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Restoration of values needed  
to fight hunger, report says

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

WASHINGTON (BP)--A restoration of values will help the fight against hunger and violence, said the president of Bread for the World Institute upon the organization's annual report on world hunger.

In its report, Bread for the World described hunger as "one piece of a complex of interrelated social ills" and identified five main causes of hunger: violence, powerlessness, poverty, environmental overload and discrimination.

"We need values -- at the family level, yes -- but also at the community, national and international levels," said Bread for the World Institute President David Beckmann in a prepared statement. "Value-drive action to reduce hunger will also reduce violence. Violence and hunger breed each other, both in U.S. cities and in countries such as Haiti and Somalia."

While he expressed a hesitancy to accept a strong statistical correlation between hunger and violence, a Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission consultant welcomed Bread for the World's emphasis on values.

"Hunger is a problem of the heart, not the stomach," said Ben Mitchell, the CLC's consultant for biomedical and life issues. "That is, both the causes of hunger identified by Bread for the World and the responses to hunger have to do with moral values."

Hunger ministry will not be maintained without a stronger motivation than sentimentality, Mitchell said.

"Only humanitarian values informed by biblical revelation will, in my view, sustain an effective ministry to the starving, undernourished and chronically hungry," he said. "Whether or not there is any connection between other social ills and hunger, Christians should be compelled to minister to the needs of hungry persons simply because of the commands and example of Jesus. We should need no other reason."

"Without being self-congratulatory, Southern Baptists have always excelled in linking hunger ministry with biblical values," Mitchell said. "Wherever Southern Baptists are feeding stomachs they are nourishing souls and vice versa."

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Bread for the World's report said hunger and poverty result in violence, while violence and militarism "almost invariably lead to hunger." The connections between hunger and violence "are not simple connections, but the connections are real," Beckmann said at an Oct. 13 news conference.

Reducing hunger requires people making moral choices in their individual lives and through the political arena, the Bread for the World report said.

Hunger in the United States is "just so fixable," Beckmann said, but the country has chosen not to attack the problem. Americans spend more money on watches and jewelry than federal food programs, he said.

While private agencies feeding the hungry have grown from a few in 1975 to 150,000 now, Beckmann said he wishes they would become more politically involved. Private agencies feed 26 million people in the United States, he said.

There has been a steady decline in world hunger since 1975, largely because of progress in the Asia-Pacific region, the report said. Hunger has increased, however, in sub-Sahara Africa and the United States, according to the report.

Approximately 30 million people in the United States cannot afford to buy enough food to maintain good health, the report said. An additional 1 million people fell below the poverty level last year, according to a recent Census Bureau report. More than 39 million people, including 15.7 million children under age 18, live below the poverty level, which is \$14,763 for a family of four.

Worldwide, 700 million people are chronically hungry, according to Bread for the World's report.

Relief work is becoming more dangerous, according to a survey also announced at the news conference. In a poll of InterAction's member organizations, 61 percent reported United States relief workers in other countries are more at risk today than five years ago.

InterAction is a coalition of 159 United States-based nonprofit agencies which promote development around the world.

Bread for the World Institute is a nonprofit organization engaging in research and education on hunger and development policies.

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Baptists put faith into action  
through multi-county food bank

By Brian Smith

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

COLUMBIA, Mo. (BP)--A man in faded blue denim coveralls stopped at the food pantry door, glanced over his shoulder to see if anyone was looking, and ducked into the building. After spending a few minutes picking out some items, he quickly left through the rear entrance.

Whether they be proud or humble, Central Missouri Food Bank in Columbia serves hundreds of people still affected by last year's flooding.

Two Missouri Baptists are the organization's top administrators. Peggy Kirkpatrick, a member of Midway Heights Baptist Church in Columbia, is CMFB's executive director. David Schawo, bivocational pastor of Midway Heights, is associate director.

Kirkpatrick explained although the state's 1993 flood waters have long since receded, Central Missouri Food Bank still provides relief to more than 1,200 families in 14 counties. "Folks who one year ago didn't seek help are now coming into food pantries," she said. "We're seeing more and more farm families coming in for assistance."

Coming in isn't easy for some, Schawo noted. "Some of our agencies are discovering that the people coming in for help are some very proud farmers who haven't needed anything from anybody, but their farm is still not able to be farmed. They were willing to come in for clothing, but they would kind of slink in for food, like they didn't want anybody knowing it."

Last year CMFB distributed more than 4.5 million pounds of food. One of six food banks in Missouri, CMFB is part of the 185-member Second Harvest National Food Bank Network.

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CMFB's staff of eight is supplemented by scores of volunteers, Schawo noted. "We use church groups, youth groups, a lot of people."

Volunteers are used in such areas as driving delivery routes, sorting and repackaging food, office tasks, cleaning and warehouse work.

Prior to joining CMFB in April 1992, Kirkpatrick worked as a programmer/analyst for the University of Missouri, Columbia. The daily walk between her parking space and her office took her past the fraternity house dumpsters, where she often saw street people scavenging through the trash.

One day, she noticed they were doing more than sifting through the garbage. They were eating it.

"It was an incredible sight to see people eating out of the dumpster," Kirkpatrick said. "I grew up in Columbia, and I always thought that was something that happened in New York or St. Louis. I didn't expect it to happen here."

After seven years of "looking the other way, to my shame," she prayed God would send someone to help. "Boy, was that the wrong thing to pray," she said with a laugh. "The Holy Spirit said I was somebody."

Her first reaction was to let someone else do it, but the words of James 1:22 and 2:15-17 convinced her otherwise. "It was time to 'walk the talk' or quit talking," she wrote recently in a Missouri Christian newspaper. "As only God can do, doors opened for me to work here."

Schawo had been working as assistant manager of a clothing store but he found the work unfulfilling. "It paid the bills but was not that sense of ministry," he said. "Over here I really feel much more of a sense of being able to have a ministry to people directly."

At the time Kirkpatrick joined the food bank, it operated through shared maintenance -- a system in which a handling fee was charged to member agencies who received food. In July 1993 the food bank's board decided to distribute food according to need, not ability to pay.

That decision required Kirkpatrick to build a fund-raising network, which is how Schawo became involved. "Her concept was to (raise funds) through the churches," Schawo said. "It's our basic belief that the government should not have to feed the people. God commissioned the churches to take care of the poor and the homeless."

"Food drives and such are important, but for every dollar we raise we can procure \$22 worth of food. We became convinced we needed a broader base of financial support," Schawo said.

"We're only the second food bank in the national network that's gone to non-shared maintenance, and the only one without a huge endowment to underwrite it."

CMFB is able to turn one dollar into 22 by being part of the Second Harvest national network, Schawo explained. Second Harvest accesses manufacturers, wholesalers, growers and others to acquire product overruns or shipments with packaging problems.

"The food is good but maybe the boxes have paint smears or the flaps overlap," Schawo said. "Rather than throw it away, they donate it to Second Harvest, which then divides it up among all the food banks. All we have to pay for is the cost of shipping it here."

He realized churches offered the broadest possible base for financial support. "If we had 500 churches each donating \$750 a year, that would be our whole budget," he said. "Across a year's time, it breaks down into 75 people in a church giving \$10, for instance. Per person it's not a lot."

The concept became the subject of prayer by both Schawo and Kirkpatrick. They now call it the James Principle, after tenets from the Book of James. "Christians are called to put our faith into action and feed and clothe those in need," Kirkpatrick pointed out.

Kirkpatrick and Schawo have to be careful to keep religion separate from the food bank's operation. "It has to be delicately balanced, because we are a secular organization with a board of directors. We deliver USDA commodities so there has to be complete separation," Schawo said. "But at the same time, we really believe it's important to operate on biblical, spiritual principles."

CMFB's 15,000-square-foot headquarters in Columbia includes 9,000 square feet of warehouse space, 3,000 square feet of refrigerated and frozen storage, and 3,000 square feet of office and processing areas.

University of Missouri head football coach Larry Smith jumped on the food bank bandwagon with his "Two for the Tigers" program for last spring's Black and Gold game. Entry into Faurot Field required two cans of food or three dollars, and the game raised about 10,000 pounds of food, Kirkpatrick said.

"Nobody got into that game for free," she recalled. "Not the press, not the coaches, not the players, nobody. He told the team if they wanted to play in that scrimmage they had better bring some food."

Smith already is planning for next spring. "A big part of college football is getting involved for good causes, and there's no question this is a great cause," he said. "It's an ongoing problem we have in this country that people are going hungry. This is a way to alleviate that problem."

The coach also said he was impressed with the commitment level of CMFB's Baptist leadership. "They are very enthusiastic about what they are doing. To me that's a sign of people who like what they're doing and are doing a good job at it," he noted. "They are ready to help, ready to organize and ready to implement. That's the sign of a good organization."

CMFB serves 150 member agencies, such as food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters, child care centers, family service agencies, senior citizens food programs and rehabilitation centers throughout 29 counties in central and northern Missouri. The food bank uses two trucks, each with a gross weight of 18,000 pounds, to deliver the food to member agencies.

More than 8 million pounds of food and supplies were distributed to such agencies by Missouri's six food banks in 1993. Missouri's other food banks are in Sikeston, Kansas City, St. Joseph, Springfield and St. Louis.

Beyond the Second Harvest network, CMFB's food sources include local growers, packers, manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers and retailers, as well as food drives such as Two for the Tigers and the Boy Scouts' Scouting for Food.

Schawo hopes churches will get as excited about helping the needy as coach Smith is. "We have to get more churches and more Christians involved in feeding the hungry," Schawo said.

Kirkpatrick originally wanted God to send someone else, someone qualified, to the work of directing the food bank, she said. "I've realized very clearly that God do sn't necessarily send the qualified; he sends the willing."

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Colorado court rejection  
of Amendment 2 criticized

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

WASHINGTON (BP)--Opponents of homosexual rights called a Colorado Supreme Court decision rejecting an initiative banning such laws illogical but not surprising.

In a 6-1 vote, the Colorado Supreme Court ruled Amendment 2, the first state provision against homosexual rights, was unconstitutional. After the Oct. 11 release of the opinion, the state announced it would appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

Colorado's highest court upheld a lower-court ruling striking down the 1992 initiative prohibiting the passage or enforcement of laws granting civil rights status to homosexuals. The amendment overturned homosexual rights ordinances already in force in Denver, Boulder and Aspen.

The majority opinion said the amendment was unconstitutional because it denied homosexuals an equal opportunity to participate in the political process.

The decision is "supremely illogical on its face," said Michael Whitehead, general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

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Because the court says the United States Constitution bans state and local laws which deny equal opportunity, Whitehead said, the court "must assume, therefore, that the people may create a constitutional limitation on actions by subordinate governments. This is all the people of Colorado did in Amendment 2."

Some states have constitutional prohibitions against gambling, Whitehead said.

"Colorado's Supreme Court would apparently strike down such constitutional provisions, oblivious to the obvious fact that the opportunity to participate was during the vote to adopt the constitutional provision," he said. "This supreme nonsense should be reversed by the United States Supreme Court."

The decision was expected by Colorado supporters of Amendment 2.

"Our state's courts have already made known their willingness to cast aside the freedoms of those who hold 'politically incorrect' beliefs in today's society," said a prepared statement by Colorado for Family Values, the organization which placed the initiative on the ballot.

"But 813,000 Colorado voters understood, nearly two years ago, that Amendment 2 is not about denying anyone's civil rights or about hostility toward anyone. It's a matter of reason. Those concerned citizens voted to reserve special protection for legitimate minorities and preserved the integrity of civil rights law.

"The Colorado majority understood that granting minority status to the behavior of homosexuality would lead to grave, inevitable consequences in their daily lives -- including public policies mandating the affirmation of homosexual behavior in our schools and every other public arena."

Suzanne Goldberg, a lawyer with the Lambda Legal Defense Fund and co-counsel in the case, told The Washington Times, "This ruling is a decisive affirmation of lesbian and gay rights, a crushing blow to the radical right's efforts to curtail important constitutional protections."

Calls to the Human Rights Campaign Fund, the country's largest homosexual political organization, were not returned prior to the deadline for Baptist Press.

Colorado for Family Values also decried the date of the opinion's release, "National Coming-out Day." The annual event recognized among homosexuals is an occasion when homosexuals who have not "come out of the closet" are encouraged to announce their sexual lifestyle to others. CFV said, "This is an additional slap in the face of the majority of Coloradans -- one they will not forget."

Southern Baptist leaders in Colorado were among those publicly supporting the amendment during the '92 campaign. The executive board of the Colorado Baptist General Convention unanimously endorsed it.

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Court lets stand decision  
rejecting cross in San Diego

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

WASHINGTON (BP)--The United States Supreme Court has allowed to stand a lower court decision declaring unconstitutional a massive cross on public land overlooking the city of San Diego. The court did not comment in announcing Oct. 11 it had refused to grant a hearing in *San Diego v. Paulson*.

The city has three months to comply with a federal judge's injunction forbidding the permanent presence of the 43-foot tall Latin cross on Mount Soledad. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the judge's ruling before it was appealed to the Supreme Court by the city.

The 24-ton concrete cross was built in 1953 by private citizens as a memorial to service members who died in World Wars I and II, as well as the Korean War. The same private group, the Mount Soledad Memorial Association, maintains the structure. The cross replaced previous non-concrete crosses which were destroyed.

In seeking Supreme Court acceptance of the case, the city argued the cross does not violate the state or federal constitutions in regard to the separation of church and state. It transgressed neither the "no-preference" language of California nor the establishment clause of the United States, it said.

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The city also argued if the cross, which was declared a historical site by San Diego, was not preserved, the "irreplaceable historical treasures of this country would be at risk of destruction."

In his ruling, Judge Gordon Thompson said where the cross, which has been used as the site of an annual Easter sunrise service for 40 years, stands as a "permanent, salient symbol on public property . . . , California's Constitution will not permit it to continue to stand." If the land on which it stands were privately owned or were the cross raised only periodically for religious observance, the case would be different, he said.

The general counsel of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, Michael Whitehead, said too much should not be read into the Supreme Court's refusal to accept the case.

"The United States Supreme Court rarely agrees to hear decisions based solely on state constitutions, as was this case." Therefore, Whitehead said, it should not be taken that the Supreme Court believes the cross was illegal under the federal constitution's establishment clause.

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Christians can take advantage  
of Halloween, Roberts notes

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

ATLANTA (BP)--Rather than shunning Halloween as a pagan holiday, the director of the Home Mission Board's interfaith witness department suggests Southern Baptists take advantage of society's emphasis on the supernatural.

"If we don't, the devil will certainly use it to his advantage," said Phil Roberts.

Adults who remember Halloween as a time to live out a fantasy or get away with mischief need to be aware of the revival of paganism and satanism in the western world, Roberts said.

"Thirty years ago the satanic influence was less powerful," he noted. Satanism has filled the spiritual gap created by a decline in the Christian voice, Roberts said.

Halloween has its roots in the day of the dead in Celtic religions, Roberts said. The god of the dead, in the Celtic celebration, recalled the souls of people who had died the previous year. The souls could visit relatives, and trick-or-treat began as family members set out food to appease the souls.

In the year 824, All Saints Day was moved from May to Nov. 1 in an attempt to "Christianize" the Celtic worship, Roberts said.

Satanic movements continue to believe that Halloween is the best day to contact the spirit world, Roberts said.

Christians need to recognize that Satan does have power and that the Bible affirms the presence of evil, Roberts said. "The danger is when the church does not address the topic. If we fail to draw out the dangers and the presence of evil, we do families a disservice. Everybody is touched by it. The only thing we can control is our response."

Teaching about Satan needs to include the Bible's promise that Christ will be victorious, Roberts added.

Responses to Halloween that Roberts recommended include:

-- Give simple tracts or invitations to church services along with candy to trick-or-treaters, Roberts said.

-- Be prepared to talk to people who ask questions about the supernatural world. Families could host an open house in their neighborhood to talk about their faith.

-- Host alternative Halloween activities, such as fall festivals and family celebrations.

-- Preach sermons about the reality of the devil and how Christians can be armed for spiritual warfare.

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-- Offer a workshop with a trained interfaith witness volunteer leading discussions on the occult. For printed resources on the occult, call HMB customer services, 1-800-634-2462. For names of available speakers, call the HMB interfaith witness department, (404) 898-7404.

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Seniors' yearbook pledge:  
'to remain sexually pure'

By Diane Hesselberg

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)--Five high school seniors made a bold statement for abstinence last spring: After signing "True Love Waits" pledge cards with about 650 others from their church's youth group, the students discovered a way to tell students at Dr. Phillips High School about their commitment to purity.

Robby Hurd, a member of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla., along with Toby Ayers, Bobby Fritts, Brad Crosby and Justin Carpenter, purchased a full-page in the school's yearbook to tell about the pledge each of them had taken.

"We decided that this would be a good way to take a stand," Hurd said. "It held us accountable to the whole school."

The page features prom photos of all five young men with their dates, encircling the "True Love Waits" pledge. "We wanted to show that we're not 'geeks,'" Hurd said. "We wanted to prove that you can have fun and date -- but you have to control yourself."

All five young men now attend college and date regularly; four of them participated in high school sports; three of them earned letters and other awards and on placed in the top three in state competition.

In designing the advertisement, Hurd said he was also thinking of the future:

"It will be something neat to hand to my wife someday and say, 'Read this page,' because I really kept my pledge."

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Hesselberg is a writer for Focus on the Family. This story appeared in the Oct. 17 issue of Citizen magazine. Copyright 1994. Focus on the Family. All rights reserved. International Copyright secured. Used by permission.

Pastor's heart transplant stirs  
deepened view of relationships By Bonnie H. Davis

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

ROXBORO, N.C. (BP)--For every person there are certain dates that stand out as forever altering life's course. For Donald Harris, pastor of Timberlake (N.C.) Baptist Church, June 9, 1994, will be one of those dates -- when doctors at Duke University Medical Center removed Harris' 46-year-old diseased heart and transplanted the heart of a 16-year-old accident victim, making Harris DUMC's 100th successful heart transplant recipient.

Harris' second chance at life came after a three-year wait for a suitable heart donor.

In November 1990, Harris, then pastor of Rock Grove Baptist Church, Roxboro, N.C., had been preparing to preach the funeral of a church members when he suffered a massive heart attack. He recovered, then in January 1991, he contracted a virus from which he recovered with the help of antibiotics. By June of that year, however, he knew he had even bigger problems: His heart had been attacked by the virus and was now enlarged and unable to work properly. His condition, known as ischemic cardiomyopathy, made the possibility of coronary bypass and other cardiac surgery or procedures out of the question.

"I knew in June 1991 that I needed a heart," he recounted. "The doctors told me my heart could stop functioning at any time. It was devastating; it was a shock to be facing the reality of looking at death itself, of leaving my family at any point in time, of not knowing if they would have a heart available."

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Like most people, Harris said he had never even thought much about heart transplants until DUMC person 1 approached him about having one.

"Heart transplant information came to life for me and brought hope of extending my life. They were saying I could probably live three to five years without a heart transplant if I was lucky," he recalled.

"The good thing was my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I knew the Lord had everything in hand, so faith kept us strong." Once Harris made the decision to seek a heart transplant, he continued his life as best he could.

"I was doing the work that was necessary and required of me to care for the church and my family," he said. "The church was very lenient in what they were allowing me to do. And of course I was always making trips to the hospital. They were trying new medicines on me to try to prolong my heart muscle."

About two or three months before his transplant, Harris had been upgraded on the transplant list as his health weakened.

"I could tell my condition had begun to worsen," said Harris. "I was able to work at the church. My heart was putting out enough blood to sustain me during the day, with rest periods, but my condition was weakening. I was having shortness of breath.

"I was angry because I could not do what I wanted to do. I was never angry at God, but at myself. I was scared to death because of the uncertainty of what was facing me here on earth, not of what would happen to me once I left earth, but for my family and what would happen to them. I knew because of my faith I would be taken care of after I left the earth."

Harris' chance for a new heart came after a teen who had been playing Russian roulette died at DUMC and his parents decided to donate his organs for transplant.

"I was very much at peace," recalled Harris of his mood prior to surgery. "I was happy about going into surgery. I knew the Lord had everything in hand.

"But it was a strange feeling because, when they took me into operating room number six, I knew that young boy was in the next room. I felt sorrow for the young lad who had lost his life, but I felt thankful and happy for the lives he'd saved. Eight people have a chance for life because of that one person. Many people now have a chance for happiness and joy."

Peter van Trigt performed the heart transplant in a four-hour surgery, the 100th such procedure completed since DUMC began the program in 1985. The longest survivor received his heart transplant in 1986, and 84 of the 100 patients continue to do well.

Harris made a quick recovery and left the hospital eight days after surgery, four to six days earlier than expected. He says he's "doing extremely well" although he is still recovering from the surgery and has to deal with side effects of the medications he must take for the rest of his life to ward off his body's rejection of the donated heart.

"I feel better than I've felt in three years," he said. "I have a heart that can do anything I want it to do. I've just got to get my body working with my heart. My strength is increasing from day to day, and I'm improving physically and emotionally."

Harris said he hopes to return to the pulpit and has already begun leading his church's Wednesday night Bible study.

A former employee of IBM, Harris entered the ministry 10 years ago, serving as Rock Grove's pastor. He was in the process of assuming the Timberlake pastorate when he suffered his heart attack. He said both congregations have been extremely supportive of him and his family through the last three years.

"We've had a lot of love and support," he said. "I had never experienced people helping me before all this. But what I had given out as a minister I had returned to me, and this has been very helpful, very meaningful in my recovery. People have been so supportive and giving.

"Relationships are more meaningful to me, more than anything I've ever had in my life. All are so important, so much more important than any things, any material possessions in life. Our relationships with our Lord Jesus Christ, with our family, our extended family, our friends mean the most. We want to give ourselves to others, to love, trust and care for other people."

To that end, Harris said he plans to become an advocate for organ donations and will be willing to talk to anyone who is considering a heart transplant.

"A lot of people are very skeptical of donating organs for various reasons -- religion, wizardry, hearsay, whatever," said Harris. "Any person can give life to others by being a donor. Life can continue, and there can be happiness and joy for someone else."

The experience also will make him a better minister, he believes. "I can understand what people go through in sickness. I know what they and their families are going through."

For now, Harris is reveling in the miracle of new life he has been given through medical science.

"Every day is a special day, seeing the sun, breathing on my own, doing what God has called me to do each day, seeing my grandchildren grow up." Harris reiterated relationships are "the most precious things on earth. They are priceless," the words coming straight from his heart.

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Davis is associate editor of The Courier Times, Roxboro, N.C., from which this article is reprinted with permission.

Southeastern, FMB co-sponsor  
new church planting degree

By Dwayne Hastings

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees gave approval to a historic partnership with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board Oct. 11. The seminary and the FMB will cooperate in the establishment of a field-based master of divinity with church planting degree at Southeastern.

Students in the proposed degree track will complete their degree over a four-year period. The first two years will be spent on the school's campus in Wake Forest, N.C. The final two years of study will be on the mission field under the International Service Corps of the Foreign Mission Board.

Keith Eitel, professor of Christian missions at Southeastern, said the new degree program is right in line with the seminary's mission to emphasize wholesome and intentional evangelism so as to make disciples of all nations.

"Southeastern aims at providing the kind of theological education that results in churches. The Foreign Mission Board operates on the basis of evangelism that results in churches. It's a great match," Eitel said.

Eitel, who directs the Lewis Drummond Center for Great Commission Studies at Southeastern, said this is a unique arrangement within the Southern Baptist Convention. "The vision for this cooperative program came into focus when FMB President Jerry Rankin asked a gathering of mission professors in January of this year, 'How can we help you better train missionaries?'" Eitel recounted.

Sam James, FMB vice president for creative leadership development, said, "This program reflects the kind of resourceful thinking that is required if we are going to reach the world for Christ. We must get more church planters with experience on the mission field." He said missionaries must become more effective in their ministry much more quickly than in the past.

James explained the program will produce missionaries who will gain their experience on site. "They will have exposure to the culture of the region and will have made progress in learning the local language. If we are going to be effective in the 21st century, we must develop innovative programs like this," he said.

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Eitel said once the program is operative, negotiations will begin with the Home Mission Board to develop a similar field-based degree program.

He added, "We are excited about this opportunity. We anticipate that students who complete this course of study will be equipped to engage church planting ventures in a variety of settings and be conversant with biblical, theological, historical and pragmatic elements involved in starting and nurturing Baptist churches throughout the world and across our nation."

Eitel said students will initially be assigned to church planting positions in Kenya and Uganda. He said the first field-based site will be Nairobi, Kenya. The Kenya Baptist Convention operates a resident seminary in the city and has agreed to provide facilities for the modular seminars.

James said he had met with the seminary leadership in Kenya and received an enthusiastic response to the plan.

Kevin Barnes, a second-year SEBTS M.Div. student who spent his teen-age years in Kenya, said he is thrilled about the prospect of returning to Africa: "My parents were career missionaries in Malawi and I was in school just outside of Nairobi. My wife and I had already talked to the Foreign Mission Board about church planting work in Africa. We are excited about this program; it means we may be on the field much sooner than we ever imagined."

Barnes, who is fluent in Kenya's mother tongue of Swahili, said the proposed degree program is an answer to prayer. "The design of the degree would not only give me critical experience in cross-cultural evangelism, but would provide me with the two years of experience required for consideration as a career missionary. It would be some serious on-the-job training. If it's God will, we're itching to go."

Students will take a total of 64 hours on the Southeastern campus during their first two academic years. Those entering the second phase of the degree program will take a block of church planting and language acquisition courses, as well as some SEBTS elective courses, at designated seminar sites overseas. The FMB and Southeastern will work together in providing instruction during the student's third and fourth year of the degree program.

Eitel said students who earn the degree can be considered for career missionary appointment since students will be serving with the Foreign Mission Board's International Service Corps and will have accrued the two years of experience required for appointment.

He stressed admittance into the degree program did not automatically signal a student's acceptance as a career missionary with the FMB, only that the program will satisfy the experience requirement.

The Foreign Mission Board and Southeastern anticipate opening the degree program to students currently in their second year of seminary study. Eitel said they will be deployed to the field through the International Service Corps in August 1995.

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Southeastern Seminary  
forms new college

By Norman Miller

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Formation of Southeastern Baptist Theological College (SEBTC), an institution offering an undergraduate major in biblical studies and an associate of divinity degree, was unanimously approved by trustees during the Oct. 10-11 meeting at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

Undergraduate students seeking the biblical studies major must have at least 58 basic education hours before entering the college as required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, one of Southeastern Seminary's accrediting agencies, said SEBTC's newly elected dean, Gerald Cowen.

Cowen, professor of pastoral leadership and church ministries at the seminary, estimates 25-30 students will enter the college's first semester in January 1995, and he said, "I can easily see as many as 100 students here by next fall."

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Saying "it's hard to keep good news quiet," Cowen intimated dozens of inquiries trickled into his office concerning the new biblical studies major. "People were calling me for applications even before we had a catalog of courses or official trustee vote to establish the school."

SEBTS Vice President for Academic Affairs Russ Bush lauded the formation of the SEBTC, saying, "The biblical studies major offered by the college will lay a sound academic and theological foundation, which will benefit both students and professors. Southeastern College students entering the seminary will be prepared for advanced study and have a known base of biblical knowledge upon which our professors can build."

Paige Patterson, president of the seminary, said the addition of an undergraduate, biblical studies major and degree program will "allow Southeastern faculty more time to train God's messengers with academic acumen and evangelistic energy so they can minister practically and prophetically in a lost world which needs the saving message of Jesus Christ."

More information concerning Southeastern's college and other seminary programs may be attained by calling the SEBTS admissions office at 1-800-284-6317. SEBTC's admissions process should be on-line by late October, Cowen said.

Citing some required and elective classes of the 64-hour major, Cowen noted introductory work in the Old and New Testaments, personal evangelism, church and Baptist history, systematic theology, Greek, missions and ethics as "foundational and pivotal" to both ministry and graduate study.

Cowen, who hails from Alabama, earned a bachelor degree from Mississippi College and Th.M. and Th.D. degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is a former faculty member at Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Mo., and Criswell College, Dallas.

"Ever since my days at New Orleans Seminary, I have wanted to have this kind of opportunity in theological education," Cowen said. "I went to seminary to train for the pastorate, and I have done some of that; but while in seminary, God called me into theological education."

Cowen added, "The demands of the ministry today are much more complex, and today's ministers need intensive preparation. Students earning the biblical studies major will be better equipped for advanced studies at our seminary and for ministry after graduation than they would if they entered the seminary with a liberal arts, bachelor's degree from another school."

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Southeastern trustees approve  
development of Ph.D. program

By Dwayne Hastings

Baptist Press  
10/14/94

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Trustees at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary gave the school's faculty the green light Oct. 11 to pursue development of a doctor of philosophy degree program.

Dean of the faculty Russ Bush said the faculty has been working on the program. "We are pleased the board of trustees has affirmed our desire to offer a Ph.D. program. The faculty will strive to have the program completed and ready for the trustee's approval at their spring meeting," Bush said.

The trustee's approval of the program in principle will allow the seminary to take applications from potential students almost at once, Bush said. He added students will be considered for acceptance once the faculty has formally adopted admission requirements.

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Bush continued, "While there are many schools that offer this degree, we envision the Ph.D. program at Southeastern as being unique. It will include everything that composes a traditional Ph.D., but will have some special features that will make it particularly attractive for theological students. From pre-baccalaureate work through the doctoral level," Bush continued, "Southeastern is now ready to provide a comprehensive program of theological education second to none."

He recalled when he arrived on the Southeastern campus in 1989, no one expected the school to achieve so much in so short a time.

Bush says the inaugural class for the Ph.D. program will begin studies in the fall semester of 1995.

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EDITORS' NOTE: In (BP) story titled "Journalism prof advocates 'biblical objectivity,'" dated 10/11/94, a qualifying phrase listing a conference's sponsor can be added to the second paragraph: "... at a Southern Baptist communications seminar sponsored by the Executive Committee convention relations office Oct. 1-4 at Ridgecrest ... ."

Thanks,  
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