

Tyler pastor Dykes receives top cooperation award

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INDIANAPOLIS—David Dykes, longtime pastor of Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas, received the Southern Baptist Convention's highest award for cooperation during the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis.

Dykes accepted the M.E. Dodd Award from the SBC Executive Committee June 10. Dodd was an SBC statesman, pastor of First Baptist Church in Shreveport, La., and chairman of the committee that created the Cooperative Program, the convention's unified budget, in 1925.

David Dykes accepts the M.E. Dodd Award for cooperation during the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis.

Green Acres Church has been the top contributor to the Cooperative Program for several years, including 2007, when the Tyler congregation allocated \$1,445,909, eclipsing the second-place amount by almost one-half million dollars.

Green Acres is "one of the leading churches in America," noted Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, who presented the award to Dykes. Green Acres is church home to more than 14,000 members and sends more than 1,000 volunteer missionaries on assignments around the world every year, Chapman added.

The church has developed partnerships in numerous countries, and Dykes has led mission trips to at least 10 countries, Chapman added.

Since 2000, Green Acres church has contributed more than \$18.4 million to missions causes, including more than \$10 million to the Cooperative Program, he said, noting the church also has baptized more than 2,000 new Christians during the past 17 years.

Paraphrasing New York Yankees legend Lou Gehrig, Dykes told the SBC crowd: "I consider myself to be the most blessed person alive. I'm pastor of the most missions-minded church I've ever heard about. They've taught me more about missions than I could ever teach them. ...

"If I told them we were going to attack hell tomorrow morning with water pistols, they'd ask, 'Pastor, where do we fill up?'"

Dykes called the Cooperative Program "the lifeline for our work, ... the pipeline of our resources, and the love-line in which we show our love for our missionaries."

Green Acres Church increased its Cooperative Program allocation from 12 percent of unallocated offering receipts by one-half percent per year until it reach 15 percent, Dykes recalled, noting this took place even during aggressive building programs.

"God always challenges churches who give away for the Lord's sake," he said.