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September 21, 1995

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Southern trustees will consider
transfer of social work school

Baptist Press
9/21/95

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustees will consider in October a proposal to transfer the Carver School of Church Social Work to Samford University.

The recommendation for the transfer will be made by a five-member trustee committee from the Louisville, Ky., seminary appointed in April to study the future of the Carver school, said Southern Seminary President R. Albert Mohler Jr. The trustees of Samford, a Baptist university in Birmingham, Ala., approved terms for the Carver school transfer in early September, Mohler said.

The transfer proposal was initiated by Samford officials, according to Mohler. If Southern trustees agree to the transfer during their Oct. 9-11 meeting, Samford will assume responsibility for the school at the start of the 1996-97 academic year. Samford will conduct the school on Southern's campus during the 1996-97 academic year before moving it to Birmingham in the fall of 1997.

"We are pleased that we are able to protect the interests of our current students, maintain the focus of the seminary and see the Carver school continue and flourish in a new institutional context," Mohler said. "I see this as a very positive and constructive proposal."

Controversy surrounding Southern's social work school erupted in March when Mohler dismissed the school's dean, Diana R. Garland, for breaching administrative processes by releasing a document criticizing Mohler's refusal to approve a social work faculty nominee, David Sherwood, who had been recommended by faculty and student committees. Sherwood is director of the social work program at Gordon College, Wenham, Mass., and editor of the journal, Social Work and Christianity.

Mohler cited Sherwood's stance allowing for the role of women as church pastors in refusing to recommend Sherwood to Southern's trustees for final approval.

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Garland's dismissal as dean did not affect her status as a social work professor at Southern.

Southern will continue to offer a concentration in social ministries within its master of divinity and master of arts degrees. However, if Samford acquires the Carver school, the seminary must promise not to re-establish a program leading to the master of social work degree.

Under terms of the proposed transfer, Samford will acquire all books, periodicals, audio visuals, computer software and other library holdings specifically related to the Carver school. This includes a collection of about 5,200 books and 700 bound periodicals.

Southern also will furnish Samford a list of its M.S.W. graduates, the names of prospective students for the Carver school and all documents related to the Carver school's accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education.

"The trustee study committee has provided clarity of purpose and protected the stewardship of institutional trust and mission," Mohler said. "We are in their debt for their hard work and heartfelt concern."

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Mississippi takes SBC increase
out but dollars remain in 1996 By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
9/21/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Mississippi Baptist Convention executive board has proposed a 2.98 percent increase for the state's 1996 Cooperative Program budget, a proposal that will keep the Southern Baptist Convention's portion of the increase for mission work in Mississippi.

However, gifts in 1995 over the basic budget will allow the state to forward enough additional funds in 1996 to the SBC to make up the difference.

The proposed \$23,280,983 budget is 2.98 percent above the 1995 budget of \$22,606,589. According to Mississippi officials, the portion of the budget forwarded to the SBC Cooperative Program would remain at 37 percent but Mississippi would keep the actual increase in dollars from last year sent to the SBC.

In 1995, Mississippi budgeted to send the SBC \$8,364,434, or 37 percent of the budget. The proposed plan for 1996 would send the same dollar amount to the SBC as in 1995 and keep the 2.68 percent increase, or \$249,530, in Mississippi. In actuality, that would have meant Mississippi would be sending slightly under 36 percent of its 1996 budget to the SBC Cooperative Program, a decrease of more than 1 percent from 1995. However, officials said the state's gifts in 1995 should reach the challenge portion of the budget which would allow about \$250,000 to flow to the SBC, matching the amount of the increase.

The executive board's proposal was approved Aug. 29, with the budget slated for final approval by messengers to the Mississippi Baptist Convention in November in Jackson.

Mississippi officials said the \$249,530 represents the approximate amount which the SBC Home Mission Board returns to Mississippi for joint state-HMB projects. Each of those projects is funded 60 percent by Mississippi and 40 percent by the HMB.

Mississippi convention executive director Bill Causey told the state board home missions work is still in the 37 percent going to SBC causes.

"We're showing it this way because we're trying to be completely open," Causey said. "Mississippi is going to take care of Mississippi and will contribute to the HMB for other areas."

Budget committee chairman Robert Upchurch, Tupelo, Miss., said the SBC asked the old-line states to allow HMB to direct its efforts toward pioneer states.

"This (new way of allocating the budget) does not mean any pulling away or any expression of being uncooperative," Upchurch told the board's executive committee in the August meeting.

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Larry L. Lewis, president of the SBC's Home Mission Board, told Baptist Press he had been assured (Mississippi) will not reduce either the dollar amount or percent of CP funds sent to Nashville (where CP dollars are distributed to the SBC agencies) for national and worldwide missions. He said he wanted to make two points "very clear."

"First, we intend to maintain a cooperative agreement with Mississippi and all other states regardless of funding arrangements. Any partnership based solely on money is weak. Our cooperative agreements with state conventions are based on a desire to reach our nation for Jesus Christ. We will work together to set priorities and meet mission needs whether or not funding is involved.

"The HMB and Mississippi have not yet completed a new cooperative agreement that will address a number of unresolved issues, especially how our jointly funded missions personnel in Mississippi might be handled. These missionaries were jointly called, assigned and funded and, of course, neither party will attempt to unilaterally assume full responsibility.

"Secondly, the HMB has a national assignment from the SBC to ensure priority mission needs are met across the U.S., its territories and Canada. No SBC agency, state convention or association can claim exclusive responsibility for Southern Baptist mission work in a particular area. The HMB reserves the right to address unmet mission need whether in partnership or directly," Lewis said.

SBC Cooperative Program gifts from the state conventions are received by the Nashville office of the Executive Committee and then disbursed to SBC agencies according to a SBC-approved Program and Allocation Budget.

The proposal by Mississippi follows a proposed reduction of 2.5 percent (\$1.5 million) to the SBC Cooperative Program by Texas in 1996 and a proposed 2 percent reduction by Oklahoma.

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Beijing document disturbs
U.S. pro-family reps

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
9/21/95

WASHINGTON (BP)--The World Conference on Women, plagued by controversy before and during its 12-day run in Beijing, China, closed with a Platform for Action apparently much more satisfactory to ardent feminists than to advocates of the traditional family.

The 150-page, non-binding document was adopted Sept. 15 on the final day of the United Nations-sponsored conference by delegates from 185 countries, but 42 countries and the Vatican registered reservations.

While portions of the document's final version generally remain a mystery, pro-family organizations know enough about it to describe the "good and necessary" in the text as "overshadowed by the negative," a pro-family spokesperson said.

Before representatives of United States pro-family organizations left Beijing, they described their grave disappointment at a news conference, said Susie Sanguinetti of Focus on the Family.

The consensus among pro-family groups was the document is guilty of "ignoring marriage" and "minimizing the importance of motherhood," said Sanguinetti, Focus' manager for international media who was in Beijing. They also believed the document "encouraged sexual promiscuity" and "weakened the authority of parents," she said.

"There was general disappointment that any country that held the world view that the family was at the core of society was seen as backward," Sanguinetti said.

The pro-family representatives especially were displeased with the agenda of the U.S. delegation, which unsuccessfully pushed for inclusion of homosexuals as a class deserving civil rights protection but stayed in the background while delegations from other industrialized countries pushed other provisions opposed by pro-family organizations, the Vatican delegation, and delegations from Muslim and heavily Catholic countries.

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U.S. delegation members "were not subdued in their efforts to use other countries such as the European Union and Canada as surrogates," said Nancy Schaefer, who represented the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission at Beijing.

It was clear "that what America is exporting to other countries through social positions and policies is a travesty," said Schaefer, a CLC trustee and a member of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, in a written statement. "Many delegates [were] quick to say, 'We don't want your social programs, such as sex education in our schools.'"

Especially damaging in the final document was its language on children's rights, which were given priority at the expense of parental rights and responsibilities. The document comes close to saying juveniles have a right to sexual health, which could include abortion, contraceptives and sex education, said Bob Ditmer, who reported from Beijing for the Family News in Focus radio network.

Pro-family representatives described this section as probably the "biggest defeat at the conference," Ditmer said.

Among reported provisions in the final document were the endorsement of "sexual and reproductive" rights for women, including the right to refuse sexual relations with their husbands, and the condemnation of violence against women, including coercive abortion and sterilization, as well as rape as a systematic weapon by wartime forces and genital mutilation.

Left undefined in the document were such terms as "gender" and "family."

Language including "sexual orientation" as a class deserving protection against discrimination was removed from the document on the conference's final day. More than 30 countries objected to removing the protection for homosexuals, bisexuals and transsexuals, according to The New York Times. Among the proponents of retaining "sexual orientation" were the United States, Israel and South Africa, the Times reported.

The document, however, maintained a clause protecting national sovereignty in implementing the platform with "full respect for various religious and ethical values," according to the Times.

"The United States delegation looks forward to bringing the Platform for Action from Beijing to fruition," said delegation director Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky, according to The Washington Times. "We will move quickly and implement this document."

Congressional oversight hearings on the conference have been promised, however.

CLC representative Schaefer and six other women chose to demonstrate their differences with the U.S. agenda by silently raising a banner which read "U.S. Delegation Ignores Pro-family U.S. Women" at the close of a Sept. 12 press briefing by the U.S. delegation appointed by President Clinton. A United Nations security guard escorted them to a holding room, where he confiscated their credentials and took photographs of the badges, said Schaefer, who presides over an Atlanta-based ministry, Family Concerns Inc. Their credentials were returned Sept. 14.

Schaefer and the other pro-family representatives decided to unfurl a banner after they were dissatisfied with the U.S. delegation's agenda and its response to pro-family concerns expressed in a Sept. 11 meeting attended by Schaefer and three others representing pro-life/pro-family organizations.

On behalf of 21 organizations, Schaefer had written a letter Sept. 8 to Madeleine Albright, U.S. ambassador to the U.N. and head of the U.S. delegation, asking for a meeting. Among the groups signing onto the letter were Focus on the Family, Eagle Forum, Concerned Women for America, American Life League and the National Association of Evangelicals.

The U.S. delegation informed Schaefer about 90 minutes beforehand she and others could meet with some of its members Sept. 11. Tom Minnery of Focus on the Family, Diane Knippers of the Institute on Religion and Democracy and Ellen Lucas of the International Catholic Organizations Center joined Schaefer in the meeting. They met with nine members of the delegation, including Veronica Biggins, vice chair, and Melinda Kimble, head of the negotiating team. Albright had returned to the United States.

Earlier in the conference, U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton and another female world leader decried violence against women, including coercive abortion and the infanticide of girls, in a country notorious for both practices.

Without mentioning the host country, China, by name, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton included forced abortion and sterilization among a list of violations of human rights in a Sept. 5 speech to delegates. In the opening session the day before, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan condemned infanticide, abortion and abandonment of baby girls, especially in Asia.

Their speeches pointed to some of the controversy which surrounded the conference. Some American pro-life and human rights advocates criticized the conference's site and called for the United States to boycott it.

The Chinese Communist regime's widespread human rights violations are well-documented. The government's one-child policy for most families has resulted in forced abortions and sterilizations, as well as reports of infanticide, especially of female babies.

"It is a violation of human rights when babies are denied food, or drowned, or suffocated, or their spines broken, simply because they are born girls," Clinton said, according to an excerpt of her speech in The Washington Times. "It is a violation of human rights when women are denied the right to plan their own families, and that includes being forced to have abortions or being sterilized against their will."

While he praised the First Lady for courageously raising the issue of coercive abortion in Beijing, Rep. Christopher Smith, R.-N.J., cochairman of the congressional delegation to the meeting, said her speech was lacking "for want of one word -- China."

Schaefer said, "Mrs. Clinton's talk and her walk do not match. Women fleeing forced abortion and forced sterilization have tragically not found asylum in America due to the policy change made by the Clinton administration. Every boy and girl cannot be loved and cared for equally as long as abortion is promoted as a women's right."

The Clinton administration reversed a policy granting asylum to those fleeing to the United States to escape forced abortion or sterilization.

According to The New York Times, Bhutto said, "How tragic it is that the pre-Islamic practice of female infanticide still haunts a world we regard as modern and civilized. Girl children are often abandoned or aborted. Statistics show that men now increasingly outnumber women in more than 15 Asian nations."

A climate in which Asian men prefer boys has resulted in pressure to abort "innocent, perfectly formed" unborn girls, she said.

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RTVC president says depraved
technology fuels work of Satan By C.C. Risenhoover

Baptist Press
9/21/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission is sounding an alert.

"We need to wake up to the fact that the communications age brings with it inherent dangers to everyone, especially our children," said Jack Johnson in response to a number of recent news stories that report how computers are being used to promote pornography and solicit children for sexual purposes.

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"All media can be used for good or evil," Johnson said. "We must be constantly alert to the fact that secular humanism, immorality and materialism threaten even the most committed Christian families in today's electronic society."

Johnson said with the increasing reliance on computers by American families, there will be an increasing number of depraved people who use the technology to further the work of Satan.

"We need to turn back the tidal wave of filth," he said. "And we can help do that by using the computer for ministry. It is a great tool for proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christians have been slow to utilize it for that purpose. But we have been slow to use all media in spreading the gospel. Now we're fighting an uphill battle."

The RTVC president said practically all media are being used to promote pornography, not just computer networks.

"Women and children are the obvious targets of hard-core pornography, but men can also become victims," Johnson said. "Unfortunately, the largest group of consumers of pornography are boys between the ages of 12 and 17. Most men who have severe problems with porn addiction had early exposure to pornography. Not every boy who uses pornography becomes a sexual deviant. But when pornography plays a major role in a boy's formative years, his views on sex, love, women and relationship can become distorted."

"It can affect his ability to have a deep, loving and intimate relationship with a woman," Johnson said. "If taken far enough, it can even contribute to criminal behavior."

Pornography also plays a major role in the molestation of children, encourages rape, is addictive particularly to men, encourages behavior that contributes to sexually transmitted diseases and negatively affects attitudes and values, Johnson said.

"It eroticizes inequality and violence and gives permission to treat women and children in a degrading, debasing manner," he said.

"The dangers from media are incomprehensible to many people. The effects of rap music, MTV, sex, violence and depravity can seep into even the most diligent, Christ-centered home."

Television programs targeted specifically to children often are peppered with gratuitous sexual comments and double entendres, Johnson said, and what children frequently see on daytime and early prime time television is often sexually explicit and violent beyond their comprehension.

"There are no easy answers to the pervasiveness of media that is harmful and inappropriate for children," he said. "Parents and grandparents should be aware of media-related problems and be ready to answer the questions children ask as a result of them."

"Obviously, we should be vigilant as to what various media are doing and educate children accordingly. We need to encourage children in the use of good, wholesome media."

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World Changers to expand
youth missions opportunities

By Shelley Smith

Baptist Press
9/21/95

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Youth can participate in a new kind of missions experience in 1996 as World Changers introduces World Tour.

Combining the best of "traditional" World Changers projects with inner-city ministries in a host city, World Tour offers youth in grades seven through 12 a multifaceted approach to missions, exposing them to urban needs and ministries.

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Through their involvement in light construction and painting projects, World Tour participants will have the opportunity to demonstrate Christ's love in action. Moreover, participants will offer valuable assistance to local ministries and churches seeking to meet the vast physical and spiritual needs of those in the inner cities.

Youth and adult leaders from participating churches will be placed in "bands" of 10 to 15 people and assigned to two projects -- an inner-city work project in the morning and a local ministry project in the afternoon.

Some of the ministries in which youth can participate include children's Bible clubs, senior adult home care, sports clinics, inner-city evangelism, clothing and food closet, meal delivery, clowning and more. Youth are assigned to a ministry based on their interests and abilities.

"World Tour participants get the best of two worlds -- a relationship ministry with an inner-city organization or church, and a paint project in an inner-city neighborhood," said George Siler, associate director of World Changers. "We're excited about partnering this project with Baptist associations and ongoing missions work in the inner city."

Piloted in 1995, World Tour involved more than 275 participants from 19 churches in 19 paint projects and 21 ministries in the inner-city neighborhoods of Memphis.

"It has been an eye-opening experience to actually see firsthand how needy some people are and that we can make a difference," said one participant.

"I believe it has made us more aware of others who are in need. It also has made us more appreciative of what we have," said another.

In 1996, four World Tour projects will be held -- one in Savannah, Ga., one in New Orleans, and two in Memphis.

World Changers, a ministry of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, has involved more than 20,000 youth and adults in renovating more than 2,000 homes since it began in 1990.

For more information about World Tour or other World Changers projects, call the World Changers office at (901) 272-2461.

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Smith is a newswriter for the Brotherhood Commission.

SBCNet users testify
to unexpected values

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
9/21/95

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Ministry among Southern Baptists occurs almost everywhere, even in cyberspace. SBCNet, Southern Baptist's data communications network coordinated by the Baptist Sunday School Board, has become another place laypersons and church staff people meet others' needs.

Two recent examples reference the "connections" people sometimes make through "the net."

Howard Burkhart of California recently wrote SBCNet coordinator David Haywood to say SBCNet had helped his family in an emergency.

"My parents live in Florida, but are summer residents in southern Colorado," he explained. "Thursday morning my stepfather had a heart attack in Colorado. He was rushed to Durango and put in the hospital. They were very afraid and scared.

"I knew of James Bush (pastor of First Baptist Church, Flora Vista, N.M.) from SBCNet and that he is a pastor living only 20 minutes from Durango. I pulled his name out of the New Mexico state directory and called him. He was able to go and minister to my parents in the hospital. It was reassuring to both them and me.

"Jim and my stepfather made plans to go fishing next year, if he is able to return. Turns out that Jim went to seminary with my pastor and associate pastor, whom my parents know. A good connection was made, and my parents were very much ministered to. Had SBCNet not been available, I would have had a hard time dealing with this and my parents would have been stuck.

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"I wanted you to know how much this blessed me and my family and how instrumental this was for us."

In another testimony from the Florida Baptist Witness newsjournal, Prais Fellowship Church, Lake Mary, Fla., gained new members who had heard about the church through SBCNet.

Pastor Jerry Walsh had intended to get on line, but had delayed doing so.

"So when he received a card from the Baptist Sunday School Board asking if he would like to be added to a listing of innovative churches on SBCNet, he answered yes, even though he was not yet on line himself," the paper reported.

This past Easter Sunday, as Walsh reviewed the visitor cards, he noticed a guest had noted he heard about the Lake Mary church through SBCNet.

Walsh contacted the visitor, invited him to lunch and they became friends. Since that time, the visitor and his family have become active members of the church and have initiated a small-group ministry.

His new friend "got me on line with CompuServe," Walsh told the Witness. "I've been on four weeks now and cannot believe how much help it is.

"I get all my news now through the computer. SBCNet is the best part of CompuServe for me. I can network with other innovative pastors through the Church Growth Forum, get free clip art and send newsletters to friends and family across the country."

According to Haywood, SBCNet had more than 6,000 members as of Sept. 20.

The network may be accessed by using a computer, modem and a membership kit distributed free by the Sunday School Board. Kits, which provide access to services of CompuServe and SBCNet, are available in DOS, Macintosh and Windows versions.

Those who are already members of CompuServe may join SBCNet by simply typing "GO SBCNet" at any CompuServe prompt. Among the services available on SBCNet are Baptist Press and other news items, a variety of Sunday school helps and foreign missions prayer requests.

Among the CompuServe services available to SBCNet subscribers are news, sports and weather; the opportunity to read classified ads, support forums and the member directory; travel and shopping services; games and entertainment; reference library; and "Money Talks," including stock quotes and other financial services.

To order an SBCNet kit or to obtain additional information, call 1-800-325-7749.

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SBC African American leader
grew church by staying focused By Mark Kendall

Baptist Press
9/21/95

LA PUENTE, Calif. (BP)--E.W. McCall knew his church had to stick to its niche. So his first big move as pastor was to scuttle plans to merge his African American congregation with an Anglo church.

That other church is long gone, while members of St. Stephen Baptist Church recently celebrated McCall's 25 years of leadership. A house church grew into the area's largest African American congregation by maintaining its identity -- and by helping provide one to members drawn from all over suburbia.

"When African Americans move to suburbia, they lose community," McCall said. "This church offers a bona fide community."

Some people drive 25 or more miles to worship here. The church thrives even though it's in a neighborhood with few African Americans.

With this success, McCall is getting attention within the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant denomination with more than 15 million members. He recently was elected president of the Southern Baptist African American Fellowship.

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McCall was there when his denomination made history in June. South rn Baptists split from a national Baptist group 150 y ars ago in a dispute over whether slave owners should be missionaries. Denominational leaders apologized for the past at the national convention in Atlanta.

The son of an Arkansas preacher, McCall studied elementary education in colleg , then came to California in 1962. He was angry about discrimination in the Deep South and earlier had considered joining the civil rights movement. He ended up teaching elementary school in Baldwin Park.

Then one day he happened by what would become his church as members met at a little stucco home. McCall joined and in 1970 was asked to be the pastor.

"When I came to California, I had this seething rage within me, but God turned and tilted it toward the kingdom," said McCall, who with wife Velma have three grown children.

McCall's father led his flock in a humble brick church, and his father's sermons focused on the hope of seeing Jesus in heaven. McCall spends more time talking about the journey there.

"Preaching should be portable," said the 50-ish McCall, who won't give his exact age. "People should be able to take something home with them -- an idea, a way to change their life."

With that approach the church grew from a home to a storefront and now a modern sanctuary that sits on four acres. It has more than 4,000 members.

Along with worship, the church offers practical help with everything from drug-abuse recovery programs to printing a Yellow Pages-type book of church members' businesses.

It's also a place to learn.

McCall always stayed the teacher. As a pastor, he still pushes education -- both spiritual and secular.

"When someone comes to our church, he says, 'Sign them up for Sunday school,'" said Natalie Barlow, 25, of Pomona, Calif.

Indeed, the church is nationally known within the SBC for its Sunday school classes that attract up to 1,000 people of all ages each week.

Learning goes beyond the Bible. College fairs, tutoring and preparation classes for admissions tests all are available at the church. Students do their homework in the church library and classrooms.

McCall said he chose his denomination, in part, because he saw the opportunity to learn "to do church." Conservative in theology, Southern Baptists -- which once supported racism and were dominated by whites -- are known for their skill in planting new churches. "I'm a realist," McCall said.

Now the denomination might be learning from him. Last year, McCall's church was ninth of more than 1,600 Southern Baptist churches in California in the important growth measure of baptisms. His church baptized 144.

Living in the time he did, McCall's father might have had trouble believing this sort of progress was possible here on earth. "He had to use survival tactics," McCall said.

"My dad was more passive," he added. "I'm more aggressive."

And just wait. McCall's son Wil recently entered seminary.

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Reprinted with permission from the San Gabriel Valley Tribune, West Corina, Calif.

Church fights tax assessment
of church-operated day care

By Julie A. Nall

Baptist Press
9/21/95

CARTHAGE, Mo. (BP)--Little Folks, th child-care and early education center housed at First Baptist Church, Carthage, Mo., is appealing a recent Jasper County assessment and \$40 tax paid in protest for personal property.

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First Baptist has housed Little Folks more than 25 years, pastor Ray Crews said. This is the first year the county has assessed and taxed the ministry.

"In terms of money, the amount of money is not large, but it creates a situation where the state is getting into the programs of the church to decide which ones they are going to tax," said Scott Douglas, a First Baptist member representing the church.

The church was denied its first two appeals and will appeal to the State Tax Commission in November. Douglas said the first appeal, heard informally, was denied by the board of equalization, a county board made up of three county commissioners, the county auditor and the county assessor. The second appeal was in a formal hearing before the Jasper County board of appeals, and also denied.

Another day care in Carthage, Wonderland Kiddie Kare at the Free-Will Baptist Church, was assessed and taxed in a recent year but not in 1995, Brian Brinkhoff said. Brinkhoff's wife is the director for Wonderland. He said Wonderland has yet to determine why it was taxed and why it was not taxed again.

"We cannot figure out the wording on why they are trying to tax us," Brinkhoff said. "It is hard to appeal when you don't know what you're fighting against."

First Baptist Church has requested an explanation of why the church-based day care is being taxed. Jasper County assessor Jim Willis said he requested a ruling by the State Tax Commission as to whether Little Folks was exempt.

"Our general advice to assessors is that if they are in doubt, the property should be assessed," tax commission counsel R. Randall Turley wrote in a reply to Willis. "This allows the taxpayer an opportunity to appeal and receive a decision based upon a complete record of all the facts."

Willis said he directly considered the fees and policies of the day care in his decision to assess Little Folks. "I have never been against the church," he said. "The Bible says, 'What belongs to Caesar, give to Caesar; what belongs to God, give to God.' There are a lot of churches in Joplin who have day-care centers that are being inspected. Other day care centers approach me to say they are glad we are taxing (the church day cares), because church day cares are taking their kids and busing them in, tax-free."

Crews said First Baptist has been unable to locate another private or religious day care in Carthage that is being taxed this year, although one other church day care has received a notice of assessment. "Our churches need to be warned about this," he said.

First Baptist Church, Jefferson City, Mo., has housed a child development center for 15 years without ever being questioned about taxes, director Carolyn Johnston said. She said the child development center is tax-exempt because it is not separate from the church. The books and payroll are done together with the church, the staff are church staff and the materials used in the development center are bought on the same account as other church materials.

Beverly Cockrell, financial secretary for First Baptist, Carthage, said Little Folks has its own bank account, but it shares equipment with the church, some purchased by the church and some by Little Folks. The same equipment is used for Sunday school and other church activities, she said.

Aimee Smashey, a hearing officer for the State Tax Commission, said the Missouri Constitution provides that under certain circumstances real and personal property is exempt from taxation. Exempt properties include: property owned by the government; property owned by nonprofit cemeteries; property not held for private or corporate profit and used exclusively for religious worship; property not held for private or corporate profit and used exclusively for schools or colleges; property not held for private or corporate profit and used for purposes purely charitable; or property not held for private or corporate profit and used exclusively for agricultural and horticultural societies.

"The key issue is, 'What is the primary use of the property?'" Smashey said. "If the primary use is one which qualifies for an exemption, the property should be exempt. In order for a day-care operation to have its property exempted, it will have to establish that the property is used primarily for religious, educational or charitable purposes."

She related a recent ruling by the Supreme Court of Missouri in which the court ruled on whether a house in Maryville owned by a religious organization, Central States Christian Endeavors Association, was subject to property tax by Nodaway County. The court determined the house owned by a campus religious organization was "used exclusively" for religious purposes even though the organization rented bedrooms to college students.

The full-time presence of student leaders at the house was closely related to the organization's religious purpose, in that students were readily available and were required to plan, promote and execute religious worship activities.

The court ruled that "used exclusively" refers to primary use. The fact that in the house more hours of the week are devoted to eating, resting, studying, fellowship, administration and counseling services than are devoted to purely religious worship does not make the property taxable.

In court, the taxpayer has the burden of establishing that its property falls within the exempted class. Douglas said First Baptist of Carthage has claimed religious, educational and charitable purposes for exemption. It is religious as a ministry of the church, with Christian teaching and a chapel time that each child attends. It is educational as an early education provider. It is charitable because the church actually loses money on its Little Folks program, with a net loss of \$15,057.49 in 1994.

Crews said he hopes legislation will be passed that will alleviate questions of vague wording in the laws regarding exemptions. State Sen. Marvin Singleton, R-Seneca, agreed such action would be beneficial.

"I would be more than happy to write it in statute to help clarify exemptions of religious day cares," Singleton said. "We basically need to know if the problem is located in just (Jasper County), or is it statewide? We may not need new legislation at all, but simply an understanding of this exemption."

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Churches challenge 'tax' bills
to pay for county incinerator

Baptist Press
9/21/95

WHEATON, Md. (BP)--Many Montgomery County, Md., churches received tax bills in the mail recently ranging from a few hundred to more than a thousand dollars. When asked the meaning of the bills, Montgomery County tax assessors explained everyone in the county would pay special taxes to underwrite costs for the new garbag incinerator under construction. Although the levies came labeled as tax bills, under questioning, county officials said, "Oh, no. It's not a tax. It's only an assessment."

Ed Williams, pastor of First Baptist Church, Wheaton, asking, "What's the difference between a tax and an assessment?" has taken up the no-tax banner with vigor.

"It's a matter of principle and Baptist heritage," Williams said of the levy. "I think John Leland (a revolutionary-era Virginia Baptist preacher who, with James Madison, moved the new nation toward complete religious freedom) would be very disappointed if we allowed our churches to be taxed to pay for government facilities without putting up a thoughtful but vigorous protest."

Almost all churches pay private contractors to remove their trash. These contractors, in turn, make their own deals with the county for the use of landfills and other means of waste disposal.

As notices have arrived in the churches' mailboxes, more and more pastors and lay leaders are preparing to fight the tax. In large measure, because he first publicly raised the alarm, Williams has become the hub of the protest movement. Although busy with pastoral responsibilities, Williams said he's in the fight to stay. County officials already have indicated they plan to raise the tax even higher next year.

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Williams, trained in Christian ethics, pointed out while churches certainly intend to act as solid citizens, the larger threat involved in this effort cannot go unchallenged.

"We all know government's penchant for expansion," he said. "If you let them into the church pocketbook with this tax, they are just going to dig deeper and deeper each year into church money to pay government bills. This assault on inherent religious freedom must be met -- now."

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Partnership, not preaching, key
to kingdom work, Draper says

By Dwayne Hastings

Baptist Press
9/21/95

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--No one ministry carries the local church, James T. Draper Jr., president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, told students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary Sept. 14. Not only are ordained clergy called to minister to a world crying for an embrace, Draper said, but everyone in the local church is a partner with God.

"I wish I could tell you that you just need a preaching ministry but that's not true," said Draper, former pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Texas.

"You can't find a great church that has lasted over several generations that did not have a great Bible teaching ministry and a great benevolence ministry in addition to a great preaching ministry."

The former Southern Baptist Convention president said too often the preaching ministry is tied only to the dynamism and the charisma of the man in the pulpit. Every ministry is needed, he said; all are partners, but not all have the same task in the kingdom.

The emphasis should not simply be that believers work together but that all work together with God, he said at the Wake Forest, N.C., school. "There is a great deal of difference," Draper said. "We could be working together and not be working with God -- in fact, we sometimes do," he quipped.

There are no words that can adequately describe what it means to be laborers together with God, partners, linked in harness with him, Draper continued.

"Every moment of every day in everything that I do, I am partnering with God - there are no accidental days. Wherever he leads us, he goes with us; whatever burden he places on us, he sustains us; and whatever relationship is severed from us, he is there with us in that moment."

The quickest way to burn out is to try to do the work of the Lord in the energy of the flesh, Draper said, citing the apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, "It is not our ministry or our service; it is his. We grow weary in our own strength. It is God who gives the increase."

Despite being partners together in kingdom work, believers are not all alike, Draper said, noting he preached for several years at First Baptist Church, Dallas, in the shadow of W.A. Criswell.

"People would ask me if it didn't bother me to have W.A. Criswell listening to me preach. It didn't. I'd tell them, 'He's unique. I could never be W.A. Criswell, but I'm the best me there ever was.'

"You don't have to be anybody else but yourself," Draper said, telling the Binkley Chapel audience to seek diligently for what God wants and then to get on with his plan.

A person's efforts will succeed because God gives the increase, Draper said. "Keep your eyes on God," he told the students. "Don't look at the associational record and don't get too impressed with your annual church profile. Keep your eyes on God and know that your measure of success is not the statistics of men, but the smile and blessing of God."

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**Pulpit courage urged despite
'roasted preacher' outcome**

By Lee Weeks

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--To be a minister in 1995 one must first be a "fool for Christ," Logan Carson said Sept. 19 at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"When you start pleasing God, men will turn against you," said Carson, professor of theology at Southeastern.

Carson, who has been blind since birth, became the seminary's first full-time African American professor last fall. Before coming to Southeastern, Carson taught for 21 years at Gardner-Webb College, Boiling Springs, N.C.

Carson said his blindness has never robbed him of life's joy. "I can't see the sun rising in the east (but) I know the S-O-N has risen in my soul," he said. "He (God) gave me an insight where I can look far beyond where your eyes can see."

Drawing his fingers over his braille text, Logan preached from 1 Corinthians 4: 3-12. This Scripture records the apostle Paul's account of what ministers of the gospel must endure for the sake of Christ, he said, in chapel services marking Black Pastors' Appreciation Day on the school's Wake Forest, N.C., campus.

"If you are a servant of God, you have, no doubt, been called many names," Carson said. "You will be praised, insulted, vilified and served around many dining room tables as 'roast preacher' or 'marinated minister.'"

Carson encouraged ministers to hold strong to God's Word when church members, "puffed up with pride," like those at Corinth, are offended by the preaching of the Word.

"Woe to the preacher who will not be directed by the Holy Spirit of God," Carson said. "Shame on the minister who will be afraid of what he will say or do. There comes times in the service of God when you must stand alone. But you are standing on the promise of God. ... The church has had enough placebos. It's time to give them the gospel."

Before preaching, Carson thanked the seminary community for praying for his wife, Glenwood, who went into a coma and was pronounced brain dead early last January.

Doctors gave her nearly no chance for recovery, Carson noted. Yet at Carson's introduction, Glenwood, now fully recovered, stood to a robust round of applause in Southeastern's Binkley Chapel. "I never panicked," Carson said of his wife's brush with death. "I never did anything but believe that he would bring her back."

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Weeks is a first-year M.Div. student at Southeastern.

**David Mein dies; was MK,
40-year missionary in Brazil**

By Mary E. Speidel

**Baptist Press
9/21/95**

VALDOSTA, Ga. (BP)--David Mein, who grew up in Brazil and served 40 years as a Southern Baptist missionary there, died after a long illness Sept. 18 in a Valdosta, Ga., hospital. He was 75.

Born in Grand Rapids, Mich., Mein grew up in Maceio and Recife, Brazil, the son of the late Southern Baptist missionaries John and Elizabeth Mein.

The younger Mein, appointed to Brazil in 1944, succeeded his father in 1953 as president of North Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary in Recife. He held the post until he and his late wife, the former Lou Demie Segers of Cornelia, Ga., retired in 1985. The seminary's library and chapel are named after Mein.

Twice Mein was elected president of the Brazilian Baptist Convention. He also wrote two books on missions in Brazil. During missionary furloughs he taught at four of the six Southern Baptist Convention seminaries.

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Most of the Meins' service was in Recife, where he was named an honorary citizen. Mein also was a teacher at the seminary, headmaster of a Baptist high school and for 30 years pastor of Cordeiro Baptist Church. Earlier, after missionary appointment by the Foreign Mission Board, the Meins worked for a few years in the Brazilian state of Sergipe.

Mein earned the bachelor of arts degree from Georgetown (Ky.) College and the master and doctor of theology degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

He is survived by a son, John Edwin Mein of Sao Paulo, Brazil; two daughters, Margaret Graves of Louisville, Ky., and Mildred Hunt of Valdosta; a brother, William Carey Mein of Monterey, Calif.; a sister, Margaret Elizabeth Mein of Austin, Texas; and five grandchildren.

A graveside service was to be held at 10 a.m. Sept. 21 at Sunset Hill Cemetery, Valdosta, followed by an 11 a.m. memorial service at First Baptist Church, Valdosta, where Mein was a member at the time of his death. He and his late wife had lived in Valdosta during retirement.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial gifts be sent to the David Mein Memorial Library at the North Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary, c/o First Baptist Church, 200 W. Central Ave., Valdosta, GA 31601.

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Miss. pastor dies of injuries
from airplane crash in Georgia

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Baptist Press
9/21/95

ATLANTA (BP)--Mississippi Gulf Coast pastor Steven R. Wilkinson, 34, died Sept. 18 after suffering severe burns in the Aug. 21 crash of a commuter airplane en route from Atlanta to Gulfport.

Bobby Perry, director of missions for Gulf Coast Baptist Association, said Wilkinson succumbed to kidney and liver failure at about 3:30 p.m. Sept. 18 while a patient in the burn unit of Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta.

Wilkinson, former pastor of Popps Ferry Baptist Church, Biloxi, survived the crash of the Atlantic Southeast Airlines flight, but suffered first-, second- and third-degree burns over a large area of his body.

He was returning from a visit with a pastor search committee in Illinois when the Brazilian-made Embraer 120 crash-landed in a farm field five miles southwest of Carrollton, Ga., with 26 passengers and three crew members aboard.

Four people were killed in the crash, and at least three others have since died of injuries received in the accident. Several other passengers remain in serious condition in hospitals around the Atlanta area.

Eyewitnesses reported the 66-foot-long aircraft broke in half behind the cockpit and caught fire moments after it slammed into the ground. Many of the passengers escaped from the plane's mangled fuselage but were seriously burned.

News reports indicate federal investigators searching for clues to the cause of the crash are focusing on an engine propeller that may have broken loose in flight and damaged the engine. No official determination has been announced.

Wilkinson, who was single, received a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, in 1986. He was also a graduate of Mississippi College and Gulfport High School.

Perry said Wilkinson's parents, who reside on the Gulf Coast, were returning from Atlanta Sept. 19 and funeral arrangements were incomplete at press time.

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**Turkey-calling layman calls
for conservation of creation**

By Tim Palmer

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)--Ralph Duren isn't worried about going on David Letterman's TV show. After all, he already has performed before Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf. The Gulf War hero sat at the head table as Duren competed in the National Wild Turkey Federation turkey-calling contest this past February before 3,000 banquet guests at Nashville's Opryland Hotel.

Competitors had to do a two-minute routine that could incorporate turkey calls and any other natural sounds. Duren used his voice to combine 40 different animal noises in a symphony of the woods waking up in the morning. When he heard the crowd respond to a coyote bark midway through, Duren recalled, he knew he had won the audience.

Shortly afterward he learned he had won the title: national champion turkey caller. He received a big trophy, a fancy new shotgun and an expense-paid trip to New York City to appear on a cable network interview show. He expects to appear on the Letterman show in mid-November.

Duren, a member of Liberty Road Baptist Church, Jefferson City, Mo., has spent nearly a lifetime perfecting his calls. Growing up on a farm in Jefferson County, he entertained himself while doing chores by talking to the animals around him. His father taught him some of the finer points of calling game birds.

In his job as public relations specialist for the Missouri Department of Conservation, Duren travels the state making presentations for groups and special events. That can mean anything from a prison Bible study group to a Baptist association's wild game dinner. Recently he performed at the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia; the next day took him to Bass Pro Shop in Springfield.

Longtime Department of Conservation employee Duren formerly was a wildlife damage control agent and then an outdoor skills/hunter skills specialist. He had so many requests for appearances that in August the agency allowed him to focus full time on making presentations.

"The department saw an opportunity for Ralph to use his unique skills and background to provide outdoor education to Missourians," said Gerald Ross, an assistant director of department. "He's a very able communicator of the importance of natural resources in our state."

Duren imparts knowledge and humor in liberal doses. There are three ways to get an animal's attention, he told his audience at the state fair: invade its territory, make it think you're a potential mate or sound like you're something it likes for dinner. "If there's something out there that can have you for dinner, you don't want to use that."

He then shifted to imitating the calls of the cardinal -- so territorial it will attack its own reflection; the robin; the eastern meadowlark; the blue jay, "tattletale of the woods;" the redwing blackbird; and others.

Knowing bird calls can be useful in conservation work, Duren pointed out. Agents position themselves at designated intervals each spring to listen for the cooing of male doves so they can estimate the dove population.

Duren's repertoire goes far beyond whistles and chirps. A green frog makes a sound like a broken banjo string.

There are some calls Duren doesn't do -- those he believes the human voice is incapable of duplicating. He uses a tube to get the desired resonance for an elk call. Although he can do a passable rose-breasted grosbeak when he hears one, its song is too long and intricate to memorize.

The poor old possum is a target for Duren's wit -- it makes a "thump-thump" sound as a vehicle turns it into road kill. This makes it a favored food for crows, Duren explained, but you never see road-kill crow. That's because they post a lookout in a tree, and h sounds the alarm, "Cawr! Cawr!" as drivers approach.

Before the hour-long presentation concludes, Duren has demonstrated everything from a screaming toad to a screeching owl to a honking goose to a howling wolf. He even coaxes audience participation, getting the women to cry, "Luck, luck," like a gaggle of Canada geese.

Duren said his primary job is making people aware of the wildlife that is all around them -- even in their own backyards. He enjoys helping folks recognize the sounds they may hear every day.

Another message Duren tries to get across: "It's all right to hunt and trap; in some cases it's pretty necessary." Many people do not realize the contributions sportsmen have made to restoring wildlife that had nearly disappeared, he noted.

"I'm not trying to make hunters out of the audience," Duren added. He seeks to educate the public about the difference between the "market hunting" of old and the sport hunting of today, as well as the role of hunting in managing wildlife populations.

"Genesis says we're supposed to be stewards of the creation," he explained. "That's pretty much what our job is. I learned that in Sunday school when I was a little bitty kid."

When he speaks in churches, Duren points out that the animal rights movement is misguided because its emphasis is on worshiping creation rather than the Creator.

Duren grew up in Selma Baptist Church, Festus, Mo. He and his wife, Cheryl, live with their five children -- ages 4 to 16 -- in Taos, near Jefferson City.

In his talks, Duren emphasizes that hunting and fishing can help young people stay out of trouble. Like most outdoorsmen, he acknowledged that being in the great outdoors causes him to feel close to God. "That doesn't mean you need to skip church and go hunting and fishing on Sunday morning."

Duren has been a Sunday school director and teacher; currently he is substitute song leader at Liberty Road Baptist Church. He said he has enjoyed leadership training at Windermere Baptist assembly, which is also a favorite place to enjoy nature. "Take one of those hiking trails and hear all the sounds I do -- except for wolves and elk and some of those."

Autumn finds Duren busy giving presentations all across Missouri -- from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies meeting in Branson to schools near the Iowa line. He admits to practicing wildlife calls sometimes as he drives along the highway, especially when he can't find his favorite music, Southern gospel, on the radio.

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(BP) photo of Duren available upon request from Missouri Word & Way.

State policeman, convict meet
again in lay revival ministry By Joyce Sweeney Martin

Baptist Press
9/21/95

WEST LIBERTY, Ky. (BP)--Although state policeman Dave Hoffman had seen "that face" in his mind's eye many times the past 15 years, he had not expected to be eyeball-to-eyeball ever again. In fact, he thought the man was dead.

But there the man was, coming down the corridor of the Eastern Kentucky Correctional Complex.

"I recognized him immediately," Hoffman said.

After all, he said, it's hard to forget the face of a man who planned to kill you, the face of a man you encountered in a barrel-to-barrel confrontation when you were 29 years old and just five years into a law enforcement career.

There was another reason Hoffman hadn't forgotten the man. Over the years, "the Holy Spirit had brought his face back to me many times," he said. "He became a part of my testimony."

Often, Hoffman had told about how even though he was not a Christian at the time, God still watched over him. "It was not luck or skill that saved my life. It was God," he recounted.

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The story began when the 39-year-old man had been jailed on a stolen vehicle charge, but had escaped. Two weeks later, Hoffman located him and went alone to a residence to make the arrest.

"He met me with a shotgun loaded with deer slugs," Hoffman said. "Both of us had our weapons drawn, getting ready to kill each other." But, "in the providence of God," Hoffman convinced the man to lay his weapon down and surrender. "He told me he had planned to shoot whoever came to arrest him, but surrendered instead because I treated him fairly."

The man had a long criminal record and felt "on other busts he had not been treated fairly," Hoffman said.

And now, on an August weekend in the last 40 minutes of the last day of a lay-led revival at the Eastern Kentucky prison, the two were once again face-to-face.

Hoffman and 64 other laymen from Central Baptist Church, Winchester, Ky., had spent the weekend ministering at the prison. Although they were tired and ready to go home, Hoffman's team decided to hand out a few more tracts.

It was then that Hoffman saw him. "At first he didn't recognize me," Hoffman said. But when Hoffman identified himself, the inmate said he had thought of Hoffman many times over the years. In fact, he said he had included Hoffman "several times" in a biography he is writing. And he said he had become a Christian.

Once again, in "that face," Hoffman saw the hand of God. "Sometimes the Lord gives an extra blessing to let you know his presence is still here," he said.

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