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September 22, 1995

95-150

PORTUGAL: European Baptist leaders affirm cooperation with FMB.

VIRGINIA--Inserts, ads in dailies detail Foreign Mission Board's work.

ILLINOIS--Evangelical groups wrangle over alleged abuse of families.

MISSOURI--Her impulsive promise gets new van for church in Belarus.

KENTUCKY--Southern trustees will consider transfer of social work school.

SOUTH AFRICA--Missionary to Lesotho dies in car wreck in South Africa.

EDITORS' NOTE: Baptist Press today adds a weekly calendar of meetings related to Southern Baptist Convention entities. CALENDAR will appear every Friday, listing meetings to be held during the coming week. Periodically, other meetings of key interest in Southern Baptist life, such as the Jericho missions weeks, also will be noted.

CALENDAR

NORTH CAROLINA -- Baptist Sunday School Board trustees, Sept. 25-27, Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

**European Baptist leaders
affirm cooperation with FMB**

**Baptist Press
9/22/95**

SAO PEDRO DE MOEL, Portugal (BP)--Baptist leaders from 40 European countries unanimously affirmed their cooperative relationship with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board during the European Baptist Federation's general council meeting Sept. 20-23.

In an address to the body Sept. 21, FMB President Jerry Rankin reasserted the board's commitment to ever-higher levels of cooperation in evangelism and church planting efforts, even as the numbers of career and volunteer missionaries in Europe reach record levels.

A hundred delegates were convened in Sao Pedro de Moel, Portugal, for the annual meeting.

"This was my first opportunity to speak to the European Baptist Federation," said Rankin, FMB president since June 1993. "It was a joy to bring them greetings on behalf of Southern Baptists and to share our FMB vision and pledge our continuing cooperation with the Baptists of Europe for evangelism and church growth."

Rankin and John Floyd, director of FMB work in Europe, also spoke to the EBF executive committee Sept. 21 to review the Hamburg Agreement, a 1992 accord outlining principles of cooperation and consultation between the two groups. The committee voted to reaffirm the Hamburg Agreement, and EBF's general council delegates ratified the action unanimously.

Floyd told the committee the board now has 459 career missionaries and representatives working in 30 countries of Europe, with ongoing relationships in 15 other countries. On top of that, requests for missionaries are pouring in from Eastern Europe.

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Baptists in the Ukraine, who currently host five FMB missionaries, have asked for missionaries to be sent to each of the country's 25 regions. Many countries that gained independence after the collapse of the old Soviet Union are making similar requests.

At the same time, partnership projects will involve a record number of volunteers from the United States for evangelism and church growth efforts in Europe this year, he said.

Through August, 2,979 volunteers had assisted European Baptists in 384 projects related to the FMB. That number is expected to top 4,000 by year's end.

Almost half those volunteers have served through one of 15 partnerships between Southern Baptist state conventions and EBF conventions or unions. Match-ups such as those between Georgia and Germany, Texas and Romania/Estonia, Kentucky and Russia, Tennessee and Poland, and Arkansas and the European Baptist Convention have given large numbers of Southern Baptists hands-on involvement with FMB work in Europe.

More than 1,600 Southern Baptists so far this year have joined partnership evangelism projects coordinated by Southern Baptists like Dub Jackson of Abilene, Texas, former president of World Evangelism Foundation; Arnold Tanner of Outreach Evangelism International in Lubbock, Texas; and Taylor Henley of Missions Our Mission in San Angelo, Texas.

Major crusade efforts are under way this year in Denmark and Spain, with plans for Norway and Sweden in 1996 and England, France and Germany, among others, in 1996 and 1997.

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Inserts, ads in dailies detail
Foreign Mission Board's work

By Marty Groll

Baptist Press
9/22/95

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board distributed about 1.9 million tabloid-size inserts through daily newspapers in four major cities during September.

In addition, the board placed a full-page color ad -- with a clip-out coupon to order the tabloid report -- in three other daily newspapers of major cities with circulation totaling 625,000.

The eight-page, four-color insert, a special report titled "Changing Lives Overseas for 150 Years," highlights the size and scope of the board's work throughout the world, using stories, photos and informational graphics.

Content ranges from an overview piece on what the board is and does, to its record growth overseas in baptisms and new churches and its involvement in Bosnia. It includes a message from board President Jerry A. Rankin and a statement of the board's vision and mission.

The ad centers on the teamwork between volunteers and missionaries working in 130 nations. "We're Southern Baptists coming together. ... One Savior. One people. One purpose. No apologies," it reads.

"We have an exciting message to share with Southern Baptists," said David Button, the board's vice president for public relations and development. "God is using our missionaries in remarkable ways to bring Christ to the nations. The staff in Richmond is trying to be as creative in communicating the missionary story as our missionaries are in communicating God's love."

Counting pass-around readership, the board hopes to reach up to 6.5 million people with the inserts and ads. The board projects up to 2 million Southern Baptists could be among them.

The papers and dates the inserts were scheduled to run are: Richmond Times-Dispatch, Sept. 21; Atlanta Journal and Constitution, Sept. 22; Houston Chronicle, Sept. 23; and The Dallas Morning News, Sept. 23. The ads were to run Sept. 23 in the Birmingham Post-Herald; The Greenville News-Piedmont; and the Nashville Tennessean-Banner.

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Cities were chosen based on their Southern Baptist population.

"Our traditional channels of communication about our work have served us well," Button said. "(This) helps augment what those channels are doing, and gives us the perfect media mix for getting our message out to missions supporters."

Inserts also were packaged with the September issue of Pastors Update, a 37,000-circulation four-page newsletter produced by the board. Free copies of the insert are available from the Foreign Mission Board by contacting customer services at 1-800-866-FMB1.

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Evangelical groups wrangle
over alleged abuse of families By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
9/22/95

WHEATON, Ill. (BP)--An evangelical group advocating "biblical teachings on male headship in marriage" has issued a statement that such teachings "do not authorize a man's domination or abuse of his wife."

The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, based in Wheaton, Ill., said its statement on abuse, released in mid-September, "was originally written to be issued jointly with Christians for Biblical Equality," which CBMW described as "the leading evangelical feminist advocacy group," although CBE does not use the word "feminism" in its statement of faith.

According to a CBMW news release, "Surprisingly, CBE declined CBMW's offer to issue this statement jointly."

Christians for Biblical Equality, however, will have a book on the issue, "Women, Abuse and the Bible," released next year by Baker Book House, drawing on an April 1994 conference in Chicago with the same title. The book will consist of papers presented during the two-day conference's plenary sessions and workshops, attended by about 150 people.

CBE's president, Catherine C. Kroeger, for example, told a conference session that proponents of traditional family hierarchy may not intend to promote abuse of women and children, but the system leads to it, according to a report in Christianity Today. A "major flaw in the system" of male headship, Kroeger was quoted as saying, is that it "misses the propensity to sin."

The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood's 10-point statement defines abuse as "the cruel use of power or authority to harm another person emotionally, physically, or sexually."

It says the biblical teaching on relationships between men and women "does not support, but condemns abuse. ... Abuse is the hallmark of the devil and is in direct opposition to the purposes of God. Abuse ought not to be tolerated in the Christian community. ... (T)he Christian community is responsible for the well-being of its members. It has a responsibility to lovingly confront abusers and to protect the abused."

The statement also notes, "We are confident of the power of God's healing love to restore relationships fractured by abuse, but we realize that repentance, forgiveness, wholeness and reconciliation is a process. Both abusers and abused are in need of ongoing counseling, support and accountability. In instances where abusers are unrepentant and/or unwilling to make significant steps toward change, we believe that the Christian community must respond with firm discipline of the abuser and advocacy, support and protection of the abused."

CBMW's 23-member council includes three Southern Baptist women, Dorothy Patterson, of Wake Forest, N.C., wife of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson; Beverly LaHaye, president, Concerned Women for America, Washington; Rhonda H. Kelley, associate director, Innovative Evangelism, New Orleans.

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Various other Southern Baptists are members of CBMW's board of reference, including Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, suburban Memphis, Tenn., and his wife, Joyce; Paige Patterson; theologian Carl F.H. Henry; and Betty Jo Lewis, wife of Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis.

CBMW's flagship book, "Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: An Evangelical Response to Feminism," published by Crossway Books, was chosen as 1992 "Book of the Year" by readers of Christianity Today. According to CBMW, the 566-page book, with chapters by 22 authors, "is widely recognized as the most thorough scholarly defense of a complementarian view of the Bible's teaching on the relationship between men and women."

CBE, meanwhile, currently has no Southern Baptist board members, according to a spokeswoman at CBE's Minneapolis office. Timothy Weber, a church history professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., is among the endorsers of CBE's two-page "Men, Women & Biblical Equality" statement, as are such well-known evangelicals as retired U.S. Senate Chaplain Richard Halverson, Christianity Today senior editor Kenneth Kantzer and speaker-authors Tony Campolo, Bruce Larson and Stuart Briscoe.

In its news release, the Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood describes itself as "a group of leading evangelical scholars, pastors and authors committed to promoting male-female equality and loving headship by the husband in marriage." They believe that "God has given the husband a unique authority as leader of the family, and that he is to exercise that authority in self-giving love for his wife and his children, following the example of Christ (Eph. 5:22-23)."

Christians for Biblical Equality, meanwhile, says in its literature it is "an organization of Christians who believe that the Bible, properly interpreted, teaches the fundamental equality of men and women." Its statement of faith says the the Bible "is the inspired Word of God, is reliable, and is the final authority for faith and practice."

Both organizations have cornerstone statements: CBMW's "Danvers Statement," drafted during a 1987 meeting in Danvers, Mass., and CBE's "Men, Women & Biblical Equality," of 1989.

Wayne Grudem, CBMW president and professor of biblical and systematic theology at Trinity International University, Deerfield, Ill., was quoted in the news release as saying of CBE: "If they will not join us in something on which we agree (condemning abuse), then I see little hope that they will be willing to join us in constructive dialogue on issues where we disagree."

CBE's Kroeger, adjunct associate professor of classical and ministry studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Mass., contacted Sept. 22, said in response, "We could not issue a statement jointly with an organization propounding a submissionist theology. In our opinion, based upon considerable sociological and biblical research, such a theology predisposes to family violence and abuse."

Kroeger cited research, for example, by a Campus Crusade for Christ staff member, Jackie Hudson, who also is a specialist in child abuse, that the risk of incest is 2 percent in families where husbands and wives see themselves as equals but "far higher in patriarchal families." According to various studies, Kroeger said, the No. 1 predisposing factor for child abuse is substance abuse followed by "religious fundamentalism."

Grudem, reached Sept. 22 for reaction to Kroeger's comments, said, "I think that's using sociology to overturn the teachings of Scripture. We don't know what collections of people and data have gone into those studies. I'm very concerned about a trend toward sociological studies rather than Scripture determining our standards of conduct. We know that any teaching of Scripture can be misused, and we're issuing this statement precisely to guard against that."

Her impulsive promise gets
new van for church in Belarus

By Julie A. Nall

Baptist Press
9/22/95

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (BP)--Jean Freeman is off the hook. A member of South Gate Baptist Church, Springfield, Mo., Freeman visited the Berezinski Baptist Church in Belarus while on a mission trip to the Eastern European country.

While there, she made an expensive promise on the spur of the moment in the spirit of excitement and camaraderie. She promised the Berezinski Baptist Church a new mini-van.

South Gate Baptist Church has adopted the Berezinski congregation in a church-to-church linkup, part of a three-year partnership between Missouri Baptists and the Baptist union in Belarus.

Freeman was one of nearly 90 Missouri Baptist women who went to Minsk, Belarus, in June to attend a national meeting of Baptist women at Central Baptist Church there. Missouri Woman's Missionary Union members scaled down their own 1995 annual meeting in order to free up funds to give the Belarussian women their first-ever opportunity for a similar meeting.

Freeman said she almost did not make the trip, as she had never been on a mission trip before. Her husband and the associational Woman's Missionary Union director convinced her to go.

She lived overseas when her husband was a pastor in Australia and Germany, so she was prepared for the travel, but she never really thought to call the Belarus visit a mission trip.

Possibilities for visiting the partner church seemed dim as interpreters were few and some missionaries did not believe the Berezinski area was safe to visit.

Then almost at the last moment, Mila Firisuk became available as her interpreter. Freeman was ecstatic.

While visiting at the home of pastor Nikolai Shpak, Freeman asked him to relate prayer requests for the Berezinski church. Her intent was to pass them along to her pastor and South Gate church for prayer.

The Berezinski church is 70 years old. At one point in its history, every adult man was taken away and the church never saw them again. In Pastor Nikolai's memory, the church has been fined 17 times under communism for acts such as baptizing without permission. Shpak mentioned such problems as prayer requests.

"It's amazing how in all these 70 years, they have remained faithful and never turned back," Freeman said. "They never looked back."

The pastor also told Freeman about the need for classrooms. The church has no place to hold Sunday school for 40 children and young people who are eager to enjoy a privilege denied to Christian youth for 70 years.

Pastor Shpak went on to say that the church needed a micro-bus, which is what the Belarussians call a mini-van.

"Before even thinking once, much less twice, about what I was saying, I blurted out, 'You got it, Brother Nikolai!'" Freeman said. "Immediately I realized what I had done and wanted to retract my hastily spoken words, but too late." The interpreter relayed her words as a pledge from South Gate church to Berezinski Baptist Church to provide the Belarus congregation a van.

What to do? "I knew Jean Freeman had to get them a van," Freeman said. "First I asked the Lord to forgive me for such audacity and unauthorized boldness lest the members of our link-up church think I alone could accomplish such a feat."

When South Gate pastor Nolan Carrier gave Freeman opportunity to share her slides and experiences from Belarus, she confessed to the congregation what she had done. She admitted that her husband, Bill, was hearing about her promise for the first time with the rest of the church.

"Jean's commitment to the Lord is very evident," Carrier said. "When she heard that need, she was convinced God spoke to her."

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Freeman said there was an electrifying response in the South Gate congregation. Carrier said that if the church had taken an offering that night, they probably would have raised the \$5,000 needed for the van because of the spirit there. But they were all in shock.

The deacons endorsed the project and designated one Sunday to collect the money. Special offerings were taken in each of the Sunday services, and after the evening service the church held a pie auction on the lawn outside.

There were 91 cakes and pies. The auction raised \$3,011, which works out to \$33.09 per pie. South Gate had sent \$1,000 earlier in the year which the Berezinski church was saving, and with the special offerings the total raised was \$7,407, Carrier reported.

"If we could do that, as a six-year-old church, any church could do it," Carrier remarked. "What made me feel good about the church was that we really need every penny for the new building fund, but if we're going to be missions-minded, we have to do this. After the Missouri Baptist three-year commitment (to the link-up church), the feeling of our people is that it will be an ongoing commitment."

South Gate church is hoping to send the van fund money to the Berezinski church with a group of pastors who are going to Belarus in October.

"I just give the credit to the Lord," she said. "I just related the prayer request and God did the rest."

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EDITORS' NOTE: Please substitute the following story for one with the same headline in (BP) 9/21/95.

**Southern trustees will consider
transfer of social work school**

**Baptist Press
9/22/95**

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.

Financial arrangements were not disclosed by either school.

"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.

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

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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.

Thomas E. Corts, Samford's president, noted in a statement: "It is crucial that Southern Baptists maintain an emphasis on the great social issues of our time, the way those issues impact persons and the way the Christian faith and churches minister to those persons."

Corts said Samford had been exploring the possibility of adding social work education almost two years. He said Birmingham "is a great venue for the school ... home to the national headquarters of Woman's Missionary Union, which originated the program that led to Carver School's founding."

Mohler voiced appreciation for the Southern trustees involved in the transfer.

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

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**Missionary to Lesotho dies
in car wreck in South Africa**

By Mary Speidel

**Baptist Press
9/22/95**

MIDWATERS, South Africa (BP)--Glenda Middleton, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary to Lesotho, died in an accident Sept. 22 while driving alone behind her husband to a prayer retreat in Midwaters, South Africa.

Middleton, from Bernice, La., apparently lost control of her four-wheel-drive vehicle while going over a series of humps in the terrain on the paved road, said John Gordy, who directs Foreign Mission Board work in South Africa.

It appeared she died upon impact after her vehicle flipped over, Gordy said. The accident occurred sometime between 10 a.m. and noon about 40 miles from Midwaters in South Africa's Orange Free State.

Middleton, 56, was following her husband, Charles, from Shreveport, La. After passing over the humps, he checked in his rear-view mirror for his wife but didn't see her. He turned his truck around to investigate.

At the scene, a farmer who apparently had seen or heard the accident told the missionary his wife was dead, Gordy said. Middleton found her vehicle upside down off the shoulder. Using CPR, he tried unsuccessfully to revive his wife, still belted into the driver's seat. A South African physician speculated she died upon impact, but an autopsy is being performed. Mrs. Middleton reportedly had some health problems.

The Middletons are assigned to Maseru, capital of the tiny country of Lesotho, which is surrounded by South Africa. He is a church developer. Much of her work as a missionary has been in literature development.

After appointment by the Foreign Mission Board in 1968, the Middletons served in the southeastern African country of Malawi 13 years. There they did church planting and publications work. In 1982 they transferred to Transkei -- also in southern Africa -- where they worked in church planting and church development for a decade.

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The Middletons wrote and edited a number of tracts, Sunday school and religious education materials, said John Faulkner, who directs FMB work in southern and eastern Africa.

"She's always been involved in some kind of literature development. She was a very dedicated and capable missionary," said Faulkner, who is based in Nairobi, Kenya.

"She worked with women in the church and was planning to do some literacy training with them," said missionary colleague Martha McAlister, whom Mrs. Middleton had helped with language study. "The work there is fairly new. The people are difficult to reach. But she was always upbeat, always cheerful, no matter what.

"She was an encourager. She was a real strength to her husband."

Before her appointment, Middleton, the former Glenda Evans, was a teacher in Bienville, La., White Settlement, Texas, and Ringgold, La. She earned the bachelor of arts degree from Louisiana College in Pineville.

Besides her husband, she is survived by a daughter, Vicki Blackwell of Bossier City, La., and a son, Carl Middleton of Hawkins, Texas.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

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