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**NATIONAL OFFICE**  
SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
(615) 244-2355  
Herb Hollinger, Vice President  
Fax (615) 742-8919  
CompuServe ID# 70420,17

**BUREAUS**

**ATLANTA** Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522, CompuServe 70420,250  
**DALLAS** Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232, CompuServe 70420,115  
**NASHVILLE** Linda Lawson, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300, CompuServe 70420,57  
**RICHMOND** Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151, CompuServe 70420,72  
**WASHINGTON** Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223, CompuServe 71173,316

October 17, 1995

95-165

MISSOURI--Midwestern Seminary trustees elect 4 new vice presidents.  
WASHINGTON--Bread for World decries reduction in foreign aid.  
KENTUCKY--Church sends Bosnians 'Shoebox Blessings.'  
MISSISSIPPI--Nobles to remain in federal custody; competency hearing scheduled Oct. 31.  
VIRGINIA--Navy adrift without God, Southeastern prof says.  
ALABAMA--Church feeds Opal's refugees, sends \$1,000 to world's hungry.  
MARYLAND--Baptist association launches 'Advangelism' to reach region.  
GEORGIA--Int'l seafarers find friend in 75-year-old 'Miss Vallie;' photo.  
ALBERTA--Ski-jump tower new home for Canadian Baptist Church.  
TEXAS--Proceeds from Christian artists help support work of Covenant.

**Midwestern Seminary trustees  
elect 4 new vice presidents**

**By Herb Hollinger**

**Baptist Press  
10/17/95**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Trustees of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary unanimously approved an administrative team recommendation of new President Mark T. Coppenger, electing four new vice presidents, at their Oct. 16-17 regular meeting.

Coppenger, Midwestern's president since Aug. 1, brought recommendations for vice presidents of academic affairs, institutional advancement, student development and business affairs at his first meeting as president with the 35-member board of trustees. Coppenger said some have called his staff selection a "power or dream team."

Lamar Cooper was elected vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty, effective Oct. 19. Martin F. King was elected vice president for institutional advancement, effective Dec. 11. Gary K. Ledbetter was elected vice president for student development, effective Dec. 1. Michael K. Whitehead was elected vice president for business affairs, effective Jan. 1.

Midwestern trustees seemed to embrace the enthusiasm and vision of Coppenger, former vice president for convention relations for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, when he presented his administrative team. Coppenger has often, since coming to the Kansas City, Mo. campus, articulated his vision of the seminary reaching out to the nation's midwest in an evangelistic, missionary and revival spirit, called "prairie fire."

Cooper, 53, was also elected dean of Midwestern's faculty as well as professor of Old Testament and Hebrew.

He will receive an annual salary of \$60,000, while the other three vice presidents will receive salaries of \$50,000.

Cooper is director of denominational relations for the SBC Christian Life Commission, Nashville, Tenn. He came to the CLC in 1989 following nine years as dean of graduate studies for Criswell College, Dallas. He also was a pastor in Louisiana and Texas.

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A native of New Orleans, Cooper has a degree from Louisiana College, Pineville, La. and two degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, a master of theology in 1969 and doctor of theology in 1975. He has also studied archaeology at Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel.

Cooper and his wife, Barbara, have four children.

Speaking to trustees, Cooper said he hopes to foster a spirit of cooperation and teamwork, in harmony with the vision of the new president. Several trustees cited his work at Criswell College as evidence of his strong academic and motivational strengths.

Cooper said he and Coppenger are on the "same page" when it comes to commitment and vision for Midwestern.

"We are coming to help build for the future of Midwestern a school that will be faithful to its commitment to our Lord, the convention and to our doctrinal positions that have been clearly enunciated by our convention, with the goal of helping to prepare people to go out and minister in Southern Baptist churches."

Martin "Marty" King, 44, has been the public relations and development officer for the SBC Home Mission Board as well as Atlanta bureau chief for Baptist Press, the SBC's daily news service, since 1992. As institutional advancement officer at Midwestern, King will have similar responsibilities: public relations, development, alumni affairs, publications and student enlistment.

King has a bachelor's degree from Indiana State University, Terre Haute, and has completed course work for a master's in journalism from Ball State University, Muncie, Ind. He has worked with several medical and mental health agencies, taught journalism at two universities and worked as a broadcast journalist and news anchor for a radio/television station.

King and his wife, Barbara, have two daughters.

Gary K. Ledbetter has been editor of the Indiana Baptist, newsjournal of that state convention, and the convention's director of student work since 1989. His position at Midwestern, Coppenger told trustees, was created by merging two current seminary offices, dean of students and vocational services.

Ledbetter, 40, a native of Arkansas, has been a student worker with churches in Arkansas, Texas and Indiana. He is chairman of the SBC Christian Life Commission and a member of the SBC Committee on Order of Business.

A graduate of Criswell College and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, Ledbetter will be asked to give stronger emphasis "to cultivating and coordinating student involvement in missions and evangelism," according to Coppenger.

Ledbetter and his wife, Tammi, have three children.

Michael K. Whitehead, 45, has been the general counsel and director of Christian citizenship and religious liberty concerns for the SBC Christian Life Commission since 1990.

As vice president for business affairs, Whitehead will be responsible for supervising the financial office, computer services, student housing and campus operations at Midwestern. With extensive experience in business matters, both as a management trainer and as a manager, Coppenger said, Whitehead has developed and presented training programs for thousands of human resource managers in one-day seminars in more than 100 U.S. cities.

A specialist in religious liberty/First Amendment litigations, Whitehead has drafted and filed numerous friend-of-the-court briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court and lower courts. An attorney, Whitehead also was responsible for general legal work of the Christian Life Commission.

Whitehead, a native of the Kansas City area, has a bachelor's degree and the juris doctor from the University of Missouri, Columbia.

Coppenger told trustees Whitehead also would possibly teach religious liberty and church-state issues at the seminary as well as courses in church and the law.

Whitehead and his wife, Jan, have three children.

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Midwestern writers Jennifer Mauldin and James A. Smith contributed to this article.

Bread for World decries  
reduction in foreign aid

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
10/17/95

WASHINGTON (BP)--At a time when violent civil unrest is producing hunger for 100 million people worldwide, Congress is cutting foreign assistance programs which could help, Bread for the World charged in its annual hunger report.

In its recent report, Bread for the World said proposals passed by both the House of Representatives and Senate would reduce development funding and other aid which helps reduce poverty. The House approved a funding cut of 35 percent in the overall foreign aid appropriations bill, while the Senate's cut was 24 percent. A conference committee soon will determine the final figure.

"At a time when we really need to step up to the responsibility of a world power, we are slashing deeply the budget that could help the most hurting in the world," said Rep. Tony Hall, D.-Ohio, at a Oct. 13 news conference. This cutback "probably could not come at a worse time," he said.

In a statement released at the conference, Bread for the World President David Beckmann said, "In a world of Rwandas and Liberias, slashing and burning the best of foreign aid is clearly not the answer. By spending a fraction of what it cost to send troops into Somalia and Rwanda, we could help prevent hunger and conflict on the entire continent of Africa. A little forethought now can prevent mass grave-digging later."

Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, said, "Congress has an imposing responsibility. We must not, as a nation, turn our backs on starving people. At the same time, solving hunger crises is sometimes a very complex matter. If Congress chooses to cut humanitarian aid to foreign countries, it should do so with a scalpel, not a hatchet.

"The danger is that we take the short-term approach," Mitchell said.

"Long-term development, as the term suggests, takes time. We need to take the long look if we are truly interested in helping people at risk of dying from hunger."

In 1994, there were reports of 164 armed conflicts in the world. Since World War II, violent civil conflict has become the prime cause of starvation, Bread for the World reported. In such strife, food is used as a weapon, crops are destroyed and farmers are killed or drafted into battle, the report said.

Hall witnessed the results of war in Bosnia, Rwanda and Angola in recent months, he said. At night in Luanda, the capital of Angola, he saw groups of starving, young orphans "like puppies sleeping on top of one another" under bridges.

Bread for the World also criticized Congress' cuts in domestic nutrition and anti-poverty programs. Welfare proposals in Congress would reduce food assistance programs by \$20 to \$30 billion during the next seven years, it reported.

While the Republican-led Congress is cutting such programs, Sen. Dan Coats, R.-Ind., recently said the federal government must not only shift authority for such responsibilities to the states but also provide opportunities for private and religious organizations to meet such needs.

Coats has introduced a 19-piece policy initiative, the Project for American Renewal, in an attempt to rebuild society.

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"Our goal is to exercise civil society by turning over federal roles to private institutions," including shifting welfare to private and religious charities, Coats said in a recent speech. "Every dollar spent by families, community groups and faith-based charities is more efficient and compassionate than any dollar spent by the federal government."

Bread for the World, which was established in 1974 as a Christian response to hunger, lobbies Congress and the White House to seek changes in policies on hunger and poverty.

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**Church sends Bosnians  
'Shoebox Blessings'**

By Marv Knox

Baptist Press  
10/17/95

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Thousands of children in Bosnia will discover good things come in small packages this Christmas, thanks to Ninth & O Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky.

Ninth & O members plan to ship 8,000 "Shoebox Blessings" to children in the battle-decimated country, reported Ninth & O pastor Rodney Burnette.

"These Bosnian refugee children have lost everything -- their homes, their possessions, their peaceful country," Burnette reported. "They just don't have anything.

"We're trying to gather as many shoeboxes filled with toys as possible, so that these children can know someone cares for them this Christmas."

Burnette is working with Bill Steele, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board administrator in Eastern Europe, to collect the shoeboxes filled with gifts.

The shoeboxes will be shipped to the region Oct. 30 in a container capable of holding about 8,000 boxes, Burnette said. They will be distributed through FMB-operated feeding stations in Baptist churches.

Boxes are being collected for both girls and boys, he said. Each box is marked according to gender and according to age, with categories for 0-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-10 years and 11-13 years.

The boxes contain age-appropriate toys for youngsters who have lost their own toys. But the church isn't accepting war-related items, Burnette said, explaining, "These children have seen enough of the real thing."

Boxes also contain such items as Bible-story picture books, school supplies, wrapped and sealed hard candy, stuffed animals, dolls, balls, flashlights with extra batteries, underwear and hygienic items.

In addition, boxes contain personal notes written to the children. And each box is accompanied by cash or a check for \$5 to cover shipping costs, Burnette said.

The church's address is 2921 Taylor Blvd., Louisville, KY 40209; telephone, (502) 636-5576.

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**Nobles to remain in federal custody,  
competency hearing scheduled Oct. 31**

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Baptist Press  
10/17/95

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--A federal judge in Jackson Oct. 11 denied former Mississippi College President Lewis Nobles' request to be released from jail while he awaits an Oct. 31 competency hearing to determine whether he can be tried on charges he allegedly embezzled money from the Baptist-affiliated school.

U.S. District Judge William Barbour also denied a motion filed by Nobles asking for the return of more than \$25,000 in cash that was in his possession when he was arrested on a federal fugitive warrant in San Francisco on Jan. 26, 1995.

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Barbour deferred a ruling on whether the federal government can claim a portion of the cash as bail bond forfeiture, and he denied a motion by Mississippi College to intervene in court proceedings dealing with the cash.

FBI agents tracked Nobles to California after he failed to appear at a Jan. 26 hearing in Jackson in connection with a 20-count federal indictment charging him with diverting at least \$1.7 million in donations to the Clinton, Miss., school. College officials have contended that more than \$3 million may be missing.

Nobles allegedly attempted suicide in the San Francisco hotel room by swallowing poison as FBI agents closed in on him. He was rushed to a nearby hospital, where he underwent two surgeries and suffered a brain disorder.

He was eventually transferred to a federal prison hospital in Missouri for extended recovery and mental evaluation. He was released from the prison hospital earlier this summer and is presently being held in the Madison County Jail in Canton, which houses federal prisoners under contract.

Barbour expressed concern that Nobles might again disappear or attempt suicide if released to a halfway house in Jackson for further treatment, as he requested in his motion.

"I have problems, frankly, with the request. What assurance would the court have that being in a halfway house would prevent him from fleeing the jurisdiction of this court?" Barbour asked.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jack Lacy argued against returning the cash to Nobles, contending the money is evidence in another criminal proceeding involving Nobles' alleged flight to avoid prosecution.

Barbour agreed, ruling that the "actual cash money is of evidentiary value." However, he deferred a decision on whether the federal government can claim \$15,000 of the cash to pay Nobles' bail bond forfeiture in connection with his Jan. 26 disappearance.

Attorney Danny Mulholland of Jackson, representing Mississippi College, asked that the court allow the school to intervene in federal court proceedings to determine the distribution of the cash, but Barbour denied the request.

"Mississippi College has no standing to participate in this criminal proceeding," Barbour ruled.

Nobles, who appeared frail and unshaven at an earlier hearing when he was transferred to Mississippi from the federal prison hospital, looked healthier and had gained weight. His ill-fitting prison garb from the earlier hearing had been replaced with a blue sport coat, grey pants, white dress shirt and striped tie.

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Navy adrift without God,  
Southeastern prof says

By Dwayne Hastings

Baptist Press  
10/17/95

YORKTOWN, Va. (BP)--There is a crisis of cultural authority in American society that threatens the integrity of the country's armed forces, cautioned Daniel Heimbach Oct. 13.

Speaking to U.S. Navy personnel at the Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, Va., Heimbach, who saw combat in Vietnam as a naval officer, said the Navy faces a series of challenges greater than any it has faced whether in wartime or peacetime during its 220-year history. The root cause of the crisis, he said, is because the Navy has forgotten God.

"The greatest challenges are those presented by what we have come to call social issues," said Heimbach, professor of Christian ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, noting the issues of women in combat, mixed-gender recruit training, single-parent policies, as well as the homosexual policies of the current administration, as problems not yet been fully comprehended within the military.

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A 1972 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md., Heimbach said, "The specific social issues now stressing Navy manpower policy are only the leading edge of a bow wave generated by the crisis of cultural authority that threatens the core of our identity as Americans." Heimbach came to the Wake Forest, N.C., seminary after serving as deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for manpower in the Pentagon after a stint in the Bush White House.

Much of American society is no longer able to discern the difference between right and wrong, he said, or to even know if there is a clear and fixed difference between right and wrong.

"Americans are losing confidence in traditional moral standards because we are less and less willing to recognize any moral authority greater than ourselves," Heimbach explained, noting the crisis of cultural authority is being driven by a crisis of moral authority.

The end result, Heimbach said, is that Americans are acting more and more as though there is nothing to transcend or restrain human desire. "The Navy's sustaining ethic is now at risk because the Navy has forgotten God," he said.

"The Navy did not rise to what it has become without faith in our Creator," Heimbach said. "There is no moral authority, apart from God, sufficient to build and sustain any great military power."

The Navy will not survive this crisis of moral authority unless it returns to a dependence on God's guidance, Heimbach warned.

"I expect God can do very well without the United States Navy, but the United States Navy will fare very poorly without God," he said.

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Church feeds Opal's refugees,  
sends \$1,000 to world's hungry By Keith Hinson

Baptist Press  
10/17/95

CAMDEN, Ala. (BP)--Like most south Alabama churches on Oct. 4, Camden Baptist Church cancelled its midweek services as Hurricane Opal approached the Gulf Coast.

Yet the same Wednesday night -- with services cancelled -- the church received more than \$1,000 in donations it later gave to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Offering.

After calling off services, Camden Baptist found itself with a lot of food that had already been prepared for its Wednesday night supper: roast beef, mashed potatoes and green beans.

As usual when roast is on the menu, the meat had been prepared a day earlier by a local company, according to the church's pastor, Eddie Davidson.

With lots of food and virtually no one to serve it to, church staffers called area police, civil defense and several motels, which were heavily booked. The message was simple: Send people to Camden Baptist for shelter and for a free meal.

A local Christian radio station, WMBV, helped notify people driving automobiles in the slow-crawling line of traffic that had made its way from points south.

About 112 refugees from the storm came to Camden Baptist for food and shelter, Davidson said. Only five people were from the local area. Many were from Florida and some were visitors from other states, such as Missouri and Kentucky.

The visitors to the church were so grateful for the food and shelter that virtually all of them left an offering of some amount, totally unsolicited, Davidson said.

At the end of the crisis, more than \$1,000 had been donated by the guests. The next Sunday, Oct. 8, was World Hunger Sunday in the Southern Baptist Convention, so the church decided to donate the money to the SBC World Hunger Offering.

Assisting Davidson were the church's minister of music, Will Philpot, and the church secretary, Jeannie Newsom, who worked and stayed at the church all night to ensure the comfort and safety of the refugees sleeping in the sanctuary.

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The church's basement, where the evening meal was served, was flooded, but the next morning Philpot and Newsom stood in several inches of water as they cooked pancakes and eggs for their guests. The visitors were delighted with the meal they were served in the flooded basement. Everyone largely ignored any inconvenience or discomfort created by the water, Davidson said.

"The people had a good time and were glad to be there under the circumstances," Davidson noted. "We had plenty of food, and it was a real blessing."

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**Baptist association launches  
'Advangelism' to reach region** By Vivian Phillips

**Baptist Press  
10/17/95**

COLUMBIA, Md. (BP)--In one of the most strategic areas of the world, a local Baptist association is reaching out to the unchurched through television, newspapers and even the Internet.

The multimedia outreach campaign, called "Advangelism," is the result of the prayers and efforts of a group of Southern Baptist businessmen in Howard County in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C., area.

The campaign's first newspaper advertisements highlighted the logo, "Someone Still Cares. God Cares ... and so do we!" Subsequent TV and newspaper advertisements, appearing from late September until mid-December, will include the toll-free telephone number of the Howard Baptist Association.

A recent study of the suburban county indicated 83 percent of its 216,000 residents have no church affiliation. About 15 percent are church members, and only 2 percent are Southern Baptists. It is a community of some of the most wealthy, educated and influential people in America, said Bill Crowe, director of missions for the 21-church Baptist association.

"If we introduce Howard County to Christ, it will be by sharing with one person at a time," Crowe said, explaining that volunteers who answer calls to the association will be trained to respond to crises, special needs and spiritual questions, as well as provide information about local churches.

Callers who wish directories of HBA churches to be sent by mail will be assured no one will visit their homes. "Our goal is to connect them with a local church," Crowe explained.

"We checked and we can't find anyone (a religious organization) who has done a multimedia campaign like this with all the churches cooperating," he said. All churches except for a few mission congregations without necessary resources have contributed their share of \$600 to fund the effort.

Phil French of Patapsco Community Church, a member of the core group who created the campaign, arranged for the programming, delivering and installing of a \$40,000 telephone system at no charge to the association.

"The Lord impressed on my heart a year ago to ask about an interactive voice system," French told 72 church members who attended a Sept. 23 Advangelism breakfast. He recalled being apprehensive about approaching a man named Joe Enrico. French said he was stunned when Enrico answered his request by saying, "I'd be happy to work with Southern Baptists." Enrico's family is active in a Southern Baptist Church.

French, an information highway team leader for Bell Atlantic, Maryland, was also key in setting up an Internet home page which will provide church directory information and graphic images via computer. "Within three years more people will be using the Internet on a daily basis to communicate than use telephones," French predicted.

The \$135,000 campaign will reach each Howard County resident by cable television, newspaper, Internet, direct mail and/or hand-delivered fliers. Bumper stickers and refrigerator magnets also will be distributed. Funds are being provided in three equal portions by churches, the local business community and with a grant from the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware.

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Ken Whit, a local businessman from South Columbia Baptist Church is another member of the Advangelism planning prayer group. He explained that print ads will complement the television advertising by featuring the same theme.

Howard County will serve as a target group to test the impact of this multimedia campaign, White said. Under the direction of Turner Research Incorporated, Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., a random telephone survey was conducted before the campaign to determine Howard County residents' awareness of Southern Baptist churches. Soon after Advangelism is completed, another random survey will determine what effects the campaign had on developing awareness of Southern Baptists in the county.

Charles Barnes, the state convention's executive director, commented, "We need a massive and continuous media campaign to help Maryland/Delaware residents know of the Christ we serve. People need to know us for what we believe and stand for, not just what we stand against."

David Lee, director of BCM/D's church growth and services division said, "What excites me about this effort is the role of the laymen. Professional businessmen are driving Advangelism. I have never seen lay leaders so enthused about outreach. Their enthusiasm is contagious."

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Phillips is a correspondent for Maryland/Delaware Baptist Life.

Int'l seafarers find friend  
in 75-year-old 'Miss Vallie'

By James Dotson

Baptist Press  
10/17/95

BRUNSWICK, Ga. (BP)--If she had the appropriate degree, Vallie James might be considered a chaplain.

As a Missions Service Corps volunteer at the International Seaman's House in Brunswick, Ga., she offers a good dose of biblical counseling mixed with a listening ear and an understanding heart.

In other words, for international seafarers far from home and family, she makes a great surrogate mom.

"One of the main things I enjoy doing is the evangelism, just talking with the people individually," said the energetic retiree with an ever-present grin. "They have so many problems," she added later. "You can just sit anywhere in the living room here, find a problem and talk with them about it."

And in one of the other key aspects of her ministry, she usually is able to give each seafarer a copy of the Bible in his or her native language to study for themselves the truths she has shared with them.

"Miss Vallie," as many of the seamen call her, was named Missions Service Corps volunteer of the year two years ago by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board for her dedicated service. And with a busy schedule that includes everything from editing a newsletter, to driving a large van full of seamen, to speaking in churches on behalf of her Scripture distribution ministry, the 75-year-old widow shows no signs of slowing down.

James first got involved in ministry to seafarers when Southside Baptist Church, located near the Georgia Port Authority terminal in Brunswick, began a ministry to crewmen from merchant ships.

James Woods, Southside's pastor, said the effort was limited in that it did not offer the telephone facilities that allow seamen to make international calls at reasonable rates without using a pay phone, now one of the key attractions at the International Seamen's House. The Southside ministry did offer fellowship, games and reading materials in their fellowship hall.

It was in 1984 that a group of church and community leaders met at Southside to form the International Seamen's House, an interdenominational ministry currently located in a converted home adjacent to the Georgia Port Authority terminal. For years, James and her husband, Leroy, were active volunteers.

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But it was in 1991, when her husband became ill and eventually died, that James began devoting more of her time to the center. She had been a Christian Service Corps volunteer, serving two weeks a year on mission trips in such varied locales as Key West, Fla.; Spartanburg, S.C.; Wyoming; Texas; and Vermont. But when she considered curtailing those activities, the Home Mission Board suggested she focus on the Seamen's House ministry and become a part of Missions Service Corps.

Supervision of the Scripture distribution ministry is one of her key projects. The house has 57 different language translations on hand, meeting the needs of most of the guests. She also has a supply of surplus Sunday school and devotional literature donated by area churches, which the men and women can use to study Scripture on their own.

"She has a way of making sure that when they leave here they have a Bible with them in their own language," said Elliott Foss, executive director of the Seamen's House. Foss, incidentally, had high praise for the involvement of Southern Baptists overall in missions efforts such as the Seaman's House. An ordained minister in another denomination, he was ordained Sept. 24 as a Southern Baptist minister at Southside.

James also coordinates the volunteers who serve at the house, a role Foss said she does well. "She's kind of the momentum behind a lot of the women that come here to work," he said. "She just really gets them fired up."

The center also provides "ditty bags" of personal care items for the seamen that are made up by volunteers largely through the efforts of James and Southern Baptists in Brunswick and across the country. Recently she received more than 180 boxes of Christmas-in-August items that will be used for the ditty bags. "She can't get around in her house" because of the boxes, Foss said.

And, of course, there is her role as counselor. When the guests arrive, she is the first one there to greet them and to talk. She has made friends worldwide, many of whom have started Bible studies on their ships and similar ministries because of her influence.

Recently, Foss said, James was in Tacoma, Wash., attending a conference on seafarer ministry and she was sorely missed. "We had a sailor almost trying to keep the ship here so he could see her before he left," he said.

James told of one seaman who saw her on a ship and asked, "Hey, Miss Vallie, where have you been?" She apparently had given him a Bible two years earlier and he had become a Christian. They spent hours that evening discussing how he could share his new faith.

Other times, she has been able to console seafarers who often learn of problems at home while making phone calls from the center. One man's wife wouldn't let him see his daughter. Another learned his home had just been covered with volcanic ash and his family needed a new place to live. Through talking with her about the sufficiency of Christ to help him, he accepted Christ.

"You just kind of sit and listen to what they tell you about their children; sometimes they've had a death in the family," she said. "Sometimes they come out (of the telephone booths) crying, and you just put your arms around them and love them."

Soon the International Seamen's House crew is moving to a new, much larger facility being built next door to their current house. And Foss is glad James will continue to be an integral part of their activities. She recently received an attractive offer to work at a seamen's ministry in New Orleans, he said, but Foss told her he was not going to give her up.

"She's just a great person," he said. "If we didn't have her, this ministry would suffer severely . . . . She is one of those people who could never be replaced."

**Ski-jump tower new home  
for Canadian Baptist church** By Nancy Carter McGough

CALGARY, Alberta (BP)--When a church meets in a ski-jump tower, the cliches which come to mind can be endless.

"Church gets jump-start."

"New church rises above the rest."

"Taking Christianity to new heights."

"Oh, what a heavenly view."

Jeff Christopherson, pastor of the new "ski-jump church," doesn't mind the cliches because he knows the 90-Meter Tower, on the grounds of Canada Olympic Park (one of the venues of the Calgary 1988 Winter Olympics), is among the most recognizable sites in the city.

"It always helps when people immediately know your location," Christopherson says.

But the church's purpose is more than to be recognized for its unusual setting.

In a city where 83 per cent of the people don't go to church, Christopherson wants to make worship services accessible and appealing to those who don't normally attend.

"This is another advantage of our location. The 90-Meter Tower is a tourist attraction. People who aren't accustomed to going to church are more likely to visit us for the first time," he says.

Also, because Baptists are such a small minority in Canada, the 16 founding members of the group chose the name Mountain View Christian Fellowship, leaving the word Baptist out of their name but not out of their purpose. The church is supported by the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists.

The group began meeting last spring in home Bible study groups. Since Sept. 10 they have had Sunday morning services at the tower. About 50 regularly attend, most of whom also attend one of the three home groups.

For \$200 a week they rent the top two floors of the tower, which are above the ski-jump itself. One floor is for children's Sunday school, the other for the worship service. Each floor can accommodate about 80 people.

Since the tower is the only operational 90-metre tower in the world, it stands to reason that Mountain View Christian Fellowship is the only church of its kind.

But some things stay the same, Christopherson asserts: "We support the Cooperative Program and our association. We give to our national offering, Harvest Missions, and we'll give to Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong when those offerings are taken. And like most Southern Baptists we have an evangelistic spirit."

Christopherson, 31, was in the first graduating class of the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary, Cochrane. He was pastor of First Baptist Church, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, for five and a half years before coming to Calgary. He and his wife, Laura, have two children, Kelley and Jamie.

"Our church's vision is to be a church for the unchurched," Christopherson says, adding, "we see the 90-Meter Tower as a means to facilitate that vision."

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McGough is editor of Baptist Horizon, Canadian Southern Baptists' newsjournal.

Proceeds from Christian artists  
help support work of Covenant

By Karen Cannon

Baptist Press  
10/17/95

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Christian music to help support the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission's "Covenant" ministry is now available on CD and cassette tape.

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A percentage of the profit from each album -- recorded by Elizabeth Dietsche, Larry Orrell, Pamela Rayside and Wayne Meachum for Aim High Records, Nashville, Tenn. -- goes to the volunteer fellowship Covenant for the purpose of acquiring and producing Christian family values programming for the RTVC aimed at turning America's children away from pornography and violence.

The RTVC operates the ACTS (American Christian Television Service) network on cable reaching into 20 million homes and the FamilyNet broadcast television reaching into more than 40 million homes.

Dietsche, twice runner-up to Miss Oklahoma in pageants to determine the state's representative in the Miss America pageant, holds a master's degree in vocal performance from the University of Denver in Colorado. She was also runner-up in Colorado's Miss America competition.

"Sharing my God-given talents to help bring about more wholesome media through Covenant is a dream come true," she said.

Dietsche said she has a special burden for starving children in the United States and donates 20 percent of all concert proceeds to Feed the Children ministry. Her Covenant album is titled, "Singer of My Soul."

The name Orrell has been familiar in gospel music circles for more than three decades. Orrell has been a guest on numerous Christian television programs and his music is heard on radio stations around the world. He resides in Nashville with his son Nicholas.

About Covenant, he said, "As a veteran of the Christian music industry, I'm excited to be a part of this project that uses media to teach Christian family values to children, young people and adults." His Covenant album is titled, "Grace."

Rayside delivers her message in song in a contemporary style that appeals to young people. As a writer of lyrics and music, she provides inspiring compositions that incorporate both the struggles and successes experienced in the everyday lives of Christians.

Rayside, who resides in the Nashville area with her husband, Tom, said, "Covenant supports the values I believe in -- the importance of the family. I'm privileged to be associated with a fellowship that gives Christian young people and adults an alternative in media." Her Covenant album is titled, "Living Water."

Meachum, a Dallas attorney with a law degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas, is a native of Ringgold, La.

"The Covenant fellowship stands for the highest ideals in Christendom," Meachum said. "It's an honor and privilege to be part of a movement so in tune with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

He and his wife, Bettie, have two children, Kurt, a student at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and Aubrey, a student at the University of Texas in Austin.

His Covenant album is titled, "Family Ties."

Pricing and ordering information can be obtained by calling 1-800-682-3332. The artists are available for concerts in churches and can be contacted through RTVC public relations, (817) 737-4011.

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Cannon is a writer for the Radio and Television Commission.

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