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ACTS, FamilyNet to carry Baptist Press
Billy Graham Global Mission 3/10/95
By C.C. Risenhoover

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The Billy Graham San Juan, Puerto Rico, Crusade, which via satellite technology will be the most far-reaching evangelistic outreach in history, will be broadcast by ACTS and FamilyNet.

ACTS is the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission cable television service that reaches into almost 23 million homes. FamilyNet is the RTVC broadcast television service that reaches into more than 65 million homes.

ACTS will carry the crusade March 15 at 4 p.m., March 16 and 17 at 7 p.m. and March 18 at 5 p.m. All times are Eastern Standard.

The crusade will be transmitted to FamilyNet affiliates March 14-17 at 7 p.m. and March 18 at 5 p.m., all times Eastern Standard. Affiliates may delay crusade broadcasts, so viewers should check local listings.

"We are honored and privileged to have this role in what is being called Global Mission with Billy Graham," said Jack Johnson, RTVC president. "As it is with Mr. Graham, our commission is the Great Commission. We seize every opportunity to proclaim Christ to the world."

Crusade services March 16-18 will go out via satellite in 80 languages to an estimated 165 countries around the world.

"The technology revolution has shrunk the world to a global village, with instant access to world news networks in even the most remote areas," Graham said. "It is time for the church to utilize this technology to make a worldwide statement that in the midst of chaos, emptiness and despair, there is hope in the person of Jesus Christ."

A. Larry Ross, a Graham spokesman, said San Juan's Hiram Bithorn Stadium was selected for the crusade meetings and Global Mission broadcasts because of Puerto Rico's bilingual community, its strategic location with convenient worldwide satellite access and because of its strong and enthusiastic Christian community.

"Mr. Graham," he said, "will speak in English accompanied by a Spanish interpreter, while backstage more than 40 other interpreters will be working to send the message around the world."

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In addition to the 40 or more languages into which Graham's message will be interpreted and transmitted by satellite, Ross said Global Mission planners will incorporate a "silent channel" on some of the satellites that will be used by local committees for an additional 40 languages and dialects to be interpreted at local mission locations.

Bob Williams, director of international ministries for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, said, "We are overwhelmed by the eagerness of Christians throughout the world for this event. In addition to the satellite transmissions, we are also planning to broadcast one specially produced San Juan mission program on prime-time television four to six weeks later in as many countries as possible. This will not only create an opportunity to saturate each country with the gospel, but will also provide a time for the churches to mobilize special evangelistic efforts based on the television broadcast."

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Study group chairman clarifies
WMU status in recommendation

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
3/10/95

SHREVEPORT, La. (BP)--The recommendations of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in the "Covenant for a New Century" should not change the working relationship the SBC has with Woman's Missionary Union, according to the chairman of the study group which designed the proposal.

Mark Brister, chairman of a special Program and Structure Study Committee appointed by the Executive Committee, told Baptist Press March 10 the study committee has received overwhelmingly favorable feedback from Southern Baptists. However, questions and misstatements he has read in some state Baptist newspapers about the impact of the group's report suggest the need for clarification about the future role of WMU in the SBC.

Questions about the role WMU will have in the Lottie Moon Christmas and Annie Armstrong Easter offerings have been raised, Brister said. Also, why the WMU's "program" statement is not included in the proposed SBC organizational structure has been raised, said Brister, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport, La.

"Quite simply, the WMU requested to remain an auxiliary," Brister said. "We honored their request."

The "Covenant for a New Century" was approved by the SBC Executive Committee in its February meeting and messengers to the annual meeting of the SBC in Atlanta in June will be asked to approve the changes in the SBC recommended in the document. Basically, the 19 agencies of the SBC will be reduced to 12, with the biggest change in merging the ministries of the Home Mission Board, the Radio and Television Commission and the Brotherhood Commission into a new North American Mission Board. A majority vote by messengers to two consecutive SBC annual meetings will be needed to enact the recommended changes.

In the proposal, "ministry statements" would replace "program statements" for the SBC agencies. In a footnote in the document it was noted that "ministry statements are assigned only to SBC entities governed by trustees elected by the convention. Thus, the WMU, governed by directors elected by state WMU organizations, is not assigned a ministry statement." Also, in another footnote speaking of responsibilities, the study committee stated: "We recommend that the two mission boards assume primary responsibility for promoting their own mission offerings" These are the two places in the lengthy document where the WMU is mentioned.

Brister said the promotion of the two special offerings, "while historic," was not included in the original program statement for WMU in 1966 or any succeeding statement approved by the SBC.

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The 1994 SBC organizational manual includes a program statement for WMU but with "an exceptional sentence." It states the WMU is "auxiliary to the SBC. The program statement is not binding except as the WMU consents." When it was voted on in 1966, the recommendation to accept the WMU statement noted it is "not an agency of the SBC and the (statement) would be advisory rather than binding as in the case of SBC agencies."

"While WMU has done a superlative job in promoting these mission offerings, the initiation of the offerings was influenced by the vision of the Foreign Mission Board, the Home Mission Board, as well as Woman's Missionary Union," Brister said.

Brister cited the many years WMU has promoted the two offerings, which have included financial assistance from the two boards. The boards have annually provided funds to WMU for "out of pocket" expenses in the promotion of the offerings. The HMB and FMB pay for the service of assisting in promotion of the respective offerings, he said.

"In 1994 and 1995, the FMB allocated \$400,000 for such expenses relating to the Lottie Moon Offering in addition to \$300,000 for WMU assistance in the general promotion of missions education," Brister said. "The Home Mission Board allocated \$200,000 in 1994 and \$232,000 in 1995 for out-of-pocket expenses in the promotion of the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering."

In news conferences at the February SBC Executive Committee meeting, the heads of the two mission agencies declared their appreciation for the assistance of the WMU in the promotion of the offerings and their commitment to continue to request and to enable the assistance of WMU.

"Given the historical non-binding nature of WMU program statements, it is reasonable to confirm the responsibility for these vital offerings to agencies whose accountability to the SBC is binding," Brister said. "It is also logical to anticipate continuation of the vital role of WMU in assisting the two mission boards in promoting the offering."

The seven-member study group, Brister said, agreed churches, associations and state conventions would continue to use the services of WMU in providing missions education as they have for decades.

"This has not changed."

The proposed Sunday School Board ministry assignment "to assist churches in ministries to men and women relates to the 'develop believers' assignment of the board and differs from the mission education work of WMU identified in the program statement adopted by the SBC in 1992," Brister said.

"That program statement, The Program of Christian Development for Women in Missions, positions WMU in assisting women in its mission organizations," Brister said. "The Covenant for a New Century does not in any way restrict the WMU in its historic role of missions education."

"Simply stated, the study committee's report supports women's ministries from the Sunday School Board, and missions education and championing of mission offerings from the WMU," Brister said.

"The study committee's report affirms the WMU's request to remain an auxiliary. The study committee granted the WMU's desire. Reading more into the report than appears amounts to editorial eisegesis."

In his own church, Brister noted, "As a pastor I have supported Broadmoor's WMU."

The WMU leadership of Broadmoor concurs, according to Evelyn Boatner and Velma Gulledge.

"Perhaps because our women's missionary organization was born the same week that our church was officially organized, Broadmoor has been blessed with a strong mission organization and enjoyed the support of our pastors, and Dr. Mark Brister is no exception," Gulledge, the church's Baptist Women's president, said. "He has always been very accessible to us and cooperative in helping to promote missions offerings, missions education and mission projects. It would be my prayer that any changes that may occur would not result in removing our tasks but would reinforce our efforts to go, give and pray for missions."

Boatner, former church WMU director and member of the Louisiana Baptist Convention's executive board at the time Brister became the church's pastor, said the WMU at Broadmoor has had a "big influence on missions for 65 years."

"Dr. Mark Brister is our WMU's supporter, encourager, challenger and works side by side with us to reach our goals for teaching, going, praying and giving to missions," said Boatner.

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Southwestern opts against appeal;
Hemphill: Won't 'dwell in the past'

By Kellie Crowe

Baptist Press
3/10/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will not continue to appeal the probation ruling of the Association of Theological Schools, according to President Ken Hemphill.

"Our decision was based largely on our desire to move positively toward the future rather than to dwell in the past," stated Hemphill. "A lengthy appeal process would consume energy and resources that could best be spent on the building of the seminary for the glory of God."

Hemphill emphasized "the decision not to appeal does not mean that we agree with the decision of ATS to place Southwestern on probation, but it does mean that we are united in our conviction that we can work quickly and constructively through probation."

The ATS decision of probation was issued in late January 1995. Two weeks later, on Feb. 14, Southwestern announced intentions to appeal the ruling. "We originally registered our right to appeal before the deadline so that all options remained open to Southwestern," Hemphill explained.

He noted the recent decision not to continue with the appeal was reached "after consultation and prayer with trustees, faculty and administration."

"I believe our most constructive action will be to focus our efforts on the concerns raised by the ATS visiting team," Hemphill said.

Trustee Chairman Ralph Pulley commented, "While we are not in accord with the ATS conclusions, we are sensitive to the observations of ATS. Those observations have been and are being addressed by the trustees, the president and others in the seminary family. We expect an early, positive resolution of the ATS action and have determined to devote our energies in this direction."

According to ATS, probation is intended to provide ample time to correct inadequacies which, in the judgment of its Commission on Accrediting, "may be remedied within a relatively short but specified period of time." Accordingly, Southwestern has been placed on probation until no later than January 1997. Probation may be removed prior to this date after the commission observes that the seminary has satisfactorily met certain criteria.

"We believe the decision not to appeal will provide the opportunity to make some fresh approaches to our work while we continue to offer present and entering students some of the finest theological training available today," Hemphill said.

According to Daniel O. Aleshire, associate director of the Commission on Accrediting, the commission observed both "a talented faculty who are skilled in their disciplines and loyal to the seminary" and a student body "qualified and motivated to pursue graduate theological education," during a fall 1994 visit to Southwestern.

"It should be understood that Southwestern's accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools continues during this period of probation," Aleshire said.

"I want to personally thank the students, faculty, staff, trustees and the many friends of the seminary who have been praying for us as we have decided how best to respond to ATS," Hemphill stated. "I believe God has honored his promise to work for good in all circumstances. God is up to something big in our land and I pray that Southwestern will be in the center of his activity."

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Crowe is a news writer at Southwestern Seminary.

Gores host homosexuals;
'out of touch,' CLC says

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP)--A recent reception for homosexual activists at the vice presidential home offers more evidence of a White House "out of touch" with the country's moral mood, a Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission staff member said.

Vice President Al Gore and his wife, Tipper, held a reception March 3 for 150 homosexual activists. Most were officers or members of the Human Rights Campaign Fund, the country's largest homosexual political organization. In addition, openly homosexual members of the Clinton administration also attended, according to an Associated Press report.

Four days after the Gores' reception, House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., expressed opposition to school programs which present homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle and to legislation which would grant homosexuals the right to sue based on employment discrimination.

"The Clinton administration is looking for love in all the wrong places," said Michael Whitehead, the CLC's general counsel, about the vice presidential reception. "It seems oblivious to the mistakes of the past and to the message from conservative voters in the fall election. This could be a snapshot of a one-term presidency, out of touch with the moral mood of America."

The vice president told Human Rights Campaign Fund members "we understand very well why it is so important to have an organization that fights for the rights of Americans to be free of discrimination," AP reported.

"We very deeply share your vision of a society that is fair and free of discrimination for gay and lesbian people, and we want you to know that," Tipper Gore said, according to AP.

Whitehead said, "What's wrong with this picture? Rich and powerful homosexuals feasting on a buffet of vice presidential delicacies, offering millions of dollars if the White House will support 'gay rights' laws to protect them from discrimination and economic disadvantage. Obviously, homosexuals already enjoy equal opportunity under our Constitution and law. What they want is government-coerced legitimacy, creating a legal and moral equivalency between sodomy and a person's race or gender.

"What else is wrong with this picture? Forgetting how badly his boss was burned by flirting with gays in the military, the vice president is caught embracing the homosexual lobby in his home," Whitehead said. "The second lady is unashamed to be portrayed as sharing 'very deeply' in the homosexual vision."

A spokesperson in the vice president's communications office declined comment on the reception.

The reception "came about quickly" and was not prompted by anything in particular, said David Smith, communications director for the Human Rights Campaign Fund. The reception reflects "how the administration will reach out to all constituencies in this country and not, as you say it, (just) the homosexual community," Smith told Baptist Press.

HRCF Executive Director Elizabeth Birch told AP, "Evenings like tonight and reaching out in significant ways between now and 1996 will be absolutely necessary gestures as part of an overall calculation for political victory. I think the president feels extremely unappreciated, and whether or not the administration has legitimate reasons for feeling that, the fact is that gay and lesbian people are somewhat disenchanting."

Homosexuals received credit for donating \$3.5 million to the 1992 Clinton-Gore campaign but have expressed disappointment with the administration, including its failure to overturn the ban on homosexuals in the military.

A day after his half-sister lobbied Congress on behalf of homosexual rights, Gingrich said he opposed people "in first grade explaining that homosexuality is a reasonable alternative lifestyle," according to an AP report.

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He is "very cautious about the idea that you want to have active homosexuals in junior high school and high school explaining to young people that they have all these various wonderful options," Gingrich said March 7.

The speaker said he also opposes legislation which would protect homosexuals from discrimination in the workplace.

"I am not prepared to establish a federal law that allows you to sue your employer if you end up not having a job because of a disagreement that involves your personal behavior," Gingrich said, according to AP. "Does that mean a transvestite should automatically have the right to work as a transvestite? I don't think so."

Gingrich's half-sister, Candace, met with him March 6. She lobbied as a representative of the Human Rights Campaign Fund.

The Gores, as well as Gingrich and his wife, Marianne, are members of Southern Baptist churches.

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Home churches offer alternative
for outreach, HMB staffer says

Baptist Press
3/10/95

By Melanie Childers & Marv Knox

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptists must recover a sense of accountability and relationship if they're going to be effective in starting and developing churches, according to David Palmer of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Palmer, HMB associate director of new church extension, was among speakers at a recent conference on multi-housing ministry sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Billy Graham Center for World Evangelism.

Early Baptists -- as well as the New Testament church -- defined church according to relationships, Palmer told participants in late February. That contrasts with Baptist churches today, which have marginal members who come occasionally and sit in the pews without actively joining in the lives of the congregations, he said.

And early Baptists did not expect some people to join the fellowship and then fade away unnoticed, as happens in churches today, he said.

"People didn't just disappear," he stressed.

Palmer emphasized the effectiveness of and scriptural basis for small churches that meet in homes and rely on multiple lay leaders -- a model well-suited for ministry in multi-housing complexes.

Southern Baptists' ancestors opposed the institutional church, he said, insisting Southern Baptist churches today have become too institutionalized.

This pattern especially has been prevalent during the last 50 years, with an emphasis on growth and a de-emphasis on lay leadership, he explained. For example, until 1945, 60 percent of Southern Baptist churches were considered less than full-time.

"Most Southern Baptist churches met every Sunday for Sunday school, but they only had preaching once or twice a month, whenever they could afford it," he explained.

After 1967, the number of part-time churches dropped below traceable levels. This was due in large part to the denomination's emphasis on defining church according to professional leadership. That emphasis, and the effort to merge or close all "small and financially weak churches" actually "hastened the decline in the denomination," Palmer stated.

But studies continue to demonstrate that churches with fewer than 50 people in attendance and a bivocational leader prove to be the most productive and efficient, he said.

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"Southern Baptists have tried to get respectable like other denominations," he added. "In the process, we're offending God. I love the traditional church. I love traditional pastors. But I see significant problems in the way we do church today," he said.

Rather than being relationally based, traditional church life today often is centered on buildings, a pastor, the worship experience or programs for church growth, Palmer asserted.

By contrast, residence-based churches are free from an autocratic leader, building-maintenance expenses and superfluous programs. Under plural lay leadership, these congregations commit to a covenant and spend their time and resources on personal discipleship and missions, he said.

"The functions are still accomplished, but without the programs." Also, the residence-based church is mobile. "This model of church will go anywhere," Palmer said. "This model of church will go to the ends of the earth."

And it will go into apartment and condominium complexes, he asserted.

"Can you really be church if you're meeting in a small group or in a home?" he asked.

The answer is a resounding yes, he added, comparing church to a healthy marriage. Both are built on covenant relationships and both hold participants accountable for their actions.

But many churches are like bad marriages, he said. "The biggest problem in our churches is that our people don't have relational skills. They don't get along. Until we get back to doing church and being the church in covenant relationship, we're going to be in the same sad situation and fall under the judgment of God."

However, the transformation can come when Christians truly enter into covenant relationship with each other and with Christ, Palmer insisted.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Baptist Press will release related stories and photos from the Home Mission Board on home-based churches during the week of March 13.

Multi-housed people pose
key challenge, speaker says

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press
3/10/95

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--People who live in multi-housing units pose "the greatest evangelistic challenge in church history," claimed a Kentucky Baptist missions strategist.

Tony Hough, associate director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's direct missions department, said churches are reaching only 5 percent of the 80 million Americans who live in apartments, condominiums and mobile home communities. "At least 76 million multi-housed Americans are likely unsaved by Christ and unrelated to his church," he said.

Hough addressed a recent conference on multi-housing ministry sponsored by the state convention and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Billy Graham Center for World Evangelism.

Hough said churches lack the appropriate methodologies and congregational readiness to reach the multi-housed. The key to evangelizing people in multi-housing units lies with starting congregations in their communities, he stressed at the conference in late February. "Multi-housing dwellers, as a whole, have not attended, do not attend and will not attend our churches," Hough said. "The answer to this challenge is to start work -- and stay -- where multi-housing dwellers live."

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Churches often are reluctant to divert resources from existing ministries to invest in a venture where success is not readily visible, Hough observed. "If we spend our resources planting the church elsewhere, we may not see new buildings, bigger budgets or more baptisms for our records," he said. Attempts to start new works to reach multi-housed people are frequently fraught with frustration, he admitted. "But our Savior called us to extend the church, to cross barriers, to reach new people, to serve the lost," he said.

"Even if multi-housing frightens us, challenges our priorities and appears to rob us of what we call success, Jesus called us to go into all the world -- and that includes multi-housing."

Hough offered six suggestions for congregations wanting to reach multi-housed people.

1) Reassess frustration. Those frustrated in their faith and ministry may be being redirected by God into church extension. Divine call can be to a foreign nation or to an apartment complex across the street.

2) Proclaim the gospel in a variety of methods. The message should include praise of Christ and concern for people.

3) Minister to a variety of people. Do not assume that people who live in the same apartment complex or mobile home park are all alike.

4) Cultivate indigenous leaders. After the lost are won, they must be allowed to "grow into faith and Christian life as the Spirit leads."

5) Stress ministries that focus on the needs of lost people, not church culture. Be careful not to confuse church traditions as "true Christianity." Ministries must fit the schedules, culture and musical tastes of the people being reached.

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Multi-housing leader offers
advice for apartment ministry

By Pat Cole

Baptist Press
3/10/95

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Tillie Burgin offers "two spiritual laws" for ministry in apartment complexes: "Hang out on property and hover around John 3:16."

"There is nothing magic about apartments or mobile home parks," said Burgin, director of Mission Arlington in Arlington, Texas. "This is where the people are and God has opened up a way for us to be there."

Burgin, who leads a multi-housing ministry that includes eight mission-type churches and 122 preaching points, addressed a recent conference on multi-housing ministries sponsored by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Billy Graham Center for World Evangelism and the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

On a recent Sunday more than 3,500 people attended Bible studies and other activities offered through Mission Arlington, said Burgin, a staff member of First Baptist Church, Arlington. Much of the program's success is due to a "movement of lay people" who reach "one person at a time." Said Burgin, "We don't have a Billy Graham in our midst."

Mission Arlington provides a variety of social ministries in addition to Bible study, Burgin noted. When Mission Arlington moves into an apartment complex, retirement community or mobile home park, it goes with the attitude that "we're going to have a Bible study and help however we can," she explained.

Burgin, a former missionary to Korea, said she got involved in the multi-housing ministry as part of her ongoing call to missions. Yet at first she had no clear vision about the form her ministry would take, she acknowledged. "When asked what I thought it was we would do, I said, 'We're going to take church to the people, but our definition of church is what we do seven days a week, 24 hours a day.'"

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**Mobile home ministries
change lives, he says**

By Pat Cole

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Johnny was strutting down Pork Chop Hill with two pit bulldogs on a leash when Claud Healan saw him for the first time.

Johnny was a drug dealer in the Auburn Mobile Home Park in Auburn, Ga. He was known to unleash his dogs to attack customers who did not pay.

Healan, director of missions for the Mulberry Baptist Association, and Johnny barely made eye contact with each other that day five years ago on Pork Chop Hill. Yet the association's ministry in the mobile home park would profoundly affect Johnny's life.

One day Johnny called Healan and asked to be assistant coach of the basketball team the association's ministry had started in the park. Healan consented and Johnny "built one of the finest basketball teams you've ever seen."

After about six months, Johnny made a profession of faith and became a leader in the Auburn Mobile Home Park Chapel. He eventually left the park and moved to another city but has remained true to the commitment of faith he made in the mobile home park chapel, Healan said. Johnny is one of about 200 people the chapel has baptized in the past six years. It is one of three mobile home community ministries sponsored by the Mulberry association.

Healan shared the story of the association's mobile home ministry at a conference on multi-housing sponsored by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Billy Graham Center for World Evangelism and the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

People who live in mobile home communities are frequently "like an island in the middle of the sea," Healan said. "The world outside is frightening to them. They've been hurt so many times."

However, Healan emphasized there are different types of mobile home communities. Some people are driven to run-down mobile home parks out of economic necessity, he said. On the other end of the spectrum are middle-class families who choose to live in upscale mobile home communities with clubhouses, swimming pools and well-manicured grounds.

Ministries in mobile home parks must be geared to the needs of the particular communities, he said. For instance, he noted food pantry, clothes closets and tutoring services are needed in lower-income communities. Yet he added more affluent mobile home communities have limited or no need for such ministries.

Healan said starting and maintaining ministries in mobile home communities can be both rewarding and discouraging. "You cannot measure mobile home ministry by the same standard you measure other church ministries," he said, adding mobile home ministry takes prayer, vision and commitment.

Good cooperation with the management of mobile home parks is essential for ministries in those communities, Healan said. "We work with management to create a better community."

Mobile home park managers have acknowledged the positive results of the Mulberry association's efforts, Healan said. Some managers, he explained, have attributed decreased vandalism and better rent collections to the association's mobile home park ministries.

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**He sees commitment, excitement
in SBC 'Key Church' program**

By Marv Knox

**Baptist Press
3/10/95**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Congregations must accept their role in missions if Baptists are going to reach the nation for Christ, a missions strategist told participants in a conference on multi-housing ministry.

"We need to put ownership of missions back into the church," said Stuart Perkins, minister of missions at Florence Baptist Church, Florence, Ky.

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And the best way to do that is through the Southern Baptist Convention's "Key Church Strategy," he said at the conference jointly sponsored by Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and the Kentucky Baptist Convention in late February.

The Key Church program creates cooperative relationships between churches, associations, state conventions and the SBC Home Mission Board to team up for ministry, he said. The strategy places evangelism, ministry and church starting as top priorities in the participants' efforts.

"The issue of priority is paramount," said Perkins, who was missions minister at Gambrell Street Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Texas, before moving to Florence last year. Both congregations are "key" churches.

The priorities provide a beacon to "key" churches, helping them channel their efforts constructively and efficiently, he explained.

"This invigorates the key church," he added. "If you get momentum, people are attracted to momentum," and the impetus to reach people for Christ and start new churches multiplies.

Churches can apply to participate in the Key Church program by completing a form available in the associational office. Perkins listed qualifications of a "k y" church:

- Make a long-term commitment to hold missions as a top priority.
- Make the missions priority equal to the education and music priorities.
- Form a missions development council.
- Elect a missions minister or church director of missions.
- Begin and maintain at least one mission congregation and one community ministry each year.
- Maintain a 1-to-8 ratio of baptisms to Bible study attendance.

"Your church must feel called to do this," Perkins said. But he promised rewards. "It's the most exciting thing I've ever done or been a part of."

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Layperson tackled Houston,
now targeting New York City

By Melanie Childers

Baptist Press
3/10/95

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--No one ever told Barbara Oden she could be a missionary as a layperson.

She had sensed God's call to become involved in ministry but was told she needed a whole list of qualifications first -- including a seminary education. So she tried to dismiss her aspirations for ministry.

"But the gnawing didn't go away," she said. Then she heard about Mission Service Corps, a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board program in which volunteers raise their own support to serve in a variety of mission settings.

Oden, now stationed in New York City, shared her story during a conference on multi-housing ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. At the conference, sponsored by the seminary and the Kentucky Baptist Convention in late February, she described how she began ministering to people in apartment communities in Houston.

Oden, a single parent with two teen-agers at the time, managed to raise her own missions support. The family moved to Springbrook, an apartment complex with 510 families, to begin a ministry.

"I was trained to do all kinds of church programs ... but they didn't work at Springbrook," she said. "Then God said, 'Why don't you ask them what they want to do?'"

As a result, Oden started craft classes, English as a Second Language classes, children's clubs and tutoring sessions. Before long, a Bible study developed. Residents who attended eventually requested a church.

Within one year, 152 people had made professions of faith in Jesus Christ through that apartment ministry.

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"Why do sn't anyone ever tell us we can b ministers where we are?" Oden wondered. "Each of us has a world out there. I challenge you to get involved with secular people."

In 1990, Oden was hired by the local Baptist association to repeat the process throughout the Houston area. "There were 102 apartment communities waiting for a church when I left," she said.

She now lives in New York City, where her task is even bigger than the Houston challenge. She's trying to discover new ways to implement ministries among multi-housing dwellers in the nation's largest city.

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Sounds and sights of commerce
fill Southeastern gymnasium

By Dwayne Hastings

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WAKE CENTER, N.C. (BP)--There were no games played in Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's Ledford gymnasium March 9. Instead, merchants from Wake Forest, N.C., stood ready to show their products and services on the gym's hardwood floor in the community's first annual "Business and Commerce Conference."

So, while the gym did not reverberate with the usual pounding of basketball shoes in pursuit of an errant pass, it was filled with a cacophony of sounds, smells and sights as local vendors scanned the aisles for customers. The brainchild of the Small Business Council of the Wake Forest Chamber of Conference, the exposition attracted 59 exhibitors to the day-long show held on the campus.

The seminary was host to trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board and Christian Life Commission in February. Representatives of the Home Mission Board will be on the school's campus in mid-April. It was fitting then that the seminary open its doors to its neighbors in the community, said Paul Fletcher, Southeastern's vice president of internal affairs.

"We felt this was one way the Chamber of Commerce could assist businesses in showing their products to the community," said Greg McCraw, chairman of the chamber's Small Business Council and a certified public accountant in the central North Carolina town. "We sold all the available booths and set up a workplace recruiting area for employment agencies to talk with people who are looking for a job.

"Yet we couldn't have done it without the seminary's help. The school was an excellent place to hold the conference," McCraw said. "It has fine facilities for something like this and everyone in the area knows where it is located."

Fletcher joined business leaders in expressing his pleasure at the community's response to the conference: "The seminary is committed to being a vital part of the Wake Forest community. The exposition not only provided the means for folks to meet face-to-face with business owners and sales people -- it introduces the seminary and its beautiful campus to many who had never walked its brick sidewalks before."

The chamber worked hand-in-hand with the North Carolina State University's Small Business Development Center in planning the conference. Nat James, senior counselor with the center, said, "This exposition is part of our overall plan of assistance for small business owners. We help clients with developing business plans. We act both as their coach and their friend to promote their business.

"The key is teaching people how to most effectively sell their products and how to get new business," James added.

The conference was a positive step for Wake Forest, according to Lisa Zimmer of Delectable Delights, a downtown enterprise that offers custom gift baskets, coffees and candy. "I think Wake Forest is waking up. Anything we can do in the revitalization of downtown, I am willing to support because my shop is downtown.

"I'm thrilled at the participation from the town's business community," Zimmer said. "My hope is that we will continue to move forward in this direction."

"I think the momentum has shifted," said James, noting a family sampling Pepsi-Cola products at a booth across the aisle. "As soon as we've finished this show, we're going to begin planning the next one tomorrow morning."

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