this, or I can't live without that.' There is no reason to be afraid to accept any challenge God gives us."

Despite his thoughts of suicide and growing discipline problems, Bapin was able to discover positive outlets. "I had a few hobbies such as woodworking and ceramics. I made many statues of Indian gods and goddesses from clay I got for free from my uncle's brick/tile factory. My mother is a talented artist so she would paint these statues for me."

In the meantime, he said, God was planning a "miracle" for him to come to the United States.

He said his father wrote letters "all over the world" searching for a school that could accommodate his son's educational needs. After several disappointments, he was accepted to the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Mass. "It was a miracle how God planned for me to come to Perkins," he recalled.

Part of that miracle came in the form of Frank and Steve, Christian staff members at Perkins. "I became good friends with them and we did many things together while they were off duty," he said. "From time to time they would take me to their church.

"On Feb. 8, 1987 after I heard an inspiring sermon I wanted very much, in my heart, to accept Jesus as my Savior," Bapin recalled. "But I was afraid, since I thought my parents would oppose my converting to Christianity.

"I told Steve and one of his friends, Mike, overheard me and told Steve to have us go to his house for lunch," he said. "After we finished eating lunch, Mike and I had a long conversation. I told him how afraid I was to change my faith."

Mike told Bapin "not to worry since God came first before anything else. At this point, I felt inside me something strange. It was as if Jesus was talking to me. I told Mike that I was ready" to accept Christ, he said. "Mike prayed with me and I accepted the Lord into my heart."

H said through his experience in America, "God showed me that he does not want me to waste my lifetime no matter if I lost my sight. He has always kept my life fulfilled and has found a way to lead me to the right place where he knew I would be happy."

God's leading eventually brought him to UALR and to the BSU. Director Dan McCauley said Bapin adds to and receives from the program there. The BSU provides Bapin a forum to express himself in a Christian community of peers. In fact, his testimony was the focus of a recent Reach Our Campus service.

"The BSU provides him with students who care about him in a compassionate way, although he doesn't seek compassion," McCauley explained. "He wants to be accepted for who he is."

Although physically handicapped, he asks others not to think of his handicaps as a weakness. "Sometimes we are afraid to admit to weaknesses for fear of rejection, but any weakness can become one's strength if he faces it, and allows God to use it in his life," Bapin affirmed. "Even people who are hearing and sighted can be handicapped. Not necessarily physically, but handicapped in the way they deal with different situations."

Bapin maintains God provided his handicap as a ministry outlet. "I feel blessed for my disabilities because I can truly see others with disabilities," he noted. "God made me with disabilities to help others who feel their lives are not important. I want to be a missionary to those with disabilities."

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