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Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST



news magazine



Arkansas Baptists 'Impact the World'

by contributing
\$16.5 million
through the
Cooperative Program
in 1996.

漫信會出版社



'96 CP gifts set record but fall short of goal

Arkansas Baptists' 1996 Cooperative Program giving was a classic case of "good news, bad news."

On the positive side, statewide CP gifts reached a record \$16,499,370, an increase of 3 percent over the previous year's receipts. The bad news, however, is that receipts totaled only 95.6 percent of the 1996 CP goal of \$17.25 million. Even coupled with designated gifts of \$136,096, total receipts fell 3.5 percent below the budget goal.

Affirming the impact of the 3 percent gain, state convention executive director Emil Turner noted that the rate of increase more than doubled the previous year's financial growth. "If that's the beginning of a trend, that's tremendously encouraging," he added.

Acknowledging that the budget shortfall "is disappointing," he explained that staff members "make adjustments during the year to stay within our budget so that we don't overspend our resources."

In response to the budget shortfall, "we prioritize ministry needs above operational needs," he said. As a result, "we wind up doing without capital improvements or equipment needs."

Encouraging "all of our churches to maintain and increase their level of commitment to the Cooperative Program," he added, "We in Arkansas impact the world through Cooperative Program giving."

Special offerings gain mixed results

In addition to CP giving, Arkansas Baptist gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions and Dixie Jackson Offering for state missions each came up short of the 1996 offering goals.

Lottie Moon offering receipts totaled \$2,837,497, an increase of \$12,262 over the 1995 offering but \$362,503 below the '96 goal of \$3.2 million.

Annie Armstrong gifts for the past year reached \$1,093,963, an increase of \$19,208 over the previous year. The annual home mission offering was \$6,037 below the goal of \$1.1 million.

"I'm grateful for the gifts of Arkansas Baptists and for the increases," said Julia Ketter, executive director of the state Woman's Missionary Union department. "We need to continue to look at how we can be more sacrificial in missions giving to reach our world for Christ. It will take more than a slight increase to take the gospel to all the peoples of the world."

Contributions to state missions suffered the greatest setback during the year. The total receipts of \$696,276 came in \$46,000 below the previous year's gifts and \$53,724 below the 1996 Dixie Jackson goal of \$750,000.

Voicing concern that state missions leaders "didn't tell the story as effectively as we needed to," state missions department director Jimmy Barentine said, "We'll take a fresh look at how to more effectively present the need....As people learn more and more about what God is doing through state missions, I believe the dollars will follow."

Despite the budget concerns, Barentine affirmed that 1996 "was a stellar year in terms of missions results," including "a record number of new church starts and new missions ministries."

Barentine said funding to assist new church starts and missions ministries "that have a proven record of reaching people for Christ" will continue to be top priorities this year. He added, however, that the offering shortfall means some chaplaincy projects and plans to relocate the Hope Migrant Center will be delayed.

Arkansas Baptist gifts to world hunger relief also declined in 1996. The total of \$122,784 was \$9,326 below 1995 receipts.

ARKANSAS BAPTIST

news magazine

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Striving to produce 'impact'

ABSC executive director Emil Turner reflects on first year of service

Trannis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

From restructuring to reconciliation, Emil Turner's first year as executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention has been filled with diverse ministry opportunities and challenges.

Turner, who was elected ABSC executive director in December 1995 and officially took office Jan. 15, 1996, recently completed his first year of statewide service among Arkansas Baptists. He previously was pastor of First Baptist Church, Lake Charles, La.

Acknowledging that he "was surprised at the intricacies of the job," Turner said he "expected to be able to learn the job more quickly." Despite the adjustment of moving from the local pastorate to a denominational leadership post, he added, "I enjoy the flexibility and varied nature of the job - I don't enjoy routine."

Citing highlights of his first 12 months in office, Turner affirmed the quality and commitment of Arkansas Baptist pastors, staff members and lay leaders with whom he has worked. "They are people who get things done," he said.

He also voiced appreciation for "the quality of staff members" serving the state convention, citing "the tremendous sense of call the staff feels here."

"We have people on staff who can help any church in Arkansas grow a larger Sunday School, increase baptisms or increase gifts to its budget," Turner emphasized. "We've begun to approach our work from an impact perspective rather than an activity perspective. I've been gratified with the way the staff has responded to that."

"Impact" has become a primary focus in Turner's administration, with the top priority being on encouraging and equipping Arkansas Baptists to strengthen their evangelistic efforts throughout the state. A proposal to restructure the work of the state convention - already being studied prior to Turner's election - will be utilized to help sharpen the convention's emphasis on evangelistic impact. Portions of the proposal will be presented to the ABSC Executive Board in March with final action scheduled during the 1997 state convention annual meeting in November.

"Most Arkansas Baptists do care about how many people are baptized and how many people attend Sunday School," the new executive director pointed out. "This restructuring plan impacts those things and I'm excited about that."

"While Arkansas Baptists have differences and our churches have differences, there are some awesome and impressive commonalities," Turner said. "The commonalities are commitment to Scripture, commitment to the Cooperative Program and commitment to soul-winning. These commonalities drive just about all Arkansas Baptists and most of our churches."

"I don't want us to 'do stuff,' I want us to make an impact," he emphasized. "I'm convinced that baptisms among Arkansas Baptists are going to go up and Sunday School enrollment is going to increase."



I believe revival can come to Arkansas when Arkansas Baptists...are willing to pay any price to reach lost people.

EMIL TURNER
Executive Director,
Arkansas Baptist State Convention

"I'd like to see each of our churches have a heightened awareness that they do not exist for themselves but for lost people," he continued. "I believe revival can come to Arkansas when Arkansas Baptists become more concerned about their own sin than everyone else's and become more concerned about lost people outside the church than their own comfort inside the church and when they are willing to pay any price to reach lost people."

"I believe that time is coming," Turner insisted. "I believe in 1997 and the years to come, we're going to see a spontaneous movement of God among our churches....I look forward to it."

In addition to the yearlong emphasis on restructuring, Turner's first year in office will long be remembered for the events related to what he describes as "the Oct. 10 surprise." That was the date when Ouachita Baptist University trustees voted to name their own successors after the state convention nominating committee declined to recommend any of the names suggested by OBU president Ben Elrod.

"I, like all Arkansas Baptists, regret the struggles that we've had to face with Ouachita and I'm glad that the convention affirmed the work of the reconciliation committee," Turner reflected. "I believe that prayerful and sincere Baptists will continue to work through this problem until we can say we've resolved it once and for all."

The reconciliation committee appointed by Turner and ABSC Executive Board president Chuck McAllister worked with a group of Ouachita trustees to draft an agreement which was approved by convention messengers in November. Convention bylaw changes specifying that representatives of Ouachita and the state convention nominating committee will present joint recommendations for future trustee nominations are expected to be presented to convention messengers this fall.

Explaining that "Arkansas Baptists have a unique relationship with Ouachita that no other state convention has been able to forge with any of their institutions," Turner added, "Arkansas Baptists maintained the right to control the Cooperative Program gifts to the institution and to have the final say about who serves as trustees."

Turner, a former trustee of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, recently invited FMB president Jerry Rankin to lead an orientation session for new Arkansas Baptist trustees. Paraphrasing Rankin's motivation for accepting the FMB presidency, Turner said of his ministry as ABSC executive director: "God did not lead me away from an exciting and fulfilling local church ministry in order to be frustrated and ineffective in a denominational responsibility. He led me away from that local church so that I could have impact and leadership in a convention setting that would result in more people going to heaven and fewer people going to hell. Before the Lord, that's what I intend to do."

Reflecting on the personal impact of accepting the role of executive director, Turner expressed appreciation for "the response to me by the pastors and laypersons in the convention." He said Arkansas Baptists "have been very open to me and very responsive to me."

Turner said his family also has provided tremendous support throughout this year of transition. His wife, Mary, and sons, Joel and Jonathan, "have been so willing to have our lives radically changed for this ministry," he remarked. "They have paid a far greater price than I have."

A Pastor's Heart



Emil Turner

ABCS Executive Director

Monday morning, Dec. 30. Eleven a.m. What were you doing? Wondering what you would have for lunch? Thinking about the bowl games?

That morning, quietly, with no fanfare or dramatics, a group of college and high school students launched a strategic attack. They had assembled in the Statehouse Convention Center early that morning to plan the attack. By 11 a.m., they had moved into position and attacked. Moving in small groups, they divided the empty chairs in the convention center into sections. A group went to each section and began to pray.

Later, 4,600 youth would crowd into that facility. Each one had been the object of prayer. In the Joy Expo conference that took place, hundreds of young people

would make decisions. The music was loud, the crowd was at times boisterous. Souls were snatched from Satan's grasp, lives were touched, eternity was changed. It wasn't the speakers, it wasn't the music. It was the anonymous group of young people who joined in the hand-to-hand combat of prayer that God used. Today, pray for someone who is lost. God will use you.

■ Have you read *Contending for the Right to Know* by William C. Junker (Providence House Publishers), 1996? This is a history of the first 100 years of the Southern Baptist Press Association. It makes for interesting reading. For instance, it tells of a fight between two convention editors and interesting comments on the "social activities" of some of the early editors. I appreciate our Newsmagazine and because of this book I better understand its history.

Executive director's schedule:

Jan. 26 FBC, Lake Charles, La.
Jan. 27-28 Evangelism Conference, FBC, Little Rock
Jan. 31 Wild Game Dinner, FBC, Sherwood
Feb. 2 Meadowview, Sheridan
Feb. 4 Park Hill, NLR, Sunday School Workers Banquet

item. There is one far better who is to be seen than Mother Teresa. The Lord Jesus is to be manifested in and through the lives of every born-again child of God. The imprint of His life is to be seen on human flesh, not pastries. The life of Christ is to envelope our world through Christians and the church.

In Old Testament days, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon men and women for special ministries or events. The Spirit did not always abide upon them. He came upon them temporarily for a special purpose. Today we rightly teach that the Spirit of God indwells every believer. He comes to live within us at our conversion and to impact us daily, permanently.

Why is it that Jesus is not recognized more today? Could it be our churches and lives do not witness His power and love? Do people see our faith evidenced in a vital relationship or a cold religion? Resurrection power is within us. This power can only be unleashed through a person emptied of self, cleansed of sin and directed by the One who saved and indwells.

Someone in my church had a picture of the cinnamon bun. Frankly, it looked more like the comic strip character Snuffy Smith to me. While this episode is somewhat comical, the need to see Jesus is critical.

Rex Horne, pastor of Immanuel Church in Little Rock, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

President's Perspective



Rex Horne

ABCS President

Did you read or hear about the appearance of Mother Teresa in Nashville? I know she has been very sick, and no she didn't appear in person. It seems a person bought a cinnamon bun in a Nashville, Tenn., coffee shop. As he prepared to bite into it, he suddenly stopped for he saw in the bun a resemblance of Mother Teresa.

As you can imagine, word spread and people started coming to view the nun's likeness in that bun! I imagine some were tempted to make this a relic. The cinnamon pastry was displayed for people to view. This event served to remind me how gullible we are, and yet how people reveal, in curious ways, a spiritual hunger (that may override the hunger for cinnamon rolls).

It is a sad day, however, when people think they might find inspiration through a perceived likeness of a person in a food

quotes

"We need to have state missionaries at the crossroads where opportunities and needs are intersecting."

—Jimmy Barrentine
Director, ABCS missions department

"Christians today are the most persecuted group in the world."

—Nina Shea
Human rights attorney

"The biggest barriers to worship are spiritual, not stylistic."

—Rob Hewell
Director, ABCS church music ministries department

ARKANSAS BAPTIST

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ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWSMAGAZINE

'Seek peace and pursue it'

Straight from the Editor



Trennis Henderson

Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Christian life, many denominations face ongoing strife. More specifically in Baptist life, turmoil sometimes erupts in local churches, as well as the associational, state and national levels.

Why bother to seek peace in a trouble-plagued world? There are a number of lessons we can draw from the current Middle East efforts.

■ *Peace is a God-honoring goal.* "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," Psalm 122:6 urges. "Seek peace and pursue it," counsels Psalm 34:14. Whether pursuing political peace for a nation, congregational peace despite differences of opinion or personal peace in response to Jesus Christ, peace is a goal that God calls on people to pursue.

■ *Peace can be costly.* One of the biggest barriers to peace is pride. Both Netanyahu and Arafat risked political clout to seek a solution to their longstanding differences. Both men had to compromise

some of their personal preferences in order to find common ground. When we fail to listen to an opposing view or refuse to negotiate in good faith, we jeopardize the opportunity for peace with others. Genuine peace is possible only when we make a commitment to set aside personal pride and seek ways to work together.

■ *Peace is worth the cost.* Colossians 3:12-13 instructs Christians to "put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other...just as the Lord forgave you." It requires maturity to be a true peacemaker, to be willing to forgive one who has wronged you — but if opposing political entities can find a way to move beyond their differences, surely followers of Christ can do the same.

■ *Peace is more than political negotiation.* While the principal players in the Middle East peace efforts may miss the spiritual significance of eternal peace, it is freely available to anyone who seeks it. "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you," Jesus told His disciples in John 14:27. Ephesians 2:14 emphasizes that "Christ Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall."

What are you willing to do in your life, family and church to follow God's instruction to "seek peace and pursue it"?

Pace in the Middle East? Long-term stability in the region has been an elusive goal for centuries. In recent decades, the area's emotional roller coaster has ranged from the 1967 Six-Day War to the 1978 Camp David Accords to the assassinations of Anwar Sadat in 1981 and Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

Now comes the latest round of hope with the fragile Hebron and West Bank agreement negotiated by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. The agreement, announced last week, has been hailed as "a historic turning point in Israeli politics." The plan provides for Palestinian self-rule over most of the West Bank city of Hebron, with Israel granting similar Palestinian authority over much of the rest of the West Bank in the coming months.

Will the current negotiations produce lasting peace in the troubled region? According to history, probably not. Even before the plan was officially ratified by Israeli leaders, detractors threatened to derail the peace process. Despite the slim chances of long-term peace, however, peace is still worth pursuing.

While the Middle East peace process is of concern to people around the world, an even greater concern should be what we can learn from the process on a personal level. The lack of peace in today's world is not limited to international politics. In

Ratings system won't protect kids from TV

Mark Wingfield

Editor, Kentucky Western Recorder

The television industry has hauled out a new set of content labels for their programming, aimed at helping parents make better choices about what to allow their children to watch.

These content labels, structured much like the Motion Picture Association of America's ratings for movies, have been denounced as too little and too late by many child advocacy experts and religious leaders. Critics contend the labels offer too little information for parents to make informed decisions. They also note a conflict of interest because television executives themselves will determine which shows get which labels.

The critics are right. What the television industry has agreed to do isn't nearly enough, even though it is a baby step in the right direction.

But that's only part of the story. While plenty of blame should be heaped on television executives for the stream of violent rubbish they pipe into our homes, parents must bear an equal measure of guilt for letting their children watch it. The bottom line is parents must take responsibility for what their children's minds ingest in video form.

As adults, we have become insensitive to many of the undesirable things portrayed and said on TV. For just one week, really pay attention to what comes into your home through TV,

keeping in mind what you want your children to view, and you'll have a better measure of what changes you need to make.

Here are other suggestions for parents (and grandparents):

■ *Take responsibility for your children's viewing habits.* Parents, your children will love you more for standing up for what's right for them than for letting them watch whatever they want on TV or movies. Your child's emotional and spiritual development can be scarred far more seriously by inappropriate viewing than by your denying them the privilege of watching whatever they want.

■ *Set a time limit and then turn the TV off.* Kids (and adults) can even get too much of non-offensive TV, according to numerous authorities in child development. By age 18, the average American child has spent more time watching TV than engaging in any other activity except sleep. Watching so much TV leaves children insufficient time to develop their minds in play and nurture interpersonal relationships.

■ *Stop using the television as a babysitter.* Sure, there are times when even young children can watch alone while parents do other chores. But the TV or video must not become a quick-fix for overextended parents.

■ *Make personal sacrifices.* Some television fare that may be entirely appropriate for you to watch as an adult may be entirely inappropriate for your child to watch with you or even overhear from the next room. Being a parent requires personal sacrifice.

guest editorial

Legislature to face key moral issues

Legislation seeking civil rights for gays among concerns for lawmakers

Following the first two days of the Arkansas legislative session, the head of the Christian Civic Foundation of Arkansas said his organization will work to oppose legislation targeting moral concerns in the state, including legislation supporting gay rights and charitable bingo, while seeking a reduction in the blood alcohol level standard for drunk drivers.

CCF executive director Larry Page said Jan. 15 that his "top priority" during the session will be opposing a possible amendment to a bill supporting civil rights for homosexuals.

"Sen. Mike Everett, (D) Marked Tree, and Sen. Jim Argue, (D) Little Rock, stated their intention to support the amendment to a bill that would prevent an employer from refusing to hire individuals based on the knowledge that they are homosexuals," Page explained. "This can impact Baptists dramatically. A church day care could be required under this law to let a homosexual work with children or a church to hire a youth minister who is homosexual."

Attached to gay marriage bill

Page said that Argue and Everett "plan to attach" the legislation "as an amendment, ironically, to a bill calling for the outlawing of same-sex marriages."

While he said that "sometimes these bills exempt churches or religious organizations from their application, I'm not aware of that yet" concerning the possible amendment.

He added that his concern about the law extends to "other employers that work with children, such as school districts, that could be required to hire homosexuals."

The amendment is supported by the Arkansas Non-Discrimination Alliance, which includes the Arkansas Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation and Parents, Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gays among its members.

A similar piece of legislation supporting same-sex marriage also is expected to be introduced in the House during the ses-

sion. The proposed bill cleared a House committee and was referred to the full House Jan. 16. It also will contain an amendment supporting homosexual rights in the workplace.

In addition to a moral argument, said Page, there is a "political argument" against the legislation. "As a lawyer," he noted, "I have a philosophical difference" with the amendment. "We have granted civil rights to groups, but we are talking about rights based on class, race, religion, gender or age. It looks dangerous granting this status based on behavior and, in this case, sexual perversion."

"Who's next? Pedophiles, sociopaths or vegetarians?" he asked. "You don't do something as important as civil rights protection on the basis of behavior."

Gov. Mike Huckabee agreed, noting that he believes "sexual orientation is ultimately a matter of choice, not genetic determination."

Quoting research by psychiatrist Jeffrey Santinover, Huckabee emphasized that "few human behavioral traits are directly inherited the way simple physiological traits are."

"As such, it would be improper for the state government to create a legally protected group based on the this type of behavioral criteria," Huckabee added.

Page said the proposed amendment has earned the CCF's highest priority "because it is the most urgent. I didn't know it would be there until this week."

He added that action on the legislation "will happen pretty soon. It's already in the works. That's smart on their part: if you have something controversial, you run it through quickly."

Page noted that his multi-denominational organization plans to "get a letter out to pastors in our coalition asking them to contact their representatives and senators, asking them to vote against granting special civil rights protection to homosexuals."

Page said that as a Christian, "I love them (homosexuals), but that lifestyle is destructive. I ask anyone in the context of biology or theology to support that."

A second issue of legislative concern for the group, said Page, is "to see if there is any interest in repealing the law that requires the registering and taxing of bingo operations."

He said the law "allows charities to run bingo games. What's happening is that bingo operators are getting bolder, operations are becoming more commercial and

the prizes are getting bigger. They're beginning to get out of hand."

Noting that the law "is confusing a lot of law enforcement personnel," Page said, "They see gambling is illegal and they see bingo operations getting larger, but are not moving to prosecution or to repeal that law."

He said that while the law was meant to regulate small-stakes bingo games benefiting charities, "the problem is the commercial guys that come in and are making a lot of money. They may claim to give a small amount to charity, but they are getting larger, bolder and bigger."

Page pointed to a recent issue of the free Hardy-Ash Flat area newspaper, *Business Profile*, to illustrate the larger stakes occurring in Arkansas bingo parlors. Promoting the one-year anniversary of The Lucky Strip in Ash Flat, *Profile* writer Gene Cooper wrote that with "over \$10,000 in prizes...in one night," gamblers "don't have to drive for hours and hours to go to Tunica!"

When lawmakers passed legislation protecting bingo, Page said, "they were thinking of bingo benefiting St. Teresa's or the rural fire department, with top prizes being \$10 or \$20."

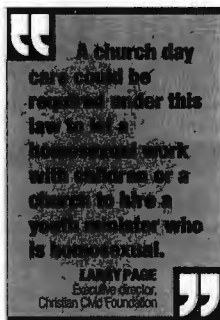
The CCF's third main area of concern, he said, "has to do with lowering the blood alcohol content that deems a person too intoxicated to drive."

"We are now at 1.0 (percentage of alcohol content in the blood)," Page remarked. "But a lot of states have gone to .08. The point is, you are impaired as a driver long before you get to 1.0."

He admitted that the attempt to legally lower the blood alcohol content level "will be a tough one. The alcoholic beverage lobby is powerful, but we will try to do this incrementally."

Page said other issues of moral concern that might crop up during the legislative session "may include bills filed for enlarged or expanded liquor distribution laws. Very likely there will be an attempt to repeal the sodomy law. There may be some things that will be adverse to churches in taxation."

"I don't really expect anything on abortion, unless someone would try to prevent the parental notification bill," he said. "It also might be interesting to see if we have something on assisted suicide. We would need to gauge the interest among legislators to support legislation to protect the elderly, the infirm or the incompetent from physicians assisting proactively in carrying out suicide."



State missionaries deploy to field

Russell M. Dilday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Five staff members in the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions department will be deployed by April to field positions across the state. Department director Jimmy Barrentine said the move is designed to "get more missions dollars to the mission field and get state missionaries in direct contact with the mission field."

The staff members, who all have missionary status with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, include church extension associate Jack Ramsey, black church extension associate Eddie Jones Sr., language missions associate Jim Hausler, chaplaincy associate Marion Reynolds Jr. and church and communities field consultant Sandy Wisdom-Martin.

Statewide impact

All five will maintain their primary job responsibilities and be available to serve throughout the state, Barrentine noted. He said only their office bases will change, with most moving from the Baptist Building in Little Rock to working from their homes. He said specific changes among the missions department staff include:

■ Ramsey "will continue to be state leader of new church extension and Anglo new churches, but will live in either the Clarksville or Russellville area," Barrentine announced. "This will allow him to give special focus to the northwest quadrant, which has experienced large growth."

■ Hausler "will probably live in the Van Buren/Fort Smith area because of the great opportunity on the western side of the state," Barrentine said, adding that he will remain "just as available to southeast Arkansas as he is to the western part of the state."

■ Jones, who was elected to his new position Dec. 10 by the ABCS Executive Board, will maintain an office at Greater Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Little Rock. Moving to Arkansas from Mississippi, Jones is the first staff member to focus specifically on starting black Southern Baptist churches in the state. "His focus area will be central to south Arkansas, where most of the black population is," explained Barrentine.

■ Wisdom-Martin, who began work with the missions department Jan. 1, previously served as Girls in Action and Mission Friends associate in the ABCS Woman's Missionary Union department. In her new role, she will work from her home in central Arkansas and "will be responsible for the entire state, starting and developing church and community ministries," Barrentine said. "She will be a hands-on, right in the heart of the action kind of missionary."

■ Reynolds will continue to work from a Baptist Building office, "but will be in only a maximum of two days a week. He will be mostly in the field, giving more effective supervision of chaplains and a much greater portion of his energy to developing new chaplaincy ministries in state," Barrentine said. "Marion will give up his responsibilities in theological education as the year progresses. His duties

will flow to Burton Perry, who currently serves as Marion's assistant for theological education."

The moves will leave the missions department with three administrative staff in the Baptist Building, including Barrentine, church and community ministries leader Tommy Goode and a yet-to-be-determined special ministries leader.

While Barrentine noted that the changes will be completed by April, Jones and Wisdom-Martin are already working from their field offices.

Emphasizing that the decision to deploy staff members was made for effectiveness, Barrentine added, "We have for a long time been wrestling with the question of being more effective — to get more missions dollars to the mission field and get state missionaries in direct contact with the mission field. If we were going to be effective as missionaries, we needed to unpack some of the administrative load imposed on these key leaders."

Following a strategy planning session with HMB leaders, Barrentine said, "It was apparent we were in agreement. We need to reach people for the Lord and develop new churches and new missions ministries. State home missionaries are critical to all that is taking place. They are the catalysts for missions work and the most effective place for a catalyst is at the heart of the delivery system. The cultural and demographic studies of the state indicate we need to have state missionaries at the crossroads where opportunities and needs are intersecting."

Barrentine noted that the moves "were not driven" by current convention-wide restructuring plans "and not dependent on it, but they are compatible with the restructuring plans."

He credited Ramsey with the initiation of the deployment, emphasizing that "Jack volunteered to sell his house, move to the field and give himself to the field. Others were willing to take the risk. They're making big changes in their lives and moving away from their support systems."

Advanced technology

Barrentine also credited a responsive administration and advanced communication technology as crucial to the move. "We already have in place a communication system. We do live in a day when technology allows us to be separated by working with Internet access. We will be in as much contact in the future as in our offices wall-to-wall."

"The system will allow the deployment to be cost effective," he said. "The communications link costs about \$20 a month. It is cost effective in terms of missions: They will not be carrying an administrative load and will need less secretarial assistance. We can do more with fewer dollars."

He also noted that the staff members' salaries "are not being increased or decreased. They are not taking staff reductions or promotions, but it's always a promotion to be trusted and have the freedom to do the job you have been called by God to do."

To contact any of the new locations, Arkansas Baptists may still contact the missions department by calling 1-800-838-ABCS in state or 376-4791, locally in Little Rock. An operator will connect callers with the proper location.



Jack Ramsey
New church extension
Russellville/Clarksville



Jim Hausler
Language missions
Fort Smith/Van Buren



Eddie Jones Sr.
Black church extension
Little Rock



Sandy Wisdom-Martin
Church and community
Little Rock



Marion Reynolds Jr.
Chaplaincy
Little Rock

people & places

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CHURCH LIFE

Glynnwood Church and Park Hill Church, both of North Little Rock, sponsored a "Partners in Faith" worship service Jan. 19 in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Gov. Mike Huckabee was the featured speaker at the service held at Park Hill Church. The event is designed to promote racial, community and spiritual harmony.

Floyd Mission in Romance recently celebrated its first year of ministry. The congregation reported 18 baptisms, an average Sunday School attendance of 30-32 and a Vacation Bible School of 52 during the past year. First Church of Beebe and First Church of Carlisle have provided support for the mission. Bill Elliott is pastor.

Stamps First Church will celebrate 100 years of ministry with a Centennial Celebration Oct. 5. All former staff and church members are invited to be special guests for the event. More information is available by contacting the church at 501-533-4861.

TRANSITIONS

The Carpenter began serving Jan. 5 as pastor of Caddo Gap Church. He previously served as pastor of Nimrod Church and the New Orleansian Chapel in New Orleans. He is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Monticello and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Michael P. Montalbano began serving Jan. 5 as pastor of First Church in Heber Springs, coming there from First Church of Nesbit, Miss. He previously was pastor of First Church in Marianna. Montalbano is a graduate of McNeese State University in Lake Charles, La., and Mid-America Seminary. He and his wife, Marianne, have three children, Lance, Shelly Renee and Kelly Lynn.

Grover B. Inman recently retired as pastor of Nimmons Church. He previously served First Church in Success and Beaver Church of Beaver, Tenn., as well as serving in pioneer missions work in Washington. He also spent 17 years starting Baptist churches among Spanish-speaking people in south Texas and Mexico. He can be contacted at RR 1, Box 405 S, Holcomb, MO 63852; phone 573-792-3336.

Britton J. Pruitt recently retired as pastor of Moreland Church, following 22 years of ministry. He previously was pastor of Lonsdale Church and interim pastor of Leonard Street Church of Hot Springs. Pruitt, a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, is continuing to work at the Booneville Human Development Center as a program coordinator. He and his wife, Doris, have two daughters, Theresa L. Holland of Little Rock and Judith A. Berkau of Austin. They have five grandchildren.

John Fleming has accepted a call to join the staff of Immanuel Church in Rogers as financial and properties administrator. Fleming is a graduate of Southwest Baptist University and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Danita, have a son, Josiah.

James Tillant, a member of Wynne Church, is serving the church as part-time senior adult associate.

J.D. Passmore, is serving as interim pastor of Wits Chapel in Maynard. He has been pastor of Arkansas churches and served as director of missions for Current Gaines Association.

OBITUARIES

Allie P. Parchman of North Little Rock died Jan. 5 at age 95. She was a member of Park Hill Church of North Little Rock and was retired from the U.S. Postal Service. Survivors are a daughter, Flo Hardwick of North Little Rock; two sisters, Elizabeth Brame of North Little Rock and Cecelia Whitley of Little Rock; two grandchildren, John and Becky Hardwick of Jacksonville; and three great-granddaughters.

ORDINATIONS

Blytheville First Church ordained Al Sypniewski as a deacon Jan. 5.

Van Buren First Church ordained James Griffin as a deacon Jan. 5.

Conway First Church ordained Hank Phelps and Brian Robertson as deacons Jan. 12.

Wynne Church ordained Jeff Cagle as a deacon Jan. 12.

Walnut Street Church in Jonesboro ordained Jay Gamblin as a deacon Jan. 12.

'97 doctrine study to preview revised Faith & Message

A preview study of the 1997 Southern Baptist Doctrine Study will be offered following the Monday afternoon session of the Arkansas Baptist State Evangelism Conference. The two-hour preview will begin at 4:30 p.m. Jan. 27.

According to Bob Holley, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention discipleship and family ministry department, the preview will offer an in-depth study of the revised edition of *The Baptist Faith and Message*, a commentary written by the late pastor and denominational leader, Herschel Hobbs.

Hobbs was the architect and spokesman for the Baptist Faith and Message statement and chaired the committee that drafted the document, which was adopted in 1963 by Southern Baptist Convention messengers.

"This is a revision of Dr. Hobbs' original book, published in 1971," Holley explained. "It represents Dr. Hobbs' last major contribution to Southern Baptists before his death just over a year ago."

"The newly revised edition of the Baptist classic will acquaint a new generation of Southern Baptists with our cherished beliefs," he added.

The study will be led by John Gilbert, pastor of First Baptist Church in Poplar Bluff, Mo. Gilbert was the leader of *The Baptist Faith and Message* preview studies at Gloriaeta (N.M.) Conference Center in 1996.

The cost for the study preview, held between the Monday afternoon and evening sessions of the Evangelism Conference, is \$10 per person. The cost includes a meal and a copy of *The Baptist Faith and Message*.

For more information or to make a reservation for the study, contact the ABC discipleship and family ministry department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5160.

The fifth annual Festival of Evangelists also will be held in conjunction with the state Evangelism Conference. The festival will begin at 9:45 a.m. on Jan. 27. The two-day Evangelism Conference will begin Monday at 1:30 p.m. and conclude Tuesday at 8:30 p.m.

Seminary graduates



David K. Newberry

Crossett

Doctor of Ministry
New Orleans Seminary



Timothy James Fowler

Paragould

Master of Divinity
Southern Seminary

A new style of worship

Churches utilize contemporary worship to reach the unchurched

Russell M. Olday

Associate Editor, Arkansas Baptist

Several Arkansas Baptist churches have adopted a different worship style designed to provide a more comfortable, relaxed setting for worship. According to advocates of the trend, this contemporary style helps attract the unchurched, especially younger adults.

Rob Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention church music ministries department, said that by altering their worship services or adding an alternate contemporary service, congregations are reaching new prospects.

"Many churches are finding that the use of contemporary music sparks an interest in people who are not currently a part of a church family," Hewell remarked. "It especially attracts younger adults by providing them an opportunity to experience worship in a language that is familiar and comfortable to them."

Hewell noted that many churches that are holding contemporary services have similar characteristics. "They may or may not use choirs. They may use a small praise team. They will use multiple live instruments, keyboards, synthesizer, or a good, strong rhythm section, including drums and bass guitar. They tend to use choruses or contemporary music that lends itself to that kind of instrumentation."

"Many churches are either printing the text in a worship folder, projecting texts with slides, overhead projectors or are using overheads or video projectors," he added. "Some churches are encouraging people to dress less formally, even Sunday morning, and some pastors are adapting their preaching style to match."

Hewell's description matches that of alternate services held by Levy Church in North Little Rock. Offering a second type of worship service is one way churches are diversifying to become relevant to more audiences. Ron Selby, minister of music and youth at Levy Church, said the church recently instituted a second service with a contemporary style.

"At Levy, the early service is a contemporary-style service and the late service is more of a blended service where we blend traditional and contemporary together," he explained. "In our early worship service, we use choruses — ones fairly familiar to other churches using choruses."

Leading in worship, he said, "is an ensemble of seven voices we call a worship

team. They provide music for the service. Rather than me directing from the front, I lead worship from the keyboard. Sometimes we use drama sketches and whenever we have live instruments, we use drums and guitars."

Hewell noted that in speaking with other worship leaders that, "to a person, I have heard that in taking that kind of approach, they were reaching people they were not reaching prior to that."

In fact, some church growth experts suggest that offering a diversified style appeals not only across generations but also across racial, cultural and class lines. Edwin Jenkins, director of leadership and church growth for the Alabama Baptist State Convention, said that in the 1980s, "Southern Baptists worked their way into the homogeneous church idea, but we are returning to the need for heterogeneous

pastor there a year and a half ago. The congregation has grown from a dozen to more than 60 members.

"It's high-energy," he said. "We still stick with hymns, but added a mixture of choruses and praise and worship songs and the music is more upbeat. On Sunday morning I wear a shirt and tie, but blue jeans on Sunday night and Wednesday."

Whaley said most of the church's growth "has been among adults in their low- to mid-30s to 50."

While a contemporary worship style may attract a younger, more diverse audience, does it detract from the gospel? No, answered Hewell, who said it is more a change in style than substance.

"When you look at it, it's not so much we've changed the other elements, but we've changed how we do them," he explained. "While there are some changes, they may not be all that different. The biggest barriers to worship are spiritual, not stylistic."

Whaley said the contemporary worship style still conveys the message of the gospel. "We have to be able to reach out to people in the '90s," he emphasized. "The people in 1997 are not going to be so receptive to traditional styles of the '30s, '40s and '50s."

"We must be all things to all men. We are trying to adapt our worship to be enjoyable, but still be worship," he said, adding that "when we experience worship, we need to walk out the door knowing we have spent time with God."

Evans agreed. "Worship is where the buck stops for a believer. Worship is a witness to a lost person. Lost people can come to our worship services and they see somebody worshipping and it's genuine, it's passionate, it's heartfelt and they can say, 'That's something I don't have.'"

Hewell said that while contemporary worship is new to many Southern Baptists, it is not a fad. "The church has always renewed itself. Part of that renewal is seen and expressed in the music a church uses to worship and to promote the gospel. It is part of a continuing process of growth and learning, but it is important that we do not lose sight of our roots."

He warned, too, that "what works for one church doesn't necessarily work for another." In determining the worship needs of congregations, he explained, church leaders "have to apply the principle of ministry in being sensitive to...the people they are ministering to as well as the people they are trying to reach."

intentional innovation
CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP IN ARKANSAS CHURCHES

churches. The only way to do viable ministry in reaching across the generations is through a heterogeneous approach."

Selby said that although Levy Church began a contemporary service because of "the need for space and the needs of our congregation," the service is attracting a younger audience. "We found that many people who come to this service are baby boomers in their 30s to 50s."

While many contemporary-style churches seek to involve baby boomers or younger generations, Mark Evans, of The Church at Rock Creek in Little Rock, noted that the church has only one target group: "People that don't go to church. Maybe they went to church 10 or 15 years ago, or maybe they've never been to church."

Evans, pastor of the year-old church, said the congregation follows a contemporary organization and worship style because "it's more user-friendly in today's culture. It's a place where people can come to church and feel like their lives fit into church, not that they have to change to fit into church. That's why the relaxed atmosphere as far as dress. That's why we don't have them open a hymnal and sing a song written in the 1800s with words that none of us know what they mean."

Churches using a contemporary worship style are not confined to urban areas. Jim Whaley, pastor of Rowe's Chapel Church near Caraway, initiated a more contemporary worship when he became

World missions

'96 Annie Armstrong offering sets record for home missions

BIRMINGHAM, AL (BP)—

For the fourth year in a row, Southern Baptists gave a record amount to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions. The year-end total for the 1996 offering was \$39,508,440, according to Ernest J. Kelley, HMB interim president.

Kelley announced the record offering to the executive board of Woman's Missionary Union during their recent annual meeting, WMU.

In conjunction with the Brotherhood Commission and the Home Mission Board, promotes the offering in Southern Baptist churches.

The nearly 200 participants in the WMU meeting applauded news of the record offering and Kelley expressed appreciation for their support. "Home missions has no greater friend than Woman's Missionary Union," Kelley said. "On behalf of our missionaries and those whom they serve across the country, thank you and God bless your dedication to missions."

According to Kelley, the annual home missions offering has grown 214 percent since 1978, more than any other aspect of Southern Baptist financial growth, including local church income.

"I believe the continued record mission offerings are a reflection of Southern Baptists' commitment to reach our nation for Jesus Christ," Kelley affirmed. "The United States is Southern Baptists' base. If a strong base is not maintained and even strengthened, the next generation will experience a reduced commitment to foreign missions and theological education as well as home missions."

Baptist disaster relief teams aid hard-hit western states

MEMPHIS, TN (ABP/BP)—Southern Baptists in the Northwest quickly mobilized disaster-relief efforts to aid victims of the region's worst floods in 40 years.

Snow and rain were blamed for at least 23 deaths in California, Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Nevada. Across the region, an estimated 15,000 homes were destroyed and mudslides closed several highways.

About 125,000 Californians were forced from their homes as up to 40 inches of rain fell on the area, accompanied by heavy melting of snow from the Sierra Nevada mountains. President Clinton declared disaster areas in large parts of the region.

Thousands of people forced from their homes in central California began returning after officials lifted earlier evacuation orders. However, others were being evacuated for the first time as new breaks appeared in the area's extensive levee system.

As of Jan. 15, three California feeding units had served 83,000 meals. They were located at Cooper Avenue Baptist Church, Yuba City; Trinity Baptist Church, Stockton; and the Seventh-day Adventist church in Modesto.

Elsewhere, Nevada units at Carson City and Reno closed Jan. 15 after providing 10,525 meals. The Northwest unit at Medford, Ore., closed the same day after providing 6,985 meals. A report from Idaho was not available.



Disaster relief to retain stature in restructuring, Williams says

MEMPHIS, TN (ABP)—During the past decade, disaster relief has grown into one of the most visible ministries provided by Southern Baptists, according to Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission president James Williams.

He pledged that emphasis will not change when the Brotherhood Commission, which coordinates Southern Baptist relief efforts, becomes part of the denomination's new North American Mission Board next summer.

Southern Baptists have been working directly in disaster-relief ministries for 29 years, Williams noted. In the past decade, however, the SBC has come to be regarded as indispensable in disaster response by both the government and relief organizations such as the American Red Cross.

In a report compiled two years ago, the Red Cross noted that of 129 recent national disasters identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Southern Baptists had responded to 124 and had prepared 80 percent of the 18 million meals served at Red Cross disaster-relief centers.

"It's ministering first of all to people in need," Williams explained. "When you demonstrate the kind of love that represents, it arouses curiosity," adding that many relief volunteers report leading individuals to accept Christ as Savior.

"Disaster relief will be one of the key ministries of the North American Mission Board," he affirmed, adding he hopes it may even be enlarged in the new staff structure.

"Certainly, I have no question in my mind about the future place of disaster relief ministries," he said.

History-making partnership in Kenya proves successful

NAIROBI, KENYA (BP)—Forty new churches and 16,561 decisions for Christ resulted from a history-making three-year partnership between black and white Baptist conventions in South Carolina working with Southern Baptist foreign missionaries and Baptists in Kenya.

"It helped our people see we're not just a historical, traditional group of Baptists," noted B. Carlisle Driggers, executive director of the South Carolina Baptist Convention. "We're doing something new and challenging. We're opening ourselves to God."

Approached about the possibility of working with the South Carolina Baptist Convention, members of the historically black Education and Missionary Convention of South Carolina initially expressed some doubt. But there was no doubt about the partnership's ultimate success, as the two groups provided 720 volunteers during the project's three-year emphasis.

Ed F. Johnson, who was president of the Education and Missionary Convention when the partnership began, affirmed that the effort "introduced us to a brand new way of thinking. This has been good for us in helping us get back to...carrying out the Great Commission."

Southern Baptist missionary Sam Turner said the project helped mission work in Kenya by promoting unity. "It has caused lives to be changed, churches to be revived and conventions to have a new sense of vision."

Samson Kisla, moderator for the Kenya Baptist Convention, affirmed the impact of seeing participants work together. "It doesn't matter what tribe you are. It doesn't matter what color. When black and white volunteers came and worked together, they proved it can be done."

White House prayer breakfast

Clinton seeks leaders' assistance on welfare, immigration issues

President Bill Clinton has called on churches to help make welfare reform successful by providing for the employment of needy people.

At a White House breakfast for 100 religious leaders — the fourth ecumenical breakfast of his presidency — Clinton also asked participants to help solve problems surrounding immigration.

Southern Baptists participating in the prayer breakfast included Arkansas Baptist State Convention president Rex Home, Clinton's pastor at Immanuel Church, Little Rock; former Immanuel pastor Brian Harbour, who is now pastor of First Baptist Church, Richardson, Texas; James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; and former Southern Baptist Convention presidents Jimmy Allen and Wayne Dehoney.

The annual event also included other evangelicals and Baptists, Roman Catholics and representatives of mainline Protestant denominations, as well as Jewish, Muslim and Baha'i leaders.

Clinton requested a provision in the new welfare laws which some of the religious leaders oppose, saying it violates

the First Amendment's ban against government-established religion.

"This new law gives every state the right to give the welfare check to an employer, including a church, as an employment and training subsidy, who will hire someone from welfare," Clinton said.

Community-based norms

"What I long for is a system of community-based support for people who are out of work through no fault of their own, but a system of community-based norms that require people who can work to work when there is work.

"If every church in America just hired one family, the welfare problem would go way down," he added. "If every church in America challenged every member of that church who had 25 or more employees to hire another family, the problem would go away."

Clinton said his administration has worked to cut down on illegal immigration but legal immigration has served the nation well by making it more diverse.

"America is not a white and black

America," he said. "America is a country with scores, hundreds of different racial, ethnic and religious groups.

"Against the background of what you see in Bosnia, Rwanda, Northern Ireland, the Middle East, all of these things, these destructive impulses people have, how can we prove in America that we can all get along — without giving up our basic beliefs but in finding a ground of mutual respect?" Clinton asked. "It seems to me that that may be the single most significant decision facing the United States."

Sounding themes of unity and common ground, Clinton spent nearly two hours dialoging with the leaders.

"We have devised a system — we have nurtured and maintained it now for 200 years — in which people can reconcile their differences and come to a consensus and an agreement which will push the country forward," Clinton said. "We are enlarged when we come to agreement after honest debate in the right way. We are diminished if, in the way we treat each other, we preclude the possibility of resolution and going forward."

WASHINGTON (BP/ABP)

HMB's Kelley committed to convention restructuring

Martin King

SBC Home Mission Board

Ernest Kelley, new interim president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, told the agency's staff that he "is and has been for some time committed to restructuring and to bringing about the North American Mission Board as envisioned in the 'Covenant for a New Century' and approved by the SBC."

"I am committed to doing the right thing in the right way and to being honest and open in all dealings with you as staff as well as others involved in the transition," Kelley said during the agency's first employee meeting of the new year.

Kelley, who previously served as HMB executive vice president, was elected interim president in December to serve until the new North American Mission Board is formed and selects a president this summer.

Kelley acknowledged the next few months will be difficult with anticipated reductions in staff, adding that he does not know how many employees will be needed in the new organization. "More important than the number of people are the functions the new agency will be asked to perform," he noted. "You could run the new organization with 100 people or with a thousand, but you couldn't perform the same number of functions. We want the right number of people to perform the ministries assigned."

Kelley said he believes NAMB will be a more focused, effective agency, and he assured the staff that even though the

Home Mission Board will cease to exist later this year, "home missions will continue to be done by dedicated missionaries supported by equally dedicated staff."

When asked if missionary positions are in jeopardy, Kelley said, "No. The cooperative budgets with state conventions will remain relatively unchanged for 1997 and 1998 and any changes will be negotiated with the states."

Following Kelley's address, Gary Jones, HMB vice president of services, reviewed previously announced severance benefits for employees who are not offered a position with NAMB. The package includes a minimum of four weeks' salary plus accrued benefits. He said notification of those affected will begin following release of a more complete organizational structure for the new agency.

"Notifications will not happen all at the same time," Jones said. "The process will take place over a period of several months as final staffing decisions are made."

Sharing his assessment of requirements for employees of the new agency, Kelley said, "If I were staffing the new mission board, I would want people who have a deep, genuine godliness, are committed soul-winners, are creative and skilled at what they do and who agree with the direction of the new agency and the Southern Baptist Convention."

During the interim period, Kelley said, "We still have an agency to run and we can only do that as we work cooperatively...seek God's leadership...and pray for one another — not casually or corporately but personally, one for another by name."

ATLANTA (BP)

Religious persecution

Christians today are the most persecuted group, activist Nina Shea says

Linda Lawson

Baptist Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE, TN (BP)—More Christians have died for their faith in the 20th century than in the previous 19 centuries combined, according to a human rights attorney and author.

In nations as far flung as China, Sudan, North Korea, Iran, Bosnia, Pakistan, Egypt, Cuba and Iran, Christians are beaten, raped, tortured, sold as slaves for as little as \$15 and brutally murdered, according to Nina Shea, director of the Puebla Program, a division of Freedom House, which investigates and documents instances of religious persecution throughout the world.

A human rights attorney who has devoted the past 10 years to addressing the persecution of Christians, Shea is the author of *In the Lions Den*, a book released Jan. 15 by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Brandon & Holman Publishers.

"This is the biggest story that has not been told," Shea noted. "Christians today are the most persecuted group in the world. At the time of the Jewish Holocaust, we said 'never again' and it's happening again."

For example, she charged that in China, Christians are allowed to worship only "in the confines of atheist-controlled churches." Other devout Christians who worship secretly in house churches often are persecuted.

In Egypt, Shea said the "Christian

community is vanishing under the onslaught of militant Islam." Christians in Sudan are regularly bought and sold as slaves. Since 1994, she said four top Protestant leaders in Iran have been murdered "under mysterious circumstances." In Bosnia, the United States has criticized persecution of Muslims but "no one is talking about persecution of Christians there."

The attitude of the U.S. government has been "appalling indifference," she said.

"We will pressure China on intellectual property theft, but the issue of religious persecution of Christians has never been raised," said Shea, who recently was appointed to serve on a State Department religious liberty advisory committee.

While expressing strong dissatisfaction with the stance of the U.S. government, Shea said churches and the secular press are becoming energized about the issue.

Steve Forbes, publisher of *Forbes* magazine and honorary chairman of Americans for Hope, Growth and Opportunity, said in endorsing Shea's book: "The West must not be ignorant about the atrocities being done to Christians or those of any faith in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Nor can we be silent. We must expose persecution to the light of day and be the champion of free people, free markets and free elections."

As Christians become aware of the scope of persecution, Shea said their initial response is, "I never knew." They quickly move to "I want to do something."

In his foreword to Shea's book, Charles Colson, founder and chairman of Prison Fellowship, warned: "If Christians in America stand by and do nothing as their

brothers and sisters in other parts of the world suffer, they are abandoning the proudest heritage they have as Americans. They are also abandoning their birthright as Christians."

To marshal support for persecuted Christians, Shea directed a conference sponsored by Freedom House in January 1996. It was attended by representatives of many religious groups including Southern Baptists. Participants organized an International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church which was observed Sept. 29.


Southern Baptists adopted a resolution on Christian persecution last summer denouncing "the denial of fundamental human rights and all religious persecution anywhere in the world."

The resolution also urged leaders "to call Christians worldwide to fervent prayer for the constant protection and power of the Holy Spirit in the daily lives of all Christians everywhere who may be vulnerable to persecution."

Similar resolutions have been adopted by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Episcopal Church. The General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church has written a letter of support. The National Association of Evangelicals was an early leader in adopting a statement of conscience in January 1996.

Shea predicted the chorus of voices opposing persecution of Christians will escalate into the 21st century.

"Christian churches are becoming outraged about this," she said. "We have to inform ourselves about this situation. We must talk about it and we must pray about it."

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Interfaith group opposes SBC stance on Jews

Bob Allen

Associated Baptist Press

WASHINGTON (ABP)—An interfaith conference in Washington has called on the Southern Baptist Convention to retract last summer's resolution calling for evangelization of Jews.

The Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington recently adopted a statement imploring the SBC to retract

its "Resolution on Jewish Evangelism" adopted by convention messengers in June and to rescind its implementation.

The SBC resolution called on Southern Baptists to "direct our energies and resources" toward evangelization of Jews. Major Jewish organizations decried the resolution as anti-Semitic. Officials of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board said the resolution merely stated what most Baptists believe — that all people must profess Jesus to be saved.

Directors of the 18-year-old interfaith group called the SBC resolution "contrary to the spirit of interreligious respect and understanding." The group urged Southern Baptist churches and denominational bodies to "engage the Jewish community in the true spirit of dialogue" which it defined as "not an opportunity to proselytize but as a way to gain understanding of another faith — and of one's own — through mutual respect."

Singling out one faith community as particularly needing conversion "impugns the integrity and legitimacy of that faith," the interfaith group stated. Singling out Jews for conversion has "horrific historical

precedents," the statement continued, including "many centuries of persecution and stigmatization by Christians."

While recognizing that evangelism plays "a vital role in the life of many faith communities," the interfaith group urged that "missionary zeal be tempered with honesty, humility and respect."

Jim Sibley, a home missionary named last summer to develop evangelistic ministries among Jews and start churches in predominantly Jewish communities, said the interfaith group's resolution "fails to understand the advisory nature" of an SBC resolution. It would be impossible for the SBC to rescind a resolution adopted by a previous convention, he said.

Sibley, a former Southern Baptist representative to Israel who proposed the SBC resolution, denied that it "targeted" Jews for evangelism. The reason Jewish people were specified, he said, was because others had raised questions about whether Jews need the gospel.

The interfaith conference's statement was supported by representatives from the Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Sikh communities.

classified ads

Needed — Full-time secretary. Send resume to: Second Baptist Church, Attn: Tim Moore, 1117 N. James, Jacksonville, AR 72076.

Seeking — Part-time/full-time youth minister. Send resume to: FBC, Gravel Ridge, 14322 Hwy 107, Jacksonville, AR 72076 or call 501-835-2644.

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Youth groups needed — for summer missions. For information, cities, dates, costs, call 800-299-0385, Youth on Mission, Box 2095, Rocky Mount, NC 27802.

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Accepting resumes — Central Baptist Church of Eureka, Missouri, is prayerfully accepting resumes until March 15, 1997, for a dynamic, full-time youth/music minister to serve in a rapidly growing community. Send resumes to Central Baptist Church, P.O. Box 66, Eureka, MO 63025, Attn: Search Committee.

Position available — Full-time youth and music minister. Send resumes to: First Baptist Church, PO Box 324, Clarendon, AR 72029.

Seeking — Full-time minister of youth/education. Seminary degree preferred. Experience a plus. Send resume to: Minister Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 356, Siloam Springs, AR 72761 or FAX 501-524-8606.

Classified ads must be submitted in writing to the ABN office no less than 10 days prior to the date of publication desired. A check or money order in the proper amount, figured at 90 cents per word, must be included. Multiple insertions of the same ad must be paid for in advance. Classified ads shall be restricted to church-related subject matter. The ABN reserves the right to reject any ad because of unresolvable subject matter. Classified ads will be inserted on a space-available basis. No endorsement by the ABN is implied.

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10:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

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Workshops on: ☞ Substance abuse ministry to families ☞ Helping families deal with violence ☞ Networking families to resources in the community ☞ How literacy missions is changing the lives of families ☞ Ministry to migrant farm worker families ☞ Evangelizing low-income families ☞ Getting your church mobilized for community ministry ☞ Ministry to families of criminal offenders

Designed for church or associational lay leadership and staff wanting to know more about ministering to families in their communities.

Registration of \$10 (includes lunch) due by February 5

Send to: Oleta Raines, Missions Dept., P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203;

1-800-838-2272, ext. 5150. Mileage of 13 cents per mile paid for vehicles bringing 3 or more persons. A Mission Arkansas Training Event.



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MUSIC

Music Ministers' Retreat Feb. 20-21

Arkansas Baptists' 1997 Music Ministers' Retreat will be held Feb. 20-21 at the Ozark Conference Center in Solgohachia. The event will "offer professional development, fellowship, inspiration and motivation for ministers of music," according to Rob Hewell, director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's church music ministries department.

The program, highlighting the theme, "Truth & Transitions: Shaping Ministry and Music for the Days Ahead," will include "roundtable discussions" among participants; worship led by Joseph Martin, director of church music publications for Shawnee Press; Bible study led by Bill Steeger, chairman of the religion department for Ouachita Baptist University; and "The Change Challenge - Choice or Chore?" led by Hewell.

The program also will feature an earlybird session on "Building Great Choir Teams," beginning Thursday at 11 a.m. The \$55 per person cost includes lodging, three meals and conference materials.

For more information or to request registration materials, contact the church music ministries department toll-free in state at 1-800-838-ABSC or locally in Little Rock at 376-4791, ext. 5121.

MK prayer calendar

Missionary kids with birthdays in February attending college in Arkansas:

■ Feb. 3: Jennifer Colliers, OBU Box 4512, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; sophomore from south Brazil.

■ Feb. 7: Ruth Provost, WBC Box 3074, College City, AR 72476; junior from Cyprus.

■ Feb. 11: Anna Coppedge, OBU Box 4216; sophomore from Uruguay.

■ Feb. 17: Michelle Nicholson, OBU Box 4077; senior from Nigeria.

■ Feb. 18: Aaron Hood, OBU Box 4496; freshman from Colombia.

■ Feb. 21: Mandy Seale, OBU Box 3487; senior from Brazil.

■ Feb. 23: Shad Smith, OBU Box 3846; senior from Portugal.

■ Feb. 23: Rob Crockett, OBU Box 3509; sophomore from Argentina.

■ Feb. 24: James Cheng, OBU Box 4149; freshman from Hong Kong.

■ Feb. 25: Ben Darley, OBU Box 3287; junior from Japan.

■ Feb. 25 Bryan Highfill, OBU Box 3103, sophomore from south Brazil.

■ Feb. 25: Jason Akins, OBU Box 4227, sophomore from south Brazil.

■ Feb. 26: Matt Bolts, OBU Box 4455, junior from the Niger Republic.

ACTEENS ENCOUNTER

April 4-5 • Immanuel Baptist Church • Little Rock

Friday, 9:30 p.m. - Saturday, 1:00 p.m. Registration begins Friday at 9:30 p.m. in the Atrium off West 10th Street

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to Sixth Grade Girls



COST: 'Early Bird Special' -
\$12.00 per person until Feb. 28
\$14.00 per person March 1-28
Deadline for fees is March 28

Included in the registration fees are TWO meals: pizza Friday night and lunch Saturday noon; program guest's expenses; use of facilities and a small gift.

FEATURING:

Mike Raymond-Worship Leader; **Becky Nelson**-WMU, SBC;
Alana & Ron Greenwich-Missionaries, Brazil; **Glenn & Pauline
Nicholson**-Missionaries, Panama; **Kathy Johnson**-Missionary, Zimbabwe;
Crystal Thomson-Former Journeyman, Japan

FOR MORE INFORMATION: State WMU Office, P.O. Box 552,
Little Rock, AR 72203; 1-800-838-2272 or 376-4791, ext. 5137

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Total cash contributions through the Cooperative Program and Designated Gifts received in the office of the Executive Director of the Executive Board, from January 1, 1996-December 31, 1996. If any errors are found in this report, please notify Emil Turner, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203-0552.

| | | | Moro | 3,558.00 | 2,284.00 | Westside | 2,924.38 | 1,838.22 |
|--|--|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| | | | Petty's Chapel | 270.00 | 100.00 | Wilmar | 4,958.66 | 3,563.00 |
| | | | Snow Lake | 49.75 | 0.00 | | 293,533.54 | 83,080.37 |
| | | | Turner | 2,139.62 | 282.00 | Big Creek Church | Coop Prog Designated | |
| | | | West Acres | 1,200.00 | 145.00 | Big Creek | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | West Helena | 25,247.85 | 9,856.17 | County Line | 300.00 | 300.00 |
| | | | West Helena Second | 27,212.94 | 4,149.32 | Elizabeth | 360.00 | 728.00 |
| | | | | 271,182.01 | 121,170.40 | Enterprise | 557.31 | 646.67 |
| | | | Ashley County Church | Coop Prog Designated | | Flora | 120.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | Ashley County | 0.00 | 0.00 | Mammoth Spring First | 1,700.86 | 1,643.90 |
| | | | Calvary | 1,517.57 | 0.00 | Mount Lebanon | 1,208.43 | 0.00 |
| | | | Community Chapel | 167.65 | 253.50 | Mount Zion | 100.00 | 767.97 |
| | | | Corinth | 3,620.40 | 924.00 | Saddle First | 373.00 | 90.92 |
| | | | Crossett First | 172,135.69 | 18,085.13 | Spring River | 540.00 | 1,558.23 |
| | | | Crossett Second | 900.26 | 100.00 | Union Hill | 344.46 | 375.00 |
| | | | Eden | 5,587.30 | 1,700.85 | Viola | 4,800.00 | 1,903.66 |
| | | | Fellowship | 600.00 | 623.08 | | 10,404.08 | 8,014.35 |
| | | | Fountain Hill First | 600.00 | 70.00 | Black River Church | Coop Prog Designated | |
| | | | Gardner | 4,563.88 | 1,544.41 | Alicia | 1,047.07 | 227.50 |
| | | | Hamburg First | 52,831.08 | 27,354.78 | Amagon | 25.82 | 23.00 |
| | | | Jarvis Chapel | 1,200.00 | 0.00 | Banks | 565.36 | 0.00 |
| | | | Magnolia | 22,211.07 | 7,786.43 | Black River | 0.00 | 135.17 |
| | | | Martinville | 3,558.00 | 400.00 | Black Rock First | 3,615.57 | 314.05 |
| | | | Meridian | 12,720.00 | 2,597.35 | Calvary | 3,823.35 | 2,734.00 |
| | | | Mount Olive | 63,324.57 | 13,148.78 | Campbell Station | 2,085.19 | 560.83 |
| | | | Mount Pleasant | 2,292.47 | 200.00 | Clear Springs | 506.61 | 366.52 |
| | | | Mount Zion | 0.00 | 0.00 | Crossroads | 181.99 | 341.36 |
| | | | North Crossett First | 3,970.28 | 1,420.93 | Oiaz | 4,042.00 | 1,899.01 |
| | | | Pleasant Lane | 1,315.05 | 1,272.24 | Grubbs First | 2,918.75 | 1,175.00 |
| | | | Sardis | 87.80 | 0.00 | Hoxie First | 5,969.90 | 2,009.84 |
| | | | Shiloh | 662.94 | 175.22 | Imboden First | 8,305.83 | 5,045.24 |
| | | | South Main | 7,011.00 | 5,854.55 | Immanuel | 6,289.67 | 852.08 |
| | | | Temple | 5,679.21 | 1,922.82 | Jacksonport | 3,541.74 | 146.00 |
| | | | Wilmet | 10,414.54 | 3,704.00 | Murphy's Corner | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | | 377,671.56 | 89,145.87 | New Hope #1 | 1,968.22 | 1,811.28 |
| | | | Barthelomew Church | Coop Prog Designated | | New Hope Hardy | 3,160.43 | 2,452.28 |
| | | | Antioch | 0.00 | 0.00 | Newport First | 73,045.23 | 13,127.72 |
| | | | Bartholomew | 0.00 | 0.00 | Old Walnut Ridge | 1,480.84 | 265.00 |
| | | | Calvary | 15,161.88 | 2,378.85 | Pitts | 314.32 | 33.42 |
| | | | Cominto | 2,095.00 | 0.00 | Ravenden First | 938.00 | 177.00 |
| | | | Corinth | 2,895.70 | 1,057.36 | Sadgwick | 2,988.88 | 900.00 |
| | | | Eagle Lake Crossroads | 2,093.29 | 0.00 | Smithville | 2,467.82 | 674.28 |
| | | | Ebenezer | 1,965.41 | 1,745.95 | Spring Lake | 1,997.34 | 1,100.86 |
| | | | Enon | 4,490.82 | 984.99 | Swifton | 5,498.83 | 1,331.84 |
| | | | Florence | 1,590.37 | 645.00 | Tuckerman First | 4,410.60 | 3,423.46 |
| | | | Green Hill Community | 2,422.35 | 700.00 | Walnut Ridge First | 49,204.97 | 13,860.93 |
| | | | Hermitage | 14,014.82 | 2,172.96 | White Oak | 700.00 | 675.00 |
| | | | Immanuel | 51,509.59 | 18,178.60 | | 191,094.13 | 55,662.65 |
| | | | Ladelle | 2,020.11 | 0.00 | Buckner Church | Coop Prog Designated | |
| | | | Macedonia | 1,284.23 | 463.00 | Abbott | 355.21 | 155.00 |
| | | | Maradan | 0.00 | 0.00 | Bates | 175.00 | 210.00 |
| | | | Monticello First | 69,322.79 | 18,936.41 | Boles | 1,057.68 | 698.25 |
| | | | Monticello Second | 32,031.92 | 9,508.08 | Buckner | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | North Side | 3,787.88 | 786.37 | Calvary | 195.48 | 57.48 |
| | | | Old Union | 1,855.21 | 0.00 | Cauthron | 50.00 | 150.00 |
| | | | Pleasant Grove | 0.00 | 0.00 | Cedar Creek | 881.26 | 200.00 |
| | | | Prairie Grove | 2,053.25 | 400.00 | Dayton | 1,818.00 | 200.00 |
| | | | Primera Iglesia Bautista Hispana | 0.00 | 0.00 | Denton | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | Selma | 1,918.34 | 693.69 | Evening Shade | 889.30 | 0.00 |
| | | | Selma | 198.00 | 0.00 | Fellowship | 10,386.59 | 8,638.80 |
| | | | Southside | 1,310.31 | 30.00 | Friendship | 101.50 | 0.00 |
| | | | Union Hill | 3,778.46 | 0.00 | | | |
| | | | Warren First | 67,058.77 | 18,988.88 | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Hartford First | 17,245.29 | 4,591.10 | McRae First | 5,977.57 | 1,416.76 | Ward First | 7,409.79 | 1,794.41 |
| How Creek | 4,637.29 | 2,504.92 | Midway | 1,174.17 | 193.36 | Wattensaw | 3,547.00 | 806.00 |
| Hon | 827.90 | 200.00 | Mount Hebron | 5,226.63 | 3,469.77 | | | |
| Huntington First | 619.53 | 383.95 | New Morrow | 130.00 | 0.00 | | | |
| Isle | 0.00 | 0.00 | Pangburn First | 8,782.75 | 735.63 | Centennial | 458,570.37 | 67,727.02 |
| James Fork | 4,846.84 | 2,033.05 | Petterson First | 0.00 | 0.00 | Church | Coop Prog | Designated |
| Long Ridge | 1,818.87 | 1,460.00 | Pleasant Grove | 1,455.01 | 527.00 | Aberdeen First | 1,823.55 | 220.42 |
| Menfield First | 35,194.14 | 13,044.71 | Rocky Point | 2,989.30 | 1,704.32 | Almyra First | 30,855.15 | 5,324.48 |
| New Providence | 2,082.90 | 682.00 | Ross Bud | 8,037.28 | 4,410.44 | Centennial | 0.00 | 50.00 |
| Parke | 901.00 | 692.60 | Royal Hill | 0.00 | 0.00 | DeWitt First | 35,278.23 | 12,848.28 |
| Pleasant Grove #2 | 1,378.79 | 100.00 | Searcy First | 134,939.43 | 15,804.59 | Eastside | 1,506.00 | 389.39 |
| Pleasant Grove #3 | 1,024.27 | 314.94 | Sidon | 1,238.07 | 400.00 | Faith | 2,992.14 | 1,858.18 |
| Rock Creek | 1,895.20 | 280.00 | Temple | 20,473.61 | 5,980.00 | Gillett First | 6,202.46 | 968.28 |
| Shiloh | 0.00 | 0.00 | Trinity | 40,779.99 | 10,969.23 | Hagler | 211.00 | 0.00 |
| Southside | 2,093.39 | 3,000.00 | Tupelo First | 3,685.02 | 1,172.15 | North Maple | 2,149.05 | 74.00 |
| Temple | 1,089.16 | 335.48 | Union Valley | 14,748.26 | 5,097.20 | Reyald | 1,400.00 | 1,082.45 |
| Unity | 427.49 | 0.00 | Valley | 17,883.00 | 2,314.00 | Saint Charles | 5,212.59 | 372.30 |
| Waldron First | 32,473.95 | 8,943.19 | West Point | 1,589.27 | 259.50 | Southside | 7,237.35 | 1,710.54 |
| West Hartford | 888.01 | 372.84 | | 430,451.83 | 141,476.22 | Stuttgart | 107,392.00 | 47,950.96 |
| Winfield | 1,861.15 | 2,049.76 | Carey | | | Tichnor | 60.00 | 120.00 |
| | 126,771.97 | 49,489.96 | Church | Coop Prog | Designated | | 201,918.52 | 72,748.86 |
| | | | Beardon First Southern | 6,999.96 | 2,422.00 | Central | Coop Prog | Designated |
| Beakville | Coop Prog | Designated | Bethesda | 2,131.96 | 1,744.43 | Church | 39,617.70 | 15,545.30 |
| Buckville | 0.00 | 0.00 | Calvary | 39,244.21 | 3,017.29 | Belboa | 70,199.89 | 22,351.39 |
| Rock Springs | 3,434.33 | 556.55 | Carey | 0.00 | 0.00 | Barcelone Road | 180,404.74 | 30,426.52 |
| | 3,434.33 | 556.55 | Edge Mills | 4,902.00 | 1,350.00 | Benton First | 349.37 | 238.20 |
| | | | Faith | 368.82 | 122.00 | Buie | 24,080.11 | 5,496.38 |
| Caddo River | Coop Prog | Designated | Fordyce First | 59,503.96 | 17,770.67 | Calvary | 2,496.06 | 1,917.93 |
| Church | 240.00 | 0.00 | Grace | 1,613.32 | 934.71 | Calvary | 14,898.96 | 4,366.00 |
| Amity Second | 870.48 | 55.05 | Grant County First Southern | 130.75 | 0.00 | Central | 0.00 | 85.30 |
| Big Fork | 4,384.29 | 400.00 | Hampton First | 11,901.32 | 2,362.74 | Central | 6,921.35 | 2,858.27 |
| Black Springs | 220.00 | 100.00 | Harmony | 916.06 | 0.00 | Congo Road | 1,004.59 | 979.30 |
| Caddo Gap | 0.00 | 0.00 | Holly Springs | 3,263.12 | 522.80 | Gileed | 6,467.97 | 100.00 |
| Caddo River | 0.00 | 0.00 | Menning | 3,331.00 | 550.00 | Gravel Hill | 43,748.46 | 19,795.07 |
| Community Bible | 0.00 | 1,133.00 | New Hope | 3,290.50 | 305.00 | Highland Heights | 1,987.00 | 200.00 |
| Concord | 0.00 | 0.00 | Ouechite | 1,655.00 | 753.50 | Hilldale | 55,607.81 | 2,552.25 |
| Glennwood First | 22,237.19 | 3,672.31 | Prosperity | 1,894.89 | 2,650.00 | Hot Springs | 105,718.73 | 34,676.01 |
| Lake Ouachita | 8,410.21 | 2,885.00 | Shady Grove | 200.00 | 966.00 | Hot Springs First | 98,222.33 | 63,030.62 |
| Liberty | 0.00 | 0.00 | South Side | 3,737.69 | 282.00 | Hot Springs Second | 4,290.77 | 951.60 |
| Little Hope | 200.00 | 0.00 | Sparkman First | 28,078.09 | 26,084.00 | Hurricane Lake | 9,776.73 | 1,860.00 |
| Mount Gileed | 1,037.00 | 0.00 | Thornton First | 3,043.58 | 346.00 | Lake Hamilton | 11,435.20 | 11,142.33 |
| Mount Ida First | 20,870.16 | 6,462.00 | Tinsam First | 240.00 | 0.00 | Lakeshore Heights | 2,212.97 | 147.31 |
| Murphy | 0.00 | 380.00 | Tulip Memorial | 749.18 | 810.00 | Lee Chapel | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Norman First | 1,400.00 | 941.00 | | 177,215.45 | 62,994.14 | Lighthouse | 961.93 | 0.00 |
| Oak Grove | 120.00 | 20.00 | Careline | Coop Prog | Designated | Lonsdale | 522.00 | 150.00 |
| Oden First | 2,513.16 | 295.00 | Church | 7,450.26 | 1,193.04 | Macedonia | 8,248.45 | 2,802.77 |
| Pencil Bluff First | 5,804.63 | 1,528.00 | Austin Station | 5,244.86 | 1,069.48 | Magnet Cove First Southern | 24,851.71 | 11,584.39 |
| Pine Ridge | 0.00 | 0.00 | Baugh Chapel | 8,832.69 | 2,250.00 | Malvern First | 39,771.41 | 11,728.79 |
| Refuge | 975.00 | 400.00 | Biasco First | 3,192.77 | 886.12 | Malvern Third | 3,593.32 | 1,080.48 |
| Sims | 429.00 | 135.00 | Briarwood | 5,329.89 | 504.00 | Meadowview | 3,701.90 | 682.85 |
| Sulphur Springs | 69,648.12 | 18,406.96 | Cabot First | 163,929.37 | 12,977.92 | Memorial | 4,273.10 | 1,239.00 |
| | | | Cabot Second | 1,099.44 | 120.00 | Mount Vernon | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Calvary | Coop Prog | Designated | Calvary | 2,723.45 | 890.43 | New Life | 6,239.03 | 704.00 |
| Church | 1,296.00 | 1,918.00 | Caney Creek | 537.56 | 735.00 | New Life Bible Fellowship | 277.00 | 50.00 |
| Antioch | 15,111.22 | 5,569.19 | Cerfise First | 31,060.62 | 4,336.24 | North Main | 1,414.85 | 372.78 |
| Augusta First | 34,443.83 | 14,394.08 | Corkline | 0.00 | 0.00 | Old Union | 5,094.01 | 1,350.00 |
| Beebe First | 1,707.13 | 576.30 | Cooleburn | 10,677.96 | 500.00 | Owensville | 9,363.00 | 2,711.47 |
| Berthany | 545.90 | 0.00 | Coy | 1,469.53 | 725.00 | Piney | 11,417.95 | 5,452.65 |
| Bradford First Southern | 1,046.40 | 4,515.35 | Cross Roads | 1,210.00 | 500.00 | Pleasant Hill | 15,172.19 | 3,045.15 |
| Calvary | 0.00 | 100.00 | Des Arc First | 49,682.18 | 4,127.40 | Ridgecrest | 2,026.56 | 1,446.09 |
| Calvary | 0.00 | 0.00 | DeValis Bluff First | 2,579.26 | 1,218.10 | Riverside | 4,218.06 | 2,209.05 |
| Central | 36,291.86 | 18,019.16 | England First | 15,507.26 | 1,805.00 | Royal | 1,728.27 | 746.05 |
| Cotton Plant First | 3,367.92 | 1,753.65 | Hazen First | 14,548.87 | 2,238.70 | Salem | 22,967.74 | 4,347.56 |
| Crosby | 1,535.00 | 1,250.00 | Immanuel | 5,311.49 | 1,472.77 | Shorewood Hills | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Denmark | 491.00 | 281.00 | Keo | 7,087.04 | 504.25 | Social Hill First | 1,041.35 | 276.00 |
| El Paso First | 1,593.16 | 466.45 | Lonoka | 52,846.62 | 9,886.20 | Temple | 3,763.10 | 1,997.54 |
| Floyd First | 1,576.48 | 1,213.38 | Mount Carmel | 32,007.67 | 9,677.01 | Trinity | 22,777.59 | 4,393.87 |
| Gateway | 271.78 | 0.00 | Mountain Springs | 1,945.12 | 552.34 | Trinity | 12,387.75 | 7,858.05 |
| Good Hope | 1,285.21 | 355.53 | New Hope | 1,759.47 | 300.00 | Walnut Valley | 3,213.71 | 1,336.94 |
| Grace | 2,400.00 | 4,918.82 | Oak Grove | 1,357.83 | 1,883.13 | | 886,294.72 | 286,023.04 |
| Gregory | 413.78 | 185.00 | Oskridge | 842.90 | 277.00 | Clear Creek | Coop Prog | Designated |
| Griffithville First | 3,059.82 | 370.00 | Old Austin | 1,100.00 | 379.67 | Church | 61,497.02 | 14,488.78 |
| Hunter First | 1,000.00 | 650.00 | Orlando First | 5,605.42 | 815.00 | Alma First | 1,809.77 | 1,925.50 |
| Judsonia First | 24,384.73 | 20,973.24 | Pleasant Hill | 2,284.26 | 68.00 | Alma First | 816.00 | 478.00 |
| Kennett First | 8,894.00 | 2,288.17 | Roberson | 919.25 | 383.28 | Batson | 814.91 | 120.00 |
| Liberty | 550.72 | 315.00 | South Bend | 1,897.26 | 818.00 | Cabin Creek | 0.00 | 188.10 |
| McCroly First | 19,328.23 | 5,949.95 | Steel Bridge | 6,795.82 | 2,685.57 | Casa | | |
| | | | Tellico | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| Cedarville | 3,200.00 | 1,805.00 | New Hope | 5,859.43 | 1,957.21 | Shiloh | 480.00 | 675.55 |
| Clarksville Second | 11,564.89 | 3,297.12 | North Side | 894.43 | 0.00 | Success First | 6,191.49 | 3,418.25 |
| Clear Creek | 0.00 | 0.00 | North Side | 819.40 | 538.76 | Witts Chapel | 4,211.17 | 993.68 |
| Coal Hill First | 1,121.16 | 423.12 | Oak Cliff | 46,286.23 | 10,057.45 | | 133,874.40 | 43,241.27 |
| Concord | 31,999.76 | 5,567.55 | Palestine | 857.26 | 790.30 | | | |
| Dyer First | 2,102.26 | 662.95 | Paris First | 29,856.54 | 4,326.40 | Delta | | |
| East Mount Zion | 11,409.68 | 2,106.09 | Parkview | 4,078.83 | 1,221.00 | Anderson Chapel | 2,535.96 | 0.00 |
| Eastern Heights | 4,372.66 | 94.43 | Phoenix Village | 2,907.94 | 836.00 | Arkansas City | 10,649.65 | 1,073.00 |
| Graphic Southern | 706.68 | 0.00 | Pine Log | 0.00 | 0.00 | Bayou Mason | 8,408.73 | 3,443.10 |
| Hagarville | 0.00 | 0.00 | Ratcliff First | 1,460.14 | 1,116.92 | Bellaire | 15,076.12 | 6,042.66 |
| Hartman First | 3,087.00 | 818.00 | Roseville | 755.11 | 1,709.00 | Boydell | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Kibler | 9,287.13 | 5,738.00 | Rye Hill | 21,713.13 | 9,255.58 | Chickasaw | 607.40 | 102.50 |
| Lamar | 3,945.00 | 2,195.43 | South Hills | 1,704.96 | 1,423.91 | Collins | 1,462.53 | 500.00 |
| Lee Creek | 5,485.42 | 2,615.60 | South Side | 5,359.56 | 273.00 | Daniel Chapel | -891.05 | 6.00 |
| Mountainburg First | 1,341.16 | 1,698.43 | South Side | 6,000.00 | 9,854.44 | Deft | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Mulberry First | 13,365.14 | 4,522.25 | Southern Hills | 0.00 | 0.00 | Dermott | 14,260.77 | 4,189.29 |
| North Park | 24,943.52 | 3,610.60 | Southside | 2,284.07 | 1,595.84 | Eudora | 14,807.99 | 13,468.43 |
| Oak Grove | 21,132.88 | 7,438.89 | Spradling | 15,098.00 | 7,340.34 | Gaines | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Oark | 0.00 | 0.00 | Temple | 11,546.33 | 2,332.72 | Halley | 1,940.59 | 0.00 |
| Ozark First | 54,959.09 | 7,882.83 | Trinity | 8,138.74 | 7,402.76 | Jannie | 3,630.50 | 955.55 |
| Ozone | 2,082.59 | 1,661.00 | Union Hall | 0.00 | 120.00 | Jerome | 600.00 | 100.00 |
| Rudy | 445.00 | 234.00 | Vesta | 200.00 | 119.00 | Kelso | 5,011.89 | 5,722.42 |
| Shady Grove | 784.54 | 201.00 | Victory | 991.99 | 785.00 | Lake Village | 17,795.41 | 18,017.83 |
| Shibley | 0.00 | 876.85 | Vietnamese | 100.00 | 0.00 | McGehee First | 14,803.08 | 11,801.00 |
| Southside | 5,509.77 | 195.00 | Vietnamese (of Grand Avenue) | 0.00 | 1,305.35 | Montrose | 687.45 | 195.11 |
| Spadra | 364.93 | 1,043.17 | Westside | 1,842.74 | 3,550.10 | New Hope | 4,142.97 | 547.06 |
| Trinity | 550.00 | 135.00 | Windsor Park | 0.00 | 0.00 | Northside | 600.00 | 320.09 |
| Union Grove | 3,251.47 | 1,894.74 | | 1,277,411.36 | 438,681.05 | Omega | 815.53 | 271.58 |
| Uniontown | 1,894.96 | 0.00 | Canway-Perry | | | Parkdale | 600.00 | 1,572.45 |
| Van Buren First | 43,032.32 | 20,851.41 | Church | | | Parkway | 260.00 | 0.00 |
| Van Buren Second | 5,518.25 | 15.00 | Case First | 1,420.04 | 1,861.50 | Portland | 5,401.42 | 2,844.50 |
| Vine Prairie | 2,132.40 | 903.17 | Center Ridge | 948.21 | 869.75 | Shiloh | 627.02 | 105.00 |
| Webb City | 4,687.29 | 1,917.00 | Conway-Perry | 0.00 | 0.00 | South McGehee | 7,891.62 | 3,174.67 |
| Woodland | 3,523.53 | 1,463.42 | Cove Chapel Southern | 822.08 | 100.00 | Temple | 9,775.00 | 946.80 |
| | 343,520.18 | 99,087.43 | Harmony | 892.01 | 100.00 | Tillar First | 1,826.59 | 1,318.00 |
| | | | Houston | 2,557.88 | 2,123.70 | Watson | 2,780.88 | 729.04 |
| | | | Morrilton First | 44,432.95 | 6,286.76 | | 147,890.15 | 77,440.08 |
| | | | Nimrod | 3,728.85 | 2,945.00 | | | |
| | | | Oppelo | 650.00 | 1,145.00 | Faulkner County | | |
| | | | Perry | 335.00 | 300.00 | Church | | |
| | | | Perryville First | 13,687.66 | 9,544.85 | Beryl | 11,344.59 | 2,270.10 |
| | | | Peit Jan First | 1,081.85 | 1,241.75 | Bigelow | 4,523.13 | 200.00 |
| | | | Pleasant Grove | 120.00 | 335.00 | Blaney Hill | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | Plumerville First | 2,965.39 | 1,769.48 | Bono | 1,458.78 | 335.00 |
| | | | Solgoachia | 2,005.00 | 559.00 | Brookside | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | Stony Point | 810.00 | 810.00 | Brunley | 6,991.45 | 4,021.00 |
| | | | Sweet Home | 144.50 | 151.16 | Cadron Ridge | 8,530.28 | 3,417.51 |
| | | | Thornburg | 3,221.21 | 1,836.29 | Conway Celebration Church | 281.85 | 0.00 |
| | | | Union Valley | 1,456.06 | 1,233.80 | Conway First | 77,141.67 | 8,871.00 |
| | | | Wye Mountain Southern | 761.38 | 165.15 | Conway Second | 75,197.77 | 10,382.68 |
| | | | | 82,039.07 | 33,380.20 | Eastwood | 62.46 | 193.18 |
| | | | | | | Emmanuel | 2,745.32 | 297.74 |
| | | | | | | Enla | 641.92 | 439.62 |
| | | | | | | Faulkner County | 0.00 | 100.00 |
| | | | | | | Friendship | 19,602.39 | 2,439.85 |
| | | | | | | Glad Creek | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | | | | Greenbrier First | 14,762.09 | 0.00 |
| | | | | | | Happy Hollow | 608.00 | 1,270.00 |
| | | | | | | Harlan Park | 23,569.85 | 7,959.59 |
| | | | | | | Harmony | 5,982.45 | 2,178.01 |
| | | | | | | Holland | 5,512.65 | 3,184.02 |
| | | | | | | Mayflower First | 11,897.27 | 6,540.73 |
| | | | | | | Mount Vernon | 4,281.24 | 1,674.55 |
| | | | | | | Naylor | 35.00 | 441.00 |
| | | | | | | New Bethel | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | | | | New Hope | 3,019.80 | 1,158.65 |
| | | | | | | Oak Bowers | 16,788.73 | 2,181.96 |
| | | | | | | Perryville Second | 100.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | | | | Pickles Gap | 50,435.66 | 15,447.28 |
| | | | | | | Pleasant Grove | 17,187.02 | 5,896.08 |
| | | | | | | Satillito Heights | 1,571.34 | 392.86 |
| | | | | | | Smyrna | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | | | | South Side | 4,480.57 | 3,337.01 |
| | | | | | | Sunny Gap | 3,430.00 | 1,840.92 |
| | | | | | | Victory Southern | 1,810.84 | 252.50 |
| | | | | | | Woodland Heights | 66,022.46 | 22,304.94 |
| | | | | | | Wooster First | 10,174.30 | 3,392.11 |
| | | | | | | Zion | 1,807.70 | 345.00 |
| | | | | | | | 451,798.48 | 112,563.30 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Liberty | 381.00 | 0.00 | Central | 258,729.73 | 88,581.78 | New Hope | 4,050.58 | 1,462.97 |
| Little River | 0.00 | 0.00 | Childress | 445.13 | 427.00 | Newton County | 814.29 | 303.96 |
| Lockesburg First | 7,452.45 | 2,026.67 | Obie | 1,103.00 | 522.00 | North Arkansas | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Lone Oak | 180.00 | 195.00 | Egypt | 250.00 | 240.00 | Northville | 25,208.50 | 7,479.43 |
| Maranatha | 2,365.44 | 1,263.00 | Friendly Hope | 3,768.19 | 3,084.87 | Omaha First | 747.84 | 0.00 |
| Millwood | 2,173.62 | 998.77 | Highland Drive | 28,119.00 | 6,010.18 | Oragon Flat | 1,762.86 | 291.50 |
| Mount Moriah | 0.00 | 0.00 | Jonesboro First | 54,233.65 | 122,976.90 | Osage | 6,232.96 | 708.89 |
| Murfreesboro First | 8,250.00 | 3,017.50 | Lake City First | 7,273.45 | 1,902.38 | Parthenon | 3,805.37 | 1,738.17 |
| Nashville First | 61,609.88 | 9,207.35 | Lunsford | 1,334.12 | 242.56 | Pindall | 214.60 | 75.00 |
| Oak Grove | 4,518.34 | 1,093.00 | Magnolia Road | 2,013.64 | 446.64 | Rock Springs | 2,245.91 | 1,207.87 |
| Ogden First | 2,058.66 | 271.02 | Monetta First | 20,319.47 | 2,744.12 | Rudd | 2,919.89 | 25.67 |
| Ridgeway | 13,257.05 | 1,972.10 | Mount Pisgah | 1,027.10 | 369.26 | Saint Joe First | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Rock Hill | 200.00 | 250.00 | Mount Zion | 8,112.58 | 3,449.55 | Searcy County | 100.00 | 443.93 |
| State Line | 1,193.65 | 1,407.25 | Mount Zion | 0.00 | 200.00 | Snowball | 334.92 | 130.00 |
| Washington | 750.00 | 882.00 | Needham | 2,031.50 | 253.80 | Southside | 3,659.49 | 5,894.76 |
| Wilton First | 1,575.00 | 426.57 | Nettleton | 71,470.89 | 12,519.96 | Trinity | 485.32 | 196.63 |
| | 161,106.79 | 42,564.69 | New Antioch | 4,743.42 | 1,184.00 | Union | 10,768.99 | 2,841.70 |
| Mississippi County | | | New Hope | 1,767.20 | 256.52 | Valley Springs First | 17,611.51 | 4,856.53 |
| Church | Coop Prog Designated | | New Hope | 2,399.28 | 273.14 | Valley View | 6,102.85 | 2,292.00 |
| Amorel | 12,850.52 | 914.24 | North Main | 10,826.74 | 1,603.57 | Western Grove First | 838.59 | 205.00 |
| Bethany | 3,002.00 | 137.00 | Philadelphia | 17,806.28 | 4,503.51 | Woodland Heights | 13,747.54 | 13,231.44 |
| Bethany | 110.00 | 10.00 | Providence | 1,889.83 | 100.00 | Zion's Light | 1,975.76 | 490.00 |
| Blackwater | 1,252.32 | 362.58 | Rowe's Chapel | 1,728.16 | 102.71 | | 440,763.43 | 121,407.62 |
| Blytheville First | 144,644.10 | 16,012.78 | South Caraway Chapel | 5,410.00 | 1,591.96 | North Central Church | Coop Prog Designated | |
| Brinkley Chapel | 0.00 | 1,095.00 | Strawfloor | 4,446.16 | 1,365.02 | Angora | 0.00 | 205.00 |
| Brown Chapel | 741.00 | 410.00 | University | 6,800.33 | 1,342.00 | Bee Branch | 2,052.10 | 1,453.37 |
| Calvary | 9,518.39 | 5,211.47 | Valley Ridge | 1,984.61 | 50.00 | Botkinburg | 80.00 | 24.88 |
| Calvary | 9,070.28 | 984.69 | Walnut Street | 58,720.71 | 15,384.84 | Burnt Ridge | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Clear Lake | 4,481.12 | 3,428.06 | Westvale | 1,624.00 | 265.00 | Clinton First | 50,900.08 | 10,292.83 |
| Cole Ridge | 2,341.93 | 325.32 | Woodsprings | 1,272.42 | 491.00 | Conith | 716.58 | 1,139.00 |
| Crossroads | 334.06 | 0.00 | | 625,222.76 | 300,693.75 | Fairfield Bay | 16,478.73 | 3,711.72 |
| Dell | 7,467.56 | 4,660.63 | No Membership in An Church | Coop Prog Designated | | Fermosa | 5,202.46 | 3,254.37 |
| Dyess Central | 480.00 | 0.00 | Community Church of LR | 2,955.55 | 650.00 | Friendship | 16,062.28 | 4,933.90 |
| East Side | -2,426.85 | 595.00 | Cushman | 0.00 | 0.00 | Hallmoon | 50.00 | 0.00 |
| Emmanuel | 1,262.44 | 330.33 | Koinonia | 817.19 | 1,006.20 | Higher Ground | 233.22 | 65.00 |
| Etowah | 854.15 | 155.00 | New Beginnings | 1,271.56 | 0.00 | Immanuel | 2,508.54 | 2,693.65 |
| Gosnell | 19,032.21 | 4,290.32 | New Life | 0.00 | 0.00 | Leslie First | 8,768.03 | 3,227.73 |
| Joiner | 1,178.46 | 1,106.50 | Providence | 0.00 | 0.00 | Lexington | 1,514.00 | 150.00 |
| Keiser First | 391.88 | 0.00 | Rolling Hills | 734.66 | 1,167.40 | Marshall First | 10,690.47 | 3,485.14 |
| Leachville First | 32,399.00 | 3,989.00 | Shepherd's Heart Com.Church | 450.00 | 0.00 | Morning Star | 1,215.70 | 109.00 |
| Leachville Second | 5,945.52 | 1,314.44 | Southside | 225.00 | 25.00 | New Hopewell | 177.70 | 0.00 |
| Leachville Secnd Hispanic Msn | 0.00 | 0.00 | Trinity | 0.00 | 185.00 | North Central | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Luxora First | 5,018.96 | 2,031.00 | Unity | 0.00 | 0.00 | Peo Dee | 2,569.00 | 784.95 |
| Manila First | 21,068.84 | 4,228.89 | | 6,453.96 | 3,033.60 | Plent | 1,414.48 | 286.50 |
| Marys Chapel | 240.00 | 328.65 | North Arkansas Church | Coop Prog Designated | | Pleasant Valley | 3,600.37 | 3,789.15 |
| Memorial | 85.95 | 760.33 | Alpens First | 4,142.23 | 1,803.35 | Rupert | 1,031.67 | 0.00 |
| Mississippi County | 0.00 | 449.84 | Batavia | 2,499.03 | 677.94 | Scotland | 2,472.37 | 325.10 |
| New Harmony | 780.00 | 339.00 | Bear Creek Springs | 4,631.79 | 519.28 | Shady Grove | 2,125.76 | 3,934.96 |
| New Liberty | 9,441.80 | 0.00 | Beaver Lake | 1,259.83 | 582.00 | Shirley | 4,474.15 | 887.56 |
| New Life Korean | 550.00 | 1,187.00 | Bellefonte | 3,600.00 | 782.00 | Skyland Southern | 463.65 | 600.67 |
| New Providence | 231.00 | 390.00 | Berryville First | 17,245.59 | 5,736.88 | Sugar Loaf First | 2,422.03 | 946.27 |
| Nodena | 1,202.88 | 1,780.44 | Beth'El | 2,260.62 | 191.00 | | 136,313.37 | 45,400.75 |
| North Tenth Street | 12,949.25 | 941.50 | Blue Eye First | 5,467.32 | 3,256.30 | North Puleaski Church | Coop Prog Designated | |
| Number Nine | 771.51 | 865.87 | Boxley | 593.27 | 0.00 | Amboy | 8,606.27 | 3,294.72 |
| Osceola First | 23,993.53 | 5,093.00 | Burlington | 3,018.43 | 418.00 | Baring Cross | 53,458.73 | 88,884.57 |
| Pleasant View | 0.00 | 0.00 | Cassville | 1,700.00 | 2,658.00 | Beyno Meto | 25,265.38 | 8,335.91 |
| Ridgecrest | 3,296.00 | 2,528.00 | Deer | 1,500.00 | 470.00 | Beraa | 388.31 | 1,180.01 |
| Rosa | 280.00 | 0.00 | Diamond City First | 1,378.80 | 739.10 | Bethany | 5,954.52 | 3,024.78 |
| Trinity | 12,217.03 | 2,453.37 | Dove Circle | 4,531.44 | 607.00 | Bethel | 17,423.90 | 3,866.69 |
| Wardell | 1,302.00 | 0.00 | Eagle Heights | 53,524.83 | 1,519.12 | Calvary | 26,746.71 | 8,307.46 |
| Westside | 6,388.50 | 896.00 | Elkirk | 2,018.51 | 1,354.21 | Cedar Heights | 27,009.18 | 2,862.26 |
| Whitton | 610.99 | 137.11 | Elmwood | 2,757.17 | 844.50 | Central | 71,088.38 | 19,845.41 |
| Wilson First | 18,831.13 | 3,421.00 | Emmanuel | 2,476.70 | 2,420.43 | Chapel Hill | 5,676.76 | 465.03 |
| Woodland Corner | 949.73 | 64.89 | Eureka Springs First | 2,023.03 | 270.00 | Crosspoint | 8,070.22 | 1,601.13 |
| Yerbo | 8,241.03 | 2,992.94 | Everton | 2,893.16 | 667.00 | Crystal Valley | 5,100.00 | 611.72 |
| | 386,233.82 | 76,323.19 | Freeman Heights | 24,797.79 | 3,089.35 | Fellowship | 1,867.71 | 0.00 |
| Mount Zion Church | Coop Prog Designated | | Gaither | 1,663.46 | 624.00 | Forty-Seventh Street | 2,800.00 | 1,133.55 |
| Alsup | 814.00 | 0.00 | Grandview First | 16,121.89 | 3,651.08 | Friendship | 8,789.83 | 893.93 |
| Bey First | 10,207.25 | 4,395.11 | Green Forest First | 13,866.50 | 2,638.57 | Gerthsemene | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Bethabara | 3,008.24 | 200.00 | Grubb Springs | 2,458.48 | 1,435.57 | Goryland | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Black Oak | 2,481.43 | 4,951.67 | Harrison First | 136,590.71 | 26,005.73 | Good Stewardship | 5.00 | 0.00 |
| Bono First | 480.24 | 2,880.92 | Hopewell | 2,289.00 | 389.00 | Grace | 2,190.36 | 419.00 |
| Bowman | 6,578.74 | 445.35 | Jesper First | 12,885.29 | 3,438.00 | Gravel Ridge | 30,701.65 | 3,762.75 |
| Brockland | 4,268.98 | 4,587.92 | Lakeland | 500.00 | 896.46 | Graves Memorial | 10,952.00 | 3,613.23 |
| Buffalo Chapel | 343.65 | 0.00 | Lead Hill First | 6,450.29 | 3,686.86 | Highway | 30,945.61 | 23,888.21 |
| Caraway First | 10,661.94 | 9,532.85 | Marble Falls | 193.50 | 160.24 | Indian Hills | 21,126.44 | 0.00 |
| Cash First | 4,537.70 | 1,235.85 | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Indianhead Lake | 7,292.41 | 3,864.99 | Chapel Hill | 2,255.18 | 676.16 | Vinny Ridge Immanuel | 1,401.70 | 978.49 |
| Jacksonville First | 47,280.89 | 18,032.67 | Cherry Hill | 2,447.07 | 2,091.25 | Vision of the Light | 122.15 | 0.00 |
| Jacksonville Second | 27,916.36 | 6,265.88 | Concord | 3,211.22 | 486.56 | West Pulaski | 2,193.15 | 0.00 |
| Korean | 157.82 | 967.82 | Cove First | 2,158.38 | 543.78 | West Rock | 5,305.77 | 1,012.25 |
| Korean | 0.00 | 0.00 | Dallas Avenue | 38,288.65 | 9,355.10 | West Side | 2,462.18 | 1,925.00 |
| Levy | 46,336.12 | 13,069.92 | De Queen First | 66,872.00 | 21,204.41 | Whispering Hills | 618.74 | 0.00 |
| Maddox Road | 3,628.00 | 745.00 | Gilham | 2,025.00 | 145.25 | Woodlawn | 9,778.11 | 1,385.00 |
| Marshall Road | 18,903.30 | 14,479.32 | Grannis | 5,474.89 | 1,379.14 | Woodson | 1,194.26 | 809.83 |
| Meunelle | 9,003.67 | 6,225.05 | Hatfield First | 18,748.04 | 2,597.02 | | | |
| Military Road | 4,108.14 | 2,536.47 | Hatton | 917.72 | 600.00 | | | |
| Morrison Chapel | 1,228.07 | 140.00 | Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel | 323.88 | 84.00 | Red River Church | | |
| North Little Rock First | 12,928.69 | 5,887.82 | Mena First | 64,389.96 | 15,328.27 | | | |
| North Pulaski | 0.00 | 0.00 | New Hope | 590.73 | 100.00 | Anchor | 167.26 | 0.00 |
| Oakwood | 600.00 | 0.00 | Ouechita | 0.00 | 0.00 | Antoine | 1,067.82 | 1,095.80 |
| Park Hill | 220,164.84 | 118,664.58 | Rich Mountain | 90.62 | 115.00 | Arkadelphia First | 76,836.27 | 24,179.61 |
| Remount | 4,343.00 | 468.00 | Salem | 4,291.97 | 2,083.59 | Arkadelphia Second | 53,690.26 | 16,679.63 |
| Riverside | 0.00 | 20.00 | Two Mile | 271.63 | 54.00 | Beech Street | 3,923.26 | 7,850.77 |
| Royal Oaks | 0.00 | 0.00 | Vandavort First | 6,090.74 | 1,428.59 | Beirma First | 18,543.43 | 390.00 |
| Runyan First | 9,129.78 | 2,306.32 | Wickes First | 1,493.48 | 979.25 | Bethel | 924.75 | 674.00 |
| Saintsville | 0.00 | 0.00 | Yocana | 915.56 | 403.00 | Bethlehem | 555.00 | 150.00 |
| Sherwood First | 72,144.30 | 15,734.37 | | 230,398.72 | 66,418.76 | Bismarck First Southern | 1,266.88 | 572.00 |
| Sixteenth Street | 0.00 | 0.00 | | | | Boughton | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Stanfill | 675.00 | 443.55 | Pulaski Church | | | Caddo Valley | 2,653.50 | 1,396.00 |
| Sylvan Hills | 17,700.00 | 21,617.88 | Alexander First | 8,425.34 | 1,246.51 | Cedar Grove | 1,520.82 | 184.10 |
| Trinity | 1,200.00 | 1,220.00 | Archview | 11,060.59 | 3,341.99 | Center Point | 825.00 | 275.00 |
| Victory | 4,581.00 | 2,883.02 | Barnett Memorial | 2,784.80 | 542.62 | Curtis First | 5,832.21 | 1,193.32 |
| Zion Hill | 16,679.23 | 5,654.27 | Bingham Road | 14,423.35 | 1,938.90 | Daler | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | 890,168.48 | 417,217.29 | Bountiful Blessings | 0.00 | 0.00 | DeGray | 3,464.00 | 2,010.00 |
| | | | Brookwood First | 2,692.35 | 1,285.25 | East Wholen | 90.00 | 0.00 |
| North west Church | Coop Prog Designated | | Bryant First Southern | 32,354.67 | 6,613.38 | Emmet First | 2,583.28 | 249.85 |
| Amazing Grace | 3,078.99 | 0.00 | Calvary | 118,799.88 | 55,750.94 | Harmony Hill | 765.00 | 503.50 |
| Avoca First | 658.37 | 75.00 | Charity | 362.26 | 17.00 | Hollywood | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Bella Vista | 110,830.27 | 42,915.96 | Chicot Road | 3,328.12 | 1,677.53 | Lakewood | 263.40 | 263.41 |
| Bentonville First | 100,260.40 | 30,317.58 | Cross Road | 3,547.27 | 1,037.22 | Marlboro | 2,175.23 | 705.00 |
| Bentonville Second | 2,103.74 | 0.00 | Crystal Hill | 17,231.87 | 2,387.56 | Mount Bethel | 50.00 | 0.00 |
| Centerion First | 56,366.16 | 28,758.06 | Douglasville | 450.00 | 0.00 | Mount Zion | 1,746.75 | 545.00 |
| Charity Southern | 16,963.70 | 1,475.19 | East End | 23,934.88 | 7,549.40 | Mount Olive | 2,940.00 | 477.00 |
| Cornestona | 1,217.36 | 201.00 | Faith Southern | 0.00 | 0.00 | New Hope | 246.00 | 0.00 |
| Decatur First | 15,776.74 | 13,671.95 | Forest Tower | 7,905.64 | 2,015.60 | Okolona | 451.00 | 0.00 |
| Emmanuel | 0.00 | 0.00 | Geyer Springs First | 322,455.90 | 39,936.47 | Park Hill | 28,844.40 | 11,495.58 |
| Faith | 2,810.76 | 266.98 | Greater Grace | 600.00 | 0.00 | Prascott First | 15,790.18 | 1,227.73 |
| Garfield First | 12,860.69 | 7,317.12 | Greater Mt Carmel | 0.00 | 0.00 | Primera Iglesia Bautista | 184.42 | 251.25 |
| Gentry First | 36,539.33 | 15,667.49 | Green Memorial | 6,047.34 | 3,517.10 | Red River | 0.00 | 52.10 |
| Grace | 5,298.70 | 1,010.00 | Hebron | 8,587.43 | 2,978.84 | Richwoods | 1,124.11 | 937.00 |
| Gravette First | 1,581.54 | 1,305.00 | Highland | 500.00 | 4,310.53 | Shady Grove | 380.00 | 100.00 |
| Gum Springs | 2,183.62 | 3,073.45 | Hispanic | 0.00 | 0.00 | Shiloh | 1,732.00 | 1,684.00 |
| Harvard Avenue | 31,676.25 | 20,574.94 | Holly Springs | 1,858.76 | 344.33 | South Fork | 711.65 | 1,571.57 |
| Hickory Creek | 0.00 | 55.00 | Immanuel | 489,709.67 | 138,494.90 | Southside | 43.00 | 0.00 |
| Highfill First | 7,146.79 | 2,855.62 | Indian Springs | 0.00 | 200.00 | Sycamore | 80.00 | 0.00 |
| Hixson First | 4,434.64 | 1,646.73 | Ironton | 6,604.23 | 1,816.00 | Third Street | 7,250.00 | 25.00 |
| Immanuel | 19,182.04 | 47,206.98 | Lakeshore Drive | 16,755.55 | 3,784.16 | Unity | 1,910.00 | 2,410.00 |
| Lakeside | 12,183.56 | 1,412.85 | Lancaster Road | 171.90 | 3,464.16 | Whelen Springs | 240.00 | 0.00 |
| Lakeview | 4,737.51 | 3,254.21 | Life Line | 2,381.15 | 108.82 | | 253,239.68 | 79,343.22 |
| Lowell First | 22,398.28 | 5,507.61 | Little Rock First | 69,945.47 | 36,325.58 | Rocky Bayou Church | | |
| Lowell Spanish Mission | 595.37 | 0.00 | Little Rock Second | 200,409.90 | 70,544.79 | | Coop Prog Designated | |
| Mason Valley | 3,357.99 | 1,275.22 | Markham Street | 3,811.82 | 56,479.34 | Ash Flat First | 1,277.15 | 130.00 |
| Monte Ne | 5,815.13 | 1,337.82 | Martindale | 46,115.64 | 8,832.43 | Belview | 7,368.52 | 4,809.54 |
| Mountain Springs | 2,050.00 | 72.00 | Natural Steps | 9,422.85 | 3,526.99 | Boswell | 30.00 | 0.00 |
| Northwest | 0.00 | 0.00 | Pleasant Grove | 14,529.91 | 2,806.00 | Calico Rock First | 8,706.52 | 5,006.50 |
| Open Door | 5,899.52 | 5,844.75 | Pulaski | 507.61 | 100.00 | Cherokee Village First | 17,164.26 | 11,999.11 |
| Park Street | 2,199.29 | 344.10 | Pulaski Heights | 39,409.96 | 17,640.50 | Dolph | 1,433.93 | 702.59 |
| Pea Ridge First | 10,766.76 | 5,039.73 | Reynolds Memorial | 8,437.59 | 3,935.48 | Evening Shade First | 1,478.13 | 818.16 |
| Piney Point | 1,875.38 | 211.52 | Roland | 28,852.78 | 6,254.50 | Finley Creek | 465.80 | 125.92 |
| Plains Hill | 1,918.38 | 617.73 | Rossdale | 4,707.12 | 610.42 | Franklin | 3,555.86 | 2,152.01 |
| Robinson | 0.00 | 0.00 | Shannon Hills First | 2,984.80 | 0.00 | Guion | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Rogers First | 192,514.67 | 37,498.57 | Sheridan First | 9,741.00 | 5,256.99 | Hardy First | 10,145.83 | 3,192.56 |
| Siloam Springs First | 39,277.37 | 15,417.49 | South Highland | 0.00 | 0.00 | Horseshoe Bend First | 12,461.01 | 5,629.53 |
| Spanish | 0.00 | 0.00 | Sunset Lane | 33,656.69 | 10,056.21 | Immanuel Southern | 3,000.00 | 855.00 |
| Sulphur Springs First | 279.52 | 35.00 | The Church at Rock Creek | 1,372.41 | 1,045.51 | Melbourne First | 12,794.00 | 4,864.14 |
| Sunny Side | 0.00 | 1,500.00 | Thorn Oaks | 3,774.79 | 1,516.18 | Midway | 5,574.24 | 2,702.57 |
| Trinity | 1,025.00 | 154.50 | Trinity | 6,213.40 | 3,060.00 | Mount Pleasant Southern | 1,626.87 | 787.00 |
| Twelve Corners | 3,021.48 | 350.00 | Tyler Street | 3,100.56 | 1,199.74 | Myron | 2,154.85 | 1,044.27 |
| | 738,935.38 | 298,268.15 | | 27,695.70 | 6,790.42 | Oxford | 841.18 | 125.00 |
| | | | | 31,527.36 | 9,526.65 | Rocky Bayou | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Ouechita Church | Coop Prog Designated | | | 1,407.00 | 912.65 | Sage | | |
| Acorn | 207.00 | 0.00 | | 125.00 | 0.00 | Salem First | | |
| Berthal | 74.47 | 135.70 | | 0.00 | 0.00 | Sidney | 5,805.28 | 2,968.90 |
| Board Camp | 7,872.04 | 3,898.69 | | 1,939.83 | 582.27 | | | |
| Calvary | 3,388.49 | 2,632.00 | | 7,516.89 | 5,308.30 | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Sylamore First | 170.81 | 16.00 | Madison First | 2,586.32 | 311.49 | Farmington First | 6,808.11 | 1,088.97 |
| Zion Hill | 832.62 | 1,379.60 | Merion | 27,827.81 | 2,315.00 | Fayetteville First | 133,287.92 | 53,187.73 |
| | 111,039.52 | 52,899.27 | Midway | 2,109.20 | 1,105.00 | Friendship | 8,492.98 | 58.00 |
| Southwest Church | | | Morton | 1,140.39 | 497.75 | Goshen First Southern | 8,377.78 | 841.89 |
| Anderson | 4,707.70 | 470.91 | New Life | 2,310.33 | 85.00 | Greenland First | 3,600.00 | 1,771.80 |
| Arabella Heights | 3,655.66 | 300.00 | One Accord | 1,535.00 | 135.00 | Hindsville | 2,368.64 | 944.43 |
| Beech Street First | 123,522.82 | 57,215.85 | Palestine First | 712.00 | 120.00 | Huntsville First | 11,387.20 | 5,880.05 |
| Bradley | 5,683.01 | 2,432.53 | Parkin First | 10,515.72 | 4,349.00 | Immanuel | 1,101.82 | 3,000.95 |
| Calvary | 35,708.00 | 10,108.42 | Pine Tree | 498.90 | 334.00 | Johnson | 614.21 | 0.00 |
| Canfield | 3,023.50 | 1,793.98 | Pleasant Hill | 2,754.70 | 1,730.00 | Kingston First Southern | 349.24 | 0.00 |
| Central | 154,949.33 | 65,891.81 | Richland | 1,713.24 | 340.00 | Lake Hill | 350.00 | 0.00 |
| Comarstons | 15,689.01 | 5,825.81 | Ridgeview | 3,657.29 | 631.46 | Liberty | 5,222.89 | 949.80 |
| Faith | 3,918.66 | 1,067.21 | Shell Lake | 3,880.69 | 567.00 | Life Change Community Fellowship | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Fellowship | 6,960.98 | 278.90 | Tri-City | 0.00 | 0.00 | Lincoln First | 9,984.44 | 2,008.74 |
| Fouka First | 0.00 | 175.35 | Turrell First | 1,989.61 | 851.43 | New Hope Fellowship | 900.00 | 1,808.80 |
| Fulton | 0.00 | 0.00 | Union Avenue | 19,371.11 | 1,697.98 | Northeast Southern | 948.15 | 1,590.68 |
| Garland | 409.32 | 84.00 | Vanderbilt Avenue | 4,701.44 | 2,408.85 | Oak Grove | 2,960.06 | 428.13 |
| Gena First | 3,230.84 | 2,044.56 | Vandale | 0.00 | 0.00 | Old Missouri Road | 1,898.00 | 1,247.00 |
| Grace Community | 927.38 | 0.00 | Victory | 1,380.00 | 300.00 | Prairie Grove First | 9,199.67 | 5,531.14 |
| Guernsey | 0.00 | 0.00 | West Memphis First | 130,379.12 | 20,719.12 | Providence | 2,180.84 | 124.19 |
| Hickory Street | 13,749.72 | 3,405.18 | West Memphis Korean | 0.00 | 0.00 | Ridgeview | 17,972.33 | 3,700.00 |
| Highland Hills | 7,934.41 | 660.32 | West Memphis Second | 20,271.00 | 0.00 | Sang Avenue | 1,888.30 | 8,316.97 |
| Hope First | 56,812.12 | 37,908.46 | Wheatley | 3,735.80 | 2,951.70 | Sierra Estates | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Immanuel | 3,195.86 | 550.00 | Widener | 2,636.30 | 1,200.55 | Silent Grove | 5,861.24 | 1,127.34 |
| Laytsville First | 11,685.89 | 1,392.01 | Wynns | 45,000.00 | 30,306.60 | Sonora | 4,594.24 | 2,587.96 |
| Line First | 0.00 | 0.00 | | 433,854.88 | 140,064.35 | Southside | 630.00 | 178.14 |
| Macedonia at Doddridge | 1,324.00 | 1,550.00 | Trinity Church | | | Spring Valley | 906.37 | 830.00 |
| Macedonia First | 1,859.39 | 0.00 | Anderson Tully | 939.89 | 437.23 | Springdale First | 320,880.38 | 76,691.40 |
| Mandeville | 2,633.10 | 602.65 | Black Oak | 0.00 | 1,419.99 | Springdale First Hispanic Men | 294.77 | 100.00 |
| McNeil Second | 0.00 | 0.00 | Calvary | 1,000.00 | 1,733.71 | Sulphur City | 1,915.17 | 325.00 |
| Memorial | 7,385.32 | 1,558.00 | Calvary | 13,082.89 | 2,008.07 | The Worship Center | 0.00 | 210.00 |
| Mitchell Street | 0.00 | 0.00 | Central | 5,076.80 | 538.55 | University | 58,000.00 | 27,312.43 |
| Mount Zion | 3,569.00 | 1,316.46 | Corner Chapel | 1,771.44 | 420.06 | University Hispanic Mission | 0.00 | 902.00 |
| Phillips Chapel | 0.00 | 0.00 | Eastside | 2,493.58 | 205.11 | Washington-Madison | 0.00 | 125.00 |
| Pines Grove | 1,666.74 | 899.23 | Faith | 866.00 | 385.00 | Wedington Woods | 196.85 | 0.00 |
| Pinson Park | 0.00 | 0.00 | Fellowship | 0.00 | 0.00 | West Fork First | 14,183.98 | 747.00 |
| Pisgah | 1,252.42 | 816.50 | Fisher First | 2,871.21 | 775.50 | Western Hills Southern | 1,069.00 | 218.10 |
| Red River | 1,395.96 | 0.00 | Freer | 886.61 | 0.00 | Winslow First | 3,787.00 | 2,284.16 |
| Rocky Mound | 1,583.80 | 415.00 | Greenfield | 1,570.13 | 120.00 | | 761,495.39 | 233,280.44 |
| Shiloh Memorial | 7,923.65 | 2,289.45 | Harnsburg First | 12,738.38 | 2,337.50 | White River Church | | |
| South Texarkans | 1,306.37 | 0.00 | Lebanon | 2,067.40 | 518.00 | Antioch | 898.45 | 1,150.88 |
| Southwest | 0.00 | 0.00 | Lepanto First | 14,173.32 | 2,947.06 | Arkana | 2,485.57 | 410.10 |
| Springhill | 4,128.63 | 1,352.00 | Maple Grove | 20,853.00 | 6,577.00 | Big Flat | 515.72 | 0.00 |
| Stamps First | 27,713.00 | 6,671.65 | Marked Tree First | 12,792.55 | 5,124.05 | Bruno | 880.17 | 0.00 |
| Sylvester | 4,838.71 | 1,248.98 | McCormick | 723.17 | 892.03 | Bull Shoals | 7,036.29 | 1,701.39 |
| Tennessee | 3,135.86 | 1,610.35 | Neal's Chapel | 128.47 | 239.65 | Clerkridge | 88.05 | 0.00 |
| Trinity | 140,108.44 | 10,914.54 | Neiswander | 500.00 | 1,000.00 | Cotter First | 2,917.75 | 2,436.72 |
| Westside | 1,187.24 | 1,267.24 | Pleasant Grove | 15,054.43 | 1,698.25 | East Oakland | 1,094.85 | 483.00 |
| | 668,471.46 | 223,717.43 | Pleasant Hill | 2,423.00 | 344.75 | Eastside | 30,811.48 | 5,723.02 |
| | | | Pleasant Valley | 1,991.79 | 1,288.62 | Filppin First | 20,015.98 | 6,236.53 |
| Tri-County Church | | | Providence | 1,544.99 | 112.00 | Gemalieu | 1,185.26 | 472.50 |
| Antioch | 275.00 | 218.00 | Red Oak | 743.50 | 823.50 | Gessville | 10,302.67 | 4,041.73 |
| Barton Chapel | 1,875.67 | 1,129.55 | Rivervale | 2,173.09 | 555.95 | Henderson First | 7,785.70 | 2,028.16 |
| Beckspur | 7,508.51 | 1,474.80 | Shiloh | 1,523.96 | 171.25 | HillTop | 300.00 | 0.00 |
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| Calvary | 8,994.67 | 8,036.42 | Trinity | 729.41 | 104.00 | Lone Rock | 4,298.38 | 600.00 |
| Cherry Valley | 13,114.04 | 2,990.07 | Trumann First | 17,654.11 | 4,043.50 | Midway | 4,573.62 | 1,454.11 |
| Colt | 500.00 | 520.00 | Tyronza First | 4,945.00 | 1,315.10 | Mountain Home | 11,358.97 | 1,116.45 |
| Crawfordsville First | 1,818.35 | 153.00 | Valley View | 575.63 | 330.00 | Mountain Home First | 126,414.30 | 40,191.17 |
| Earle | 13,243.45 | 17,385.47 | Waldenburg | 0.00 | 0.00 | New Hope | 3,988.95 | 100.00 |
| East | 3,609.23 | 431.75 | Weiner First | 1,805.94 | 455.00 | Norfolk First | 1,716.00 | 1,333.25 |
| Emmanuel | 12,305.00 | 4,166.95 | West Ridge | 0.00 | 0.00 | Peel | 616.18 | 195.00 |
| Fair Oaks | 6,893.49 | 2,316.68 | | 145,083.29 | 39,255.23 | Pilgrims Rest | 896.68 | 630.36 |
| Faith | 2,765.96 | 880.00 | Washington-Madison Church | | | Pyatt | 3,818.24 | 951.88 |
| Fitzgerald | 2,939.51 | 2,545.92 | Berry Street | 11,539.84 | 3,445.75 | Rea Valley | 1,123.44 | 12.00 |
| Forrest City First | 35,040.00 | 15,544.73 | Black Oak | 3,575.00 | 997.79 | Summit | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Forrest City Second | 10,619.79 | 4,279.84 | Brush Creek | 10,407.52 | 1,468.00 | Tomahawk | 2,609.98 | 389.35 |
| Gilmore | 0.00 | 95.00 | Calvary | 5,391.70 | 1,431.98 | White River | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Gladden | 685.25 | 200.00 | Caudle Avenue | 3,952.27 | 0.00 | Whiteville | 1,354.45 | 683.02 |
| Good Hops | 3,951.00 | 1,150.00 | College Avenue | 330.00 | 236.00 | Yellville First | 16,983.15 | 5,761.51 |
| Goodwin | 1,806.36 | 15.00 | Combs | 240.00 | 2.00 | | 267,025.25 | 78,231.13 |
| Harris Chapel | 2,006.00 | 1,782.53 | Elkins | 240.00 | 340.00 | Other Contributions | 87,053.29 | 265,158.50 |
| Hydrick | 945.36 | 400.00 | Elkins First | 0.00 | 133.00 | | | |
| Immanuel | 3,313.98 | 490.57 | Elmdale | 81,721.18 | 16,781.61 | Grand Total | 16,499,368.58 | 5,730,532.88 |
| Ingram Boulevard | 8,201.89 | 861.06 | Faith Southern | 864.15 | 0.00 | | | |
| Lakeshore | 285.00 | 40.00 | Farmington | 4,821.99 | 650.71 | | | |
| Lakeshore Estates | 689.00 | 0.00 | | | | | | |

Family Bible Barnabas, the Encourager

By Bruce Swihart, director,
ABSC Church Leadership
Support Department

Basic passage:

Acts 4:32-37; 9:23-31;
11:19-30

Focal passage:

Acts 4:32-37; 9:23-31;
11:19-30

Central truth:

Begin a ministry of
encouragement today!

Life and Work Responding to God's Word

By Tim Reddin, director of
missions, Central Association

Basic passage:

Matthew 13:1-23

Focal passage:

Matthew 13:3-9; 18-23

Central truth:

One's response to God's Word
will demonstrate the level of his
commitment to Christ as Lord.

Explore the Bible The Coronation of the King

By Bill Bowen, pastor,
First Church, Mena

Basic passage:

Matthew 21:1-46

Focal passage:

Matthew 21:1-11

Central truth:

Jesus must be coronated as the
Kings of kings in our lives.

One of the most interesting Bible characters is Barnabas. What did he do that made him a testimony to the grace of God in his life?

■ He helped provide for the needy. The Jerusalem church contained new converts who were poor. Some of the new converts (Acts 2:41-47) had stayed in Jerusalem following their conversion for instruction and fellowship. Even though the church was empowered by the Spirit (Acts 4:32-35), there was a need for money. Barnabas sold property he owned and gave the money to the disciples for those in need (Acts 4:36-37).

■ He risked himself for a questionable convert. After Paul's dramatic conversion (Acts 9:3-19), he desired fellowship with the disciples. They were filled with fear, not believing Paul was a true follower. They would have nothing to do with him (Acts 9:26). No one could forget how Paul had mistreated Christians by having them beaten and thrown in prison (Acts 9:1-2). Risking his reputation, Barnabas brought Paul to the disciples (v. 9:27). Thus, Paul was accepted by the brethren because of Barnabas' risk. The church was strengthened because of Barnabas' encouragement and by

Paul's testimony (vv. 9:28-31).

■ He welcomed Gentile believers. Persecution had scattered the early church. Everywhere they went, they proclaimed the good news of Jesus. Some even shared the gospel with the Gentiles in Antioch, a vast center for trade. Barnabas was sent to Antioch to investigate exactly what was happening. Seeing the grace of God at work, he "encouraged them to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts" (Acts 11:23).

■ He coached a promising worker. The Antioch work grew so rapidly, Barnabas realized it could not be a one-man operation. He set off for Tarsus to find a qualified, zealous Christian associate. There Barnabas rescued Paul from obscurity and placed him in an arena where he would develop a major ministry (Acts 11:25-26).

Christians must make a sincere, sacrificial effort to find the ways and means to help needy believers. There is no room for prejudice among the Christian family. We must learn to be a spiritual mentor for new Christians in order that they may grow strong in their faith and productive in their service. We cannot wait for someone else to be an encourager.

Jesus once asked His disciples, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46). The depth of one's discipleship is demonstrated by the degree of his obedience to the will of God as revealed in His Word. This is the truth our Lord portrayed in the parable of the soils.

We normally call this story the parable of the sower. The imagery, of course, was familiar to Jesus' listeners. Often they had seen farmers out in the fields broadcasting handfuls of seed in the springtime.

However, it is not the sower himself but the four kinds of soil which illustrate the main point Jesus is teaching. Each soil corresponds to a potential spiritual condition of man's heart.

■ The wayside soil represents the hardened heart. The paths through the countryside were packed beneath the feet of travelers so that the windblown seed which fell there could not penetrate the hardened soil.

■ The rocky soil represents the shallow heart.

When the soil is so shallow that the sprouting seed cannot take root very deeply, the quickly growing plant will be scorched by the searing desert sun and will not thrive.

■ The thorny soil represents the preoccupied heart. When one's heart is divided and gives first priority to temporal things, the "cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches" will choke the plant and sap it of the life-giving nutrients it needs in order to mature and produce fruit.

■ The good soil represents the responsive heart. It is a heart soft enough for the seed to take root and grow, deep enough for the seed to become well-rooted and strong, and focused enough that it withstands the distractions of competing loyalties. Good soil produces plants that bear fruit as the farmer intended.

Through Sunday School lessons, sermons and personal Bible study, the seed of God's Word in planted within your heart. What kind of soil are you?

One high moment in a nation's history is the coronation of the king. The coronation symbolized power for the kingdom in a person. In Matthew 21, the coronation of the true King takes place. There is not the usual pageantry that goes along with the coronation of a king, but this pageantry demonstrates that the kingdom of Jesus is not of this world. Chapter 21 contrasts the Kingship of Jesus with the kings of this world.

■ The arrival of the king: As earthly kings arrive for their coronation, most arrive in regal splendor with great pomp and circumstance. In Jesus' day many chose to use white stallions pulling regal chariots. However, Jesus chose to arrive in Jerusalem on the back of a colt. The colt was a foal of a beast of burden - the donkey.

■ The way of the king: As Jesus entered the city people grabbed whatever they had to lay before Him. Using palm branches and clothing, they covered the road to mark His entrance into the city. Earthly kings entered the city on carpets or other expensive pieces of fabric that had been prepared long beforehand for their arrival.

■ The acceptance of the king: As a king enters his capital city on his coronation day, he is closely guarded. People are kept away from him for fear that he may be besieged either by those who love him or those who hate him. No one protected Jesus. He was surrounded by those who sought to enthrone Him as the Messiah. Most saw Jesus as the Messiah who would save their nation from the hands of Rome. For some, He was the Messiah who would save Israel from their sins.

The arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem was completely unexpected by the religious leaders of that day. They never anticipated that Jesus would be enthroned in the hearts of people as the Messiah.

As people left the streets of Jerusalem that day they knew they had witnessed a great life-changing event. However, how their lives were changed depended on how they accepted Jesus as King. If they saw Him as the king of Israel, who came to save their nation from Rome, they would soon be saddened. However, if they saw Jesus as the King of kings and Lord of lords, the joy they felt would never be taken from them.

The story of Stephen covers only two biblical chapters (Acts 6-7). So dynamic was he with his wisdom, eloquence and zeal that he was the first believer to be martyred. His life burned so brightly for Christ that the Spirit used his testimony to energize the church. His life was cast in four roles: deacon, apologist, martyr and victor.

■ **Deacon:** The early church selected seven men to solve a controversy (Acts 6:1-7). Stephen's name appears first on the list (v. 6:5). His character and spiritual wisdom gained him recognition as a leader. He was able to lead the other six to handle the situation so that no split occurred. It was handled so wisely that God's word spread (v. 6:7). Churches must give greater consideration to ordaining only those who meet the criteria of being filled with the Spirit and wisdom.

■ **Apologist:** Stephen worked so fervently and effectively that opposition arose outside the church (Acts 6:8-9). He was falsely accused and called to give an accounting of his beliefs (v. 6:12). Before the high priest and Sanhedrin, Stephen spoke in defense of Jesus as Messiah. His speech is the first apologetic sermon on record (Acts 7:2-53).

Nothing the Christian is asked to do is more unnatural to the human heart than to practice the art of forgiveness. Yet nothing is more damaging to relationships in the body of Christ today than offenses, real or imagined, that are allowed to grow into a root of bitterness in our hearts.

■ **Every Christian has received forgiveness from God (v. 23-27).** Because God is holy and humanity is sinful, we owe God a debt we cannot repay. In loving kindness, God takes pity upon all who come to Him in repentance and faith and He lavishes His grace upon them.

A famous atheist was interviewed on television a few years ago. In a moment of unusual candor she remarked, "One thing I envy about you Christians is your forgiveness. I have nobody to forgive me." What a gift! No wonder the Psalmist sings, "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered" (Psalm 32:1).

■ **We must forgive as we are forgiven (vv. 28-34; 6:12).** Our debt of sin toward God transcends

any obligation or offense anybody can commit against us. We who have been forgiven so much must extend the same grace toward others. Even a "seventy times seven" kind of forgiveness cannot compare to the matchless grace of God toward a sinner like me!

■ **Martyr:** Stephen's sermon so enraged the Sanhedrin that they began to gnash their teeth (v. 7:54). Filled with the Holy Spirit, Stephen looked heavenward and announced he was seeing the glory of God and the Son of man standing at God's right hand (vv. 7:55-56). This was too much for them. They stoned him (vv. 7:57-58).

■ **Victor:** As a result of Stephen's death, members of the early church suffered a staggering blow. Stephen was the champion defender of the faith. Who could possibly take his place? Stephen's defense of the faith caused others to boldly stand up for Jesus. Those who buried him risked their lives. They buried Stephen undeterred by the danger and motivated by his courageous example (Acts 8:2). His death was a factor in Paul's conversion. Paul took up the mantle of Stephen. God was glorified and Stephen was the victor in death. We are victorious as we stand strong for Christ.

any obligation or offense anybody can commit against us. We who have been forgiven so much must extend the same grace toward others. Even a "seventy times seven" kind of forgiveness cannot compare to the matchless grace of God toward a sinner like me!

■ **Unforgiveness is the sin of pride in disguise (v. 32).** Ultimately, sin is never against you or me but against God. An unforgiving spirit places self in the middle and demonstrates an egocentric pride which is at the root of so much sin against God.

■ **Forgiveness must come from the heart (v. 35).** You cannot find it in your heart to forgive? Look closely; if God's Spirit is there, the power to forgive is there! What you cannot do in the energy of your own nature, you can do in the supernatural dynamic of God's Holy Spirit.

Have you been forgiven? Then forgive, as He has forgiven you (Eph. 4:32).

After Jesus entered Jerusalem and the people proclaimed that He was the Messiah, the religious leaders challenged His authority. In response to their rejection Jesus told a series of parables about the judgment of God. The first is the story of the royal wedding invitation. There are four scenes in this parable, each portraying the sad story of those who reject the call of God to salvation.

The first scene shows the rejection of the invitation. An invitation to a royal wedding feast was a great honor in the day of Jesus. However, those who received the invitation showed utter contempt for the king. First, they refused the invitation; second, they killed the servants of the king whom he sent to encourage them to come.

The second scene in verses 7-8 portrays the punishment of those who reject the invitation of the king. It was well within the king's rights to take action against those who had rejected his invitation. He first showed grace when they rejected his invitation. The second time, they killed his servants. This had to be dealt with. So, he sent his army to destroy those who had acted wickedly.

The third scene in verses 9-10 shows the new guests who are invited. The wedding feast was now available to anyone who would accept the king's invitation. Certainly this was against the principles of that day. No king would invite the common person to a royal event such as a wedding feast. But already it can be seen that this king is different. His invitation is to anyone.

The final scene is in verses 11-13. It shows the intruder being expelled. Special clothing was always required for a wedding feast. It was a formal affair. Obviously, those who accepted the invitation of the king did not have such clothing. Therefore, the clothing had to be provided. One man stuck out like a sore thumb. He did not have on the attire provided by the king. He could have come freely if he had accepted the invitation of the king, but he did not. As a result, the king had him removed.

As the disciples basked in the afterglow of the triumphant entry, Jesus reminded them through this story that His kingdom is not made up of those who do religious acts. It is for any who come to Him and accept His righteousness through faith.

Family Bible

Stephen, the Martyr

By Bruce Swihart, director,
ABSC Church Leadership
Support Department

Basic passage:

Acts 6:1-8:3

Focal passage:

Acts 6:1-12; 7:30-39, 44-60;
8:1-2

Central truth:

As Christians, we must stand strong in the face of opposition.

Life and Work

Forgiven? Then Forgive!

By Tim Reddin, director of
missions, Central Association

Basic passage:

Matthew 18:21-35

Focal passage:

Matthew 18:23-24

Central truth:

Those who have received God's forgiveness must forgive those who commit offenses against them.

Explore the Bible

An Invitation to Accept

By Bill Bowen, pastor,
First Church, Mena

Basic passage:

Matthew 22:2-14

Focal passage:

Matthew 22:1-14

Central truth:

God invites all people to receive salvation through Jesus Christ.

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Nation's abortion rate drops to lowest level in 20 years

ATLANTA (ABP)—The nation's abortion rate has dropped to its lowest level in nearly 20 years, according to the latest statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An estimated 1.2 million abortions were performed in 1994, according to the report, down nearly 5 percent from 1993 and the fourth straight annual decline.

The nation's abortion rate—the ratio of abortions to the number of women of child-bearing age—also dropped for the third straight year. The ratio—21 abortions for every 1,000 women ages 15 to 44—is the lowest level since 1976.

The Atlanta-based CDC speculated that possible causes for the decline could include reduced access to abortion clinics, changes in attitude about abortion and the possibility that the number of unintended pregnancies had decreased.

Laura Echevarria, a spokesman for the National Right to Life Committee, credited education by pro-life groups as a factor in the decline.

"We point them in the direction of a church or pregnancy crisis center, and tell them that there are other alternatives besides abortion," she told Associated Press. "You have to make sure women can know where they can turn."

Another possible factor cited in the CDC study is that large numbers of women are aging beyond normal child-bearing years. In 1980, 58 percent of women in their child-bearing years were under 30. In 1994, that percentage dropped to 46 percent, according to the Census Bureau. Eighty percent of women receiving abortions were unmarried.

Jim Henry honored as 'Floridian of the Year'

ORLANDO, FL (BP)—Former Southern Baptist Convention president Jim Henry has been named "Floridian of the Year" by the editorial board of *The Orlando Sentinel*. Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, was featured in a Jan. 5 article in the Florida newspaper.

Henry was described in the article as a "man of reason in trying times" and a "consummate conciliator."

Manning Pynn, the Sentinel's editorial page editor, said the award is given annually to an individual "who has contributed the most" to the state. He said reasons for Henry's selection included his national prominence as SBC president, 1994-96; his leadership in efforts to reach out to the African American community; his recent selection to a State Department panel on religious persecution; and his role in the SBC's differences with the Walt Disney Company. In the latter situation, Pynn said, Henry didn't take sides, but "acted as a peacemaker."

"I was stunned and overwhelmed that I would be chosen when there are so many others more deserving," Henry told the *Florida Baptist Witness*. "It is an honor that belongs to Jesus Christ alone.... I pray that I will be faithful to honor Him in any opportunities that may come my way through this."

Marion Hays, widow of former SBC president, dies at 100

BETHESDA, MD (ABP)—Marion Prather Hays, widow of former Southern Baptist Convention president and Arkansas congressman Brooks Hays, died Dec. 19 of heart failure in Bethesda, Md. She was 100.

Mrs. Hays, a former Sunday School teacher at Second Church in Little Rock, was the author of two books, *The Land Where Time Began* and *Simple Talks for Special Days*. She delivered the prayer at a worship service held in conjunction with President Clinton's first inauguration in 1992.

Her husband, who died in 1981, served eight terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. When he was elected SBC president in 1958 and 1959, he was the first layman to hold the post in nearly 50 years.

Former Texas Baptist executive director James Landes dies

DALLAS (ABP)—James Landes, 84, former Texas Baptist leader and educator, died Dec. 28 in Waco, Texas.

Landes was executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas from 1974 to 1985. He also was president of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene and a pastor for 30 years of churches in Texas. Since retiring at age 70, he lived in Waco, where he was distinguished professor of religion at Baylor University.

A native of Lewisville, Ark., Landes was a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is survived by his wife, the former Irene Pearson of Fayetteville; one daughter, Ruth Pitts; and two grandsons.

