

'91 SBC baptisms projected to rise

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptists can expect a fourth consecutive year of increased baptisms this year, according to projections by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

If the projections hold true, this would be the first time since 1950 that Southern Baptists have recorded increased baptism rates in four consecutive years.

The estimated number of baptisms for 1991 is 390,800, up 1.5 percent from the 385,031 baptisms reported last year, said Clay Price, director of HMB program research. Price reported the projections to state evangelism directors during their annual meeting in Williamsburg, Va.

The 1991 estimate is based on reports from evangelism leaders. Actual baptism numbers will not be available until statistics from the Uniform Church Letter are released in February.

Those figures should give an accurate picture of Kentucky baptisms, said Bill Jagers, director of evangelism for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Jagers said he wanted to wait until complete data is available before announcing Kentucky numbers.

The projected 390,000 baptisms nationwide represent the highest number of baptisms reported since 1983, when the total was 394,606.

This year's projected increase is especially significant because it comes on the heels of last year's Here's Hope nationwide revivals, Price said.

After Southern Baptists had nationwide simultaneous revivals in 1986, the next year's baptism rate fell 7 percent in comparison.

"This year's increase is small," Price said. "But considering it follows a national emphasis on evangelism in 1990, it is a remarkable increase."

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Ruschlikon decision won't be reconsidered

RICHMOND, Va.—By a two-to-one margin, trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board voted Dec. 11 not to restore funding to the Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, despite the advice of the board's attorney and a storm of objections from Baptists at home and abroad.

European Baptist leaders attending the trustee meeting in Richmond, Va., said the decision signaled a serious break in cooperation between Southern Baptists and European Baptists. Earlier, other leaders of European Baptist groups had said such a decision could affect the future status of Southern Baptist missionaries working in Europe.

FMB President Keith Parks said the decision "seriously jeopardizes" FMB work in Europe and reflects a different approach to missions than previously practiced by the board.

"This will hamper everything we are doing, especially in Europe, because everything we are doing depends on partnership," Parks said.

FMB trustee Chairman William Hancock, pastor of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, said he was disappointed a better solution could not be found. Trustees "have done what they think is right, but they have done it at the wrong time and in the wrong way," he said.

The motion to "take no further action" on the Ruschlikon funding passed 54-27—a much wider margin than the initial 35-28 decision Oct. 9 to cut the FMB's 1992 allocation to Ruschlikon. That \$365,000 allocation represents about 38 percent of the seminary's budget.

Two of Kentucky's three trustees voted with the majority, while Hancock did not vote in his role as chairman. Voting in favor of not reconsidering the matter were William Hall of Danville and James Garland of Hazel. A fourth Kentucky spot on the board is vacant.

Last week's vote came after two months of public debate about the seminary, and after two days of negotiations between leaders from Europe and the FMB failed to resolve the dispute.

The earlier vote was taken without consultation with the seminary. However, several trustees said their action was not a quick one based only on the presence of visiting professor Glenn Hinson at the seminary. They said it also was based on a longstanding concern about the seminary's theological direction.

Hinson, a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, has been teaching at the Swiss seminary while on sabbatic leave from Southern.

Trustees critical of Hinson said his teaching assignment there was "the straw that broke the camel's back," signaling what they termed a continuing "liberal" trend in the school's theology.

In the two months since they initially voted to defund the Ruschlikon seminary, FMB trustees have complained that their side of the story has not been made clear in news reports.

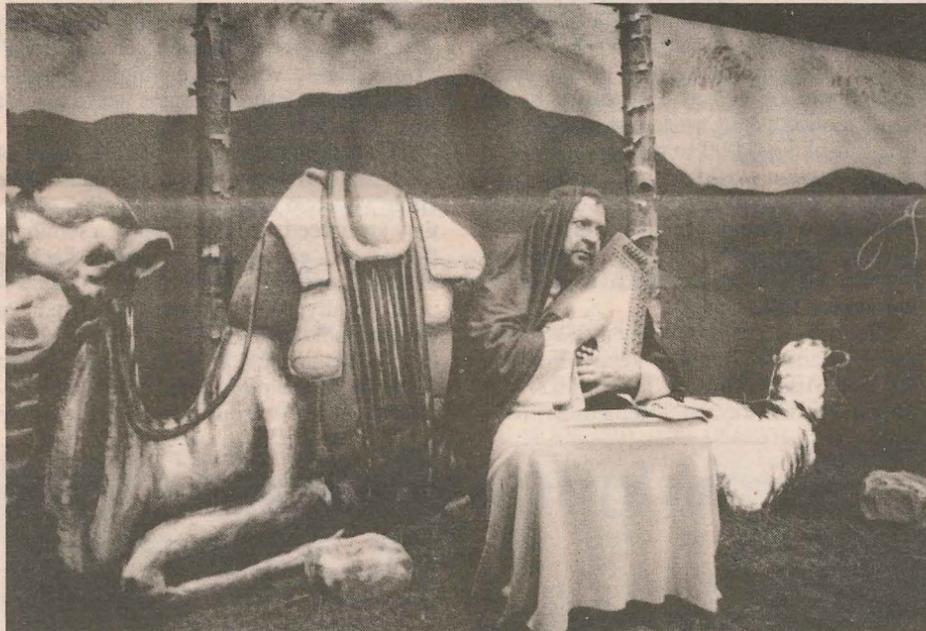
At last week's meeting, they asked Hancock to "send a news release" in the form of a letter explaining the trustees' reasons to all Southern Baptist churches and state conventions and all people who have written letters about the controversy.

Although many trustees acknowledge relationships with Baptists in Europe will suffer from their action, they insist the defunding is necessary to protect the theological integrity of the FMB and to make the most efficient use of the unparalleled opportunities for outreach in Europe.

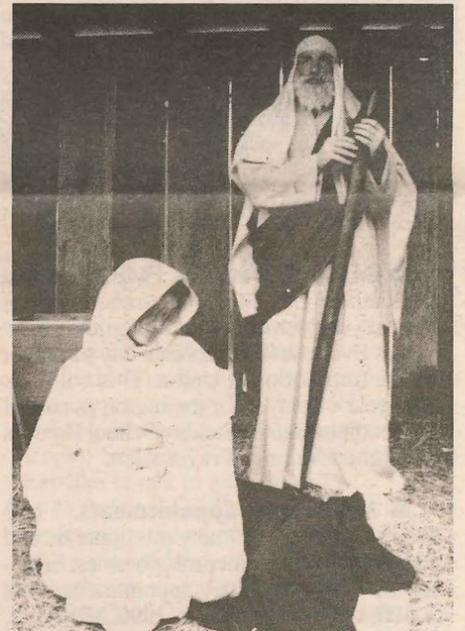
Last week's vote not to reconsider came moments after trustees heard details of the FMB's massive "green alert" outreach into the former Soviet Union.

The 48-student Swiss seminary, founded by the FMB soon after World War II, became a symbol of post-war cooperation

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BETHLEHEM—About 300 members of Shively Baptist Church in Louisville staged "Walk Through Bethlehem" Dec. 7. The church gymnasium was turned into a replica of biblical Jerusalem, complete with shops and shopkeepers, live animals and an



inn with no room for a baby. Elmo Goldsmith (left photo) plays the role of a musical shepherd while Staci and David Yakamovicz (right photo) portray Mary and Joseph with the baby Jesus. An estimated 5,000 people attended the event.

Changes planned to halt financial 'drain' of assemblies

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Kentucky Baptists' two assemblies will begin operating on a reduced schedule next year and eventually could be disposed of if their financial condition does not improve.

During their Dec. 9-10 meeting in Louisville, the Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board approved a six-point plan for changes at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek assemblies. Cedarmore is located near Bagdad in north central Kentucky, and Jonathan Creek is located on the shore of Kentucky Lake in the western region of the state.

The changes were proposed by a planning work group of the Executive Board's business and finance committee, which conducted an in-depth study of the assemblies for more than a year.

Before approving the work group's recommendations, Executive Board members

amended the document to eliminate a two-step procedure for disposing of Cedarmore and then Jonathan Creek "if and when necessary in the judgment of the combined business and finance and administrative committees of the board."

"There could be something self-fulfilling about this," one member said during debate.

But another suggested outlining such a contingency could get the attention of Kentucky Baptists and cause them to rally around the assemblies.

At the final vote, board members accepted the two-step procedure for disposal of the camps as a part of the report from the work group and business and finance committee but did not include it as part of the approved plan of action.

Immediate savings under the approved plan will come by eliminating two months of operation at each camp, reconfiguring staff positions and reconsidering insurance coverage.

Barry Allen, KBC business manager, said he anticipates making changes admin-

istratively to save about \$40,000 annually.

Under the approved plan:

- Both assemblies will not operate in December and January, beginning in 1992.

- Efforts will be made to reduce direct Cooperative Program budget appropriations for the assemblies in the 1992-93 budget.

- Funds set aside for major capital additions will be frozen.

- Executive Board staff will not be bound to schedule meetings at the assemblies if the events could be conducted more efficiently elsewhere, thus freeing more time for churches and associations to use the assemblies.

- Executive Board staff will be encouraged to "establish new and creative approaches to ministry through the assemblies."

- The business and finance committee will consider appointing a work group at its December 1993 meeting to review the results of these changes and report back no later it takes."

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FMB trustees ask more involvement in selection process

RICHMOND, Va.—Trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board moved themselves further into the selection process of missionary candidates last week.

In the future, trustees will join FMB staff in selecting candidate consultants, the staff members who work closely with people seeking appointment as career missionaries. Previously, candidate consultants were employed by five FMB staff members: the vice president, the associate vice president and the director of the personnel selection department and the board's president and executive vice president.

Now, trustees will participate in selecting consultants through a subcommittee of the board's mission personnel committee. Potential consultants will be interviewed by the subcommittee and "no job will be offered ... until after the outcome of the interview is known."

In other news related to the FMB:

■ **Green Alert report.** A task force overseeing the FMB's Green Alert in the former Soviet Union told trustees an estimated \$12.3 million will be needed to fund accelerated evangelistic efforts in that region during 1992. A Green Alert permits the board to speed up normal procedures to take advantage of missions opportunities amid social upheavals. A portion of the \$12.3 million would fund the 139 career missionaries and 346 International Service Corps appointees which the task force projects will be needed. In addition, as many as 1,469 volunteers from the United States will be invited to minister there during the next year.

■ **Day of prayer.** The FMB has asked all Southern Baptist churches and overseas Baptist conventions to designate New Year's Eve as an international day of prayer for the former Soviet Union. This will kick off a year of prayer for the region as part of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's Watchman National Prayer Alert.

■ **Missionary appointments.** FMB trustees appointed 31 new missionaries and reappointed two former missionaries, bringing the 1991 missionary appointment count to 400, down from 414 in 1990. However, the 1991 missionary count includes a record 191 International Service Corps workers, an increase over 1990, when the board sent 178 ISC workers overseas for two-year assignments. The total missionary force now stands at 3,941 people working in 122 countries.

■ **Missionaries generous.** FMB President Keith Parks told trustees about the generosity of the 37 missionaries now in orientation at the Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va. The new missionaries have given \$14,500 to the 1991 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

■ **Fellowship calls for funding.** John Hewett, moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, has called for all "free and faithful" Baptists to restore the \$365,000 allocation FMB trustees have withdrawn from the Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. "The trustees have broken a covenant with European Baptists. They have broken faith with Southern Baptists," Hewett said. "Against the recommendations of President Keith Parks and the entire European staff, despite the protests of Woman's Missionary Union and thousands of mission-minded Southern Baptist churches, and with utter contempt for the sensitivities of European Baptist leaders, they've let the political agenda ... overrule common sense and negate solemn oaths."

Ruschlikon funding decision not changed

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among European Baptist groups and between European Baptists and Southern Baptists.

But critics say the school is too heavily influenced by neo-orthodox or liberal theology and not representative of many European Baptists. Because the school is expensive to operate and attend and inaccessible to many Europeans, they say, it is ill-suited to lead a major thrust in outreach through the "open doors" of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Debate on the motion not to reconsider focused on broken promises. But trustees could not agree on who had been unfaithful—the trustees themselves, whose vote in October nullified a 1988 agreement to continue funding the seminary, or Ruschlikon's leaders, who FMB trustees say promised in 1988 to make the school more conservative.

California trustee Ron Wilson, who in October said the temporary hiring of Hinson demonstrated the school's liberal bent, said seminary administrators had broken their word.

"We made a commitment but they also made a commitment," Wilson said during last week's debate. "They broke that trust. Therefore, I believe our reaction to it is appropriate."

Ruschlikon President John David Hopper, who did not speak during the debate, earlier denied he promised to make the school more conservative.

The successful motion not to reconsider funding was offered as a substitute for an earlier motion asking trustees to make a one-time gift of \$365,000 to the seminary. The original motion would not have restored the FMB's previous funding agreement, which promised to continue financial support for up to 15 more years but with a gradual reduction. Instead, it would have provided funding for 1992 only.

"We made a promise to pay the \$365,000 next year and we ought to keep our promise," said Missouri trustee Paul Brooks, who offered the first motion. "Remember, Rus-

chlikon is not our seminary any more. ... It belongs to our brothers in Europe."

The FMB transferred ownership of the school to the European Baptist Federation in 1989.

Virginia trustee Paula Hemphill spoke against the defunding by comparing the situation to a marriage. She said she counsels many women who have been betrayed by their husbands. She urges the women to pray for their husbands and seek reconciliation—"not at all costs, but I never counsel them to deceive or betray in return, and I can't counsel that for us."

After their October vote, trustees asked FMB staff to seek a legal opinion on whether the budget cut violated their 1988 agreement to continue funding for Ruschlikon. The board's attorney, Lewis Booker of Richmond, told FMB administrators the board likely would lose if Ruschlikon's trustees brought a lawsuit to recover the money.

Although Booker asked that his opinion not be made public, it was reported in a Richmond newspaper prior to the December meeting. "It is really not a secret in light of that information," John Simms, a retired attorney from Salem, Va., told fellow trustees. "The (newspaper) report is correct."

Despite legal ramifications, several trustees said their duty to God superseded the 1988 agreement.

"I do not ever want to break a trust to any group of people," said John Jackson of California. "However, I have a higher commitment, and my commitment is not to break a trust with the Lord himself."

"Our ultimate answer is in the word of God," said William Sutton of Texas. "The Bible says two cannot walk together unless they are agreed. I cannot support a seminary that allows, encourages or aids in teaching doctrine contrary to Scripture."

Ironically, Wiard Popkes, chairman of the Ruschlikon seminary trustees, said neither the seminary nor the European Baptist Federation had considered taking the defunding action to court because that would

be contrary to Scripture.

After last week's vote, trustees agreed to hear responses from Popkes and Karl-Heinz Walter, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation. Both had witnessed the debate but had not been asked to speak.

"We regard ourselves as Christians who deeply love God and the Bible," Popkes said. "We do not regard ourselves as liberals."

Despite the defunding, Popkes said, "We shall not forget the generosity that Southern Baptists have shown to us."

Walter expressed his pessimism about restored relationships between European Baptists and Southern Baptists. "I do not see a way for a new building up of trust and confidence, although ... we dearly want this."

Ruschlikon President Hopper told reporters afterward that the FMB decision signals the "exportation" of Southern Baptists' biblical controversy "to all countries where Southern Baptists have work, and that is a disaster."

Trustee Chairman Hancock blamed the impasse on the inflexibility of the European leaders, the insensitivity of the FMB's Europe staff, the unresponsiveness of FMB administrators and a lack of grace from trustees.

Several trustees privately called for disciplinary action against some staff members, including Hopper, who serves as an FMB missionary assigned to Ruschlikon.

Meanwhile, FMB leaders are concerned the rift over Ruschlikon will produce a major shortfall in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, which provides about half of the FMB's annual \$184 million budget.

A set of four audio tapes of the Dec. 5-6 meeting is available from the FMB for \$13 and a videotape of the Dec. 11 meeting is available for \$7. Requests should be addressed to the FMB at Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230.

Reported by Robert Dilday of the Virginia Religious Herald and Greg Warner through Associated Baptist Press and Robert O'Brien of the FMB through Baptist Press.

Kentucky trustees explain views on Ruschlikon

By Marv Knox
Editor

A disappointed and frustrated William Hancock said stubbornness on all sides prevented the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board from restoring \$365,000 to the budget of Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Hancock, pastor of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, is chairman of the FMB trustees. He presided over recent meetings in which trustees voted again on their October decision to shift the money from the Swiss school to theological education in Eastern Europe.

Last week, trustees voted 54-27 to sustain the October defunding decision.

"It is a strange feeling to be caught in a controversy where there is no movement," Hancock said, noting trustees, missionaries, European Baptists and FMB staff all refused to compromise.

"I worked as hard as I could to get the \$365,000 appropriated for at least one more year. The trustees would not move. The European (missions) staff were insensitive. The European Baptist leaders said a flat 'no' to our (compromise) proposals. And I asked the board staff on Nov. 26 for a clarification of fund-raising policies, which I have not received."

Had any of the four parties taken a step toward reconciliation, a compromise could have been achieved, Hancock said.

"I am very frustrated by the lack of movement by anybody," he stressed. "I

can look God in the face and these trustees in the face and Southern Baptists in the face and say I did the best I could to get a \$365,000 allocation for one more year."

Hancock expressed appreciation to FMB President Keith Parks "for his encouragement and counsel the past two months," noting they talked regularly about developments regarding the Ruschlikon issue.

Of the trustees, he said: "Though they thought they were right in what they did, they were wrong in their timing and in the way they did it."

But trustees weren't the only ones who shaped the final decision, Hancock insisted. "More than just 54 people voted for there not to be any change," he explained, noting the other parties also "voted" with their inflexible attitudes.

The board and Europeans next must turn their attention to how they will work together in the future, he said.

"The first step we have initiated is to meet with European Baptist Federation leaders to create a dialogue with them on partnership," he reported. "We still have \$365,000 budgeted for theological education in Eastern Europe. ... Our missionaries are still there; we just appointed seven new missionaries to three European countries."

Hancock is concerned about the vote's impact on the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions. The Lottie Moon goal is \$84 million, part of the board's \$184 million budget.

"It's going to be down as much as \$10 million under the goal," he predicted. But he noted that if all the money raised under the auspices of Lottie Moon—such as designated gifts to the Ruschlikon seminary—were reported as part of the offering, the total could reach about \$82 million.

As chairman, Hancock did not vote on the decision. The two other Kentucky FMB trustees—James Garland, pastor of Hazel Baptist Church in Hazel, and Bill Hall, pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church in Danville—voted to defund.

"I felt we had a conditional covenant and that they had not lived up to their end of the agreement," Garland said. "We felt they were the ones who had broken faith. The board felt they had a commitment to move to a more conservative stance, ... but the school was not moving" that direction.

"We felt the good-faith agreement had been broken, not from our side, but from the seminary," Hall added. He cited a failure to make the school more conservative and Ruschlikon's fund-raising activities as violations of the agreement.

"From our side, we went to the meeting feeling like we would like to see movement from their side so we could justify movement from our side," Hall said. "At any table of arbitration, there needs to be movement from both sides."

"The German representative categorically said, 'We will not discuss any of these' (compromise proposals)," Hall said. "We are honorably justified at restating the position we voted in October."

Volunteers celebrate impact of partnership missions work

By Marv Knox
Editor

RADCLIFF—A well-traveled group of Kentuckians thanked God for a miracle when they recalled their participation in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions project with Kenya Baptists.

About 175 veterans of the Kentucky-Kenya Baptist partnership attended an appreciation banquet in their honor Dec. 6 at Stithton Baptist Church in Radcliff.

The KBC participated in the joint missions project with Baptists in the East African nation from 1985 through 1987.

Almost 800 Kentucky Baptists journeyed to Kenya during the three-year effort, and some of them made more than one trip, reported Bob Jones, director of the KBC direct missions department.

"During 1987, the last year of our partnership, the Kenyans averaged starting one church every day," Jones said. "More than 45,000 professions of faith in Christ were recorded" during the project.

"We just happened to get in when God was doing something special, and that was a miracle," said KBC Executive Secretary-Treasurer William W. Marshall.

Three major ingredients made the Kenya partnership—Kentucky Baptists' first such endeavor—successful, he said: "A carefully laid plan of organization; committed, sensitive volunteers who fulfilled the purpose of partnership; and a base of missionaries who wanted us."

The Kenya volunteers laid the groundwork for the current successful partnership with Baptists in the state of Espirito Santo, Brazil, which concludes next year, Marshall noted. The KBC Executive Board is setting aside funds for a third partnership to be start-

ed when the Brazilian partnership has ended, he added.

"I'm grateful for the sacrifices of Kentucky Baptist volunteers," said Benton Williams, director of the KBC missions and evangelism division. "Some of you borrowed money and paid on it for three years, just to be able to give your time as a volunteer in partnership missions."

That sacrifice was well-rewarded, Williams stressed, pointing to the thousands of people who became Christians when they heard Kentuckians proclaim the gospel.

"I recall one morning, when 22 people made professions of faith," he said. "I wondered if I would ever see them again. The next Sunday, all of them came to the small Baptist church. ... The chief tithed a chicken, which he laid on the altar."

That chief was joined by tens of thousands of his fellow Kenyans, said James Whaley, the Kenya field coordinator of the project. He noted the Kenya Baptist Convention grew from about 300 churches to 1,098 churches during the project, and now has 1,610 churches. Kenya Baptists baptized about 3,000 people in 1985, then baptized 14,194 in 1987, and baptized 19,517 last year.

"It was not just the witness you gave, but also the example you set—the training you gave to the Kenyan Christians" which made the results possible, he said.

The training and witnessing paid off in dividends that cannot be measured, insisted G. Allen West, stateside coordinator of the project. "All those people gave their hearts to the Lord. How can you put a value on that?" he asked.

The truth is, Kentuckians received more than they gave, said Delores Spears, president of Kentucky Baptist Woman's Mis-

sionary Union and a volunteer to Kenya.

"The (Kenyan) women were so dedicated and committed it really impressed us," she said. "Many walked for miles to attend our WMU meetings."

Volunteer Ray Provow, pastor of Sedalia Baptist Church in Sedalia, told another story of inspiration, about his interpreter, Peter, who could speak six languages.

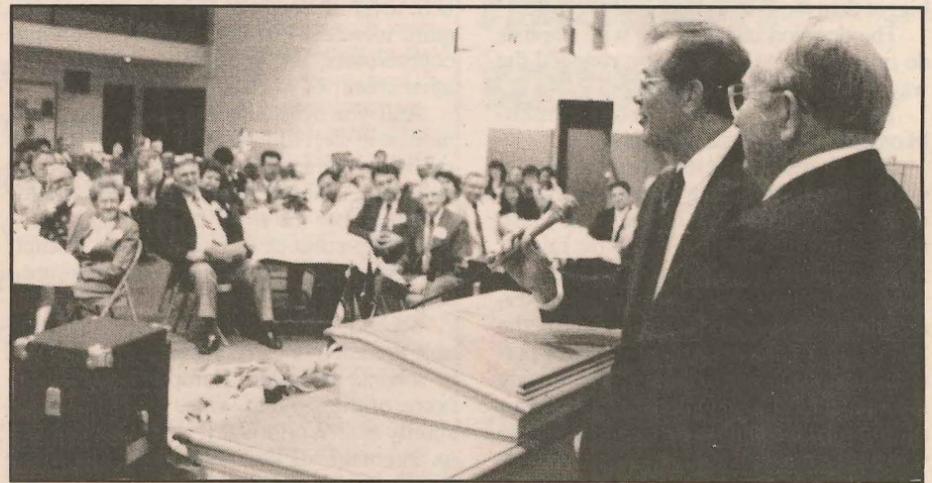
"He could have been a rich man if he had chosen any other profession than being a pastor," Provow marveled. But instead, the Kenyan pastor and his family lived in near poverty for the privilege of proclaiming the gospel.

Rick Robbins, director of missions for Blackford and Breckinridge Baptist associ-

ations, reinforced that memory, recalling the 12 seminary students he taught in Kenya. "These men were genial, mannerly and dedicated," he said. "They dreamed not of cars but of motorbikes or bicycles" to use to ride to their church fields.

Calvin Wilkins, the KBC's partnership missions coordinator, reminded the volunteers that needs still exist in Brazil for the coming year.

"About 250 volunteers are needed to meet the requests," he said. "Chapels will be built, medical teams are needed, teachers are needed to teach conversational English. Join us in praying that the Lord of the harvest will send the needed laborers to Brazil for a great harvest."



THANKS AGAIN—Bob Jones (left), director of the Kentucky Baptist direct missions department, introduces an old friend to Kentucky Baptists who participated in the partnership missions project in Kenya. Marshall Duncan, a former missionary to Kenya who now lives in Tennessee, thanked his Kentucky partners for their work in the African nation from 1985 to 1987. About 175 participants in the project gathered for a nostalgic appreciation banquet this month at Stithton Baptist Church in Radcliff.

Long's church not short on converts as deaf hear their language

By Pat Cole
Southern Seminary

DANVILLE—The hands of Brance Long are a conduit of good news for deaf people in Danville.

Long, 25, has been pastor of Danville Deaf Baptist Mission since January. The 30-member congregation has baptized 15 people and finished second among Kentucky Baptist churches in 1990 in per capita baptisms.

Every Sunday, Long preaches to about 60 people crowded into the chapel at Lexington Avenue Baptist Church in Danville for worship. During the week, he is a student at Boyce Bible School, a division of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, that



provides ministerial training for people who do not have college degrees.

Freedom to worship in their own language has created an inviting atmosphere for deaf people, he said. "They feel confident to relate to God. Many deaf people have felt like God is a white, English-speaking God. They weren't sure that God understood or shared their values or even knew their sign language."

The mission began with a nucleus of people who had attended interpreted services in churches in the South District Baptist Association. Part of Long's task has been to mold the group into a unified church.

"They tended to group themselves by the churches they had come from," he said. "Now we are beginning to blend and devel-

op a spirit of unity."

The mission was constituted in April 1990 under the association's sponsorship. Director of Missions Bill Willham believes it is the only deaf mission in the United States sponsored by an association.

"They (deaf people) had limited opportunities for leadership in hearing congregations," he said. "Few of them had served on a committee or even taken up the offering."

Now, he noted, the congregation works hard at self governance and has been paying its own expenses. The association and some churches contribute regularly to a fund which will help the congregation find a larger meeting place.

Long makes the 90-minute drive from Louisville to lead the congregation's services on Sundays and Wednesdays. His weekend ministry begins with visitation on Saturday and includes an overnight stay. Satur-

day visits are mostly contacts with people who are not church members.

He also tries to attend social events in the deaf community in Danville. Relationship building is a key part of evangelizing deaf people, he said. "The deaf like to talk and they like to talk to each other."

At Boyce, Long studies in one of the few programs in the country which offers theological classes in sign language. He and several other deaf students have been associated with Deaf Opportunity Out Reach, a national ministry based in Louisville.

Long stressed the need for deaf congregations to make their own decisions. Leaders in the deaf community have been reluctant to join churches dominated by hearing people, he said. "Deaf people need to recognize their own identity and realize that God can use them as deaf Christians. They can be their own kind of Christian."

Executive Board approves changes for assemblies to stop drain on CP

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er than December 1994.

Don Mathis, chairman of the assemblies work group and pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin, said operating costs for the assemblies are growing at a faster rate than can be funded with income from traditional sources of the Cooperative Program and guest fees.

If trends continue, the \$344,000 allocated for the two assemblies in this year's KBC budget would increase to \$833,000 by the year 2001, Mathis said. Faced with decreasing Cooperative Program income, this 142 percent increase could make the assemblies "a luxury the board could no longer afford," he explained.

The problem with the assemblies involves changing market trends and changing demographics among Kentucky Baptists, Mathis said. While the assemblies still

do well with summer youth camps, they are failing to attract enough business during the remainder of the year from other users to break even.

"It may be that the era of the camp or assembly is passing," Mathis said. "We are a different people than we were as recently as 30 years ago."

He cited statistics that show Kentucky Baptist churches today have 48.1 percent fewer youth and children than in 1960 but 32 percent more adults. "If our primary users are children and youth, then we're obviously dealing with a shrinking market," he said.

Summers and weekends are not a problem, Mathis said, but it takes more than seasonal use to sustain the assemblies: "Our problem is Monday through Thursday, September through May."

With modern lifestyles, few conferences

of any type are scheduled Mondays through Thursdays, Mathis said.

The situation is further complicated by Kentucky Baptists' attitudes about the assemblies, research indicates. A scientific survey commissioned by the work group discovered 60 percent of Kentucky Baptist church leaders believe it is "very important" for the KBC to provide the assemblies. But 42 percent said it is "very unlikely" they would schedule a function at Cedarmore and 53 percent said they weren't likely to schedule an event at Jonathan Creek.

Mathis told Executive Board members this situation is like Baptists who adamantly believe their church must have Sunday night worship but never attend on Sunday night.

The work group also discovered little support for using the assemblies among KBC staff who schedule statewide meetings. Mathis said many meetings can be held

more efficiently at centrally located churches without requiring overnight lodging.

The six-point plan approved by the Executive Board "is not a recommendation to sell Cedarmore or Jonathan Creek," Mathis told the board before the vote. "It is a recommendation to take some short-term steps to remedy the situation."

Mathis said the work group drafted the recommendations hoping to "stop the escalating drain on the Cooperative Program" from the assemblies and allow time for further evaluation.

The facts discovered by the assemblies work group will force Kentucky Baptists to take a position somewhere between the strictest business decision and the most emotional heart decision, Mathis said. "From a business standpoint, we ought to sell them tomorrow. From an emotional viewpoint, we would like to support them with whatever it takes."

12/11/91: A day that will live in Baptist history

editorial

Marv Knox

Mark Dec. 11, 1991, as a red-letter day in Baptist history.

On that date, trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board reaffirmed their decision to defund Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

The decision overshadowed the \$365,000 allocation that had been pledged to the Swiss school through 1992. It was bigger than the seminary's 48 students. Even bigger than the 2-to-1 margin of the vote.

The decision changed the way Baptists do missions. And it may have changed the way we support Baptist causes.

Trustees who voted to defund Ruschlikon cited three primary factors:

First, they said, the seminary broke faith with the FMB by failing to move in a more conservative direction. The seminary also breached trust with the FMB by raising money in the United States, they added.

Second, they said, the trustees were exercising responsible stewardship of the \$365,000. They felt the seminary's cost-per-student ratio was too high, and the money could do more elsewhere. They insisted their action opens the door for new leaders who will move Baptists along the wave of freedom sweeping Europe.

Third, they said, they had no choice but to vote their consciences. They said they must do what they feel the Lord wants, not what others want. One trustee noted, "The Bible says two cannot walk together unless they are agreed."

By most accounts, the trustees who voted 54-27 to defund the seminary are sincere, well-intentioned Baptists. The rationale put forward to support their decision is laced with enough truth to make it plausible, even though it led them to a disastrous conclusion.

First, the seminary has been the center of concern and contention for years. Even longtime supporters suggest Southern Baptists would have done well to wean Ruschlikon from financial support long ago. Yes,

the seminary is not as conservative as the theological destination of our six Southern Baptist seminaries. And yes, Ruschlikon has tried to raise U.S. dollars outside the board's financial pipeline.

However, Southern Baptists did not wean Ruschlikon from their FMB checkbook. But the board did make a legal commitment in 1989 to provide \$365,000 per year to the seminary through 1992; the trustees broke that agreement.

Of course, the seminary is not theologically identical to the FMB conservative trustee majority. But given the variances accounted for by language and culture and history, no foreign school will be identical to a U.S. ideal. If Southern Baptists were to require identical identity from their foreign counterparts, our cooperative ministry in other countries would diminish radically.

And yes, Ruschlikon has tried to raise money in the United States. Whether the school broke agreements with the board in doing so is subject to dispute. One can understand how the sheer panic of losing almost 40 percent of its budget could prompt the seminary to take extreme action to preserve its stability.

Second, the trustees very well might be able to train more students per dollar in other schools in Eastern Europe. Switzerland, home of the seminary since it was founded shortly after World War II and the only place an international European seminary could have been located at the time, is one of the most expensive places on earth. Eastern European economies look like bargain-basement discounts in comparison.

However, with one year remaining on an international legal agreement, trustees should not be bargain hunting. A decision to cut losses after the agreement had been fulfilled is one thing, but to go shopping in mid-contract is another. Sometimes a bargain costs far more than its pricetag.

Besides, how do you put a price on the head of a minister-in-training? And how can you say a new room of a house is more valuable than the foundation? The opportunities in Eastern Europe are exciting, but can we expect to be successful in new ventures if we break promises to old allies?

Third, no good Baptist would ask another Baptist to break conscience. Since we believe in the priesthood of the believer, we understand that we have a divine right and responsibility to seek God's truth.

However, trustees who appeal to conscience as a rationale for taking the money from Ruschlikon are selective. They may have a conscience problem in working with brothers and sisters whose theology is not identical to theirs. But do they have a conscience problem in breaking a legal contract? Do they have a conscience problem with dropping support for students—the powerless victims in this dispute—midway through their theological education? Do they have a conscience problem with telling the Baptists who sent their young ministers to Ruschlikon they are unworthy of Southern Baptist support? Many people find single-issue consciences unconscionable.

FMB Chairman Bill Hancock of Louisville had a hard, thankless task as he sought to mediate through this morass of logic and counter-logic last week. He testified that he tried as best he knew how to lead the disputants to compromise, at least for the 1992 budget year. But in the end, only FMB trustees could vote, and they decided overwhelmingly to defund Ruschlikon.

Their decision is likely to have dire consequences on several fronts:

- Most immediately, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions will take a wallop.

Some churches already have said they will take part of their Lottie Moon receipts and send them directly to Ruschlikon. Others have indicated they will designate offering funds to other causes. And some have said the Ruschlikon debacle has so jaded many members they expect receipts to be way down.

The \$84 million offering goal is designed to provide almost 46 percent of the board's budget. If the offering drops far, it will hurt almost 4,000 missionaries in 122 countries.

- The convention's Cooperative Program unified budget also could lose big. The CP begins in local churches, where members give their contributions. It moves on to support Baptist work at state, national and glo-

bal levels.

The economy and denominational conflict have taken their toll on the CP. Widespread alarm over the Ruschlikon situation could lead to even deeper distress. Some moderates may switch loyalties to the new Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and its alternative giving plans. More ominous is the specter of stay-at-home money. With a tight economy, many churches are looking to balance their budgets. Ripe controversy makes them vulnerable to members—who span the theological spectrum and claim no political stripe—who suggest the money would be spent better "right here at home."

A major Cooperative Program shortfall would have repercussions from the farthest mission field all the way back to Kentucky. Missionaries can't stay on the field for free, and a major shortfall would either prohibit new missionaries from going or possibly cause some to come home. And closer to home, drastic cuts in the CP could mean staff layoffs for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

- Partnership with European Baptists has been severed, perhaps fatally. Representatives from the Foreign Mission Board and European Baptists have agreed to meet to discuss their relationship. But the Europeans admit restoring partnership will be difficult, if not impossible. And even if ties are made to "new" European leaders, they certainly must be wary, given the SBC's tarnished reputation.

- The degree to which that reputation has been tarnished globally also has not been determined. Baptists the world over have varying cultural, theological and denominational emphases. If Southern Baptists try to impose rigid conformity on them as we have imposed on each other, we may lose the right to labor alongside them. They may decide they want no part of our theological/political controversy. They may decide the value of our relationship is not worth the cost.

- And if we fail to serve effectively with our Baptist sisters and brothers, how can we expect to speak an authentic word of redemption to a hostile world?

We must pray against all odds for global Baptist reconciliation.

Who is Lottie Moon? Partnership provides many answers

partners with lottie

third of a 4-part series

What is the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions? What does it do? Who is Lottie Moon?

This past June we were privileged to go on a mission trip to Brazil. We were members of a team involved in the Kentucky-Brazil partnership. As volunteers, we went to build a mission church and to do evangelism. We worked long, hard hours along side of some very nice people including missionaries, Brazilians and other volunteers.

We became aware of some of the difficulties missionaries encounter every day. We heard no complaints, but they did say that things could be better. Also evident were the busy, long days spent in preparation for each team's arrival and the daily work lovingly done by the missionaries. Their only requests were for us to pray for them, to support the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and to encourage others to support it also.

We met a young Brazilian man who is attending the seminary in Vitoria. In a few months, he will be the pastor of the mission church we helped build. We worked with him every day, and he studied at night. Lot-

tie Moon contributions are making it possible for Paulo to study the word of God so he can preach and teach it to his people. He is so excited about doing the work of the Lord.

We realize, more than ever, how Lottie Moon helps our missionaries with housing, cars and education for their children. Lottie Moon also provides teachers and textbooks for Paulo at the seminary.

What is the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering? Lottie Moon is love, hope, answered prayer, hard work, happiness, friendship, preaching, teaching, sharing and caring.

What does Lottie Moon do? Lottie Moon gives a helping hand to those who are willing to sacrifice their families and personal

lives to help the needy and spread God's word.

Who is Lottie Moon? You and I are Lottie Moon, along with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

This year the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering has a new, exciting meaning for us.

Jerry and Jane Paul
Owensboro

down home
will return next week

western recorder

Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253

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MARV KNOX, *Editor*
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RAY L. HAYES, *Business Manager*
C. R. DALEY, *Editor Emeritus*

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Missions gifts bear eternal significance

guest editorial

As we approach Christmas 1991, we Christians have much to celebrate. Who can doubt that God is at work in our world when we see walls crumbling; warring parties making peace; hostages set free; and, especially, when we see the gospel preached where it was once suppressed.

I still marvel when I think of the possibility of Southern Baptists and Korean Baptists cooperating with the Iranian government to open a hospital. Or when I hear of New Jerusalem Baptist Church in Monrovia, Liberia, and how it has grown from 40 to 190 members in a matter of months, in part because Southern Baptist missionaries and African Baptists have fed refugees of that nation's bloody civil war. Or when I hear of 70 people accepting Christ as Savior when two Baptists, including Southern Baptist missionary Bill Wagner, preached on the steps of the Communist Party headquarters in a Bulgarian city.

Yes, I marvel that in the midst of repression and injustice and even bloodshed, God is at work and that he has allowed Southern Baptists to be among those he uses to carry out his work in our world.

I marvel also at those God has sent as his people in this world. Under the Foreign Mission Board, there are about 3,900 missionaries assigned to 121 countries, and serving and visiting several additional countries. Their witness touches more of the earth than any of us really understands. My conviction is that if you could gather 3,900 people from any other group, that none would surpass the quality, the ability, the commitment, the dedication, the expertise, the effectiveness, the evangelistic zeal and spiritual qualities of these 3,900 who call themselves Southern Baptist missionaries.

The first thing I would say about them is they are called of God to be his servants, his missionaries representing Jesus Christ and proclaiming him to a lost world. In a day when so many are reluctant to make long-term commitments to anybody or anything, it continues to be a remarkable phenomenon that so many come forth from Southern Bap-

tist churches to acknowledge that God has called them to open-ended, unrestricted, unlimited commitment of service.

Secondly, I would observe they evidence a level of commitment beyond that which most people demonstrate. I have read the testimonies recently of that one in the tropical mountains walking two days beyond where the outrigger canoe could take him, where 20 people were saved. An old man said, "Now I know there is a God who cares if an American would come this far to share the gospel with us." The missionary got sick from the trip, as the local pastors also did. But after recuperation, he will return.

There is also doctrinal integrity among the missionaries whom we appoint. Missionaries are examined thoroughly by staff and board trustees. But missionaries are constantly evaluated in other ways. They are heard by Southern Baptists at the grassroots. They preach in churches; they speak in state and national conventions; they write newsletters regularly.

These missionaries are evangelistic. Our primary purpose is evangelism that results in churches. We would forfeit our calling unless all of our missionaries have an evangelistic emphasis. All of them, whatever their assignment, have been trained in personal evangelism, and they not only exemplify it, but they influence Baptist leaders in the countries to which they have gone. For the last decade, the ratio of baptisms to membership overseas has been approximately 12 to 1. This averages out those very hard and difficult places with the more responsive fields, and even though we have made extraordinary gains in numbers, the ratio has remained remarkably stable.

This emphasis is noted in new church starts also. With 2,600,000 members, the churches overseas had a net growth last year of 2,880 churches, moving from 21,242 churches to 24,122 churches. This is due in large degree to the tone the missionaries set.

At this time of special emphasis on foreign missions, I would simply want to appeal to all Southern Baptists to intensify our praying for our missionaries. They face the dangers of disease, traffic accidents, rebel activity and unrest to a degree of which we are not aware. God knows, and even as we pray, he releases his protective power. We need to pray for them in times of discouragement and burnout and temptation and exhaustion and depression, and in times of victory, enjoyment and excitement.

I would appeal to you also as you give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to consider the eternal significance of your gift. Your gift may buy a film projector for showing the Jesus film to thousands who can't read those same words in the book of Luke. Your gift may buy discipleship materials which strengthen believers in Egypt to face the struggle of living as Christians in a Muslim land. Your gift may buy a strategic plot of land in Argentina so that a church can bring the gospel into that community.

But more importantly, your gift supports missionaries like Curtis and Betty Dixon, who have devoted their lives to the people of the African nation of Angola. Living out of a suitcase, often sleeping in church buildings, they traveled the war-torn country providing Angolan Baptists with theological training. Today, they have a home, but they rejoice even more in the coming of peace and new opportunities for witness and discipleship.

More than 3,900 Southern Baptist missionaries like the Dixons are counting on your support as they face both the difficulties and joys of serving in the lands where God has called them. Celebrate this Christmas by praying steadfastly and giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering a gift with eternal significance.

*R. Keith Parks, president
SBC Foreign Mission Board
Richmond, Va.*

**More than 3,900
missionaries are
counting on you.
Celebrate Christmas
by praying
and giving.**



William W. (Bill) Marshall
Executive Secretary-Treasurer
Box 43433
Middletown, KY 40253

on mission together

The birth of a child

As a young person, I thought my father's middle name, Pickett, was strange. I thought of picket fences or picking at scabs—or worse. I was glad then they didn't decide to use that name for me.

Later in life I learned that the Pickett family was related—way back—to the George E. Pickett of Civil War history.

Thus, it was a pleasant gift when Alice noticed this article in one of the publications "we" read. I share it as a Christmas gift to the reader.

"In the tragic history of the un-Civil War, no Confederate general except Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson enjoyed more popularity than General George E. Pickett. This flamboyant character was brave and romantic. He led the famous charge of the Battle of Gettysburg.

"His love and loyalty to his beautiful wife was well known to both armies. The two armies were drawn up for battle in lines confronting each other when word was received that his wife had given birth to their first son. This softened and cheered the hearts of his troops.

"All along the two-mile Confederate battle line there were cheers, shouts and bonfires lit in celebration.

"The long line of bonfires illuminated the sky.

"Across the way, General Grant was curious to know what was happening. When his scouts reported the birth of a son to General Pickett, Grant responded: 'Haven't we any kindling wood on this side of the line. Why don't we strike up a row of lights, too, for the young Pickett?'"

Soon bonfires were ablaze all along the Union line. Not a shot was fired. Bright lights and peace reigned because of the birth of a son.

"A few days later, a baby's silver service, engraved to George E. Pickett Jr., from General Grant and two other Union generals was taken through the lines."

The birth of a baby brought peace among fighting men that night. But dawn came, and man began again to kill.

Many years before, a baby was born of a virgin. But when he became a man, men killed him, too. That's the way it is with men.

Christmas should remind us that God became a man to show us what men were really meant to be.

baptist forum

Typographical error

Regarding the "safe sex" verbal virus, I greatly appreciated the position you proposed to make in your article, "Inoculate teens against 'safe sex' virus" (WR, Dec. 3, P.4). However having read the article, I wonder if the point you made was the one you intended to make.

Your last sentence stated, "We've got to teach our children the only approaches to sexual safety: absolute abstinence of faithful fidelity."

To use a term popularized in the political arena, did you misspeak or did the typesetter misread? Surely you meant "... absolute abstinence and faithful fidelity." I would suspect that one of the reasons the HIV virus is spreading among heterosexuals is the "absolute abstinence of [meaning "from"] faithful fidelity."

While we are about the business of inoculating our teens, as well as our adults, against the "safe sex" verbal virus, we should also be about the business of educating our churches about the disease of AIDS and preparing them in advance to deal redemptively with the presence of an AIDS victim within the church family.

While I good-naturedly chide you for the apparent mistake in the article, I applaud you for speaking out on the issue.

*Michael R. Duncan, pastor
Eminence Baptist Church
Eminence*

Editor's Note: The sentence in question contained a typographical error. The sentence should have ended, "... absolute abstinence or faithful fidelity."

Commencement prayers

I am writing in regard to an article which was written in the Western Recorder concerning the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. A Nov. 12 article, "Court hears Lee v. Weisman arguments," reported, "The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs joined a coalition ... in filing a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of Weisman."

Weisman was the father in Providence, R.I., that won a lower court battle in which all future commencement prayers at public school graduations were forbidden by law. This action seems to indicate the BJCPA does not want commencement prayers at public school graduations and are even pay-

ing lawyers' fees to see that public prayers are terminated.

If Kentucky Baptists place the BJCPA in the budget for 1993-94, as has been instructed by the 1991 Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting in Lexington, it seems to this preacher that Kentucky Baptists desire to abolish all public prayers at public school graduation commencement services also. I do not agree with Cooperative Program funds being employed for this itinerary.

At the 1991 graduation commencement of the Walton-Verona High School, I was personally invited to pray a public prayer and to also confer a two- or three-minute charge to the graduates. The primary reason I was invited was because my daughter was valedictorian of her graduating class. Are Kentucky Baptists and the BJCPA saying I should not have had this privilege? I hope not! Yet, if I understand the issues, that is exactly what the BJCPA epitomizes.

I want to show my support for the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention which filed a brief on the opposite side of the question against the father. I am convicted that most Southern Baptists would be favorable to public prayers being prayed at a public school graduation commencement service.

*Michael W. Hail, pastor
New Bethel Baptist Church
Verona*

Rating
Churches
on Meeting
Social Needs

Churches sensitive to family needs but not minority needs

GLENDALE, Calif. (EP)—Protestant churches in America are relatively sensitive to the needs of families, the elderly, children, teen-agers and the poor but are less sensitive to needs of minorities, non-Christians, young adults and singles, the Barna Research Group reports.

In a telephone survey of a representative sample of American adults, the Barna Group asked respondents to evaluate how sensitive Protestant churches are to the needs of 15 types of people.

Less than half those surveyed rate Protestant churches as "very sensitive" to any of the types of people listed in the survey.

The group to which churches are perceived to be the most sensitive is families: 46 percent of respondents rated American churches "very sensitive" to families, 23 percent "somewhat sensitive," 2 percent "not too sensitive," 1 percent "not at all sensitive," while 28 percent had no opinion.

People who are married with children did not rate churches any differently on this issue than did unmarried people or those with no children in the household.

The area of lowest perceived sensitivity is to minorities: 14 percent of respondents said churches are "very sensitive" to needs of blacks, 12 percent to Hispanics and 10 percent to Asians. Blacks and Hispanics were more likely to see churches as sensitive to minority needs than were whites.

Other findings:

- 39 percent of respondents rated Protestant churches "very sensitive" to needs of the elderly, while 26 percent chose "somewhat sensitive," 4 percent "not too sensitive," 2 percent "not at all sensitive" and 28 percent had no opinion.

- 37 percent rated churches "very sensitive" to needs of children under age 13.

- 28 percent said churches are "very sensitive" to needs of teen-agers.

- 28 percent said churches are "very sensitive" to needs of the poor, with no variation in answers from respondents based on household income.

- Less than 25 percent of respondents rated churches "very sensitive" to needs of adults under age 35, non-Christians and singles.

In general, people who call themselves Protestant tended to have a better perception of Protestant churches than did those who consider themselves Catholic, of a different religious background or of no particular religious faith. Also, people who attended church were more likely to say Protestant churches are sensitive to needs.

George Barna, president of the Barna Research Group, said it is "sad that even among people who consider themselves Protestant fewer than half rated churches as very sensitive for all but one of the groups listed in the survey."

"Protestant churches either have a serious lack of sensitivity toward people today or they have an image problem of epic proportions," he said.

Further, Barna noted, those most in need of the church feel the most shunned by the church. "One of the primary reasons churches exist is to reach" non-Christians, he said, "yet fewer than one out of 10 non-Christians see churches as very sensitive to their needs."

92 percent of churches involved in ministry

By Jim Newton & Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists already have exceeded a Bold Mission Thrust goal for involvement in ministry projects, according to Home Mission Board research.

Ninety-two percent of Southern Baptist churches are involved in some type of ministry to needy people, a number well above the goal of 75 percent participation set for Bold Mission Thrust.

Bold Mission Thrust is the denomination's plan to share the gospel with every person on earth by 2000 A.D. Along with that primary goal, each Southern Baptist Convention agency monitors more specific goals for issues such as ministry.

"It is time for us to say thank you to SBC churches for all they are doing to minister to the needs of people who are hurting," said Beverly Hammack, HMB director of mis-

sion ministries.

The new HMB research is based on a stratified, random sample of 1,500 SBC churches with a questionnaire mailed to pastors. Although there is some possibility of response bias, the research is statistically reliable and represents the best available data on SBC churches with community ministries, said Clay Price, director of HMB program research.

The percentage of churches with ministries, and the number of ministries offered, increase as the size of the church increases, Price explained.

Virtually all SBC churches with more than 300 members have at least one community ministry, and the typical large church has nine different ministries, he said. Most churches with less than 100 members provide three types of ministries.

Although the research did not show any correlation between the number of ministries

offered and baptisms, almost two-thirds of the pastors reported professions of faith as a result of the ministries.

Based on survey responses, about 3,000 church-type missions have been started through community ministries. Nine percent of SBC churches have used ministries to needy people to start new congregations, Price said.

The average SBC church offers six ministries. The research indicated that 68 percent of SBC churches offer financial assistance, 63 percent provide a food pantry, 54 percent have nursing home ministries, 40 percent participate in a clothing closet and 37 percent provide transportation assistance.

More than 10 percent of the responding churches offered, in order of responses, jail or prison ministries, disaster relief, children's clubs, emergency shelter, home delivery of meals, parents' day out, exercise classes or teen clubs.

Hammack expressed concern about the relatively small percentage of SBC churches providing ministries to meet such social problems as drug and alcohol abuse, child and spouse abuse, AIDS, medical needs, and shelters for homeless people.

HMB President Larry Lewis emphasized the need for churches to develop "break out" ministries that touch the unchurched.

"Baptists are keenly concerned about ministry, but so much of it is self-centered," Lewis said. "We minister to the sick in our church family and to the needy in our church family. We will never minister to the needs of America until we come out of the church buildings and share our witness and ministry."

Professor suggests ways to help homeless

ATLANTA (BP)—During a mission ministries conference at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Kentuckian Willis Bennett suggested nine ways for Christians to become involved in ministries to the homeless.

Bennett, retired provost and senior professor of church and community at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, suggested:

- Encouraging government policies and

- programs for the homeless.
- Supporting local shelters.
- Providing food and clothing.
- Providing religious services.
- Creating a climate of understanding about homelessness based on facts.
- Offering job training.
- Providing housing or shelter.
- Sponsoring medical clinics.
- Making homelessness a public issues forum.

Commission calls for action on AIDS

WASHINGTON (ABP)—American society must transform anger, fear and indifference into action if the AIDS epidemic is to be stopped, according to a report released by the National Commission on AIDS.

Congress created the commission as an independent body to make recommendations to Congress and the president for "a consistent national policy concerning AIDS." The 15-member commission included two Southern Baptists, one a Kentuckian.

The report emphasizes that Americans stand at a crossroads: They can either begin to take the disease seriously or face a relentless, escalating tragedy.

AIDS has taken more American lives in its first 10 years than did the Korean and Vietnam wars combined, according to the report, and the cumulative deaths of the first decade (120,000) will more than double to 350,000 in the next two years.

As AIDS enters its second decade, Americans must overcome the indifference they have displayed, the report says: "It is as if the HIV crisis were a televised portrayal of someone else's troubles."

Belinda Mason, a former member of East Hartford Baptist Church in Hartford, served on the AIDS commission until she died of the disease this year.

A 1989 statement by Mason is in the commission's report: "We must learn to practice the justice, freedoms and compassion that we take so much pride in talking about in civics classes and teaching our children about when we tell them what it is to be an American," she said.

"But compassion is not going to happen because of a report that we make or an edict that somebody in Washington delivers," she continued. "It will begin in the small towns in the quiet country throughout America when people understand that people living with AIDS and HIV are just like us, because they are us."

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Marshall: Tight finances will be challenge of years ahead

By Marv Knox
Editor

Tight finances will challenge the Kentucky Baptist Convention during the next three years, KBC Executive Secretary-Treasurer William W. Marshall told KBC Executive Board members last week.

Marshall outlined five primary challenges for the KBC, and four of them dealt directly with money. He chose the three-year period because it spans the newest board members' term of service.

"The most immediate challenge for this Executive Board is to provide effective leadership in this time of continued financial stress," Marshall insisted.

"On a smaller scale, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Executive Board is facing the same realities as General Motors, IBM or, closer to home, General Electric and the University of Louisville. The simple reality is that costs, particularly personnel, continue to rise, while financial resources have diminished."

Preparation of the Kentucky Cooperative Program's 1992-93 detailed budget presents "our greatest challenge in many, many years," Marshall added. That \$17.34 million budget will be more than 3 percent smaller than the current \$17.9 million budget.

"Regretfully, there is no way to present, under present guidelines, a balanced budget for 1992-93 without applying the 'crisis plan' which was approved two years ago," Marshall said. Under specific financial con-

ditions, the crisis plan specifies cuts in allocations to the Southern Baptist Convention's portion of the Cooperative Program, to KBC Christian education and to the Executive Board.

"Unless this board should decide to provide a larger portion of the budget to the work of the Executive Board, there is no way to present a balanced budget without further cuts in staff and program," he noted. "The previous year's action of eliminating several staff positions was made somewhat easier by utilizing vacant positions. However, the magnitude of this budget cut will make it necessary to eliminate some positions with people in them."

Marshall pledged to "hold the staff loss to a minimum" and to approach the challenge with resolve and commitment.

He painted in the colors of a gloomy financial picture drawn by Barry Allen, the KBC's business manager.

Allen presented Executive Board members with statistics about KBC finances for the past decade. "Two realities" shape the picture, he said.

First, designated gifts grew faster than undesignated Cooperative Program receipts. Second, the KBC kept a smaller portion of its undesignated Cooperative Program receipts for in-state purposes, passing a larger share along to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Those factors left the KBC with a smaller portion of its income available for purposes chosen by the Executive Board. Conse-

quently, those unselfish decisions of the past decade have strengthened the economy's squeeze on Kentucky Baptist dollars, Allen said.

"Unlike the federal government, we cannot raise taxes or print money," Marshall conceded. "We must do with what we have."

The four other major challenges Marshall highlighted are:

- Medical insurance.

The Executive Board provides medical insurance for its staff and almost all state and district missionaries, Marshall noted. That cost will jump an additional \$45,000 this year and is to increase about \$250,000 in 1992-93.

- The future of Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek Baptist assemblies.

The KBC's two campgrounds have been the focus of a study committee and may have to be disposed of if they cannot be made financially viable. (See story, page 1.)

- Funding for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

The Baptist Joint Committee, a Washington-based religious liberty watchdog, was defunded by the SBC last summer. But messengers to the KBC annual meeting last month approved a motion to "find a way to provide funds in the 1993-94 budget ... to allow our convention to continue to support the Baptist Joint Committee."

"The board's precise task will be to determine the amount; how it is to be related to the budget; and the source or sources of the

allocation," Marshall said. "Because of the nature of this issue, this board will need to exercise unusual sensitivity in fulfilling the action."

- The relationship of the Executive Board to the KBC Historical Commission.

"The commission is in the early stages of developing a strategy for its future ministry which, inevitably and rightly, must include the question of space, location and support," Marshall noted.

The commission has a \$7,300 line item in the Executive Board's budget. But the role of historical preservation needs to be given "permanence and stability," he said.

"In these next three years, there will be other challenges not yet revealed," Marshall stressed. "And in these days of unsettledness ..., we would do well to walk sensitively, carefully and compassionately, listening more intently than ever for a word from the Lord."

He also promised a range of exciting experiences during the three years: a Missions-Fest emphasis in September 1992, a state-wide Sunday school convention in October 1993, a new overseas missions partnership starting in 1993, a limited missions partnership in New England in 1993, achievement of the "Mission Kentucky" church-starting campaign goal of 400 new congregations, preparation for 1995 simultaneous revivals, a five-year special project with senior adults, music ministry celebrations, increased ministry to the needy and assistance for KBC institutions.

Ellis, Atcher, Harmon & Mitchell elected Baptist campus ministers

Four Kentucky Baptists have been elected ministers to college campuses in the northern, central and eastern areas of the state.

The new campus ministers were approved by the Kentucky Baptist Executive Board's administrative committee last week in Louisville.

Bill Ellis was elected full-time campus minister at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights. He was joined by three part-time workers: David Atcher at Elizabethtown Community College in Elizabethtown; French Harmon at Prestonsburg Community College in Prestonsburg; and Sandy Mitchell at Alice Lloyd College in Pippa Passes.

Ellis has been minister of education and youth at First Baptist Church of Williamsburg since 1990. Previously, he was minister of music and youth at Buck Grove Baptist Church in Ekron from 1987 to 1990. He also was a recreation intern at First Baptist Church of Dalton, Ga., and a summer minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church of New Paris, Ohio.

Ellis is a former Kentucky Baptist Student Union president and participated in the Kentucky BSU's Son Celebration and Son-Burst summer ministry teams. He was president of the Kentucky Baptist Youth Ministers' Association in 1990-91.

He is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He grew up in Richmond and attended First Baptist Church there.

Ellis and his wife, Elizabeth, have a 1-year-old son.

Atcher has been interim campus minister at Elizabethtown Community College since

August. He has been a conference and convention coordinator for Alpha Recording in Elizabethtown and an intern for Word publishers in Dallas and Nashville.

Atcher is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University and is a student at Southern Seminary. He was active in Baptist Student Union while at Eastern and worked in summer missions.

His home congregation is Stithton Baptist Church in Radcliff.

Harmon has been interim campus minister at Prestonsburg Community College this fall and has worked with the Baptist Student Union ministry at Pikeville Community College for more than a year.

Harmon has been pastor of First Baptist Church of Allen since 1989. He was an evangelism intern for the Kentucky Baptist Executive Board in 1988-89; associate pas-

tor of First Baptist Church of Russell from 1985 to 1989; and previously served as assistant pastor of Unity Baptist Mission in Ashland.

He is a graduate of Ashland Community College, where he was BSU president; Marshall University; and Southern Seminary.

Mitchell has been interim campus minister at Alice Lloyd College this fall. She recently became placement officer at the college after working as assistant registrar for six years.

Mitchell has been interim youth director this year at First Baptist Church of Hindman, where she also is a Sunday school teacher, has implemented a watchcare program and is president of the church's Baptist Young Women.

She and her husband, Mitch, have three daughters.

Executive Board appropriates money, extends partnership

Financial decisions dominated the actions of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board during their Dec. 9-10 meeting in Louisville.

The board appropriated unused funds from the 1990-91 budget and investment income, approved new non-camp rates for the two state Baptist assemblies, approved bylaws changes for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation and called on churches and associations receiving Cooperative Program support to move toward self-support.

In other business, the board approved extending Kentucky Baptists' partnership with Utah-Idaho Baptists two more years. The home missions partnership will end in December 1994.

A total of \$793,000 in investment income and unspent funds from the KBC's 1990-91 budget was appropriated to these causes:

- \$75,000 to Mission Kentucky, a fund for special church-starting and church-growth efforts in the state.
- \$50,000 to a special evangelism project for 1995.
- \$40,000 to overseas missions partnerships.

- \$24,000 to domestic missions partnerships.

- \$76,000 to fund special projects that arise but were not foreseen in time for inclusion in the budget.

- \$50,000 for capital improvements and construction of Baptist student centers.

- \$75,000 to pay life and medical insurance premiums for retired state personnel and missionaries.

- \$50,000 for maintenance and improvements at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville.

- \$193,000 to be used either for salary bonuses for KBC staff in lieu of 1992-93 salary increases or to assist KBC personnel if positions must be terminated due to future budget restraints.

- A total of \$100,000 given in \$20,000 increments to each of Kentucky Baptists' five educational institutions: Campbellsville College, Cumberland College, Georgetown College, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College and Oneida Baptist Institute.

- \$50,000 to purchase additional hardware and software to complete the new computer network in the Kentucky Baptist

Building.

Non-camp rates at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek assemblies were raised slightly—a \$1 per day increase for Cedarmore motels, a \$1.50 per day increase for Waller dorms at Jonathan Creek and a \$2.50 per day increase for youth dorms at Cedarmore.

Executive Board members also voted to amend the bylaws of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation to bring the bylaws in line with changes in the Foundation's covenant agreement which the KBC previously approved. The changes allow the Foundation to charge fees for certain services.

Also during the December meeting, the Executive Board received "with regret" the resignation of Billy Compton, associate director of evangelism. Compton has been called as pastor of First Baptist Church in Mount Washington.

The board also focused its attention on foreign missions, hearing brief testimonies from furloughing missionaries and witnessing a visit from Lottie Moon through a dramatic presentation by actress Freddie Neel of South Carolina.

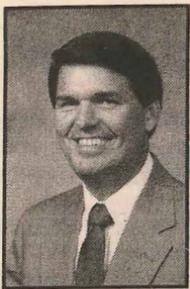
Dehoney appointed to CP study group

NASHVILLE (BP)—Kentuckian Wayne Dehoney is among 23 Southern Baptists named to a special Cooperative Program study group by the chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

David Hankins, a pastor in Lake Charles, La., said he appointed the group to review the history of the Cooperative Program, analyze how Baptists perceive it now and develop proposals for the future. The group will meet in Nashville Jan. 20-21.

Dehoney is former pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville and currently serves as senior professor of preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He served as SBC president in 1965 and 1966.

Others appointed to the study committee include SBC Executive Committee members and staff, state convention executive directors, SBC agency representatives and past SBC presidents.



Bill D. Whittaker
President
Clear Creek Baptist Bible College
Pineville, KY 40977

clear creek chronicle

Sent as God's people

My gift to the Lottie Moon Foreign Mission offering will be motivated by missionaries I know who faithfully serve around the world. Five of these couples prepared at Clear Creek.

Tim Searcy graduated in 1980 and serves with his wife, Brenda, and sons Philip, 7, and Nathan, 3, in Cali, Colombia. Tim teaches religious education at the Columbia Baptist Theological Seminary. One of Brenda's assignments is to play the piano in the San Fernando Baptist Church. They work each week with a tutor developing their ability in Spanish.

They write, "We are feeling more comfortable with the language as time goes by. Teaching will probably help a lot, and learning to laugh at yourself is imperative!"

They acknowledge, "We are here for God to use us in the best way he sees fit and request your prayers as we seek God's guidance in whatever that might be."

Jim and Jenny Ditty completed their studies here in 1981. After graduation from Southwestern, they were appointed as missionaries to South Korea. Jim writes each month.

His most recent letter noted, "We just finished with two Han Mi crusades, and the results are wonderful. These evangelistic efforts were made by two new starter churches. At the first church, there were 19 professions of faith. Most were by adults. In the second church, there were nine who became believers. All of these adults!"

"These church congregations tripled overnight. Praise the Lord for his power and grace! Is it not a true privilege to be able to work in the Lord's harvest? Pray for these new congregations to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord."

After several years as director of missions for Booneville and Irvine Associations, 1973 graduates Bob and Oakie Blevins were appointed to Namibia, Africa. Malaria struck their town at epidemic stage, and Mrs. Blevins was in the hospital four days.

She wrote, "There are so many here that perhaps will never know about the Lord unless we share the gospel with them. We do want to make a difference in our world, and we desire your prayers as we do all we know to do."

Other Clear Creekers serve in Transkei—John and Marge Wilson, 1965 graduates—and in South Africa—James and Dorothy Ditty, 1978 graduates. We have several others now preparing to join these laborers in the fields white unto harvest.

Pray for the laborers and give generously to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions. As God's people sent to the world, that response is not optional.

Recorder board votes no rate increase; Earwood elected

LOUISVILLE—Western Recorder trustees have voted to maintain current subscription rates, elected new officers, approved a new design and decided to postpone a decision on carrying Sunday school lessons.

Meeting in Louisville Dec. 5-6, the board elected Greg Earwood, pastor of First Baptist Church in Murray, new chairman. He succeeds Richard W. Bridges, pastor of First Baptist Church in Bowling Green, who served as chairman the past three years.

Earwood will serve with Don Mantooth, pastor of First Baptist Church in Morehead, vice chairman, and Kay Trisler, a member of Harrodsburg Baptist Church, secretary.

Trustees also approved elements of a new design for the Recorder which will take effect with the Jan. 7, 1992, edition.

Since the death of H.C. Chiles, longtime writer of Western Recorder Sunday school lessons, trustees have been considering whether to continue to offer Sunday school

lessons. At last week's meeting, they voted to delay making a decision on the matter until other design changes are in place and more research has been completed.

Trustees approved a budget goal of \$789,386 for the 1992-93 fiscal year. That amount represents no increase over the current budget. It also calls for no increase in subscription rates, although both matters will be evaluated in the spring if the government increases postal rates.

Hopkinsville church on the go with year of missions

By Connie Bull
Staff Writer

HOPKINSVILLE—When members of Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville give their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering this year, it will mark the conclusion of a yearlong emphasis on giving and going in missions.

Pastor Michael Watts reports the church has been involved in a variety of missions projects this year:

- Through a linkup with First Baptist Church in Allen, Edgewood volunteers formed a construction team to help the mission church install shower facilities in the "prophet's room," a space for visiting mis-

sion teams. They also surveyed nearby Dwale for the possibility of a mission point.

- In addition to enrolling 257 in their own vacation Bible school, the church conducted a mission VBS in Christian County Baptist Association, assisted with VBS at First Baptist in Allen and conducted VBS at a day-care center near Allen.

- A corps of youth and adult volunteers supplemented the Monday through Friday schedule of a "Summer is Fun" program for children, offering a varied curriculum of instruction and recreation.

- Western Kentucky University graduate Andrea Moore represented Edgewood in mission work overseas as a volunteer summer missionary to Poland for two months.

Other church volunteers have served in the Kentucky-Kenya partnership and in the Utah-Idaho partnership with Kentucky Baptists.

- Members continued their work of the past four years with a campground ministry on the Cherokee Indian reservation in Cherokee, N.C. The ministry includes puppets, drama, backyard Bible studies, visitation, recreation and worship.

The Edgewood church is preparing to have a missions celebration, capping off the year in missions with the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions. A Mission Hall of Service is being dedicated to "record the service of the people in mission for the Lord," Watts said.

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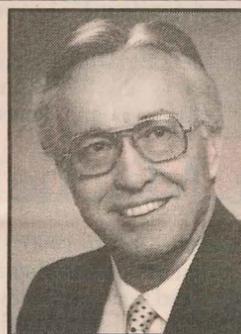
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Catholics support different version of RFRA legislation

By Larry Chesser
Baptist Joint Committee

WASHINGTON (ABP)—By insisting on special provisions about taxes and abortion, a group headed by the U.S. Catholic Conference has divided America's religious bodies in what would otherwise be a unified front on a religious liberty bill.

Almost all religious groups agree legislation is needed to counter the impact of a 1990 U.S. Supreme Court decision that allows government to restrict religious freedom for almost any reason as long as religion is not singled out for adverse treatment.

In the historic case of Employment Divi-

sion of Oregon v. Smith, the high court held that the government no longer need demonstrate a "compelling interest" to justify a restriction on religious practice.

What has united religious groups is the harsh reality of the high court's abandonment of its long-held "compelling interest" test.

Aside from such a test, religious groups challenging governmental actions as an infringement on their free-exercise rights almost always lose.

However, the rare consensus among religious organizations that something needs to be done is being tested by some groups—most notably the U.S. Catholic Conference.

They argue that any corrective legislation must exempt religiously based challenges to abortion restrictions, to the use of tax funds by religious groups, and to the tax status of religious groups.

Most other U.S. religious bodies, including the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, have resisted special treatment of any particular free-exercise claim.

The two Baptist bodies have joined with a number of civil-liberties groups in forming the 47-member Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion.

This coalition seeks a legislative remedy

to the Smith decision that would restore the compelling-interest test but would not single out specific types of religiously based claims for enhanced or diminished protection.

The fracture among religious groups over whether specific types of claims should be singled out is now reflected in two legislative proposals designed to counter the Smith decision:

- The Religious Freedom Restoration Act (H.R. 2797) was introduced June 26 by Rep. Stephen Solarz, D-N.Y. Backed by the 47-member religious coalition and co-sponsored by 124 House members, RFRA would prevent government from interfering with religious practice unless the governmental action represents the least restrictive means of advancing a compelling governmental interest.

- The Religious Freedom Act of 1991 (H.R. 4040) was introduced Nov. 26 by Rep. Christopher Smith, R-N.J. It generally mirrors the Solarz bill but includes the specific exemptions proposed by the Catholic Conference. The Smith bill also lacks a provision contained in RFRA stating that the legislation, targeted at enhancing free-exercise protection, does not affect establishment-clause requirements.

Rep. Smith and the Catholic Conference contend the exemptions are necessary to ensure that the legislation neither creates a religiously based right to abortion nor affects churches' tax status or ability to participate in government social programs.

Coalition leaders, on the other hand, say the exemptions are unnecessary and would jeopardize support for the legislation.

The first bill, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (H.R. 2797), is "scrupulously neutral on all free-exercise issues," said Oliver Thomas, coalition chairman and general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee. But the new proposal (H.R. 4040) is "denominational pork barrel," he said.

But Rep. Smith said language excluding religiously based challenges to abortion restrictions is considered essential by the National Right to Life Committee, Americans United for Life, the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

"The bill I am introducing has a specific provision that makes it clear that the legislation cannot be used to secure a right to abortion or abortion funding," Smith said. "It also explicitly protects the tax status of religious organizations."

However, members of the broad coalition supporting the Religious Freedom Restoration Act range from civil-liberties organizations, such as the American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way, to conservative groups that oppose abortion, including Southern Baptists' CLC, the National Association of Evangelicals and Beverly LaHaye's Concerned Women for America.

In a Nov. 22 letter asking members of Congress to co-sponsor RFRA, representatives of these and other organizations that oppose abortion said the abortion language supported by the Catholic Conference is "unnecessary and would jeopardize passage of this legislation. This bill (RFRA) is neutral on the abortion issue, as it is on every other particular claim, including peyote use, tax exemptions and landmarks preservation. It must remain so."

Hearings on RFRA are expected to be held soon after Congress returns in January, according to Brent Walker, associate counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee. Walker said Sens. Joseph Biden, D-Del., and Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, chairman and ranking minority member of the Senate Judiciary Committee respectively, are committed to introducing RFRA in the Senate when Congress returns.

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homes for children

And God bless us, every one!

I am always humbled when I see a child who finds the courage to love when all he knows is loneliness, fear and abandonment. Dickens' celebrated story, "A Christmas Carol," reminds me to look in the children's faces to discover the true meaning of Christmas.

Though they have little to smile about, these children—past, present and future—have given us gifts far too precious for us to live the life of an Ebenezer Scrooge.

There are so many courageous Tiny Tims and so many arms reaching out to help. I rejoice each year as Kentucky Baptists band together to bring Christmas to these fragile children, abused, rejected and forgotten by those they love the most.

Dickens wrote about the Christmas spirit of Tiny Tim. This year, we have watched another Tim grow into a brighter future. He came over a year ago with a long history of hospitalizations related to his suicidal tendencies. Since he has been with us, Tim has built many meaningful relationships and has seen love and acceptance mirrored back to him from the caring workers you support. Tim has made no suicidal gestures in the past year, and his grades have gone from Fs to As and Bs, giving a boost to his self-esteem.

Recently, 15-year old Kevin came to us. After his mother died three years ago, Kevin was forced to rely on the care of his father and older brother, both alcoholics. Each night he fell to sleep on a worn mattress in a crowded trailer. To numb the pain during the days, he used drugs and alcohol. He struggled to keep pace in school, working on just a fourth grade level. Because you cared, Kevin has his own bed to sleep in, no longer uses drugs or alcohol to escape his pain and is learning to trust again.

What about the children of Christmases yet to come? At Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, we are committed to bringing hope and light into the lives of the children. Last year more than 1,100 children reached out to us for help. We want to help every child that comes our way. With your support, we will be able to expand our services and care for many more of them.

This season reminds us of the most wonderful gift given by our Lord 1992 years ago. That gift of long ago carries with it a promise for the future—a promise of love, peace and hope.

Our children find these gifts wrapped in your love and warmth throughout the year. I want to thank each of you who have provided gifts of love in the past, present and future. Without your support, the picture might look different.

Merry Christmas, and God bless us, every one!

mountains to the mississippi

■ AGES—Ages Church called former associate pastor **Robert Jordan** as pastor.

■ BERA—**Ralph Shepperson** has been called as pastor by Blue Lick Church.

■ CALHOUN—The McLean County Youth Rally was held at Calhoun Church Nov. 21-23. Calhoun Church joined with Livermore Church in Livermore, Island Church in Island, and Buck Creek Church in Calhoun to sponsor the event. **Jim Powell** of Parrish Avenue Church in Owensboro served as evangelist. Attendance averaged between 215 to 230 each night with a total of 42 decisions for salvation.

■ CONWAY—**Kale Conner** has been called as interim pastor by Conway Church.

■ CORBIN—**Larry Mulberry** has resigned as pastor of Greenland Church to accept a pastorate in Clarksville, Tenn.

■ LAMERO—**Jerry Ballenger** has been

serving Pleasant Run Church as interim pastor.

■ LOUISVILLE—West End Church held a celebration of relocation Dec. 15 which included a membership motorcade from the old location to the new church facility at 1400 S. Fourth Street.

Ormsby Heights Church ordained **Michael Sharp** to the gospel ministry. Sharp has assumed a pastorate at Parkway Church in Hodgenville.

Verlin Kruschwitz has been called as interim pastor by Clifton Church.

■ MCDOWELL—**J. Eddie Miller** has been called as pastor by McDowell First Church.

■ MIDDLESBORO—**Dennis Price** resigned as pastor of Southside Church.

■ MT. VERNON—**Steve Weaver** has been called as pastor by Copper Creek

Church sets records on 'Not Easter Sunday'

By **Connie Bull**
Staff Writer

GREENVILLE—Church members who have said they would like every Sunday to be Easter Sunday came a step closer to realizing their dream this fall in Greenville.

Second Baptist Church had a "Not Easter Sunday" emphasis to promote high attendance and giving. It wasn't Easter Sunday, "but it sure did feel like it," said Pastor Rick Shannon.

On that day, the church recorded more people in attendance than on the last real Easter Sunday.

All goals were exceeded with 366 in Sunday school attendance, 470 in worship attendance and \$21,350 given in offerings—more than double the offering goal of \$9,030.

The church previously averaged 275 in Sunday school, 375 in worship and \$6,000 weekly in giving.

To make this event work, Shannon said he first secured the sponsorship and prayer commitment of the deacon body, and then

embarked on an extensive promotional campaign.

The deacons and staff set goals for Not Easter Sunday in the areas of Sunday school attendance, worship attendance, choir participation and giving.

Every Sunday school member was urged to contact every member in the class. The Wednesday night before the emphasis, members met for cottage prayer meetings. And the day before the event, the deacons and yokefellows attempted to visit every home on the roles.

In all, more than 300 contacts were made—half of them in that one day.

The entire congregation caught the spirit of the special day, Shannon said.

The choir and soloist prepared Easter music, and Shannon delivered a sermon on Easter themes. A purple drape covering a crown of thorns was placed in the sanctuary as a visual reminder.

Shannon even wore a brightly colored leaf in his suit lapel and encouraged husbands to buy their wives new "Not Easter" outfits.



Barkley Moore
President
Oneida Baptist Institute
Oneida, KY 40972

oneida journal

God's blessings very obvious

One of the greatest joys of Christmas is hearing from friends.

Here are a few excerpts:

From Minneapolis: "My two brothers visited in your area in recent years, talked to many and video-taped a lot. Mother left us a heritage of faith, and she often talked of the beauty of the Kentucky mountains and sang to me. I'm sending a small check to be used for potatoes."

From Cave City: "We appreciate your efforts for the children of Oneida and hope

to visit there in the near future."

From Jamestown: "What is happening at Oneida is exciting to us. God's blessing on the work there is very obvious."

From Lexington: "I am enclosing \$100 in memory of our son. Our family recognizes your school as an outstanding and worthwhile cause."

A Catholic priest recently visited our school from Ohio, and this letter came with a \$50 donation:

"Thanks much for your gracious and personal hospitality. The school is surely a buzzing beehive of activity, never a dull moment. What did not get done in the 'tour,' your movie 'Oneida: a Special Place' certainly accomplished—a splendid presentation. Keep up the good work of educating here and hereafter. Please put me on your mailing list for the Oneida Mountaineer."

A Baptist pastor writes from Michigan: "Thank you for your hospitality and the tour. That was my third visit to Oneida and every trip has been an inspiration. I have read the book 'Mountain Rising' and enjoyed every page of it."

From Hopkinsville: "My greatest sympathy to you in the trying situations you have had. Your staff has served well indeed with both body and soul. The Lord has promised he will not give us greater burdens than we can bear. May the many friends of Oneida supply all its needs rapidly."

From Louisa: "Enclosed is a check for \$250. We have been giving our pastor and his wife gifts of money at Christmas time. This year they requested our gift to them

Church.

■ OWENSBORO—Walnut Street Church ordained **Kenny Davis**, **Eddie Tichenor** and **Tony Steele** as deacons.

■ PADUCAH—**Bill Ogden** is serving Bethel Church as pastor.

■ STONEY FORK—**Donnie Yates** resigned as pastor of Stoney Fork Church to move to Ohio.

■ WARFIELD—**Jimmy Grayson** retired as pastor of Warfield Church Dec. 1.

MISSIONARY UPDATE:

■ **Nadine Lovan**, missionary to Ghana, is on furlough at 940 Covington, Bowling Green, Ky. 42103.

■ **Max and Betty Sledd**, missionaries to Nigeria, are on furlough at Rt. 1, Box 357, Gilbertsville, Ky., 42044.

Clear Creek College adds music faculty; will expand facilities

PINEVILLE—Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville has added two new music instructors and announced plans for improved music facilities.

Shirley Joyce Humphries, daughter of the late Rev. and Mrs. H.C. Chiles, now accompanies the Clear Creek Singers and teaches piano. Charlene Ditty, wife of Clear Creek instructor John Ditty, also will teach piano.

James Castlen, professor of music, announced plans to relocate music classrooms from the second floor of the Correll building to the building currently used as the preschool center. These changes will allow the music program to accommodate more students, he said.

The remodeled music building will include offices, classrooms, a piano lab, practice rooms and a choir rehearsal room.

Castlen said he hopes to add another full-time faculty member to teach music theory, keyboard, orchestra and handbells.

be sent to Oneida."

There were other pastors and Sunday school teachers who had their classes send gifts to OBI rather than to themselves.

Also many husbands and wives gave to Oneida rather than to each other.

For example, from northern Kentucky: "I am sending this check as my Christmas gift to my husband. This will make him happier than anything else I could give him!"

From White House, Tenn., came a lovely letter and a generous gift:

"We are prayerful about your ministry there. Since my father mentioned Oneida as a concern of his as he lay dying, it is now special to me also."

From Lexington: A group of ladies decided to send \$300 to OBI instead of spending it on each other or going to a fancy place to eat.

"We are aware of the great work being done at Oneida."

A pharmacist wrote from Knoxville, sending \$500 in honor of his Somerset parents:

"Times have been hard and challenging for all of you. If there is anything I can personally do, contact me. I am available for manual work, career days, class discussions on medical and science issues or drug abuse and to help any individual I can. I believe in involvement, not just money and talk."

What was done by these was done by scores of others for which we are most grateful.

Reprinted from the Jan. 9, 1990, issue of Western Recorder.



RETIRES ON THE GO—Nine years after retirement, Southern Baptist home missionaries Bob and Sara Wells continue to minister in Southern California. Since leaving Texas in 1950, they have helped start three associations, the Nevada Baptist Convention and more than 43 churches. (BP photo by Sarah Zimmerman)

Retirement isn't call to comfort for active couple

By Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board

NEWHALL, Calif. (BP)—Reviewing 40 years of ministry in the western United States, Bob and Sara Wells admit they could have chosen a more comfortable place of service.

Their calling, however, is not to comfort—even in retirement.

Wells was pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, in 1950 when he went to California on vacation. Before the visit was over, Wells was called as pastor of Narbonne Avenue Baptist Church in Lomita, Calif.

As the couple left the Bible Belt, they were uncomfortable about raising their three children in the Southern California culture. But the children have followed in their missionary parents' footsteps—the daughter is a pastor's wife, one son is worship leader and another son is helping start a congregation.

Wells routinely found himself in the uncomfortable position of leading a church with a history of pastor turnover. His first California church had four pastors in six years. But he stayed 13 years and helped the church start three missions and grow from 100 to 1,100 members.

Another church where Wells was pastor had a history of running off pastors, but Wells said, "I didn't run very fast."

Wells left that church on peaceful terms after four years to become a Southern Baptist home missionary and director of missions for Northern Nevada Baptist Association in Reno. Winters in Reno were "long, cold and harsh," but the experience generated some of their warmest memories, Wells said.

For example, a Sunday school class Wells helped start in Jackpot, Nev., could not afford to pay rent on the building it used each week. A local resident offered to let the class meet in his casino for free. The class in the casino ministered to two children, whose father later became a Christian and helped start another church in Nevada.

While in Nevada, Wells helped organize three associations, the Nevada Baptist Convention and at least 43 churches. But he takes the most pride in the six couples from his association who now serve as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries.

In 1982, Wells retired and returned to Southern California. Their community north of Los Angeles did not have a Southern Baptist church, so naturally they helped start one.

Mrs. Wells, a retired school teacher, leads the children's ministry at the new church. Wells, 74, serves as interim pastor of a mission 20 miles north of their home.

Teaching English to internationals is the pair's newest passion. Wells uses the gospel of Mark to teach English and the plan of salvation to the advanced class while Mrs. Wells teaches beginner classes from Psalm 23.

Now the retired missionaries are learning Spanish so they can empathize with their students who are trying to master a new language.

In his free time, Wells plays golf, jogs at least three times a week, competes in the senior olympics and serves as an estate planning consultant for the Southern Baptist Foundation of California. Mrs. Wells creates ceramic figurines and paints china dolls. They both work as American Bible Society volunteers.

Retiring to a rocking chair, "might be a comfortable thing to do," Mrs. Wells said, "but it would be hard for us."

Minister cracks down on crack houses & prostitution

By Lydia Murphy
Southwestern Seminary

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—The most successful businessmen in Willie Bennett's Fort Worth, Texas, neighborhood have been shut down.

Thanks to the soft-spoken, mild-mannered Bennett, it's not "business-as-usual" anymore.

The graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary may not look like the kind of person who would run someone out of business, but when it comes to drug dealers, he knows how to play hardball.

As director of the Bethlehem Center in east Fort Worth, Bennett was told to ignore the drug pushers along his street. They weren't bothering him, city officials said, so it would be better to let them go about their business.

But their "business" was something Bennett could not tolerate, especially around the center, which cares for 100 children in various programs each day.

"What do you mean they aren't bothering us?" Bennett said he asked city officials and police.

"I would go out each morning and pick up bags full of needles and crack bags, all sorts of drug paraphernalia, even condoms, all over the playground where my kids would soon be playing.

"We've had people so doped-up they would crash through neighborhood yards. One man almost crashed into our building. They would speed down our streets."

Drug users and dealers were just one problem Bennett faced.

"The prostitutes were so bad about peddling right in the middle of the street that there were often traffic jams. One day I looked up from my desk and saw a bare-chested prostitute walking down the street. All this was going on while my kids played outside," Bennett said.

Bennett discovered all the crime in his neighborhood was connected. If the drug problem could be eliminated, other problems would be easier to beat, he decided. "I

realized the prostitution was so bad because of the crack houses."

Bennett began his crusade by locating owners of vacant houses used for drug deals and having the houses boarded up and the lawns cut.

When the crack houses closed around the center, "it changed the area dramatically," Bennett said.

The task hasn't been easy for Bennett, who was raised in the more pastoral setting of Brenham, a southeast Texas town of 11,000.

In those days, Bennett wanted to become a lawyer because, "blacks could only be a mortician or a preacher, and certainly not have their own businesses. I wanted to be something different and something special."

But as a minister, Bennett has become "something special" to residents in the heart

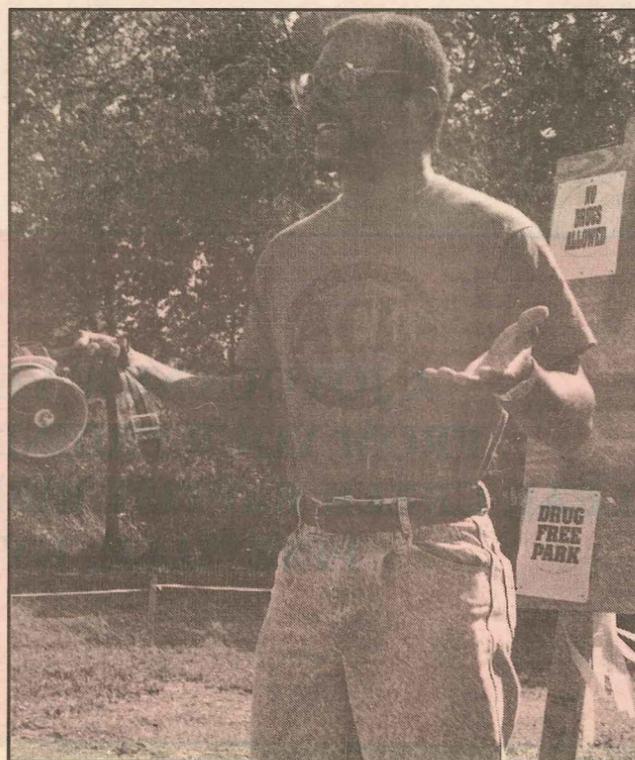
of Fort Worth's low-income, high-crime area. Under his direction, the community applied for a federal grant to fight substance abuse. The result was a \$1 million grant to the city of Fort Worth earmarked to clean up Bennett's community.

"The problem is not an area of town," he said. "It is a problem of the city and economics. Centers like mine will not solve the problems of the neighborhoods. Even preaching to these people will not solve it unless the church gets involved and stands up for the injustices that these people are facing.

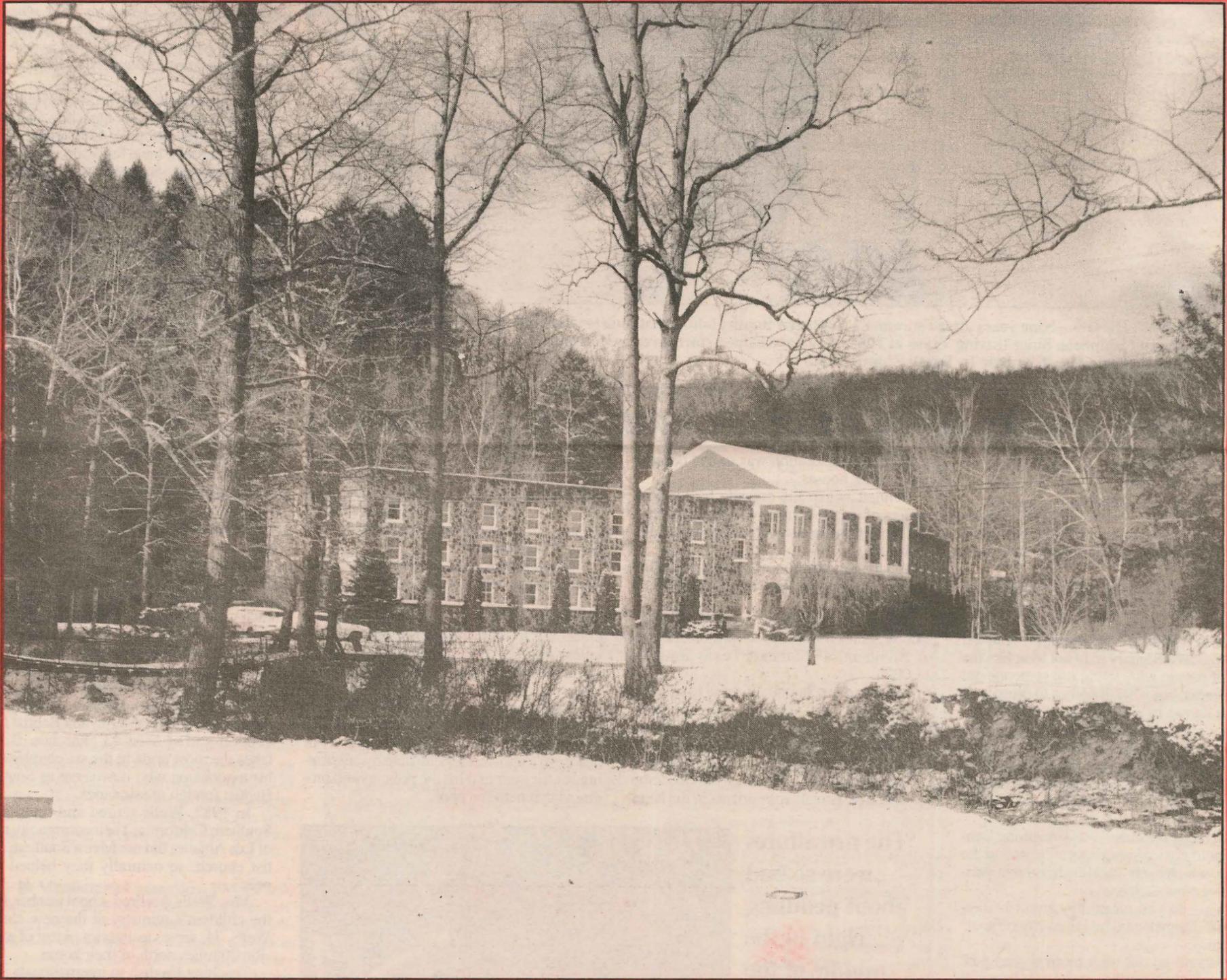
"There are a lot of influential Southern Baptists in cities who vote the policies which perpetuate poverty," Bennett said. "For Southern Baptists, they can help by advocating for the poor and for the policies and programs that help the poor."

'The prostitutes were so bad about peddling right in the middle of the street that there were often traffic jams'

INVOLVED—Willie Bennett, director of the Bethlehem Center in Fort Worth, Texas, leads an anti-drug campaign in his neighborhood. Community involvement has been a hallmark of Bennett's ministry, resulting in the cleaning up of his rough neighborhood. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)



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