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Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine, 1990-1994

Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine

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**January 25, 1990**

Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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**Maintaining Separation**

# Arkansas Baptist

January 25, 1990



**Will  
You Go?**



(BP) photo / Paul Obregon

*"Will You Go?" is the question posed on Volunteers in Missions Day, Feb. 25. Every year, more than 60,000 Southern Baptist volunteers assist home and foreign missionaries.*

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**Interested in Missions?**

Orvell Bryant, missionary to St. Vincent, West Indies, will host a breakfast, Tuesday, Jan. 30, 7:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn-City Center, 617 S. Broadway, Little Rock, for all pastors and wives who are interested in mission service. If interested, please call 501-234-2440.

**IT'S UPLIFTING**

**Life As A Gift From God**

DALLAS (BP)—In spite of severe pain, chronic physical ailments and the immediate need of a kidney transplant, Julie Liss greets her problems with a smile, viewing life as a gift from God.

For many pre-med students, a four-week, mid-semester hospital stay could be scholastically fatal, but for Liss, a junior at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in Belton, Texas, it was just another in a long string of obstacles to be overcome.

"I've been taking upper-level chemistry, biology and psychology courses and an English class. I made up the work, and I'm expecting all A's and B's," she said. "God has helped me through a lot."

Liss, a member of First Baptist Church of Belton, who considers Universal City, Texas, her hometown, is no stranger to physical ailments. Her most recent hospitalization was due to a severe kidney infection and other problems with her urinary system.

"I'm looking down the road now at a kidney transplant. It appears inevitable," she said, noting that doctors urgently are seeking a kidney donor.

She suffers from a condition in which she has no control of smooth muscles from her neck to below her waist, and a spinal tap performed at age 16 left her semi-paralyzed and temporarily bound to a wheelchair.

"I still don't feel stuff like normal people do. I have to think when I walk, or else I trip," she said.

Furthermore, she has had one tumor surgically removed from her thyroid, and others discovered inside her intestine may have to be treated with chemotherapy.

But in spite of physical problems, she remains a committed Christian, an award-winning athlete and a dedicated student whom friends describe as "smiling," "radiant" and "determined."

Before transferring to the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, she won titles in diving at Eureka College in Illinois and a national ranking in track. On the Belton campus, she is active in the Chemistry Club and Baptist Student Union, and she is junior class president.

"I've never seen anybody as strong emotionally. She's incredible," said Lori Horner, college intern at First Baptist Church.

Although she frequently is in severe pain, Liss often forgoes her pain medicine in order to keep her mind clear and to enable her to study, Horner added.

Looking beyond her immediate problems and her need for a kidney transplant, Liss anxiously anticipates entering medical school after university graduation in May 1991.

"I would love to be a doctor," she said. "I want to be able to stand on the other side of the table and say: 'I can sympathize with you. I really do know what you are going through!'"

**GOOD NEWS!**

**Dreaming A Christian Dream**

Romans 1:1-17

A person needs to have a dream. A dream becomes a beckoning star before the eyes that puts energizing fire in the heels. Paul had the dream of going to Rome. In his day all roads led to Rome. Even though Paul had traveled many of those roads, he had not yet traveled as far as Rome. In introducing himself to the saints in Rome, Paul told them about himself and his dream.

*Paul's ministry (vv. 1-7)*—Paul's ministry originated in the will of God. A person's concept of the reason for his service has a direct bearing on the quality and duration of his service.

The objective of Paul's ministry was to bring men of faith (vv. 5). This was the goal of his service and the purpose of his

apostleship.

*Paul's motives (vv. 8-15)*—The apostle didn't want to go to Rome for the usual reasons. He had a twofold motive. First, he wanted to give something (vv. 11-13), and second he recognized his obligation to all men (v. 14). These two motives caused him to be ready to preach in Rome (v. 15).

*Paul's message (vv. 16-17)*—Paul preached the gospel. The subject of his gospel is the righteousness of God (v. 17). The strength of the gospel is proved by its power to save all men.

A Christian needs to have a dream, and it should be to see people won to faith in Christ. That dream should compel Christians to share Christ with every where.

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# Maintaining Separation

J. EVERETT SNEED

The recent events which transpired between the Vatican's diplomatic representative in Panama City and the United States government is a classic study in church-state relations. Manuel Noriega was given diplomatic protection for a number of days in the residence of the Vatican's representative in Panama City. At length, Noriega was encouraged or coerced to leave the residence of the Vatican's representative. The entire episode, however, raises a number of significant questions. Is the church to be over the state? Is the state to be over the church? Are church and state to be separate and both work to encourage the other?

The background of this situation in Panama is the fact that the Vatican claims to be a state. The Vatican is about one square mile in Rome where the Roman Catholic pope lives. The Vatican claims to be a sovereign state, but basically is the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the headquarters of a religious organization, not of a country such as the United States.

Many countries, however, recognize the Vatican as a state and maintain diplomatic ties. The United States in 1984 became another country which recognizes the Vatican diplomatically. The U.S. government maintained consulate relations with the Vatican from 1848 to 1867. During this period, the Catholic pope personally governed Rome and all of central Italy. In 1867, the U.S. Congress became angry because of the closing of the Presbyterian churches by the papal government. At this point the United States ended its ties with the Vatican. In 1871, the Italian Republic was proclaimed and the U.S. government established diplomatic ties with Italy, but not with the Vatican.

In 1984, the U.S. Congress approved funds to establish full diplomatic relations with the Vatican. President Reagan chose to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican in spite of protests from the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, most of the Baptist state papers, and many other groups. President Bush chose to continue this relationship by appointing Thomas P. Melady to the Vatican last June.

There are both theological and practical reasons why we oppose the sending of an ambassador to the Vatican. The dilemma



which was just concluded illustrates one of the practical implications which such entanglement presents.

Theologically, our doctrine of separation of church and state is primarily drawn from Mark 12:13-17. Mark's gospel records a strange coalition between the Pharisees and the Herodians. These two groups came to Jesus asking, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?" (Mk. 12:14b). If Jesus answered in the affirmative, that tax money should be paid to the Roman government, the Pharisees would say this man is recommending the overthrow of ancient laws and should be stoned. On the other hand, if Jesus said, "No it is not right to give money to Herod," the Herodians would go immediately to Herod saying, "This man is recommending insurrection against the

Roman government." It appeared that there was no way out for Christ.

To the amazement of all, Christ said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." This has given the basis for our doctrine of separation of church and state. The principle, then, is that the state shall not exercise authority over the church, nor the church authority over the state.

If a church or a denomination takes money from the government, we can expect these funds to come under government control. As citizens of the United States of America, we should expect our government to control money which it provides for any endeavor. If our Baptist churches are to remain free, we must steadfastly refuse to accept government money for any of our causes. In other words, Baptist churches must pay their own bills.

Each Christian is a citizen of two worlds. We have responsibility in the spiritual realm and in the governmental realm. As citizens of the United States of America, it becomes our responsibility to work for the best government and the best legislators possible. Further, we have the responsibility to encourage the enforcement of the Constitution, which says, "Congress shall make no laws reflecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." What will the U.S. government do when some drug runner enters the residence of the Vatican for diplomatic immunity in the future?

This editorial is not an anti-Catholic statement. But it is a plea for absolute separation of church and state. If we are to retain the freedom that we enjoy in America today, we must always be vigilant.

## Arkansas Baptist

VOLUME 89 NUMBER 3

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WILLIAM J. REYNOLDS

## Hymns Baptists Sing



### Redeemed How I . . .

"Redeemed how I love to proclaim it!"

Fanny Crosby was an extraordinary woman by any description. When she was an infant, she was blinded by a quack physician who applied a strong poultice to her eyes. She was educated at the New York Institute for the Blind, and later taught there for several years.

She was almost 40 when she began writing hymns, and her phenomenal memory, which became evident at an early age, was a great asset in this regard. By the time she was 12, she knew the first five books of the Old Testament, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Solomon, and many Psalms.

During her prolific hymn writing years, she usually put together her poems in the evenings after she had retired to her room. The next morning, she would dictate to a friend what she had completed the night before and had retained in her mind overnight.

Since 1882, Crosby's text has been sung to a tune composed by William J. Kirkpatrick. However, a new tune appeared in 1966 that has become exceedingly popular. The tune was written by A. L. Butler, then minister of music, First Baptist Church, Ada, Okla., and the tune bears the name of this city in southeast Oklahoma.

Butler's hymn tune was first sung by the Singing Churchmen of Oklahoma at the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Detroit in 1966. Since then it has been sung in many places. In addition to its publication in the 1975 *Baptist Hymnal*, it has been published in other widely used hymnals throughout our country.

William J. Reynolds is professor of church music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

COMMENTARY

## Networks Testing Toleration

Step by step, frame by frame, the major television networks seem to be testing just how much of the homosexual lifestyle the public will let them depict in programming.

ABC scored a major breakthrough in November 1989 when its show "thirtysomething" portrayed two male homosexuals in bed together. Through the use of scripting and camera work, the ambiance of the scene left the impression that the men had just engaged in homosexual activity.

Now, as the new decade opens, ABC and NBC are both pushing the limits further through films about the life of actor Rock Hudson. Hudson was an active homosexual who died of AIDS.

The ABC docudrama on Hudson aired Jan. 8. It will be followed later in the year by NBC's mini-series on the actor.

"Rock lived a life of incredible promiscuity," said ABC's Frank Konigsberg in an interview in *TV Guide*. "He had one, two or sometimes three lovers a night." Konigsberg, who served as executive producer for the docudrama, said the network decided to handle Hudson's homosexuality "matter-of-factly, without sensationalizing."

According to *TV Guide*, the ABC movie shows men "embracing, flirting, lounging in bed together and entering a bedroom with unambiguous purpose."

The *Washington Post* says two scenes in the show "seem to be leading up to" protracted same-sex kissing.

The homosexual theme is so clear and pervasive that some of the actors in the show have gone out of their way to deny homosexual backgrounds. However, *TV Guide* identifies the show's scriptwriter, Dennis Turner, as an active homosexual who "left his marriage, sobered up and is now in a stable relationship with a man."

*Washington Post* television writer Tom Shales said the NBC mini-series later in the year will be "produced in cooperation with Mark Miller, who was Hudson's secretary." The homosexual theme will, no doubt, permeate the NBC series, too.

Indicative of the networks' efforts to lead us further down the primrose path, step by step, toward toleration and acceptance of the homosexual lifestyle, was Shales' comment in a recent review: "TV movies about gay celebrities who die of AIDS are, alas, becoming a genre."

Shales said the trend he sees includes two previous movies about Liberace, a homosexual who also died of AIDS.

As a TV critic, Shales said he is already bored with watching such AIDS-focused films.

What he doesn't say, however, is what we Christians need to say: We are tired of the networks slowly and steadfastly introducing into our homes the unbiblical idea that homosexuality is an acceptable, alternative lifestyle.

Christians who have fought for decades against the growing pornographic industry and its downward spiral into the depths of human degradation can see clearly where such films as "Rock Hudson" are leading us. What is depicted in pornographic materials today is far worse than what was presented two decades ago.

If same-sex kissing on prime-time television was unthinkable five or 10 years ago, just think what barriers the networks may want to cross by the end of the 1990s.

The time to act is now! Call ABC TV at 212-456-7777 and let them know how you feel.—Louis Moore, SBC Christian Life Commission



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# LOCAL & STATE

## Arkansas All Over

MILLIE GILL

### People

**Robert Meeks**, associate pastor of Hilldale Church in Alexander, was ordained to the preaching ministry Jan. 7 at Markham Street Church in Little Rock. Pastor Manuel Weeks served as council moderator. Ray Branscum brought the charge to the church and Ray Harrell, chairman of deacons, moderated the questioning. Don Jones, pastor of Hickory Grove Church in Star City and uncle of the candidate, preached the ordination message.

**Cottrel R. Carson** of Blytheville has joined Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Prospective Student Services staff as Martin Luther King Jr. Fellow. He is a graduate of Henderson State University and is a candidate for the master of divinity degree at Southern Seminary

**Thomas W. Price Jr.** of Searcy graduated Dec. 15 from Florida Baptist Theological College with a bachelor of music ministry degree.

**Marvin Cooper**, music director for Belview Church at Melbourne, has retired following 60 years of service. He was honored for his years of service Dec. 31 with an afternoon program which featured special music, testimonies, and the presentation of two plaques and a monetary gift. Former pastors Doayne Robertson, Raymon Carneal and Noble Wiles participated in the program. Pastor Tim Porter served as moderator for the program, which was coordinated by Charles Cheatham, Mildred Cheatham, Earldene Loggains, and Brenda Trotter.

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Meeks



Carson



Price



Cooper

**Dr. and Mrs. Dillard Miller** of Mena observed their 50th wedding anniversary Dec. 30 when a reception was given by First Church in Mena by their children, Mrs. Dean Dickens and Rod Miller, both of Dallas, Texas. The Millers were married Jan. 13, 1940, in Horatio, Miller, who is serving as director of missions for Ouachita Association, served as pastor of First Church in Mena for 29 years. He is a former president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and currently is a member of the ABSC Executive Board and State Joint Committee for Cooperative Ministries with National Baptists and Arkansas Retired Workers Association. Mrs. Miller is a retired public school teacher, having taught in the Mena School District for 22 years.

**Clark Colbert** has joined the staff of

Sylvan Hills First Church in North Little Rock as part-time minister of youth.

**James D. Brown** has joined the staff of Cullendale First Church in Camden as associate pastor in charge of the education and youth programs, coming there from Calvary Church in Fort Smith.

**Dale Wooten** has joined the staff of Beech Street First Church in Texarkana as associate pastor for pastoral care and senior adult ministries. Retired from the U.S. Navy, he holds a diploma in pastoral ministries from the Seminary Extension Department and has done additional study through the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Genola, have three adult children and six grandchildren.

**Jon Stricklan** has resigned as minister of

## 1990 ANNUAL PASTOR'S RETREAT

March 12-13, 1990

(Lunch Monday through Dinner Tuesday)

- ★ **Four Great Bible studies!**  
by Dr. William P. Steeger, Ouachita Baptist University
- ★ **Three Great Messages by one of Florida's Top Church Growth Pastors!**  
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  - How to Keep from Staying Too Serious, Dr. David Uth
  - Doing Good Prenatal Counseling, Dr. James Strait
  - Conflict: Prevention and Cure, Dr. Glenn McGriff
- ★ **If I Could Do My Ministry All Over Again**  
by Dr. Dillard Miller, Mena
- ★ **Great Time of Prayer for Awakening**
- ★ **Ethics and Integrity in Ministry**  
by Dr. Don Moore (by request of the Pastor's Retreat Committee)

Sponsored by: Executive Board, Arkansas Baptist State Convention

music and youth at Beebe First Church to enter the field of music evangelism.

**Johnny Kimbriel** of Step Rock is serving as pastor of Denmark Church at Bradford.

**Ray Meador** has resigned as pastor of First Church in Judsonia to serve as pastor of Memorial Church in Port Arthur, Texas.

**Willie Gold** has resigned as pastor of First Church in McRae, effective Jan. 28.

**Bessie M. Sanders** of Leachville died Dec. 29 at age 89. She was a charter member of Rowe's Chapel at Caraway and an honorary member of Black Oak Church. Survivors include two sons, L.E. Sanders and H.D. Sanders, both of Leachville; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren. Memorials may be made to either Rowe's Chapel or Black Oak Church.

**Chris Hoag** is serving as part-time youth director at Midway Church in Melbourne, coming there from West Church in Batesville.

**Danny Elder** is serving as part-time youth director at Grand Avenue Church in Fort Smith, where he has been a member for 28 years.

**Mike South** has joined the staff of Second Church in Little Rock as minister to single adults. He is vice-president of the property management company of One Financial Centre in Little Rock. He and his wife, Sue Carol, have a son, Michael.

**Floyd M. LaSage** of Benton, retired employee of Alcoa and a Baptist minister

for more than 40 years, died Jan. 4. He was a member of Indian Springs Church. Survivors are his wife, Lorene LaSage; two sons, William A. LaSage; two sons, William A. LaSage and Donald W. LaSage, both of Benton; a sister; and three grandchildren.

**Spurgeon Wilkerson** of Harrison died Dec. 22 at age 80. He was the former pastor of Valley Springs Church and the Hopewell Church. He was a member of First Church in Harrison. Survivors include his wife, Artie Edith Wilkerson, Harrison; a son, Samuel S. Wilkerson of St. Charles, Mo.; two daughters, Anna Beth Phillips of Everton and Vera Murray of Jefferson City, Mo.; four brothers; four sisters; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**Karl Meyer** is serving First Church in Hardy as part-time minister of music and youth.

**Mike M. Gilchrist Jr.** has accepted the pastorate of Matthews Memorial Church in Pine Bluff, coming there from Highland Church in Wills Point, Texas. He is married to the former Kerry Duke of El Dorado. They have two children, Rachel, and Mike.

**Terrance Bradshaw** began serving Dec. 31 as pastor of Immanuel Church in Magnolia, coming there from the Challis Church in Brownfield, Texas. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Bradshaw and his wife, Dorothy, have a son, Zane.

**Bill Brown** has resigned as minister of music and college at Harlan Park Church in Conway to pursue a concert ministry.

**Erich Albat** has resigned as minister of youth at Harlan Park Church in Conway to move to Marshall.

**Glenn Artt** is serving as pastor of First Church in Green Forest, moving there from El Dorado.

**Ron Bradley** has resigned as pastor of Pines Church at Quitman to serve as pastor of First Church in Marshall.

**David Taff** is serving as pastor of Evening Shade Church near Waldron.

**Paul Montgomery**, a U.S. Air Force sergeant and ordained Baptist minister, is serving as part-time chaplain at the Little Rock Job Corps. This position is funded by the Chaplaincy Ministry of the ABSC Missions Department.

**Gary S. Kleinpeter** has joined the staff of Nettleton Church in Jonesboro as minister of education and evangelism, coming there from Shreve City Church in Shreveport, La. Kleinpeter is a graduate of Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, La., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Kimberley Bruce of Ruston, La.

**Mary Linda McClain Porter** of Hot Springs died Jan. 8 at age 29. A graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, she had attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and was a teacher at Cutter-Morning Star High School. Her funeral services were held Jan. 10 at Lakeshore Heights Church in Hot Springs, where her husband, Richard Porter, serves as pastor. A service was held Jan. 11 at First Church in Fordyce. Other survivors include a son, Seth Porter of Hot Springs; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy McClain of Fordyce; her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Clark McClain and Mrs. Veda Robinson, all of Fordyce. Memorials may be made to the building fund of Lakeshore Heights Church.

## Race Relations Conference

*'How Far Have We Come?'*



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## Briefly

**Jonesboro Central Church** ordained Mack Isbill, Doug Gilmore and Lynn Erwin to the deacon ministry Jan. 7. Commissioned as deacons were Tony Bari, Floyd Bonham, Art Boudoucies, Truett Brannon, Carroll Carr, Tracy Clayton, Noyl Houston, Ernest Howell, Buddy Huff, Frank Lady, Danny Liles, and Jerry Schaeffer.

**Pine Bluff Central Church**, with a Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$1,300, missions organizations sponsored several fund raising events which raised \$1,500, exceeding the goal by \$200.

**Bakers Creek Church** at Russellville has launched a program to upgrade the buildings and grounds. Improvements completed include the renovation of the fellowship hall, new sanctuary lighting, enlargement of the parking lot, and re-roofing the main building. The church also has launched a Discipleship Training program, missions organizations, and children's choirs.

**Van Buren First Church** ordained Bob Shepherd, David Gatling and Ron Reading to the deacon ministry Jan. 7.

**Park Hill Church** in North Little Rock ordained John Rogers and Earl Smith to the deacon ministry Jan. 7.

**Blytheville First Church** ordained

Richard Snyder and Joe Warren to the deacon ministry Jan. 7.

**Remount Church** in North Little Rock ordained Bruce Merrick, music director, as a deacon Dec. 24. Program participants included John S. Ashcraft, Marvin Peters, director of missions for North Pulaski Association, H.D. Hughes, and Pete Church.

**Lake Village Church** hosted the 13th annual National and Southern Baptist Fellowships of Southeast Arkansas Jan. 8. Program personnel included Larry Alexander of Dumas; R.A. Austin of Dermott; Harold Elmore and Bill Goode, both of Lake Village; LaShonda Graham of Dermott; B.J. Jackson, moderator of Southeast District Association; Jack Kwok, ABSK director of Cooperative Ministries with National; George Pirtle of Dermott; Kerry Powell and Don Hilton, both of McGehee.

**South Side Church** in Pine Bluff held a Spiritual Awakening Seminar Jan. 12-13 with Ted Elmore of Euless, Texas, serving as leader.

**Olivet Church** in Little Rock will hold a service Jan. 28 to commission Jim and Kathy Ingram, who were recently appointed by the Foreign Mission Board for service in France. Ingram as served Olivet Church as minister of evangelism.

**Brinkley First Church** will hold a Family Life Conference March 18-19. Tim LaHaye will be speaker.

**Meridian Church** at Crossett recently purchased a 1990 van to be used in church

outreach ministries. Allen Jackson served as purchasing chairman. Pastor Dan M. Webb led a van dedication service Jan. 7.

**Indian Springs Church** at Benton observed the mid-point in their "Boldly We Build" campaign Jan. 7 with a potluck dinner and program. Pastor Benny Grant was speaker. The church has received, to date, \$102,000 of its \$200,000 goal.

**Rogers First Church** 1989 adult choir award winners were Molly Dyer, choir member of the year, Dana Ryan, best attendance, and Anna Dunson, director's award.

**Harris Chapel** at Pangburn ordained Johnny Kimbriel and Randy Altom to the preaching ministry Jan. 7.

## OBU Scholarship Deadlines

ARKDELPHIA—Deadlines for academic scholarships and music scholarship auditions for the 1990-91 school year at Ouachita Baptist University are in February. The application deadline for academic scholarships is Feb. 15. For information contact Harold Johnson, Student Financial Aid, OBU P.O. Box 3774, Arkadelphia, AR 71923; telephone 501-246-4531, ext. 570.

The School of Music will hold its annual music scholarship auctions on Feb. 1 and Feb. 8. For information contact Dr. Charles Wright, School of Music, OBU P.O. Box 3771, Arkadelphia AR 71923; telephone 501-246-4531, ext. 129.

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5615 Geyer Springs Rd. - Little Rock, AR 72209  
Paul R. Sanders, Pastor



Dr. McGriff

## Keep Pressing On

by Don Moore  
ABC Executive Director

The day I write this Andrei Sakharov's death has just been announced. This tough man who won a Nobel prize for his achievements in physics may end up being best known for his relentless pressure on the Soviet Union to grant freedom to their people. The night of his death he had been in a meeting working on the further expansion of the present trend toward the dream of his heart. Reporters said, "He pressed on right up until his death."



Moore

I think this is what I must do with regard to missions. Someone needs to do it in every church, too. The mounting tragedy of misused blessings is going to come back to haunt us. "To whom much is given, much is required," the Lord said. It is clear that stewardship which pleases God is that which is expressed by giving in proportion to the blessings received. The record is clear. Church after church is receiving increased support, while at the same time giving smaller percentages of what they receive to missions through the Cooperative Program. The curse of declining Sunday School enrollment, baptisms and increased church strife could be a part of God's judgment on the churches for violating his inerrant principles. Churches can no more escape the discipline of God than an individual can.

In every church there is someone who sees to it that the youth ministry is not neglected, the senior ministry is not neglected, the music adults are not neglected, the staff is not neglected, and the buildings are not neglected. Who keeps the church on its toes about its global obligation to fulfill the Great Commission? In most churches, no one does. Much of the support of the world mission program is based on vague sentiments or weak traditions. This is proven by the fact that most finance committees, when faced with a little pinch, look first to the Cooperative Program as a place they can take away money to meet some local need of little consequence. Most of our people do not know the significance of what they do or do not do with reference to the Cooperative Program.

If the above is true, and I sincerely believe it is, I want to appeal to you to do

something about it.

(1) Feb. 11-17 has been designated a week for Focus On WMU. What churches know and do for missions is more attributable to the WMU than anyone in the church except the pastor. Shouldn't their labors be recognized? Shouldn't their efforts be encouraged by prayer, promotion and appreciation? The *Dimension* magazine for January, February, March could provide you some creative ideas for this emphasis.

(2) Feb. 18-21 is the suggested time to have the home mission study. The theme this year is, "So The Lost May Hear." Again, helps are available in the WMU *Dimension* magazine, and through the book and teaching guide at the Baptist Book Store. It would be great if the entire church could be involved. Perhaps only one service can be given to this, but that would be better than no emphasis at all. Believe me, home missions are hurting because of what Southern Baptists do not know.

(3) March 4-11 lead your church in a special period or periods of prayer for Home Missions. There is no other way for personnel and strategies to be made supernaturally effective but through prayer. Our society, our churches, the lost—all are in great trouble. Surely the believing will pray, give and go.

God will bless those who give themselves to these activities that are in the mainstream of redemption. Then, when it comes time to support our concerns with the Annie Armstrong offering, the people will joyfully and abundantly give.

**Prayer and Fasting**—How urgent are your hunger pains? Is there anything worth more to you than a couple of meals? Do you need 800 or 900 additional calories more than our world needs to be touched by God?

Jesus taught that difficult spiritual tasks could only be accomplished by prayer and fasting. "Here's Hope Revivals" are scheduled for March and April throughout our land. Our Brotherhood Department urges you to join in concerted prayer and fasting on Feb. 15 and March 15 for Here's Hope revivals. Let your hunger remind you of the greater hunger of the human heart. Demonstrate that your hunger for the blessing of God on us is more urgent than your physical hunger.

**State Singles Conference**—Three hundred singles are expected to gather at Second Church, Little Rock, for a time of inspiration, enrichment and training, Feb. 23-24. Ann Gardner of Nashville, Tenn., will be the guest speaker-leader. The large

number of singles in our society with their potential for ministry cannot be ignored. Their special needs cannot be ignored either. You and others in your church probably need to be involved in this conference. Look for details elsewhere in *Helpline*.

**Who created what? How? When?** The issue of the creation has profound theological significance. The theory of evolution has had a devastating impact on the influence of evangelical Christianity. It's basic effect is this. "If I did not come directly from God, why should I believe that I will return to God or be accountable to God? If I may have not come from him or return to him, why should I worry about how I live?" Such are the reasonings of the modern secular mind. The other devastating effect of evolution is that it calls into question the foundational scriptures, thereby making all of the rest suspect.

For these reasons and others, it is appropriate that the Doctrinal Study for 1990 throughout our convention is "The Doctrine of Creation." Are you ready to teach that? A National Conference on the Doctrine of Creation will be held at Immanuel Church in Little Rock, Feb. 19-21. This will be the first time Arkansas has hosted such a meeting. Outstanding speakers have been enlisted. Every teacher of the book should try to be present.

**Lay Renewal Fellowship**—A real wave of spiritual blessing is washing across the people and the churches who become involved with Lay Renewal. Feb. 9-10, beginning with a potluck dinner on Friday night at 7 p.m., and concluding on Saturday at 12:30 p.m., every moment will be filled with testimony, fellowship, training and worship. Many who have been blessed by Lay Renewals, but who have never served on a team, should search out the possibilities by joining in this event. This all takes place at the Levy Church in North Little Rock.

**Music Leader Retreat**—Feb. 23-24, volunteer and part-time music leaders will gather at Camp Paron for a great time of fun and growth in leading worship. Accompanists, directors and pastors are encouraged to come together. Pastors will discuss "The Small Sunday School at Work," with Freddie Pike leading.

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## Stewardship/Annuity

### Video Discusses Financial Support

The Annuity Board recently distributed a new video, "Facing the Facts," to help churches as they study financial support for ministers and church staff members.

The 40-minute presentation leads churches through a systematic process of developing a fair and adequate plan for supporting, protecting and paying their minister and employees. The video answers such questions as:

- \*Why provide adequate financial support for God's servants?
- \*What is included in a plan of financial support?
- \*How do tax laws impact a minister's financial support plan?
- \*What are ministry-related expenses and how are they handled?
- \*What protection coverages should a church provide?

The video is designed for ministers, staff members, personnel committee members and/or budget planning committees.

Loan copies are available through directors of missions or from the Stewardship/Annuity office.—James A. Walker, Annuity representative

## Sunday School Children's Park 1990

Plans are well underway for Children's Park in the 1990 Arkansas Baptist Assemblies. A new and exciting program is being developed for boys and girls who have finished grades three through five.

"A Trip Through Bible Lands" is the idea behind the whole program. During the Bible study classes, children will search the Scriptures and find ways to apply Bible truths to their lives. Another class will explore the geography of the Bible lands and learn about customs, clothing, and food.

Children who choose arts and crafts will make objects related to the theme: making a pottery lamp that really works, weaving, and basket making.

In music classes, children will learn about music in Bible times. It's possible that musical instruments will be made!

The evening worship times will focus on Jesus and the travels he and his disciples made.

This new approach to Children's Park promises to be both fun and a great learn-

ing experience for boys and girls.

Make plans now to offer this unique time to the children in your church.—Jackie Edwards, associate

## Evangelism

### State Evangelism Conference

Our annual State Evangelism Conference will be a cooperative effort between Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the following National Baptist Conventions:

General Missionary Baptist State Convention, Regular Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and Consolidated Missionary Baptist State Convention. This means that we will have a large group of our National Baptist friends involved with Arkansas Baptist State Convention pastors, staff members, and lay people.

We will be privileged to meet on Jan. 29-30 with Brian Harbour and the Immanuel Church, 1000 Bishop, Little Rock. Lewis Drummond is scheduled to open the conference at 1:30 p.m. Monday afternoon, speaking on "Spiritual Awakening." We have planned and prayed that God would truly give us spiritual awakening at the conference.

One of the special features of the conference will be small "Interest Conferences." The conferences will be conducted Monday evening and Tuesday afternoon. They will be led by a National Baptist and a Southern Baptist. These conferences are: "Personal Witnessing," Raymond Bishop/Bill Howard; "Revival Preparation," Earl Thomas/Clairence Shell; "Prayer for Spiritual Awakening," Gerald Parker/Bill Hilburn; "Sunday School Emphasis," Fred Brown/Freddie Pike; "Conserving Evangelistic Results," James Thrower/Don Atkinson; "Evangelistic Music," Cedric Hayes/Lester McCullough; "Youth in Evangelism," Ricky Bedford/Randy Brantley; "Women in Evangelism," Rachel Meyers/Kay Kincl; and "Building Witnessing Relationships," Robert Jenkins/Paul McClung.

We have several outstanding state leaders who will be sharing during the conference. The National Baptist leaders are Arnett Dotson, pastor of St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church, North Little Rock. He serves

as Executive Secretary of the General Missionary Baptist State Convention of Arkansas. J.A. Toney, Forrester City, will be giving a testimony. Robert Willingham, Jr., pastor of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Little Rock, who serves as chairman of the Ministers Conference, Union District Baptist Association, and is an instructor in this association.

The following Southern Baptists will be speaking of the program: Johnny Jackson, long-time Arkansas Baptist pastor, and now executive director of Paul Jackson Evangelistic Association; Barry King, pastor of Social Hill First Baptist Church, will be giving a testimony on "Growing Missions"; Rex Holt, pastor of Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, who now serves as president of the Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference, will be speaking on "Witnessing During Revival"; Glen D. McGriff, director of Ministry of Crisis Support, ABSC, will be speaking on "Hope for our Homes."

Lester McCullough, director of Church Music, ABSC, and Cedric Hayes, music leader in the National Baptist, will be directing the music for the conference. They have enlisted several outstanding musicians to direct, sing solos, and serve as instrumentalists.

The theme "Here's Hope, Jesus Cares For You" will be developed by all speakers and musicians. This will be done under the session themes of "Hope for the Hopeless," "Hope for the Lost," "Hope for the Homes," "Hope for our Churches," and "Hope for our Nation."

I hope that you will come to the conference and I further hope that you will leave the conference with a greater hope.—Clairence Shell, director



Shell

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# Looking Ahead

## February

- 5 State Vacation Bible School Clinic, *Immanuel Church, Little Rock (SS)*
- 5-6 ASSIST Training, *Immanuel Church, Little Rock (SS)*
- 9-10 Lay Renewal Fellowship, *Levy Church, North Little Rock (Bbd)*
- 11-17 Focus on WMU (WMU)
- 15 Church and Community Ministries Workshop, *Calvary Church, Little Rock (Mn)*
- 18-21 Home Mission Study (WMU)
- 19-21 National Conference on the Doctrine of Creation, *Immanuel Church, Little Rock (DT)*
- 23-24 Volunteer/Part-time Music Leader Retreat, *Camp Paron (M)*
- 23-25 High School Young Men's Rallies, *Majestic Hotel and Spa, Hot Springs (Bbd)*
- 28-3/2 Director of Missions Retreat, *DeGray Lodge (Mn)*

## March

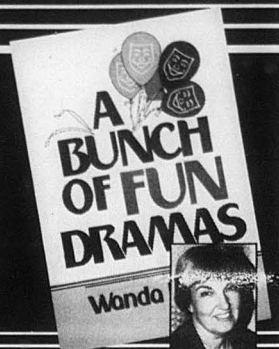
- 4-11 Week of Prayer for Home Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (WMU/HMB)
- 8-10 Interfaith Witness Training, *Ouachita Baptist University (Mn)*
- 9-10 HSBYM State Basketball Tournament, *Park Hill Church, North Little Rock, and Immanuel Church, Little Rock (Bbd)*
- 9-10 State Handbell Festival, *Geyer Springs First Church, Little Rock (M)*
- 12-13 Pastors' Retreat, *Camp Paron (Ad)*
- 16-17 WMU Annual Meeting, *Pulaski Heights Church, Little Rock (WMU)*
- 18-4/8 "Here Hope, Jesus Cares For You" Revivals (Ev)
- 19-22 State Building Tour (SS)

23-24 State Building Conference, *Markham Street Church, Little Rock (SS)*

23-24 Leadership Training Conference, *Camp Paron (BSU)*

## April

- 8 Cooperative Program Day (SBC)
- 10 PACT Awareness Conference (Mn)
- 13 State Youth Convention, *Statehouse Convention Center, Little Rock (DT)*
- 16 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (DT)*
- 17 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, *Southern Baptist College, Walnut Ridge (DT)*
- 18 Area Summer Youth Ministry Conference, *Baptist Building, Little Rock (DT)*
- 17-20 Campers on Mission Spring Rally, *Petit Jean State Park (Mn)*
- 19-20 Youth Ministry Conference, *Excelsior Hotel, Little Rock (DT)*
- 19-20 Minister of Education Retreat, *Excelsior Hotel, Little Rock (DT)*
- 20-21 Ministering to Youth in Crisis Conference, *Excelsior Hotel, Little Rock (DT)*
- 20-21 BSU Volleyball Tournament, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (BSU)*
- 21 Young Musicians Festivals, *Little Rock First Church, Hope First Church, Monticello Second Church, Wynne Church, Rogers First Church (M)*
- 22 Life Commitment Sunday (SBC)
- 23-24 Key Leader Meeting, *North Little Rock Park Hill Church (Ad)*
- 27-28 State Family Ministry Conference, *Little Rock Immanuel Church (DT)*
- 27-28 Acteens Encounter, *Little Rock Markham Street Church (WMU)*
- 27-28 RA/HSBYM Congress, *Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia (Bbd)*
- 30-5/2 Church Music Excellence Conference, *Springdale First Church (M)*



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**Wanda Pearce** is minister of education/youth at First Baptist Church, Malvern, Arkansas. She has published extensively for *Church Recreation* magazine, among others.

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WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION

## O'Brien Installed

by Susan Todd

SBC Woman's Missionary Union

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Dellanna W. O'Brien was installed as the sixth executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Jan. 9. The installation service, which was held during the WMU executive board meeting, was the first formal installation of an executive director in the organization's 101-year history.

In the service, O'Brien gave her first address to the WMU executive board. She told the group of almost 300 board members and guests that the causes for which WMU was founded will continue to be central

under her leadership.

"I reaffirm that commitment (to missions), along with the pledge to continued loyalty and devotion to the cause which binds us all together," she said.

"The mission for '90 is 'Go.' Our charge is clear. The resources are available. The need is urgent. All that remains is to obey the command. Woman's Missionary Union stands ready to do our part. Our call to arms unifies and deploys us. So now, Go."

During the installation service, a WMU insignia-shaped medallion was invested on O'Brien by WMU President Marjorie J. McCullough. The medallion was cast for the occasion and will be used during installation services for future national WMU executive directors.

The official portrait of O'Brien was unveiled during the service. It will hang in the national headquarters building in Birmingham, Ala.

O'Brien's husband, Bill, who is a special assistant to the president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, sang a solo during the service.

A professional and recessional included representatives of the five age-level organizations sponsored by WMU; representatives from O'Brien's church, Mountain Brook Baptist in Birmingham; representatives of WMU leadership on the associational, state and national levels; the

WMU executive director search committee chairman, Christine Gregory of Danville, Va.; missionary friends; and family.

Convention executives representing 15 agencies and associated organizations also participated in the program's professional and recessional. They included A.R. Fagan, Stewardship Commission; Richard McCartney, Radio and Television Commission; Richard Land, Christian Life Commission; James Smith, Brotherhood Commission; Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board; Darold Morgan, Annuity Board; James Dunn, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; Lynn May, Historical Commission; Denton Lotz, Baptist World Alliance; Arthur Walker, Education Commission; Sam Pace and Harold C. Bennett, Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee; Keith Parks, Foreign Mission Board; Roy Honeycutt, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Lewis Drummond, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.

O'Brien recognized the six former national WMU leaders who attended the service: former presidents Helen Fling, Christine Gregory, Dorothy Sample and Marjorie J. McCullough, and former executive directors Alma Hunt and Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler.

In her address, she described them as "godly women who have contributed mightily to the cause of Christ through the Southern Baptist Convention. Through their able leadership, women throughout our convention have been mobilized, challenged, guided, informed, trained and inspired to study, to give and to go."

## Seminary Says Charges Untrue

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustee executive committee has affirmed President Roy L. Honeycutt's determination that recent charges against a seminary professor are "completely unsubstantiated."

In a letter addressed to Daniel O. Aleshire, seminary director of professional studies, Clark D. Kirkbride, a theology student from Jeffersonville, Ind., requested that he be withdrawn from the school.

Kirkbride then accused seminary ethics professor Paul D. Simmons of a series of statements and actions regarding the sexuality of Jesus. According to Kirkbride, the statements were made in a course on "The Church and Sexuality" taught by Simmons during the fall semester.

Honeycutt said the seminary has declined to be specific about the accusations because "they have been found to be totally unsubstantiated and, in my judgment, libelous."

An investigation of Kirkbride's charges by School of Theology Dean Larry L. McSwain concluded that each of the accusations was "patently untrue." In addition to conversations with Kirkbride, Simmons and a director of missions who received a copy of Kirkbride's letter, McSwain conducted personal interviews with 38 of the 58 students in the class taught by Simmons. None of the students' testimonies, he reported, corroborated any of Kirkbride's charges.

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## Teleconference to Air Feb. 4

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—The seventh annual Home Missions Teleconference will air Feb. 4 at 3 p.m. (CST) on ACTS Network and Baptist Telecommunication Network (Spacenet 1, Channel 21.)

Featured live in the hour-long teleconference will be home missionaries Ken and Barbara Chadwick and Debbie Scott. The Chadwicks coordinate associational work in Salt Lake City, Utah, and Scott works with students in Puerto Rico. Video features of missionaries working

in church starting, resort ministries, evangelism and catalytic missions will also be included.

Missionaries and national missions leaders will be available to answer questions from viewers who call in during the teleconference.

Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board; James Smith, president of the Brotherhood Commission; and Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, will also participate.

A new 30-minute leadership feature will be aired only on BTN beginning at 4 p.m. (CST). During this half hour, viewers will be introduced to a wide range of ideas and available materials for promoting the 1990 Season of Home Missions- including the Week of Prayer for Home Missions, the Home Mission Study, the Home Missions Teleconference and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Video-taped copies of the teleconference can be ordered in advance from the Home Mission Board Customer Service Center by calling 1 (800) 634-2462.



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## Convention Uniform

### *Who Is The Light?*

by Lawson Hatfield, Malvern

Basic passage: John 9:1-11,35-41

Focal passage: John 9:1-11,35-41

Central truth: The light of the world is Jesus.

There are many illustrations which help us understand who Jesus is. One important one is the central truth of our lesson. This truth is stated in John 9:5, when Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."

Darkness is a symbol of blindness, often associated with sin or evil. While blindness is never to be equated with sin, there is a common weakness in mankind to think that something very wrong must cause blindness and other sickness. That is why his disciples asked him who had sinned to cause the blindness, the man born blind or his parents?

Jesus said neither. Then Jesus said that a good purpose could come out of blindness. God's works should be accomplished, and he (Jesus) must do the works of him who sent me.

Here is a man born blind. Present is Jesus the Son of God sent to do God's work. Jesus' time on earth was limited.

The light of the world would be seen. Jesus healed the blind. No problem or need is beyond the possibility of being solved by the work of God.

Involved in the healing process was the presence and function of Jesus with the clay. A person in need was willing to receive help, through obedience. The blind came seeing. Darkness became light.

But as always there are skeptics. Some neighbors were not even sure it was the same man which was born blind who now stood in their presence seeing.

But how the man was healed, he knew. A man called Jesus anointed his eyes, gave command and to wash in the pool of Siloam. Sight was the miraculous result.

The unbelieving Jews considered the case, and cast the man out of their fellowship. Jesus heard of the blindness of the unbelievers to truth. The Lord came to the healed man and talked with him about believing in the Son of God. He asked the all important question, "Who is he Lord, that I might believe?" (Jn. 9:36).

Jesus said that he who once was blind has now seen him and it is he who talks with you. It was then the once blind man professed his faith in Jesus. He worshipped Jesus.

This lesson treatment is based on the International Bible Lesson for Christian Teaching, Uniform Series. Copyright International Council of Education. Used by permission.

## Life and Work

### *For the Birds*

by Frank C. Gantz, Nall's Memorial Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Mark 4:10-20

Focal passage: Mark 4:14-15

Central truth: Satan works to keep folks from receiving the gospel.

In the parable of the sower, Jesus identifies four types of soil into which the seed of the gospel is sown. Probably only the fourth type of soil could really be considered those who are saved. Much debate has centered on the stony and thorny soils. Most do agree that the first category definitely refers to the lost. The birds or Satan snatches away the seed before it can penetrate the soil.

Matthew 13:37 identifies Jesus as the sower of the seed. The seed is further defined as the Word of God (Lk. 8:11) and the Word of the kingdom (Mt. 13:19). Nothing is wrong with either the sower or the seed. The problem is in the soil or the hearers.

These hearers are characterized as being confused. Matthew described them as hearing "and understandeth not" (Mt. 13:19). The word for "understandeth" means that they cannot put the pieces together. They might know all the elements of the gospel, but do not put it altogether.

These hearers are also characterized as being calloused. Mark 4:4 describes the soil as being "by the wayside." The wayside was a three foot wide path between the fields which had been hardened by the steps of both men and beast. The seed would not penetrate this hard surface. The seed simply rested on the surface until the birds arrived. Many rejecters of the gospel have become calloused by things beating their hearts into hardness.

When the confused and calloused hearer hears the gospel, he does not do anything with it and the birds or Satan snatch it. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record this parable. Each differ in their designation of the birds. Mark calls the birds "Satan." This term means "adversary." Luke calls the birds the "Devil." This title means the "slanderer" or "accuser." Matthew simply calls the birds the "evil one" or the "wicked one." From Genesis to Revelation, this evil one is pictured as a snake. A snake deceived Eve. A snake tempted Jesus. A snake will appear in the end times. He comes as a bird for seed "lest they should believe and be saved" (Lk. 8:12).

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## Bible Book

### *Overcoming Defeat*

by Tommy Cunningham, Life Line Church, Little Rock

Basic passage: Joshua 8:1-2,32-33; 9:22-27

Focal passage: Joshua 8:30-35; 9:1-27

Central truth: God's recipe for blessing is obedience. Even in victory Satan continues his attempts to deceive the believer.

Chapter 8 of Joshua divides into two divisions. In verse 1-29 there is the account of the destruction of Ai. In verses 30-35 there is the reading of the law, with the blessing for the obedience and the curses that could come upon the disobedient.

The humiliating defeat at Ai is now turned to victory. Isn't it interesting that often what we consider the "little things" that cause us defeat. Ai was a little city, yet it became a great obstacle in the victory march of Israel. The people of God learned how strong a little thing may be and what wisdom and dependence on God is needed in order to overcome it! The people of God conquered Ai when they applied God's plan (8:1-29). After the victory at Ai, Joshua and all Israel journeyed 30 miles northward to the valley of Shechem.

The purpose of the events recorded in verse 30-35 were to remind Israel of God's recipe for blessing. As long as Israel kept God in her midst and obeyed his laws, she would have his blessings. When she chose to disobey then she would be under God's chastisement.

The symbolism of the two mounts warrants our attention. Bare and rocky, Mt. Ebal was a natural symbol of cursing. Green and luscious, Mt. Gerizim was a natural symbol of blessing. We need both to produce a balanced reverence in our lives.

Chapter 9 presents the reader with the account of the deceit of the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites deceived Joshua into believing they were somebody they were not. This is a favorite tactic of Satan.

Note the mistake of Joshua and the people of Israel mentioned in verse 14. It is always a mistake to act on our own judgment instead of seeking to know the will of God. Being deceived can happen to the best of God's servants.

Once again God's grace overruled man's weakness and the Gibeonites were made to be temple servants (9:27). God's grace took what Satan intended to destroy with and turned it into divine good.

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## Record 'Annie' Offering

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Baptists gave a record \$32,960,700 to home missions through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in 1989, according to figures released by the denomination's Home Mission Board.

This unaudited total was an increase of 6.8 percent, or \$2.1 million, from gifts received the previous year.

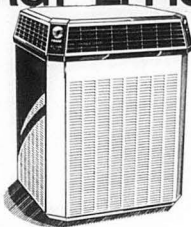
The amount also was \$2 million more than the board had budgeted in 1989 as anticipated income, but fell \$6 million short of the \$39 million offering goal.

Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis announced the final tabulations during a meeting of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union executive board in Birmingham, Ala.

The \$2.1 million increase is more than three times the increase of \$611,192, or 2.02 percent, which was received in the 1988 offering. Southern Baptists gave \$30.8 million to home missions that year.

Lewis said the \$2 million more than budgeted will help overcome a financial setback at the board earlier this year and will be budgeted as income in future years to support mission work on the field. HMB policy stipulates that all Annie Armstrong funds must be used in state conventions, not at the board's offices in Atlanta.

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## Drummond Back At Southeastern

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)—Lewis A. Drummond, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, is back on the job at the Wake Forest, N.C., school following cancer surgery Dec. 7. He is making a faster-than-expected recovery.

Drummond began work almost immediately after the holidays. Jan. 2, he was in his office for about two hours; he now is spending several hours per day in the office.

When asked about his full recovery, Drummond said: "I feel I should be back up close to 100 percent by the end of the month. By then I should be able to spend the whole day in the office. I'm easing slowly into speaking engagements. I have a speaking engagement at the state evangelism conference in Arkansas at the end of January that I intend to keep."

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COLOMBIA

Missionaries Go 'Home'

by Mary E. Speidel

Baptist Press

DENTON, Texas (BP)—Joye and David Crane thought twice about returning to Colombia.

Every time they heard a disturbing newscast about Colombia's bloody drug war, they had to "rethink and repray" their decision to return to the South American nation as Southern Baptist missionaries, said Mrs. Crane. But the answer was always clear.

"This whole situation has caused us to re-evaluate not only our missionary calling but our specific location. But in all of this praying and everything we've done, Colombia is still home," David Crane said during a recent vacation in Denton, Texas.

The couple and their daughters—Aimee, 9, and Heidi, 6—went "home" to Colombia Jan. 11. He returned to his assignment as a music consultant. She will continue as a church and home worker and piano teacher.

"We just have a peace about going ahead and going back," she said. "God has taken care of us before. There's no reason to doubt that care at this point. Outwardly, it looks like a dangerous situation. But that's only true if we're not in the Lord's will."

When drug-related violence escalated in Colombia last September, the Cranes relocated within the country for safety reasons. Later they came to the United States to spend time with relatives in Denton, their hometown.

Two other Southern Baptist missionary families who left Colombia because of the violence returned to their assignments in December. They are Arnold and Lucy Pessoa of Morton, Texas, and Charles and Jamie Ruede. Ruede is from Noel, Mo.; Mrs. Ruede is from Faucett, Mo.

Larry and Linda Booth, who also left Colombia in mid-September, remain on furlough in Raleigh, N.C. Booth is from Camden, N.J.; Mrs. Booth is from Closter, N.J.

In addition, five new Southern Baptist missionaries will go to Colombia as soon as paper work for visas is complete, said Betty Law, Foreign Mission Board associate area director for Spanish South America. The new missionaries, who recently finished Spanish language school, are Rodney and Sharon Coleman, of Hereford and Clifton, Texas, respectively; Sandra Gustin, of San Antonio, Texas; and David and Betsey Kammerdiener, of Lane, Kan., and Energy, Ill., respectively.

When violence escalated in Colombia last fall, board officials gave missionaries several options, Law said. They could stay put, return to the United States for furlough, transfer to another country or relocate to safer areas within Colombia.

The Cranes chose to relocate within Colombia. Before and after the move, they adjusted to rapid changes. They began home schooling their children for the first time. They heard a bomb explode almost every day. They squeezed a family of four into a tiny guest apartment.

Along the way, they discussed the changes with the children. "We've tried to let them know in advance every step that we're taking," said Mrs. Crane. "We've always been very straightforward and open about the situation in Colombia with our children. But we've tried to take out any emotion or fear or sensationalism."

But the Cranes have tempered the facts of life in Colombia with a healthy home life. After the move their living arrangements, although crowded, provided opportunities for family time. "We've always been a close family, but we've just had more time together and we've just enjoyed each other more," Mrs. Crane said.

The children's home schooling also gave Crane a chance to help his first grader, Heidi, learn to read. "I always thought that was some magic the teacher did," he said.

As they have made decisions amid conflict, the Cranes also have considered family members in the United States. "There was a stewardship of personhood and in our case there was a stewardship of grandchildren. Our families were very concerned," Mrs. Crane said. "We felt like the Lord would not have us be foolish with the loved ones we had in our care."

As they return to Colombia, the Cranes asked Southern Baptists to pray for families and friends of missionaries there. "We know we're being prayed for," she said. "But our families and close friends back in the States need the prayer as well."

Some friends and relatives have not understood why they are risking going back to Colombia, the Cranes said. But the couple insisted they are realistic about potential dangers. "We're not naive," said Mrs. Crane. "We know something could happen . . ."

For the Cranes, the choice remains clear. "Unless someone has been at that kind of crossroads," she said, "it's hard to understand how one has to depend upon the peace that the Lord gives, because there's nothing else to depend on."