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March 21, 1995

95-47

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Southern's Mohler removes
Garland as social work dean

Baptist Press
3/21/95

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--At the request of President R. Albert Mohler Jr., Diana R. Garland was removed March 20 as dean of the Carver School of Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

A seminary spokesman said March 21 Mohler requested Garland's resignation the morning of March 20 and Garland verbally agreed to resign. Garland's office, however, said March 21 the dean had not resigned. In either case, the seminary spokesman said, Garland no longer is the social work school dean.

The reason for the resignation request, according to Mohler, was Garland's unwillingness to resolve policy and personnel issues within the appropriate administrative structures of the seminary. As a result of Garland's actions, "the requisite trust level required between a president and a dean are no longer present," Mohler said.

Garland, in a four-page public statement March 20, had taken issue with criteria Mohler holds for faculty selection that she charged are "absolutely restrictive."

Garland joined Southern Seminary's faculty in 1983 and was appointed dean in 1993. Although she has been removed as dean, she remains Gheens Professor of Christian Family Ministry at the Louisville, Ky., school. Garland's husband, David, teaches New Testament at the seminary.

Garland is scheduled to address the June 21 Minister's Wives Luncheon during the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta.

The firing was precipitated by Mohler's stated unwillingness to present to trustees a proposed candidate for the social work faculty, based on the candidate's views on women serving in the pastorate. Mohler indicated that since his 1993 election as president he has "consistently stated my intention not to nominate for election persons who hold such a position," a view he says is consistent with that of an overwhelming majority of seminary trustees.

The candidate at issue, according to Garland, was David Sherwood, director of the social work program at Gordon College, Wenham, Mass., and editor of the journal, Social Work and Christianity. Sherwood had been interviewed by the social work school's search committee and a student advisory committee prior to a March 8 interview with Mohler.

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According to Garland, Mohler subsequently asked Sherwood for written answers to a set of questions concerning the seminary's doctrinal Abstract of Principles and contemporary social issues. Garland said Sherwood's answers, provided to Mohler March 13, prompted Mohler to inform her the next day he would not recommend Sherwood for the faculty.

Sherwood could not be reached for comment March 21.

During several days of conversation with Garland, Mohler proposed that she discuss the issue with the board of trustees at its April meeting. To discuss this and other issues relating to the Carver school, Mohler also proposed a study committee be formed to present a report next year. Instead, Garland prepared a four-page document outlining her views and calling on Mohler to present those views to the trustees.

The document was distributed in written form to students and news media representatives prior to Garland's Monday morning meeting with Mohler. Based on what he characterized as a preemption of official administrative structures including the release of "private and privileged information," Mohler asked for Garland's resignation.

In her statement, Garland expressed the view that "the future of the Carver School of Church Social Work is in serious jeopardy." She objected to the proposed study committee, since it would preclude hiring new faculty until August 1996, a situation that she believes "jeopardizes the accreditation of the MSW (master of social work) degree at Southern Seminary." Southern is the only seminary in the United States offering an accredited MSW degree.

Garland also contended that criteria Mohler had established for evaluating prospective faculty were "absolutely restrictive" and "there were, in my estimation, no other candidates for the Carver School who can meet all his criteria"

A news release from the seminary cited only Mohler's stance on women pastors, while Garland's statement did not amplify the criteria to which she objected.

Garland also contended that one's "private views" should not disqualify a person for selection to the faculty "so long as those private thoughts do not keep the candidate from teaching in accordance with and not contrary to the Abstract of Principles or from respecting and relating constructively to the Southern Baptist Convention."

At a meeting with social work students at midday, Mohler assured students he remained committed to providing a setting in which church social work education could be provided within the seminary, in so far as such a program fits with the seminary's commitments and mission. He confirmed his hope that there is adequate "common ground" between the social work profession and theological education to allow such an approach, although he pointed out that the lack of similar programs at other seminaries reflects that there is not "congruence at all points" between the two spheres.

At the same time, Mohler observed, "the institution will not compromise its theological commitments in response to any external pressure."

In a statement to Baptist Press, Mohler noted: "I fully intend to continue the search process and it is my expectation that we will have a full roster of social work faculty for the fall semester.

"It has never been the intention of this administration to eliminate the Carver School. Indeed, we have sought to support the school and to see it serve its distinctive role within the seminary structure. I did not seek to bring about a crisis related to this school. That decision was made by others."

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Concerning his stance against recommending prospective faculty members who embrace the concept of women pastors, Mohler said, "Based upon the New Testament, I believe there is a clear pattern of male leadership in the congregation, especially reflected in the office of senior pastor. The New Testament clearly reveals a complementary pattern of relationships between men and women. Spiritual gifts are not gender-specific, but some roles within the church were and are limited to men, just as other roles are more properly fitted for women. It is simply not acceptable to allow a secular egalitarianism to obscure the New Testament pattern.

"We must maintain trust with the churches we serve, and Southern Baptists have spoken loudly concerning their convictions on this issue. We are a Southern Baptist institution, and we will not apologize for maintaining loyalty to the denomination we serve," Mohler said.

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Compiled by Art Toalston

Foundation work would continue
in new setting, consultant says By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
3/21/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--While the Southern Baptist Foundation would be among seven agencies eliminated in a proposed restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention, "transferred" is a more applicable description, according to a member of the committee recommending the SBC-wide changes.

The foundation could be transferred to, or become a subsidiary corporation of, the SBC Executive Committee, said Bill Hall, one of seven members of the Executive Committee-created Program and Structure Study Committee and a registered investment adviser in San Clemente, Calif.

The foundation would cease to be a separate SBC agency with its own SBC-elected trustees, but Hall said its work otherwise would continue, likely under the supervision of an Executive Committee subgroup of members familiar with estate planning and funds management who are not denominational employees.

As the SBC's trust agency, the foundation provides investment and trust services for Baptist agencies, institutions, foundations and individuals. Current assets are approximately \$176 million.

The Executive Committee subgroup would not manage funds or make stock purchases and other specific investments, Hall noted. Rather, they would decide on policy and money managers, based on appropriate input they gather, he said.

Transferring the foundation to the Executive Committee would be the most effective way from a legal and cost of operation point of view, Hall said of the PSSC recommendation to place the foundation's work under the Executive Committee. The study panel consulted with SBC legal counsel about the possible options, Hall said. "It's straightforward," he said, explaining that other methods for reassigning the foundation's functions would create various technical legal and financial problems.

Questions about the status of the foundation's work under the proposed restructuring were fielded by SBC President Jim Henry during a recent visit with trustees of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's foundation, and Henry asked that Southern Baptists at large be informed that the Executive Committee would not be involved in direct management of charitable funds now handled by the foundation.

Hall was a member of the California Baptist Foundation for more than eight years, ending his tenure as chairman from 1991-93.

For its investment committee, Hall recounted, the California board regularly selected members who were most knowledgeable in the field, and he said the Executive Committee could be expected to do likewise.

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With the phasing out of the foundation and six other smaller SBC agencies, the proposed restructuring would set the number of denominational entities at 12. The Executive Committee approved the PSSC recommendations during its February meeting, placing it up for a vote at the next two annual meetings of the SBC. A majority vote of messengers each year will be necessary for the changes to be enacted. The PSSC was created by the Executive Committee in September 1993, acting on a motion referred from the SBC annual meeting in Houston that June.

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**2 Baptist university groups
experience Asbury influence**

By Ken Walker

**Baptist Press
3/21/95**

MOREHEAD, Ky. (BP)--To recent reports of revival, add Morehead State and Murray State university campuses in Kentucky.

Although on opposite sides of the state, the schools have become linked through interest in a famous revival 25 years ago at Asbury College in Wilmore, Ky.

Two months ago, Gene Parr, Baptist Student Union director at Morehead State and an Asbury graduate, invited student David Buckner to show a video he uncovered last fall during a research project. "An Account of the Asbury Revival" is a 45-minute documentary about the event and its aftermath.

The night of the viewing in Morehead, students stayed for an extra two hours afterward to pray, sing and confess their sins.

As a direct result of that experience, some students recommitted their lives to Christ and the number of students committing to summer missions projects has increased, Parr said.

In addition, 35 students have enrolled in discipleship groups for the first time this semester. They are part of 130 students who meet weekly in small groups to study discipleship courses such as "Experiencing God," "Search for Significance" and "Mind of Christ."

"When you have that many students in discipleship groups, I think you're having revival," Parr said. "You have two kinds of revival, the explosive kind and the more subtle. I'll choose the slow, steady kind any time."

As for outreach, last fall the Morehead students launched "lunch encounters" -- where Christians sit with strangers in the cafeteria in an effort to share the gospel.

Parr designed the emphasis last year after seeing 10 BSU students crammed around a table designed for six. Yet other students were scattered about the cafeteria in ones and twos.

"We decided to have the students pair up and ask the Lord to give them a chance to share their faith," he said. "And he has. Our building is a place of evangelism and witness, but it's not limited to here. Our campus is our mission field."

Besides testimonies of other life-changing decisions that have filtered into Parr's office, he sees an eagerness for spiritual growth among student discipleship leaders.

"The soil is ready, and when God speaks, the seed is ready to grow," he said.

It's difficult to know how many students have made professions of faith because they don't record those decisions at the BSU, he said. "They're making professions of faith at church and to each other. I hear about some, but I can't help but believe there's a lot more. With some of these things, the seeds are planted and the harvest comes later."

At Murray State, BSU director Keith Inman is equally excited about what he sees God doing.

"What's been fun about this is it's so spontaneous," he said. "The way it's going, I couldn't have planned this. I haven't seen God move like this in 11 years of campus ministry."

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Inman said he saw God working after he prayed over Christmas break about several students who had "gotten off track." In January, each one came to him to relate personal times of repentance during the holidays. Meanwhile, because of what happened on the Morehead campus, Parr forwarded the Asbury video to Scott Michaels, a BSU intern at Murray who graduated from Morehead.

Approximately 130 students attended a showing of the film at Murray State. Again, God's spirit came forth in a mighty way, Inman said.

Two women professed faith in Jesus Christ after the film. A man who saw the video stood to say, "I can't believe I'm saying anything; I've been away from the Lord for so long ..." and broke into tears. After counseling with Inman, the man recommitted his life to God. The next week BSU member Jennifer Burnette was sharing about the Murray State revival with the youth group at First Baptist Church in Fredonia, Ky. "I've never been that excited about Jesus Christ in my life," one girl choked through her tears of repentance, which opened the door for a time of prayer and renewal.

Inman said it's hard to predict how far this revival will travel, since 66 students traveled to Utah, Idaho, South Carolina and Texas for spring break mission trips.

"I know I'm just scratching the surface," Inman said of the 20 recommitments and three professions of faith he has counted lately. "We've had students going into residence halls and taking advantage of witnessing opportunities there.

"This shows the power of prayer. There's a lot of answers to prayer going on all over the place."

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EDITORS' NOTE: A new 30-minute video, "When God Comes," recently was released on the 25th anniversary of the Asbury revival. Information about ordering copies may be obtained by calling 1-800-530-5673.

EDITORS' NOTE: This is the 10th article in "The Spirit of Southern Baptists, 1845-1995" series. The Historical Commission, SBC, will release one article each month from June 1994 to May 1995.

The Southern Baptist contribution
to American life and religion By R.G. Puckett

Baptist Press
3/21/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Southern Baptist mission to the world rolls on the twin tracks of education and information. No knowledgeable person questions the zeal of Southern Baptists for missions, which includes evangelism and benevolences, but all of these things are dependent upon Baptists being educated and informed to effectively translate their passion and commitment to missions into action.

Luther Rice is correctly called the "father of world missions" among Baptists in America. Stirred to action by prayer, by 1812 Adoniram and Ann Judson, along with Rice, were bound for the Orient to implement their calling and commitment.

Through reading the Bible while on the ship en route to the mission station, the Judsons and Rice accepted the Baptist position on believer's baptism by immersion. Judson announced his plans to be scripturally baptized and Rice soon came to the same conclusion. In September 1812, Rice preached his famous sermon on believer's baptism and Carey called it "the best I have ever heard on the subject."

These decisions cost the missionaries their sponsorship by the Congregationalists, and Rice returned to America to solicit prayer and financial support among the Baptists for the Judsons. By 1814, Rice and others formed "The General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in The United States of America for Foreign Missions," calling it the Triennial Convention for short.

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Within 10 years, Rice provided the model for undergirding Baptist missions: an organization, a publication and an educational institution.

Between the formation of the Triennial Convention in 1814 and the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, many states used the "Rice model" to get Baptists mobilized for more effective world missions.

Jesse Mercer, a native of North Carolina, used the system effectively in Georgia; Richard Furman in South Carolina; Robert B. Semple in Virginia; and Thomas Meredith and Samuel Wait in North Carolina.

By the time the SBC was formed in 1845, there were nine state conventions: South Carolina, formed in 1821; Georgia, 1822; Alabama and Virginia, 1823; North Carolina, 1830; Missouri, 1834; Maryland and Mississippi, 1836; and Kentucky, 1837. The significance of these state conventions is not only that they encouraged and promoted missions -- in the state, in the nation and throughout the world -- but they also fostered ministries in education, publication and benevolences.

Paralleling the formation of the state conventions was the birth of state Baptist papers: The Christian Index in Georgia, formerly the Columbian Star founded by Luther Rice, 1822; the Western Recorder of Kentucky, 1826; the Religious Herald of Virginia, 1828; the Biblical Recorder of North Carolina, 1833; and the Alabama Baptist and the Tennessee Baptist and Reflector, 1835. Other state conventions and their official journals would follow the formation of the SBC in 1845.

Equally significant was the establishment of educational institutions: Furman University in South Carolina, 1826; Georgetown College in Kentucky, 1829; Mississippi College, 1830; Mercer University in Georgia, 1833; Wake Forest University in North Carolina, 1834; Samford University (formerly Howard College) in Alabama, 1836; University of Richmond (preceded by the Richmond seminary in 1832) in Virginia, 1840; William Jewel College in Missouri, 1843; and Baylor University in Texas, 1845.

Today, there are 69 colleges/universities, four Bible schools and eight academies operated within the state conventions. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary was established in Greenville, S.C. The SBC now operates six theological seminaries, two of which (New Orleans and Southeastern) have established college-level studies.

There are three key words in the Baptist contributions to American life and religion: missions, education and benevolences. While it is assumed these first and foremost benefited Baptists, the larger picture includes all of American society.

The benevolent institutions -- hospitals, children's homes and retirement centers -- have impacted the general culture in a manner equal to any dimension of American life. The system of state Baptist papers involves the largest circulation and the most comprehensive coverage of any religious group in the United States.

Of non-Roman Catholic educational institutions, the Southern Baptist system of colleges, universities and seminaries exceeds any other religious group and thus has influenced society in every way.

Jesus instructed his followers to "disciple" individuals and to teach others what he taught them. The disciples were to give cups of cold water, food, clothing and comfort to those who were sick, hungry, in prison or lonely and isolated.

Millions of Southern Baptists have done precisely that and the United States of America will never again be the same because of their efforts.

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A longer version of this article is available in the SBCNet News Room under LIFE.HC. To receive free guidelines and to purchase resources to help celebrate the SBC's 150th anniversary, write the Historical Commission, SBC, at 901 Commerce Street, Suite 400, Nashville, TN 37203-3630, or call toll-free 1-800-966-BAPT.

Larry Burkett has cancer,
prognosis is 'very good'

GAINESVILLE, Ga. (BP)--Larry Burkett, president of Christian Financial Concepts, has cancer and underwent surgery March 20, according to his son, L. Allen Burkett, the firm's executive vice president.

"At this point, the prognosis is very good," Allen Burkett wrote in a March 16 letter to more than 1,000 financial counselors affiliated with the firm. He said there are two malignant tumors, one in Burkett's right kidney and another in his left shoulder.

"Aside from some pain in his shoulder, Larry is feeling fine," his son wrote in the letter.

Doctors removed the infected kidney in surgery March 20, a CFC spokesperson told Baptist Press, and were to look at the shoulder later in the week. She said the prognosis continues to be "very good" for his recovery.

Burkett had undergone "extensive" tests March 15 at an Atlanta hospital.

According to Allen Burkett, Larry told the CFC Gainesville staff March 16, "This ministry is not, nor has been, built around one man." The CFC directors "laid hands on Larry and fervently prayed for his healing and for God's glory to be seen in this situation," Allen said.

Larry Burkett, an author and speaker on Scripture-based financial planning, suffered a heart attack about five years ago.

He is a member of Blackshear Place Baptist Church, Flowery Branch, Ga., in the Gainesville area.

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