

# (BP)

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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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May 1, 1995

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SBC Cooperative Program gifts  
increase for month, year to date

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts continued to surpass previous marks for last year even though an accounting change made at the halfway mark in the fiscal year clarified the distinction between the CP and designated gifts, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For the month of April 1995, gifts increased a hefty 16.46 percent over April of last year: \$12,653,924 to \$10,865,870, or an increase of \$1.7 million.

In accordance with an accounting change April 1 directed by the Executive Committee in its February meeting, all gifts are now either Cooperative Program -- those without any restrictions, while the rest -- with any restriction -- are designated. Even with the change, there was an increase in all April figures and the SBC fiscal year, at seven months, was up 4.32 percent over the previous year.

For the 1994-95 budget year to date, CP receipts stood at \$86,330,877, compared to 1993-94 which had \$82,756,762, or an increase of \$3,574,115. And the 1994-95 total was an increase of 8.39 percent over the required budget figure. More than \$11.3 million is required each month for the SBC Program Allocation Budget.

Designated gifts also were up -- 5.43 percent -- for the month of April compared to April 1994: \$10,559,299 to \$10,015,320. For the year-to-date, designated gifts are up 2.40 percent: \$92,554,642 compared to \$90,381,353.

The SBC Cooperative Program total includes undesignated receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships for distribution according to the 1994-95 program allocation budget.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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State and regional conventions retain a percentage of Cooperative Program contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries. The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state or regional convention.

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FMB trustees endorse  
restructuring proposal

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (BP)--A widely discussed proposal to restructure the Southern Baptist Convention won a nod of approval from Foreign Mission Board trustees during their April 27-29 meeting in Huntsville, Ala.

The trustees also asked "all Southern Baptist entities, ... especially our historic partner Woman's Missionary Union," to help them promote the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

Trustees appointed 58 missionaries in a vibrant, colorful service of about 8,000 Baptists from Alabama and neighboring states during the meeting. Among the appointees were a Chinese woman, Korean and African American couples and a Palestinian man.

Trustees elected officers for the coming year, approved a special appropriation of \$1.2 million to update the board's computer technology, and heard directors of mission work tell story after story evidencing a new movement of God's love among far-flung people groups.

In a unanimous recommendation to the convention's Executive Committee, trustees expressed "approval and appreciation" for a study committee's convention restructure plan as it relates to the Foreign Mission Board. They commended the study committee for "courage in facing difficult issues and making wise decisions that will result in greater efficiency and better coordination of our work."

The proposal, which must pass two successive votes at annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention, makes a number of proposals for changes throughout the SBC.

Recommendations for the Foreign Mission Board include renaming it the International Mission Board and shifting its work in Canada to the new North American Mission Board -- a recommended merging of the current Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission and Brotherhood Commission. It would also link the FMB to the new North American Mission Board by creating a Great Commission Council to coordinate the two functions.

And it would place the burden of promoting foreign missions squarely on the shoulders of the new International Mission Board. Trustees expressed approval for a proposal to assign the board primary responsibility for promoting the Lottie Moon Offering.

Endorsing the Great Commission Council, trustees said it would "enable us to work more closely with the proposed North American Mission Board and will make possible the building of a coordinated mission strategy for the whole world."

In a separate action, trustees recommended they be allowed to use the name International Board when they face situations overseas where the word "missions" creates resistance and the appearance of Western colonialism.

The Friday night, April 28, appointment service highlighted the meeting for trustees and the Alabama Baptists who hosted it in the Von Braun Civic Center. A parade of hundreds of Christian banners and flags of nations from around the world opened the service, along with music by a 43-piece orchestra and some 900 choir members.

During the anthem, the voices of about 140 children rang out alone as part of a special arrangement. At the invitation, 34 people walked the aisles to indicate they were willing to become missionaries.

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Board President Jerry Rankin told the newly appointed missionaries God has called them to emerge as victorious witnesses to Jesus.

"Many things are going to come against you," he said. "Some of you will find nationalism so intense that your American identity will be a barrier. Some of you will feel the government and all of society is conspiring against you, and you'll experience spiritual warfare like you've never known before."

But, he said, "Nothing can separate you from God's prevailing love. The battle has been won."

The appointee group was among the largest in recent years, bringing the total missionary count to 4,187. Almost a third of the new appointees -- which included four reappointees -- have at least a year's experience in overseas missions.

The board's officers were all elected by acclamation. Re-elected were current chairman, Leon Hyatt of Pineville, La.; second vice chairman, Bob Oxford of Denver, Colo.; and secretary, Reed Lynn of Shawnee, Okla. Bill Blanchard was newly elected as first vice chairman. He grew up with missionary parents in southern India and now is pastor at First Baptist Church, Soddy Daisy, Tenn.

Board staff members Jim Slack, former missionary to the Philippines, and John Gilbert, former missionary to Chile, reported to trustees statistics concerning Baptist and evangelical work overseas.

Slack told of record numbers of churches and baptisms and other indicators of a new era of growth among Baptists with whom Foreign Mission Board missionaries work overseas.

Gilbert, a former physicist, unveiled a new technology the board will use to track the progress of evangelical work as it grows. Unlike past research methods, the new Integrated Strategic Planning Database defines global missions from an evangelical point of view, Gilbert said.

Using computer technology developed within the past three years, it allows the mission board to record and access the most up-to-date information about evangelical growth throughout the world and create new plans to reach pockets of non-Christians as conditions change.

In other action, the board:

- appointed two committees, one to study possible new policies that need to be set regarding foreign mission work and another to study the effectiveness of their own committee structure;

- heard of staff plans to orient new missionary training more around soul-winning and church starting and use more missionary experience in the curriculum; and

- voted to release to Ruschlikon Baptist Theological Seminary in Switzerland eight trust funds totaling about \$180,000 that the seminary had earlier asked them to manage, after direction is received from the donors who set up the funds.

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HMB cancels special meeting  
to review SBC restructuring

By Martin King

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

ATLANTA (BP)--A special meeting of Home Mission Board trustees to consider proposed restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention has been canceled due to scheduling conflicts.

The meeting was announced during April's regular board meeting when trustees spent several hours asking questions about the proposal, which recommends merging the HMB with the Brotherhood and Radio and Television commissions. Prior to adjournment, however, several trustees expressed a desire for additional time to discuss the proposal. Then-chairman Bob Curtis announced a special session for that purpose, tentatively scheduled for May 9 in Atlanta.

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Newly elected board chairman Stephen Swofford, however, told Baptist Press the special session was canceled because no member of the Program and Structure Study Committee and only 35 HMB trustees would be able attend, which would not constitute a quorum. "In the absence of a quorum, we felt it would be in the best interest of the board to cancel the meeting," Swofford explained.

Cancellation means the mission agency's trustees will take no action on the restructuring proposal prior to the SBC annual meeting June 20-22 in Atlanta's Georgia Dome. The next full HMB board meeting will be in August.

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FMB staffer says WMCs  
'bring missions home'

By Steve Barber

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A Southern Baptist missions executive said missionaries who "bring missions home" to believers in local churches through World Missions Conferences are living out a biblical model and reaching people in the pews more effectively than by any other method.

Sam Pittman, executive director of public relations for the Foreign Mission Board, told a two-day meeting of World Missions Conference state directors here April 28-29 that WMCs "still reach more people than the Southern Baptist Convention (annual meeting) and our associational meetings combined."

"As we look at the whole picture of what Christ is leading us to do as a denomination, and from my point of view as a personal testimony, I do not know of any other vehicle at this moment that can help us do that more effectively at the least cost, and reach more people at the same time," Pittman said of WMCs, which are associational missions awareness events that bring Southern Baptist missionaries into local churches.

As a rule, each participating church plays host to two foreign missionaries, two home missionaries and one state or associational missionary.

According to Pittman, missionaries involved in WMCs today are following the model of what he called the "rotating World Missions Conference" described in 3 John, when the "brethren" who "went out for the sake of the name (of Christ)" returned with news of the faithfulness of other believers in other churches.

Today, he added, churches become "fellow helpers to the truth" when they receive missionaries and become "a full part and partner of their ministry. This is personalization to the nth degree."

During their meeting, the state directors elected Glenn Igleheart of the Baptist Convention of New York as their representative on the WMC administrative council. Don Gibson of the Baptist General Convention of Texas was elected alternate.

Special recognitions included the Bernard King Award for outstanding work promoting WMCs in an "old-line" Southern Baptist state, presented to the Georgia Baptist Convention for 1992 and the Alabama Baptist Convention for 1993.

The Ella Keller Award, for promotion of WMCs in a new-work state convention, was presented to the Montana Southern Baptist Fellowship for 1992 and the Illinois Baptist State Association for 1993.

Top associations with World Missions Conferences during 1993 based on participation by churches and membership were named in four categories: Yadkin Baptist Association, N.C. (metropolitan associations, "old-line" SBC states); Lakeland, Ohio (metro, new work); Dale, Ala. (non-metro, "old line"); and Platte Valley, Colo. (non-metro, new work).

World Missions Conferences are directed by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in cooperation with the Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union.

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Church secretaries key players  
in ministering during crises By Chip Alford

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--When it comes to handling crises, church secretaries are often on the "front line."

They either have to deal with the problem themselves or find the appropriate minister or church leader for help.

"Your role in ministry in your church is very important. ... You often are the first to hear about a crisis," Neil Knierim, a consultant in the Baptist Sunday School Board's pastor-staff leadership department, told a large crowd of church secretaries attending his seminar, "Ministering in Times of Crisis." The April 27 seminar was part of the 1995 National Conference for Southern Baptist Secretaries held in Nashville, Tenn.

Crises, Knierim said, come in two categories -- immediate and continual -- though some can fit in both.

Citing examples of immediate crises, Knierim mentioned premarital pregnancy, the uprooted (moving to a new location), husbands and wives in conflict, separation and divorce and suicidal persons. Continual crises can include depressed persons, caring for the terminally ill, the lonely and widows. Examples of situations which have both immediate and continual needs include financial crises/the unemployed, the abused and their families, the bereaved and those experiencing spiritual doubt and pain.

On the whole, Knierim said churches tend to do a better job of responding to immediate crises rather than long-term problems, especially when it comes to death.

"Churches do a great job immediately after a death," he said. "The 'food troops' are rallied and food gets to the house. Then the 'sitters' come in to be with the family. Next, the 'arrangers' come in to help work out funeral details. And everybody shows up at the funeral.

"But as soon as the funeral is over, everybody goes home, and oftentimes, that is the most difficult time (for the bereaved)."

Although there is no time limit on grief, Knierim said it takes at least two years for most people to work through losing a loved one. He suggested church members write down the day a person died and visit the survivor(s) on the anniversary of the death to offer support and encouragement.

"Some people worry that they will just remind the person about the death. But believe me, they'll know," he said.

Knierim told secretaries it is important for them to understand the "ingredients of caring" which he identified as: 1) knowledge about people and their needs; 2) self-evaluation (constantly evaluating who you are and your motivation for ministry); 3) patience; 4) courage; 5) honesty; 6) humility; 7) a sense of hope; and 8) trust.

He also discussed three "resources" which need to be used in crisis ministry:

1) Listening. "There is something very healing and helpful in being able to talk through a problem," Knierim said. He suggested listening non-critically, managing your own feelings, making the other's feelings primary, avoiding advice, being impartial, remaining unshockable, keeping calm, sticking to specifics, paying attention and listening for more than facts.

2) Developing trust. Knierim said it is important to accept the other person's feelings, respect confidentiality, avoid compromising your integrity, ask appropriate questions, avoid focusing on facts, avoid prying, avoid controlling the conversation and ask clarifying questions.

3) Praying. "Prayer is a very important tool in helping people in crisis," Knierim said. He suggested avoiding using prayer only as "closure" when ministering to those in a crisis.

"Sometimes we need to pray earlier in the situation because prayer often opens up people's feelings. If we use it as closure, then the conversation is over and they have no one to talk to," he said.

4) Sharing Scripture. "In times of struggle and difficulty, Scripture brings comfort," Knierim said. "People need that anchor of the Word of God."

He and some of the secretaries attending the seminar identified the following Bible passages as helpful in ministering to those in crisis: Philippians 4:13; Psalm 23; Deuteronomy 33:27; Isaiah 41:10, 13; Romans 8:38-39; Psalm 46:1; James 1:3-6.

Ministering in times of crises doesn't need to involve anything "elaborate," Knierim said. "Just listen and let them know you care. Just sending cards and notes, or a phone call can be helpful. ... Nobody ever remembers what you say, they remember that you were there and that you cared.

"There is nothing more important you can tell someone than this: God loves you. He wants what's best for you and he is able to work in your life in any situation," he added.

Knierim urged secretaries to be involved in meeting day-to-day ministry needs, not just problems that arise during crises. That can sometimes be difficult, he acknowledged, when the same people come by for help over and over.

"But if you see people as a distraction and a problem, you're not going to be effective in ministry. If we don't minister as we go, then what right do we have to minister to those in crisis?

"Don't be a person who goes out of your way to minister to people -- be a person who ministers to people who are in your way."

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Editors' note: Knierim will put his crisis ministry skills to work this week during a two-day trip to Oklahoma City, site of last month's bombing tragedy which left more than 120 people dead and hundreds of others injured. He, along with fellow BSSB consultant Norris Smith and Southern Baptist counselor Joe Richardson, will visit with counselors, chaplains and pastors from all denominations who have been ministering to survivors and families, relatives and friends of victims who died in the blast. Baptist Press will provide coverage of the Sunday School Board-sponsored session to assist Oklahoma City clergy.

Land: Misinterpretation  
endangers First Amendment

By Mark Christie

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The greatest threat facing America is a misinterpretation of the First Amendment to the Constitution, the executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission told students during an open dialogue at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary recently.

According to Richard Land, the biggest danger facing the country "is not an infringement of the establishment clause," which bars government support of religion, "but an infringement of the free exercise clause," which guarantees freedom of religion.

He referred to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's effort last year "to preclude Christians and those of other faiths from expressing their faith convictions in anything other than their own personal lives."

Land further labeled the EEOC action, which was turned back by a storm of protest from Christians, as "nothing more than an attempt by the federal government to make the workplace as artificially sanitized of religion as public schools have been over the last 30 years."

After citing a recent case in which a public high school student was denied the right to give an informative speech on Jesus Christ, Land cautioned students about a growing belief that American students have the right not to hear the religious opinions of their fellow students.

"I believe students have the constitutional right not to hear school-sponsored religious convictions in the classroom, but their right not to hear religious opinions ceases with the right of other students to express their religious convictions," Land said.

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Also during his dialogue with Southwestern students, Land addressed students' concerns on the issues of abortion, school prayer and tuition tax credits and vouchers. He defined the role of the Christian Life Commission in acting as the voice for Southern Baptists on issues of public policy, and he expressed the need for Southern Baptists to be active in bringing their convictions into public policy.

"After all, we're in a situation in the United States today that is unprecedented. The president, the vice president, the speaker of the house, the president pro tem of the U.S. Senate and the majority whip in the House are all Southern Baptists," Land said. "This says Southern Baptists have come in from the cold. We're part of the action, and that means we have both an obligation and a responsibility in this culture and society."

Land said that while Baptist founding fathers worked for no governmental establishment or sponsorship of religion, they intended for there to be governmental accommodation for religious expression. He said Christians could lose such rights in this decade if they don't reassert themselves because "it's an oxymoron to say we're going to preach the gospel but not get involved in anything controversial."

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(BP) photos available through the Office of Public Relations at Southwestern Seminary.

McCullough now ministers  
where his daughter died

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

RENO, Nev. (BP)--At 9 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 16, 1992, Mike and Sarah McCullough -- exhausted, grieved, but by a miracle of God's grace, at peace -- sat by a bed in the Washoe Medical Center's pediatric intensive care unit in Reno, Nev. They held their blonde, 9-year-old daughter, Maggie, as the last vestiges of life slipped from her comatose body and her heartbeat slowed and then stopped.

Today in the same children's ICU where Maggie died, McCullough spends a few hours as a volunteer chaplain each Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday and at other times as needed. He encourages and comforts parents and family members of sick and injured children. He stands with doctors and nurses when they have to tell a family there is no hope. He asks medical staff members how he can pray for them. His is a calming, encouraging ministry of presence.

The journey from father of a dying child to chaplain among parents with similar agonies has been a road of claiming God's promise that it is possible to walk and not faint. Two and a half years after Maggie's death, Mike, Sarah and 9-year-old Jackson McCullough now sometimes know what it is like to run and not grow weary.

"We're still looking to the day when we'll soar again," McCullough, director of mission ministries for the Nevada Baptist Convention, reflected on a sunny April morning, claiming the promise of Isaiah 40:31. Retelling Maggie's story had brought tears that come less frequently now but still symbolize that the pain, while less acute, will always be part of their lives.

Maggie's dying began Oct. 10 when she entered the hospital with a high fever and a rash. As doctors struggled to identify the problem, she slipped into a coma. As her liver and other blood organs shut down, a transplant was proposed and then eliminated when brain damage became evident.

She had been diagnosed a few months earlier with a childhood form of epilepsy which doctors expected her to outgrow. She was put on a drug to control seizures. The drug, combined with some unknown virus in Maggie's system, caused her death, McCullough said.

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The McCulloughs believe they received a word from God Monday at noon as they sought refuge in Remedee's, a hospital restaurant with tablecloths, china and food far more tasty than the stereotypical hospital fare. While eating lunch, they came to believe in those moments that Maggie would die, though they never stopped praying that she would be healed and restored to their family.

Their awareness of Maggie's impending death did not indicate "a lack of faith," he emphasized. "God gave us those days to be ready."

Sarah McCullough surprised Mike by saying she wanted Maggie to be buried beside his mother near Bryan, Texas. "I know it doesn't matter, but I don't want her to be alone," was Sarah's reasoning. That was reason enough, the family agreed.

On Wednesday, the "deepest, darkest part" of the week occurred as they were given 30 minutes to decide whether to move Maggie to California for a liver transplant. "Out of the middle of nowhere," Sarah, a medical technologist, "found the indication of brain damage" in reading Maggie's chart. At that point, Maggie's death became a matter of time.

Thursday night, exhausted, they left family members at Maggie's bedside and went home to their son, then 6.

"How do you deal with the dying and the living?" McCullough asked. "I had a 6-year-old son at home scared to death. We were trying to take care of him, too."

They returned to the hospital at 5:30 a.m. Friday. Less than four hours later, "We were able to hand our girl back to the Lord," he said.

In the weeks and months that followed, the McCulloughs grieved together and separately. Sarah's deepest moments of pain were triggered by the clock or calendar -- the Sunday night when they left Maggie in a coma at the hospital, her birthday and other specific occasions. Mike, on the other hand, just had dark days when the pain of missing Maggie was so intense he couldn't go to the office or, if at work, just sat at his desk.

Knowing that eight of 10 marriages end within two years after the death of a child, Mike and Sarah "made a deliberate choice that we wouldn't be part of that statistic. We worked hard to be open. We're extra patient," he said.

They expressed their gratitude to the medical personnel who cared for Maggie by placing a plaque saying thanks for "Nursing with Love" at the door of the ICU.

They sought family counseling, receiving assurance they were doing the right things to move toward recovery. They set up a foundation to provide funds to enable ministers to pay health insurance premiums for themselves and their families.

Eight or nine months after Maggie's death, McCullough began again to pray that God would show him a place of service where he could make a difference as a chaplain. He had first offered that prayer in the summer of 1992 just after chaplaincy was added to his mission ministries portfolio. In addition to coordinating several ministries related to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, he assists the state executive director and edits the monthly state convention paper, the Nevada Baptist.

"I felt there was no way I was going to lead and work with chaplains and not be one," he recalled.

His prayer was answered when he returned to the children's ICU in November 1993, this time as a chaplain.

"It's where I belong," McCullough said. "I'm comfortable there. If I'm not at home, I'd rather be there. I don't see Maggie there. I feel blessed about that."

While he listens to, comforts, encourages and prays with parents going through experiences similar to his own, McCullough is careful not to tell them he understands what they are going through.

"It's not my family. I don't have their history," he said.

Child abuse cases are among the most difficult. His concern for the needs of parents who may have hurt their own children sometimes draws questions from some medical personnel about how and why he can reach out to them.

"I can't, except as God loves them through me," McCullough reflected. "Christ died on the cross as much for the parent who has hurt a child as he did for that child. I think that's the essence of the gospel. We love because he first loved us."

While his time at the hospital is more limited than he would like -- generally five to six hours a week -- he makes the most of the time he does have.

On one recent Sunday afternoon, he counseled a grandmother whose son and daughter-in-law likely had abused an infant then on life support in ICU. He comforted a mother whose 5-year-old son lay close to death from an automobile accident. He talked with a hospital staff member with family problems. He reached out to the father of a critically ill child who pushed him away, saying there is no God.

"All last night and this morning I've been praying for that dad," McCullough said.

ICU director Nancy Harland praised McCullough's ministry.

"We as nurses don't have the ability to truly feel what the parents do. Mike does. Knowing he's coming makes us feel better because we know the family truly will be cared for," she said.

"We need as much as they (families) do sometimes," said Becky Bunker, day shift supervisor. "When Mike walks in, he knows if the nurses need help."

McCullough said his way of reaching out to hospital staff has changed from his early days when he asked how they were feeling. Now he asks if there is anything in their lives he can pray about.

"I think that has made a difference," he said.

For the future, McCullough would like to make time to expand his ministry to the intensive care nursery where no chaplain presently is assigned.

The experience of Maggie's death has impacted him in unexpected ways, including a car purchase. He deliberately sought a number of safety features, including anti-lock brakes.

"I've lost Maggie," he said. "I'm doing everything I can to protect my family."

Mike and Sarah are proud of Jackson's progress in working through his own grief while expanding his interest in "critters," including two tarantulas and a snake.

"In his mind Maggie was perfect," Sarah said. "He loves for us to tell Maggie stories, especially ones that show she was not perfect."

"And she wasn't perfect, but she was wonderful."

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(BP) photo (horizontal) to accompany this story is being mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press. The photo also is posted in the SBCNet News Room.

Maggie Erin McCullough  
Oct. 6, 1983-Oct. 16, 1992

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

RENO, Nev. (BP)--Maggie McCullough's blonde hair seldom stayed in place for very long. Her smile could light up a room, at least in her parents' eyes.

She loved to go to church and cried on occasions when she was sick and had to stay home. Once when she lacked money for the offering plate, she put in all she had, a bag of vanilla wafers.

"She'd put you to shame the way she told people about the Lord," her dad, Mike McCullough, recalled. In the first grade, Maggie took a book of Bible stories to school for her favorite teacher, Mr. Ware, to read to the class. "You need to love Jesus," Maggie told Mr. Ware.

Maggie progressed to second grade and Mr. Ware developed cancer. When he returned to school, Maggie sent him a love note.

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The next year, 10 days after her ninth birthday, on Oct. 16, 1992, Maggie McCullough died in the children's intensive care unit of Washoe Medical Center, Reno, Nev. The drug she was taking for a childhood form of epilepsy interacted with an unknown virus, causing severe liver damage.

At Maggie's memorial service, many of her teachers, including Mr. Ware, attended. As Maggie's dad shook hands with Mr. Ware, he told him, "Maggie loved you in ways more special than any other teacher. She always wanted you to know Jesus."

Reflecting on the all-too-brief life of his daughter, McCullough said, "She was a little witness. I'd like to think she'd have been my little missionary girl."

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(BP) photo of Maggie is being mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

Families can prepare  
to cope with crises

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

RENO, Nev. (BP)--When crises such as the critical or chronic illness of a child come a parent's way, it's too late to develop the mature belief system that is needed to cope with the pain and grief of the situation, Mike McCullough warns.

"We need to recognize that none of us is exempt from the evils of this world," notes McCullough, director of mission ministries for the Nevada Baptist Convention. "We need to live each day as if it were our last. Our faith has got to be growing and deepening."

McCullough speaks from experience as a parent and a chaplain to parents of critically ill children. His 9-year-old daughter, Maggie, died in the intensive care unit of the Washoe Medical Center, Reno, Nev., in October 1992. Today, he serves as a chaplain in the same unit where Maggie died.

Recognizing the reality of crises in Christian families, the theme of the 1995 Christian Home Emphasis is "Families Under Pressure." Sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division, the emphasis begins on Mother's Day, May 7, and continues through Father's Day, June 19.

To Christians, McCullough urges, "recognize the sovereignty of God and that he is in control," even in chaotic and painful circumstances.

Also, he suggests, "recognize and rely on some of God's promises. He and his wife, Sarah, found Isaiah 40:31 particularly helpful as they moved through the grief process: "but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Preparing for the inevitable crises of life also should include such practical, everyday matters as insurance, maintaining cars at a high safety level and giving advance thought and preparation to the kinds of problems most likely to occur, such as the illness or death of an elderly family member.

McCullough expressed gratitude for the health insurance he has through the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board that paid the \$80,000 hospital bill for Maggie's illness and also funded family counseling after her death. Out of a concern that other ministers don't always have health insurance provided, the McCulloughs established the Maggie Erin McCullough Insurance Memorial Fund through the Nevada Baptist Foundation to pay for health insurance premiums for ministers needing this assistance.

In other areas, he urges:

-- Get as much rest as possible.

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-- Eat regularly and avoid junk food.  
 -- Allow others to help -- staying with the patient, helping out with children at home, being available to listen or to pray with you.  
 "Asking for help is not easy," he acknowledges. "God has given us the church to be our family."

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A list of Christian Home Emphasis resources is posted in the SBCNet News Room.

TV ministry's outreach exceeds  
 365 nights in the Georgia Dome By C.C. Risenhoover

Baptist Press  
 5/1/95

ATLANTA (BP)--The letter reads, "Dear Dr. Lee:

"Late one night as I sat on the edge of my bed, I felt as though there was nothing to live for. So I had decided to just end my life. In the bottles beside me were more than enough pills to end it all."

The woman's name is Scherree. The above is the first paragraph of a letter she wrote to Richard G. Lee, senior pastor of Rehoboth Baptist Church in Atlanta.

Scherree wrote that before taking her life she wanted to write a note to her two daughters, to tell them she loved them and not to blame themselves for her inability to cope.

She could not find a pen and grew desperate in her attempt to find something with which to write. She finally settled on a tube of lipstick.

The letter continued, "Just then I heard someone on TV telling me, 'Don't give up, there's hope.' If any religious program came on, I would turn the TV off or at least change the channel. But for some reason I didn't understand, I didn't turn it off or change the channel.

"This person said, 'Don't give up. God loves you and there's always hope.'

"At that moment those words pierced my heart and I gave my life to God."

Scherree wrote that at the time she did not know the identity of the man who was preaching or the name of the TV program. But the next Sunday she went to a church in the town where she lived and gave her life to God.

Approximately two years later she visited Rehoboth Baptist Church with a friend. She wrote that the moment she stepped into the building she felt the strong presence of the Holy Spirit.

"Then," she wrote, "as the minister started to speak, I knew that this was the church and the minister who, through 'There's Hope' ministries, had stopped me from ending my life.

"I just wanted to write you and all the people who support 'There's Hope' to let you know that without them and God's help, I would not be alive today."

The "There's Hope" television ministry began Feb. 19, 1984.

"We didn't have any cameras, no equipment at all," Lee said. "But I went to a UHF station in Atlanta and got a quote on what it would cost to air a 30-minute program every week. The quote was \$175 for 30 minutes. That same station charges \$5,500 for 30 minutes now."

Lee said the purchase of time did not solve the problem of where to produce the program, so he went to the local ABC affiliate and asked about renting its studio and cameras.

"At first I was told that the station didn't rent to religious groups," he said. "But then they quoted a price of \$800 a program, which was beyond reason."

The pastor said he prayed about it, then talked to the station's production manager.

"I asked him what his people did between the early and late news," Lee said. "He said they didn't do much of anything, so I talked him into turning three cameras on me for 30 minutes for \$250 a week. We did an unedited version of the program for 18 months and then the church began to invest in its own equipment."

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Lee first became interested in, and participated in, a media ministry when only 8 years old. His father was a pastor and had a weekly program sponsored by the Atlanta Council of Churches that was on WSB-TV. Lee often sang solos on the program.

He surrendered to preach at age 8 and preached his first sermon at age 12. He became a full-time evangelist when 17, a ministry direction he followed for 10 years.

By 1976 he had his own program, "The Miracle Hour," on TV-46 in Atlanta. The 30-minute format included songs by Lee and his wife and a brief message.

"There's Hope" is now aired weekly by every major Christian television network in America, including ACTS and FamilyNet of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission. It also is broadcast by numerous independent stations. A weekly radio version is carried throughout Georgia and by TBN short-wave around the world.

No matter what subject he preaches on each week, Lee said, the message is always interlaced with the theme of hope. "Hope" is also the theme of his 10 books published since 1988.

"You can go for days without food or water," he said, "but you cannot live a minute without hope. What a person watching or listening to the program hears in the six or seven minutes of their attention span is how the gospel gives hope."

Lee said he never compromises the gospel on his program, that he preaches "hope is always on the other side of repentance."

"There's Hope" has received the prestigious "Ministry of the Year" award from the National Association of Broadcasters. And, as a recognized spokesman on Christian issues, Lee frequently writes editorials for newspapers and magazines and has appeared on numerous national television programs. These include, in TV, CBS News with Dan Rather, NBC News with Tom Brokaw, CNN News, Headline News and CBN's "700 Club;" in radio, the BBC, Moody Broadcast Network and Focus on the Family; and in print, the Atlanta Journal, Newsday, The Los Angeles Times, USA Today and The London Times.

"The secular media opens windows of opportunity," Lee said. "If you stand clearly for Christ with integrity, you will gain entree with people who are normally unfriendly toward the gospel."

In discussing his commitment to a media ministry, he said, "If I were to pack 70,000 people into the Georgia Dome every single night for a year, I would not preach to as many people as I potentially do every Sunday through the miracle of television."

A graduate of Mercer University in Macon, Ga., with master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Atlanta's Luther Rice Seminary, Lee's congregation of 9,000 is the second-largest Baptist church in the state. During its 1994 year, the church baptized 1,144. It baptized 1,034 the year before.

"We're on the verge of a technological revolution that is going to challenge every media ministry and cause us to reevaluate," Lee said. "But these great challenges will provide us our greatest opportunities."

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SWBTS, Baylor doctoral students  
discuss, disagree -- & learn

By Mark Christie

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--"It's good to be able to sit down with someone with whom you disagree and discuss the topic rationally," said Bill Tillman after a recent dialogue and research paper exchange between doctoral students of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Baylor University.

Participants compared and contrasted research topics and ideas in Christian ethics, according to Tillman, associate professor and chair of the department of Christian ethics at Southwestern and current faculty initiator of the dialogue.

The annual dialogue, held this year on Baylor's campus in Waco, Texas, was an unofficial gathering of doctoral students and professors from the two schools.

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Bobby Adams, visiting professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern, noted, "This is a professional meeting. We want to demonstrate, not prove or show, that in the field of ethics we are well aware of what's happening in the real world, and that as Christians we need to interact.

"The idea exists (among some university students) that seminaries are a kind of ivory tower or monastery, out of touch with what is going on," Adams said. "If anything could dispel that conception, these meetings could."

Adams stressed the fact that the dialogue this year was with Baylor's department of religion, not with Baylor's new Truett Seminary. The first dialogue took place in 1982 as an idea of Adams and Dan McGee, faculty initiator at Baylor.

Doctoral students from Tillman and Adams' ethics seminars at Southwestern participated in the dialogue. The event included two presenters, two responders and observers from each institution.

"We pick students who have written good papers, ones that will show what we do here, and we want someone who can present well and digest it in 10 minutes," Tillman stated.

Though there were some "very pointed" discussions, a relaxed atmosphere permeated the program, Tillman said. "They (students) represent their institutions; there is going to be a decorum. Nobody slams their books to the floor and storms out."

Tillman underscored that the dialogue exemplified professionalism and was not a competitive grudge match. "It has an educational broadening to it. It is one of the best 'teachable moments' that we can put together. You see these creative juices flowing and you say, 'This is what education ought to be about,'" he emphasized.

"Some of our Ph.D. students are going to be involved in professional societies and make paper presentations, and this gives them practice," Tillman added.

Student comments about the dialogue have been positive. Tim Heavin, a Southwestern student who served as a presenter, said that presenting a paper to a different group of people created a unique challenge he had never experienced before, but one he would like to have again.

Brian Whitney, a Southwestern student who was a respondent, appreciated the opportunity to interact with other doctoral students in an unusual setting.

"It gave us the chance to sharpen our response skills," Whitney said, adding that a key benefit for him was the opportunity to be a part of such a scholarly event. He said the dialogue adds a "tremendous value" to the ethics program at Southwestern.

The 1996 dialogue will be at Southwestern's Fort Worth, Texas, campus, Tillman said.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Please substitute the following story for one in Baptist Press, 4/28/95, with the same headline.

Southwestern v.p. accepts  
Lockman Foundation post

By Jan Johnsonius

Baptist Press  
5/1/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Jay P. Chance, vice president for institutional advancement at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has announced his departure from the seminary to take the position of vice president of The Lockman Foundation.

The purpose of the foundation, based in La Habra, Calif., is to translate and disseminate the Scriptures. The most notable translation of the foundation is the New American Standard Bible.

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Chance's final day at the Fort Worth, Texas, seminary is May 13 and he will assume the vice presidency at Lockman May 14. In making the announcement, Chance noted, "I am not leaving, but rather going to a new opportunity of service and ministry beyond my greatest expectations. When events take place as they have at Southwestern during the past year, additional options of ministry seem to afford themselves in great number. Such has been the case for me. I looked and asked God to lead me in making the right decision."

In responding to the announcement, Southwestern President Ken Hemphill stated, "Jay Chance has served Southwestern Seminary with integrity for five years as vice president for institutional advancement. He has been helpful to me personally during these months of transition and he will be missed by his colleagues. We can only wish for him God's best as he continues in the service of our Lord. We can only be excited for Dr. Chance as he helps The Lockman Foundation as they fulfill their mission to translate and disseminate the Scripture."

During Chance's tenure at Southwestern, endowment increased by \$13 million and 10 academic chairs and professorships were added.

Chance said his responsibilities at the foundation will include marketing, public relations and assisting with its recent international emphasis on providing the Scripture in all major languages of the world.

Robert Lambuth, president of The Lockman Foundation is Robert Lambuth, has been a member of the Southwestern Council since 1991. The Southwestern Council consists of laypersons who serve as goodwill ambassadors, helping fulfill the seminary's mission through development and the recruitment of qualified students.

"Jay Chance has been involved with two agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention, a Baptist college and a major state university. That experience is just what The Lockman Foundation needs to move assertively worldwide in scope," Lambuth noted. "Jay will begin by strengthening ties with all evangelical denominations nationally and assist in providing an international focus."

Before coming to Southwestern, Chance served as vice president for public affairs at California Baptist College in Riverside from 1980-90. He also has served as assistant director of the Southern Rural Development Center at Mississippi State University in Starkville; supervisor and instructor at East Mississippi Junior College in Scooba; national director of Royal Ambassadors at the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention; and director of youth education at First Baptist Church of San Angelo, Texas.

Chance noted that his "love and admiration for Southwestern remain strong," and he and his wife Gailya will maintain their home in Fort Worth as well as a residence in the La Habra area of California.

**(BP)**

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