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FMB committee 'prefers'
missionary replace Parks

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

By Greg Warner

DALLAS (ABP) -- The committee seeking a new president for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board said May 8 it would prefer a missionary be hired for the position but did not rule out hiring someone lacking missionary experience.

The 15-member committee released a "profile" it will use in its search for a successor to Keith Parks, who will retire in October. The document, adopted during the committee's first meeting May 7-8 in Dallas, generally follows the profile used when Parks was hired in 1979 but with a few alterations. No change was made in the section referring to missionary experience, however.

That section states the new president should demonstrate "unquestioned commitment to foreign missions, having a broad knowledge and understanding of missions and preferably including missionary service."

Committee member Hoyt Savage, a pastor in Las Vegas, Nev., told Associated Baptist Press the new president "preferably" would have missionary experience but "not necessarily."

John Jackson, FMB trustee chairman who serves on the committee by virtue of his office, told Baptist Press the committee would "prefer someone with missionary experience because he would relate better to missionaries and better understand missions. But if God has selected someone else, we want to be open to his will whichever way it leads."

Few of the people mentioned as likely candidates for the position have served as career missionaries.

However, Savage said the eventual choice is likely to be someone from inside the FMB administration who has served as a field missionary. "I think there is a better than equal chance it will be someone from inside," Savage told ABP.

The current FMB staff member considered to have the best chance of landing the job is Don Kammerdiener, executive vice president under Parks. Kammerdiener served as a missionary in Colombia and Argentina for 18 years before joining the FMB administration in 1980.

Search committee members declined to discuss specific candidates.

Although neither the search committee's profile nor FMB policy requires the president to be a missionary, the current job description followed by Parks calls for at least 20 years of relevant experience, including service as an FMB missionary and service in the FMB's administrative office in Richmond, Va.

Only about half of the Foreign Mission Board's trustees agree the next president needs to have missionary experience, according to chairman Jackson, a pastor from Fairfield, Calif. Other trustees have expressed their desire to look outside the agency for "new blood."

The 64-year-old Parks, a 38-year FMB veteran, announced in March he will retire earlier than planned because of "philosophical differences" with the trustees. He said there has been a "drastic shift" in trustees' mission philosophy, with fundamental-conservative trustees now "expecting theological conformity from those who receive Southern Baptist money."

Parks said a president with missionary experience would make more informed decisions, make fewer wrong decisions, and gain more missionary support for tough decisions than would a person without missionary experience. The FMB's 3,900 missionaries would have a "measure of uneasiness" about a non-missionary president, he said.

The last three presidents -- Theron Rankin, Baker James Cauthen and Parks -- all were career missionaries. However, the six men who preceded them were not. The most recent non-missionary president was Charles Maddry, who served from 1933 to 1944.

In a memo to FMB staff members and missionaries, the search committee asked for suggestions in filling the presidency and said committee members have "no inclination toward any individual."

Savage said committee members pored over the 1979 profile "with a fine-toothed comb" during their recent two-day meeting before adopting a version very similar.

Among the changes:

-- While the 1979 committee sought a president with "compassion for the lost," the 1992 committee said the president should evidence "active commitment to personal...soul-winning."

-- While both committees targeted a president "theologically in the mainstream of Southern Baptist life," the 1992 committee eliminated the 1979 requirement that the president have "an appreciation of the rationale behind differing doctrinal opinions."

-- The 1992 profile adds a request that the president be someone who "pursues a relationship with trustees according to the constitution and bylaws" of the SBC and FMB.

Savage explained the objective is to achieve the proper "balance" in the trustee-president relationship, whereby the trustees set policy and the president administers policy. "It has to do with who plays what role," he said. Adding the phrase did not indicate Parks had failed in that task, Savage noted.

-- Also added to the 1992 profile is a stipulation the president be "committed to the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering as the historic and primary sources of funding" the FMB's work.

Savage said the addition acknowledges some Southern Baptists are promoting alternate channels for missions money -- such as the funding plans of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship -- which bypass the SBC's Cooperative Program budget and the mission offerings.

"Since that is our primary source of funding, we need someone committed to that," Savage explained. The committee did not discuss whether or not the FMB should refuse contributions from alternative sources, Savage said.

The search committee has set two more meetings. The first is June 10 in Indianapolis, Ind., prior the Southern Baptist Convention, during which the committee will review input from FMB missionaries and other Southern

Baptists. The second is June 22 in El Paso, Texas, during the regular meeting of FMB trustees.

No date has been set for naming a replacement for Parks, who plans to leave the FMB Oct. 31.

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Ethicists suggest actions
to foster racial justice

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (ABP) -- Actions -- not just words -- are necessary to bring about racial reconciliation, particularly in the wake of riots and unrest, three Southern Baptist ethicists said.

"Criticizing the Rodney King verdict, condemning the Los Angeles violence, lamenting the root causes of injustice and brutality, repenting of our racial history, and playing the blame game are understandable reactions," said Robert Parham, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics.

The center, based in Nashville, Tenn., is a network of Southern Baptist ethicists established as a pro-ethics voice to offer "practical solutions to real problems."

In the wake of the rioting and unrest which followed the acquittal of four white policemen accused of beating black motorist Rodney King in Los Angeles, Parham urged Southern Baptists to go beyond words to "constructive initiatives to help move our nation toward the dream of racial reconciliation."

A good place to start, according to one black Southern Baptist leader, is with the leadership structure of the denomination.

Atlanta pastor Emmanuel McCall, former black-church specialist for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, called for more black and ethnic representation on the governing boards of the SBC, as well as for meaningful actions to sensitize Southern Baptist agencies to the presence of blacks and other ethnics.

Glen Stassen, professor of ethics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and an associate with the BCE, noted the King verdict "brings to the surface very clearly the continued injustice that African Americans experience, and the old wounds hurt in new ways."

Rhetoric is not enough, Stassen said. "We have got to do deeds -- not just words -- if we are to be delivered from the alienation and the wrong in our society."

Parham wrote an "Open Letter to White Southern Baptists," suggesting seven constructive actions which could be taken to move toward racial reconciliation.

"The fundamental question for Christians is, 'What can I do, what can my faith community do, to tear down the dividing walls of racial hostility and to be ambassadors of reconciliation for Christ?'" Parham wrote.

His first suggestion is for white Southern Baptists to "look inward." "Why do we fear or distrust African Americans? Do we need to repent for our hostile, demeaning attitudes and actions toward others?"

Parham's second suggestion is to "look within the walls of our own faith community (to) stop demonizing African Americans with our theological symbols and language." The symbols, often unintentionally, disclose deep-seated racism and reinforce the racism of church members, he said.

As an illustration, Parham said the Southern Baptist Convention and many state convention evangelism departments promote the "power bands," beaded bracelets which are worn around the wrist and which have "six colored beads

representing the different salvation steps."

"The black bead represents sin," Parham noted. "But where does the Bible identify the color black with sin? Why is it that white Southern Baptists want to assign the color black to sin?"

Parham called on messengers to the annual meeting of the SBC this June to "cast off the shackles of racist theology represented by the power bands. To wear them is insensitive. To promote them is bad theology which only encourages racist attitudes."

Parham also encouraged white preachers to be aware of the language of sermons where sin is black, salvation is white, sinners are black-hearted, and black sheep are lost believers.

McCall, pastor of Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in College Park, Ga., and a director of the Baptist Center for Ethics, said efforts to sensitize SBC agencies to blacks and other ethnics "should begin with a retreat for members of the SBC Executive Committee and spread to other agencies and would lead to an intentionality and an inclusiveness toward those who are not Anglo, especially among those agencies which do literature and video presentations."

A third suggestion in Parham's open letter is for white Southern Baptists to reach out to establish meaningful relationships with members of other racial-ethnic groups.

Parham pointed to the koinonia movement in South Africa in which black and white families share meals together. "That initiative breaks down walls and builds bridges. We need a similar movement within our own churches, but we do not need to wait for someone else to take such programs. We can take our own initiatives."

A fourth step should be to "invite people of color to sit at the tables where decisions are made. It is not enough to have people of color occasionally preaching, singing and praying at our meetings. We need them sitting as full and equal partners around the conference table."

McCall, who for many years headed the black church relations department at the Home Mission Board, noted there are about 1,500 predominantly black SBC churches. But that number is not reflected in the ratio of representation for African Americans -- or other ethnics -- on SBC boards of trust. When blacks are represented, he added, their presence is aimed more at politics than inclusiveness.

The fifth step outlined in the open letter encourages white Southern Baptists to engage in mission projects which put them in direct contact with people of color.

"Building homes with low-income people, providing literacy programs, offering nutrition classes, feeding the hungry, and sponsoring job banks are constructive mission-action initiatives which can transform everyone involved.

"Mission-action projects can empower the poor, inform the powerful and link the two groups together," he said.

McCall also called on the SBC to provide adequate funding for work in transitional and ethnic communities and to be aware of evangelistic and church-growth opportunities in those communities.

He warned, however, that the Islamic community "has targeted \$267 million for evangelism in the United States this year, most of that directed at the black community. Eight out of every nine persons won to Muslim faith is a black," he said.

"That ought to say something to Southern Baptists about evangelistic opportunities among blacks and ethnics," he said.

Parham's sixth suggestion is to "speak out. Too many of us ignored the efforts to dismantle social welfare and justice programs in the 1980s. Too many of us were silent about the Willie Horton ad during the 1988 presidential campaign.

"Too many of us only shook our heads about David Duke's campaign and Pat Buchanan's racial slurs.

As his final suggestion, Parham urged support of "public policy programs which equip and enable people of color to get onto the playing field of society."

"A few decades of social programs hardly eradicate centuries of social injustice," he said. He urged full funding for programs which work to overcome poverty -- such as Head Start, Aid for Families with Dependent Children, and school breakfast and lunch programs -- and those designed to end discrimination.

In a comment regarding the open letter, Stassen said: "We need to repent ourselves. And we need to call on a government that has taken a passive, hands-off position to repent and to respond by actively engaging itself in funding job corps programs, Head Start and other efforts, as well as drug-treatment facilities."

In the conclusion to the open letter, Parham asked: "If we do not take any initiatives now, what right do we have to speak later? If we, the ones committed to Christ, are incapable of setting a positive example, how can we believe that others will change?"

"The social earthquake in southern California is a warning. Will we take heed? Or are we locked into a reactive, rhetorical approach to social programs?..."

"Can the convention born to slaveholders and nurtured in segregation be transformed by the risen Christ and walk in newness of life?"

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-- Dan Martin is a free-lance writer living in Penland, N.C.

Louisianians to form
Fellowship chapter

FORT WORTH, Texas (ABP) -- Louisiana participants in the recent national assembly of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship agreed to work toward forming a state chapter of the moderate-conservative organization.

More than 80 persons from a variety of Louisiana Baptist churches attended an hour-long state meeting May 1 during the assembly in Fort Worth, Texas.

Participants agreed on the need to form a Louisiana chapter as soon as possible and named a 10-person committee to work toward that goal. The committee is headed by Jon Stubblefield, pastor of First Baptist Church of Shreveport and a member of the national Fellowship's coordinating council.

Stubblefield said formation of a Louisiana chapter is likely to be misperceived as a political move. But he said a state chapter would serve as a means to interpret the work of the Fellowship for others, to build relationships with each other and to pool information.

Also during the meeting, the Louisiana caucus nominated Natchitoches pastor Brad Creed to the coordinating council. Creed later was elected by the full assembly, joining fellow Louisianians Pamela Williams of Baton Rouge and Fred Jones of Ruston on the council.

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-- By Lacy Thompson

Joint convocation
focuses on evangelism

By Richard Schramm

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Nearly 800 American Baptist lay and professional church leaders celebrated and examined the challenges of Christian outreach during the National Evangelism Convocation May 4-7 at First Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

Focusing on the theme "All Things New: Invited to God's Future," the joint Baptist gathering offered workshops, resources, worship and addresses by prominent theologians, authors and preachers.

Sponsoring bodies included three organizations from the American Baptist Churches and the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, which is affiliated with both the ABC and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Well-known German theologian Jurgen Moltmann told participants renewal and eschatology are intertwined. "God will not find rest until all creation returns to God," he said.

Toward that goal -- "God's common house" -- Christians are obliged to seek "a new commitment personally and in community." The "experience of reconciliation" of all God's creation must be approached not through mystical meditation but rather through a "messianic hope (viewed) with wide-open eyes."

Moltmann, drawing texts from II Corinthians, John and Ephesians, maintained "there is eternal life before death; we feel it through the depths of life experiences." Rebirth, he said, brings "boundless joy of life." In it, he added, "God's future already has begun and we are invited to participate in it."

Renewal includes "anticipation of God's new world in the midst of this old world according to God's promise," he said. Christian teaching confirms that "things are not necessarily becoming better or becoming worse but that there will be salvation."

Christians, he said, must not be preoccupied with extending the existing church but must invite the unchurched "to the new creation of all things." The church "is not an end in and of itself. It must be the pilgrim call to journey that is none less than the establishment of God's kingdom."

Karen Mains, best-selling author, utilized signing and examples of sensitivity to physical disability as analogies to dramatize the need "to communicate with the spiritually impaired."

With part of her message movingly presented simultaneously by two signers, she belied the conception of that communication form as crude and inferior. "We must be humble when learning another's language," she said. Like many who deal with the disabled, she said, "Christian communicators shout at the spiritually impaired."

"We have the arrogance to write off those who didn't respond as substandard," Mains added. "We have been guilty of the sin of feeling superior."

Because "Christ translated the Word to us" through the incarnation, "you and I are translators of the Word to the world," she said.

Pablo Calzoncit of the division of evangelistic ministries for the ABC's National Ministries, one of the event's sponsors, delivered a message from Ecuadoran theologian Rene Padilla that called for a return to the Old Testament ideal of "global community."

Padilla, general secretary of the Latin American Theological Fraternity, said the Old Testament calls us "to live in harmony with one another and with the environment. God's Good News of Jesus Christ demands a renewed creation (that is) in fellowship with God." That new order is antithetical to the "classism, racism and ethnocentrism" that flourish in contemporary society.

Using the imagery of a "global shopping mall," Padilla criticized "the ultimate commitment of men and women to the gods of this world." For many people, he said, the shopping mall "has replaced the church as a place of worship."

"Consumerism is based on a distorted anthropology: Things are more important than people," Padilla said. "It defines lifestyles with no regard for ethical standards."

Elizabeth Barnes, who this fall will become associate professor of theology and ethics at the new Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (Va.), called for evangelism as "storytelling interlacing our own stories with the Jesus stories."

Citing anecdotes and stories from her own experience, Barnes said that effective evangelism often "enfleshes the story of God's Good News."

Personalizing the gospel message, she said, helps people see "the elemental connection between the Resurrection and hospitality -- what happens in God's house."

Os Guinness, noted British author and lecturer, said "most Christians are largely persuasionless" and "can witness (only) if people are open, interested and needy."

Guinness said "persuasiveness is in the character of the Holy Trinity." Persuasiveness "must not be a technique, a way of speaking" but instead "a way of living, a matter of truth," he said. In place of persuasion, modern liberals in the church tend to use "dialogue" and conservatives favor "proclamation," Guinness said.

Aids and Wright-Riggins, executive director of ABC National Ministries and the ABC's director of evangelism, encouraged evangelism that employed head, heart and hands.

"We need not only to talk the talk, but also walk the walk," he said. "Sometimes we confine our Christianity to bumper-sticker terms. Perhaps the best view of the church is the view from the curbside."

Like the Levite and the priest in the parable of the Good Samaritan, too many of us "pass by the other side," Wright-Riggins said. But "Jesus Christ stopped for us," he said. "Therefore we've got to reach out to someone else."

Billy Kim, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Seoul, Korea, the largest Baptist congregation in Asia, challenged the church in the United States to a revival through more emphasis on prayer and praise. "Prayer is a premise to revival. It doesn't need proof, just practice," Kim said.

A worship celebration at Washington's National Cathedral drew about 1,800 participants, including area church members. Jeremiah Wright, pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago and a leading developer of black theology, used the story of Moses in Exodus 33 to exemplify God's deliverance of the persecuted.

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-- Richard Schramm is director of the American Baptist News Service in Valley Forge, Pa., which supplied this story to ABP.

Religious-liberty measure
needs support, groups say

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The Religious Freedom Restoration Act is the most significant religious-liberty measure Congress has grappled with since the First Amendment, congressional staff members were told at a May 11 briefing on the bill.

RFRA (H.R. 2797) is designed to restore a high standard of protection for the free-exercise of religion. The bill would restore the strict "compelling interest" standard the U.S. Supreme Court formerly required government to meet before restricting religious practice.

The compelling-interest standard, first articulated by the Supreme Court in 1963, was abandoned by the court in its 1990 decision in *Employment Division vs. Smith*.

The briefing, sponsored by the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion, featured presentations by five attorneys whose organizations or agencies support the bill.

Michael Farris, president of the Home School Legal Defense Association, told congressional staffers that all Americans are losing their religious freedom slowly but surely. Every congressional office has constituents that have been or will be affected by the *Smith* decision, he said.

Farris said constitutional rights are divided into two basic categories: fundamental rights and other rights. Fundamental rights, such as freedom of speech, press and religion, are protected by a high standard requiring government to prove it needs to restrict those rights. Other constitutional rights are protected by a lower standard that places the burden of proof on the individual.

Under the standard used prior to *Smith*, free-exercise claimants won about 50 percent of the time in court, Farris said. But since *Smith*, religion has lost in nearly every case, he said.

The only solution to this problem is RFRA, Farris said.

Thomas Jipping, legal-affairs analyst for the Coalitions for America, said one political issue hinders the measure. A few pro-life groups have argued that RFRA could advance abortion rights.

Jipping, who represents a pro-life group, said the bill is abortion-neutral and assured staff members that several pro-life groups support it. The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission is among the pro-life groups supporting RFRA.

"This is a religious-freedom bill, not an abortion bill," Jipping said.

Another bill (H.R. 4040) would add a pro-life amendment to RFRA that amounts to no more than "window dressing," Farris said in response to a question. Because of the amendment, H.R. 4040 does not stand a chance of passage, he said.

Another question focused on congressional authority to restore protections abandoned by the court.

Oliver Thomas, chairman of the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion and general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee, said the Constitution does empower Congress to restore rights abandoned by the court. Thomas, who moderated the briefing, said the constitutional rights interpreted by the court are like a floor, not a ceiling. Congress cannot take away those rights, but it can build on them, he said.

The House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights will conduct hearings on RFRA May 13-14. The bill has about 180 House co-sponsors and has not yet been introduced in the Senate.

Other briefing leaders were Robert Peck of the American Civil Liberties Union and Richard Foltin of the American Jewish Committee.

Philadelphia pastor looks
for lost souls in the night

By Ralph Cipriano

PHILADELPHIA (ABP) -- The 350-pound Baptist preacher plops a Stetson fedora on his close-cropped head, stuffs his size-60 bulk into a skimpy windbreaker, and heads out into the night.

"Well, looks like business is in session," the pastor says. On the streets surrounding El Shaddai Baptist Church in North Philadelphia, four prostitutes are looking for work.

Pastor Joe Thompson heads straight for a woman in a long denim jacket, gold crescent earrings and white bobby sox. She's standing in front of the pastor's church, at Old York Road and Bristol Street.

But not for long.

The "bobby-soxer," as the pastor calls her, sees the preacher trudging towards her, so she crosses the street. Now she's standing in front of a stone entranceway to Fairmount Park, doing her best to look the other way. It's 10 o'clock on a weekday night, and men are driving slowly through the park with their headlights turned off.

"It's almost like a hunt," the pastor says. "There's the hunters and the guys who want to be hunted."

The night shift has just begun for Pastor Thompson, who himself is out hunting -- for lost souls. The Southern Baptist preacher isn't content to just talk about Jesus on Sunday to his small congregation of 50.

Pastor Thompson considers all the neighborhood's residents part of his flock, even Mr. Willie, the neighborhood drug hack. And the pastor tries to minister to all the people's needs.

Every Tuesday morning, he holds a "bread ministry service," where he says prayers for the needy. Then he passes out free loaves of bread, cans of chili and winter coats to grandmas and prostitutes, children and junkies, the homeless and jobless. The ministry is supported in part with funds from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Day and night, Thompson counsels troubled souls like Mike Graves, who used to be a drug addict and now is a singer in the church choir.

But his most thankless job is proselytizing the prostitutes, for whom he feels particular sympathy.

"It's a tough life, going from house to house, man to man," the pastor says. "How long can you last? I see them as potential graveyard residents. That's where they're headed."

One who ended up there was Linda. Two years ago, while the pastor was trying to get her off the streets, Linda was found beaten to death in an abandoned house across the street from the church.

As cars drive by the church, the male occupants slow down when they see the hookers. They step on the gas when they see the pastor. "As long as I'm here, they keep moving."

The bobby-soxer has noticed this. So has another prostitute who is working the park. The pastor limps across the street, dragging a right ankle inflamed by cellulitis. When he gets across the street, the hookers aren't ready to talk about salvation.

"Slow night, huh?" the pastor asks.

"You're jinxing us, you're jinxing us, man," the bobby-soxer says, pouring out her anger. "You know I can't do nothing with you out here. You're jinxing us man."

Undaunted, the pastor begins his spiel.

"You know what, I'm gonna give you an offer," he says.

"What?" the bobby-soxer replies.

"You want to get off the corner?" he asks.

"Yeah. I want to go home right now."

"You want to go home? Well, I'm gonna try to get you out of this whole situation."

"What's the offer?" the bobby-soxer snaps. Her friend stares at the ground.

"I got a dear sister who runs a shelter," the pastor begins.

"I have a home," she cuts him off.

The two prostitutes decide it's time to close up shop.

"Ain't no business tonight," the pastor repeats. He hands them each a church pamphlet on salvation. They glance at it quickly as they leave.

"I truly believe that folks' lives can be changed," Thompson says, limping back toward the church. "But you've got to want to change."

Inside the pastor, 55, props up his aching foot on a chair and talks about his own life. The former high school dropout was once arrested for carrying a switchblade. He's a former lead singer and harmonica player for a Philadelphia rhythm-and-blues band.

For 25 years, he worked as a security officer at the Federal Reserve Bank, then retired on disability in 1990. Over the years, he's attended night and Bible schools, and worked a number of second jobs, including a stint as a chemist at the city morgue. He's been an ordained minister since 1968.

Thompson's church has been at its location since 1985. When the church opened, the prostitutes worked right under the church hedges. "I used to pick panties off the doorknob," the pastor says. Then he put up a fence.

"This was a jammed-up corner," he says. "Now, you don't see too much. I'd like to think that's because of our input."

The pastor isn't a one-man crusade. He has a supporting cast, starting with Miss Lill -- Lillie Murrell -- who plays the piano at every Tuesday service.

Miss Lill, 69, is retired from her nursing job at a local children's hospital. She has a look of infinite kindness, and can't help but get involved. She adopted two of her hospital patients -- a 3-year-old girl who was a burn victim and an 11-year-old boy who had been pushed out a second-story window. The girl is now 11, and the boy is 28.

At a recent Tuesday service, 60 men, women and children pack the six wooden benches in Thompson's small church.

"When you meet up with Jesus, he regenerates you," the pastor preaches in a folksy, soothing voice. "Now you may still look ugly. It's not gonna do anything for your looks. You have a young lady who don't look too sporty. She falls in love with Jesus Christ, she'll be all right."

Thompson tells them to trust God the way he does.

"You can tell I'm not missing any meals," he says, patting his ample stomach. "He's taking care of me.... You need to ask Jesus to come into your heart."

Tony Gray, 44, is one of the men on the bench. Gray, who lives a few blocks away, has been out of work for two years since he was laid off as a clerk at Montgomery Ward's.

"It's like a rest stop for me," Gray says of the Tuesday service. "It's an oasis for the soul."

As Gray walks out the door with a bag of food, he glances at the pastor and says, "If they could clone him, they'd have something."

After the pastor hands out the food, he spots a local hooker in the crowd. "You still out there hustling backwards?" he asks Arlene Jacks. She nods, and laughs. She tries on a rose-colored winter jacket. It fits.

"I'm out there, but I'm not tired yet." Jacks, 36, tells a visitor as she leaves.

Last year, the pastor talked two prostitutes into getting off the corner. They moved in with Miss Lill.

"It was a beautiful experience for me," Miss Lill says. "You could see

they were searching for help, for shelter, for somebody to love."

The pastor got the two women jobs in a bakery and a school cafeteria. But it didn't work out. The women left and returned to the streets.

"It hurt me, but I understand," Lillie Murrell said. "I don't feel it was in vain because I know they'll never forget it."

The pastor has had his failures. Michael Graves is one of his successes.

Graves, 33, is an Army veteran who got hooked on crack. The pastor got Graves hooked on his Wednesday night Bible class.

"I was trying to kill myself," said Graves. "Thank God Pastor was here to talk to me. Sometimes, a man needs a man to talk to."

Now Graves is a plumber's assistant. He recites biblical passages from memory and sings tenor in the Sunday choir.

Stephen Ridley, 41, is a graduate of the Tuesday bread ministry.

"I came for the food," said Ridley, who stopped by to check on the pastor. Ridley dresses in black and wears a goatee and a gold earring. He is a former addict who said he had converted his North Philadelphia house into a shooting gallery and hooker haven.

"Getting that bread, those sweets, allowed me to use my money to get high," Ridley says.

In 1989, Ridley was arrested for theft and served three months in jail. It gave him time to ponder the pastor's words.

"When I came around, I drew on the things he gave me," Ridley said. "I came here for the bread but I got more than bread, I got food for the soul."

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-- Ralph Cipriano is staff writer for the Philadelphia Inquirer. This story is reprinted with permission.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Please delete the following three paragraphs from the May 7 story "Sloan resigns commentary role..."

After the consulting editors expressed their desire that Dockery remain as general editor, Draper did recommend to the board's trustee executive committee that Dockery be named as one of two associate general editors.

Draper could not be reached for comment. Other board staff members who work on the commentary were unprepared to discuss the dispute over Clendenen's nomination.

Clendenen told Associated Baptist Press his position at Criswell College, an independent Baptist school, apparently was the basis for Sloan's charges of partisanship. Criswell President Paige Patterson has been a prominent leader of fundamental-conservatives in the 13-year Southern Baptist controversy.

And substitute the following:

Draper said he considered the concerns registered by Sloan and the other editors. "But we had to ask, 'Are these valid enough concerns that we need to back off this nomination?'" he explained.

After the consulting editors expressed their desire that Dockery remain as general editor, Draper did recommend to the board's trustee executive committee that Dockery be named one of two associate general editors.

Draper said he did not understand Sloan's suggestion that the choice of Clendenen was partisan. "I don't know where he's coming from, unless its the Criswell (College) connection," Draper said.

Three of the commentary's editors -- Clendenen, Dockery and Patterson -- have taught at Criswell College, an independent Baptist school founded by First Baptist of Dallas. Patterson, Criswell's president, has been a prominent leader of fundamental-conservatives in the 13-year Southern Baptist controversy.

Also, please replace the word "contributing" in the third paragraph with the word "consulting." Thank you.

***** END *****