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### January 11, 1996

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST



Volume 95, Number 1

January 11, 1996

**Arkansas Awakening**

**Day of Prayer for**

**Spiritual Awakening**

**SUNDAY ♦ JANUARY 14**

## 'Make Your Will Month' offers encouragement to review plans

The new year offers an ideal opportunity for individuals to make out a will, according to David Moore, president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. Southern Baptists traditionally highlight "Make Your Will Month" throughout January.

"This is the time of year that witnesses the largest sales of health equipment," Moore pointed out. "Many health equipment companies capitalize on the slogan, 'New Year, New You.' What better time of year to review your estate plans?"

Emphasizing the importance of proper estate planning, Moore added, "We must practice good stewardship of our God-given resources, maintain a responsibility to family and invest in spiritual things."

Make Your Will Month, he remarked, provides Arkansas Baptists a reminder to make or review their long-term plans. He said individuals who need to review those plans include:

■ Those without a will, "leaving their family with no administrative plan."

■ Those with a will that needs updating. "Your will still may not accomplish your goals," Moore explained. He warned that some wills need a review because "pre-1981 wills may not take a limited marital deduction into account or protect those who wish to avoid probate, hence the popularity of living trusts."

■ Those without a plan for incapacity, "which call for a living trust or power of attorney" to be written into their wills.

Other factors which need to be included in a review are insuring the inclusion of an administrator (an executor or trustee) or contingency administrator; guardians if there are children or disabled adult children

in need of care; a trustee of trust funds; and beneficiaries such as family, friends and charities.

"Falling to list beneficiaries may result in the Internal Revenue Service becoming the beneficiary," Moore warned.

He said the Arkansas Baptist Foundation offers a number of services to help make the will process easier for church staff and their spouses or those laypeople wishing to include Baptist causes in their wills.

"First, we can provide free assistance in answering question about wills," Moore explained. "Second, we can provide drafts of wills to Baptist donors and free wills for ministers."

Other helps from the Foundation include free seminars or individual conferences on estate planning and charitable giving.

Paul White, Foundation vice president and general counsel, said that help from the Foundation in preparing a will can save donors money and effort.

"If you want to make gifts to Baptist causes, we can help by doing some of the front-end of the work that an attorney would have to do," he said. "Finding out the objectives on the front end, we can send a document containing essentials to their attorneys with what we want to do. We hope that will lessen the expense for them."

For more information about wills or other services offered by the Foundation, contact Moore or White at Arkansas Baptist Foundation, 500 Broadway, Suite 402, Superior Federal Building, Little Rock, AR 72203 or by phone toll-free at 1-800-798-0969.

## Cover Story



## Day of Prayer 11

Arkansas Baptists will observe a statewide "Day of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening" Jan. 14. The emphasis will highlight the state convention's five-year focus on "Arkansas Awakening."

## Also inside

### Perspective

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| You'll Be Glad to Know.....   | 4 |
| Woman's Viewpoint.....        | 4 |
| Straight from the Editor..... | 5 |
| Letters to the Editor.....    | 5 |

### Arkansas Baptists

|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Former atheist finds Christ..... | 8-9 |
| 'Joy Explo' attracts 5,000.....  | 11  |
| Arkansas All Over.....           | 12  |
| Kite earns national award.....   | 13  |

### Nation/World

|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Prayer amendment debate.....     | 6-7 |
| Graham plans global event.....   | 9   |
| Olympic ministry gears up.....   | 10  |
| Elliff seeks SBC presidency..... | 15  |

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Lessons..... | 22-23 |
|--------------|-------|

Next issue: Jan. 25



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# ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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## Editors: SBC restructuring top news in '95

JACKSONVILLE, FL (ABP) — A massive restructuring of the Southern Baptist Convention topped Baptist news stories in 1995, according to an Informal poll of Baptist state paper editors.

The restructuring, the product of an 18-month study by a seven-member committee, includes a mission statement, the first for the SBC. It also reduces the number of convention agencies from 19 to 12, the most comprehensive retooling in the convention's history.

Twelve of 15 editors responding to a survey by Associated Baptist Press ranked the restructuring as the year's top story.

The plan will merge three of the largest SBC agencies — the Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission and Brotherhood Commission — into a new North American Mission Board to be based in Atlanta.

Trustees of smaller agencies being eliminated in the restructuring, including the Southern Baptist Historical Commission, protested recommendations to eliminate their agencies.

An implementation team was appointed by the SBC Executive Committee in September. Following routine votes on bylaw changes at this year's SBC annual meeting, full implementation will begin. The new structure is scheduled to be in place by 2000.

Another story from the SBC meeting in June ranked second in the editors' poll.

## Religion writers rank SBC racism apology among top news stories

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention's apology to African Americans for its part in racism and slavery has been voted by the Religion Newswriters Association as the fourth most significant religion story of 1995.

The top story, according to the annual year-end vote by RNA members, was the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Rounding out the top 10 stories:

2. The Million Man March in Washington, D.C., led by Louis Farrakhan, African American leader of Nation of Islam, coupled with the growing Promise Keepers movement, which has drawn about 850,000 men to evangelical rallies across the country.

3. A statement by Pope John Paul prohibiting women from ordination as priests, but stopping short of a claim of papal infallibility. In an earlier letter, the pope had endorsed "real equality" between men and women and apologized for Catholic leaders who had contributed to the oppression of women.

4. The SBC resolution apologizing for racism.

5. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's board action to honor the 77-year-old Graham's request that his son, Franklin, be named first vice chairman, to succeed him if he becomes incapacitated.

6. Pope John Paul II's five-day U.S. visit, during which he repeated calls for Americans to defend life "from conception to natural death," to care for the poor and to strengthen families and marriages.

7. The Christian Coalition's "Contract with the American

On the eve of the celebration of the convention's 150th anniversary, messengers approved a resolution renouncing the SBC's racist roots. The resolution apologized to African-Americans for "racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously."

The SBC was established in 1845 by Baptists in the South defending the right of slaveholders to be appointed as missionaries. While the SBC had renounced racism in general, the June resolution was the first to publicly acknowledge the role of slavery in the convention's founding.

Other top stories for the year included:

3. Turmoil surrounded the Carver School of Social Work in Louisville, Ky. The March firing of dean Diana Garland by president Albert Mohler set off a protest by students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The fate of the Carver School remains undecided.

4. The April bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City gripped the nation with the realization that America is not safe from terrorism. Baptists churches in Oklahoma mourned victims and helped with rebuilding lives.

5. WMU leaders announced in July that the auxiliary would begin producing missions education supplements for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Jerry Rankin, president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, protested the move in a letter to local churches. WMU leaders said

their intent was not to undermine loyalty to SBC missions, but to promote missions work among all Southern Baptists.

6. The 2.5 million-member Baptist General Convention of Texas, the largest contributor to the SBC, voted in November to decrease funding to the SBC. Texas leaders said they needed the money to start new churches in the state. SBC leaders said it would hurt foreign and home missions efforts nationwide.

7. Southern Baptist statesman Herschel Hobbs died Nov. 28. Hobbs, 88, chaired the committee which developed the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message.

8. A revival led by Texas preacher John Avant broke out at Howard Payne University in Brownwood, Texas, and spread to college and seminary campuses across the country. Prolonged chapel services featured public confession of sins.

9. It was revealed in May that the Foreign Mission Board had earlier applied for a trademark on the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, traditionally promoted jointly with Woman's Missionary Union, without the knowledge of WMU leaders. FMB leaders said the failure to communicate was unintentional and eventually dropped the trademark application.

10. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in November. Among dignitaries attending the state funeral as part of the U.S. delegation was SBC president Jim Henry.

Family" and its move to consolidate its leadership role in nearly two dozen state Republican caucuses, after playing a key role in the GOP's sweeping mid-term election successes in 1994.

8. The NATO-backed peace agreement signed by presidents of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia after years of bloody ethnic and religious warfare, to be enforced by 60,000 troops, including 20,000 from the United States.

9. The embezzlement of \$2.2 million from the Episcopal Church by treasurer Ellen Cooke, with the church filing two civil suits to recover the funds.

10. Encyclicals by the pope urging leaders of other churches — especially the Orthodox — to help him re-think the meaning of the papacy and preaching against abortion and a growing "culture of death" in the modern world.

The SBC's 18-paragraph "Resolution on Racial Reconciliation," adopted during the convention's June sesquicentennial in Atlanta, stated, "We apologize to all African-Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime; and we genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously."

The resolution described racism as "deplorable sin" and stated, "We lament and repudiate historic acts of evil such as slavery from which we continue to reap a bitter harvest."

The resolution drew widespread media coverage, including CNN, the front page of *The New York Times* and numerous other newspapers and magazines.

## YOU'LL BE GLAD TO KNOW



By DON MOORE  
ABCS Executive Director

The squeeze is on. I am beginning to feel like Jesus did when He said, "I have many other things to say to you." His time was running out as far as His earthly ministry was concerned. Mine is running out as far as my present position is concerned. Some things I feel I must say. Other things I just want to say.

First, I must say that the preparation for 1996-2000 is most exciting! Church leaders statewide joined with our staff in determining that we would plan, work and seek God for a spiritual awakening during these final years of the century. You are right! I hate not to be in leadership as that unfolds. But it is His plan and He has provided a leader who will help Arkansas Baptists work toward their goal. I will delight in what God does! By His grace and mercy, I will work to help make it happen wherever I am at the various stages.

Second, I need to answer the question most often asked: "What are you going to do in retirement?" Retirement is not really a good word for this stage of my life and ministry. I suppose you would describe my role as an itinerant preacher. In 1996, if the Lord wills, I will be involved in a five-month interim pastorate, 11 revivals and a month of ministry with the Foreign Mission Board. The FMB has asked me to lead the Bible studies for the annual mission meetings of all of our missionaries in Europe. This is a most awesome responsibility. In fact, all of this is awesome. How Nita and I covet your prayers.

Third, I need to let you know that we will continue to live in Little Rock. This year, as usual, your cards and notes at Christmas time were a blessing. However, many of you did not have our new address:

14506 Honey Bear Dr.,  
Little Rock, AR 72212

Our new phone number is 501-868-5951. We want to stay in touch.

At this point, I feel a tremendous need to call us all to prayer. The only hope for revival and awakening is for God to intervene. For our individual and collective ministries, the power of a Sovereign and Holy God must be manifest. Let us pray!

NITA MOORE

## Woman's Viewpoint

### God answers prayer



Fred and I were married for 39 years. Our marriage was an ideal one. Our three children were grown and married and we were at a point financially where we could enjoy traveling and doing the things we had dreamed of for years. We were several years from retirement age, but were starting to talk about that time in our lives.

Little did we know that those plans would never develop because God had other plans for our future. Now we were to hear the bad news: Fred had cancer. How do you pray in this situation? We could only pray the hardest prayer that we would ever pray, "Lord, not our will, but yours be done and whatever Your will is, though we might not like it, we'll accept it and make the best of it." We didn't ask for understanding, only grace to endure the days and years ahead.

We talked of the plans that we had, but had to admit that those plans were not important anymore. The only thing that counted now was our relationship to the Lord.

God did not choose to spare Fred's life and I lost the love of my life. I was

sure that there'd never be anything wonderful in life for me again.

Later, I faced the reality of a lonely life without him and again prayed, but this time for only three things, a companion who was a strong Christian, who shared my beliefs, and who needed me as badly as I needed him.

And God answered this prayer in a way that I never felt would be possible. He not only gave the three things I prayed for — He gave me so many bonuses in addition. He brought into my life not just a companion, but someone whom I could love, respect and enjoy. When God puts two lives together, it can only be wonderful, and we just praise God for His love and blessings to us. After having lost our spouses, we know how to appreciate every day and everything. And, praise God, He's giving us unlimited opportunities to minister and share our blessings with others (Eph. 3:20).

Nita M. Moore, wife of retiring ABCS executive director Don Moore, is a member of Parkway Place Church in Little Rock. She has three children and nine grandchildren.

## Personal perspectives

"We anticipate reaching 2.5 billion people, most of whom we could never reach in our usual crusade ministry."

—Evangelist Billy Graham, announcing 1996 Global Television Series

"If awakening is going to come, it's going to happen in our churches. What better way than to start the year in prayer for this emphasis?"

—Jimmie Sheffield, ABCS associate executive director, describing Jan. 14 Day of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening

"Most Baptists' view of ministry is too narrow. Ministry is not a preacher in the pulpit. Ministry is a Christian in the world."

—Dale Holloway, HMB national home missionary for bivocational ministries

# 1996 – a year of new beginnings

The start of a new year, traditionally considered an opportunity for new beginnings, is more than mere symbolism for Arkansas Baptists in 1996.

Two major events – the beginning of Emil Turner's tenure as state convention executive director and the work of a long-range planning committee to help strengthen Arkansas Baptist ministry into the 21st century – promise to impact state convention life for many years to come.

Turner's unanimous election last month by the Arkansas Baptist Executive Board marked a positive start for a new era of leadership. Letters of recommendation shared with board members described Turners as "an effective leader," "a sensitive encourager" and "a people person" who is "compassionate," "very committed" and displays "high integrity."

The members of the executive director search committee, led by chairman Billy Kite, are to be commended for their many hours of prayer and work involved in seeking such an individual to guide Arkansas Baptist ministry efforts into a new century.

For his part, the next executive director has emphasized that his top priority in the coming years will be to help Arkansas Baptists reach more people for Christ. As a pastor since 1983, including four years as pastor of Mount Olive Church in Crossett, Turner's ministry zeal has helped facilitate significant growth in each congregation he has served.

In addition to encouraging greater soul-winning among Arkansas Baptists, Turner will face numerous decisions related to budgets, programs, personnel and other

## STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR

By TRENNIS HENDERSON



priorities in the years ahead. While the success or failure of Arkansas Baptist ministry never has and never will be determined by one individual, the executive director does play an influential role.

Even with his personal qualifications, Turner readily affirms that the primary key to effective ministry is dependence on the leadership of the Holy Spirit. As he seeks to discern God's will concerning vital issues with statewide impact, he deserves the best that fellow Arkansas Baptists have to offer in the areas of prayer, encouragement and support.

Current executive director Don Moore, who will retire at the end of February, has described his successor as "very conscientious, very thorough, very committed." Addressing Executive Board members during their December meeting, Moore added, "If you accord to him the same privileges that have been accorded to me, I predict that Dr. Turner and the convention will have a great ministry."

In addition to the current change of

leadership, Executive Board members voted last year to establish a steering committee and subcommittees "to study and recommend a plan by which the Arkansas Baptist State Convention can most effectively meet the challenges of the 21st century."

The 13-member study committee, which will be aided by the work of three nine-member subcommittees, will address such issues as ministry challenges, organizational mission statements, program assignments and financial support. The two-year study will conclude with a report and recommendations to messengers at the 1997 state convention annual meeting.

Even with the election of a new executive director and the work of a committee studying future ministry opportunities, one other major emphasis has the potential for even greater impact in Arkansas Baptist life. 1996 marks the beginning of the state convention's five-year focus on "Arkansas Awakening," a call to prepare for God's blessing of spiritual renewal and revival.

Whatever the future holds for Arkansas Baptists, seeking God's perfect timing and leadership is the key to true success. "God is in the business of shaping souls for eternity," Bible study leader Wallace Williams reminded Executive Board staff members during their annual retreat last week. "When you pray for revival, look out. God is real and when He comes, it changes everything."

Are Arkansas Baptists truly ready for authentic awakening? "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

wait in the hall may not come back.

If you drive by some churches 10 or 15 minutes before Sunday School time, you may find that there is not a car in the parking lot. When I lived in Washington state several years ago, my wife and I would get to church early in case a visitor might come early. In cool weather we would turn on the heat and it would be warm at Sunday School time.

We like to visit different churches once in a while. Recently we went to a church about 15 or 20 minutes early. Of course, not one was there. It was cold in the church and about Sunday School time, we decided that we would freeze, so we left.

Stores try to determine how they can get customers to come into their store. Churches might grow more if they would look at people as prospective customers.

Ben Fried  
Mena, AR



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

awareness of our missions task and what God is doing throughout the world.

Jerry Rankin  
President, Foreign Mission Board  
Richmond, VA

### Warm welcome needed

Many church have a senior adult Sunday School class meeting in the sanctuary. It is my opinion that if you have a small church and want it to stay small, this a good way to keep it small. The senior adult class is usually the last to dismiss. This leaves people standing out in the hall. A prospective church member who has to

### 'Extraordinary' coverage

Although we have noticed excellent support of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in state Baptist papers this year, I wanted to write and commend you for the extraordinary feature in the November 30th issue of the *Arkansas Baptist*.

The multi-page feature in which you used the photos of all the active foreign missionaries from Arkansas was an impressive way of personalizing missions among your constituency. Seeing faces and identifying home towns had to have a positive impact on your readers as they considered the appeal for missions support.

We appreciate the good job you are doing, the high profile you consistently give to missions and the balanced coverage of convention issues. Thank you for your partnership with us in stimulating an

## Amendment is 'right direction' to protect religious freedom

By Michael Whitehead  
Former General Counsel  
SBC Christian Life Commission

Lawyers and judges have been fiddling with the First Amendment for 50 years, distorting the doctrine of church-state separation so that Thomas Jefferson would not recognize his own "wall of separation" between the two today.

A Pontotoc, Miss., second grader asked his teacher if the class could say "grace" before they walked down the hall to the school cafeteria. The teacher said yes, if a student volunteered to lead. Students who did not want to participate could be first in the lunch-line outside the classroom door, where the teacher stood. In a federal lawsuit still pending, People for the American Way has persuaded the trial judge to stop this practice, based on "separation of church and state."

It's time to stop the discrimination against student-initiated, student-led prayer and religious expression in public schools.


When the Oklahoma City bombing killed innocent children and adults, local churches and nearby businesses opened their hearts and doors to the victims and rescuers. Tents were erected in church parking lots by government relief workers to provide additional shelter. Afterward, federal funds were offered to fix the damage caused by relief workers, including holes in the asphalt parking lots caused by tent pegs. When some churches applied for the repair money, they were denied, on grounds of "separation of church and state."


It's time to stop the discrimination against religious people who participate in government programs or benefits.

In response to countless situations like these, Rep. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.), has introduced H.J.R. 121, titled "The Religious Equality Amendment," which we helped to craft. The Hyde amendment is so simple even a lawyer can understand it. In a nutshell, it says: "Government, thou shalt not discriminate against religious expression by private persons."

To support this amendment is to oppose religious discrimination. To oppose this amendment is to support religious discrimination. So who could oppose this amendment? Those groups who think the establishment clause of the First Amendment permits or requires government to discriminate against private religious expression in public schools or the public square.

Will this amendment repeal the establishment clause? Absolutely not. It





**"To support this amendment is to oppose religious discrimination."**

**— Michael Whitehead**

will not remove one jot or tittle of James Madison's 16 words. It will only "repeal" misinterpretations of the establishment clause by adding a clear statement that most Americans will accept as self-evident truth: Government should not discriminate against private religious speech.

Will this proposed amendment produce government-mandated, teacher-led prayers in public schools? Absolutely not. It will only produce freedom for voluntary, student-initiated, student-led prayer and religious expression in circumstances when non-religious expression is permitted.

Will this amendment force states to provide educational vouchers to private religious-school students? Absolutely not. It will make clear that vouchers are constitutional, but not required. If a state chooses to provide vouchers to private-school students, then it cannot discriminate against religious-school students. Still, the wisdom of offering vouchers should be decided by voters in school districts, and the wisdom of accepting vouchers with whatever strings attached should be decided by religious schools and their patrons.

Mr. Jefferson's wall of separation between church and state has been overgrown with a thicket of confusing court rules and contradictory decisions. Instead of a hedge of protection for religious liberty, the wall has been

mistakenly viewed as a barrier against religious equality in the public square. It has been misused as an excuse for discrimination against children and adults who wish to pray and speak about religious faith in public schools and the public square. The time has come for a constitutional amendment which will not lower Mr. Jefferson's wall one inch, but will help to clear away the noxious weeds of misinterpretation which will restore the wall to its original function—promoting religious liberty rather than prohibiting it.

At its annual meeting in June, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a resolution endorsing a religious equality amendment. This fall, some Baptist state conventions have adopted resolutions opposing a religious equality amendment, based on fears and rumors that have no foundation in fact or in the text. When told the truth about this text, the people can be trusted to see that Mr. Hyde's amendment is perfectly consistent with Mr. Madison's amendment. No "tinkering" with the First Amendment here, only reinforcing the principle of religious freedom.

Suppose a traffic control signal with red, yellow and green lights has added to it a right-turn arrow. Does the addition of a green arrow "repeal" the red light or make the highway more hazardous? Of course not. The new arrow clarifies the rules of the road and facilitates free-flowing traffic. It may even protect lives. Lawyers who profit from traffic accident cases may be saddened, but not many others.

Adding a religious equality amendment cannot repeal the "red light" of the establishment clause, but can only provide additional light in coordination with the First Amendment. The religious equality amendment provides a "right-turn arrow" expressly protecting the right of private religious expression, including prayer. Its "green arrow" can prevent countless collisions at the intersection of church and state, and can help to protect religious life in the public square. Lawyers who profit from constitutional "car wrecks" may be saddened, but not many others.

A religious equality amendment is the right direction for religious freedom.

### Hyde amendment (HJR 121)

"Neither the United States nor any state shall deny benefit to or otherwise discriminate against any private person or group on account of religious expression, belief or identity; nor shall the prohibition on laws respecting an establishment be construed to require such discrimination."

## Proposed amendments viewed as 'unnecessary and unwise'

By Melissa Rogers  
Associate General Counsel  
Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs

A "religious equality" constitutional amendment is unnecessary and unwise. Indeed, the two constitutional amendments recently proposed by Congress threaten our religious liberty.

To those who want to "fix" the Constitution with such an amendment, I say, "The Constitution isn't broken." The First Amendment, as well as an array of supporting laws such as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the Equal Access Act, currently provide vigorous protection for religious freedom. These laws make clear that prayer has not been kicked out of the public schools and religion has not been banished from the public square.

Under current law, students may pray silently at school at any time — even orally and collectively as long as they are not disruptive. The Equal Access Act allows student religious clubs to meet on school property to pray or read their Bibles.

Our laws permit citizens to speak of their religious convictions in public settings such as town hall meetings and religious leaders to hold rallies in public parks. In fact, the U.S. Supreme Court recently reaffirmed the robust protection for religious expression in public places.

Well, fine, some say, the rights are there, but sometimes these rights are not understood or respected. The proper response is not to draft more laws — it is to educate society about the laws already on the books and enforce them.

As part of this effort, the Baptist Joint Committee and other organizations drafted "Religion in the Public Schools: A Joint Statement of Current Law." This publication provides a clear, concise explanation of the rights and responsibilities of students, teachers and parents under the First Amendment. The Clinton administration recently furthered the educational



**CounterPoint**

**"No American should be made to feel a religious outsider by their government."**

**— Melissa Rogers**

effort by mailing to every school district a copy of its guidelines on religion in the public schools. These guidelines describe the many ways in which students may express their faith, emphasizing that schools are not "religion-free zones."

What current law does not allow — but the new amendments would permit and sometimes require — is government promotion of religious activities and government endorsement of religious messages. For example, the amendments would require government to fund religion in the same way it funds secular activities. Thus, if the government funds the educational and charitable activities of secular organizations, it also must fund the sacred missions of churches and other pervasively sectarian groups.

Ultimately, this would permit the government to coerce, control and compromise religion. When the state advances religion in this way, it violates the consciences of taxpayers who rightfully expect the government to remain neutral toward religion. And, because the government must monitor and sometimes restrict its grants, it also would create entangling church-state alliances.

Moreover, because government simply cannot fund the thousands of religious groups in the United States, the amendment would trigger unhealthy competition among faith groups and force government to make

divisive decisions about which groups get public money. All too often, only majority religions would "reap the spoils." The founders wisely took this role away from the government; we should not attempt to restore it.

Further complicating this debate is the fact that even those who support an amendment cannot agree on what it should say. Amendment proponents have splintered into two camps with two different amendments: one led by Rep. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.) and one by Rep. Ernest Istook (R-Okla.). If amendment proponents can't agree, how much further apart must the rest of the country be?

Both amendments would allow government funding for religion, but they would apply to religious speech differently. The Hyde amendment states that it protects only the religious expression of "private person[s] or group[s]," making it sound both appealing and unambiguous on first reading. Indeed, the Constitution already protects purely private religious speech and activities. But, as courts have recognized, the line between public and private is far from clear. Sometimes religious speech by "private" speakers is so couched in the context of state sponsorship it leaves the impression that the government is endorsing religion.

For example, is a public school student who delivers a hell-fire sermon to a captive classroom audience a "private person" whose speech must not be "discriminated" against under the amendment? Whereas the First Amendment currently has the sensitivity and flexibility to respond to such distinctions, Hyde's amendment would attempt to bludgeon cut across them.

Rep. Istook's "religious liberties" constitutional amendment would require schools to allow any prayers desired by students. Thus, it would permit a teacher to lead a class in prayer so long as one or more students wanted such a prayer. Also, because the Istook amendment would require the government to permit "acknowledgments" of religious heritage, beliefs or traditions, it would allow a legislative proclamation that the United States is a Christian nation. The Istook amendment would therefore violate a touchstone of church-state relations: No American should be made to feel a religious outsider by their government.

Baptists' commitment to religious freedom played a large role in the formulation of the First Amendment's religion clauses over 200 years ago. These clauses command the government to accommodate religion without advancing it and protect religion without privileging it. Because the new amendments would violate these worthy goals, they should be rejected.

### Istook amendment (HJR 127)

"Nothing in the Constitution shall prohibit acknowledgment of the religious heritage, beliefs, or traditions of the people, or prohibit student-sponsored prayer in public schools. Neither the United States nor any State shall compose any official prayer or compel joining in prayer, or discriminate against religious expression or belief."



# A life-changing journey

*Spiritual search leads former atheist/communist to faith in Christ*

By Russell N. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

What began as a spiritual search for Chol Chang of China led him to faith in God as he made a personal profession of faith in Christ at Park Hill Church in Arkadelphia a few months ago.

Chang, 32, who came to Arkadelphia in August as a student at Ouachita Baptist University, is a former atheist, Communist Party member and student demonstrator. Because of his ties to the Communist Party in China and the sensitive nature of passport renewal there, the names of he and his wife, Julia, have been changed in this article.

Chang said that the spiritual journey that led him to Arkadelphia began while he was a boy.

"I struggled for a long time spiritually," he recalled. "In China, I was taught atheism along with Marxism. I was a communist for a while. I got into the party in college."

His student travels also took him to Kuwait for two years. "It was there I began to think about a spiritual life. I read some books on Islam, since Kuwait is an Islamic country.

"The first time I bought a Bible was in Kuwait," he said. "I also bought a book by Billy Graham. So I read some books, but I didn't know God at that time. I thought about God. I knew there was God. But I didn't know if it was Yahweh, Christ or Allah or something else."

After returning to China in 1989, he joined the student protest movement there. "We demonstrated, we cried, we shouted. We also felt very painful after the (Tiananmen Square) massacre.

"After that, we felt aimless and that life was meaningless," he commented. "We began to make money and we thought money would bring us happiness. So we tried to moonlight and take second jobs. We got almost everything: a nice house, VCR, a big-screen TV and a fax machine, but still we felt very miserable, aimless."

It was during that aimless time in their lives that Chang said he and his wife met some Christian missionaries, two of them Southern Baptists serving through Cooperative Services International, a service organization associated with the Foreign Mission Board.

One of the workers attended a class Julia was teaching, Chang said. "As we began to know more about her, she shared Christianity with us. Julia became a Christian first. I was hesitant, but I supported her."



Chol Chang and his wife, Julia (not their real names), are Chinese citizens who have become Christians. Their faces are blurred to protect their identity, as they visit with their "adopted" parents, Nancy and Bill Summers, at Park Hill Church in Arkadelphia.

He said his hesitancy was because "it was too difficult for me to believe in the Bible. I knew Christianity was a good religion that teaches people to love each other, but I was taught evolution and atheism and couldn't believe the Bible literally. It's hard."

Local religious customs also made belief difficult. "Our parents believe in their dead ancestors," he explained. "My mother believes that every object is a God: The house is a house god, the well is a well god."

"I heard him say many times, 'I want to believe, but I can't believe there is a God,'" added Julia.

She said before she became a Christian, she "believed in myself" as a deity. "I thought I was my own god."

"We never heard much about Jesus," she said. "We even didn't know if this person is in a fiction book. It took me more than a year to accept it."

Julia, who joined Chang in Arkansas with their young son, Jimmy, in December, accepted Christ more than a year ago. She said she was attracted to the Christian faith when her missionary friend gave her C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* series, which contain biblical references, to read.

She also received a Bible from her missionary friend. "I read it and said, 'This is a good philosophy.' First it was a philosophy, then it became a belief and now it is my life."

She said a disappointing event, being passed over for an opportunity to teach in

Korea, produced a crisis in her life that caused her to eventually accept Christ. Angered about the situation, she prayed to God that she would "be kind when people mistreat me...or the system is not fair...or my students don't care." As she prayed and trusted God, "suddenly I felt a peace in my heart. After a few days I went to (her missionary friend). She asked me, 'Have you made a decision yet?'" I said, "Yes."

Because Julia was not baptized, she will be baptized at Park Hill Jan. 14.

Although Chang supported his wife's faith, he did not accept Christ until he came to America. "I went to Ouachita and decided I would go to a Baptist church. I saw this church's flyer and remembered the address. So my first Sunday at Ouachita, I walked to Park Hill. I lost my way."

"He ended up walking about three miles," said Blake McKinney, pastor of Park Hill Church. "I was outside the church building and this very sweaty Chinese person walks up during a very hot day in August," he laughed.

"But I found out he had walked all the way from Ouachita and was just floored that he had made that much effort to come to worship," McKinney said. "The more I got to know him, the more I understood part of that was because he didn't have the freedom to do that as a registered member of the Communist Party in China."

Chang accepted Christ during a salvation study emphasis in his Sunday School class.

McKinney's wife, Gayla, who leads the

college ministry at the church, said Chang's conversion also proved a blessing to the class. "We were studying salvation the month he was saved and I remember wondering, 'Why are we doing this?' because most of my students are Christians. Chang's salvation gave a whole new angle to the class from someone who had not grown up in church. They learned through that how to minister to people who are not familiar with our way of doing things."

Joining Park Hill not only gave Chang and Julia a church home, but "parents" to go with it.

"A year or two ago, we started a college ministry Adopt-a-Student program," Mrs. McKinney noted. "We didn't think about international students, but it's turned out to be wonderful. Chang signed up the first day he was here and Bill and Nancy Summers adopted Chang, then Julia and Jimmy."

"It's very easy to love Chang and now that his family is here, we love them too," said Summers. "Our role is not hard at all. We like to have him come to our house, eat and ride around and look at Christmas lights."

"We even want to get to play Grandma and Grandpa for Jimmy," Mrs. Summers added.

Summers said it is "amazing" that they were assigned to Chang and Julia because "I was in the service in Korea from 1951-52. Her father was, too. Who would have ever thought that 43 years later, that the daughter of my enemy during the war would be in my house visiting and we just think the world of them? To me, that is God's work."

"I believe God has plans for us," Julia affirmed. "If we have the opportunity, we would like to join the Foreign Mission Board and do some kind of mission work in our country."

There are problems, though, with doing that, Chang acknowledged. "Since we are Chinese citizens, we cannot go back to China to preach or be missionaries. That is impossible. Maybe we can be missionaries in Malaysia or another country."

"They've already been doing some mission work," said McKinney. "Chang has brought a number of international students with him to church and the two of them, just this past Sunday night, brought another Chinese couple with them to church."

"They already are practicing what they are planning on practicing in the future and its exciting to see," McKinney emphasized. "Literally, from the Sunday Chang was baptized he was bringing other international students to church. If that can become contagious, that could really transform a church."

## Graham targets 2.5 billion via global TV series in '96

MINNEAPOLIS (BP)—Evangelist Billy Graham has announced that the Global Television Series — to be broadcast at prime time during the month of April in every country of the world — will bring the gospel to more people on a single day, April 14, than on any previous day in history.

"Through the Global Television Series, we anticipate reaching 2.5 billion people, most of whom we could never reach in our usual crusade ministry," Graham said. "I believe this will have a far greater impact than anything we have ever done before."

A special evangelistic program featuring Graham will be broadcast in 42 languages on national television networks in more than 160 countries. It will also be broadcast on two of the largest intercontinental satellite networks in the world, STAR-TV and BSKYB, which cover approximately two-thirds of the world's population — including some countries traditionally opposed to the proclamation of the gospel.

STAR-TV in Hong Kong will first broadcast the program to East Asia, from the Philippines and Vietnam through China and Nepal to Pakistan. Another broadcast on a separate channel will reach viewers from Indonesia to India and the Middle East. Later that day, the program will be transmitted across Europe's Sky Television network, reaching a potential viewing audience of 65 million homes from as far north as Finland to as far south as Egypt.

The telecast will include testimonies by former President Jimmy Carter and U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young.

This outreach represents a natural progression in Graham's recent ministry. Beginning with Mission '89 meetings in London, crusade meetings were transmitted via satellite to 12 African countries. The next step, in 1990, 1991 and 1993, was to transmit a crusade from a major city in Asia, South America and Europe respectively, to remote crusade locations and national television networks across each continent.

Most recently, in 1995, 10 million people attending 3,000 actual Global Mission locations in 185 countries received satellite transmissions from a

Billy Graham crusade in Puerto Rico. In addition, a worldwide television audience of more than 1 billion people viewed a special Global Mission telecast at prime time on their national television network.

Two weeks before the upcoming preaching program is aired in April, each national TV network also will broadcast at prime time one of two hour-long dramatic Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) feature films, interpreted into the same languages. The film broadcasts will include promotional announcements for the preaching program. Many countries are providing free air time in exchange for their use of the feature films, which will often be aired several times.

Church leaders around the world have organized to participate in the Global Television Series. One million churches, which have worked with BGEA on recent evangelistic programs, have been invited to participate in this outreach, mobilizing their members in a program called Operation Matthew.

Three million homes are expected to take part in this program, which is based on the biblical account of the tax collector who — following his life-changing encounter with Christ — invited colleagues and friends to his home to meet Jesus.

Rather than focusing on bringing people to an urban stadium or church, the goal of Global Television Series is to empower church pastors and lay leaders.

In addition to arranging for the television broadcasts in multiple editions, BGEA will coordinate the distribution of 445 million pieces of literature, including house party discussion guides and follow-up materials in many languages.

"Pastors participating in the Global Television Series see it as a powerful tool to help their own church members have a dynamic witness for Jesus Christ," said Bob Williams, BGEA director of international ministries. "More than 1 million pastors and church leaders who have committed themselves to this program are more enthusiastic about it than they have been for any other program we've initiated. This time we can go not only to churches in the large population centers, but to every church in a country."



Graham

# 'More than Gold'

## Baptists, other groups offer spiritual victory during '96 Olympics

By James Dotson

Georgia Christian Index

ATLANTA (BP)—Evangelistic ministries during the 1996 Olympics will not only share a desire to spread the good news of Christ. They also will share a theme and witnessing tools influenced largely by Southern Baptists' Atlanta International Ministries (AIM '96) and Home Mission Board.

The theme of "More Than Gold" has been adopted by a consortium of denominations and para-church organizations as the basis for evangelistic ministries related to the Olympics.

The HMB's "Interactive Pocket Guide '96" — an evangelistic booklet that also contains Olympic records and previous gold medal winners — will be the principle witnessing tool for many evangelical organizations.

"It's just really neat to see how this has snowballed," said Toby Frost, HMB associate director of mass evangelism and chairman of the AIM '96 evangelism committee.

"We believe that this 'More Than Gold' slogan and this array of products that has developed using that slogan gives Christians a kind of united front in Atlanta and other venues without sacrificing our denominational distinctives," he said.

Frost noted that the consortium of organizations — the Olympic Outreach Partnership — was formed out of a larger group called Sports Outreach America to seek ways to coordinate evangelistic ministry efforts.

The AIM evangelism committee settled on the "More Than Gold" theme and began work on designing the Olympic lapel pin and tract with that theme. The partnership decided to adopt the same theme.

The pin and pocket guide will be the principle evangelistic tools used by AIM '96 volunteers and others working in association with the Olympics.

The pin is important because of the enormous popularity of pin trading during the Olympics. Almost every organization, sponsor or sport associated with the Olympics now creates its own pin, and many people collect as many of the pins as possible through trading, Frost explained.

"Pin trading is one of the ways that relationships are made during the Olympics, and we wanted to use that," Frost said. "In Barcelona, a huge park right there in the middle of town was designated for pin trading."

The pin — and the logo it bears — is designed as a simple witnessing tool in the

same way "power bands" with five different colors of beads have been used to share the gospel for years.

The logo also has five colors. The blue represents God's royalty and hope, symbolizing His love for mankind. The dark purple represents darkness, symbolizing separation from God because of sin. Red represents Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Gold signifies eternal life. And green, growth as a new Christian.



*The Olympics is going to be the best bridge to share Christ."*

— Toby Frost  
AIM '96 evangelism chairman

The same means of presenting the gospel is used in the Interactive Pocket Guide '96. The 32-page booklet doesn't look like a traditional tract because it contains Olympic records for selected events, as well as winning countries for all events in 1992. But it also contains a complete gospel presentation.

Frost said the idea was to provide an item people would use and refer to while still including an uncompromising gospel presentation.

"Most Christian materials start where God is," he said. "What I wanted to do with this piece of material is start with where the people were and move them to where the Lord wants them to be. We start on their turf with the Olympic records...and when they get into it, it's 'more than gold.'"

Also included is a response card that can be mailed to the Home Mission Board indicating whether a person has made a profession of faith or is interested in learning more. Further materials will be sent to respondents, and the AIM committee has made a commitment to send materials and refer to a local church anyone in the world who responds.

The board placed an initial order of 3 million of the pocket guides, and already hundreds of thousands have been purchased by other denominations. The

Plymouth Brethren, for example, purchased 150,000 of the tracts before they were even warehoused, Frost said.

The impact of the booklets will go far beyond the actual Olympics. Frost noted two Baptist associations in Indiana plan to canvass their entire area with the booklets. One association in Florida plans to distribute them in their area during the opening ceremonies of the Olympics, providing the guide as both a service to the people and as a means of sharing the gospel. Others are ordering them for their regular visitation programs.

"The Olympics is not only about Atlanta, it's about the world," Frost emphasized. "And the Olympics is going to be the best bridge to share Christ."

Other denominations also are producing their own specialized materials with the "More Than Gold" theme. Child Evangelism Fellowship, for instance, is producing a Vacation Bible School curriculum; Discovery House publishers is doing a version of its Sports Spectrum magazine with the "More Than Gold" theme; and the International Bible Society plans to produce an Olympics version of its sports New Testament including feature stories on Christian athletes.

Another item that will be used by AIM is a special version of the "Slip Disc," a flying disc produced by a South Carolina ministry that includes a gospel presentation on the back. The final AIM version will include the "More Than Gold" logo on the front.

Linda Johnson, executive director of AIM '96, said the disc will be useful with youth, as well as at such venues as beach volleyball. Also, she said, the disc is an item that can be distributed in some areas where traditional published materials might not be allowed.

All the items, in addition to being used by individual churches, will be used by AIM volunteers during its ministries throughout Olympic venue areas. Examples of AIM ministries include hospitality tents, performance teams, witnessing teams and information booths. Materials also will be made available at hotels and other tourist sites.

The "More Than Gold" pin and the Interactive Pocket Guide are currently available through Home Mission Board customer service, 1-800-634-2462. A brochure listing those materials, as well as those produced by other groups with the "More Than Gold" theme, is being prepared for distribution to churches.

For further information, contact AIM '96 offices in Atlanta at 404-872-0096.

## Day of prayer highlights need for awakening

Arkansas Baptists will pray for awakening in their churches Jan. 14 during the statewide Day of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening emphasis. The day will highlight the beginning of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's five-year theme, "Arkansas Awakening."

The day of prayer was planned by the convention's Bold Mission Prayer Thrust work group, according to Jimmie Sheffield, ABSC associate executive director.

In addition to praying for spiritual awakening, he urged Arkansas Baptists to pray that God's people apply biblical principles to their lives, that they intensify and expand their mission to reach people for Christ and grow in missions understanding, support and involvement.

Sheffield said in planning the emphasis day, the group singled out prayer as the "number one" need in seeking awakening. "The heart of the matter, in terms of the work group's desire to seek awakening," he explained, "was that if awakening is going to come, it's going to happen in our churches. What better way than to start the year in prayer for this emphasis?"

Work group member Monica Keathley agreed. "To support the Arkansas Awakening theme, the work group proposed that we call Arkansas Baptist churches to a day of prayer at the beginning of the year because awakening can only come from God. We cannot manufacture it, only receive it."

Sheffield noted several ways churches can observe the day of prayer, including a day of prayer worship service, an emphasis during Sunday School department time or a day of prayer breakfast.

He noted that churches may celebrate the Day of Prayer for Spiritual Awakening at any time and listed a number of helps available for the emphasis, including a sermon outline written by ABSC executive director Don Moore, a prayer guide, a planning guide and an order of worship.

For additional information or materials for a day of prayer emphasis, contact Sheffield at the ABSC offices toll-free at 1-800-838-ABSC, ext. 5103.

## 'Joy Explo' draws record crowd of 5,000 youth to Little Rock

Showing the world "Jesus Makes a Difference," more than 5,000 young people gathered at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock Dec. 28-29 for Joy Explo '95, Arkansas Baptists' annual Youth Evangelism Conference.

Randy Brantley, an associate in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention evangelism department, said the Explo's attendance set a record for the event. "Last year we had about 4,500 attend so we were really excited about this year's attendance," he noted. "It may have been the single largest event ever sponsored by Arkansas Baptists under one roof."

He credited the record attendance to a change in location. He said Joy Explo had previously been held in Hot Springs, but was moved to Little Rock because of over-capacity crowds at the Hot Springs Convention Center. "We were hoping for growth in the change of location, but a 10 percent increase was beyond our expectations."

Brantley said that Explo highlights included a record number of personal spiritual decisions and a continued emphasis on the True Love Waits sexual abstinence campaign.

"About 600 students responded to the preaching of (Explo keynote speaker) Paul Jackson," said Brantley. "His basic theme was, 'Show the World Jesus Makes a Difference,'" which was the theme of Joy Explo.

"During his two messages to students, 75 came to know Christ as a result of the invitation and close to 100 indicated decisions for service," he said, adding that the total of approximately 600 public decisions was "the largest number of decisions made at a Joy Explo."

Brantley told of one young man's salvation experience that was "one of the nearest stories. At the second invitation, a father brought his son down to the front. He was home from college for the holidays, and God caught hold of the son's heart and the son turned to his father and said, 'Dad, I'm ready to receive Christ. Will you go with me?'"

"They worked their way to the front," Brantley continued. "The father said, 'This is my son,' as he wept. 'I've been praying for him for years and something you have said tonight has broken through his heart.'"

Joey Dodson, minister of youth for First Church in Star City, also reported decisions from his students. "They caught an excitement to go out and witness."

He said participants are "the hope for churches and our nation" and that "Joy Explo maximizes on that hope. Joy Explo tells them how to live for Christ and what to do."

Another highlight of Joy Explo "was the issue of True Love Waits — Through the Roof," Brantley said. "We asked the students to sign or re-sign their 'Through the Roof' commitment cards, and about 3,500 did."

He explained that the Baptist Sunday School Board "is hoping, by Feb. 9, to have enough commitment cards to string through the roof of the Georgia Dome in Atlanta during Atlanta '96, the largest gathering of youth ministers from throughout the nation. Arkansas teens will have their cards displayed for that event."

In addition to messages by Jackson, youth heard a variety of contemporary Christian musicians, including Clay Crosse, Bryan Duncan, Steve Geyer and Scott Springer.

## El Dorado pastor Floyd Lewis dies

Floyd W. Lewis Jr., pastor of First Church of El Dorado since 1989, died Dec. 28 of an apparent suicide. His body was discovered the following morning, according to church officials.

A statement released Dec. 29 by church leaders explained, "A tragedy has occurred. Dr. Floyd Lewis Jr., the pastor of First Baptist Church, has taken his life. Our church family appreciates the concerns and prayers of the community during this difficult time."

Lewis, 43, was a former pastor, associate pastor and youth minister for churches in Louisiana and Virginia. A graduate of Washington and Lee University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, he

was president of the El Dorado chapter of Habitat for Humanity. He also was a founding member of the Interfaith Health Clinic and a participant in Arkansas Baptists' European missions partnership.

Funeral services were held at the church Dec. 31 with Fisher Humphreys, Randall O'Brien and Buzz Thomas officiating. Burial was in Kentwood, La.

Survivors include Lewis' wife, Janis, and two daughters, Mary Catherine and Claire, all of El Dorado; his parents, Floyd and Jimmie Lewis; a brother and four sisters. Memorials may be made to the First Baptist Missions Fund, the Interfaith Health Clinic or the El Dorado Habitat for Humanity chapter.

# ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

## Staff changes

**James Clifford "Jim" Ingram** began serving Jan. 7 as pastor of First Church in Osceola. Ingram has been serving as a Southern Baptist missionary to France since 1990. He previously was associate pastor and minister of evangelism for Olivet Church in Little Rock as well as a pastor in Virginia. He is a graduate of Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Va., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Ingram and his wife, Kathy, have three daughters, Sara, Emily and Laura.

**Robert N. Hopkins** joined the staff of First Church of Fayetteville Jan. 7 as minister of education, coming there from First Baptist Church of Midland, Texas. He previously served as a minister of administration and education in Oklahoma. Hopkins is a graduate of the University of Tulsa and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Wanda, have three children, Kimberly Andrews, Lisa Hopkins and Neil Hopkins, and two grandchildren.

**Danny Bryson** will join the staff of First Church in Hot Springs in mid-January as minister of education and outreach. He will come there from Sedalia, Mo., where he has served on the staff of First Baptist Church as minister of education and administration since 1983. Bryson previously was a member of the staff of First Church in Clinton, Miss. He is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Connie, have three children, Melissa, Amanda and Spencer.

**Floyd Emmerling** is pastor of Angora Church near Mountain View. He previously has been pastor of churches in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Michigan. In addition, he has been a Southern Baptist home missionary, serving as director of an inner-city center in Detroit, Mich. Emmerling also has been chaplain for veteran hospitals in Little Rock and North Little Rock. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Sarah, have three children, David Emmerling of North Lauderdale, Fla.; Laura Thomas of Troy, Mich.; and Sherri Andrews of Sherwood.

**Wayne Porter** is pastor of Daniel Chapel at Dermott. He previously served Community Chapel Church at Crossett and Locust Bayou Church of Hampton. A graduate of the University of Arkansas at Monticello and Southern Mississippi University in Hattiesburg, he currently is completing studies at the University of Arkansas for his doctorate in education



## ARKANSAS ALL OVER

By MILLIE GILL

and administration. Porter also has studied at Liberty University. He and his wife, Shirley, are residing in Dermott.

**Don Coleman** recently began his ministry as pastor of First Church of Harrisburg. He graduated Dec. 17 from Mid-America Seminary. Coleman and his wife, Sherry, have three sons, Matthew, Timothy and Christopher.

**Arnold Teel** is serving as pastor of Emmanuel Church in Conway, coming there from Zion Church of Conway where he served for more than three years. This is the fifth church Teel has served as a pastor since his retirement 16 years ago.

**Bill Powell** of Fort Smith has accepted the call to serve as pastor of First Church, Highway 96. He previously was pastor of First Church of Coal Hill.

**Thomas Medley** has joined the staff of First Church in Harrisburg as minister of music and youth. He previously served Pleasant Grove Church in Little Rock. Medley and his wife, Tracy, have two daughters, Caitlyn and Hannah.

**J.R. Hull** retired Jan. 1 as pastor of Foothills Church in Mountain View. He is available for church revivals, supply preaching or to serve as an interim pastor. Hull may be contacted at HC 72, Box 120, Mountain View, AR 72560; phone 501-269-3956.

**Roy Fish** is serving as interim pastor of East Side Church in Fort Smith. Fish is professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

**Aubrey Turner** has resigned as pastor of Corners Chapel Church of Trumann to move to Augusta where he will continue his secular employment.

**Kenny McMahan** has resigned as bivocational pastor of Shiloh Church near Harrisburg. He will continue his employment with Arkansas Power and Light.

**Carey Deaton** has resigned as pastor of Neal's Chapel near Lepanto.

**Sharon Groves** has resigned as director of preschool ministries for Nettleton Church in Jonesboro, following four years of ministry.

**Frank Gantz** will conclude his ministry as pastor of West Rock Church in Little Rock Jan. 14 to enroll in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he will work on his doctorate. He is a graduate of

Oklahoma Baptist University and Mid-America Seminary. Gantz previously was pastor of Greenfield Church in Harrisburg. In addition, he has served in Oklahoma. He and his wife, Belinda, have four children, Cameron, Leah, Carlton and Bethany.

## Obituaries

**Marvin Edward James**, age 68, died Dec. 23 in his Hot Springs home. James, pastor of Rector Heights Church in Hot Springs, also had served Emmanuel Church in Hot Springs, Dell Church, Woodland Heights Church of Harrison, Friendship Church of Clinton, Kibler Church of Alma, Harvey's Chapel Church of Hot Springs and Second Church of Clarksville. Retired from the U.S. Air Force, he attended Boyce Bible School and was a graduate of Luther Rice Seminary and the International Bible Institute. He is survived by his wife, Lora Adella James of Hot Springs; two sons, Alfred C. "Chuck" James of Woodstock, Ill., and Raymond A. "Andy" James of Little Rock; one daughter, Sarah L. Love of Hot Springs; five sisters and seven grandchildren.

**Allen Meeks** of Mountain Home died Nov. 30 at age 77. Meeks, a native of Arkansas, had served as executive director for the Ataska Baptist Convention, taking a medical leave of absence in 1981 and returning to Arkansas. He moved to Alaska in 1960 to help establish a new church in Anchorage and while there served three churches in the Anchorage area. He became director of religious education for the convention in 1964 and served as interim executive director on three occasions before being elected executive director in 1980. Meeks was a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is survived by his wife, Ruth, four children, 10 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

## Church news

**North Little Rock First Church** is sponsoring a reception Jan. 14 to honor Lanelle Siegman who is retiring as church secretary, following 22 years of service. She will continue to serve as part-time financial secretary through 1996.

**Sheridan First Church** recently recognized church secretary Ann Clark for more than 10 years of ministry.

## Ordinations

**Conway First Church** ordained Kreg Cummins, Jerry Dixon and Jewell Steinbeck to the deacon ministry Jan. 7.

# Kite receives award for bivocational work

Billy Kite, director of missions for Ashley County Association, recently was awarded the 1995 national exemplary director of missions award for bivocational ministries. The award was presented by Dale Holloway, national home missionary for bivocational ministries, during the annual meeting of the Fellowship of Bivocational Ministers in Bolivar, Mo.

"Most Baptists' view of ministry is too narrow," Holloway pointed out. Affirming the dual roles filled by bivocational ministers, he added, "Ministry is not a preacher in the pulpit. Ministry is a Christian in the world."

Kite, an enthusiastic advocate of bivocational ministry, has worked diligently to affirm the work of bivocational ministers in his association. Kite sponsors a semi-annual dinner for bivocational ministers and has a standing offer to preach in their churches, whenever needed, without any expectation of an honorarium. When a church in his association is without a pastor, he makes himself available to fill the pulpit for the first month, also without pay.

Since becoming an associational director of missions 10 years ago, Kite said the line of division has fallen between fully-funded and bivocational pastors in the association. "Nobody talks about who's bivocational and who's not," he said.

"When I came here, I had never been a DOM, so I looked around to see the needs," he explained. "The smaller membership



Billy Kite (right) receives the 1995 exemplary director of missions award for bivocational ministries. Presenting the award is Dale Holloway, the Home Mission Board's national home missionary for bivocational ministries.

church had lots of needs, so I designed a strategy to bring larger and smaller membership churches together."

One example was the need to provide bulletins for smaller churches that didn't have the equipment to produce one. The associational office now produces the bulletins for free.

Kite also realized the need for educational resources, beyond seminary extension classes which many bivocational ministers are unable to attend. In response, he conducts basic preaching classes for which he wrote the materials. He also has designed a pastoral ministry class that teaches bivocational pastors how to

administer baptism, Lord's Supper and conduct hospital visits.

"Because the bivocational minister works two jobs, often he has less time to prepare sermons," Kite pointed out, so he also provides sermon resource materials for them.

"Billy Kite has a passionate belief in the work of bivocational ministers," noted Jimmy Barrentine, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department. "He has played a key role in seeking to lead his association, state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention to provide top-quality resources for bivocational ministers and the churches they serve.

"He has also invested much personal time and energy in the lives of bivocational ministers

and their families," Barrentine added. "Very few directors of mission have given to bivocational ministers in the way Billy Kite has."

Kite "has had an outstanding ministry in Arkansas," agreed state convention executive director Don Moore. "He has proven to be one of the strongest supporters for Baptist causes."

Kite, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has served as a pastor in Iowa and Oklahoma. He most recently was chairman of Arkansas Baptists' executive director search committee.

## Pollett named to new Children's Home position

John Pollett, executive director for the Arkansas Sheriffs' Boys and Girls Ranches since 1978, has been named associate director of development for the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries, effective Jan. 16.

David Perry, ABCHFM executive director, said that Pollett "has long-term experience in the residential child care field, a strong commitment to being involved in ministry and has a personality that makes him right for this position."

Perry said the associate position was created by the ABCHFM board during its September board meeting.

John Ross, ABCHFM director of development, said Pollett's focus will be to "raise money, contact donors, conduct public relations and assist me in promoting the agency to individuals and churches." He added that Pollett will be given primary responsibility for the agency's special offering and publications.

Pollett, a member and deacon of First Church, Batesville, attended the University of Arkansas and majored in advertising and public relations before leaving to join the military. He has served as a sales representative for Nabisco, Inc., and as an

inventory control specialist for IBM. He and his wife, Carolyn, have four children.

Pollett currently is a member of the Arkansas Air National Guard. He also has served in the Arkansas Army National Guard and was commander of signal corps units in Hot Springs and North Little Rock.

Ross said that Pollett's duties also will include assisting Ross with a proposed fund-raising campaign that agency board members voted to proceed with during their Dec. 16 meeting.

"The board has done a feasibility study for the campaign and voted to proceed with preliminary campaign activities," Ross said. "The feasibility study showed a potential range of \$3.5 million to \$6 million for campaign income," he noted, adding that responses to the study "were tremendously positive."

Although no specific date has been set for the campaign, fund solicitation may begin as early as December, according to the board's feasibility report. The report also recommended a minimum campaign time of 18 months and a minimum goal of \$3.5 million.

## Baptist laymen urged to pray for their pastors

MEMPHIS, TN (BP)—Baptist men throughout the Southern Baptist Convention are scheduled to begin a 40-day season of prayer for their pastors Jan. 28. The prayer emphasis is based on the Brotherhood Commission's latest guided prayer booklet, "Pray for Your Pastor."

"This Baptist Men's Day emphasis underlines a longtime core belief of the Brotherhood Commission that pastors are the most important people in Brotherhood work," said James Williams, Brotherhood Commission president. "That's because missions education must have the support of pastors if Southern Baptists are going to maintain their commitment to world evangelization."

There's another reason for this year's emphasis: Pastors just need to be lifted up. "American churches need strong, visionary pastoral leadership, and it's time for us to support them," said Jim Burton, director of Men's Ministries at the Brotherhood Commission. "We know that being the pastor is a very difficult and sometimes lonely job. They face high levels of stress and burnout. A pastor needs the spiritual intercession of his congregation, and they need to be ready to intercede for him."

The booklet is similar in size and format to "Pray for the President," introduced by the Brotherhood Commission in 1993 and since selling more than 350,000 copies.

Pray for Your Pastor, written by Edwin

E. Scott, pastor of Goodwood Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, La., provides a daily routine of Scripture reading and specific prayer suggestions. For example, "Day 1" directs the reader to Ephesians 6:4, and then asks him to "pray for your pastor as he shows Christ to his children and family...and for the witness of your pastor's family in their neighborhood."

"All the requests are focused on the particular needs that the pastor has," said Don Aycock, a former pastor who now directs special projects like Pray for Your Pastor for the Brotherhood Commission. "Not only does it help the pastor, but it also helps the people in their prayer life by putting them in the shoes of the pastor for a while."

The process also can defuse some of the tension that may exist in certain situations, Aycock remarked.

"It can draw people closer to the pastor,

defusing some of that tension. It works both ways, too. When the pastor knows that his people are praying for him, naturally he would feel closer to them."

Aycock added that deacon chairmen or church Brotherhood directors should take the lead in using Pray for Your Pastor. He encouraged them to order a copy for every family active in the church.

The booklets are made to fit inside a shirt pocket, "so we hope they will haul it around and pray for their pastor wherever they go," Aycock said.

"Can you imagine what would happen in our churches if our people were praying for their pastors over 40 days?" he asked. "Can you imagine how much good would come out of that?"

To order Pray for Your Pastor, contact the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission by calling their offices toll-free at 1-800-727-6466.

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## NATION

### Tom Elliff to be nominated for SBC president

DEL CITY, OK (BP)—Former Arkansas pastor Tom Elliff will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans. Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Del City, Okla., will be nominated by Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala.

Wolfe, a nominee for SBC president in 1994 and former chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, said, "I prayed about it and sensed the leadership of the Holy Spirit" to nominate Elliff, "then consulted with several friends from around the country and they were as excited and positive about Tom as I am."

Elliff, a former president of the SBC Pastors' Conference, confirmed he has prayed about Wolfe's initiative and is willing to be nominated.

Elliff, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been pastor of churches in Arkansas, Texas, Colorado and Oklahoma. He also is a former Southern Baptist missionary to Zimbabwe.

In addition to serving as president of the 1989 SBC Pastors' Conference, Elliff has been SBC convention preacher, chairman of the SBC Committee on Order of Business and a frequent Pastors' Conference speaker.

### CP gifts down for December; designated gifts up

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for the month of December were down from a year ago, but designated gifts continued to climb, according to Morris H. Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

For December 1995, CP gifts totaled \$11,292,845 compared to the same month in 1994 of \$12,218,783, a decrease of \$925,938 or 7.58 percent. Executive Committee finance officials said the drop likely was due to delays in receiving gifts

from state conventions during the holidays.

For the year-to-date, CP first quarter gifts totaled \$32,974,184 compared to the same period a year ago of \$34,494,918, a decline of \$1,520,733 or 4.41 percent. The SBC fiscal year is October through September.

Designated gifts continued to climb as December gifts totaled \$3,510,249 compared to \$3,309,045, for an increase of \$201,204 or 6.08 percent. For the year-to-date, designated gifts total \$8,343,108 compared to last year of \$7,067,706, an increase of \$1,275,401 or 18.05 percent.

For the SBC Cooperative Program allocation budget, which requires \$11,802,427 each month, the gifts for December were 4.32 percent below budget (\$509,581) and for the year-to-date, the total of \$32,974,184 is 6.87 percent below the required budget of \$35,407,281.

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## SBC student ministry program reports gains, losses during '95

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—The Southern Baptist student ministry program reported several gains in 1995, including an increase in campuses with student ministry programs and the number of students reached; gifts to missions and hunger relief; and the number of churches, Sunday Schools and missions students helped start.

Decreases were reported in the number of student conversions and participation of minorities and international students.

According to the 1995 Student Ministry Information Report, compiled by the Baptist Sunday School Board's National Student Ministry (NSM), 236,344 students participated in Southern Baptist student ministry programs in 1995, up from 188,323 the previous year. SBC student work was reported on 1,029 campuses, up from 1,013 in 1994.

The report stated students participating in SBC programs gave \$3,158,519 to missions in 1995, up from \$2,782,732 the previous year. Student gifts to hunger relief also increased, from \$74,025 in '94 to \$98,767 in '95. In addition, students helped start 346 churches, missions or Sunday Schools in '95, up from 153 in '94.

The report showed decreases in student conversions from 7,528 in '94 to 5,963 in '95. Minority student involvement declined with the number of African Americans dropping from 11,603 in '94 to 8,979 in '95 and other ethnic groups, from 7,534 in '94 to 4,872 in '95. International student involvement declined from 10,193 in '94 to 9,388 in '95.

National Student Ministry director Bill Henry said he was both pleased and challenged by the report.

"It shows Southern Baptist student ministry is alive and growing, but there are still some areas where we have work to do," he said, adding he specifically was concerned about drops in minority, ethnic and international student participation.

"I've already met with a group of state student ministry directors to discuss ways to impact this," he said. "We may need to come up with some new ministry models, and we're prepared to do that. This is a priority for us."

In other areas, the Student Ministry Information Report showed the number of students involved in witness training decreased slightly from 13,497 in '94 to 13,275 in '95, but the number of campuses reporting evangelistic outreach projects increased from 512 to 549. The number of students involved in Bible study groups decreased from 39,619 to 34,172.

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## MINISTRY

### LOVE campaign leaders seek input, action from pastors

Leaders of "Let Our Violence End," a multi-denominational organization promoting "an active stand" against violence, are seeking the input and support of Southern Baptist pastors willing to aid in promoting the campaign.

Robert Holt, director of LOVE and a member of Second Church in Little Rock, said the group is seeking the input of Baptist pastors as well as their congregations. "We are wanting to get their support not only through their membership, but also to make them aware of what we are doing when we come to them with a need in their community," Holt said. "We want to be able to present that need to them to fill."

Holt said needs may range from "older citizens who need help around their house to young children who may not be able to go to a baseball game and need someone to take them. Those are easy needs. The hard ones may involve someone who might be depressed, or who has lost their will to work or who has no food in their home."

He added that pastors also may "help us plan the neighborhood LOVE parties, bringing different denominations and businesses together."

A neighborhood LOVE party, Holt explained, is a "coming together" of neighbors "to find out the needs of their neighbors and to reach out and meet those needs."

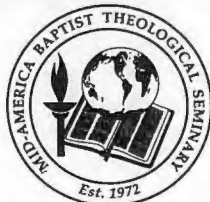
He said pastors can play an important role in leading members to take part in community action. "He is the shepherd of the church and we will need the shepherd's support to lead the sheep in this true grassroots effort in the community."

Taking the LOVE message into the community can also be an effective outreach tool for churches, he said. "We are taking LOVE into 25 schools between January and April. We can use members from congregations to help take it into other schools. It is a true outreach that the church can utilize to get into their community."

Holt said the LOVE campaign is a statewide effort and that a LOVE representative will be available to meet "person-to-person or with a group of pastors."

For more information about starting LOVE campaign activities in a local community, contact Holt at 501-228-4669.





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## Adopting a child requires prayerful consideration

PLEASANT VIEW, TN (BP)—More than Christian concern, adoption requires prayerful consideration.

Because adoption can be complicated and the child's needs have to come first, "you need to pray about whether to adopt or not, and take your time," said Janice Duffy, coauthor of *How to Adopt a Child*.

"God tends to ask us to do the things we're suited to do," Duffy noted in a recent interview. "Ninety-nine point five percent of adoptive parents would say it's a joy."

For Duffy and her husband, adopting two children has brought them closer. "It really broadens your horizons when you know the needs out there," she said. "And it gives you a deeper sense of how important it is for a child to have a home."

More than a million couples consider adoption each year, according to Duffy and Connie Crain in their book. Statistics released by the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse in Washington indicate 127,441 children of all races and nationalities were adopted in the United States in 1992, the last year for which statistics are available.

International adoption peaked in 1991 at a little more than 9,000. It dropped to

about 6,500 the next year and is projected at 8,200 in 1995, according to statistics from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Yet only one of 30 people who want to adopt will actually succeed, according to Duffy and Crain. Why is there a wide disparity between the number of couples who want to adopt and those who do?

Many people drop out because of what seems to be the staggering cost. Depending on the type of adoption, it may range from \$3,000 to \$25,000. "It often is a matter of the priorities in your life."

Additionally, many hopeful couples or even singles drop out of the adoption process prematurely because of frustration — they don't know where to turn.

Duffy and Crain's book, *How to Adopt a Child*, evolved from their own frustrations and victories with adoption. The two women, both nurses, worked together and began talking about all the questions they had and the questions they were getting about the adoption process.

Duffy and her husband, Roger, gave birth to three children and have two adopted daughters from Romania. Crain and her husband, David, adopted a child

privately and another through an agency. "We had run the gamut," Duffy explained.

Some prospective parents are leery of the adoption process because of negative publicity about failed adoptions. Many of the adoptions garnering headlines today floundered because prospective parents failed to check all of the information or get all legal knots securely tied, Duffy said.

"Today, the majority of adoptions turn out well. But you need to go into it with your eyes open," she said. "Things will get better as adoption laws change." Many states are examining and changing their adoption laws to better meet the needs of the child, she added.

The book explains the pros and cons of agency adoptions versus private adoptions. It guides the reader through pitfalls to avoid in domestic and international adoptions, and helps individuals decipher the information they will gather.

Duffy and Crain also include a chapter on further resources, listed state by state with names and telephone numbers included. An additional source of information is the Internet. A 10-minute perusal of Internet resources included such items as a warning about adoption fraud; INS guidelines for international adoption; and photos of children from other countries.

Even with the pitfalls and snares, adoption is still considered more reachable than it was 30 years ago. "A lot more people are considering it now," Duffy said. "Generally, everyone knows someone who is adopted, has adopted, or has placed a child for adoption."

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Amos is the oldest of the canonical prophets of the Old Testament.

Amos is a shepherd from Tekoa in Judah called to prophesy against the north Israelite kingdom of Jeroboam II.

Amos is being shown visions of judgment by locusts, fire and a plumb line of justice coming upon that kingdom.

Amos is preaching at Bethel sanctuary against the surrounding enemy nations: Aramean, Philistine, Phoenician, Edomite, Ammonite, Moabite.

Amos is being welcomed in this task of denouncing the sins of their enemies.

Amos is also condemning Judah and Israel for their sins.

Amos is hated for his judgment preaching against his own people.

Amos is warned by Amaziah, Jeroboam's priest at Bethel, to go back to Judah to do his prophesying.

Amos is replying that he is not a prophet by profession but a herdsman and one who tends sycamore figs.

Amos is not under Jeroboam and Amaziah's authority because the Lord commanded him to prophesy against Israel.

Amos is condemning Amaziah to a personal punishment for ordering him not to prophesy.

Amos is inspired to prophesy by the

Lord's lion's roar of judgment which conveys His counsel to His prophets.

Amos is preaching God's judgment against wicked rich people for exploitation of helpless poor people for personal profit.

Amos is condemning sexual and drunken abuses that they called worship.

Amos is predicting God will overwhelm them for spurning His saving grace and refusing to follow true religious leaders.

Amos is delivering God's word of covenant responsibility to a specifically privileged people.

Amos is warning that the plunder obtained by violence in the ivory decorated palaces of kings and nobles of Samaria will be looted by their enemies.

Amos is condemning the first wives of Samaria for urging their husbands to exploit more poor people for their wine crops.

Amos is sarcastically calling Bethel worshippers to overdo their sacrificial worship with which God is not pleased.

Amos is citing famine, drought, blight, locusts, military forces and nearly complete destruction as covenant warnings from the Lord.

Amos is offering as the ultimate threat a direct encounter with their living God.

Amos is preaching their funeral sermon as they listen in their self-satisfied prosperity.

Amos is hoping the Lord will grace a remnant who repent.

Amos is denouncing those who expect the "day of the Lord" to be salvation when

it will only be judgment.

Amos is rejecting in the name of the Lord their sacrifices and festival worship.

Amos is calling for justice to roll down like life-giving waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Amos is predicting they will haul their Assyrian idols off to exile in Assyria.

Amos is lamenting a political leadership that is so arrogant that it believes it will never suffer calamity.

Amos is condemning the luxurious and drunken partying of these leaders who will be the first to go into exile.

Amos is warning of the perils of sea and plague for those who now fear to even mention the Lord's name.

Amos is interceding for Israel when he first sees visions of their destruction.

Amos is commanded by the Lord of the righteous plumb line to quit praying for them, since He will no longer save them.

Amos is seeing climactic visions of summer fruit ("end" harvest) and the Lord's destruction of the Bethel altar.

Amos is predicting a final devastation of bitter mourning accompanied by a famine of God's word.

Amos is picturing fleeing Israelites as unable to hide from the wrath of an avenging God.

Amos is saying that in God's eyes Israelites are not worth any more than Ethiopians, Philistines or Arameans.

Amos is holding out some hope that the Lord will use the death of the kingdom to sift out the sinners.

Amos is expecting a final outcome of restoration of abundance upon returned captives planted in their own land.

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# ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

## Ouachita announces new football coach

Longtime coach Jimmy "Red" Parker has been named the new head football coach at Ouachita Baptist University. He succeeds Buddy Benson who retired after serving 31 years as head coach.

For the past three seasons, Parker has served as head football coach at Rison High School which won the State Class A Championship this season.

Parker, 63, has been a successful head coach at both the high school and university levels for more than four decades. He has a career collegiate coaching record of 146-99-2 and an overall career mark, including high school coaching, of 259-118-6. He is a member of the Arkansas Sports Hall of Fame.

"We are very pleased that coach Parker

has made this decision," noted OBU athletic director Bill Vining. "His outstanding football coaching credentials and genuine desire to relate to our goals as a university were guiding forces in the selection of coach Parker. He is widely respected and known to both players and coaches."

Parker's previous collegiate coaching experience includes serving as head coach of Delta State University, Cleveland, Miss.; Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia; Clemson University, Clemson, S.C.; The Citadel, Charleston, S.C.; and Arkansas A & M College (now the University of Arkansas at Monticello).

Parker and his wife, Betty, are the parents of three children and have seven grandchildren.

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## Missionary notes

Ron and Debbie Baker, missionaries to Indonesia, are on the field (address: Kotak Pos 1038, Bengkulu, Sumatra 38001, Indonesia). They are natives of Arkansas. He was born in Lec County and considers Brinkley his hometown. The former Debbie Rogers, she was born in Fort Smith and considers Van Buren her hometown. They were appointed by the Foreign Mission Board in 1982.

Russell and Vicky Fox, Baptist representatives to Israel, are in the States (address: 1723 N. Fillmore, Little Rock,

AR 72207). He considers Little Rock, his hometown. She is the former Victoria Hagan of Stuttgart. They were employed by the FMB in 1982.

Carl and Martha Rees, missionaries to Honduras, are in the States (address: 2206 W. Auburn, Bolivar, MO 65613). He lived in Jonesboro. She is the former Martha French of Missouri. They were appointed in 1978.

John and Jean Wright, missionary associates to Korea, are in the States (address: 20 Lantern Hill Rd., Little Rock, AR 72227). She is the former Jean Murdaugh. Both consider Little Rock their hometown. They were employed in 1991.

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## Convention Uniform

### Sexual purity

By Steven Mullen, assistant professor, Williams Baptist College

Basic passage: Matthew 19:4-6;

1 Corinthians 6:13b, 18-20;

Romans 12:1-2

Focal passage: Matthew 19:4-6;

1 Corinthians 6:18

Central truth: Because God created us as sexual beings, we should live in sexual purity according to biblical teachings.

The material for this lesson is different from the material presented most other Sundays. You may be aware that once a year we direct all Sunday School material to the subject of sexual purity. I have put off writing this lesson until the last, although I really don't know why. It could be that my delaying this lesson camouflages the reality that we live in a sexually immoral society. Like millions of other middle-aged adults, I am a product of the "baby boom" generation (those born between 1946 and 1964). Growing up in First Church in DeWitt, I never contemplated our society degrading to the immoral position where there would exist the need for an annual lesson on sexual purity. Believe me, I am as appalled as you!

There are at least two biblical principles that we as a nation appear to have violated:

■ *Sexual purity is part of God's perfect plan* (Matt. 19:4-6). Regardless of our futile attempts to alter God's Word, the fact remains that His perfect plan is for one man to be joined with one woman for life. We simply do not have the right to adjust His plan. Rather, as Christians, we are obligated to live our lives within that context.

■ *God's plan for us is to escape sexual immorality* (1 Cor. 6:18). If there is one message we as Christians need to hear, it is this: The slightest tolerance for sexual misconduct is preliminary to heightened involvement. Many men and women have strayed into the sin of sexual misconduct, only to realize too late that the journey began with a small step. At the outset, Christians should turn and run as fast as possible. We will be better for doing so.

God's principles of sexual purity have not changed and neither has His grace! Regardless of your past, your future can be as pure as snow. Even the most casual reading of God's Word presents clear examples of individuals caught up in unwise decisions, stepping under the umbrella of God's love. Won't you be next?

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## Life and Work

### God's way

By Ben J. Rowell, pastor,

First Church, Rogers

Basic passage: Matthew 19:4-6;

1 Corinthians 6:13, 18-20;

Romans 12: 1-2

Focal passage: Matthew 19:4-6

Central truth: One man, one woman.

In my family, I have experienced the sting of divorce. My parents were divorced when I was 11 or 12 years old. When you talk of divorce, it touches almost all of us in some way. Our Lord teaches us so many truths concerning this matter.

Notice that Jesus accepted the Genesis account of creation. He taught "one man, one woman." This is what He intended. When we marry, it calls for establishing a new household: "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to each other." You also could say "to be glued together forever." The two become one flesh in such an agreement and there is no place for divorce.

The Pharisees asked why Moses made the provision for divorce for the people of his day in Matthew 19:7. The Lord responded to the Pharisees by saying that it was because the people's hearts were hard. God has always meant for marriage to be permanent and divorce is wrong, except for marital unfaithfulness.

Some of you may be divorced and ask, "So what must I do? It has already happened to me." My friend, divorce is not the unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin is the sin of unbelief. Therefore, all I can say to you is that you cannot undo some things. You are to ask God for forgiveness and move on in your life.

I hope you understand that sin is still sin. "Therefore what God has joined together, man ought not separate." Romans 12:1-2 tells us that we are to offer our bodies as living sacrifices. As Christians our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:13, 18-20). All of us know that the world's system tries its best to pull us into its lifestyle. It is really an awesome thought when you consider that the Holy Spirit comes to live in our lives and in our body. We are to get this body under control. No matter where we go He is living in us. Our bodies should be a living sacrifice. I have prayed as some of you have prayed, "God go with us as we leave this place." I ask you, "Where else would He go?" He is living in us. It still amazes me that He would come and live in my life! Let us present or offer our lives as a living sacrifice.

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## Bible Book

### The sanctity of marriage

By Don Moseley, pastor, Sylvan Hills

First Church, Sherwood

Basic passage: Matthew 19:4-6;

1 Corinthians 6:13b, 18-20;

Romans 12:1-2

Focal passage: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Central truth: The body of the believer belongs to God and he should seek to bring glory to God.

While answering a question about divorce for the Pharisees, Jesus went back to the beginning. He quoted from Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 to remind them that marriage was God's plan from the beginning. God's plan was for man and woman to leave parents and come together in marriage to become one flesh. "Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matt. 19:6b). God created this union. To destroy it is to destroy a creation of God. God creates children who are a perfect expression of this union. To destroy a child is also to destroy a creation of God. From the very beginning, it is made clear to us that the sanctity of marriage is inextricably tied to the sanctity of human life.

With the impact of the secular world, our Christian world view is in sharper contrast than ever before. God's plan for sex and marriage has undergone great perversion. The sexual revolution of the 1960s is producing increased divorces, disease and death. In the face of perversion of God's plan for sexuality, we need to be reminded of two important spiritual truths: Our bodies belong to the Lord and are the temple of the Holy Spirit.

■ *Our bodies belong to the Lord* (1 Cor. 6:13b). A cry often heard in defense of abortion from the woman is, "It is my body." That does not mean that she can do anything she pleases with it. This is especially true for the believer who belongs to the Lord.

■ *Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit came to live in us at the point of the new birth. Sexual sins do more damage to us than any other (1 Cor. 6:18). The reason is that sex transcends the biological because it is a spiritual union of two becoming one. What conflict for the Christian! The most important consideration for the believer is that he has been bought with a tremendous price (1 Cor. 6:20). We belong to Christ. We can do nothing less than offer our bodies to Him as "living sacrifices" and not be pressed into the mold of the world, but let God transform our thinking (Rom. 12:1-2).

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## Convention Uniform

### Victory through suffering

By Steven Mullen, assistant professor, Williams Baptist College  
**Basic passage:** Isaiah 52:13-12  
**Focal passage:** Isaiah 53:1-9  
**Central truth:** The suffering sacrifice of Christ is victory for believers.

Do we really understand the suffering Christ endured for us on the cross? Do we really comprehend the pain, agony and grief that was paid in our behalf? I don't think we do, for I am convinced that many Christians do not empathize with Christ on the cross. Consider these truths from Scripture:

■ **The servant had an unlikely beginning** (vv. 53:1-3). He grew up in a hostile environment similar to that of a root that is displaced out of the ground (v. 53:2). He was so unimpressive and unattractive that men were repulsed at the very sight of Him (v. 53:2). He was exposed to rejection, scorn, bitterness and loneliness (v. 53:3). Men would actually turn their backs rather than look in His eyes (v. 53:3).

■ **The servant suffered vicariously** (vv. 53:4-6). Initially, the speakers believed that the servant was suffering for His own unspeakable sin, which was a carryover from their belief that all suffering is a result of sin. But something happened, we know not what, that changed their minds. The result of this change began with the understanding that their depravity was attributed to their sin; not His.

■ **The servant died a sacrificial death** (vv. 53:7-9). The servant's suffering led to His eventual death. This ultimate sacrifice was different from previous sacrifices. It was a sacrifice made outside, not inside, the temple. Furthermore, the victim was a blameless man, not an unblemished animal. Finally, the sacrifice, when completed, makes all other sacrifices unnecessary.

The debt of our sin is now paid in full. Aren't we glad that the blood on the cross is still fresh? Aren't we grateful that the blood of Jesus Christ still convicts man of sin, delivers us from our past and changes us forever? The suffering of Christ is a victory for mankind, for without such sacrifice each of us would be accountable for our sins. That thought alone should prompt us to Calvary.

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## Life and Work

### A place of cleansing

By Ben J. Rowell, pastor, First Church, Rogers  
**Basic passage:** Matthew 5:21-26  
**Focal passage:** Matthew 5:21-22  
**Central truth:** The mind is dangerous.

In this passage, Christ raised the standard of His own requirement one step after another, until the whole commandment was transformed. The inward thoughts of the heart have to be checked, not merely the outward act of a physical injury. Anger against a brother, for instance, may lead to anger in return. It may thus wound him more fatally than a blow with a dagger from the outside. Anger therefore, which is harbored in the heart, may take on a murderous aspect and bring one in danger of condemnation. Remember, the Pharisees taught that murder consists of taking someone's life. The Lord said that the commandment extended not only from the act itself, but also to the internal attitude behind the act. Of course, murder is wrong, but the anger prompting the act is also as wrong as plunging in a knife.

The word *raca* means "contempt" and it may be even more deadly than the sin of wrath. It cuts and wounds more deeply and its effect is even more lasting than hot anger, which cools quickly. It is more deliberate and cruel. Therefore the stab of contempt meets with still greater condemnation from Jesus.

The worst forms of murder are hatred and malice which end in slander and the evoking of a curse towards one's brother. When we say, "Thou fool," the Hebrew word here means literally, "Thou godless one" and implies a curse. It also implies slanderous hate. This sin of the soul, says Jesus, is the most deadly of all. So, it is easy to see we cannot bring our gifts to the Lord unless our hearts are right with the Savior and our brother.

Such wrongful attitudes should be dealt with and made right. Reconciliation with brothers must be accomplished whether the innocent or the offender takes the first step. Without such reconciliation, gifts presented at the altar mean nothing.

There is a very simple rule of conduct that naturally follows if our Lord's advice is taken. The moment that you know in some way you have given offense, go at once to the one who is offended. If you find that you have done anything to hurt him or her, ask for forgiveness. Seek reconciliation no matter what the cost.

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## Bible Book

### Guidelines for living

By Don Moseley, pastor, Sylvan Hills First Church, Sherwood  
**Basic passage:** Colossians 3:14:18  
**Focal passage:** Colossians 3:1-17  
**Central truth:** Making proper decisions out of a new perspective.

In chapters 1 and 2 of Colossians, Paul laid out the doctrines shared by these believers. In chapters 3 and 4 he moved to a discussion of the practical application of their faith. Paul wanted them to understand that belief affects behavior. He first called for a new perspective on life. He called for them to set their hearts and minds on things above in contrast to things on this earth (vv. 3:1-2). Their temporal mindset of the past would have to give way to a new eternal mindset. A mind and heart fixed on Christ above will seek to make decisions about living that will please Him.

Paul felt he had to reveal that even though they have a new nature in Christ, there will still be the pull of the old nature. The beauty of their salvation is the power available to them through Christ to reject the lifestyle demanded by the old nature and the ability to choose a lifestyle that reflects the character of Christ through their new nature (vv. 3:5-10).

Paul gave an important listing of barriers that divide men and revealed that these barriers have been broken down for the person who has been renewed by knowing God (vv. 3:11-12). Christ is the only solution to racial, religious, economic or any other prejudices that divide us. However, for this to be a reality, the Colossians would have to choose to clothe themselves with "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience" (v. 3:12). They would have to forgive as the Lord forgave them (v. 3:13). They would have to let the peace of Christ rule in their hearts (v. 3:14), depend upon the Word of God and express gratitude to God (v. 3:16).

How were these Colossians (or any other Christians) going to see these realities in their lives? In chapter 4, Paul gave a bit of summary instruction that gives the key to making the right kind of living a reality for the believer. Paul called for the Colossians to "devote yourselves to prayer" (v. 4:2). Apart from prayer, the realities called for in chapters 3 and 4 will never be realized. Prayer plugs the believer into the necessary power source. Prayer keeps the perspective clear. Prayer enables one to put off things from the old life and put on that which is new in the new life.

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## NOBTS trustees elect Billy Smith interim president

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—Billy K. Smith, provost of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, has been elected interim president following a resignation announcement from Landrum P. Leavell II, the seminary's interim president since Dec. 31, 1994.

Leavell, president of New Orleans Seminary since January 1975, originally announced his retirement effective Dec. 31, 1994, but subsequently agreed to remain as interim president. Leavell, who was named professor emeritus of evangelism in March, will be named president emeritus during the March 1996 trustee meeting.

Smith has served at New Orleans Seminary since 1976. A professor of Old Testament and Hebrew and former chairman of the division of biblical studies, he was named vice president for academic affairs in 1992. Later the same year he was named provost and academic dean of the graduate faculty. A pastor for 20 years, Smith is a graduate of Louisiana Polytechnic University and New Orleans Seminary.

## Former Clemson president to lead Mars Hill College

MARS HILL, NC (BP)—A. Max Lennon, 55, former president of Clemson University, has been elected president of Mars Hill College by the school's trustees, effective March 1. Lennon, currently president and chief executive officer of Eastern Foods, Inc., in Atlanta, was elected during a special trustee meeting Dec. 20. He will succeed Fred B. Bentley, who has held the post 30 years. The college, based in Mars Hill, N.C., is affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

A 1960 graduate of Mars Hill Junior College, Lennon also is a graduate of North Carolina State University. Lennon was president of Clemson University from 1986-94. Previously he was vice president for agricultural administration and executive dean at Ohio State University; dean of the college of agriculture at the University of Missouri; and a faculty member and associate dean at Texas Tech University's college of agricultural sciences.

## Don Kirkland named editor of S.C. Baptist Courier

GREENVILLE, SC (BP)—Donald M. Kirkland was unanimously elected editor of the *Baptist Courier* by trustees of the South Carolina Baptist newsjournal Dec. 15. He will take office March 1 following the retirement of John E. Roberts.

Kirkland, 52, has been a member of the *Courier* editorial staff 21 years, first as assistant and since 1983 as associate editor.

Kirkland is a graduate of Anderson College, the University of South Carolina and Erskine Seminary. He also attended Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Linda, have two children, Jeff and Angela.

## Texas pastor John Yeats named Indiana Baptist editor

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)—John Yeats, the editor of a Baptist conservative newsletter in Texas, has been elected editor of the *Indiana Baptist*, the biweekly publication of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana. Yeats, 45, pastor of South Park Baptist Church, Grand Prairie, Texas, was unanimously elected by the SCBI executive board.

In addition to serving several churches in Texas, Yeats spent 13 years as a pastor in Topeka, Kan. A graduate of Dallas Baptist College and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, he is a trustee of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

Yeats will serve as communications director for the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, with responsibilities for editing the 5,000-circulation *Indiana Baptist*, directing public relations and serving as Christian life consultant. Yeats and his wife, Sharon, have three sons: John-Mark, Joel and Jordan.

## Association kicks out 'laughing revival' congregation

ANAHEIM, CA (ABP)—The Toronto church which attracted world attention with its so-called "laughing revival" has been kicked out of the Association of Vineyard Churches for its emphasis on "exotic" phenomena.

The Toronto Airport Vineyard claims 600,000 people have attended a revival which broke out in the church in January 1994, including 20,000 Christian leaders and 200,000 visitors from virtually every country and denomination.

The revival has become controversial, even in the Vineyard Association, over reports of worshippers becoming "drunk" in the Spirit, laughing uncontrollably or, in some cases, roaring like lions. The phenomenon has been carried to churches scattered worldwide.

Recently the Vineyard association, based in Anaheim, Calif., expelled the Toronto congregation, saying it had moved beyond the association's view that the purpose of renewal is to equip, train and release people.